

Quick Start Guide to the

# Playbook for Communities Facing Large-Scale Development in Ohio



Ohio Environmental Council

This guide provides an overview of essential steps for Ohio communities navigating large-scale development. It highlights key strategies for community engagement, proactive planning, and ensuring equitable outcomes found in the **Playbook for Communities Facing Large Scale Development in Ohio**.



## Central Ohio is one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.

Large-scale development presents Ohio communities with a catalyst for change, carrying both promise and pitfalls. While it can unlock opportunities for economic growth and revitalization, it also brings the potential for significant disruption. To ensure that growth enhances, rather than detracts from, the fabric of your community, early and proactive engagement is essential. By getting involved from the outset, residents can play a vital role in shaping development that is both sustainable and harmonious with the existing community.

In these situations, time is often of the essence. The rapid pace of economic development can easily outpace the more deliberate and considered approach of local decision-making. That's precisely why the **Playbook for Communities Facing Large-Scale Development** was created; to equip you with the tools and knowledge to act decisively and navigate the development process effectively.

Think of the Playbook as your comprehensive strategic guide. It's a rich resource, and while you may already be well-versed in some areas, others might introduce entirely new concepts. To help you get started quickly and make the most of this powerful tool, we've developed this **Quick Start Guide**. It distills the Playbook's key strategies into immediate actions, ones that should be taken now, and continual actions which should be taken throughout the process.

# Immediate Actions: The Rapid Response

When development is proposed, time is of the essence. Here's what to do:

## 1. Form a Rapid Response Team

A well-organized team is essential for navigating the complexities of rapid development. This section guides the reader through assembling a diverse team, defining roles, and establishing a clear decision-making process.

### □ Assemble a diverse team of local government officials, community leaders, and experts.

A multi-disciplinary team is essential for addressing the diverse challenges and opportunities of rapid development. This part of the guide advises on who to include in the team, such as government officials, community leaders, and experts in specific fields.

[Rapid Response Team Formation \(p. 13\)](#)

[Assembling a Multidisciplinary Team \(p. 13\)](#)

### □ Clearly define roles (Team Lead, Planner, Community Liaison, etc.).

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are necessary for a smoothly functioning rapid response team. This section outlines the key roles within the team and their responsibilities.

[Team Roles and Responsibilities" \(p. 14\)](#)

### □ Establish a clear decision-making process.

A structured decision-making process is crucial for making timely and well-informed decisions during rapid development. This section provides guidance on establishing a transparent, accountable, and inclusive process.

[Establishing a Clear Decision-Making Process \(p. 15\)](#)

[Decision-Making Process Template \(p. 102\)](#)

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## 2. Conduct and Immediate Impact Assessment

Before taking action, it's important to understand the potential impacts of rapid development. This section guides the reader through a rapid assessment process to identify key concerns across environmental, social, economic, and infrastructure areas.

### □ Use the provided checklist to quickly identify potential impacts (environmental, social, economic, infrastructure)

This section introduces a checklist designed to help communities quickly identify potential impacts from rapid development. It offers a preliminary screening tool to guide further investigation and analysis.

[Immediate Impact Assessment Checklist" \(p. 16\)](#)

### □ Prioritize key concerns

After identifying potential impacts, it's important to prioritize the most significant ones. This section guides the reader through prioritizing impacts based on severity, likelihood, and community concern, and it explains how to gather relevant data.

[Conducting an Immediate Impact Assessment \(p. 15\)](#)

### 3. Engage the Community

Early and continuous communication with the community builds trust and ensures collaboration. This section outlines steps for establishing communication channels, organizing community meetings, and gathering initial input from residents.

#### □ Hold rapid community meetings to share information and gather feedback

In the face of rapid development, it is important to quickly disseminate information and gather community feedback. This part of the guide provides steps for organizing effective community meetings to share information and gather input.

[Community Engagement for the Rapid Response \(p.18\)](#)

#### □ Establish clear communication channels (website, social media, etc.)

Establishing diverse communication channels helps to keep the community informed and engaged. These sections advise on setting up various channels to share information and receive feedback.

[Establishing Ongoing Communication Channels \(p. 19\)](#)

[Building Community Awareness and Engagement \(p. 24\)](#)

[Developing a Communications Plan \(p. 29\)](#)

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## Continual Action: Employ the Playbook

The Playbook serves as your go-to guide for making development work for your community. It's packed with practical strategies and insights you'll want to use again and again. It will walk you through everything from the core principles that make development fair and beneficial for everyone, to understanding how the whole development process works.

### 4. Understanding the Development Process

Understanding the development process is an essential component of effective community engagement and informed decision-making. This section provides an overview of the typical stages of development, the roles of key players, and opportunities for public input.

#### □ Familiarize yourself with the typical stages of development

Development projects typically follow a series of stages from initial planning to completion. These parts of the guide outlines the typical stages of development to provide a clear framework for understanding the process.

[The Development Process \(p. 7\)](#)

[Zoning and Permitting Process \(p. 10\)](#)

#### □ Identify the key players and their roles

The development process involves various key players with distinct roles and responsibilities. This section identifies the main participants in the development process and explains their respective roles.

[Key Players and Their Roles \(p. 7\)](#)

#### □ Recognize opportunities for public input throughout the process

Public input is a vital component of the development process. This section highlights the various opportunities for community members to engage and provide feedback throughout the development lifecycle.

