



Report 4: Strategic Recommendations



Presented to:
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF WESTERN NEVADA

STRATEGIC PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Target2010 Project will serve as a roadmap for Northern Nevada's future economic development efforts. It reflects an eleven-month planning process and input from over a thousand citizens, a 49 person Steering Committee, and regional leaders. Its objective is to direct and assist the region's economic development leaders in their efforts.

Economic development is ultimately a marketing activity that has two functions, to improve and to promote a community. To be complete, an economic development plan should include community development recommendations as well as those for targeting specific audiences (both companies and people) and tips for marketing to internal and external audiences. Great economic development initiatives involve the entire community working together to improve the local "product" while the economic development organization works to improve awareness and perception of the region among its local business base and the outside world.

The Target2010 Action Plan and Implementation Strategy is organized around three topics: target industry recommendations (delivered in Report 2), strategic product improvement recommendations, and branding and marketing recommendations (delivered in Report 5). This report discusses the second topic, strategic product improvement recommendations. It

highlights five priority product improvement areas that, if enhanced, will greatly improve Northern Nevada's effectiveness in marketing and attracting its future target industries. Detailed strategies and action items are provided to guide regional efforts in each of these priority areas.



What does Economic Development mean for Northern Nevada?

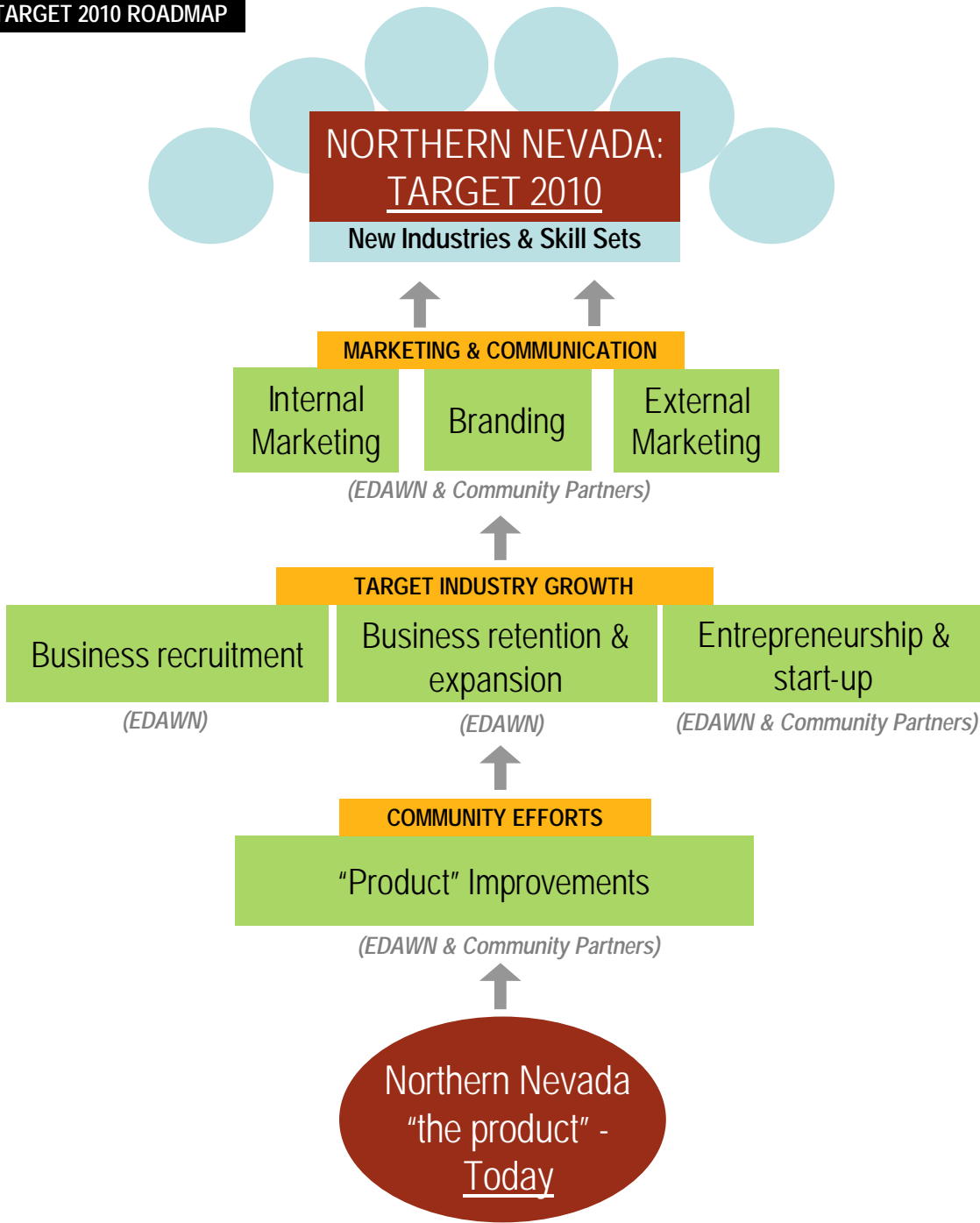
The ultimate goal of an economic development plan is to help a community achieve long-term economic health, and each community approaches economic development in a unique way. For many years, most regions focused almost entirely on recruiting new employers. Recently, the focus of economic development has shifted, placing a stronger emphasis on community development activities that give local companies the tools and capabilities to grow. The exact mix of emphasis on business recruitment, product improvement, local company retention and expansion, and entrepreneurship will differ among regions.

For Northern Nevada, economic development activities should build on the region's core assets while offering an opportunity to progress. The industries Northern Nevada seeks to develop should be ones that will be attracted to the area's unique strengths such as its strong transportation networks, proximity to West coast markets, appealing lifestyle amenities, research and education assets at The University of Nevada, Reno and Desert Research Institute, attractive statewide business cost structure, and the solid mix of current employers. Emphasis should be placed on growing the economy in a targeted manner while managing the physical growth of the region. The community development recommendations presented here should make it easier for businesses to succeed while Northern Nevada's unique personality is preserved. Entrepreneurship should be emphasized more now than it ever has been. Growth that is rooted from within will not only significantly contribute to the local economy, but also help to preserve the values that are important to the region.

Economic development should also be viewed as an avenue for making it easier for the region's citizens to afford to live and work in the region. Northern Nevada suffers from a widening gap between local wages and cost of living. A strong economic development and marketing initiative has been laid out in this plan. It focuses on strengthening Northern Nevada's employment base through new business recruitment, expanding local companies, and supporting entrepreneurship. It contains tools that EDAWN, regional economic development partners, and a wide range of regional organizations can use to increase the depth and diversity of job opportunities available. With a greater diversity of employment options and higher wage jobs comes the opportunity for residents to improve their skills and advance in their careers, generating new wealth for every citizen of the region.

The chart below depicts the planning process for the Target2010 project and provides a visual interpretation of the elements of a successful economic development effort.

THE TARGET 2010 ROADMAP



The Target2010 vision statement describes “who” Northern Nevada will be in five years. This vision should guide the implementation of this economic development initiative.

The vision for the Target2010 project was developed through personal interactions with numerous members of the region in an extensive public input process. AngelouEconomics has articulated this vision statement to be a guiding reference to regional leaders and organizations in their implementation efforts over the next five years and beyond.

What do you want this plan to do for the region?

Articulate a clear focus and direction.

Clearly define our uniqueness and identity.

Unify and pull regional groups together.

Tell us how to monitor our success.

Inform the public why E.D. is important and be embraced by the community.

Lead to action.

Source: Target2010 Initial Steering Committee meeting

Target2010 Vision for Economic Development

Northern Nevada is a leading business destination in the Western U.S. By building on its high quality of life and targeting specific industries, Northern Nevada will be a vibrant economy of community-oriented businesses and entrepreneurs that provide high-impact opportunities and further prosperity for the region’s citizens and communities.

This vision statement recognizes several of the region’s top priorities. It identifies Northern Nevada as a *destination* for targeted and high impact businesses. EDAWN’s external marketing efforts will have achieved success when the region is considered a highly desired business location by relocating and expanding companies.

It also indicates that Northern Nevada’s focus will be on growing community-focused companies - those that act as strong corporate citizens and wish to be an intricate part of the community in which they operate. In addition, while recruiting large companies may provide an immediate boost to the economy, sustained expansion of small to medium-sized firms by fostering entrepreneurship may result in a greater impact long-term. The region’s highly attractive quality of life will make it easy for companies to recruit and retain talented workers, a selling point that helps Northern Nevada stand out from many of its competitors.

What are Northern Nevada's economic development goals?

Goals are the milestones around which an economic development plan is crafted. We have identified the following goals for Northern Nevada:

- Northern Nevada will offer a business climate that is cost competitive with reasonable regulations for its targeted industries and that supports entrepreneurship and small business development.
- Northern Nevada will be home to a competitive educational and workforce development system that teaches target industry skills and offers all residents the opportunity to succeed.
- Northern Nevada will plan for and manage the physical development of the region while encouraging economic growth. Site and infrastructure improvements should make it easier to live and conduct business while preserving Northern Nevada's unique identity.
- The community will rally around economic development and work together to make the region an ideal destination for target industries, young professional workers, and entrepreneurs.
- EDAWN will be proactive and creative in promoting Northern Nevada to its target industries, resulting in an increase in investment by those businesses within the region.

