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**Sustainable
Community Economic Development:
A Study of the Extent to which the Concept of
Sustainability has been Incorporated into Economic
Development Strategies in Michigan's Regions**

**A Plan B Paper
For
Master in Urban and Regional Planning and Urban Affairs
Michigan State University**

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Introduction

For many years it has been assumed that economic development inevitably leads to some level of environmental decline and destruction. Many organizations and individuals have perceived environmental preservation strategies as hindrances to economic development as such strategies limit resource use and generate costs, contrary to the objectives of wealth generation and industrial expansion. However, over the decades the emergence of ever increasing numbers of environmental and socioeconomic problems and the severity of these problems has made it clear that society is using resources and producing waste at rates that may be unsustainable. Non-renewable resources are being used faster than substitutes are being found. As a consequence of this realization, regions across the United States and the world over are attempting to forge new strategies for linking environmental well being to economic development. Communities are seeking to unify their economic development, social, and environmental agendas so that progress in one area does not come at the expense of another area, and therefore progressing towards “sustainability”.

The Planning profession is a key contributor to making urban and rural life workable, livable and prosperous. Working with communities to provide research, reasoned analysis and recommendations on urban, regional, environmental and social issues, planners help develop solutions that are practical and effective. A planner’s role is to link knowledge and action in ways that improve public and private development decisions that affect people, places and the environment¹. Thus planners are able to influence the manner in which communities develop. Development decisions are channeled through planning agencies for approval and therefore planners play a key role in determining the type and quality of development (in terms of specific development projects as well as the resulting impact on

the environment, economy, and social well being of communities) that takes place in communities. Consequently, sustainable thinking needs to be at the root of all planning decisions and processes in order to be incorporated into planning strategies intended to guide communities towards a “healthy” future and an existence which in the long run can be sustained.

This study seeks to identify economic development practices in ten regions in Michigan that incorporate the concept of sustainability. The objective is to provide information about the extent to which these Michigan communities are unifying their economic, social and environmental agendas, and hence determining whether these communities are progressing towards sustainability as far as economic development is concerned. It is hoped that the compilation and analysis of this information may contribute to the sharing and exchange of information between regions about sustainable community economic development practices.

This analysis has been carried out through reviewing Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) prepared by ten Michigan Regional Planning Commissions, all of which are Economic Development Administration grantees. The Regional Planning Commissions and the districts they serve are as follows:

- Central Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission (serving the counties of Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee and Schoolcraft)
- East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission (serving the counties of Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Iosco, Isabella, Midland, Ogemaw, Roscommon, Saginaw, Sanilac and Tuscola)

¹ Plan Canada, *Planning as a Career*, <http://www.cip-icu.ca/eng/career.html>

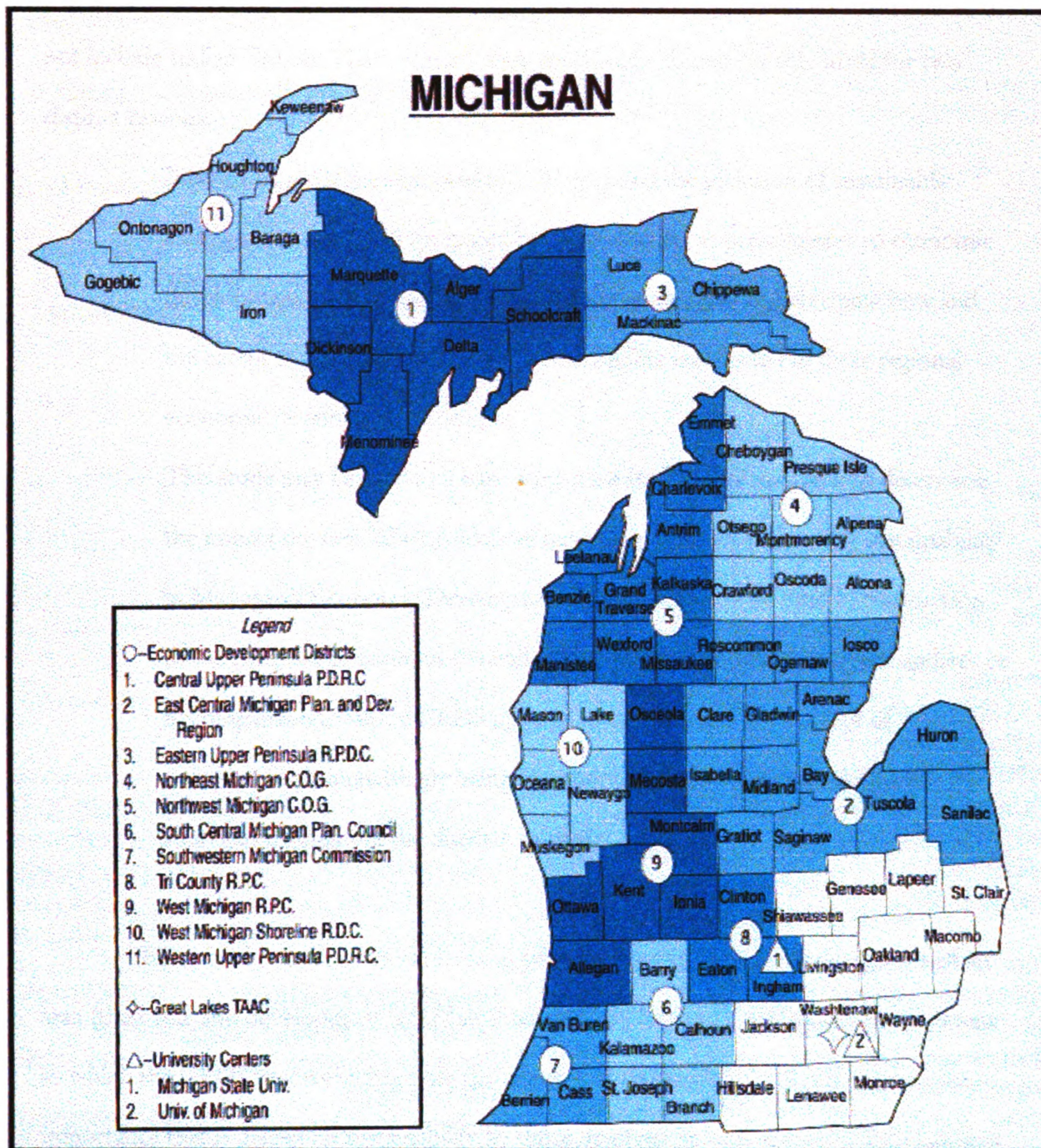
- Eastern Upper Peninsular Regional Planning and Development Commission (serving the counties of Chippewa, Luce and Mackinac)
- Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (serving the counties of Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego and Presque Isle)
- Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (serving the counties of Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Misaukee and Wexford)
- Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission (serving the counties of Berrien, Cass and Van Buren)
- Tri-County Regional planning Commission (serving the counties of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham)
- West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (serving the counties of Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola and Ottawa)
- West Michigan Shoreline Regional Planning Commission (serving the counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo and Oceana)
- Western Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission (serving the counties of Baraga, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw and Ontonagon)

The CEDS for the South Central Michigan Planning Council was not available at the time of this study.

Contact information for the Planning Agencies is provided in Appendix A.

Figure 1:

Economic Development Districts Michigan, 1999



Source: Economic Development Directory, Economic Development Administration,
U.S. Department of Commerce

This study constitutes an analysis of qualitative secondary data comprising the CEDS reports, journal articles, web sites, and other written material (brochures, annual reports). The regions reviewed were all EDA designated Economic Development Districts (this does not include Indian Tribes). These regions were specifically chosen for this study for two distinct reasons.

- New EDA guidelines adopted in 1998 required the inclusion of sustainable strategies in the CEDS (prepared by these districts as prerequisites to economic development assistance). Consequently, the study seeks to determine how and the extent to which the concept of sustainability is reflected in these regional economic development strategies.
- This study may be used as a basis for future studies that may seek to determine the impact the new EDA guidelines have on effectively promoting sustainability in Michigan's Economic Development Districts. It may be used in comparison to the contents of previous Overall Economic Development Program updates or in comparison to future CEDS updates to determine if the concept of sustainability is increasingly being incorporated in economic development strategies throughout the districts studied.

CEDS are the result of local planning processes designed to guide the growth of an area (their role and development is further discussed in Chapter 1), and therefore the extent to which the CEDS reports incorporate the concept of sustainability will reflect upon the importance that is placed on sustainability by those involved in local economic development planning processes. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the role of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in economic development planning and discusses the

role of CEDS in this process. This is followed by an examination of the concept of sustainability and the importance of incorporating the concept in community economic development planning in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, a checklist of “indicators” of sustainable economic development processes was derived from a review of EDA CEDS guidelines and other literature. This checklist comprises elements considered necessary and/or conducive to the development of sustainable community economic development processes. This is used as a tool for reviewing the CEDS and for determining the extent to which they incorporate the concept of sustainability. Chapter 4 consists of a discussion of the implications of this study’s findings for the Planning profession, and Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion of lessons learned over the course of the study.

Chapter 1

Economic Development Planning – The Role of the Economic Development Administration and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies Explained.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The Economic Development Administration, part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, was established under the Public Works and Economic Development Act, 1965. The purpose of the EDA is to help generate jobs and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed areas. This is reflected in its mission: “To stimulate employment and increase income in distressed communities, EDA’s role is to assist local communities to develop and diversify their economies through effective partnerships and strategic investment of resources.”²

Guided by the principle that distressed communities can be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies, EDA’s activities involve working in partnership with local and state governments, regional economic development districts, public and private non-profit organizations and Indian tribes, to provide grants for infrastructure development, local capacity building and business development³. The program tools that EDA uses to aid distressed communities include investment in public works infrastructure projects to allow communities to establish and support private sector initiatives, and supporting locally operated Economic Development Districts and Indian Tribes to help these communities build capacity to focus on long-term economic challenges. The CEDS reports that are reviewed in this study were prepared by the

² Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 13

Regional Planning Commissions in Michigan's Economic Development Districts. The EDA provides financial assistance to its planning grantees and the funds are used to prepare and update a comprehensive development strategy, convene planning meetings, design and develop projects, and provide technical assistance to their local governments.⁴

EDA's Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) and the Evolution of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

For over thirty years, EDA's Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) functioned as a local planning process for achieving economic development in America's economically distressed communities. The OEDP served as a method of encouraging communities to think strategically about themselves, their assets and liabilities, their future direction in terms of community development, and what were steps needed to achieve their goals and vision. The OEDP was designed to analyze local conditions, identify problems and opportunities, set goals, design strategies and evaluate accomplishments, and was also a prerequisite to qualifying for EDA public works funding ⁵. In 1998, the OEDP was revamped with the passage of the Economic Development Administration Reform Act. Reforms were made with the intention of increasing the benefits of the regional planning process and enhancing economic development capacity at the local level. As part of these reforms, the CEDS process was introduced in place of the OEDP.

Numerous reasons existed for the reforms made to the OEDP, all of which revolved around the changing context for economic development. The growing interest in

³ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration,
<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/mission>

⁴ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C.: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 13

⁵ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C.: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 16

regionalism, strategic planning within the federal government and the increasing complexity of local and regional economic development in terms of the increasing numbers and capacity of economic development organizations, are to name a few of the reasons⁶. However, the reason for reform most pertinent to this study is the movement to promote sustainable development. Movement towards the development of sustainable communities requires a new framework for thinking about economic distress that takes into account the inter-relatedness of environmental quality, social equity and economic viability⁷.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies are prepared by Regional Planning Commissions in districts that have traditionally been the recipients of EDA planning grants. CEDS emerge from a continuous and broad based planning process for addressing the economic problems and potentials of a region⁸. EDA guidelines require the strategies to reflect challenges and opportunities facing the regions and stipulate the inclusion of four elements⁹:

- Analysis – An assessment of the state of the regional economy, community assets, challenges, capacity and resource availability for economic development;
- Vision – Desired goals to be achieved and appraisal of community's competitive advantage;
- Action plan – Establishment of program priorities for implementation;

⁶ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 16

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 15

⁹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 4

- Evaluation – Establishment of criteria and performance measures for process evaluation.

This process is intended to lead to the formulation and implementation of job development programs, economic diversification, raising income levels and improving quality of life while protecting the environment¹⁰. The strategies should also “Promote sustainable economic development and opportunity, foster effective transportation systems, enhance and protect the environment, and balance resources through sound management of development.”¹¹

CEDS are a prerequisite for qualifying for EDA project assistance for planning organizations, public works and economic adjustment grants, and economic development district designation. A new CEDS is required every five years, with yearly updates. The Planning organizations responsible for the preparation of CEDS are encouraged to work with a broad variety of interest groups and participants in the process, along with other EDA programs including University Centers, Local Technical Assistance, Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers, Economic Adjustment Assistance and State Planning Assistance¹². This study constitutes a review of the 1998-1999 CEDS updates to determine the manner in which sustainable development is promoted through the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies in Michigan.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C. : U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 3

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C. : U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 18

Chapter 2

The Concept of Sustainability and the Importance of its Incorporation in Community Economic Development Planning.

Sustainability – The Concept

The concept of sustainability began reaching mainstream economic and environmental thought with the publication of the United Nations' World Commission on Environment and Development Report entitled "Our Common Future" in 1987. The definition of sustainable development provided by the publication is "development that allows people to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"¹³. Numerous definitions of this term exist in the literature, many of them variations of this definition with differences reflecting varying disciplinary viewpoints. The term 'sustainable' is widely used in reference to ecological sustainability. Today, social sustainability, economic sustainability, community sustainability and even cultural sustainability come under the umbrella of sustainable development.

