



**CITY COUNCIL**

Marc Tall, Mayor  
Ronald Beauchamp, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Patricia Baribeau, Council Member  
Ralph Blasier, Council Member  
Michael Sattem, Council Member

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Thomas Warstler, Chairperson  
Patrick Connor, Vice Chairperson  
Roy Webber, Secretary  
Brian Black, Commissioner  
James Hellermann, Commissioner  
Todd Milkiewicz, Commissioner  
Kelvin Smyth, Commissioner  
Christine Williams, Commissioner  
Stephen Buckbee, Commissioner

**ADMINISTRATION**

James V. O'Toole, City Manager  
Robert S. Richards, CMC, City Clerk  
Ralph B.K. Peterson, City Attorney  
Ed Legault, DDA Director  
Blaine DeGrave, Code Enforcement

**JOINT MEETING**

City Council, Planning Commission, Downtown  
Development Authority and Historic District  
Commission

**September 23, 2014 – 6:00 p.m.**

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Sue Parker, Chairperson  
Dan Bender, Vice Chairperson  
Mary Finlan, Trustee  
Jeffrey Slagstad, Trustee  
Andy Crispigna, Trustee  
Tara Deno, Trustee  
Mitch Taylor, Trustee  
Marc Tall, Trustee  
James V. O'Toole, Trustee

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

Don Curran, Chairperson  
Judith Fouts, Vice Chairperson  
Ellie O'Donnell, Commissioner  
Suzell Eisenberger, Commissioner  
Karen Lindquist, Commissioner  
Monte Morrison, Commissioner  
Elizabeth Keller, Commissioner

**Escanaba City Hall Council Chambers, Room C101, 410 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI 49829**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Tuesday, September 23, 2014, at 6:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER  
ROLL CALL  
APPROVAL/ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA  
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Presentation/Discussion – Michigan (MEDC) Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC).**

**Explanation:** Representatives from the Michigan Economic Development Authority will give a presentation on the City of Escanaba's selection into the Michigan Economic Development Corporation Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC). The RRC Program is a statewide program that certifies communities as "development ready" based on effective policies, efficient processes and broad community support.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT  
COMMISSION/STAFF COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS  
ADJOURNMENT

The City of Escanaba will provide all necessary, reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon five days notice to the City of Escanaba. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Escanaba by writing or calling City Hall at (906) 786-9402.

Respectfully Submitted,

James V. O'Toole  
City Manager



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Development Authority and Historic District  
Commission

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- Monte Morrison, Commissioner
- VACANCY

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- Carolyn Stacey, Library Director
- Blaine DeGrave, Code Enforcement

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Respectfully Submitted,

James V. O'Toole  
City Manager

## MICHIGAN REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) Program is a state-wide certification program that supports communities to become development ready and competitive in today's economy. It encourages communities to adopt innovative redevelopment strategies and efficient processes which build confidence among businesses and developers. Through the RRC program, local municipalities receive assistance in establishing a solid foundation for redevelopment to occur in their communities – making them more attractive for investments that create places where people want to live, work and play.

Once engaged in the program, communities commit to improving their redevelopment readiness by undergoing a rigorous assessment, and then work to achieve a set of criteria laid out in the **RRC Best Practices**. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and economic development, setting the standard for evaluation and the requirements to attain certification. The program measures and then certifies communities that actively tap the vision of local residents and business owners to shape a plan for their future while also having the fundamental practices in place to be able to achieve that vision. The six RRC best practices include:

- Community Plans and Public Outreach
- Zoning Policy and Regulations
- Development Review Process
- Education and Training
- Redevelopment Ready Sites®
- Community Prosperity

Through the RRC best practices, communities build deliberate, fair and consistent development processes from the inside out. RRC provides the framework and benchmarks for communities to strategically and tactically ask “What can we do differently?” By shifting the way municipalities approach development, they're reinventing the way they do business – making them more attractive for investment and job growth to occur.