The priority product improvement section of this plan contains recommendations designed to aid EDAWN and other Northern Nevada community partners in attaining these goals. All recommendations offered in this report are designed to be both (1) sustainable (creating consistent long-term economic growth in a non-damaging way) and (2) strategic (tailored and coordinated for meeting the region's long-term objectives).

Although EDAWN is not charged with community development activities, as the region's economic development leader, it should continue to be involved in setting the direction for local improvements that are made. This involvement will assure that the region is in the best condition possible to compete for target industries, talented workers, and entrepreneurs.

Strategic Priorities

AngelouEconomics has developed five priority recommendations in the areas that are the most vital to the region's ability to succeed in economic development. In each of these priority areas, we provide detailed recommendations and specific action items to be implemented by regional partners. Tackling these top five priorities over the next 5-10 years will have the biggest impact in the development of the region's six target industries:

1. **Business Climate Priority:** Maintain and enhance the region's attractive business climate to encourage target industry development and to foster an environment in **which entrepreneurship thrives**.
2. **Workforce and Education Priority:** Ensure that a **quality, well-trained local workforce** exists to meet the needs of all local employers, especially **companies in the region's target industries**.
3. **Quality of Life Priority:** Improve the region's **aesthetic appeal** and create a desirable environment that will **draw young professionals** and other workers who can fill jobs in target industries.
4. **Sites and Infrastructure Priority:** Focus on developing a local infrastructure that will **spur technology development and suit the needs of the region's future target industry companies**.
5. **Economic Development Priority:** Ensure that economic development efforts are **broad-based**, addressing the needs of the citizens of the county through **targeted business development and community improvement efforts**, all resulting in long-term economic prosperity.

The region needs EDAWN to take a strong leadership position. **EDAWN's most significant contribution to product improvement is to become a leading advocate of change in these five priority areas.** We strongly recommend that EDAWN become a vocal supporter of initiatives that help the region accomplish these priorities. EDAWN's board of directors and members should also leverage their influence to see that these priority projects are aggressively pursued. These priority projects must be accomplished if Northern Nevada is to be successful in the targeted economic development envisioned in this plan.

The strategies and action items in this plan flow directly from one of these five strategic priorities.

BUSINESS CLIMATE

A positive business climate is critical to strong economic development. There are many elements to a good business climate: an affordable cost of doing business, including a reasonable, fair tax structure; a solid support network that encourages entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses and helps small businesses get the support they need to thrive; and incentives that will encourage businesses to locate in a community and grow.

Business Climate Priority

Enhance Northern Nevada's attractiveness to target industry companies and build an environment in which entrepreneurship thrives.

Northern Nevada has impressive assets that make the area a desirable place for business. The region is easily accessible by a major East/West Interstate, a strong international airport, an extensive rail system, and is within a three-hour drive of the Bay Area. It offers an attractive state tax structure and competitive business costs.

However, there are opportunities that Northern Nevada can seize to make itself more attractive to businesses locating or expanding in the region. Some of the drawbacks facing the region include increasingly unaffordable housing that adversely affects the ability to compete for new businesses and workers; an inadequate support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses; little venture capital funding that is crucial for businesses to grow; and limited targeted incentives that might help entice businesses to locate in the region. The following recommendations will address those issues.

Strategy One: Foster a strong local entrepreneurial environment.

AngelouEconomics believes that a strong opportunity exists to enhance the level of entrepreneurship in Northern Nevada. The region has a strong history of entrepreneurship and risk taking that has its foundation in its pioneer days. This culture still exists in Northern Nevada, and there are many successful local entrepreneurs to point to as examples. The emphasis that should be placed on entrepreneurship was not lost in the impetus to develop this Target2010 plan. In fact, a standalone report in this project is specifically devoted to entrepreneurship and technology development. Please refer to *Report 3: The Entrepreneurship and Technology Assessment* for a more detailed discussion as well as specific recommendations to guide regional leaders in their efforts.

Below, we present key action items that should be the focus of efforts from EDAWN and other community partners. Among the action items, we recommend the formation of an Entrepreneurship Team that will act as the catalyst for implementing many of the recommendations in *The Entrepreneurship and Technology Assessment*. The action items presented below also aim to create a focus on the importance of entrepreneurs for the region's future, while leveraging this knowledge base to create a "story" that the area can utilize for future recruitment.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDAWN should form an Entrepreneurship team.
 - ✓ Identify 5-10 top entrepreneurs to serve on the team.
 - ✓ Meet with these individuals to set a strategy and calendar for speaking/activities.
 - ✓ Ask these individuals to meet with EDAWN (and others) on a quarterly basis to provide insight for continued improvement to its environment for entrepreneurial success.
 - ✓ This group serves in an advisory role to EDAWN and acts as a champion for entrepreneurship efforts across the region.
2. Celebrate and promote the region's entrepreneurship successes. The Entrepreneurship team, with EDAWN assistance, should be the primary promoter for the region.
3. EDAWN should give economic development efforts focused on Entrepreneurship as much priority as those targeting Recruitment and Expansion. Northern Nevada's economic developers should dedicate a similar level of resources to facilitating the creation of local technology companies as is devoted to recruitment and expansion efforts.
4. Promote an overarching organization to serve as the single clearinghouse for Entrepreneurship and Technology development in the region.
5. Enhance local venture, angel, and other sources of capital, making them more readily available to start-up companies in Northern Nevada. This may be accomplished in several ways, including developing outreach programs and workshops to identify and train local angel investors and attractively recruiting outside VC firms or hosting them for information exchange seminars. (See Report 3 for more details)
6. Grow entrepreneurial and technology talent from within the community by expanding and enhancing entrepreneurship and technology curriculum at the K-12 level, Community Colleges, and Universities. (See Report 3 for more details)

ED Role:

Entrepreneurship

Primary responsibility:

??? (Lead organization unknown)

Primary mission:

Build infrastructure for start-ups and small biz

Target audience:

Entrepreneurs and financiers

Organization:

Entrepreneurship team

1 EDAWN rep
1 rep from CET
1 rep from UNR's IC³
6-8 local Entrepreneurs

PLUS

Local VCs
Help Sierra Angels and Nevada Ventures grow the presence of VC

PLUS

The University of Nevada, Reno
Involve UNR faculty involved in entrepreneurship programs

PLUS

DRI, YEO, SBDC, NV
Microenterprise Initiative
The region needs to understand the value of entrepreneurship and the education/incubators/funding needed for support

Primary Implementer: EDAWN in an advocacy role

Secondary Implementer: Local entrepreneurs, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology (CET), the Institute for Innovation and Informatics at UNR (IC³), local Angel and Venture capital community

Strategy Two: Advocate for the creation of incentives specifically geared to target industry companies in Northern Nevada.

Northern Nevada has done a good job of working to create a good business climate and is able to leverage competitive incentives offered by the state to new and expanding companies. However, the state lacks any incentives that are targeted for specific industries or start-up companies in emerging industries. While incentives are not in and of themselves the only factor that attracts businesses to one community as opposed to another, they are nonetheless an important tool and can sometimes make the difference in whether a company locates in Northern Nevada or some other community.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDAWN should present the region's new target industries to state legislators and communicate the importance of these industries for the future of Northern Nevada.
2. Lobby the state to adjust incentive policy to earmark special incentive programs geared specifically to target industries.
3. In addition to target industry specific incentives, lobby the state to set up a fund to finance start-up size companies in emerging target industries.
 - ✓ The incentive structure that is currently in place makes it very difficult for most start-up companies to qualify for incentives.
 - ✓ The state should consider reducing investment and job creation criteria required for receiving incentives to help small start-up companies in the region's target industries.
 - ✓ Use the Texas Emerging Technology Fund as a model.

Primary Implementers: State of Nevada

Secondary Implementers: EDAWN, County E.D., and regional E.D. offices throughout the state (in advocacy and lobbying roles)

Strategy Three: Provide discounts on building permit fees, tap fees, inspection fees, and any other fees related to the development process for target industries, depending on the number of jobs created and the amount of capital investment involved.

Similar to earmarking incentives for target industry companies, local Northern Nevada taxing entities can encourage target industry development by discounting the cost of the fees related to the development process. This does not have to be a blanket discount, but can be indexed based on the number of jobs a company will bring to the region and the level of estimated capital investment a company will bring into the community as a result of a location or expansion.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Local government entities should encourage the growth of targeted industries by reducing permit, tap, and inspection fees as an incentive to recruit businesses.
2. Make these discounts available to developers who sell or lease space to companies in Northern Nevada's target industries.
3. Discounted fees are reclaimed if lease agreements in speculative development are made with businesses in industries other than the target industries.

Primary Implementers: Towns, Cities, and Counties in the Northern Nevada region

Secondary Implementers: EDAWN to serve in an advisory role

Strategy Four: Streamline the development and permitting process.

Permits affect all aspects of business activity and a consistent, predictable, and efficient permitting process is critical to economic development. The growing requirements for permitting and fees in many Northern Nevada communities means that new investment faces more hurdles, ultimately increasing costs and delaying construction schedules. A productive process will assist the goals of the communities in Northern Nevada by incentivizing quality, appropriate land uses, and public benefits.