The environment, economy and social structure are systems through which we interact as human beings. Understanding the concept of sustainability involves acknowledging that these spheres of human activity are inextricably linked (Please see Appendix B). Community economic viability, environmental quality, and social equity are interrelated in many ways and achieving a sustainable outcome requires attention to all three areas. Creating and maintaining a sustainable society will involve taking actions to sustain the levels of wealth creation in the economy, sustain social cohesion and social institutions whilst preserving and sustaining the environment so that it can contribute to human welfare

¹³ World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission), *Our Common Future*, New York: Oxford University Press, (1987)

and the human economy without being depleted¹⁴. Consequently, attempts must be made to balance and reconcile competing interests in these core areas. Therefore the multiple goals of sustainable development can be summarized as follows¹⁵:

To promote development that enhances the natural and built environment in ways that simultaneously take into consideration:

- 1) Sustainable use of renewable resources - the necessity to conserve the stock of natural assets, offsetting any unavoidable reduction, wherever possible, by a compensating replacement so that the total stock is left undiminished;
- 2) Minimizing the use and waste of non-renewable sources;
- 3) The need to avoid damaging the regenerative capacity of the world's natural ecosystem;
- 3) The need to achieve greater social equity and address cultural and health needs;
- 4) Economic needs – access to adequate livelihood and economic security;
- 5) Political needs – respect for civil rights and the freedom to participate in local and national politics.

Central issues to the concept of sustainability are growth and development. These terms are often used synonymously, even though they convey different notions. Growth conveys the idea of physical or quantitative expansion whereas development is a qualitative concept incorporating the notions of improvement and progress including cultural, social and economic dimensions¹⁶. Not all growth is equal; Oftentimes it comes at the expense of our environment and irreplaceable natural resources and growth of this nature is unsustainable. Growth and economic development that add long term value or yield

¹⁴ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 866

¹⁵ Andrew Blowers, *Planning for a Sustainable Environment*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1993): 7

¹⁶ Andrew Blowers, *Planning for a Sustainable Environment*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1993): 6

economic benefit at low social and environmental costs and that can support the addition of value over the long term, are sustainable¹⁷. Kinsley discusses sustainable development in terms of prosperity without growth¹⁸. A sound economy requires development but does not necessarily require expansion. Being sustainable does not mean not growing at all. The concept recognizes that jobs, wages, productivity, knowledge and education must progress and grow, but calls for a change in the content of the growth to make it less material and energy intensive, with a more equitable impact¹⁹. Growth or expansion, on the other hand, often results in problems such as sprawl, traffic congestion and the loss of a sense of community. Therefore it is necessary to distinguish between growth and development in order to make choices that truly benefit communities. It is important that we understand clearly what is meant by the term 'sustainability' if we are to propose effective strategies for achieving sustainability and sustainable development.

Some basic principles of sustainable development have emerged from thought and research into the concept. These principles serve to guide efforts and endeavors to progress towards sustainable development and are as follows²⁰:

- 1) Fostering stewardship - so that everyone is responsible for the economic, social and environmental consequences of their actions. Civic engagement and participation is critical in the process.
- 2) Efficient use of resources - conservation of resources to ensure long-term social, environmental and economic benefits, through minimizing outputs and waste recycling.

¹⁷ Lee Epstein, Land Growth and the Public Interest, *Public Management*, 79, (July 1997): 9

¹⁸ Michael Kinsley, *Economic Renewal Guide: A Collaborative Process for Sustainable Community Development*, Colorado: Rocky Mountain Institute, (1997):1

¹⁹ Anna. K. Schwab, David Brown, Sustainable Development: Implementation at the Local Level, *Land Use Law and Zoning Digest*, 49 (4), (April 1997):4

²⁰ *Ibid*

- 3) Economic prosperity - the creation of meaningful jobs, poverty reduction, and the provision of opportunity for a high quality of life. There should be equal access to education and training so that people are able to make a livelihood. This is linked to the principle of equity that suggests everyone should be afforded justice, human dignity and the opportunity to achieve economic, environmental and social well-being.
- 4) Future orientation - judging activities by their long-term environmental and socioeconomic impacts and not just short-term gains.

Thus sustainability and sustainable development cannot simply be addressed from a compartmentalized notion of the environment. The major elements, which constitute the process of development, are inextricably linked, forming cause-consequence-feedback relationships between economic development, patterns of wealth and poverty, survival, economic production and consumption, and the way humans organize their societies and develop institutional relationships. Hence the implications for applying notions of sustainability to economic development²¹.

Strategies and policies for achieving sustainable development that incorporate the aforementioned goals will require cooperation and coordination throughout the planning profession. Legislation and regulation, inspection, monitoring, enforcement, rural and urban land use controls, policy and strategy development and implementation, are all areas in which planners can play a role in guiding communities towards a sustainable existence. The shift towards sustainability can help invoke a revival of notions of community, and will require political commitment to make the necessary changes²². Government agencies such as

²¹ Cedric Pugh, Sustainability and Sustainable Cities. In Cedric Pugh (Ed.) *Sustainability, the Environment and Urbanization*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1996): 139

²² Andrew Blowers, *Planning for a Sustainable Environment*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1993): 7

the EDA and planning organizations play an important role in creating frameworks to promote sustainable practices through the coordination of other agencies, developing partnerships between infrastructure authorities and firms , developing regulations, as well as incentive and disincentive structures²³. These activities are central in influencing the way the economy operates and develops in terms of setting operational standards and norms that will enable our communities' progress towards sustainability.

Sustainable Community Economic Development

In traditional economic development, often, the only value that is represented is the value of dollars. The value and importance of the informal economy is largely ignored. In order to create a healthy community, planners need economics that goes beyond dollars and cents as the measurement of true health and wealth and that will include quality of life. They need to consider other kinds of capital in addition to traditional capital, such as human development (counting people as assets in which we can invest), natural capital (natural resources), social capital (measuring family and community strengths that are an asset in any community), economic capital (traditional capital, treated not as an end in itself, but as a means to nurture other types of capital)²⁴. It is here that community economic development comes into play.

Community economic development can be defined as “a process by which communities can generate their own solutions to their common economic problems and thereby build long term community capacity and foster the integration of economic, social

²³ Andrew Blowers, *Planning for a Sustainable Environment*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1993): 9

²⁴ Joe Flowers, Beyond Economics: Healthy Communities and Healthy Economies, *National Civic Review*, 86, Spring (1997): 54

and environmental objectives”²⁵. Economic development activities include direct involvement in creating housing, employment and local businesses, and encompass social and economic development, mobilization and advocacy for social change, and the building of alternative institutions²⁶. The major goals of community economic development are²⁷:

- to reduce unemployment;
- to identify and enhance the competitive advantage of a community;
- to create opportunities for local ownership or control;
- to build leadership and empower community residents;
- to address gaps in perception, education and information that economically disadvantaged communities are worth the effort of economic and social investment.

There are two basic types of economic development strategies: business development and community empowerment. These strategies include the following activities²⁸:

- 1) Commercial/industrial development & property management
- 2) Worker development
- 3) Business ownership and venture investment
- 4) Business development and technical assistance
- 5) Residential housing development and management
- 6) Advocacy
- 7) Leadership

It is in these areas, which communities may seek to incorporate the concept of sustainability.

²⁵ The Community Economic Development Center, www.sfu.ca/cedc/gateway/resources/online

²⁶ Eric Shragge, *Community Economic Development*, New York: Black Rose Books, (1993):

²⁷ Helen Mazarakis, *Community Economic Development: A Study of Economic Development Activities within the Community*, New York: Local Initiatives Support Corporation, (1993)

²⁸ *ibid*

Making the Link between the Concept of Sustainability and Community Economic Development Processes.

Principles of sustainability serve a limited purpose if they are not implemented. It is in the local context that sustainability can make the transition from visionary thinking to concrete action. Individual communities, municipalities or counties can play an important role in encouraging sustainability through the use of various tools and initiatives. Roles played and action taken by local government may be infused with principles of sustainability and the guiding principles of sustainability can be incorporated into day-to-day operations, requiring that plans and programs conform to the principles.

The concept of sustainable development provides a framework for approaching community economic development from a perspective which focuses on boosting local self reliance, capacity building, and rooting the benefits of corporate activity deeply within communities. Economic growth may be unsustainable for purely economic reasons (inflation or a deficit in the balance of payments) or it may be environmentally unsustainable due to the depletion of resources on which such growth depends. It may also be socially unsustainable due to the impact of income inequalities (undermining structures of social cohesion such as the family or the community)²⁹. Sustainable community economic development strategies seek to address these issues through the development of high wage, low waste economies using innovative methods of making use of community resources to improve economic opportunity and the quality of life³⁰.

²⁹Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 866

³⁰ Benjamin Goldman, *Sustainable America: New Public Policy for the 21st Century*, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (1995): 23

Different communities and agencies may perceive the idea of sustainable economic development in different ways. Some may focus efforts to become more sustainable on the process of community economic development as a whole, whereas others may dwell on how business activity can be made more environmentally sustainable³¹. Ekins and Newby (1998) suggest that although more focused efforts may have their advantages, a very significant drawback is that by focusing on a specific sphere of activity other broader potential benefits of sustainable economic development may be diminished. Broader agendas are more holistic in that they address how to make existing economic activity sustainable as well as how to develop new opportunities. This is especially important in order for an effort to gain political support, as positive impacts on the quality of life as well as in terms of job creation and revenue need to be demonstrated.

The Rocky Mountain Institute has developed a set of sustainable guidelines that can help formulate holistic sustainable economic development agendas. The guidelines include the following elements³²:

- 1) Use renewable resources no faster than they can be renewed: Natural resources are the chief capital assets of many communities and resource extraction in such communities is often driven by short term return, hence often little or no consideration is given to the long term viability of these resources.

³¹ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 866, 870

³² Michael Kinsley, *Economic Renewal Guide: A Collaborative Process for Sustainable Community Development*, Colorado: Rocky Mountain Institute, (1997): 8

- 2) Use non-renewable resources understanding that someday a renewable substitute will be required. It is therefore necessary to anticipate a shift to new resources and to create a hospitable environment for renewable economic activities.
- 3) Seek ways to strengthen the economy without increasing resource consumption: Focus on adding value to the current output rather than increasing input quantitatively. This implies improving efficiency through innovation and creativity.
- 4) Focus more on getting better and less on getting bigger: Growth in terms of development without expansion.
- 5) Seek development that increases diversity and self-reliance: This type of development is more resilient to economic fluctuations.
- 6) Put waste to work: recycling and re-use.
- 7) Regard quality of life as an essential asset: The quality of life in a community and a strong sense of place nurture residents and workers, making it easier to attract and retain good employees and employers to the area.
- 8) Consider the effects of today's decisions on future generation: Taking into account the cumulative and long-term effects of a series of decisions.
- 9) A democratic approach to decision-making and community involvement should be pursued to ensure that community wide interests are represented and a sense of stewardship fostered.

Incorporating the concept of sustainability into community economic development involves taking these guidelines into consideration when developing community economic development strategies. The following section examines numerous ways in which community economic development objectives, strategies and methods can incorporate the aforementioned sustainable guidelines with the aim of achieving community sustainability.

■ Business Development Strategies³³

Small Business Support

Small local businesses tend to be more committed and loyal to communities and are a good source of job creation. These businesses help in the process of building a sense of community, and help to keep income flowing within the local economy. Support of local enterprise can be strengthened through the formation of business networks and Microenterprise is largely used in areas where there is a significant informal economy in operation to generate self-employment. With regard to agriculture, local farmers can be supported through community land trusts and similar programs such as local production for local consumption

Encouraging New Local Enterprise

Strong support for businesses lays a foundation for attracting and encouraging new enterprise. Networks for the support of new business development can be developed through initiatives such as micro-enterprise, business incubators and creative financing. Community enterprises such as credit unions, are valuable in that they are often able to reach those by-passed by the global economy, building community capacity, relationships and confidence in the process³⁴. Access to credit and capital is vital to new business development.

Adding value to a product or service can also provide new opportunities and create local jobs. For example, instead of simply producing grain and shipping it out, the grain

³³ Lester Brown, We Can Build a Sustainable Economy, *The Futurist*, 30, Maryland: The Word Future Society, (July 1996): 12

³⁴ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

can be processed in the local economy thereby adding value to it whilst creating local jobs, before it is shipped out.

Recruiting Compatible New Business

A carefully nurtured business climate using the methods already mentioned will increase the chances of a healthy economy, which in itself will attract new enterprise. Such a community will not be desperate to attract simply any business regardless of the harm it may cause to the community. It will be in a position to choose to allow in only businesses that are compatible with existing community and environmental values, developing a responsive business climate consisting of responsible businesses. For example, the suitability of enterprises such as casinos in a community is questionable. Communities tend to allow such enterprises into their communities to boost the 'traditional' economy, however the social costs may outweigh the economic benefits, as often these enterprises are solely there to reap profits without contributing to the community. Sustainable communities work towards achieving a position in the economy where they do not have to compromise the quality of life for purely economic benefits, encouraging responsible business practice in terms of human and environmental impact³⁵.

Sustainable practices generally encourage development from within a community as opposed to inward investment. However, inward investment programs can be valuable if used in a balanced and selective manner. Communities should keep in mind that economic activity is a means to the end of sustainable human welfare and not as an end in its own right and hence a 'jobs at any cost' ethos has no place in a sustainable

³⁵ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

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³⁵ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

community³⁶. Consequently, policies and tools appraising the impact of inward investment should be used, evaluating social, environmental and economic impacts.

Environmental Economic Development

Market mechanisms that link economic and environmental priorities need to be developed. This involves capitalizing on economic development opportunities afforded by businesses and industries that target environmental technologies, recycling and pollution prevention. Such opportunities include job creation, services, knowledge and expertise such industries and businesses can bring to a community. Some communities are experimenting with eco-industrial parks in which the waste outputs of one industrial plant are be used to process or produce inputs in another plant next door. The promotion and expansion of low impact tourism and recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, and cross country skiing in parallel with the development of supporting facilities may be methods of developing economically whilst caring for the environment.

All the above activities contribute towards building strong, diversified local economies, whilst providing greater access to employment opportunities. It is not sufficient to address solely the number of jobs available, but also the nature and distribution of jobs within the economy. Work plays a central role in the lives of many people and therefore emphasis should also be placed on stimulating economic activity to provide work opportunities that are fulfilling and contributes to the well being of workers³⁷. Nurturing the business climate using the strategies explained above can improve the quality of jobs available.

³⁶ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

³⁷ *Ibid*

■ **Plugging Leaks in the Economy**

Leakage in the economy refers to paths through which a community's income leaves the local economy. Plugging these leaks represents an economic opportunity, as money that is prevented from leaving can be put back into the local economy. Economic benefit multiplies when income is spent locally and kept circulating in the local economy.