The RRC program also has an advisory council consisting of public and private sector experts to assist in guiding the development of the best practices, provide feedback and recommendations on community assessments, and consider new opportunities to enhance the program. In addition to Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) assistance, communities receive comments from multiple perspectives from experts working in the field, tapping into a broader pool of talent.

RRC certification formally recognizes communities for being proactive and business friendly. Certified communities clearly convey the importance of redevelopment. Through the program, MEDC provides evaluation support, expertise and consultation, training opportunities, and assist certified communities market their top redevelopment sites. When a community becomes a certified Redevelopment Ready Community, it signals that it has effective development practices and many more compelling sites for developers to locate their latest projects.

For more information email [RRC@michigan.org](mailto:RRC@michigan.org) or contact the MEDC at 517.373.9808.

NB# 4  
5/29/14

# PURE MICHIGAN®

April 8, 2014

Mr. Blaine DeGrave  
City of Escanaba  
410 Ludington Street, P.O. Box 948  
Escanaba, MI 49829-0948

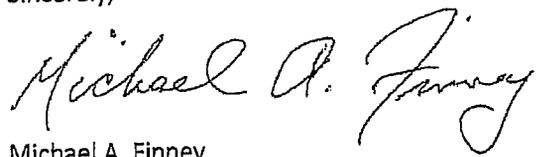
Dear Blaine:

Thank you for your recent application to the Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) program. On behalf of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, I am pleased to welcome the City of Escanaba into the second class of communities to participate in the statewide program. Congratulations!

The RRC program assesses and then certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily development practices. The certification is a formal recognition that you have a vision for the future and the fundamental practices in place to get there. As a program participant you will receive a no cost, comprehensive assessment measuring your community and economic development practices to the RRC best practice standards. It is important for communities to review planning and development policies to promote vibrant places in our state where businesses and talent want to be. Without strong communities, we can't attract talent.

We applaud your efforts thus far, and the RRC team looks forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Finney  
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Marc Tall



# REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES®

Does your community plan for future investment? Welcome public input? Offer superior customer service? The Redevelopment Ready Communities® certification indicates that your community has worked hard to make reinvestment easy.

redevelopment ready  
communities

- Actively engage stakeholders to strategically plan for the future
- Work to remove redevelopment barriers for building deliberate, fair and consistent processes
- Communicate in a clear and concise manner with sound internal procedures
- Provide training opportunities to officials, board members and staff
- Identify, package and market sites prioritized for redevelopment
- Actively promotes and markets itself

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a statewide program that certifies communities who actively engage stakeholders and plan for the future. An RRC certification signals to business owners, developers and investors that the community has removed development barriers by building deliberate, fair and consistent processes. RRC looks to foster communities that creatively reuse space, embrace economic innovation and proactively plan for the future—making them more attractive for investments that create places where people want to live, work and play.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Communities in the program receive a no-cost, comprehensive assessment, report of findings and recommended strategies and support for implementation. Evaluations are conducted by the RRC team through interviews, observation and data analysis. Workshops, trainings, sample plans and ordinance language are a few of the tools and resources provided by the RRC program to assist communities.

## RRC BEST PRACTICES

Developed by public and private sector experts, the RRC best practices are the standard for evaluation. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and

economic development. To be awarded certification, a community must demonstrate all best practice components have been met. The RRC best practice training series is aimed at building capacity of local governments in communities eager to work toward and adopt RRC best practices. Each session is a deep dive in to certification requirements and provides examples of implementation steps and strategies to assist in accomplishing the criteria.

## CERTIFIED COMMUNITIES

When a community becomes a certified Redevelopment Ready Community, it signals that it has effective development practices such as clear development procedures, a community-supported redevelopment vision, an open and predictable review process and compelling sites for developers to locate their latest projects. RRC certification says to a developer that a community integrates transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily practices.