Developers in the region feel that the permitting and development process, while not extremely onerous, can be improved. Many of those that were interviewed would like the process to be more transparent with a clear understanding of each of the steps to expect along the way. According to one focus group respondent, "if it takes 6 months that's fine, I just want to know that from day one so I can plan accordingly." AngelouEconomics recommends an examination of the existing permitting process for Northern Nevada cities and counties to determine new ways to clarify and simplify the development process.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Set up development review committees in the region's cities/counties/towns that meet twice per year. This review committee should include local government officials involved in permitting as well as local private developers.
2. Determine if a clear explanation of the permitting process exists (flowcharts, timelines, internal contacts).
3. Identify a development "champion" in each local city/county/town permitting staff that will guide projects through the process.
4. Require specific timelines for response by local cities/counties/towns to development applications.
5. Examine the development code for each city/county/town to find new ways to simplify and to make the process more standardized across city and county boundaries.
6. Automate the permitting process to the greatest extent possible so that applicants can apply for and pay for permits online. This will help speed up the process and make it easier for applicants to navigate the development process.

Primary Implementers: Towns, Cities, and Counties in the Northern Nevada region

Secondary Implementers: Local private developers, EDAWN to serve in a convener role

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

Increasingly, education and workforce development are seen as leading contributors to economic development. A strong workforce leads to business recruitment and aids in business expansion. This generates a strong industry base that leads to entrepreneurship and long-term economic growth. A strong pool of workers with diverse skill sets then acts as a pull to attract a larger population of young professionals and to help the region develop economic diversification.

Workforce & Education Priority

Ensure a quality, well-trained workforce exists to meet the needs of existing employers as well as future businesses in the region's target industries.

Throughout the course of the Target2010 process, the supply, quality, and skill level of the local workforce was cited as one of the region's top challenges. Workforce availability and quality has become one of the main factors considered by businesses in making decisions regarding growth and expansion. Efforts must take place to improve upon the current situation, and this improved level must then be maintained and leveraged to support the growth of the target industries. In short, Northern Nevada should aim to turn this negative into a positive and aspire to develop a world-class workforce well positioned for future industry growth.

Education and workforce development recommendations are being made to help Northern Nevada achieve the following three goals:

1. Northern Nevada will promote its strength in higher education, understanding that education performance is a leading contributor to business expansion, start-ups, and recruitment.
2. Educational and workforce development programs will be well coordinated, providing services that are in tune with the needs of the area's targeted industry sectors.
3. Northern Nevada's workforce development programs will offer advancement opportunities for all individuals, leading to an increase in young professionals who remain in or relocate to the area.

One of the reasons Northern Nevada's recommended target industries were selected was because they contain a wide variety of occupations and ample opportunity for workers to advance their careers. The strategies provided below will guide local efforts to develop a workforce that will meet the needs of these target industries.

Strategy One: Form a Business and Education Council to connect the private sector with the local education system.

Establish a Business and Education Council with representatives from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), Western Nevada Community College (WNCC), K-12 school systems, area workforce development providers, local Chambers of Commerce and EDAWN, and business leaders (including Human Resource Directors/Recruiters) to develop a long-term workforce plan. All of these entities are key players in the workforce development system, and they should play an even more central and highly visible role in both workforce development and economic development. It is critically important that these entities provide a common thread of information and programs to tomorrow's workers to ensure that Northern Nevada can compete for high impact jobs.

The purpose of this council will be to connect the private sector more closely with programming in the region's education institutions and workforce development system.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Form a Business and Education Council among UNR, TMCC, WNCC, regional workforce development providers, business leaders (primarily among targeted industries), Human Resource directors/recruiters, and K-12 educators.
2. The Council should be comprised of two subcommittees with members of the business community in each subcommittee:
 - ✓ Primary education, focused on K-12;
 - ✓ Secondary education and the workforce development system, focused on workforce development providers, Community College programs, and University degree curriculum
3. The Council will develop an annual program of initiatives for the year.
4. The Council should meet on a quarterly basis (each subcommittee should meet monthly) to discuss progress in its annual program and other workforce and education issues. Among issues to be addressed:
 - ✓ Address changes in programming and the delivery of services relevant to target industries.
 - ✓ Evaluate the need for more vocational technical programs offered within the high school to prepare students for certain segments of the workforce.
 - ✓ Discuss and address workforce and economic development programs.
 - ✓ Create strategies related to attracting students to stay in the area after high school and college.
5. Develop an educational campaign to inform employers and potential workers of workforce development programs currently being offered.

Primary Implementer: EDAWN to act as convener of the Council

Secondary Implementer(s): UNR, TMCC, WNCC, K-12 superintendents, Workforce Development providers (NV Works, Train Employees Now - TEN), Representatives of private sector employers

Strategy Two: Conduct an annual Workforce Preparedness Survey to gauge local workforce skills and performance in targeted industries and existing industries.

As part of a seamless workforce system, it is important to understand businesses' workforce needs. Through a continual workforce and skills assessment, the community can be better prepared to assist, retain, and recruit new industries. Without a thorough evaluation of the type of workforce existing businesses need to survive and thrive and an understanding of the necessary skills these companies need for their employees, communities could be in jeopardy of losing valuable jobs. Northern Nevada must proactively prepare for future workforce needs of its target industries in order to achieve success in job creation efforts.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Conduct an annual Workforce Preparedness Survey of local employers to gather first hand information on the region's existing skill set gaps and areas in need of improvement.
2. Compare survey results to the occupational requirements and gap analysis conducted in the target industry report delivered by AE.
3. Produce a report summarizing the results of the study by industry category.
4. Consider using software programs that correlate with EDAWN's business retention efforts for gathering information concerning industry information.
5. Information should be used by the Business and Education Council to assist with overall strategy.
6. Identify model benchmark communities for Northern Nevada to compare its progress to and benchmark the region's education performance on an ongoing annual basis.
7. Publish the results of the Survey and promote the region's successes and improvements made in building a premier workforce.

Primary Implementer: The Business and Education Council

Secondary Implementer(s): EDAWN in a support role

Strategy Three: Make the region's high schools cutting edge by developing a program that links the education system with target industry companies.

The respondents to the Target2010 online survey conducted as part of this project recognized the necessity of developing a strong public educational system. In fact, according to respondents, "better educational opportunities" should be the region's top ranked goal. While the region's educational statistics tend to be better than the state, they trail the U.S. in many categories. For example, only 34% of Washoe County students take the SAT test, compared to 48% for the U.S. Statistics like these show that, while the school system is not entirely broken, it needs to improve if Northern Nevada wants to attract target industries or be known for its premier education system. The ability of the local public school system to prepare students for college is a major factor when businesses decide where to locate. Businesses and employees will assess an area's educational system through a variety of performance standards before they commit to becoming residents.

Northern Nevada needs to take steps not just to improve its school system, but also to create a school system that is world-class – a school system that is second to none. This is not simply a challenge facing Northern Nevada. The nation's public school systems are under ever increasing pressure to do a more effective job in preparing students to succeed in the working world and in the world of higher education.

For decades, political leaders, educational leaders, and parents have decried the failure of public schools to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to survive after high school graduation and succeed in the working world.

Northern Nevada should consider the development of a pilot program devoted to education in one of the region's target industries, for example, a Technology Academy for Software Development. The development of this program could be modeled after the highly successful Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) program created jointly by the Fresno and Clovis Unified School Districts in California. CART was created to match the curriculum and instructional strategies of high schools to the needs of a competitive economy.

CART is a charter school designed to improve the public education system and prepare students for higher education and participation in the workforce and is one of the most far-reaching efforts at improving secondary public education ever developed in the United States. The program busses eleventh and twelfth grade students from the Clovis and Fresno Unified School Districts to CART where they attend half-day classes in one of the laboratories taught by teams of instructors from both education and business.

CART provides a state-of-the-art research and technology facility where students design and complete projects in collaboration with partners from the local, national, and international business community. Through learning plans, individualized attention, and a coordinated sequence of projects, CART students explore the variety of ways they can achieve their career goals. Working with business partners, teachers, and parents, students design a program of study that qualifies them to pursue the post-secondary path of their choice from entry-level positions to industry certification to university admission. With the knowledge, skills, and support they receive, students leave CART ready to launch their careers. CART began with the development of a foundation, a non-profit arm for the Center that could receive donations and grants. However, a majority of its funding is now from business partners who receive technical assistance from students at CART.

AngelouEconomics recommends that the region work to develop programs similar to this initiative to improve its overall high school learning and link the students in the program to entrepreneur initiatives. Establishing a program similar to CART in Northern Nevada would be an effective way not only to improve the performance of high school students and prepare them for college and the world of work, but would also forge a direct link between the educational systems in the area and target industries, meeting the needs of both.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Use the CART program as a guide in setting up a pilot program in one of the region's new target industries at a select area high school. Check the Center's website, www.cart.org, to get more information on its history, participating partners, and other key information on establishing the CART effort.
2. Determine the type of companies (existing companies already part of one of the recommended target industries) that have an interest in creating a "pipeline" to potential workers for their industry.
3. Begin discussions with a group of targeted companies in one of the target industries to determine the types of skills workers need in their industry.
4. Bring together representatives of the region's school districts, University of Nevada, Reno, TMCC, WNCC, and the targeted companies to begin discussions on the curriculum that should be offered in the CART program. Give this group the responsibility for developing the CART curriculum.

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5. Develop the curriculum that satisfies the needs of one target industry as a pilot project, and begin operation of CART for that one target industry. Once that program is in operation and working well, begin development of curriculum for other target industries with the assistance of companies representing those industries.
 6. The program should include an educational link that spans from high school to community college to the university level.