Organizations and individuals often buy goods and services that are non-local, even if they are available locally. In such situations, buy local campaigns or efforts to produce goods and services that are lacking in the local economy may be appropriate strategies. Goods and services that are not produced locally may also offer opportunities for local services and goods to 'piggy back' off them. For example, many communities purchase energy from external sources. A typical community may spend 20% of its gross income on energy, 80% of those dollars will leave the local economy³⁸. It may not be feasible to produce energy locally, but it is possible for local utility and service groups to provide weatherization and energy efficient products and services, which will curb spending on energy. Thus income once spent on purchasing energy from an external source can be spent on the installation of energy efficient systems by local companies, which not only inject income into the local economy but contribute to resource conservation as well. Leak plugging can take place through resource efficiency efforts, buying local, import substitution and a stronger informal economy.

³⁸ Lester Brown, We Can Build a Sustainable Economy, *The Futurist*, 30, Maryland: The Word Future Society, (July 1996): 12

- **Using Local Assets**

Communities should seek to build on their strengths and assets as far as possible and to find marketable niches in which they have natural advantage, rather than engaging solely in activities such as providing tax abatements for developers and other similar incentive programs which do not contribute towards community resources such as the tax base. One of the central features of sustainable community economic development is the emphasis on endogenous development, using local physical and human resources to stimulate locally based economic activity³⁹. Such communities rely less on external investment and the 'trickle down' effect. Instead, they are actively involved in developing alternative industries and new institutions of their own, nurturing new enterprises, and improving the capacity of its employers and workforce to produce better products and services, in order to create healthy and vibrant local economies.

Linking local production to local consumption can also generate wide ranging benefits, such as the reduction in transportation distance of materials and the resulting pollution reduction, the enhancement of the potential for local small-scale enterprises and the development of a sense of local interconnectedness⁴⁰. Hence firms purchasing locally can improve competitiveness and contribute to business development, as well as encouraging the circulation and multiplication of local wealth.

³⁹ Edward J. Blakely, *Planning Local Economic Development - Theory and Practice*, California: SAGE Publications, (1994): 50

⁴⁰ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, *Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization* *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 870

Local skills and assets may not always be obvious and this is one reason the involvement and participation of community members is critical in the process of sustainable community economic development. Wider community participation fosters local attachment as one of the comparative advantages of the sustainable local economic development approach. In the long term this is likely to foster a business environment in which enterprises are embedded within the local economy, rather than liable to move elsewhere as and when global market conditions dictate⁴¹.

■ Demand Management

This is a method of managing resources that involves determining ways of using existing supplies of resources more efficiently rather than simply supplying greater quantities of resources as demand dictates⁴². Demand management is about communities working to add value to existing resources, and developing rather than expanding. For example, car pooling and improving public transportation systems are alternatives to building more and bigger roads. There is much potential to improve access to local work opportunities thereby enabling employees to further tap into local human resources. Local labor schemes which the needs of employers needs with the skills of local people, skills databases, child care provision and public transport linking areas of high unemployment to job opportunities, are all valuable strategies for maximizing the efficient use of resources.

⁴¹ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

⁴² Michael Kinsley, Economic Renewal Guide: A Collaborative Process for Sustainable Community Development, Colorado: Rocky Mountain Institute, (1997): 26

■ Fiscal Policy

Fiscal policy is a powerful instrument for implementing sustainable strategies and may be impacted by community economic development through advocacy. There are many areas in which fiscal policy can help improve or conserve the environment and resources, and influence economic growth (development rather than expansion). Some examples are as follows⁴³:

- Eliminating subsidies for unsustainable practices. For example, fishing fleets are currently subsidized even though the fishing capacity exceeds the sustainable yield of ocean fisheries;
- Instituting a carbon tax to reflect the cost of consumption of fossil fuels. Doing so could not only discourage fuel consumption but also help to push investment in alternative energy sources and research;
- Taxing environmentally destructive activities such as the use of pesticides and cropland conversion to non-farm uses;
- Limiting tax deductions for children to two per couple to help curb population growth;
- Developing incentive based resource conservation programs.

Fiscal efficiency can be attained through more compact, mixed use, land-conserving patterns of development which are generally more efficiently structured for the provision of public services. Through fiscal policy and other strategies mentioned in this section, communities can strive to achieve environmental integrity, which basically means obtaining settlement forms and accommodating growth so as to minimize environmental harm⁴⁴.

⁴³ Lester Brown, We Can Build a Sustainable Economy, *The Futurist*, 30, Maryland: The Word Future Society, (July 1996): 12

⁴⁴ Lee Epstein, Land Growth and the Public Interest, *Public Management*, 79, (July 1997): 9

■ Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation involves collaborative regional planning that transcends jurisdictional and other boundaries. Cooperation can deal with issues such as affordable housing, transportation, land use and economic development. Regional cooperation can serve to plan and develop numerous smaller local sustainable development efforts into movements that have cumulative impacts regionally.

Studies show that the most successful sustainability efforts are those that integrate sustainability into broader regional development strategies⁴⁵. An outstanding example is that of Chattanooga, Tennessee, often called “the sustainable city”, which made sustainability and environmental revitalization an integral part of its regional economic development strategy. Some of Chattanooga’s successes include pollution elimination, riverfront redevelopment into a recreational area, public transit utilizing electric buses that are manufactured locally. The bus production has also become an export industry, creating jobs and wealth in the community.

■ Capacity Building and Training

In order to take advantage of existing opportunities, communities must have the necessary capacity to do so, which requires skills, knowledge, access to supportive institutions and the motivation to act⁴⁶. Educational institutions and community development organizations have a vital role to play in building community capacity, which involves expanding and coordinating public and private training programs to enable all people to improve their skills to match future job requirements. Both formal

⁴⁵ Richard Florida, Tracy Gordon, Bridging the Gap, *Commentary*, (Summer 1999): 13

⁴⁶ Paul Ekins, Les Newby, Sustainable Wealth Creation at the Local Level in an Age of Globalization *Regional Studies*, 32 (9), (December 1998): 871

and non-formal educational methods are valued in developing human resources.

Community service projects, enterprise partnerships and other methods of informal education can help community members develop their skills and knowledge as well as afford them the opportunity to apply what they learn to solve real problems in the community.

■ **Brownfield Redevelopment and Agricultural Land Preservation**

Brownfields represent potentially valuable assets to communities, in terms of property being put back on the tax rolls and on the impact they have on the quality of life of areas in which they are located. Redevelopment of these sites is also an opportunity to prevent further destruction of greenfield sites, such as agricultural land. The restoration of these sites can impact social inequities, particularly in low-income communities by providing tax revenues and job opportunities, and simultaneously contribute to the environmental preservation effort.

Such sites can be made more attractive for development by providing regulatory flexibility, reducing process barriers, and assessing greenfield redevelopment to reflect the necessary infrastructure costs⁴⁷.

Protecting agricultural land is crucial to protect and maintain farm operations and also to curtail sprawl, which represents unsustainable use of land. In many communities farmland is viewed as attractive land for development, particularly residential development. However, development of this nature often times is inefficient and does not advocate the maximum use of existing resources, such as infrastructure. Agricultural land is a resource to be conserved.

⁴⁷ Anna. K. Schwab, David Brown, Sustainable Development: Implementation at the Local Level, *Land Use Law and Zoning Digest*, 49 (4), (April 1997):5

A great deal of common ground has been found between community economic development and the concept of sustainable development, and it is through these commonalities that tools and strategies have been developed and can be further developed to enable communities achieve their community economic development and sustainability objectives simultaneously. Below is a summary of the key areas of linkage between the goals of sustainable development and those of sustainable community economic development⁴⁸:

- The conservation of resources provides benefits for industry, including cost benefits accruing from the efficient use of resources, which in turn contributes towards commercial viability. This represents a realistic approach to natural resource limits and can help protect businesses against future risks.
- Balanced development – strategic economic development planning can counter the tendency for new investments to be located away from economically distressed areas, mitigating the damage that some communities may suffer as a result of excessive development pressure whilst others suffer the trauma of industry closures. Strategic planning should recognize the needs, opportunities and special characteristics of all parts of the country including areas limited by population size and remote location.
- The preservation of environmental quality through reducing or altering manufacturing processes that pollute or degrade the environment may not only generate cost savings but also reduce pollution, which improves the quality of life of residents and workers. Such areas may be more attractive to other business investment.
- Human resource maximization and social equity is crucial in achieving sustainability. Issues that need to be addressed include the causes of unemployment and other lost

⁴⁸ Andrew Blowers, *Planning for a Sustainable Environment*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited, (1993): 131

economic opportunities as well as the damage and waste associated with poverty, affluence and over consumption.

- Community participation – A vital ingredient of sustainable community development. Participation creates a sense of ownership and commitment in the community and in order for the community's needs and assets to be highlighted, representation of the entire community is necessary to bring issues to the attention of governing or organizing agencies.

Understanding the linkages and defining these relationships is key to transforming current economic development strategies to ones that are more sustainable. Numerous similarities exist between community economic development principles and those of sustainable development in terms of community participation and empowerment, quality of life issues and economic efficiency. Hence if a community is practicing good community economic development it need not be a drastic leap to incorporate the concept of sustainability into its planning and development strategies. Maintaining social capital, achieving distributive and procedural justice, and expanding democratic participation and accountability, are all essential components of economic sustainability. Traditionally, the economic focus has largely been on increasing growth rates, however in today's environment the absence of the aforementioned elements will undermine the attainment of a sustainable economy⁴⁹.

The community economic development approach to sustainable development focuses on the need to get economic development into depressed communities, the need to

⁴⁹ Center for Urban Policy Research, *Final Report of the National Science Foundation Workshop on Urban Sustainability - Towards a Comprehensive Geographical Perspective on Urban Sustainability*, New Jersey: Center for Urban Policy Research, (January 2000): 13

protect and improve the environment when pursuing economic development challenges, and wage stagnation and the lack of quality jobs⁵⁰. The concept of sustainability addresses these issues through the values of and linkages between viability, quality and justice.

The strategies outlined and discussed in this chapter should not be seen in isolation to one another or to the field of economic development planning. A supportive framework in terms of policy and infrastructure are also required if sustainability is to be achieved and benefits maximized. A participative, strategic, and integrative approach to community economic development is required to develop communities that are economically sustainable⁵¹.

The preceding literature review has set the stage for Chapter 3, which comprises the analysis section of this study. The importance of sustainable community economic development and the links between the concept of sustainability and community economic development have been identified and explained. Strategies that are helpful and necessary for progression towards sustainable community economic development have been discussed. From the body of information covered in this literature review, a criteria set has been developed for the purposes of evaluating the Comprehensive Economic Strategies of ten Regional Planning Agencies in Michigan. The evaluation will indicate whether or not these Agencies are incorporating the concept of sustainability in community economic development planning processes.

⁵⁰ Benjamin Goldman, *Sustainable America: New Public Policy for the 21st Century*, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (1995):176

⁵¹ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C.: Corporation for Enterprise Development (1999): 16

Chapter 3

Analysis

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology that was used to carry out the analysis of the CEDS documents. Following an explanation of the development of the analysis criteria, a summary of each CEDS report is provided. The summaries focus specifically on the content of the reports that reflect principles of sustainability, and serve to highlight areas of the reports that allude to sustainable economic development practices. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings of the analysis.

Methodology

The first step of this analysis was to develop a set of criteria or indicators by which to assess the CEDS in order to determine the extent of their inclusion of sustainable development principles and practices. The criteria set was derived from an Economic Development Administration document entitled “CEDS Guidelines” and the literature review preceding this chapter. Thus the criteria by which the CEDS are judged by in this study are a combination of principles EDA considers necessary for moving forward sustainably and principles considered critical to the achievement of sustainable economic development by a diverse range of scholars.

CEDS Guidelines

The CEDS Guidelines is a manual intended to assist Planning organizations in the preparation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies by stating EDA’s expectations of the CEDS in order to be granted approval. The guidelines were reviewed

and sections in the document that stipulated the inclusion of principles of sustainability in the CEDS were highlighted. These were found to be as follows⁵²:

- *Broad based and diverse community participation-* The CEDS should include a discussion of community participation in planning efforts and there should be a continuing program of communication and outreach that encourages broad based public engagement, participation and commitment of partners. The CEDS committee should represent all major interests of the community to ensure that viewpoints of all components of the community are considered. Participation of this nature enables communities to take advantage of local skills and resources in program formulation and implementation. EDA' investments will continue to be directed based on strategies resulting from locally controlled participatory planning processes.
- *A holistic focus addressing economic, social and environmental issues as an interrelated system-* "The CEDS should promote sustainable economic development and opportunity, foster effective transportation systems, enhance and protect the environment and balance resources through sound management of development"⁵³. Identification and analysis of areas that affect the local economy should take into consideration the following community information and data: demography, climate, natural resources, environmental data, infrastructure, employment, income, housing, health, education, cultural and recreational facilities,

⁵² U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 1-10

⁵³ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 3

historic preservation, smart growth initiatives, hazardous waste contamination, air quality and wetlands.

- ***Local Initiatives***- Local community economic development initiatives are a required part of the CEDS process. Local initiatives which require little or no dependence on external assistance provide more local control, encourage local commitment and are therefore more sustainable in the long run.

Included in the CEDS Guidelines is a set of criteria listing factors upon which approval of the CEDS by EDA is based on. The following criteria from the aforementioned listing incorporate the concept of sustainability:

- 1) Demonstration that the CEDS process has been followed and that it involves broad participation of the stakeholders in the area's economy. Encouraging participation reflects the desire to foster stewardship as well as to achieve greater social equity.
- 2) Priority consideration of an area's distressed population and the adoption of strategies to reduce stress in these areas. The desire to achieve greater social equity is reflected in this statement.
- 3) The demonstration of local initiative and actions- those that can be undertaken with little or no outside reliance on Federal assistance. Emphasis is placed on self-reliance and actions or projects that are more resilient to economic fluctuations and are therefore more sustainable.
- 4) Demonstration that EDA requirements and Federal regulations will be met particularly civil rights and environmental laws and requirements. An emphasis is placed on affording community members justice and human dignity.