For more information, email [RRC@michigan.org](mailto:RRC@michigan.org) or contact the Michigan Economic Development Corporation at 517.373.9808.



# Redevelopment Ready Communities® **Best Practices**

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## Looking for more info?

Some parts of the Best Practices have further explanation. If a word is in **blue**, hover your mouse over it and a yellow box will appear for more information. If a word is **blue and underlined**, it contains a hyperlink.

If you still have questions, feel free to contact the RRC team at [RRC@michigan.org](mailto:RRC@michigan.org).

\*Please Note: not all web browsers are compatible with the features in this document. For optimal viewing and functionality please download the document to your desktop.



Does your community plan for future investment?  
Welcome public input? Offer superior customer service?  
The **Redevelopment Ready Communities**<sup>®</sup> certification indicates that  
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Redevelopment Ready Communities<sup>®</sup> (RRC) is a statewide program that certifies Michigan communities who actively engage stakeholders and plan for the future. An RRC certification signals to business owners, developers and investors that the community has removed development barriers by building deliberate, fair and consistent processes. RRC looks to foster communities that creatively reuse space, embrace economic innovation and proactively plan for the future—making them more attractive for investments that create places where people want to live, work and play.

Through RRC, communities commit to improving their redevelopment readiness by agreeing to undergo a rigorous assessment, and then work to achieve a set of criteria laid out in this document. Developed by public and private sector experts, the RRC best practices are the standard for evaluation. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and economic development.

Evaluations are conducted by the RRC team through interviews, observation and data analysis. After the evaluation, a community is presented with a report of findings outlining recommended strategies for implementation on any missing best practice criteria. It is important to note, a community may choose alternate approaches to accomplish missing certification requirements. To be awarded

certification, a community must demonstrate all of the RRC best practice components have been met.

When a community becomes a certified Redevelopment Ready Community, it signals that it has effective development practices such as clear development procedures, a community-supported vision, an open and predictable review process and compelling sites for developers to locate their latest projects. RRC certification says to a developer that a community integrates transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily practices. Once certified, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation will assist in the promotion and marketing of up to three Redevelopment Ready Sites<sup>®</sup>. These packaged sites are primed for new investment because they are located within a community that has effective policies, efficient processes and broad community support.

Some parts of the Best Practices have further explanation. If a word is in **blue**, hover your mouse over it and a yellow box will appear for more information. If a word is **blue and underlined**, it contains a hyperlink.

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# Best Practice One: Community Plans and Public Outreach

## 1.1—The Plans

Best practice 1.1 evaluates community planning and how a community's redevelopment vision is embedded in the master plan, capital improvements plan, downtown development plan and corridor plan. Comprehensive planning documents are a community's guiding framework for growth and investment. The information and strategies outlined in the plans are intended to serve as policy guidelines for local decisions about the physical, social, economic and environmental development of the community.

The master plan is updated, at a minimum, every five years to provide a community with a current and relevant decision making tool. The plan sets expectations for those

involved in development, giving the public some degree of certainty about their vision for the future, while assisting the community achieving its stated goals. An updated master plan is essential to articulating the types of development the community desires and the specific areas where the community will concentrate resources. Coordination between the master plan and redevelopment strategies, capital improvements plan, downtown plan and corridor plan is essential. It is also important that planning documents are actionable for implementation and have benchmarks for monitoring progress.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The governing body has adopted a master plan in the past five years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>master plan</b> reflects the community's desired direction for the future.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The master plan is accessible online.</li> </ul>
<p>The master plan identifies a strategy for redevelopment or the governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The redevelopment strategy/plan identifies priority redevelopment sites, neighborhoods, and/or districts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The redevelopment strategy/plan contains goals/actions, implementation steps and tools for the identified priority redevelopment sites, neighborhoods, and/or districts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The redevelopment strategy/plan includes a timeline that identifies responsible parties and benchmarks.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progress on the redevelopment strategy/plan implementation, barriers, and accomplishments is <b>annually reported</b> to the governing body.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice One: Community Plans and Public Outreach