Primary Implementer: Washoe County School District (expanding to other county school districts after successful pilot program), Business and Education Council

Secondary Implementer: Companies in a selected target industry, TMCC, WNCC, UNR, and EDAWN to serve as a convener

Strategy Four: Consider skilled workers as an active recruitment target for relocation to Northern Nevada.

This project has identified six target industries that should be the focus of future economic development efforts. Skilled workers should be also treated as viable relocation targets, and the region should develop an actionable campaign for actively recruiting outside workers to fill local skill set gaps. Due to the region's tremendous economic growth, many employers voiced complaints regarding both the quantity and quality of the local workforce pool. Many of the workers that are demanded by these employers are being recruited from outside of the region from areas such as the California Bay Area. Instead of recruiting in a one-off manner, **AngelouEconomics recommends that a broad based approach can be developed and spearheaded by many regional constituents to lure these talented workers to Northern Nevada,**

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Analyze the skill set needs of the region's six target industries and combine with information gathered from the Workforce Preparedness Survey of local employers to identify the most pressing skill set gaps (refer to the target industry report for occupational requirements and current skill set gaps).
2. Create a marketing campaign to target workers in other regions with a strong presence in Northern Nevada's target industries such as many California metro areas.
3. Assemble a team that consists of EDAWN representatives, local employers, Chambers, networking associations, and young professionals to visit other regions and conduct job fairs.
4. In addition to the needs of target industry companies, actively target other workforce types such as entrepreneurs and young professionals at job fairs and in marketing materials.

Primary Implementer: EDAWN

Secondary Implementer: Local employers, Chambers, individuals from networking associations (such as WIN), young professionals

QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life issues are those tangible and intangible features and characteristics that make people decide they want to live in a particular community and make them commit to staying in that community. Traditionally, the location decisions of firms have been driven primarily by factors such as land costs, labor costs, and access to

materials and markets. Today, however, location decisions are often driven by the need to succeed in this knowledge-based economy where people are the key to success.

Quality of Life Priority

Improve Northern Nevada's aesthetic appeal and create an environment that will be a draw for young professionals and skilled workers.

Therefore, firms are seeking locations that will attract and retain a well-educated work force, and quality of life factors are increasingly important. Communities that offer cultural and recreational amenities have competitive advantages over those that do not.

Quality of life is possibly Northern Nevada's greatest strength. The region offers a mix of sophistication in its urban centers and small town charm in its outlying counties with a comfortable climate, an enjoyable landscape, and tremendous outdoor recreational opportunities. Lake Tahoe and the nearby Sierra Nevada mountains are tremendous strengths and act as a draw for tourists and those relocating to the region. These factors coupled with generally low crime rates are the reason that the region is considered an excellent place to raise a family.

Yet there are challenges Northern Nevada faces in maintaining that excellent quality of life. The community must attempt to address the loss of its young professionals – those people between the ages of 25 and 44 with at least a bachelor's degree, a demographic group sought by most companies, particularly technology-related companies – if it wants to become more attractive to potential target industries or retain the companies that currently call Northern Nevada home. In addition, the region's cost of living is being pushed up by skyrocketing housing costs. Even though the region has a strong quality of life, this is severely hampered if residents cannot comfortably afford to buy a home and raise a family.

Efforts can be made to develop the region in a way that is attractive to all citizens in the region, such as improving the aesthetic appeal of the region's cities, creating a dynamic downtown center, empowering the existing young professional community, supporting measures to improve housing affordability, and promoting the vital importance of maintaining the region's high quality of life.

Additionally, the communities in the region must continue to take steps to use their valuable resources more effectively. It is no surprise that the availability of water is a natural resource limitation that will affect the type of development that occurs in the region. The "water issue" is a pressing matter that has been a prevalent topic throughout the region's history. Attempting to solve this issue is beyond the scope of this Target2010 project. However, the recommendations made in this plan, specifically the selection of the region's target industries, were developed with a strong understanding of the region's current and future scarce water resources. The industries that were chosen are not high water users and should not put a strain on future water supplies.

Strategy One: Launch a campaign to retain and attract more young professionals – establish a Northern Nevada Young Professionals Network.

Communities with a high percentage of college educated young professionals are attractive to expanding companies. Communities with a strong young professional base also seem to have a heightened “energy” level that is reflected in diverse retail and dining establishments, arts and culture amenities, and nightlife options which serve to benefit all demographic groups in the region. Northern Nevada, including each of its cities and counties, needs to commit to a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain more young professionals. With increased focus in the target industries, younger workers will naturally be drawn to the area, but leading regional organizations must work to keep them as a vital part of the community.

The establishment of a young professionals’ network is the first vital step Northern Nevada should take to empower this group and begin the process of reversing the loss of young professionals. Other communities have used young professionals’ networks to reverse the loss of young professionals and actually begin to attract more young professionals. For example, Greater Binghamton in upstate New York was losing its younger population to big cities such as New York due to a lagging economy and a lack of economic prospects. After establishing a young professionals’ organization that now has a membership of 450, the organization has actually started contacting former residents in places such as New York and convincing them to return. In addition, the local private university supported this effort and encouraged their students to be more involved in the community and consider it for future employment. Having an organized effort to make the area more appealing to young professionals was critical in attracting them to the area and retaining the ones already there. Visit www.styp.org for more information on the Greater Binghamton Young Professionals Network.

The communities in Northern Nevada can benefit from the same type of organizational effort. During the public input process, we heard from many young professionals that they do not feel engaged in economic development, but would like to have a way to get more involved. The more involved they are the greater likelihood of retaining them in the region and utilizing them to attract more young professionals.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Form a Young Professionals Network (YPN) organization.
 1. The network should be initially launched and overseen by EDAWN
 2. Over time, the YPN will be independent, but should always be closely connected to EDAWN.
 3. The YPN should be centered in the Reno-Sparks metro; however, satellite groups should be established in each county in the region under the same YPN umbrella.
2. Form a YPN “shadow” board that provides insight to EDAWN and community organizations about what this demographic desires in a community.
 - ✓ Each EDAWN board member would be assigned one young professional to serve as mentor
 - ✓ This young professionals board can, in turn, be tasked with implementing many of the product improvement recommendations contained in this plan.
3. Task the YPN to develop a strategy to attract and retain young professionals to the region. The YPN should develop three to five priorities to attract and retain people in the 35 to 44 age range. The priorities should be developed using survey input as a guide:

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- ✓ The YPN should conduct a comprehensive survey of local young professionals, and high school and college students to determine what they like and dislike about the region.
 - ✓ Ask graduating students what they need to stay in the region following graduation.
 - ✓ Ask “boomerangs” (young residents who left the region and came back) what brought them back to Northern Nevada.
4. The YPN establishes a regular schedule of networking events to give young professionals opportunities to meet and get to know one another, as well as other events of interest to young professionals (such as professional development opportunities).
 5. The YPN should also assist young professionals in fostering opportunities to become involved in leadership and civic organizations to give them a path to develop their leadership skills.
 6. The YPN should also establish a website to allow them to share information on professional, civic, and social opportunities. The website should include information on after-hours entertainment and recreational activities of interest to young professionals and should be linked to other community websites such as EDAWN, UNR, TMCC, WNCC, etc.
 7. Empower this group to market to other young professionals.
 - ✓ Members from the YPN should be included in marketing missions to other regions to recruit skilled workers, such as job fairs in the Bay Area.
 - ✓ The YPN should utilize peer-to-peer marketing and host mixer events connected to large industry conferences that take place in the region.

Primary Implementer: EDAWN

Secondary Implementer: Young professional community, UNR/TMCC/WNCC students, regional Chambers of Commerce, Cities/Counties in the region

Strategy Two: Support efforts to revitalize downtown Reno and encourage revitalization of downtown areas throughout the region.

Exciting revitalization efforts are taking place in Downtown Reno, which are increasing the attractiveness of downtown as a destination for the local community. Attractive and appealing downtowns are a key selling point to young professionals. The development that is currently underway is a positive step for the region and its ability to appeal to a younger demographic. The effort should be strongly supported and similar efforts should be encouraged in all of the region’s downtown areas to provide a central destination.

Downtown efforts should be expanded to include the University of Nevada, Reno campus. There is an opportunity to create a seamless corridor that will establish a closer connection between Downtown Reno and the University of Nevada, Reno, the region’s largest center of young people. A master plan has already been developed by the University of Nevada, Reno to guide the development of this corridor. The corridor from downtown Reno to UNR’s campus should become a dynamic, vibrant area that is appealing to young professionals, current students, and other residents. A lively, cosmopolitan feel with live/work, shopping, restaurants, and night life will be a strong attractor to both outside potential transplant young professionals, local young professionals, and graduating students.