- 5) Identification and analysis of environmentally sensitive sites and issues in a region that would preclude development. Actions should take into account sound principles of sustainable development and smart growth. Natural resource conservation and protection is encouraged and emphasis is placed on strategies having a 'future orientation' and consideration of long term environmental and socioeconomic impacts.

Summary of Principles of Sustainability Discussed in the Literature Review

The following principles are considered prerequisites for sustainable community economic development:

- Resource Conservation
- Growth in terms of development without expansion
- Balanced development
- An emphasis on development that increases self reliance
- Regarding quality of life as an essential asset
- Community participation
- Identifying and using local assets
- Regional cooperation
- Redevelopment and reuse of existing developed land
- Capacity building and training

Analysis Criteria

The aforementioned principles and concepts have been incorporated into the following criteria set that has been developed and used in this study to determine whether the reviewed CEDS reflect a progression towards sustainable community economic development. Therefore the criteria set takes into consideration elements in the CEDS

reports which reflect the extent to which communities' social, economic and environmental agendas are being unified and incorporate elements that are considered necessary prerequisites for community economic development to take place in a sustainable manner.

For purposes of this study, scores were allocated to each of the criterion listed below. A maximum of two points is achievable for each criterion met, and cumulative scores may range from zero to eighteen points. This rating system was used to illustrate the inclusion or ommitance of each of the criterion or principles of sustainability in the CEDS. Consequently, the higher a score a CEDS achieves indicates the observable incorporation of a greater number of principles of sustainability into the strategy.

Criteria Set

1) Mission and goal statements:

The inclusion of “sustainable” language in statements that define or guide the CEDS reflect an intention to incorporate the concept of sustainability into economic development strategies. *(Total: 2 points)*

2) Project prioritization criteria:

In the quest to achieve a community's economic development goals, individual economic development projects listed in each of the CEDS reports are required to be prioritized on a basis of community importance and need. The CEDS guidelines stipulate that high priority projects should be those that represent the best use of limited resources and activities that also take positive economic, environmental and social

impacts into consideration. Such priorities need to be established to provide a basis for decisions on the use of available resources⁵⁴.

From reviewing the CEDS documents it is apparent that each region has its own method or system of prioritization, which can be considered a reflection of the level of importance a community places on sustainable economic development practices.

Therefore an examination of project prioritization criteria will indicate whether the concept of sustainability is taken into consideration in community economic development decisions.

(Total: 2 points)

3) Participation in and support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability:

a) Participation in various forms of research or practice linked to sustainable development (for example, research into the development of eco-industrial parks) is an indication of a community's interest and desire to progress towards sustainable activities.

(Total: 1 point)

b) The use of and investment in information technology innovations such as community geographic information systems (GIS) can contribute towards building local economic development capacity (for example, the building of contaminated site inventory databases and map overlaying functions which help communities visualize the interconnection of resource lands and assist in revealing community preservation

⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines*, Washington D.C: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, (2000): 12

priorities⁵⁵). It must be noted however, that the use of GIS is only valuable if use is made of the data and information these programs enable practitioners to collect. Information collection alone is of little value without the ability to analyze, interpret and use it for purposes such as in the decision-making process and impact assessment. Investing in information technology can also improve the communications capacity of planning grantees and their communities for information exchange both within the EDA system and within the larger economic development field⁵⁶. GIS can also facilitate multi-jurisdictional participation in the planning process. Enhancing community access to data is also key to achieving greater social equity. *(Total: 1 point)*

(Cumulative Total: 2 points)

4) Consideration of social program development and improvement (youth, recreational, mental health and health programs):

Public health advocates, planners and many politicians have come to recognize that health requires more than the absence of disease. Health also depends on security, employment, fulfillment and hope for the future. Hence the concept of healthy communities has largely paralleled the concept of sustainable development⁵⁷ and therefore social programs are an integral part of community sustainability. *(Total: 2 points)*

5) Resource Conservation:

Resource conservation efforts include a diverse range of activities including

⁵⁵ Randall Arendt, Connecting the Dots, *Planning*, 64 (8), (August 1998): 21

⁵⁶ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 47

⁵⁷Jill Grant, Patricia Manuel, Darrell Joudrey, A Framework for Planning Sustainable Residential Landscapes, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 162 (3), (Summer 1996): 340

recycling, brownfield redevelopment, historic preservation, agricultural land preservation, and the re-use of existing developed land and infrastructure. Such activities represent efforts to make the best use out of and to protect limited resources (natural and otherwise). For the purposes of this study, *1 point* will be awarded for recycling and re-use efforts and *1 point* will be awarded for preservation efforts.

(Cumulative Total: 2 points)

6) Citizen/Community Participation in the CEDS process:

Sustainability is a value-laden and context sensitive concept. This makes it critical to seek input on sustainability concerns and priorities from a broad range of stakeholders⁵⁸. In order to implement sustainable practices, planners may require a commitment from community residents to change the way they live and their attitudes, hence commitment to sustainable practices requires an ethic of stewardship and voluntarism at the local level. Residents have the greatest stake in the health of their communities and will accept greater responsibility for the fate of their communities if they are a part of the decision making process⁵⁹.

Community participation in the decision making process not only fosters stewardship but also contributes towards the goal of achieving greater social equity. Under representation of interest groups translates into limited access to policy makers and hence a lack of advocates for certain interest groups such as minorities. Thus the importance of opportunities for community participation in the CEDS process⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ Viginia McLaren, Urban Sustainability Reporting, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 62 (2), (Spring 1996): 188

⁵⁹ Jill Grant, Patricia Manuel, Darrell Joudrey, A Framework for Planning Sustainable Residential Landscapes, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 162 (3), (Summer 1996): 340

⁶⁰ Sandra Rodriguez, Sustainable and Environmentally Just Societies, *Planners Network Online*, 129, (May/June 1998): 2, Available from <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/129/rodriguez.htm>

The diversity of backgrounds community participants involved in the CEDS process have to offer is an indicator of the extent to which the CEDS process represents all interest groups in the community. The CEDS committee formed to oversee the CEDS process should represent all major interests of the community including citizen representation of the following sectors/interest groups:

Local government representation, business, industry, finance, agriculture, organized labor, utilities, education, community organizations, public health agencies, the aged, the disabled, the unemployed, racial minorities, women, and low income (*0.125 points awarded per interest group represented. Cumulative Total: 2 points*)

7) Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resources, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process:

Economic development is essentially about creating the right conditions for entrepreneurship and business growth so that local residents can find jobs and earn a decent living. Public sector organizations cannot create these conditions without adequate private sector participation in the planning and implementation processes. Hence the value added contribution and the active engagement of the private sector should be a central component of strategic planning processes⁶¹.

The non-profit sector is also a major player in local economic development. It includes community corporations, community development financial institutions, microenterprise development organizations and other social and community agencies

⁶¹ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 38

interested in business and workforce development. Many have access to resources and approaches that may be of real benefit to distressed communities. University Centers also provide a range of support and capacity enhancing services to economic planning organizations. Such centers conduct a range of activities including data collection and analysis, surveys, organizational strategic planning, technical training and applied research. In some areas there is a close relationship between university centers and planning grantees. In other areas there is no contact whatsoever. University resources can be valuable partners in the community economic development planning process⁶².

(Total: 2 points)

8) Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts:

Elements of sustainable community business development include activities that nurture the development of businesses that contribute to the well being of the community, its economy and environment. These are as follows:

- Efforts to retain and attract businesses and industries that are compatible and complimentary to the local community's sustainable development goals
- Encouraging the development of businesses and industrial activities that do not negatively impact the environment and that provide quality employment opportunities that are fulfilling and contribute to the well being of the community.
- Encouraging the development of local enterprise is key to a sustainable local economy. Local enterprise is often more committed and loyal to communities than

⁶² Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Strategic Planning for Economic Development*, Washington D.C: Corporation for Enterprise Development, (1999): 38

non-local businesses or industries that can tend to be footloose, seeking locations where they can reap the most benefits with minimum ties to the local community.

Strategies that can help support the development of businesses and industries with the aforementioned characteristics include the establishment of local revolving loan funds, microenterprise, local credit unions, and exploring ways to add value to products or services.

(Cumulative Total: 2 points)

- 9) Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? Do the CEDS address issues of housing, transportation, the environment, regionalism and social equity?

Housing: Community sustainability involves making a wide variety of housing opportunities and choices available for residents. People require safe, clean, efficient and affordable shelter suited to their circumstances. As incomes fail to keep pace with housing costs, problems such as homelessness and poor housing conditions escalate. Efforts need to be made to address these inequities⁶³.

Transportation: Sustainable communities will reduce the use of nonrenewable energy in transportation by encouraging people to walk, cycle and use mass transit. Those who choose to walk cycle or run to work will need safe routes.

The Environment: Sustainable economic development strategies emphasize the protection of environmental quality. The environmental impact (the loss and disruption of the natural environment) of potential development projects should be a vital

⁶³ Jill Grant, Patricia Manuel, Darrell Joudrey, A Framework for Planning Sustainable Residential Landscapes, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 162 (3), (Summer 1996): 342

component for consideration if economic development strategies are to contribute to community sustainability.

Regionalism: Coordination and cooperation of this nature affords communities the opportunity to gain access to multiple resources and to coordinate the impact of programs. Fragmented efforts can be avoided thereby improving efficiency. Regional cooperation can also aid smaller local sustainable development efforts gain momentum and support so that they have larger cumulative region wide or state wide impacts.

Social Equity: Acknowledging the damage and waste associated with poverty, unemployment, affluence and over consumption, and addressing the inequities caused by certain economic development practices is key to the development of sustainable communities.

(0.4 allocated for each element; Cumulative Total: 2 points)

Total Cumulative Score for all listed criteria: 18 points

Table 1: Summary of Criteria Used and Point Allocation in the Comprehensive Economic Development (CEDS) Analysis

<i>SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA</i>	<i>POINT ALLOCATION</i>
Mission and Goal Statements: Inclusion of sustainable language	2 points
Project Prioritization Criteria: Inclusion of elements of sustainability	2 points
Participation in and support for progressive and innovative research or practice aiding the progression towards sustainability: a) Participation in research or practice linked to sustainable development b) Use of and investment in information technology innovations Cumulative Total:	 1 point 1 point 2 points
Consideration of social program development and improvements	2 points
Resource Conservation: a) Recycling and re-use efforts b) Preservation efforts Cumulative Total:	 1 point 1 point 2 points
Citizen/Community participation in the CEDS process	2 points
Involvement of important economic development partners in the CEDS process	2 points
Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts	2 points
Addressing the holistic nature of sustainable development through consideration of the following elements as an integral part of the CEDS: ~ Housing ~ Transportation ~ The Environment ~ Regionalism ~ Social equity Cumulative Total	 0.4 points 0.4 points 0.4 points 0.4 points 0.4 points 2 points
Maximum Achievable Total Score	18 points

Results of the CEDS Analysis

Summaries of the CEDS analysis for each region are attached in Appendix C. The summaries provide a breakdown of the areas in which the examined CEDS scored points for sustainability efforts. A table illustrating the scores achieved in each area can be found on page 46, followed by a bar chart illustrating cumulative scores on page 47, and a map illustrating the geographical location of the regions and cumulative scores on page 48.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Planning Commission achieved the highest score of 17.13 out of a maximum possible 18 points. This was closely followed by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission with a score of 17 points. The average score was 14.33, with three CEDS scoring below average results. The CEDS prepared by the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments achieved the lowest score of 10.08, followed by the Eastern Upper Peninsular Regional Planning and Development Commission with a score of 11.05. It should however, be noted that at the time of this study the Eastern Upper Peninsular Planning and Development CEDS report was still a draft version.

The criteria for which the majority of the regions scored well included the following:

- Use of language alluding to sustainable practice in mission and goal statements. With the exception of the Eastern Upper Peninsular Region, all CEDS incorporated the concept of sustainability in their guiding statements.
- Social program development and improvement within communities was given consideration in the CEDS by all regions with the exception of Northwest Michigan and the Tri-County region.
- All regions involved important economic development partners in the CEDS process.
- Sustainable business development efforts were built into the CEDS, with the exception of the Southwestern Michigan CEDS.