## 1.1—The Plans *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The governing body has adopted a capital improvements plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>capital improvements plan</b> details a minimum of six years of projects and improvements and is reviewed annually.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The capital improvements plan coordinates projects to minimize construction costs and impacts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The capital improvements plan coordinates with the master plan, redevelopment strategy/plan and budget.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The capital improvements plan is accessible online.</li> </ul>
<p>The governing body has adopted a <b>downtown</b> plan, if applicable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan identifies development area boundaries.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan identifies projects, and includes estimated project costs and a timeline for completion.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan contains mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development elements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan addresses transit oriented development, if applicable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan coordinates with the master plan, redevelopment strategy/plan and capital improvements plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The downtown plan is accessible online.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice One: Community Plans and Public Outreach

## 1.1—The Plans *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The governing body has adopted a corridor plan, <b>if applicable.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan identifies development area boundaries.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan identifies projects, and includes estimated project costs and a timeline for completion.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan contains mixed-use and pedestrian oriented development elements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan addresses transit oriented development, if applicable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan coordinates with the master plan, redevelopment strategy/plan and capital improvements plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The corridor plan is accessible online.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice One: Community Plans and Public Outreach

## 1.2—Public Participation

Best practice 1.2 assesses how well a community identifies its stakeholders and engages them, not only during the master planning process, but on a continual basis. A public participation plan is essential to formalize those efforts and outline how the public will be engaged throughout the planning and development process.

Public participation is the process by which a community consults with interested or affected stakeholders before making a decision. It is two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with the objective of being

intentionally inclusive, and the goal of achieving better and more acceptable decisions. Public participation aims to prevent or minimize disputes by creating a process for resolving issues before they become an obstacle.

The best plans and proposals have the support of many stakeholders from businesses, residents, community groups and elected and appointed community officials. Public engagement should be more frequent and interactive than only soliciting input during the master plan update and public hearings.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations				
<p>The community has a <b>public participation plan</b> for engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The plan identifies <b>key stakeholders</b>, including those not normally at the visioning table.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The plan describes public participation methods and the appropriate venue to use each method.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If a third party is consulted, they adhere to the public participation plan.</li> </ul>				
<p>The community demonstrates that public participation efforts go beyond the basic methods.</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <p><b>Basic methods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Open Meetings Act</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper posting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Website posting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flier posting on community hall door</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Postcard mailings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attachments to water bills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local cable notification</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Announcements at governing body meetings</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <p><b>Proactive practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individual mailings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charrettes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One-on-one interviews</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Canvassing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community workshops</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social networking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Crowd-sourcing</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community tracks success of various methods.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Basic methods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Open Meetings Act</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper posting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Website posting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flier posting on community hall door</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Postcard mailings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attachments to water bills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local cable notification</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Announcements at governing body meetings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proactive practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individual mailings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charrettes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One-on-one interviews</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Canvassing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community workshops</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social networking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Crowd-sourcing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community tracks success of various methods.</li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community tracks success of various methods.</li> </ul>					
<p>The community shares outcomes of public participation processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community participation results are communicated in a consistent and transparent manner.</li> </ul>				

# Best Practice Two: Zoning Regulations

## 2.1—Zoning Regulations

This best practice evaluates a community’s zoning ordinance and how well the ordinance regulates for the goals of the master plan.