Coupled with the current high-density housing developments taking place downtown, the region should promote the development of mixed-use employment, retail centers, and continue to support arts and culture attractions. This will create a dynamic work/live/play quality to downtown that could serve as the focal point for the region’s students and young professionals.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Form a Downtown Development Partnership to be an advocate for desirable development in downtown Reno and to serve as an oversight committee.
 - ✓ The Partnership should include representatives from EDAWN, UNR, City of Reno, Washoe County, local developers, the RSCVA, members of the arts and culture community, and major gaming employers.
 - ✓ The Partnership should support the UNR master plan for development to span from UNR's campus to downtown Reno and work to build private developer support.
 - ✓ The Partnership should take an active role in setting design and zoning standards downtown and should be the catalyst for beautification projects such as streetscapes, riverfront development, and litter control.
2. Promote high-density residential development downtown and encourage mixed-use developments to support a live and work atmosphere.
 - ✓ Consider lobbying for the creation of incentive packages for downtown development to attract business users such as entrepreneurs and mid-size office tenants. This could take the form of an opportunity zone (short-lived) for the purposes of stimulating business activity and growth in the downtown area.
3. Encourage development of downtown shopping, restaurants, and nightlife to draw young professionals and current students.
4. Continue to enhance the allure of the downtown riverfront by developing added recreational options such as a hike and bike trail that is easily accessible from nearby residential neighborhoods.
5. Continue to enhance arts and cultural offerings in the downtown area.

Primary Implementer: UNR and City of Reno, EDAWN to serve as a convener/advocate

Secondary Implementer: Washoe County, Local developer community, RSCVA, major gaming employers, members of the arts and culture community, Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce

Strategy Three: Provide diverse housing options that are affordable and attractive for existing residents and those relocating to the area.

During the public input process, residents noted that affordability is becoming increasingly difficult in the Northern Nevada region. The highest level of dissatisfaction with the region's quality of life in the online survey was the "Affordability of housing." This assertion is backed up by hard data. The region's cost of living, driven mainly by increasing housing costs, has skyrocketed in the region, and wages are not necessarily keeping pace. The average wage in Northern Nevada is 10% below the national average, while the average cost of living is 13.5% above the U.S. average. One of the main drivers of the increased cost of living is the region's booming housing prices. Over the past five years, the region's home resale price has increased over 80%.

This creates a situation in which residents are finding it difficult to both work and live comfortably in the region. This not only affects the region's current residents, it is also impacting the ability of employers to attract new workers to the region.

While the cost of housing is primarily driven by supply and demand factors, the region can implement specific programs to encourage the development of more affordable housing. Recommendations are provided below.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Form a task force with the specific goal of encouraging affordable housing options.
 - ✓ The task force should be represented by city/county governments, regional planning and land use representatives, major employers, and economic developers.
 - ✓ Be an advocate and vocal supporter of affordable housing developments.
 - ✓ Research other similar communities to gain knowledge of best practice programs.
2. Encourage the development of a mix of housing options including high-density housing in the urban center.
 - ✓ For many residents, smaller condos, town homes, or attractive apartments are more desirable than traditional single-family homes. These types of housing are also less costly.
 - ✓ Consider establishing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, which have been useful for incentivizing developers to build higher density housing in other regions.
3. Provide incentives to companies that create affordable housing for each job created. Many companies understand the limitation that is caused by unaffordable workforce housing and are will to help. The Silicon Valley in California has implemented a successful program to encourage employers to take a more active role by creating subsidies to make housing more affordable.
4. Consider establishing requirements to set aside a percentage of new residential developments for affordable housing for public service workers such as teachers, nurses, and police/fire.

Primary Implementer: EDAWN to serve as a convener of the task force

Secondary Implementer: City/County governments, Regional land use and planners, Major employers, Local developer community

Strategy Four: EDAWN should continue to actively communicate the importance that local Quality of Life has on future economic development.

It should be understood and actively communicated within the community that the success of future economic development hinges on maintaining an excellent quality of life. During the public input process, individuals noted that there is a feeling among some members in the community that economic development “just leads to more growth, which in turn leads to an eroding of quality of life.” This perception must be addressed and EDAWN should serve as a strong voice to communicate that just the opposite is true. Namely, that effective economic development, especially future efforts that will be driven by this Target2010 process aims to embrace targeted future growth that will enhance the region’s quality of life, not hinder it.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDAWN should actively communicate the purpose of the Target2010 process and emphasize that the impetus behind this project was to identify targeted growth areas that would specifically help to enhance the region’s quality of life.
2. Communicate that the six target industries were chosen with the natural environment as a key consideration and to increase wage levels to make the region more affordable to its citizens.

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3. Actively work with environmental and “slow growth” groups to ensure that they feel that their voices are being heard.
 4. Continue to build a groundswell of support and a consensus that you can “have your cake and eat it to” – i.e. you can have positive economic development and a strong quality of life.

Primary Implementer: EDawn to serve in an advocacy role

Secondary Implementer: none

SITES & INFRASTRUCTURE

When choosing a development location within a state or region, the availability of needed infrastructure is typically of primary importance. As infrastructure is available in almost every city across the country, business prospects will compare a region or city's infrastructure (availability and pricing) to competing markets. This process has identified the need to move in some new directions for business development based on the needs of the region's new target industries. Going forward, efforts will need to be made to ensure that the region's sites and infrastructure meet the needs of these new business sectors.

Sites & Infrastructure Priority

Focus on building a local infrastructure that will spur technology development and meet the needs of target industry companies.

Northern Nevada is well served by a major East/West interstate, an international airport, and extensive rail connectivity. The region is also strategically located to serve the large West Coast market. These infrastructure components provide have proved to be a great strength to Northern Nevada as represented in its strong logistics and distribution industry and will continue to be an asset in its efforts to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.

The region's major challenge regarding infrastructure is to maintain what it has and undertake efforts to enhance the existing infrastructure to make it more appealing to new target industries. New sites and infrastructure developments will not necessarily hinge on the construction of new roads and transportation networks, but rather on the development of those features that are desired by high knowledge industries such as attractive office parks, corporate campus tracts, and research and development facilities.

The development of an infrastructure to support future technology-driven economic development was recognized as a huge priority at the onset of this planning process. As such, a standalone report was developed to provide a strategy for regional efforts in this area. Some of the recommendations in that report will be presented here, but we encourage all interested parties to refer to *Report 3: The Entrepreneurship and Technology Assessment* for a more detailed view of the recommendations presented by AngelouEconomics.

Strategy One: [Support the development of a technology incubator in Northern Nevada.](#)

The development of a technology focused Incubator would be a strong asset for the acceleration of local entrepreneurship and innovation. All major technology metro areas have technology Incubators that are at least in part funded with public sector dollars. Incubators are important institutions for young start-up companies and can hasten the development of emerging technologies with strong market potential.

The Northern Nevada region, including all of its individual cities and counties, will greatly benefit by having an incubator that encourages and assists citizens in starting their own businesses. This is also an ideal project for requesting EDA funding. An incubator, also commonly called a business accelerator, is a facility that educates and supports people in their business pursuit.

The incubator(s) that are developed should be closely tied with the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Desert Research Institute, offering shared resources including: office space, computer equipment, and labs as needed. If designed as such, these facilities can also become a community gathering place for after-hours networking events. The guidance and funding should come from the public and private sectors with the emphasis of commercialization being in the target industry sectors. **The success of a program like this relies on a collaborative effort between the private sector, higher learning institutions, and the public sector.**

The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (<http://www.entre-ed.org/>) is a resource for economic development leaders for these type programs. Additionally, time should be spent exploring programs available through The Kauffman Foundation (<http://www.kauffman.org>). EDAWN should also review membership programs available through the National Business Incubator Association (<http://www.nbia.org>) for creating direction and organizing resources for the creation of incubators in the area.

Once an incubator is up and running, EDAWN should incorporate incubator information onto its website, and contain an inventory of the region's entrepreneurship resources.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDAWN, the Entrepreneur Team, UNR, DRI, and other community partners should research and visit best-in-class incubator facilities.
2. Work with these existing incubator programs for mentoring and/or "lessons"
3. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the technology niche sectors that will be the primary focus of the Incubator (for example: Clean Energy, Biotechnology, etc.).
 - ✓ It is important that the Incubator start with a more narrow focus to leverage unique local expertise.
 - ✓ The focus of the Incubator can broaden over time and with established success.
4. Research and tap into federal funding opportunities available for starting up Incubators.
 - ✓ The Economic Development Administration (EDA) currently has expressed interest in funding Incubator feasibility studies across the U.S.
 - ✓ Other federal funding sources could be identified and secured to partially fund the creation of the Incubator.
5. Determine an appropriate location for the region's first Incubator. UNR and DRI officials should work together in a collaborative manner to identify a suitable site.
6. Campaign to obtain private and public funding and lobby the state for funding support. This could be the next major public / private funded project.
7. Set the incubator up as 501c3 non-profit organization with a dedicated board.
8. Hire an executive director to oversee operation of the facility.
9. Identify facility tools, support systems, and equipment needs to create desired activity.
10. Begin to build community support and identify and attract local experts who would be willing to volunteer their expertise at the Incubator.
 - ✓ These individuals should include local accounting and financial professionals, marketing, strategic management, IP lawyers, seasoned scientists and technologists, retired executives, and entrepreneurs with successful track records.
11. Have a grand opening launch and invite the community to join in the celebration.
12. Build and launch an incubator / entrepreneurial resources website.

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13. Promote locally and throughout the region.
 14. Create a position for a grant writer to continuously look for additional funding through state and federal sources (target industry focused).
 15. Identify an individual or group to serve as a “fundraiser”, working primarily with angel investors and venture capital firms to regularly update them as to findings, etc. to work for additional funding.