Criteria that differentiated the average and above average scoring CEDS from the lower scoring CEDS were found to be as follows:

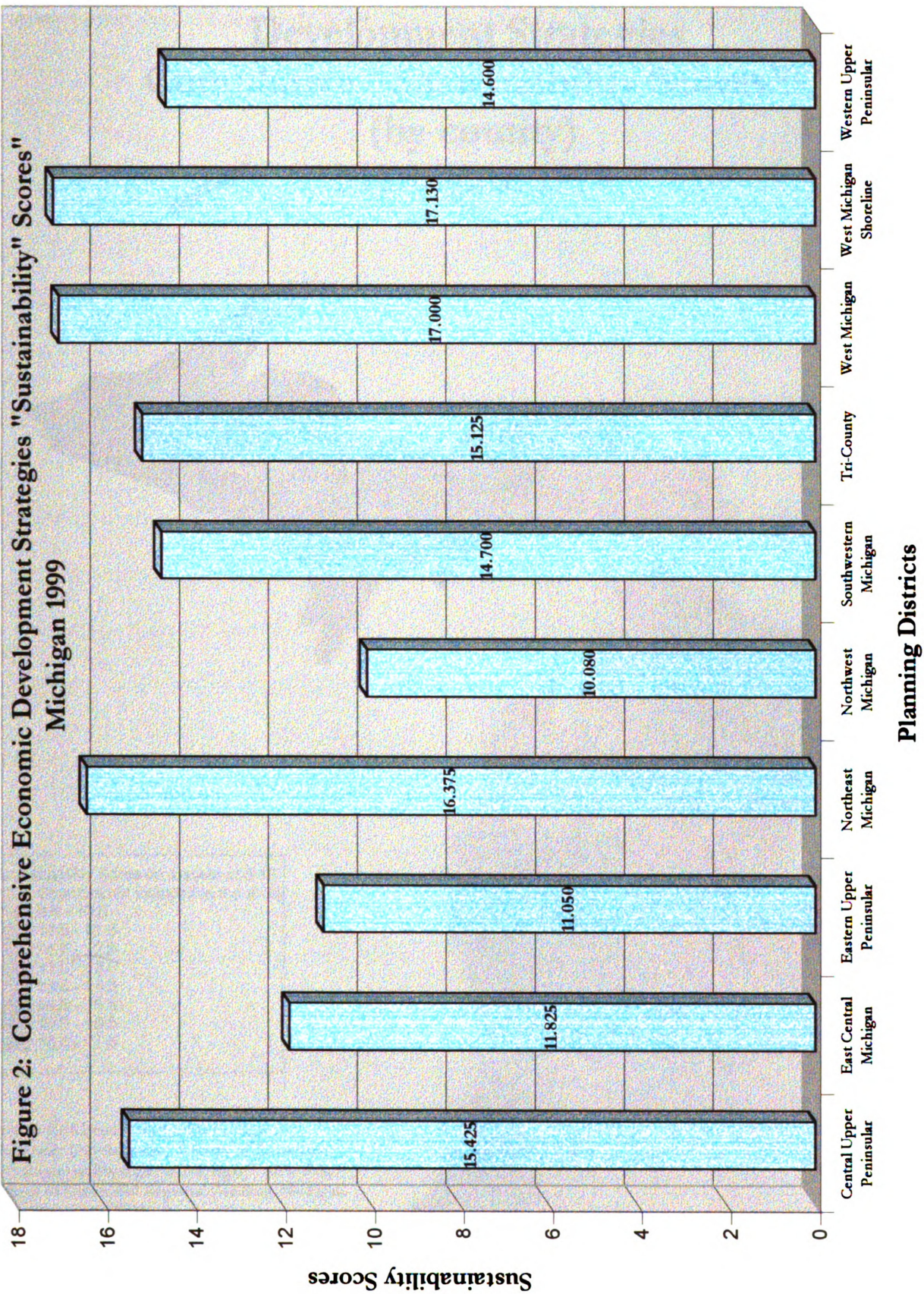
- Inclusion of elements of sustainability in project prioritization criteria.
- Support for progressive or innovative practice or research aiding the progression towards sustainable community development.
- Resource conservation in terms of maximizing the use of existing developed land and infrastructure as well as protecting undeveloped areas and endangered habitats from development.
- Citizen/Community participation in the CEDS process

The criterion that set the average scoring CEDS apart from the higher scoring CEDS was whether the strategies addressed community economic development in a holistic manner, taking into consideration a diverse range of inter-related issues as part of the economic development process (housing, transportation, the environment, regionalism and social equity). Four regions took into account all five of the aforementioned issues as part of their CEDS. Housing, transportation and the environment were addressed by the majority of the CEDS (all the CEDS addressed the environment and eight out of ten addressed housing and transportation), however there was a noticeable decline in the number of CEDS that addressed issues of regionalism and social equity.

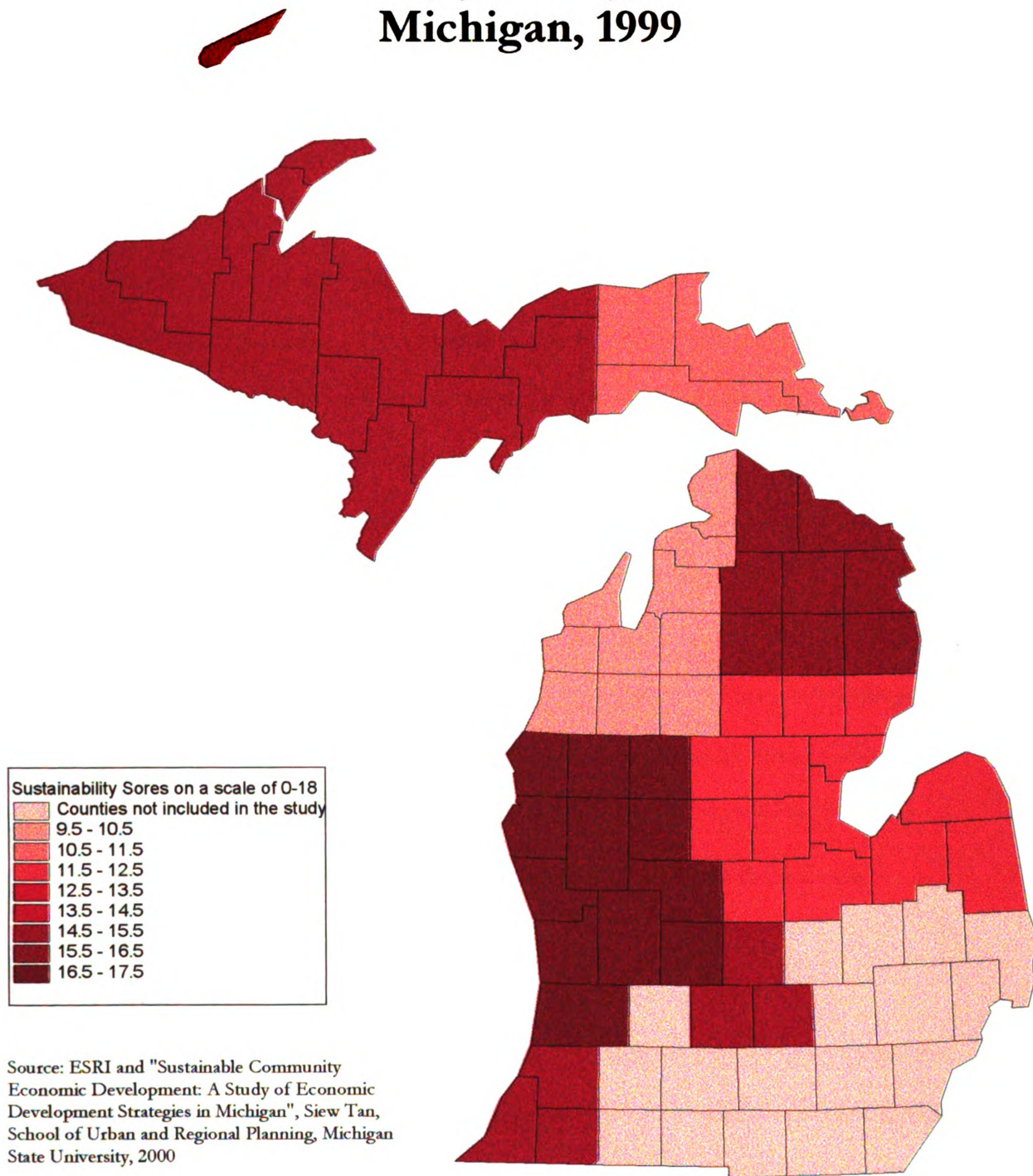
The focus of the CEDS tended to differ depending on local conditions. For example, the West Michigan Shoreline CEDS focussed heavily on environmental protection due to the many natural and vulnerable features such as the shoreline and sand dunes it is endowed with. This is important because in order to be successful, local community specific conditions must be confronted with appropriate strategies. The criteria set used in this analysis was flexible and general enough to allow for this, and so therefore regional focus would not affect or skew the analysis results.

Table 2 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Scores by District

SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA	PLANNING AGENCY West Michigan Shoreline Regional Planning Commission	West Michigan Regional Planning Commission	Northeast Michigan Council of Governments	Central and Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission	Tri-County Regional Planning Commission	Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission	Western Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission	East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission	Eastern Upper Peninsular Regional Planning and Development Commission	Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
Mission and Goal Statements: Inclusion of sustainable language	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2
Project prioritization criteria: Inclusion of elements of sustainability	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	2
Participation and support for progressive and innovative practice or research aiding the progression towards sustainability	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Consideration of social program development and improvements	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	0
Resource Conservation	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Citizen/Community participation in the CEDS process	1.13	1	1.375	0.625	1.25	1.5	1	0.625	1.25	1
Involvement of important economic development partners in the CEDS process	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2
Addressing the holistic nature of sustainable development through	2	2	2	0.8	2	1.5	1.6	1.2	0.8	0.8



**Figure 3: Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategies
Cumulative "Sustainability Scores"
(by county)
Michigan, 1999**



Chapter 4

Implications of the Study's Findings for the Planning Profession

Planning is one of a diverse range of professions that involves managing resources as communities move towards the future, and demands dealing with today's problems and tomorrow's challenges in a simultaneous manner. Reconciling present and future demands involves viewing all forms of development (physical, economic, social) with greater awareness about the conservation of limited resources.

One method of achieving this is to measure economic development strategies and other development strategies against sustainable principles in order to determine whether and how resources can be made better use of. Benchmarking in this manner can help reveal shortcomings of existing economic development strategies. The basis of this study has been to compare current economic development strategies in regions throughout Michigan against a broad set of general principles of sustainable development.

The analysis of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies suggests that systematic action to build and support sustainable community economic development is taking place in Michigan's communities in various ways. The implications of the study's findings for the Planning profession are wide ranging, and for purpose of clarity are discussed below in sections, each dealing with distinct but not unrelated issues.

▪ Holistic Economic Development Planning

An area of concern highlighted by the CEDS analysis, was the lack of a holistic planning approach to the economic development process. A holistic economic development planning process is a key ingredient for achieving sustainable objectives. The generation of revenue and jobs, though essential, does not necessarily move a community closer to

meeting its long term needs. Job quality, quality of life, the equitable distribution of benefits throughout a community, and the environmental impact the industries that are providing jobs and revenue have on a community, are a few of the necessary considerations for making sustainable economic development decisions. Local and regional economic development programs need to attract and nurture businesses that make sense economically, environmentally and socially⁶⁴. Consequently, elements such as transportation, housing, regional integration, social equity, and so forth, need to be taken into consideration in the economic development planning process due to the inextricable linkages between the economy and the environmental and social realms it operates in. It is crucial that planners understand the interaction between areas such as the economy, transportation, health and human services and land regulation and apply this knowledge to the development of the CEDS. Broad based community participation also plays a role in the development of holistic planning practices. A more diversified set of involved interests can help draw attention to a broader range of issues.

▪ Social Equity & Citizen Participation

The results of the CEDS analysis indicate that Social Equity and Citizen Participation were two elements or criteria that distinguished the average and above average scoring CEDS from the below average scoring CEDS. A number of the CEDS failed to address social equity and a number failed to indicate the extent of citizen participation in the CEDS process. This raises concern because a major part of the concept of sustainability is the social realm, which umbrellas issues of equity and citizen participation (please see Appendix B).

⁶⁴ The President's Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainable America*, Available from http://library.whitehouse.gov/PCSD/Publications/TF_Reports/amer-chap4.html

Social equity is usually associated with poverty alleviation, equality of opportunities and citizen participation in local affairs. It implies redistribution of social and economic benefits within and between generations and socio-cultural diversity⁶⁵.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development considers equity ("to ensure that all Americans are afforded justice and have the opportunity to achieve economic, environmental and social well-being") and civic engagement ("to create full opportunity for citizens, businesses and communities to participate in and influence the natural resource, environmental and economic decisions that affect them.") as two of its main goals⁶⁶. This speaks to the importance or value placed on these elements. Different societies, however, have different perceptions of what is equitable, and these social and cultural norms shape the policies adopted to promote equity and the value placed on it. Although there is consensus that extreme inequality of income, wealth or opportunity is unfair, there is little agreement on what constitutes fairness⁶⁷. Complex as it may be, planners amongst other professionals interested in progressing towards sustainable community economic development, need to address this issue as an integral part of economic development strategies for the following reasons⁶⁸:

- Communities progressing towards a sustainable existence should view equity as a worthy goal in itself because of the moral implications and links with fairness and social justice.

⁶⁵ Helen Briassoulis, Sustainable Development and the Informal Sector: An Uneasy Relationship?, *Journal of Environment and Development*, 8 (3), (September 1999):221

⁶⁶ The President's Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainable America*, Available from <http://library.whitehouse.gov/PCSD/Overview>

⁶⁷ Anonymous, Should Equity be a Goal of Economic Policy?, *Finance and Development*, 35 (3), (September 1998): 2

⁶⁸ *Ibid*

- Inequities such as discrimination suffered by certain groups due to their race, gender or ethnic origin reduces their access to services and opportunities in the labor market.
- Policies that promote equity can directly and indirectly help to reduce poverty. More even income distribution can decrease the number of individuals living below the poverty line. Equity-enhancing policies such as investment in human capital can boost economic growth, which in turn can alleviate poverty.

The challenge that planners face therefore, is how to go about increasing social equity while simultaneously conserving resources and protecting the environment. Efforts to redistribute income and wealth through job creation, for example, need to take into account the nature of the jobs and whether desired development or simply growth (expansion) is occurring.

Encouraging public participation is an activity that supports the goal of increasing social equity and is one that planners can play a role in. Many of the CEDS reviewed in this study provided information regarding the ethnicity, gender and professional backgrounds of the CEDS Committee members. In many cases there was participation by individuals with a wide range of professional backgrounds and community interests. Although there was minority participation, in the CEDS where this information was provided, minority representation on the CEDS committees was limited. Therefore steps need to be taken to ensure that historically under-represented groups are more involved in the CEDS process. Strategies including wider dissemination of information and increasing access to information on community issues through internet web sites for example, and holding community visioning sessions can serve to increase levels of participation of targeted groups. Diverse representation and broad based participation is integral to sustainable

community economic development because local government alone cannot accomplish long-term solutions to community problems. Lasting solutions are more effectively developed when individuals and organizations throughout a community are brought together in the spirit of cooperation to identify community problems and solutions⁶⁹. Planners can work towards encouraging communities to work together, promoting long term holistic solutions to community problems.

▪ Regionalism

A regional approach to community economic development was a perspective identified as lacking in a number of the CEDS. Air, water, energy, species and other natural phenomena transcend local political borders. These shared ecosystems, the spillover effects of actions by individual jurisdictions and the significant size of regional economies, warrants regional coordination. Social and economic inequities are also reasons to pursue regional level solutions in order to narrow these disparities. Expanding political boundaries may enable easier redistribution of resources from areas of plenty to areas of need⁷⁰.