Zoning is a key tool to implement plans in a community. Inflexible or obsolete zoning regulations can discourage redevelopment and investment. Outdated regulations

force developers to pursue rezoning or variance requests, disturbing project timelines, increasing costs and creating uncertainty. Communities should look to streamline ordinances and regulate for the kind of development that is truly desired. In addition, zoning is an essential tool for shaping inviting, walkable communities.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The governing body has adopted a zoning ordinance that aligns with the goals of the current master plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community has reviewed the master plan’s zoning plan to determine if changes to the zoning map or ordinance text are necessary to implement master plan vision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community has reviewed zoning district intent statements to reflect master plan land use recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p>The zoning ordinance is user-friendly and accessible online.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>zoning ordinance</b> portrays clear definitions and requirements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The zoning ordinance is available in an electronic format at no cost. Hard copies are available for review at convenient locations.</li> </ul>
<p>The zoning ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community allows mixed use in areas of concentrated development by right.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community understands form-based zoning and has reviewed their zoning ordinance to consider how form-based zoning might help them achieve community goals.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Zoning for areas of concentrated development include the following placemaking elements, where appropriate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Build-to lines</li> <li>» Open store fronts</li> <li>» Outdoor dining</li> <li>» Ground floor signage standards</li> <li>» <b>Public realm standards</b></li> <li>» Other pedestrian-friendly elements</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Best Practice Two: Zoning Regulations

## 2.1—Zoning Regulations *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The zoning ordinance includes flexible zoning tools to encourage development and redevelopment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ordinance provides standards for flexible development and preserves sensitive historic and environmental features.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conditional or special land use and conditional zoning approval procedures and requirements are clearly defined.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial districts permit related non-industrial uses that serve <b>new economy-type businesses</b>.</li> </ul>
<p>The zoning ordinance allows for a variety of housing options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The zoning ordinance allows for <b>one or more</b> of the following non-traditional housing types:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Accessory dwelling units</li> <li>» Attached single-family units</li> <li>» Stacked flats</li> <li>» Co-housing</li> <li>» Live/work</li> <li>» Residential units above non-residential uses</li> <li>» Mixed-income housing</li> <li>» Corporate temporary housing</li> <li>» Housing for those with special needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>The zoning ordinance includes standards to improve non-motorized transportation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community understands the benefits of walkable and transit oriented development and has included related zoning standards where appropriate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community understands the benefits of <b>connectivity</b> and has <b>ordinance requirements</b> that accommodate pedestrian activity within and around development.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community encourages the provision of bicycle parking through ordinance or guidelines.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ordinance provides for pedestrian lighting, traffic calming and streetscape elements.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Two: Zoning Regulations

## 2.1—Zoning Regulations *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The zoning ordinance includes flexible parking standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>ordinance considers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Availability of on-street and public parking</li> <li>» Interconnected vehicle passage between lots</li> <li>» Shared parking agreements</li> <li>» Parking maximums or waivers</li> <li>» Electric vehicle charging stations</li> <li>» Bicycle parking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>The zoning ordinance includes <b>standards</b> for green infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ordinance considers:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Rain gardens, bioswales and other treatment techniques</b></li> <li>» Green roofs</li> <li>» Rain barrels</li> <li>» Landscape regulations that encourage or require use of native, non-invasive species</li> <li>» Pervious pavement</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community recognizes the benefits of street trees and parking lot landscaping to mitigate the impacts of heat island effects.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Three: Development Review Process

## 3.1—Development Review Policy and Procedures

This best practice evaluates the community’s site plan review policies and procedures, project tracking and internal/external communication.

The purpose of the site plan review process is to assure plans for specific types of development comply with local ordinances and are consistent with the master plan. Streamlined, well-documented site plan policies and procedures ensure a smooth and predictable experience when working with a community. It is essential for a community’s site plan review team to also coordinate with permitting and inspections staff.