There are many successful incubators from which regional leaders can learn strategies and programming as this project moves forward:

- ✓ McClellan Technology Incubator (<http://www.mtisac.com/>) in Sacramento, California
- ✓ Blue Ridge Business Development Center (<http://blueridgebdc.org/>) in Alleghany County, North Carolina
- ✓ Center for Entrepreneurial Growth and Technology Innovation (CEGTI) at Lane College (<http://www.lanecollege.edu>)
- ✓ Santa Fe Business Incubator (<http://sfbi.net/>) in Santa Fe, New Mexico
- ✓ Austin Technology Incubator (<http://ati.ic2.org/>) in Austin, Texas
- ✓ Oklahoma Center for Advancement & Technology (<http://www.ocast.state.ok.us>)

Primary Implementers: UNR and DRI

Secondary Implementers: EDawn to serve in a convener role, Local business leaders and entrepreneurs, the Entrepreneurship Team, CET, and IC³

Strategy Two: Support an innovation based economy through advanced technology development.

The development of an innovation-based economy is often catalyzed in communities that embrace a strong technology backbone. These communities strive to be on the leading edge, whether it's in the development of a cutting edge technology infrastructure, strong funding support of research programs, or significant emphasis placed on tech commercialization. Many times, these initiatives simply send the right message to technology companies and workers that are looking to relocate. Below, we have provided action items that could be implemented to begin to position Northern Nevada as a future technology metro.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Expand the technology commercialization efforts at the University Nevada, Reno and Desert Research Institute to attract increased outside investor interest, learn from national leaders in the field of tech transfer, and expand the number of technologies that are commercialized annually out of these institutions.
 - ✓ Conduct a bi-annual technology commercialization symposium for inventors to present their research to venture capitalists, angels, and industry leaders.
 - ✓ The Office of Technology Transfer should organize a Distinguished Visiting Speaker Series targeted to UNR's and DRI's technology strengths with a focus on technology applications that have market potential.
 - ✓ Inaugurate regional entrepreneurial and technology transfer awards for innovative areas such as Civic Entrepreneurship, Minority Entrepreneurship, and Clean Energy Entrepreneurship.

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- ✓ Become centrally involved in professional associations and conferences that center on technology transfer and technology-based economic development.
 2. Lobby the state to develop a matching program for SBIR and STTR grants won by local companies.
 - ✓ Work to obtain state legislative support for increased funds to match SBIR and STTR grant awards earned by Nevada companies.
 - ✓ Benchmark Northern Nevada performance in attracting SBIR and STTR funding against other metros on an ongoing basis.
 3. Enhance Internet connectivity by blanketing downtown areas, university and community college campuses, and tourist destinations with wireless Internet communications access.
 - ✓ Identify private sector technology companies to fund and sponsor the deployment of the technology in exchange for advertisements such as, "this Wireless hotspot brought to you by X company"

Primary Implementers: UNR, DRI, and EDAWN to serve in an advocacy role

Secondary Implementers: Local technology companies, the Entrepreneurship Team, CET

Strategy Three: Ensure that regional land use planning efforts recognize the need for suitable sites and infrastructure to match the needs of target industry companies.

As mentioned above, the region needs to be sure that it is prepared for the evolving sites and infrastructure needs of the region's future target industries. Many of the final six target industries will require office and research parks, which is a shift from much of the large industrial park development that has shaped the region's past. EDAWN should serve as the voice of the target industries with both government entities in the land-use planning process and with private developers in the land development process.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Conduct a thorough inventory of the available sites and facilities and compare this to the needs of target industry companies.
2. Encourage development of Research and Technology parks throughout Northern Nevada.
3. Actively communicate future projected real estate needs to local commercial developers and gather their support for implementation.

Primary Implementers: Local developer community, EDAWN to serve in an advocacy role

Secondary Implementers: City/County land use planning departments

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

It is critical that Northern Nevada, with leadership from EDAWN, work to attract and expand businesses that grow jobs for its citizens and surrounding communities. Growth will come through a broad-based economic development plan focused on an updated target industry strategy and the overall creation of an entrepreneurial environment based in innovation.

However, it is also important that the region is operating under a single vision for its future economic development and that

EDAWN play a stronger advocacy role in product improvement issues. We provide recommendations below.

Economic Development Priority

Ensure that economic development efforts are broad-based, addressing community improvement needs as well as targeted business recruitment, retention, and expansion.

Strategy One: Broaden the vision and scope of economic development to include a role in shaping product improvement needs.

EDAWN has achieved strong support and has built strong buy-in from its community partners. The timing is ideal to unveil a new approach to economic development that embraces the nature of this plan and involves the community to an unprecedented degree. Emphasis should be placed on restructuring the support structure for economic development in a way that maximizes community involvement.

Economic development within a community includes business recruitment, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurship, and product improvements. Although EDAWN is charged with only two of these activities (business recruitment and business retention and expansion) it needs to play the leading role in coordinating the other two. This will ultimately make the selling of Northern Nevada much more effective. Here, we offer a structure for organization of the entire effort.

EDAWN should continue to be the organization primarily responsible for business recruitment, retention and expansion. However, EDAWN should expand its role to act as the voice of the private sector and take an advocacy role in community development issues that affect positive economic growth. In one focus group, a participant noted, "EDAWN is in the best position to lead the charge, to be the one voice that brings the business community, the public sector, and college and K-12 educators together."

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDAWN should agree as an organization on a broader vision for future economic development.
 - ✓ AngelouEconomics believes that it is imperative that EDAWN, as well as other "partners" in economic development, commit to a broader economic development vision.
 - ✓ This vision should be closely guided by the initiatives outlined for Economic Development Plus and the recommendations outlined in the Target2010 project.

- ✓ Ensure the vision is the core of every economic development activity over the next five years.
- 2. Form product improvement teams to implement the community improvement recommendations outlined in this plan.
 - ✓ Identify appropriate community partners to serve on these teams.
 - ✓ Utilize young professionals to serve on these teams and to implement recommendations.
 - ✓ EDAWN should act as a convener to assemble these teams; however, the primary implementers will be community partners.
 - ✓ For example, EDAWN will help assemble the Business and Education Council mentioned above that is made up of the region's employers, and educational and workforce providers, but this Council has the primary responsibility for implementing education and workforce development recommendations provided in this plan or other beneficial projects.

Primary Implementer: EDAWN to serve in an advocacy and convener role

Secondary Implementer: Community partners (employers, educational institutions, public sector institutions, Cities/Counties, etc.)

ED Role:	Product Improvement
Primary responsibility:	EDAWN / Community Partners
Primary mission:	Improve Northern Nevada's competitive offering
Target audience:	WFD, Biz Climate, Sites and Infrastructure, Quality of Life
Organization:	<p>Product improvement team</p> <p>K-12 Superintendents The University of Nevada, Reno Community Colleges Regional Chambers Local Major Employers City/County Governments</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Young professionals Form a young professionals network and shadow board; assign the volunteers with product improvement activities</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>EDAWN Advocate for product improvement / priority recommendations that impact ability of the region to support target industries</p>

Strategy Two: Form Target Industry teams for each representative industry.

As outlined in this project, AngelouEconomics has recommended six specific target industries for the region to focus its business recruitment efforts on to achieve the maximum results for economic development and the creation of high quality jobs. In order to become the most successful in attracting these targeted industries, AE recommends tapping into the vast knowledge and resources of other business leaders within these industries to further define specific messages and activities that could attract these industries.

The development of target industry groups pulls resources together behind a unified message and mission, while also engaging successful businesses and business owners in the overall goals for economic development in the community. This type of effort also demonstrates the community's commitment to the development of a positive business climate to prospective companies in its target industries.

The structure of EDawn's economic development efforts should revolve around its target industries. Internally EDawn should identify one staff member to be assigned to manage one to two target industries each. Invite other community leaders to serve on target industry teams. These teams will be charged with building the region's core of knowledge about the target industry. Participation in one target industry team does not exclude a participant from working with other target industries. This is simply a format for focusing EDawn's marketing efforts and ensuring that the region has a group that is educated about each industry.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDawn should form a target industry team for each of the six target industries and should identify key participants on each team.
2. As a general guide, each team should consist of roughly 10-15 team members:
 - ✓ 1 EDawn representative,
 - ✓ 1-2 local government representative per appropriate county/city,
 - ✓ 1 university representative,
 - ✓ 1 research representative (if appropriate),
 - ✓ 1 utility representative, and
 - ✓ A target industry task force made up of 6-8 private sector leaders from appropriate target industry companies.
3. Each team should meet quarterly to discuss industry strategies and issues, while focusing on specific outcomes for targeted industry initiatives.
4. Each team develops actionable strategies for attracting companies in the target industry and develops key messages concerning each industry.
5. These target industry groups should be highly visible in the community in their activity, as well as at trade shows and prospect calls, at their own expense.
6. This group should convene as needed by EDawn to assist with recruitment strategy, assisting with prospect visits and site tours, as well as "welcome" gatherings, and marketing tours to outside regions, etc.

<i>ED Role:</i>	Business Recruitment
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	EDAWN
<i>Primary mission:</i>	External marketing
<i>Target audience:</i>	6 target industries
<i>Organization:</i>	<p>6 target industry teams</p> <p>1 EDAWN rep 1 rep per county/city 1 NNDA rep 1 University rep 1 Research rep (if applicable) 1 Utility rep</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Target Industry Task Force 6-8 execs from local target industry companies to: identify leads direct sales activities inform about trends</p>

Primary Implementer: EDawn to serve in an advocacy and convener role

Secondary Implementer: Community partners (target industry employers, educational institutions, public sector institutions, Cities/Counties, etc.)

