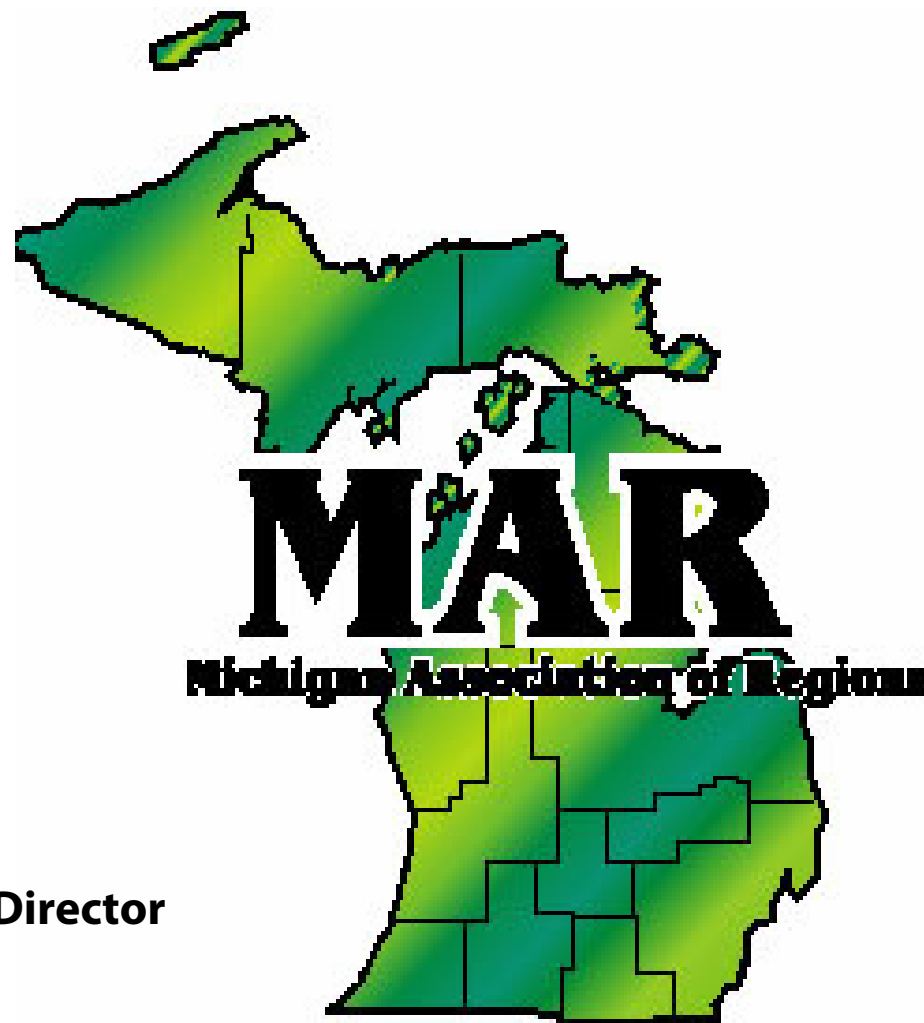




A National Perspective on Regional Councils



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By Matthew Chase, NADO Executive Director
September 23, 2008



Presentation Overview

- Global and National Trends in Regional Community and Economic Development
- Seven Significant Issues Facing the Nation's Regional Councils
- Regional Council Innovations



Global and National Economic Development Trends



World Is Changing Ever Faster

- More **International Air Travel**
in a Day Today, Than in a Year in 1975
- More **International Telephone Calls**
in a Day Today, Than in a Year in 1973
- More **International Trade**
in a Day Today, Than in 10 Days in 1968

(Source: ITTF)



World Is Changing Ever Faster

- **Google's Free Email Service** Provides 2.7 gbs today; Cost Would Have Been \$50 Million Per Subscriber Using 1975 Storage Technology
- New **John Deere Cotton Harvester** Has Computing Power of 8 Personal Computers
- In 2010, There Will Be **1 Billion Transistors for Every Person** on the Planet

(Source: ITTF)



Global Workforce and Markets

- **Global Workforce Has Experienced Massive Growth Since Fall of Soviet Union and Emergence of China, India and Pacific Rim**
 - ❖ China and India Account for 35 Percent of the World's Population, at 1.32 Billion and 1.13 Billion People, Respectively
 - ❖ United States Has Population Slightly Above 300 Million, Ranking as Third Largest Country by Population



China Transportation Investments

- Between 2001 and 2005, Spent More on Roads, Railways and Fixed Assets Than Prior 50 Years
 - ❖ \$200 Billion in High-Speed Rail Between 2006-2010, Largest Investment in Rail Capacity since 19th Century
 - ❖ Have Built 53,600 K/Ms of Expressways Since 1990s; Constructing 300,000 K/Ms of Rural Roads by 2010
 - ❖ Freight Container Throughout Will Increase 85% by 2020
 - ❖ Building 97 New Airports by 2020