Unnecessary steps and layers or unclear instructions increase time and expenses associated with development. Community leaders should look to simplify and clarify policies, operate in a transparent manner and increase efficiency to create an inviting development climate that is vital to attracting investment. To do this sound internal procedures need to be in place and followed. Tracking projects internally across multiple departments can alleviate potential delays. Offering conceptual site plan review meetings is one more step a community can take to show investors they are working to remove development barriers and cut down on unexpected time delays.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
The zoning ordinance articulates a thorough site plan review process.	<input type="checkbox"/> The responsibilities of the governing body, staff, zoning board of appeals, planning commission and other reviewing bodies are clearly documented.
The community has a qualified intake professional.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community identifies a project point person and trains staff to perform intake responsibilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» receiving and processing applications and site plans</li> <li>» maintaining contact with the applicant</li> <li>» facilitating meetings</li> <li>» processing applications after approval</li> <li>» coordinating projects with permitting and inspections staff</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff understands the importance of excellent customer service.
The community defines and offers <b>conceptual site plan review</b> meetings for applicants.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community has clearly defined expectations posted online, and an internal requirements checklist to be reviewed at conceptual meetings.
The community has a clearly documented internal staff review policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> The review process articulates clear roles, responsibilities, and timelines. <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative review standards are clearly articulated.

# Best Practice Three: Development Review Process

## 3.1—Development Review Policy and Procedures *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The appropriate departments engage in <b>joint site plan reviews</b>.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The joint site plan review team consists of the following representatives, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Planning department</li> <li>» Department of Public Works                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>traffic</i></li> <li>• <i>water, sewer</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>» Building department</li> <li>» Fire</li> <li>» Police</li> <li>» Community manager or supervisor</li> <li>» Historic District Commission</li> <li>» Economic development</li> <li>» Transportation department</li> <li>» County</li> <li>» Consultant</li> <li>» Assessor</li> </ul>
<p>The community has a method to track development projects.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The community demonstrates they have and use a <b>tracking mechanism</b> for development projects during the site plan review process.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The community demonstrates they have and use a tracking mechanism for permitting and inspections.</p>
<p>The community promptly acts on <b>development requests</b>.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The community does not require governing body approval for permitted uses.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The community follows its documented procedures and timelines.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The community has easy to follow flowcharts of development requests that include timelines.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Community development staff coordinates with permitting and inspections staff to ensure a smooth and timely development process.</p>
<p>The community encourages a developer to seek input from neighboring residents and businesses at the onset of the application process.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The community <b>assists the developer</b> in soliciting input on a proposal before site plan approval as detailed in the public participation plan.</p>

# Best Practice Three: Development Review Process

## 3.1—Development Review Policy and Procedures *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The community annually reviews the successes and challenges with the site plan review and approval procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The site plan review team meets to capture lessons learned and amend the process accordingly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community's permitting and inspections staff meets with the development team to capture lessons learned and amend the process accordingly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community obtains customer feedback on the site plan approval and permitting and inspections process and integrates changes where applicable.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Three: Development Review Process

## 3.2 — Guide to Development

This best practice evaluates the accessibility of a community's planning and development information.

Development information and applications must be assembled to help citizens, developers and public officials

gain a better understanding of how the development process in the community works. Documents should be updated regularly and provide a general overview of development processes and steps necessary to obtain approvals and should be readily available online.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The community maintains an online <b>guide to development</b> that explains policies, procedures and steps to obtain approvals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The guide includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Relevant <b>contact information</b></li> <li>» Relevant meeting schedules</li> <li>» Easy to follow step-by-step <b>flowchart</b> of development processes</li> <li>» Clear approval <b>timelines</b> for reviewing bodies</li> <li>» <b>Conceptual meeting</b> procedures</li> <li>» Relevant ordinances to review prior to site plan submission</li> <li>» Site plan review <b>requirements and application</b></li> <li>» Rezoning request process and <b>application</b></li> <li>» Variance request process and <b>application</b></li> <li>» Special land use request process and <b>application</b></li> <li>» Fee schedule</li> <li>» Special meeting procedures</li> <li>» Financial assistance <b>tools</b></li> <li>» Design guidelines and related processes                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>clear explanation for site plans that can be approved administratively</i></li> <li>• <i>permit requirements and applications</i></li> <li>• <i>instructions for online forms</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community accepts credit card payment for fees</li> </ul>
<p>The community annually reviews the fee schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The fee schedule is updated to cover the community's true cost to provide services.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Four: Recruitment and Education

## 4.1—Recruitment and Orientation

This best practice evaluates how a community conducts recruitment and orientation for newly appointed or elected officials and board members.

sions on development and financial incentives. Communities should seek applicants with desired skill sets and establish expectations prior to new officials and board members becoming active.