Strategy Three: Adopt a model for regional E.D. cooperation.

The necessity for a regional approach to economic development has been highlighted on numerous occasions throughout this Target2010 process. The bottom line is that the areas that succeed in their economic development efforts are those that act as a region. All of the assets that a region has at its disposal need to be in play to recruit businesses and/or retain the ones that currently exist. Site selectors and business owners rarely see county and city lines when choosing a location. Instead, these decision makers see a regional workforce, regional research assets, regional education institutions, and a regional infrastructure.

Northern Nevada is certainly not immune to the challenges of regionalism. With six unique counties, numerous more cities and towns, and multiple economic development authorities, the prospect of aligning the region seems daunting. Surprisingly enough, AngelouEconomics has worked in regions that comprise many more counties and has seen effective regionalism take hold.

A concerted effort must be made to reach out to regional entities and align economic development efforts. AngelouEconomics believes that EDawn (as the largest economic development organization in the region) should lead this effort. The leadership at EDawn has made consistent strides to bring the region together. These efforts must continue and be enhanced.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. EDawn should use the implementation of the Target2010 plan as a method for including stakeholders from each of the six counties and partner economic development authorities.
 - ✓ Make sure that Product Improvement teams incorporate representatives from each of the 6 counties. Alternatively, sub-group teams could be formed in the rural counties (for example, two Business and Education Councils could be established – one to focus on urban issues, one to focus on rural needs).
 - ✓ The branding and marketing section of this implementation plan includes recommendations that should be shared region-wide. Make sure to include each county and regional economic development partners in identifying community champions and getting buy-in to a regional brand.
2. Form a Retention and Expansion (R&E) team that includes each economic development entity in the region in order to ensure that needs of all existing employers are being met.
 - ✓ This team should meet on a monthly basis to provide updates and discuss issues.
 - ✓ There should be a stronger push to enact the Business Builders program (which has been highly successful primarily in Washoe County) throughout the 6-County region
 - A broader base of community volunteers should be developed in each of the six counties to participate in Business Builders
 - The Retention and Expansion team should set a goal to meet with at least 300 companies throughout the region per year.

- ✓ In addition to Business Builders inquiries, these meetings should focus on (1) learning more about the company and its future plans, (2) determining what the company needs from local economic developers, and (3) informing the company of what the community can offer them, from workforce development training to expansion incentives.
 - ✓ The Retention & Expansion team should also commit to a formalized process for following up with the companies that were met with that had pressing needs.
 - ✓ Retention & Expansion efforts should also be closely aware of issues connected to the state. One representative from NCED should be included on the R&E team to make sure that the state is kept abreast of issues affecting its employer base.
3. EDAWN should take on the role as the leading external marketing organization for the 6-county region; however, efforts should be guided by input from constituents across the region.
- ✓ Business recruitment efforts should include input from stakeholders throughout the six county region:
 - Where appropriate, include key rural county representatives on the target industry teams. This includes county EDAs and representatives from NNDA.
 - Make sure that E.D. representatives from each county or NNDA are prepared to assist in site selector or company visits to those respective areas.
 - Invite representatives from the rural counties to be a part of a “Northern Nevada coalition” when traveling to prospect regions, industry conferences, and/or E.D. related events.
 - ✓ Make every effort to receive buy-in from the 6-counties on external marketing and advertising efforts that EDAWN conducts on behalf of the Northern Nevada community.
4. Incorporate the Economic Development Plus concept and Community Contribution Tracking System across the entire six-county region.
- ✓ Work with NNDA and with economic development officials in each county to get commitment to Economic Development Plus.

Business Retention & Expansion

ED Role:

Primary responsibility:

Primary mission:

Target audience:

Organization:

EDAWN / County EDA / Regional ED partners

Foster local company expansion

All local companies

Retention & Expansion team

- 1 EDAWN rep**
- 1 NNDA rep**
- 1 rep per county/city**
- 1 Utility rep**

PLUS

Chambers of Commerce, regional workforce development providers, and other community partners

Regularly inform the Retention and Expansion team about retention efforts and needs

PLUS

State of Nevada E.D. (NCED)

Inform local companies about the state's role; Involve state leaders on issues related to the 5 priority projects

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- ✓ After successful pilot program of the Contribution Tracking System to employers and new projects in Washoe County, roll the program out to the rest of the region.

EVALUATION PLAN

AngelouEconomics has identified several data sets that we believe will be good measures of economic performance. These data are easily found at state and national sources, are available at the county level, and should be considered good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its citizens. EDAWN's newly created Research Manager position should take the lead in tracking these metrics on an annual basis. The first step will be to apply threshold levels for each of the categories listed below. Final consensus should be reached between the President of EDAWN and the Board on the ultimate levels for each of the performance metrics. Performance metric categories for each recommendation area of this plan are below:

Business Climate

- Net new firm creation
- Increase in venture capital funding or angel funding (track in conjunction with Sierra Angels and Nevada Ventures)
- Membership growth in Entrepreneur network groups (coordinate with CET or YEO)
- Reduction in development permitting timelines
- Progress on enacting target industry specific incentives

Education and Workforce Development

- Job growth in target industries
- Average wage growth
- Percentage of college educated workers
- Changes in SAT scores and dropout rates
- Changes in educational attainment, particularly higher education enrollment
- Use and quality of workforce development programs
- Employer satisfaction of worker skills and availability (focus specifically on target industry companies)

Quality of Life

- Percentage of population in the 25-44 year-old demographic
- Membership rates in the Young Professional Networking organization
- New retail, entertainment, and cultural establishments in downtown
- Number of new beautification projects completed in the downtown area
- Housing affordability, with focus on median home price and the availability of diverse housing options

Sites and Infrastructure

- Progress on the creation of a regional Technology Incubator
- Progress on development of technology infrastructure:
 - Tech transfer activity at UNR and DRI
 - Increase in SBIR and STTR grants won by local companies
 - Growth in Wireless hotspots throughout the region
- Complete inventory of sites and facilities for target industry companies throughout the 6-County region
- Office and industrial vacancy rates

Economic Development

- Local, state and national media mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity (info requests or visits) in target industries
- New project announcements in target industries
- Number of companies met with by Retention and Expansion Team

Northern Nevada could have an annual “scorecard” meeting where an outside consultant reviews progress made and gives the region a score on each goal and strategies implemented or not implemented.

Target2010:
Implementation Matrix

Product
Improvement
Recommendations

Priority = 1 - 3
Lead Entity = *
Convenor = o
Participant = x

Priority	Start Timeframe	End Timeframe	Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN)	Regional Economic Development partners (County EDAs, NINDA)	Business & Education Council (Recommended to be formed)	Regional City & County governments	State of Nevada elected leaders	NV Commission on Economic Development (NCED)	The University of Nevada, Reno	The Desert Research Institute (DRI)	Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce	Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitor's Authority (RSCVA)	The Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology (CET)	Young Professionals Network (Recommended to be formed)	Downtown Development Partnership (Recommended to be formed)	Local private land developers	Local Private Sector (Major Employers, Entrepreneurs, VC's, etc.)	Regional K-12 School systems	Workforce development providers (e.g. NV Works, etc.)	Community Colleges (TMCC & WNCC)	Local Networking Organizations (e.g. WIN, etc.)	Target Industry Teams
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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.2	The Council will develop an annual program of initiatives for the year.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o				x						x	x	x	x		
1.3	Meet on a quarterly basis (each subcommittee should meet monthly) to discuss progress in its annual program and other workforce and education issues.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o			x		x					x	x	x	x		
1.4	Develop an educational campaign to inform employers and potential workers of workforce development programs currently being offered.	2	end - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o				x						x	x	x	x		

Workforce Development & Education Strategy Two: Conduct an annual Workforce Preparedness Survey to gauge local workforce skills and performance in targeted industries and existing industries.

2.1	Conduct an annual Workforce Preparedness Survey of local employers.	1	early - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o										x					x
2.2	Compare survey results to the occupational requirements and gap analysis conducted in the target industry report delivered by AE.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o															x
2.3	Produce a report summarizing the results of the study by industry category.	1	end - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o															
2.4	Identify model benchmark communities for Northern Nevada to compare its progress to and benchmark the region's education performance on an ongoing annual basis.	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o															
2.5	Publish the results of the Survey and promote the region's successes and improvements made in building a premier workforce.	1	end - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o															

Workforce Development & Education Strategy Three: Make the region's high schools cutting edge by developing a program that links the education system with target industry companies.

3.1	Set up a pilot program in one of the region's new target industries at a select area high school.	2	mid - 2007	early - 2008	x		*o										x	*x		x		x
3.2	Determine the type of companies (existing companies already part of one of the recommended target industries) to be included in program.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007	x		*o										x	*x		x		x
3.3	Begin discussions with a group of targeted companies in one of the target industries to determine the types of skills workers need in their industry.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007	x		x										x	x		x		*o
3.4	Bring together regional educators and target industry companies to develop curriculum.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007	x		*o										x	x		x		x

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RECOMMENDATIONS																							
3.5	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007			o												x	*x		x		x

Workforce Development & Education Strategy Four: Consider skilled workers as an active recruitment target for relocation to Northern Nevada.