(Source: The Economist)



Trends In Infrastructure Investments According to CBO Report (August 2007)

- Federal Infrastructure Spending as Percentage of Non-Defense Budget Has Declined Since 1960-1980 Range of 5.3% to 4.2%; At 2.9% in 2006
 - ❖ China and India Are Spending 9% and 8%, Respectively
 - ❖ China consuming more steel than US, Japan & Germany Combined
 - ❖ Sub-Sahara African Nations Spending Above 4%

- Federal Share of Public Infrastructure Investments Only 23.5% in 2004 vs 76.5% for State and Locals



Global and National Policy Agendas

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – International Institute
- Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program
- Council on Competitiveness
- America 2050 Mega-Regions Agenda
- Rupri Center for Regional Competitiveness



Global and National Trends

■ Regions Matter

- ❖ Primary drivers of any nation's economic competitiveness are now regional in character

■ Innovation Is Driving Force

- ❖ Ability to rapidly translate knowledge and insights into new high-value products and service is imperative (Council on Competitiveness)



Characteristics of Successful Regions

- **Global and National Connections:**
Physical, IT and Knowledge-Based Networks
- **Quality of Place** to Attract/Retain Workforce
- **Pursuit and Support of Innovation and Entrepreneurship** by Public-Private Partners
- **Regional Collaborations and Governance,**
with Varying Roles of Local Government



Regional Council Message

- Forum for Regional Collaboration, Strategy Development and Solution Implementation
- Performance-Driven, Publicly Accountable and Fully Transparent Organizations
- Professional Expertise, Long-Term Capacity and Connections across the State



Keys to Success for Regional Councils

- **Networks of Local Elected Officials,** as well as Private Sector, Nonprofit and Education Partners
- **Knowledge** of Federal and State Community and Economic Development Programs
- **Intermediary** between political leaders and practitioners – *You are part of intergovernmental process!*



7 Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

Based on Focus Groups and Interviews
by the SouthEast Regional Directors
Institute (SERDI), A Regional Association
of the 112 Regional Council Executive Directors
of the Southeastern United States



7 Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

1. Relevance
2. Convener of the Region
3. Ownership and Governance
4. Relationship with Local Government
5. Relationships with Federal and State Officials
6. Lack of Uniformity / Capacity
7. Public Relations / Image

Source: SouthEast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI)



Relevance

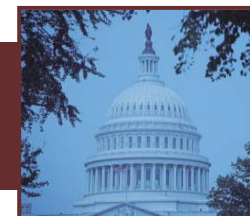
- Is your RPC a key resource for the region?
- Are board members engaged in the activities of the organization?
- Can board members relay and explain to others the work and goals of the RPC?
- Is the mission and focus of the RPC clearly defined and relevant to the region today?



Relevance

■ **Simply stated ...**

- ❖ Does your phone ring?
- ❖ Are you asked to the table on major regional and local initiatives with public, private and non-profit sector leaders?
- ❖ Are you the convener or forum for public officials, along with private and non-profit leaders, to work together on problems and solutions for the region?



Convener of the Region

- Are you **proactive** in providing leadership and a vision for the region?
- Are you providing a forum for regional and local leaders to **develop and implement a blueprint** for the region's future?
- Are you **fostering regional collaboration** between local govts, and among public, private, non-profit and philanthropic leaders?



Ownership and Governance

- Is it clear who owns your RPC?
 - ❖ Local governments
 - ❖ Federal, state and local funding partners
 - ❖ General public
 - ❖ ***Note: It is NOT the Executive Director!***
- Enabling Legislation and Executive Orders
vs Realities of Investors and Shareholders



Ownership and Governance

- Is your board structured to attract the “movers-n-shakers” of the region?
- Is your RPC structured to take a “holistic” approach to regional development; Breaking down traditional stovepipes and turf battles?
- Is your organization board-driven, customer-driven, staff-driven, program-driven or a mix?



Relationship with Local Governments

- Most RPCs by law or executive order are established as voluntary councils owned and governed by local government officials.