Regionalism provides numerous benefits including greater community stability and equity. Reforms in areas such as fair housing, reinvestment, tax base sharing, land use planning, welfare, public works and transportation, can provide for balanced, economical and environmentally conscious growth if approached from a coordinated, regional perspective⁷¹. Planning of this nature maintains a forum for exploring and resolving intergovernmental issues and also provides the opportunity for the articulation of local

⁶⁹ The President's Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainable America*, Available from http://library.whitehouse.gov/PCSD/Publications/TF_Reports/amer-chap4.html

⁷⁰ Kathryn Foster, Regional Impulses, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 19 (4), (1997):376

⁷¹ Myron Orfield, *Metro Politics – A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, (1997): 12

interests and perspectives to other levels of government⁷². Individual efforts on the other hand, may be impeded by a lack of access to adequate financing for new initiatives and it is often difficult solving challenges that are shared due to multiple jurisdictional boundaries and fragmentation⁷³.

Planners have an important role to play by forging vital partnerships that transcend political boundaries and jurisdictional divides. They can support and encourage a progression towards regional planning by demonstrating the case for regionalism through educating communities of the benefits cooperation of this nature has to offer as opposed to competing for resources and power. The use of graphics and mapping techniques, building broad and inclusive coalitions within communities in support of regional efforts, and gaining the support of reform groups, churches, philanthropists and business leaders are activities and strategies planners can engage in to further an agenda for the adoption of regional planning practices. Once again, the literature emphasizes the importance of engaging communities in the process of regional collaboration. Collaboration is effective if relationships are built across diverse and disparate interests including government agencies, foundations, public interest coalitions, business leaders, civic leaders and elected officials. Planners should always be aware of and recognize the importance of building processes from within communities⁷⁴.

⁷² Myron Orfield, *Metro Politics – A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, (1997): 12

⁷³ The President's Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainable America: A New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity and a Healthy Environment for the Future*, Washington. D.C: PCSD, (1996):69

⁷⁴ The President's Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainable America: A New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity and a Healthy Environment for the Future*, Washington. D.C: PCSD, (1996):69

- **Project Prioritization:**

The CEDS analysis indicated that a number of sustainability scores were negatively impacted by CEDS not taking sustainable principles into consideration when prioritizing projects. Project prioritization is key to strategic planning of this nature, as resources are limited. Achieving sustainable economic development is less likely when principles of sustainability are not incorporated into development decisions as it is highly probable that decisions will be made based purely on economics, thereby overlooking social and environmental implications.

Project prioritization for sustainable community economic development takes into consideration the less measurable goals in criteria for success or desirability, for example goals that have to do with quality of life. Instead of prioritizing projects based on the extent unemployment is reduced, project prioritization for sustainable community economic development takes into consideration the quality of employment provided by potential projects. Both processes as well as outcomes would be evaluated and not just outcomes alone. It is important for planners to keep this in mind during any decision making process in the pursuit of sustainable practices. Once again, holistic thinking is crucial to the planning process.

- **Technical Assistance**

The regional planning agencies involved in the CEDS process are involved in providing technical assistance to their constituent communities, and in many cases are using information technology to assist with community development. Attempts to improve Geographic Information Systems capabilities in support of sustainable land use and

community reinvestment are being made in many communities. This information collection and provision role is vital, as information is an indispensable tool for making credible cases for action to decision makers and the public, selecting sustainable development strategies, and evaluating progress towards sustainability⁷⁵. However, planners must keep in mind that information alone is not enough. Networks need to be built in order to connect individuals and institutions within communities so as to enable them to access and share the existing information. Therefore efforts to provide information should not simply revolve around information collection and acquiring technology, but should also focus on information dissemination and improving accessibility to information, making it more user-friendly.

Information and technological capacity building strategies should pay particular attention to low income and rural communities that are traditionally excluded due to a lack of infrastructure and resources. Additionally, planners themselves require ongoing training to enable them to make maximum use of information systems and technology such as GIS.

▪ Planners' Education and Training

Education, whether it is formal or informal in nature, is one of the most effective means that society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future. Education is a vital part of efforts to imagine and create new relations among people and to foster greater respect for the needs of the environment⁷⁶. Planners' education can influence the issues planners advocate in communities and can also influence skill levels in terms of leadership, mediation, and general interaction with the public and clients. What planners are taught in

⁷⁵ Presidents Council on Sustainable Development. *Towards a Sustainable America: Advancing Prosperity, Opportunity, and a Healthy Environment for the 21st Century*, Washington D.C: PCSD, (1999): 66

⁷⁶ Anonymous, Coming to terms with sustainability, *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy*, 14 (4), (Winter 1999): 12

planning school depends on the nature of planning programs, how progressive programs are, and the areas they deem important or have expertise in.

The concept of sustainability is moving planners towards rethinking development strategies, to abandon unsustainable development practices, replacing them with practices that invest in the future and not only the present. Planning programs need to place great emphasis on this and seek to provide an education and training that produces progressive thinkers who understand all areas of planning.

Planning is unusual in that it is both a physical and social science and it is often difficult to juggle the multiple interests involved. Consequently compartmentalization often occurs with specialization in areas such as economic development, environment, transportation or policy. In order to be able to formulate sustainable strategies and policies, holistic thinking is necessary and in this respect, too much compartmentalization can be counter-productive. An understanding of all areas is critical and should be incorporated as core courses rather than specializations⁷⁷.

Socialization outside of the classroom and increasing opportunities for interactive education is an area that may be improved upon in planning education. Interactive education in planning, such as field research, internships and consulting work, provides experience of multidisciplinary and holistic approaches to human problems as well as issue orientation. This can help produce planners who are able to reconcile differences within and among different interest groups, encourage community participation and who can effectively articulate between knowledge and action, theory and the real world⁷⁸. Few planning programs, however, require internships or similar interactive education. The Association of

⁷⁷ Hooshang Amirahmadi, *Emerging Trends and the Quest for Universalism in Planning Education and Research: Towards an Interactive Pedagogy*, New Jersey: Center for Urban Policy Research, (1990): 23

⁷⁸ *Ibid*

Collegiate Schools of Planning Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning 1996, reported that only 30 out of 93 masters programs (32%), include internships. A review of accreditation materials for years 1992-1995 for 35 graduate programs explaining how they help students apply knowledge in practice, revealed that only eight programs mentioned internships. Only eleven programs require students to gain some work experience and only five of these gave credit for internships⁷⁹. Hence this is an area of planning education where improvements can be made. A useful technique for the provision of work experience as part of planning programs is to link neighborhood projects to areas of academic research in order to serve mutual interests of communities, researchers and students. Students have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and experience applying their knowledge to real-world situations and neighborhood projects are fulfilled⁸⁰. Projects of this nature also help create links and useful networks between local communities and educational institutions which can help build social capacity as well as a sense of community, all ingredients for sustainable community development.

The EDA's Role in Sustainable Economic Development Planning

The Economic Development Administration seeks to generate jobs and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed regions of the United States. Capacity building is the principle that guides the EDA's efforts, which aim to empower communities to develop and improve their own economic development and revitalization strategies and therefore developing capacity for communities to help themselves in the long run. The EDA works in partnership with the state, local governments, regional economic

⁷⁹ Howell S. Baum, Teaching Practice, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 17 (1), (Fall 1997): 182

⁸⁰ *Ibid*

development districts, Indian tribes, public, private and non-profit organizations, in capacity building efforts and enabling communities to develop their own CEDS is an illustration of these intentions.

The EDA goals and objectives focus on employment stimulation and private investment in economically distressed areas. EDA performance measures include consideration of the following:

- job creation and retention;
- private sector investment;
- increased tax base;
- local planning and community participation;
- partnerships with state and regional development organizations.

The performance measures listed above are integrated into many of the CEDS project prioritization criteria. The goals, objectives, and performance measures do incorporate principles of sustainability in terms of community participation and collaboration. However, the language used does appear to be very outcome oriented, as nothing speaks of the processes such as job quality, the attraction and retention of sustainability-conscious industry and businesses, and development as opposed to growth. In these respects, it appears that it is left up to the discretion of the district as to whether or not sustainable practices are adopted. EDA performance measures do not pay sufficient attention to qualitative measures, and this is reflected in the CEDS analysis results.

In order to provide better guidance towards sustainable economic development, the performance measures used to determine project funding need to be more integrating in the sense that they should attempt to evaluate the existence of not just economics, but sustainable economic, environmental and social dimensions of projects. The EDA's

guidelines for the preparation of the CEDS calls for consideration of whether proposed activities represent the best use of limited resources and the consideration of social, environmental as well as economic impacts. However, not all the CEDS reflect this, yet received approval. This indicates an inconsistency between the requirements stated in the guidelines and the material in the CEDS that is approved. Inconsistency of this nature can be confusing and may give out mixed signals about requirements and how closely requirements need to be followed to gain approval. Thus, there is potential for the EDA to demand more of the regions in terms of sustainable practice as far as the development of CEDS is concerned, by enforcing stricter standards for CEDS approval in terms of adherence to requirements.

A further area that could be influenced by the EDA is encouraging links between regional strategies. Cooperation between regions in support of common initiatives, as an EDA requirement of the CEDS, could be an effective method of enforcing more consistent and cohesive planning practices. CEDS have to be approved by the state and the EDA as a condition of designation and requirements of this nature could potentially be a method of encouraging or enforcing regional cooperation.

Planners can play the roles of educators, organizers as well as technicians. They can use the information they command and their political literacy to ask key questions publicly, command and organize attention and raise key issues with respect to the future of their communities and their people⁸¹. Planners will not always be able to represent and balance, social, economic and environmental interests simultaneously due to constraining

⁸¹ Norman Krumholz, Equitable Approaches to Local Economic Development, *Policy Studies Journal*, 27 (1), (1999): 93

professional allegiances, skills and bureaucracies of the profession and the complicated inter-related nature of the issues at hand⁸². In such situations, planners may need to identify their specific roles and loyalties and play a role of mediator or advocate of visions of sustainable economic development. The profession can make a valuable contribution to encouraging collaboration for building consensus, problem resolution and the development of solutions. The skill sets and knowledge planners possess can enable them to exercise creativity in building coalitions between separated interest groups such as labor and environmentalists or community groups and businesses⁸³.

Progressing towards sustainable economic development requires planners to be able to integrate social theory with environmental thinking and to combine their substantive skills with techniques for community mediation and conflict resolution⁸⁴. Knowledge and awareness of policy is crucial in the profession as the development and implementation of policy needs to be geared towards maintaining or restoring the biological and physical functioning of landscapes whilst taking into consideration social and economic impacts. Knowledge of policy also provides planners with the ability to help shape local policies that build on state or regional policies that enhance societal protection of the environment⁸⁵. It is also important to be able to pinpoint policy that may be working against sustainable development practices.

In an ideal world a planner could strive to achieve a balance of all three goals of growing the economy, distributing the growth fairly and in this process, not degrading the

⁸² Scott Campbell, Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities? Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 62, (Summer 1996): 311

⁸³ Scott Campbell, Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities? Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 62, (Summer 1996): 311

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁸⁵ Scott Campbell, Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities? Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 62, (Summer 1996): 337

eco-system. It is recognized that in practice however, professional and fiscal constraints drastically limit the leeway of most planners. In summary, the implications of this study for planners are that in order to continue with the progression towards sustainable community economic development, conflict resolution and management along with the development and promotion of creative, technical, and institutional solutions to improve planning processes in the areas of citizen participation, social equity, regionalism, technical assistance and project prioritization are necessary.

Conclusion

This study has sought to examine and to provide an understanding of the relationship between the practice of economic development planning and the concept of sustainability. The concept of sustainability is a broad one that spans a wide range of fields from environmental science to business, to urban planning and community development. This study focused on sustainability in relation to economic development and explored the links that exist and the importance of sustainable economic development for communities. Having explored this, a review and analysis of economic development strategies of ten planning districts in Michigan were conducted for the purpose of determining the presence or ommitance of elements or practices that indicated a progression towards a process of sustainable economic development in these communities.

The main contributions of the study have been to highlight the importance of sustainable community economic development for today's communities and also to identify areas or facets of sustainable economic development in which Comprehensive Development Strategies (CEDS), developed by regional planning agencies in Michigan, are falling short of accomplishing. It is important to note that this study only seeks to determine the presence of sustainable criteria in the CEDS and not to evaluate their importance or impact on community sustainability. This study may also serve to highlight the different approaches to sustainable community economic development that similar communities use and information exchange of this nature can initiate collaboration and progress.

Sustainability is a dynamic condition which requires a basic understanding of the connections and interdependency among ecological, economic and social systems⁸⁶. The

⁸⁶ The Sustainability Education Center available from <http://www.globaled.org/sustain/sustain.html>

concept of sustainability seeks the condition of human security for all people and calls for a dynamic balance among social, cultural and economic requirements. This involves rethinking environmental, economic and social issues and taking into consideration their inter-relatedness. Environmental challenges are often intimately bound with decisions about economic priorities and patterns of social exclusion and inclusion.

Sustainable economic development refers to the continuing ability of an economy to maintain economic and social well-being. Both economic and social well-being also depend upon the continuing well-being and ability of the environment to provide the necessary inputs to the economy to allow it to function. In order to progress towards the development of sustainable economies, communities need to be guided towards making the most efficient use of resources and simultaneously improving economic opportunity and the quality of life for all. Sustainable economic development goes beyond stimulating wealth creating activity and strives to build a sense of community ownership and awareness that residents belong to a local economy which is extremely important to the welfare and quality of life of their locality. Participatory processes are vital to the process, as are efforts to attract quality jobs and environmentally and socially responsible industries and businesses.

Numerous strategies and activities exist that can be pursued by planners to build sustainable economies. These include, business development strategies, plugging leaks in local economies, using local assets, demand management, fiscal policy, regional cooperation, and more. The critical factor is balancing social, environmental and economic concerns and interests so that benefits in one area do not come at the detriment of another. A review of the CEDS indicate these strategies are being used in numerous communities. The CEDS analysis, using a criteria set comprising a broad range of sustainable principles, revealed that

sustainable elements are being incorporated into economic development strategies. There was evidence that the majority of the CEDS included sustainable language in mission statements, addressed social programming, collaborated with economic development partners, and built sustainable business strategies into the overall economic development strategies. A number of the CEDS fell short of addressing various sustainable principles included in the criteria set. These areas included the following:

- Support for or participation in progressive or innovative practice or research aiding the progression towards sustainable community development.
- Inclusion of elements of sustainability in project prioritization criteria
- Resource conservation
- Diverse community participation
- Addressing community economic development in a holistic manner

It was the inclusion of the above criteria that distinguished the higher scoring CEDS from the lower scoring CEDS. Thus it was deduced that the aforementioned areas needed attention in terms of actions planners could take to address the existing shortcomings. Also discussed was the role of the EDA in supporting sustainable economic development. The EDA does encourage sustainable economic development, however, there is potential for stricter enforcement of the CEDS guidelines.