3.1	1	end - 2006	mid - 2007	*o		x																	x
3.2	1	end - 2006	end - 2007	*o	x				x			x											
3.3	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x				x			x		x				x				x	x

III. Quality of Life

Priority: Improve the region's aesthetic appeal and create a desirable environment that will draw young professionals and other workers who can fill jobs in target industries.

Quality of Life Strategy One: Launch a campaign to retain and attract more young professionals – establish a Northern Nevada Young Professionals Network.

1.1	1	end - 2006	early - 2007	*o	x				x		x			x							x	x	
1.2	2	early - 2007	mid - 2007	*o										x									
1.3	1	early - 2007	end - 2007	x										*o									
1.4	1	early - 2007	Ongoing	x										*o								x	
1.5	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x							x									

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.6	Establish a website to allow YPs to share information on professional, civic, and social opportunities.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007											*o								
1.7	Empower YPs in Northern Nevada to market to other young professionals outside the region.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x								x									

Quality of Life Strategy Two: Support efforts to revitalize downtown Reno and encourage revitalization of downtown areas throughout the region.

2.1	Form a Downtown Development Partnership to be an advocate for desirable development in downtown Reno and to serve as an oversight committee.	2	early - 2007	Ongoing	*o		x		x		x				x	x	x						
2.2	Promote high-density residential development downtown and encourage mixed-use developments to support a live and work atmosphere.	2	early - 2007	Ongoing			x								*o	x	x						
2.3	Encourage development of downtown shopping, restaurants, and nightlife to draw young professionals and current students.	2	early - 2007	Ongoing			x								*o	x	x						
2.4	Enhance the allure of the downtown riverfront by developing added recreational options such as a hike and bike trail that is easily accessible from nearby residential neighborhoods.	3	mid - 2007	2010			x								*o	x	x						
2.5	Continue to enhance arts and cultural offerings in the downtown area.	2	early - 2008	Ongoing			x				x			x	*o		x						

Quality of Life Strategy Three: Provide diverse housing options that are affordable and attractive for existing residents and those relocating to the area.

3.1	Form a task force with the specific goal of encouraging affordable housing options.	1	early - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x	x									x	x						
3.2	Encourage the development of a mix of housing options including high-density housing in the urban center.	1	early - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x	x									x	x						
3.3	Provide incentives to companies that create affordable housing for each job created.	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	x		*o									x	x						
3.4	Establish requirements to set aside a percentage of new residential developments for affordable housing for public service workers such as teachers, nurses, and police/fire.	2	mid - 2007	early - 2009	x		*o									x							

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Quality of Life Strategy Four: EDAWN should continue to actively communicate the importance that local Quality of Life has on future economic development.

4.1	Actively communicate the purpose of the Target2010 process and emphasize that the impetus behind this project was to identify targeted growth areas that would specifically help to enhance the region's quality of life.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o																	x
4.2	Communicate that the six target industries were chosen with the natural environment as a key consideration and to increase wage levels to make the region more affordable to its citizens.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o																	x
4.3	Actively work with environmental and "slow growth" groups to ensure that they feel that their voices are being heard.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x					x										x	
4.4	Continue to build a groundswell of support and a consensus that the region wants to have positive economic development and a strong quality of life.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x					x											

IV. Sites & Infrastructure

Sites & Infrastructure Priority: Focus on developing a local infrastructure that will spur technology development and suit the needs of the region's future target industry companies.

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy One: Support the development of a technology incubator in Northern Nevada.

1.1	Research and visit best-in-class incubator facilities.	2	early - 2007	mid - 2007	x				x	x	x	*o			x								
1.2	Work with these existing incubator programs for mentoring and/or "lessons"	2	early - 2007	mid - 2007							x	*o			x								
1.3	Conduct a feasibility study to determine the technology niche sectors that will be the primary focus of the Incubator.	1	end - 2006	mid - 2007							x	*o											
1.4	Research and tap into federal funding opportunities available for starting up Incubators.	1	early - 2007	mid - 2007							x	*o			x								
1.5	Determine an appropriate location for the region's first Incubator.	1	early - 2007	mid - 2007							x	*o											
1.6	Campaign to obtain private and public funding and lobby the state for funding support.	1	early - 2007	end - 2007	x			x	x	x	x	*o			x								
1.7	Set the incubator up as 501c3 non-profit organization with a dedicated board.	1	mid - 2007	end - 2007							x	*o											

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.8	Hire an executive director to oversee operation of the facility.	2	end - 2007	end - 2007					x	*o													
1.9	Identify facility tools, support systems, and equipment needs to create desired activity.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007					x	*o			x										
1.10	Build community support and identify and attract local experts who would be willing to volunteer their expertise at the Incubator.	2	mid - 2007	end - 2007	x				x	*o			x										
1.11	Have a grand opening launch and invite the community to join in the celebration.	2	early - 2008	early - 2008	x				x	*o			x										
1.12	Build and launch an incubator / entrepreneurial resources website.	2	end - 2007	early - 2008						*x													
1.13	Promote the Incubator locally and throughout the region.	2	early - 2008	Ongoing	x				x	*o			x										
1.14	Create a position for a grant writer to continuously look for additional funding through state and federal sources.	3	early - 2008	mid - 2008					x	*x													
1.15	Identify an individual or group to serve as a "fundraiser", working primarily with angel investors and venture capital firms to regularly update them as to findings, etc. to work for additional funding.	3	early - 2008	mid - 2008					x	*x													

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Two: Support an innovation based economy through advanced technology development.

2.1	Expand the technology commercialization efforts at the University Nevada, Reno and Desert Research Institute	2	early - 2007	Ongoing	x				*o	*x							x						
2.2	Lobby the state to develop a matching program for SBIR and STTR grants won by local companies.	2	early - 2007	end - 2007	*o				x	x													
2.3	Enhance Internet connectivity by blanketing downtown areas, university and community college campuses, and tourist destinations with wireless Internet communications access.	3	early - 2007	mid - 2008	x		*o		x	x							x						

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Three: Ensure that regional land use planning efforts recognize the need for suitable sites and infrastructure to match the needs of target industry companies.

3.1	Conduct a thorough inventory of the available sites and facilities and compare this to the needs of target industry companies.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x										x							
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RECOMMENDATIONS																							
3.2 Encourage development of Research and Technology parks throughout Northern Nevada.	2	early - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x										x						
3.3 Actively communicate future projected real estate needs to local commercial developers and gather their support for implementation.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x												x						

V. Economic Development
(E.D.) Efforts

Priority: Ensure that economic development efforts are broad-based, addressing the needs of the citizens of the county through targeted business development and community improvement efforts, all resulting in long-term economic prosperity.

Economic Development Strategy One: Broaden the vision and scope of economic development to include a role in shaping product improvement needs.

1.1 EDAWN should agree as an organization on a broader vision for future economic development.	1	end - 2006	end - 2006	*x	x		x		x														
1.2 Form product improvement teams to implement the community improvement recommendations outlined in this plan.	1	end - 2006	end - 2006	*o	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x

Economic Development Strategy Two: Form Target Industry teams for each representative industry.

2.1 Form a target industry team for each of the six target industries and should identify key participants on each team.	1	end - 2006	end - 2006	*o	x		x		x								x						x
2.2 Each team should meet quarterly to discuss industry strategies and issues, while focusing on specific outcomes for targeted industry initiatives.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	x	x		x		x								x						*o
2.3 Each team develops actionable strategies for attracting companies in the target industry and develops key messages concerning each industry.	1	early - 2007	Ongoing	x	x		x		x								x						*o
2.4 TI teams should convene as needed by EDAWN to assist with recruitment strategy, assisting with prospect visits and site tours, as well as "welcome" gatherings, and marketing tours to outside regions	2	early - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x		x								x						x

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Development Strategy Three: Adopt a model for regional E.D. cooperation.

3.1	Use the implementation of the Target2010 plan as a method for including stakeholders from each of the six counties and partner economic development authorities.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.1a	Make sure that Product Improvement teams incorporate representatives from each of the 6 counties.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.1b	Make sure to include each county and regional economic development partners in identifying community champions and getting buy-in to a regional brand.	1	end - 2006	mid - 2007	*o	x		x															
3.2	Form a Retention and Expansion (R&E) team that includes each economic development entity in the region in order to ensure that needs of all existing employers are being met.	1	end - 2006	mid - 2007	*o	x		x															
3.2a	This team should meet on a monthly basis to provide updates and discuss issues.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.2b	The Retention & Expansion team should also commit to a formalized process for following up with the companies that were met with that had pressing needs.	1	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.2c	Enact the Business Builders program throughout the 6-County region	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.3	EDAWN should take on the role as the leading external marketing organization for the 6-county region; however, efforts should be guided by input from constituents across the region.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.3a	Business recruitment efforts should include input from stakeholders throughout the six county region	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.3b	Make every effort to receive buy-in from the 6-counties on external marketing and advertising efforts that EDAWN conducts on behalf of the Northern Nevada community.	1	end - 2006	Ongoing	*o	x		x															
3.4	Incorporate the Economic Development Plus concept and Community Contribution Tracking System across the entire six-county region.	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x															

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RECOMMENDATIONS

3.4a Work with NNDA and with economic development officials in each county to get commitment to Economic Development Plus.

3.4b After successful pilot program of the Contribution Tracking System to employers and new projects in Washoe County, roll the program out to the rest of the region.

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3.4a	2	end - 2006	mid - 2007	*o	x		x																	
3.4b	2	mid - 2007	Ongoing	*o	x		x																	



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