Diversity on boards and commissions can ensure a wide range of perspectives are considered when making deci-

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
The community sets expectations for board and commission positions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Board and commission applications outline expectations and <b>desired skill sets</b> for open seats. <input type="checkbox"/> The applications are accessible online.
The community provides orientation packets to all appointed and elected members of development related boards and commissions.	<input type="checkbox"/> The <b>orientation packet includes</b> all relevant planning, zoning and development information.

# Best Practice Four: Recruitment and Education

## 4.2—Education and Training

This best practice assesses how a community encourages ongoing education and training and tracks training needs for appointed or elected officials, board members and staff.

development decisions when they receive adequate training on land use and development issues. Turnover in officials and staff can create gaps in knowledge, which makes ongoing training essential to the efficient functioning of a community's development processes.

Planning commissioners, zoning board of appeals members, the governing body and staff make more informed

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
The community has a dedicated source of funding for training.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community has a training budget allocated for <b>elected and appointed officials and staff.</b>
The community identifies training needs and tracks attendance of the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community manages a simple tracking mechanism for logging individual training needs and attendance. <input type="checkbox"/> The community identifies trainings that assist in accomplishing their stated goals and objectives.
The community encourages the governing body, boards, commissions and staff to attend trainings.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community consistently notifies its elected/appointed officials and staff about training opportunities.
The community shares information between the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Training participants share information with those not in attendance. <input type="checkbox"/> The community holds collaborative work sessions. <input type="checkbox"/> The community conducts joint trainings on development topics. <input type="checkbox"/> The community annually meets to review planning, zoning, economic and redevelopment benchmarks.

# Best Practice Five: Redevelopment Ready Sites®

## 5.1—Redevelopment Ready Sites®

This best practice assesses how a community identifies, visions and markets their priority redevelopment sites. A priority redevelopment site is a site targeted by the community for investment.

Identified redevelopment ready sites assist a community to stimulate the real estate market for **obsolete, vacant and underutilized property**. Developers look to invest in communities that have a vision for the community, and a vision for priority sites. Communities that have engaged the public and determined desired outcomes for priority

sites create a predictable environment for redevelopment projects. A community which takes steps to reduce the risk of rejected development proposals will entice hesitant developers to spend their time and financial resources pursuing a project in their community. If a priority redevelopment project is deemed controversial, additional visioning sessions should be held to ensure community support. To encourage redevelopment, it is essential that communities actively package and market sites prioritized for redevelopment.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
The community identifies and prioritizes redevelopment sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> The community maintains an updated list of high priority sites to be redeveloped.
The community gathers preliminary background information for prioritized redevelopment sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Market analysis, feasibility study or target market analysis</li> <li>» Existing structure and previous uses <b>report</b></li> <li>» Known environmental and/or contamination conditions</li> <li>» Soil conditions</li> <li>» Natural features map</li> <li>» GIS information including site location, street maps and utility locations</li> </ul>
The community has developed a vision for the priority redevelopment sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> The <b>vision</b> includes desired development outcomes and specific development criteria. <input type="checkbox"/> Community champions for the redevelopment site are identified. <input type="checkbox"/> High controversy redevelopment sites may require additional public engagement.