- HOWEVER, in far too many cases local officials
 - ❖ Are unaware of RPC functions & programs
 - ❖ Do NOT realize RPCs are set-up to serve them
 - ❖ Do NOT consider themselves as owners



Relationships with Federal & State Officials

- **80 percent of the typical RPC budget comes from federal or state funding programs, according to NADO research**



Relationships with Federal & State Officials

- **THEREFORE**, RPCs must improve relationships and outreach with ...
 - ❖ Governors, state legislators and senior staff
 - ❖ State departments and agencies
 - ❖ Congressional and administration officials at the federal level, including political officials and career staff in the field and in Washington, DC



Lack of Uniformity / Capacity

- Perceived by outside world as a statewide network and held accountable together;
So, might as well start acting like a statewide network!
- Identify and pursue common programs and skill sets, yet also maintain local flexibility, initiatives and accountability



Lack of Uniformity / Capacity

- Is your state association tackling the pressing issues of ...
 - ❖ Common skill sets and organizational capacity
 - ❖ Peer accountability and mentoring
 - ❖ Multi-region partnerships and collaboration, including joint program delivery among RPCs
 - ❖ Statewide outreach, marketing and branding
 - ❖ Professional development training, including finance



Public Relations / Image

- Tradition of **“behind-the-scenes”** player
- **Can NO LONGER** afford to be **“silent partner”**; Still put elected officials in public view, but also market RPC accomplishments, resources and roles
- **Image is/can be a real impediment** for RPCs at federal, state and local levels



Public Relations / Image

- **You must make the effort;**
***No one else cares as much about
your organization as you!***
- ❖ As Yogi Berra said, "You have to give 100 percent in the first half of the game. If that isn't enough, in the 2nd half, you have to give what is left."



Public Relations / Image

- **Portraying a professional image:**
Professionally-designed Web site
- **First-class publications** and reports,
both content and design (including CEDS)
- **Timely and regular communications**
of activities and results with focus on
“People Impact”; not just process!



Regional Council Innovations

■ Board Development

- ❖ Off-site strategic planning board retreats with social networking and trust building
- ❖ Action-oriented board meetings with timely, pertinent and useful information
- ❖ Involve key federal, state and local officials, including funding partners, in meetings
- ❖ Host forums and events with high-profile national, state and regional leaders & move board meetings around the region to showcase local innovations



Regional Council Innovations

■ Staff Development

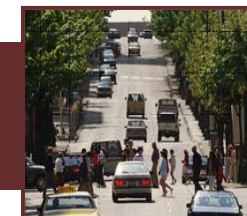
- ❖ Break down staffing “stove pipes” by program; Staff must be cross-trained and knowledgeable about all RPC programs
- ❖ Encourage collaboration and leveraging of RPC programs & resources across programs
- ❖ Invest in staff: travel, training & peer exchanges
- ❖ Conduct organization-wide retreats and strategic planning



Regional Council Innovations

■ State Associations

- ❖ Monthly meetings of executive directors, along with working groups of senior program staff
- ❖ Strategic outreach agendas and actions for federal and state legislators and agencies (including specific roles and tasks for local policy officials)
- ❖ Peer accountability, including quality controls, training requirements and financial monitoring



Regional Council Innovations

■ State Associations

- ❖ Willingness to partner with other statewide, regional and local entities
- ❖ Forging new initiatives and programs that cross multiple RPC regions; ***Hard to preach regional collaboration if RPCs don't follow the same rule!***



Regional Council Innovations

- **Transportation Finance Forum:** 3-Day Town Hall Meeting by New Mexico First and NewMARC
- **Three Rivers PDD:** \$1.5 Million for Community College Scholarships for All High School Graduates within 8-County Region
- **Pennsylvania LDDs:** Export Trade Assistance, Transportation-Land Use-Economic Development Strategies, & Broadband Plans



Regional Council Innovations

- **Maryland Regional Councils:** New Rural Broadband Cooperative to Deploy Fiber
- **Southwest Virginia PDCs:** Built Extensive Fiber Optic Broadband Loop and Founded Partnerships w Broadband Providers
- **Land-of-Sky Regional Council:** Regional Energy and Fuels Planning—Incorporated into CEDS Process and Strategy



■ Virginia's Region 2000 Partnership: RPC, EDC, WIB, Technology Council and Engineering Research Center

- ❖ **An interwoven network of organizations** with a centralized vision to provide regional development leadership within the 2,000 square miles that surround Lynchburg, Virginia. **We provide a single point of contact to the public and private sector** for regional planning services, economic development, marketing, and workforce training.





Regional Council Innovations

■ East Central Idaho PDA:

- ❖ Built multiple E-ship training centers within region
- ❖ Established traditional business lending programs
- ❖ Developed partnerships w BYU-Idaho for professors and students to assist with business planning, especially with Idaho National Laboratory inventions and research
- ❖ Part of effort with private venture capitalist to establish \$150 million venture capital pool and \$2 million Angel lending fund for rural Idaho



Final Thoughts

- Essential to manage and mitigate risks, while also taking reasonable risks!
- “Thinking Outside the Box” is more than a slogan, it’s a way of life!
- Never stop improving! Keep pushing the envelope and never accept status quo!

National Association of
Development Organizations



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