The quest for sustainable development is the quest for the simultaneous satisfaction of environmental protection, economic efficiency and social equity. Social, economic and environmental attitudes in communities must change in order to accommodate sustainable thinking and development. The role of planners is to facilitate and encourage this change and to help guide the practice of community economic development towards integrating the values of cultural and social capacity and the environment in development strategies as

opposed to focusing solely on monetary achievement as an indicator of economic success. The recommendations made in this study have been concerned with practice in community economic development that planners can influence. Areas in which planners can make an impact through the use of their professional skills and knowledge have been identified and the importance of effecting change in those areas has been discussed.

This study may be used as a basis for further studies with regard to sustainable economic development practice in Michigan's communities. Now that it has been determined which CEDS incorporate the greatest range of elements of sustainability, a follow-up study evaluating sustainable practices in these communities could identify best practices and highlight the impacts of specific community economic development strategies in the regions. Additionally, it would be of interest to carry out a comparison between the Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) process and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy process of the ten economic development districts to determine whether the EDA reforms made to the OEDP process has made a difference in terms of the incorporation of sustainable principles in the economic development planning process. A study of this nature would reveal whether and to what extent the revamped EDA processes (as far as the economic development districts are concerned) are improving support for sustainable economic development. A further related study would be to examine the institutional rules and relationships within the agencies that produced the lower scoring CEDS in this study, to determine ways in which they need to change in order to facilitate transition towards greater sustainability.

Sustainability is a large and ambitious concept but is valuable in that it brings together many different environmental concerns under one overarching value. It is a

unifying concept which helps define social, economic and environmental priorities, and encourages planners to progress towards a long term planning goal of a social-environmental system in balance⁸⁷.

⁸⁷ Scott Campbell, Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities? Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 62, (Summer 1996): 302

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Appendix A

Contact Information for Economic Development Districts

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2415 14th Avenue, South Escanaba, Michigan 49829
Phone: 906/786-9234
Fax: 906/786-4442

East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission
3535 State Street, Saginaw, Michigan 48602-3261
Phone: 517/752-0800
Fax: 517/797-0896

Eastern Upper Peninsular Regional Planning and Development Commission
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Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission
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Tri County Regional Planning Commission
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West Michigan Regional Planning Commission
820 Monroe Northwest, Suite 214, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
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West Michigan Shoreline Regional Planning Commission

137 Muskegon Mall, P.O.Box 387, Muskegon, Michigan 49443-0387

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Western Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission

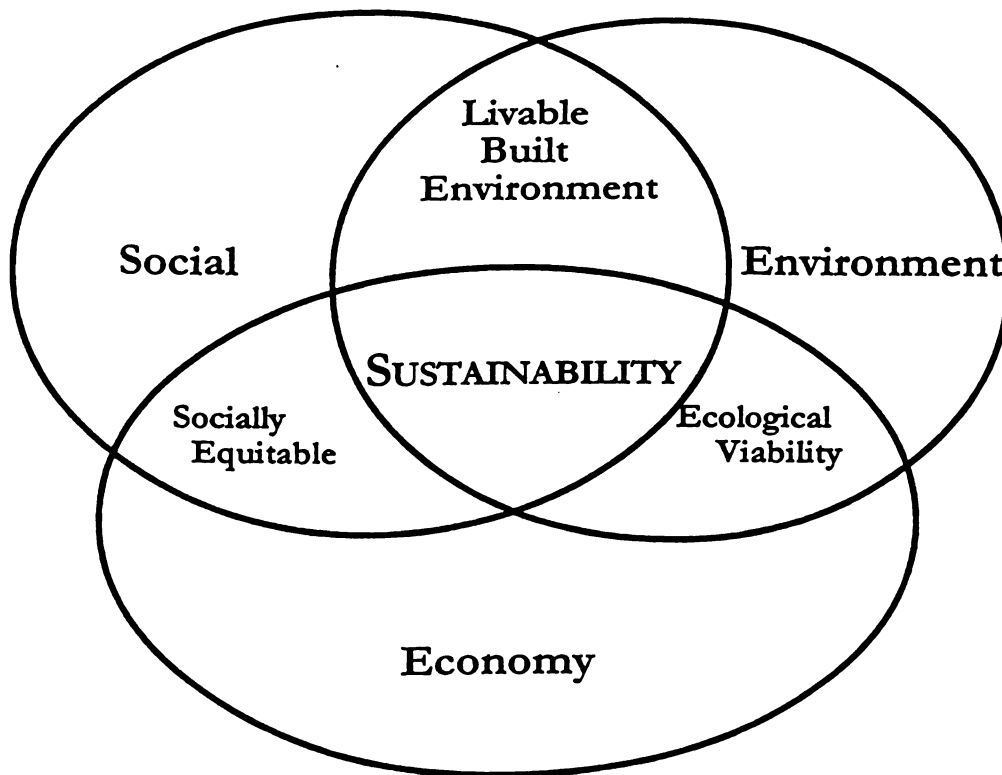
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APPENDIX B

A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES



An illustration of the inter relatedness of the three spheres of human activity - the economy, environment and social spheres. Achieving a sustainable outcome requires attention to all three areas.

Source: adapted from - Hancock, Trevor. "Healthy Sustainable Communities: Concept, Fledgling Practice, and Implications for Governance." in Roseland, Mark ed. (1997) *Eco-City Dimensions: Healthy Community, Healthy Planet*. New Haven CT. New Society Publishers.

Appendix C

Summaries of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Reviews for Sustainability Criteria by Economic Development District (arranged in alphabetical order).

- **Central Upper Peninsular**
- **East Central Michigan**
- **Eastern Upper Peninsular**
- **Northeast Michigan**
- **Northwest Michigan**
- **Southwestern Michigan**
- **Tri County**
- **West Michigan**
- **West Michigan Shoreline**
- **Western Upper Peninsular**

Central Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements: 2 points**
 - “Encourage development which is consistent with the ability of the environment to support it and which is adequately supported by local infrastructure”
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 2 points**
 - Project location - location in areas where average annual unemployment rates are high in comparison to state average and in areas where per capita income is low
 - Availability of existing infrastructure and utilizing existing vacant buildings and sites
- 3) **Participation in progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - A study of the Pulp and Paper industry (a joint study with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission in Wisconsin) including an analysis of the degree to which various plants are linked to local communities and ways to strengthen those links in order to help reduce the likelihood of mill closure. The study will help identify mills and communities that are overly dependent on this industry sector.
 - Building capacity through the use of Information technology systems. Computerized databases are being expanded to better utilize GIS for community and economic development projects.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement): 2 points**
 - Recreation plans are in place and being further developed
 - Health services expansion
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 2 points**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield redevelopment efforts: A Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) has been established in Negaunee Township and a brownfield plan adopted. Assistance is provided for the establishment of BRAs and the preparation of brownfield redevelopment plans.
 - Industrial park development within urban and secondary centers where adequate existing infrastructure is available.
 - The reuse of previously developed vacant sites for industrial and commercial use is encouraged.
 - Preservation efforts: Preservation of ‘wild and scenic’ rivers, sand dune areas, and endangered and threatened species.

6) Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 0.625 points

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Not indicated
Agriculture:	Not indicated
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Not indicated
Education:	Not indicated
Community Organizations:	Not indicated
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Yes
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

The report does not specify or provide details of the interest groups represented on the CEDS committee, but does however indicate private and public sector participation.

7) Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points

- Upper Peninsula Travel and Recreation Association, U.P. Economic Developers, workforce development boards, economic development alliances.

8) Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points

- An allied business development center, 1st Step Inc. provides assistance to local businesses in obtaining finance and business retention and attraction efforts and assistance and support in the establishment of female owned businesses.
- Encouraging the maintenance of local revolving loan funds and keeping revolving loan funds active and available as an economic development tool.
- Economic diversification
- Encouragement of public and private sector cooperation
- The production of value added products (within the wood and pulp industry other products such as flooring, veneer and standboard are produced) within the local economy.

9) Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 0.8 points

- **Housing-** Involvement in the administration of loan programs for housing rehabilitation and assistance with neighborhood housing preservation efforts
- **Transportation-** /
- **The Environment-** Environmental efforts are considered vital components of economic development planning. Economic development projects must be

consistent with the state coastal management program and environmental protection regulations are enforced to protect critical dune areas, endangered or threatened species, natural resources, wildlife and wetlands from inappropriate development.

- Regionalism- /
- Social equity- /

Total Score: 15.425

Eastern Upper Peninsular Regional Planning and Development Commission (Draft CEDS Report)

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements:** 0 points
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria:** 0 points
- 3) **Participation in progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability:** 1 point
 - Participation of Luce County and St. Ignace in the Communities Income and Expenditures Model project which surveys and analyzes income and expenditure in the community. Efforts will help strategic planning for businesses, government agencies and service organizations in terms of identifying how leakage in the local economy can be "plugged". Keeping a community's income circulating within the local economy can help make it more resilient to economic fluctuations and therefore more sustainable.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement):** 2 points
 - Development of a health center in the Bay Mills Indian Community
 - Improvement of recreational facilities
- 5) **Resource Conservation:** 2 points
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield redevelopment efforts: Plans to form a county wide Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Current redevelopment efforts are in progress.
 - The redevelopment and re-use of existing sites for new industries
 - Preservation efforts: Historic preservation encouraged
- 6) **Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process:** 1.25 points

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Yes
Agriculture:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Yes
Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Not indicated
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Yes
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Yes

- 7) **Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points**
- Workforce development board, Department of Natural Resources
- 8) **Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points**
- East Central Michigan Revolving Loan Fund
 - Pursuit of economic diversification
 - Pursuit of value-adding activities
 - Workforce development efforts strongly encouraged in terms of retraining and on the job training
- 9) **Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 1.2 points**
- **Housing-** Support for affordable housing development and improvement of the existing housing stock
 - **Transportation-** Emphasis on transporting goods using environmentally sound modes of transportation
 - **The Environment-** Support for the development of environmentally sound alternatives for solid waste disposal
 - **Regionalism-** /
 - **Social equity-** /

Total Score: 11.825 points

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements: 2 points**
 - “To provide assistance for entrepreneurial ventures that will encourage a sustainable economy”
 - “Creation of permanent employment and higher wage opportunities while employing environmentally sound management practices and retaining quality of life”
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 2 points**
 - Project location - location in areas of high unemployment and economic distress
 - Project inclusion as part of a region-wide program
 - Impact of projects on enhancing the quality of life in North East Michigan
 - Developments use the region’s natural resources wisely and prudently.
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - Support for the development of eco-industrial parks that utilize waste heat produced by industries. Feasibility studies and construction of these projects are in progress.
 - Encourage access to advanced telecommunications networks and infrastructure in order to foster economic development.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement): 2 points**
 - Improvement of recreational opportunities
 - Support improvements and expansion of health and medical facilities
 - Continual improvement of public facilities
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 1 point**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield Redevelopment – The remediation of abandoned industrial and commercial sites for appropriate re-use is in progress.
 - Encouraging the expansion of value added sustainable manufacturing practices.
 - Promote resource recycling
 - Preservation efforts: /

6) Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 1.375 points

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Yes
Agriculture:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Yes
Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Yes
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Yes
Racial minorities:	Yes
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

7) Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points

- Northeast Michigan Inter-Agency Forum, local community colleges, Department of Natural Resources, Chambers of Commerce

8) Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points

- Establishment of a Revolving Loan Fund to help small businesses in the Presque Isle and Rogers City area.
- A focus on credit and educational needs of small and start up businesses
- Emphasis on economic diversification and the expansion of value added opportunities
- Support of training and workforce development efforts
- Focus on endogenous growth economic

9) Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 2 points

- **Housing-** Advocate issues of affordable housing
- **Transportation-** Encouragement of alternative transport projects and regional transportation services
 - Focus on maintaining and improving public transportation services and promoting the bus systems
 - Advocate improvements to other modes of transportation, for example, the provision of bicycle paths and rail use.
- **The Environment-** Use of controlled development practices in an environmentally sensitive manner.

- **Regionalism-** Coordination of economic development projects with goals of other region wide programs.
- **Social equity-** capacity building of economically distressed communities.

Total Score: 16.375 points

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements: 2 points**
 - “Accomplish economic development goals in a manner protective of the region’s environmental quality”
 - “Planning appropriate growth while maintaining natural resources”
- 2) **Project Prioritization Criteria: 2 points**
 - Availability of existing infrastructure to support development at project sites
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 1 point**
 - Information technology in the form of GIS is used to better identify environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, critical wildlife habitat, highly erodible soils and prime agricultural lands.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement: 0 points**
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 2 points**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Encouraging the best use of existing infrastructure
 - Encouragement of brownfield redevelopment
 - Preservation efforts:
 - Emphasis on the protection of wildlife habitats, ecosystems and natural resources such as water, wetlands, agricultural lands and forests.
 - New developments should incorporate designs to preserve existing trees and vegetation, to reduce the numbers of driveways and to cluster buildings so as to preserve open space and natural areas
- 6) **Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 1 point**

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Not indicated
Agriculture:	Not indicated
Organized Labor:	Yes
Utilities:	Not indicated
Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Yes
Public Health Agencies:	Yes
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Not indicated
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

- 7) **Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points**
- Multi-county economic development organizations, non-profit groups, private developers, the Work Force Development Board, Northwestern Michigan College, and Chambers of Commerce.
- 8) **Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points**
- An emphasis on workforce development efforts
 - Capitalization and administration of local financing programs
- 9) **Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 0.8 points**
- **Housing-** /
 - **Transportation-** An emphasis on alternative transportation systems and encouraging the best use of existing transportation networks. A Regional Ride system (a six county transit system) helps overcome workplace location barriers.
 - **The Environment-** A strong emphasis on pollution prevention – a prevention is better than cure approach is taken.
 - **Regionalism-** Inter-jurisdictional cooperation is encouraged with regard to development approaches in order to promote consistent development standards.
 - **Social equity-** /

Total Score: 10.08

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statement: 2 points**
 - “Promotion of environmentally sound development that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure”
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 2 points**
 - Project location- A focus on areas of high unemployment rates and providing jobs for residents of nearby areas of high economic distress.
 - Project impact- Benefits provided by projects should focus on long term unemployed members of low-income families and encourage the retention and expansion of minority business.
 - Projects should encourage the revitalization of existing structures and facilities and central business districts.
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - Strong emphasis is placed on building local economic development capacity via information networks. The MI SiteNet, a database of vacant industrial sites for the region is continually being updated and improved.
 - Awarding successes: A Regional Excellence Awards program encourages regional cooperation for the Tri-County Region.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement: 0 points**
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 2 points**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield Redevelopment- The redevelopment and revitalization of brownfields and existing structures and facilities is encouraged and supported
 - Preservation efforts:
 - Protection of historic sites
- 6) **Citizen/ community participation in the CEDS process: 1.125 points**

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Yes
Agriculture:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Yes
Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Yes
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Not indicated

The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Not indicated
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

Monthly meetings are announced and public participation invited, encouraged and provided for in the CEDS process. Suggestions, ideas and opinions of a broad range of residents are integrated into the planning activities.

