

Community and Economic Development (CED) is an interdisciplinary program that supports positive change for communities, businesses, individuals and families. Our programming supports the CED mission:

The development of individual abilities and community support for creating and growing businesses, jobs, wealth, and income.

These programs aim to equip Texans to develop capacity for building sustainable communities. The courses teach valuable information that will benefit and assist individuals, communities, businesses, towns, elected officials, volunteers and others in reaching their goals. Programs are available as workshops, events, short courses, online modules, and in other formats. Course formats are customized to community needs.

Community Development

The status quo is not acceptable for communities that are interested in improving and growing. Extension community development programs help communities to

take charge of their futures, to capture the creativity and innovation of social entrepreneurs, and to bring about positive change and growth. When our faculty facilitates stakeholder input, asset mapping, and planning processes, communities and residents come away with more than a plan. They have action steps, confidence in their ability to move forward, and on-going technical support from our professional Extension team.

Leadership

Leaders get things done! Sitting around talking about what needs to be done will not bring about change and improvement in communities. It takes action oriented people with critical thinking skills to recognize problems, challenges and opportunities, then to rally the citizenry to create visions for dealing with them.

Our leadership programming helps individuals to build the skills to lead their communities. Some programs are targeted to specific audiences, including county commissioners and judges or event planners. Others are designed to fit the needs of current and future community leaders from teens to educators or economic development professionals. All programs help

Featured CED Program

Stronger Economies Together

The purpose of SET is to strengthen the capacity of communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region, one that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region.

A partnership between USDA-Rural Development and the Regional Rural Development Centers along with land grant university partners, the SET program helps communities to identify their regional assets and goals and to follow through in implementing their action plans. At the close of the nine-module program, regional relationships will be strengthened, regions will be able to function interdependently on shared initiatives, and assets will be more effectively employed. Working at the regional level, rather than the county or city level, provides a stronger asset base and greater opportunities for economic synergies. Participating regions are facilitated through a planning process and receive tailored data and technical assistance to help them set and achieve regional goals.

individuals to build on their current strengths to improve their personal leadership and their community's capacity.

Business Retention and Expansion

Taking care of local businesses is one of the best investments economic developers can make. The BR&E program offers a formal program designed to get the most out of providing timely regular assistance to existing businesses when they need it. These efforts can help local businesses to expand and connect to other local firms. Implementing BR&E can help economic developers and chambers to identify hidden gems and may even prevent a local business from moving away.

Businesses sometimes need training in retaining customers too. Extension programs help businesses understand how to create an environment that keeps customers coming back to shop locally. In today's economic environment customer service is often pointed to as the motivating factor for people to turn away from some of the big box stores in favor of shopping locally. These proven programs may just transform attitude of the entire business community.

Cooperative Business Support

The Roy B. Davis Cooperative Management Program is an effort of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to strengthen cooperative business initiatives and support the coordinated actions of agricultural producers. The mission of the Program is to improve the economic vitality of rural communities through the cooperative business actions of their citizens. Program personnel interact closely with industry associations to provide relevant, customer-driven assistance emphasizing people, not programs.

Economic Development

Most communities want to strengthen and expand their local economies. We offer a variety of programs to help community leaders to better understand and target their economic resources.

Economic development strategies may include fostering entrepreneurship, supporting local businesses, or recruiting new firms in industries from agriculture to tourism and manufacturing to professional services. We offer a variety of programs to help community leaders to better understand and target their economic resources.

Entrepreneurship and Business Development

Entrepreneurs need basic knowledge and skills to start or grow businesses. They also need to begin developing working relationships with specialists and

fellow business owners so they will be better prepared to get the assistance they need when challenges and opportunities arise.

Our entrepreneurship programs take potential entrepreneurs through the process of building a business plan and testing the business concept on to running the business and eventually expanding. We even have a program to help businesses develop a disaster plan. Many programs are not industry specific but others focus on generating income from rural property or managing risks and profits in agricultural industries.

Communities can create a favorable environment for local entrepreneurs. Extension works with communities to employ entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy and become Certified Entrepreneur Ready Communities.



Nature Tourism

Nature Tourism encompasses a broad range of natural resource based recreation and tourism activities. It is an important part of the Texas economy and a catalyst for conservation and management of natural resources. The nature tourism program provides educational programs for the public, private business-both for profit and non-profit, landowners, and community leaders. Communities can learn to develop nature tourism programs and events to enhance community development efforts. Individuals can become certified wildlife guides or explore creating or expanding a nature, historic, cultural, or agricultural based tourism business (including a hunting or wildlife photography business).

For more information on CED programs, visit <http://communities.tamu.edu>.