

**Six community entrepreneurship readiness factors** are described below. For each, rate your home community on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates limited degree of readiness and 5 indicates a high degree of readiness.

<p><b>Openness to Entrepreneurship.</b> Is the community open to exploring entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy? Central to such a commitment is the firm belief that within your community there are entrepreneurs who can create a new generation of successful businesses and there are service providers and community leaders willing to help them achieve success.</p>	<p><b>Balancing Business Attraction.</b> Does the community balance a traditional economic development approach with a focus on local businesses and on energizing entrepreneurs to create and build homegrown enterprises? For 50 years, the mainstay economic development strategy has been business attraction, particularly the search for industries. Supporting entrepreneurship requires a willingness to broaden the economic development strategy beyond the traditional recruitment model.</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship Programs.</b> Has your community had experience with entrepreneurship programs already? Check any of the following entrepreneurial programs that your community has experience with, either currently or in the past:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Networking infrastructure for entrepreneurs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring programs for entrepreneurs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Efforts to improve business services for entrepreneurs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Micro lending or other business financing services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurial training programs such as “how to start a business” seminars or courses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Business counseling services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Youth entrepreneurship education programs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other programs specific to your community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Willingness to Invest.</b> Most rural communities have limited experience with entrepreneurial programs. Do not assume you cannot create an entrepreneurial development strategy if your experience with these kinds of programs is limited. What is most important is a willingness to develop and support these kinds of activities.</p>
<p><b>Leadership Team.</b> Can your community create a team that will work on an entrepreneurial strategy? To be successful, a community needs a core leadership team committed to building and supporting an entrepreneurship program. Remember, as Margaret Mead once said, “Never forget that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”</p>	<p><b>Beyond Town Borders.</b> Is your community willing to create partnerships with other area communities to find the human and financial resources in order to be in the economic development game? Are you willing to look outside the community’s borders to find the resources to support your entrepreneurs? In today’s competitive world, we must collaborate to create enough scale and capacity to support effective economic development strategies.</p>

Now sum your scores and determine which of the following categories characterizes your community:

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| <b>1-6</b>   | Weak Score        | Little Readiness – Capacity Building Required        |
| <b>7-12</b>  | Soft Score        | Some Readiness – Gap Filling Necessary               |
| <b>13-18</b> | Good Score        | Readiness Potential – Begin to Build on Assets       |
| <b>19-24</b> | Strong Score      | Readiness Present – Build on Assets                  |
| <b>25-30</b> | Very Strong Score | Considerable Readiness – Energize Your Entrepreneurs |