# Best Practice Five: Redevelopment Ready Sites®

## 5.1—Redevelopment Ready Sites® *continued*

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The community identifies available resources and incentives for prioritized redevelopment sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community determines the level of support it will give to a project, based on the project meeting the community's vision and desired development outcomes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community gathers financial support from other partners for projects including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Development authorities</li> <li>» Chamber of commerce</li> <li>» Land bank</li> <li>» Private funders</li> <li>» State agencies</li> <li>» Others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>A "Property Information Package" for the prioritized redevelopment site(s) is assembled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The "Property Information Package" includes or identifies:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Vision statement and any specific required development criteria</li> <li>» Planned public infrastructure improvements as identified in the CIP</li> <li>» Property survey</li> <li>» GIS information including site location and street maps</li> <li>» Water, sewer, broadband and other utility locations, capacities and contact information</li> <li>» Property tax assessment information</li> <li>» Current or future zoning</li> <li>» Deed restrictions</li> <li>» Existing building condition report</li> <li>» Previous uses</li> <li>» Traffic studies</li> <li>» Known environmental and/or contamination conditions</li> <li>» Soil conditions and natural features map</li> <li>» Current property owner</li> <li>» Market analysis or feasibility study results</li> <li>» Demographic data, at community and block group levels</li> <li>» Surrounding <b>amenities</b></li> <li>» Available financial incentives</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Prioritized redevelopment sites are actively marketed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The "Property Information Package(s)" are accessible online.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Six: Community Prosperity

## 6.1—Economic Development Strategy

This best practice assesses what goals and actions a community has identified to assist in strengthening its overall economic health.

Today, economic development means more than business attraction and retention. While business development is a core value, a community needs to include community de-

velopment and talent in the overall equation for economic success. The goal of the economic development strategy is to provide initiatives and methods that will encourage diversity of the region’s economic base, tap into opportunities for economic expansion and help to create a sustainable, vibrant community.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The community has an approved economic development strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy is part of the master plan, annual budget or a separate document.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy connects to the master plan and capital improvements plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy identifies the unique economic opportunities and challenges of the community.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy contains goals/actions, implementation steps and tools for the identified opportunities and challenges.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy identifies responsible parties and includes benchmarks.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy coordinates with a regional economic development strategy, if applicable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The economic development strategy is accessible online.</li> </ul>
<p>The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community annually reports on the stated benchmarks and amends the strategy as needed.</li> </ul>

# Best Practice Six: Community Prosperity

## 6.2—Marketing and Promotion

This best practice assesses how a community promotes and markets itself to create community pride and increase investor confidence. It also evaluates the ease of locating pertinent planning, zoning and economic development documents on the community’s website.

Community marketing and promotion can take many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that rekindles community pride and improves consumer and investor confidence. Communities must develop a positive,

promotional strategy through marketing campaigns, advertising and special events to encourage investment. Marketing campaigns can assist with sharing the established community vision, values and goals. Developing a brand to promote a consistent identity can position a community for future success. A community’s website is an important marketing tool and must be well-designed to provide information to the public and build a positive image.

Evaluation criteria	Expectations
<p>The community has developed a marketing strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The marketing strategy identifies marketing opportunities and specific strategies to attract businesses, consumers and real estate development to the community.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The marketing strategy objectives strive to create or strengthen an <b>image</b> for the community, heighten awareness about the community, and attract and retain businesses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community is coordinating marketing efforts with local, regional and state partners.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The marketing strategy includes specific approaches to market the community’s prioritized redevelopment sites.</li> </ul>
<p>The community has an updated, user-friendly municipal website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community’s website is easy to navigate and find information.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community’s development information is grouped together.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The community’s website contains or links to the following information:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Master plan and amendments</li> <li>» Capital improvements plan</li> <li>» Downtown plan, if applicable</li> <li>» Corridor plan, if applicable</li> <li>» Zoning ordinance</li> <li>» All components listed in the “guide to development”</li> <li>» Online payment option, if applicable</li> <li>» Board and commission applications</li> <li>» “Property Information Packages” for the identified priority redevelopment site(s)</li> <li>» Economic development strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>