**Writing Your Region’s SET Plan:**

**Guidance for Writing as You Work**

NOTE: This document references the SET Planning Template. While regions are not required to use the template, its outline may provide some helpful guidance in how to organize work throughout the SET process.

Establish a writing team early. Even before the civic forum, the team can begin to write parts of the plan. Here are some suggested sections to write along the way:

Immediately:

* **What to write:** Write a description of the region.
* **Where to start:** You can use some of the language that you put into your regional SET applications as a starting point.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Define the counties
  + Tell about any unique history or culture that makes the region stand out
  + What is the reason these counties make up a region – what do you have in common?
  + Describe the region’s history of working together, if any.
* **Where this fits in the template:** Under the Introduction, Regional Description
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Assets and Challenges

Civic Forum:

* **What to write:** Describe the civic forum and outcomes
* **Where to start:** Use advertisements for the forum, sign in sheets, and the summary charts from the various rounds of the forum
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Describe the forum – when and where it occurred
  + Tell how people were recruited to participate
  + Tell who attended – how many people, what counties or sectors (i.e. business, industry, non-profit) they represented
  + Describe the key findings from each round
* **Where this fits in the template:** Regional Collaboration – add a description of the session and describe who attended; Under Evidence Base for Plan, Regional Input: Civic Forum Findings and Regional Demographic Data – add findings. Also, you can begin adding notes under Regional Assets and Potential Barriers. You will fine-tune this section in Session 3, but capturing some of the main features identified in the forum will lay a solid foundation for these sessions.
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Public Input
  + Assets and Challenges

Session 1:

* **What to write:** Describe key points from the Data Snapshot that caught the attention of the regional team. What were key assets or challenges identified? What clusters will the region be exploring in Session 2? Why were these considered important?
* **Where to start:** You can use tables, charts, or data directly from the Data Snapshot, but do not feel compelled to copy everything. Select those pieces that tell the story of where the region is interested in heading. Look back at discussion notes to see what elements were most important in leading to the next steps.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Provide an overview of what was covered in Session 1
  + Describe key data points that surfaced as most relevant in defining the path forward
  + Discuss the clusters you selected for Session 2. Why were these selected?
  + Think back to the civic forum. Do any of Session 1 discussions link to findings from the forum? If so describe those, demonstrating how you are building on previous sessions.
* **Where this fits in the template:** Regional Collaboration – add a description of the session; Under Evidence Base for Plan, Regional Economic Data
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Assets and Challenges
  + Comparative Advantage
  + Logical
  + Economic Development Focus
  + Regional Development Focus

Session 2:

* **What to write:** Describe Session 2, and explain what clusters the region has decided to work to strengthen moving forward. Use the Data Snapshot to explain your choices and/or any regional input that shaped the choice.
* **Where to start:** You can use tables, charts, or data directly from the Data Snapshot, but do not feel compelled to copy everything. Select those pieces that tell the story of where the region is interested in heading. Look back at discussion notes to see what elements were most important in leading to the next steps. Be sure to include discussions on foundational issues that will be addressed. Link these back to the civic forum findings where appropriate.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Provide an overview of Session 2
  + Discuss data or other input that surfaced as most important in the conversation.
  + Describe the decision made on which clusters to include in the plan moving forward.
  + Were there any foundation issues that the region plans to address because of the conversation?
* **Where this fits in the template:** Regional Collaboration – add a description of the session; Under Evidence Base for Plan, Regional Input: Civic Forum
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Assets and Challenges
  + Comparative Advantage
  + Logical
  + Economic Development Focus
  + Regional Development Focus

Session 3:

* **What to write:** Describe Session 3, listing key assets and challenges related to the clusters and foundational issues identified in Session 2.
* **Where to start:** Notes from the session will provide the bulk of this content. Refer back to civic forum input also, showing overlap and linkages.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Provide an overview of the session
  + Discuss key assets available in the region to support the clusters and foundational issues the team plans to strengthen.
  + Describe key barriers that may hinder success, and discuss any thoughts/plans on how these barriers can be mitigated or overcome
* **Where this fits in the template:** Regional Collaboration – add a description of the session; Under Evidence Base for Plan, Regional Assets and Potential Barriers
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Public Input
  + Assets and Challenges
  + Logical

Session 4:

* **What to write:** Following Session 4’s work, the region should have most, if not all information needed to complete the plan draft.
* **Where to start:** The Regional Economic Development Planning Chart, Plan of Action, and Measurement Plan worksheets will help to fill in many of the missing pieces.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Briefly describe Session 4
  + Describe the planning team – who participated, what sectors and counties did each person represent?
  + Fill in the details about each goal (written in SMART format):
    - How will this goal benefit the region’s economy?
    - What evidence did you find that this goal was important?
    - What strategies will you use to address this goal? (Regional Economic Development Planning Chart)
    - What are the target outcomes for the goal and how you will measure them (Regional Economic Development Planning Chart and Measurement Plan)
    - Plan of Action – You can insert the chart or transfer that information into the document in another format. Be sure to include:
      * Specific action steps for the next 6-12 months
      * Who will be responsible (name names here, be specific)
      * Target completion dates
    - Evaluation Plan: What you will measure and how you will measure
    - Key Contact(s): Who is providing oversight to this goal?
* **Where this fits in the template:** Regional Economic Goals section
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Focused
  + Targets
  + Time Periods
  + Initial Tasks
  + Responsibility
  + Economic Development Focus
  + Regional Development Focus

Wrapping Up:

* **What to write:** Write the “Moving Forward as a Region” (conclusion) section. Attached any relevant appendices. Then go back to do one good read-through and edit to the completed document.
* **Where to start:** As a wrap-up session, most of this information will come from the knowledge of the writing team directly. Be sure to include any proclamations, letters of support, or other external evidence of local decision-maker buy-in.
* **Ideas on what to include:**
  + Provide an overview of how the work will be organized through implementation. For instance, will the team be meeting on a regular basis, organized into work teams, and/or have any central place (such as a website) to share successes?
  + Describe any evidence of local/regional buy-in from decision-makers (such as elected/appointed officials, key resource managers, etc.)
  + Explain how someone reading the plan can get involved and/or learn more about the project.
  + Include any appendices (anything that supports the writing in a significant way).
* **Where this fits in the template:** Moving Forward as a Region.
* **How it supports a High Quality Plan** – Helps demonstrate:
  + Consistent & Connected
  + Persuasive
  + Buy-in
  + Logical

Cleaning Up the Final Document – Suggested Steps:

* Go back through the entire plan and edit to create a seamless narrative.
* Have several people read through that have not been involved in writing to ensure the writing is clear to people seeing it new.
* Share with the entire planning team for final comments.
* Ask the SET coaches to provide a review prior to submitting for formal review.
* Have someone provide a technical edit (grammar, spelling, formatting).