Advanced Year Community Criteria

1. Proximity to Central Arkansas
The selected community must be within a two hour driving distance from the Little Rock Metro area to allow Advanced Year participants to spend as much time as possible working on the community assessment rather than driving.

2. Support/Interest of the Community's Leadership
The leadership of the selected community must demonstrate support and interest in the advanced year project. Examples: County Extension office, city government, Chamber of Commerce/Economic Development officials, educational institutions, small business, industry, and other major community organizations (healthcare, nonprofits, tourism, etc.)

3. Population
The population of the selected community will range from approximately 2,000- 12,000 residents

4. Administrative Support
The selected community should be willing and able to provide administrative and logistical support during the advanced year visit. The selected community should also designate a primary Point of Contact for the duration of the initiative, lasting approximately nine months.

5. Sense of Urgency
A sense of urgency and commitment from community leaders is a critical factor in community development and will be a key factor in selecting the community for this unique and valuable assessment and development opportunity. The selected community should be able to communicate a need for change and progress in their community, and should be able to articulate current or potential community goals and/or projects in which assistance is needed.

6. Funding Availability
The selected community should be willing to bear some of the costs associated with the community assessment (such as lunch for participants, meeting space rental, light refreshments, and printing costs). Costs would be minimal.

Consulting assistance, including the Advanced Year community and economic development professionals and the nine months of follow up support, is all free of charge. Some communities pay up to $75,000 for planning assistance.