- 7) **Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points**
 - University Center at Michigan State University
- 8) **Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points**
 - Diversification of the regional and local economies.
 - Targeting the attraction of complementary industries and business
 - Matching workforce development efforts to industry need.
 - Enhancing the regions public/private cooperation
 - Promoting the attraction and retention of environmentally responsible and ecologically sound industries and businesses.
- 9) **Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 2 points**
 - **Housing and Transportation-** “The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission involvement in diverse activities including economic development, transportation, housing, environment, and natural resources, enhances the capacity to serve the area by addressing issues of regional significance. The regional economic development planning process is integrated with transportation and environmental planning issues.”¹
 - **The Environment-** Emphasis on the protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge zones, agricultural land, historic sites, natural areas and open spaces.
 - **Regionalism-** A strong emphasis on regional cooperation and the coordination of regional efforts for economic development.
 - **Social equity-** although unemployment figures are currently low, uneven development and the existence of pockets of poverty is addressed by the CEDS.

Total: 15.125

¹ Tri County Regional planning Commission CEDS p ?

West Michigan Regional Planning Commission

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements: 2 points**
 - Promotion of a “holistic, sustainable approach to community and economic development throughout Region 8. Growth and economic development decisions should lead to the balanced use of land, protection of natural resources and local aesthetic characteristics and an enhanced quality of life for local residents. Goals should not be mutually exclusive but should be considered together as a whole.”
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 2 points**
 - Project location in economically distressed areas
 - Availability of local funding
 - Availability of existing utilities to service project sites
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - Smart Growth Projects initiated in Ottawa County with the objective of preserving rural land uses.
 - Special Impact Area designation in Kent County for purposes of reducing unemployment, developing a stable and diversified economy and improved living conditions.
 - The maintenance of a data center functions to provide data to the community. GIS capacity is being improved on a regional scale. The expansion of in-house GIS mapping capabilities increases the capacity of map creation for various planning projects including the mapping of industrial site data to build a regional database for local, county and regional economic development planning purposes.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement): 2 points**
 - Operation of youth recreational projects in Ionia County through the City’s recreational department.
 - Improving community services and facilities, health services, police and fire services, recreation and education.
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 2 points**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield redevelopment efforts in Ionia city which have resulted in the generation of 170 jobs and the reuse of downtown land for office, retail and light industrial uses. 18 sites have been redeveloped within the city limits.
 - Obtaining a Clean Cities grant from US Department of Energy to bring together a coalition of organizations interested in the advancement of alternative fuels in West Michigan.
 - Maximize use of existing investments through the revitalization of existing industrial properties and business districts.
 - Preservation efforts:

-Preservation of valuable natural resources including farmland, timberland, minerals, fish and wildlife.

-Historic property preservation efforts in the Big Rapids area by the Big Rapids Housing Commission.

6) Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 1 point

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Yes
Agriculture:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Not indicated
Education:	Not indicated
Community Organizations:	Yes
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Yes
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

7) Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points

- Involvement of the Right Place Program in workforce development efforts, educational institutions (Ferris State University), Michigan State University Extension, and the Department of Natural Resources. The CEDS emphasizes the importance of “Establishing partnerships between local units of government, community organizations and the private sector to support a collaborative community development approach to economic development”¹.

8) Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 point

- Support for informational workshops- small business financing seminars are held as part of business retention and attraction efforts.
- The designation of Montcalm County as a HUB Zone. HUB Zones are U.S. Small Business Administration designated areas. The designation is intended to promote private sector investment and local employment. In order to qualify small businesses must be located in designated HUB Zones (historically underutilized business zones) and have at least 35% of employees residing locally. Firms in these areas can qualify for preferential awards of federal contracts.

¹ West Michigan Regional Planning Commission, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Report,

- 9) Do the proposed actions and projects take into account sound principles of sustainable development? 2 points
- **Housing-** Encouraging the provision of quality affordable housing.
 - **Transportation-** Consideration of alternative transport systems.
 - **The Environment-** Infrastructure development plans in Ottawa County take into consideration social and environmental impacts. Necessary developments are proposed in ways that aim to mitigate the loss and disruption of natural features and social impact. An environmental protection program is in place which involves the preparation of environmental impact assessments for economic development projects and support for environmental protection efforts.
 - **Regionalism-** The CEDS encourages programs of regional significance and dealing with planning issues from a regional perspective with the aim of eliminating barriers to regional solutions to economic development.
 - **Social equity-** Strategies geared towards poverty reduction and improving living conditions

Total Score: 17 points

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Planning Commission

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statements: 2 points**
 - “Support natural resource policies that foster sustainable development through ecosystem management while protecting the diversity of the aquatic and forests environments of the region”
 - “Support for compact settlement, preservation of open space through cooperative landscape management systems and the protection of unique and fragile environments”
 - “Maintenance and protection of current resource levels, improvement of environmental conditions and the re-use of developed land.”
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 2 points**
 - Project location in distressed communities
 - Coastal Zone Management Program is addressed when assessing project priority
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - Shorelands Planning and Zoning Study – An analysis of shore land sensitivity, development constraints and the designation of Areas of Particular Concern (APC) within the region.
 - Mona Lake Watershed Study – Examines the impact of development and on water quality. Techniques are assessed for minimizing the impacts without heavily regulating development opportunities through the use of Best Management Practices and optimum land use strategies. The study promotes responsible development and the use of the region’s water resources.
 - The use of advanced wastewater treatment facilities for recycling water in Muskegon County
 - Examining and considering sustainable development and incentive based environmental models in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Technological University.
 - An emphasis on building local economic development capacity through the use of information technology. Development of a regional GIS system is in progress and computerized inventories of vacant industrial parks and sites are being built and continually updated
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement: 2 points**
 - Provision of recreational opportunities within the shore land areas while maintaining environmental integrity
 - Encouraging training and education for the unemployed, underemployed and those on public assistance
 - Improving access to health programs throughout the region
 - Fostering the development and enhancement of recreational and cultural facilities and programs for entertainment, recreation, wellness, and cultural enrichment.

- A focus not only on traditional public works but also community cultural and recreational activities, urban parks and telecommunications infrastructure.
- Support for the establishment of vocational educational programs to meet workforce training and development needs of low to moderate income residents and the value adding industries.

5) Resource Conservation: 2 points

- Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Brownfield redevelopment: Encouraging the remediation and reuse of contaminated sites.
 - Support for the application of forest resource management
- Preservation efforts:
 - Stringent wetland protection regulations are in effect to protection natural features such as wetlands, dunes and the shore line. Industrial, commercial and residential development in the shore lands environment is controlled so as to provide for social and economic needs without wasteful destruction of unique and sensitive shore land areas.
 - Fostering locally administered development regulations that protect the character and cultural resources of communities.

6) Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 1.13 points

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Yes
Agriculture:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Not indicated
Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Not indicated
Public Health Agencies:	Not indicated
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Yes
Racial minorities:	Yes
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Yes

7) Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points

- Involvement of universities, the National Park Service, the Department of Natural Resources, the Soil Conservation Service, the Forest Service, philanthropic foundations, community growth alliances and utility companies.

8) Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points

- Firms are to be selectively developed or 'cultivated' to ensure the highest and best utilization of the area's limited resources. The strategy guides communities towards attracting firms that have a low environmental impact, produce high value added products, and that place principle reliance upon the local economy for human resources, infrastructure and utility inputs whilst relying on the regional economy for technical support.
- Development of complimentary businesses in the local economy is encouraged with an emphasis on developing and supporting home grown local businesses.
- Revolving loan funds to assist in the development and expansion of the aforementioned businesses where needed
- Educational partnerships between the private sector and schools are used to match training to employer needs.
- Incubator development for the purpose of nurturing small local enterprise

9) Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 2 points

- **Housing-** Encourage the development of affordable housing and rehabilitation of existing housing inventory
- **Transportation-** Improve region's transportation systems to insure the safety and mobility of people and commerce while protecting the environment and improving the quality of life.
 - Support for public transit maintenance, improvements to systems efficiency and a reduction of energy consumption.
 - Support for non-traditional supply approaches such as Rideshare programs.Alternative transportation is encouraged by the development of inter-city bike routes.
- **The Environment-** Support for programs which pursue incentive based approaches that enlist market forces to deter pollution and reduce the waste of natural resources.
 - Incorporating an ecosystems approach in the decision making process.
- **Regionalism-** Development from a regional perspective is promoted with emphasis on regional cooperation. Local units work cooperatively on issues which cross jurisdictional boundaries such as transportation, coastal water issues, watershed planning and air quality. Considering is being given to establishing cooperative efforts in compiling land use plans for multiple jurisdictions.
- **Social equity-** Recognition is given to the unequal impacts of development, particularly on groups such as children, the poor, the elderly, the unemployed, the disabled, minorities and to the importance of social service providers as part of the community to reduce the impact placed on these vulnerable groups.
 - Recognition is also given to the need to comprehend the effects of social trends for inclusion in the physical and economic development planning process.
 - Emphasis is placed on building and enhancing the social infrastructure of the region and the provision of opportunities for individuals to improve their capability to help themselves and thereby increasing the communities' long term capacity to surmount social problems

-Development of support programs to retain older workers and people outside of the economic mainstream

Total Score: 17.13 points

Western Upper Peninsular Planning and Development Regional Commission

- 1) **Mission & Goal Statement: 2 points**
 - The economic development planning process undertaken supports the protection of the environment and the improvement of quality of life.
- 2) **Project prioritization criteria: 0 points**
- 3) **Participation in or support for progressive and innovative research or practice to aid progress towards community sustainability: 2 points**
 - Examination and consideration of sustainable development and incentive-based environmental models in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan Technological University.
 - Building local economic development capacity via information networks. GIS systems are used for land use data and electronic databases are used to maintain an extensive information system for planning and development purposes.
- 4) **Consideration of social program (youth, recreational, mental health, health programs) development and improvement: 2 points**
 - Improve access to medical facilities and health programs
 - Development and improvement of community recreational and cultural facilities and programs for entertainment, recreation, wellness and cultural enrichment.
 - Social service delivery through a variety of service providers including health planning agencies, area agencies on aging, development disabilities councils, community action agencies, social services and mental health departments.
- 5) **Resource Conservation: 2 points**
 - Recycling, reuse and the maximization of the use of existing developed land and infrastructure:
 - Support environmental remediation activities that encourage the redevelopment and reuse of contaminated rural and urban sites.
 - Preservation efforts:
 - Foster historic preservation ordinances and scenic landscape ordinance that protect the character and cultural resources of the communities.
 - Safeguard unique and fragile environments and preserve open space through cooperative landscape scale management systems
- 6) **Citizen/community participation in the CEDS process: 1 point**

Local government representation:	Yes
Business:	Yes
Industry:	Yes
Finance:	Not indicated
Agriculture and Forestry:	Yes
Organized Labor:	Not indicated
Utilities:	Yes

Education:	Yes
Community Organizations:	Yes
Public Health Agencies:	Yes
The aged:	Not indicated
The disabled:	Not indicated
The unemployed:	Not indicated
Racial minorities:	Not indicated
Low income communities:	Not indicated
Women:	Not indicated

- 7) **Involvement of important partners for economic development (such as workforce development, natural resource, social service delivery organizations, university centers) in the economic development process: 2 points**
- Educational institutions, industrial councils, economic development commissions, U.S.D.A. forest service, U.S.D.I. National Park service, workforce development groups, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Michigan Council for Humanities, the Department of Mental Health.
- 8) **Incorporation of elements of sustainability in business development efforts: 2 points**
- Plans for business incubator
 - Continued administration of the EDA Regional Revolving Loan Fund
 - Pursuit of economic diversification through developing business outreach programs to enhance capacity
 - A focus on value added production in agriculture
- 9) **Do the proposed actions and projects take into account the holistic nature of sustainable development? 1.6 points**
- **Housing-** Encouraging the development of affordable housing and the rehabilitation of the existing housing inventory.
 - **Transportation-** Improving the region's transportation while protecting the environment and improving the quality of life
 - **The Environment-** Support programs which pursue incentive-based approaches that enlist market forces to deter pollution and reduce the waste of natural resources. There is a strong emphasis on combining natural resource protection and preservation as a key part of the economic development strategy. Efforts are being made to incorporate all environmental issues into the planning process as part of a single system rather than treating such issues separately.
 - **Regionalism-** /
 - **Social equity-** Building and enhancing community social infrastructure to provide the opportunity for individuals to improve their capability to help themselves and increase community capacity.
 - Support for training and education programs to meet the needs of low to moderate income residents.
 - Support for programs that retrain older workers and people outside the economic mainstream.

-Emphasis is placed on understanding how physical and economic development efforts can negatively affect various groups and working towards preventing or relieving social problems created. There is also recognition of the need to comprehend the effects of social trends for the inclusion in the physical and economic development planning process.

Total Points: 14.6

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