[Public Engagement Opportunities at Different Stages \(p. 11\)](#)

## 5. Key Principles for Equitable Development

Equitable development ensures that the benefits of growth are shared by all members of the community. This section outlines key principles to guide development towards just and sustainable outcomes.

### □ Prioritizing community needs and values.

Community empowerment is fundamental to equitable development. This principle emphasizes the importance of actively involving residents in shaping their community's future and ensuring their needs and values are central to the development process.

Community Empowerment (p. 20)

Forming Effective Community Coalitions (p. 38)

### □ Understand and utilize local regulations to shape development.

Local control is essential for communities to guide development in alignment with their vision. This principle highlights the importance of understanding and utilizing local regulations, such as zoning ordinances and community plans, to shape development and ensure it benefits the community.

Local Control and Influence (p. 40)

### □ Ensure development benefits all residents, particularly vulnerable populations.

Equitable outcomes are a core goal of responsible development. This principle stresses the importance of ensuring that development benefits all residents, with a particular focus on protecting and uplifting vulnerable populations.

Equitable Development by Design (p. 78)

Ensuring Equitable Development and Affordable Housing (p.80)

Shaping Development Agreements and Community Benefits (p. 58)

### □ Protect environmental resources and promote sustainable practices.

Sustainability is a critical consideration for long-term community well-being. This principle emphasizes the need to protect environmental resources and integrate sustainable practices into development to ensure a healthy environment for current and future generations.

Key Sustainable Development Strategies (p. 78)

Natural Resource Protection Strategies (p.82)

#### Principles for Equitable Development



#### Community Empowerment

Elevate and prioritize community needs and values.



#### Local Control

Utilize local regulations and processes to shape development.



#### Equitable Outcomes

Ensure benefits for all, especially vulnerable groups.



#### Sustainability

Protect the environment, promote sustainable practices throughout development.

## 6. Key Tools and Strategies

Communities can utilize a variety of tools and strategies to navigate the complexities of large-scale development. This section explores key approaches for effective community engagement, negotiation, zoning and planning, collaboration, and monitoring.

### □ **Conduct thorough outreach to ensure diverse voices are heard.**

Community engagement is essential for ensuring that development reflects the needs and values of all residents. This part of the guide emphasizes the importance of thorough outreach and provides strategies for engaging diverse community members.

**Community Engagement (p. 24)**

### □ **Advocate for community benefits and mitigate potential negative impacts.**

Negotiation is a critical skill for communities facing development. This section provides guidance on effective negotiation strategies to advocate for community benefits and minimize negative impacts.

**Negotiation and Advocacy (p. 63)**

### □ **Build relationships with developers, government agencies, and other stakeholders.**

Collaboration among stakeholders is key to successful development outcomes. This section emphasizes the importance of building strong relationships with developers, government agencies, and other key stakeholders.

**Building Relationships with Key Stakeholders (p. 28)**

### □ **Utilize local ordinances and plans to guide development.**

Zoning and planning tools are powerful instruments for shaping development. This section highlights how communities can utilize local ordinances and plans to guide development and achieve desired outcomes.

**Developing or Updating Zoning (p. 46)**

**Model Ordinances and Resources (p. 48)**

### □ **Ensuring the right expertise.**

As part of empowering your community to engage successfully in the development process, these sections deal with ensuring the right technical skill.

**Staffing and Training (p. 30)**

**Technical Expertise (p. 32)**

**Environmental Data Collection and Analysis (p. 32)**

### □ **Track progress and ensure accountability.**

Monitoring and evaluation are essential for ensuring that development projects meet their goals and remain accountable to the community. This section provides guidance on tracking progress, measuring success, and adapting to change.

**Measuring True Progress (p. 86)**



## 7. Ohio-Specific Considerations

Ohio has a unique set of laws, agencies, and regional dynamics that influence development. This section provides Ohio-focused strategies for navigating the development process effectively.

### □ Be aware of relevant state laws and agencies.

Understanding Ohio's legal and regulatory landscape is crucial for communities engaging with development. This section emphasizes the importance of being aware of relevant state laws and agencies that may impact development projects.

[Ohio-Focused Strategies \(p. 65\)](#)

### □ Leverage Ohio-focused strategies for building relationships and engaging key entities.

Building strong relationships with key entities is essential for navigating development in Ohio. This section provides strategies tailored to Ohio for building relationships and engaging effectively with relevant organizations and agencies.

[Identifying Key Stakeholders and Establishing Communication Channels \(p. 66\)](#)

[Strategies for Engaging with Key Organizations \(p. 69\)](#)

## 8. Templates Ready to be Tailored

The Playbook's Appendix provides several templates designed to assist stakeholders in various aspects of community development and engagement. These templates offer a starting point for creating plans, agreements, and other essential documents, helping to streamline processes and ensure consistency.

[Community Engagement Plan Template \(p. 92\)](#)

[Communications Plan Template \(p. 94\)](#)

[Developing a Community Vision for the Future \(p. 97\)](#)

[Engagement Templates \(p.99\)](#)

[Decision Making Process Template for Rapid Response Teams \(p. 102\)](#)

[Key Stakeholder Mapping Template \(p.104\)](#)

[Community Benefits Agreement Template \(p.106\)](#)

[Sample Key Performance Indicators \(p. 108\)](#)

[Developing SMART Goals Template \(p. 112\)](#)

[General Grant Proposal Template \(p. 114\)](#)

