Possible Questions for
Mayors or Community Development Leaders to
Ask Businesses:

**Topical Areas**

**Location [Natural Resources and/or Public Infrastructure]**
- Please describe your business (history, what you produce or service you provide)
- Why is your business here and what keeps you here?
- What natural resources are you dependent upon for the success of your business?
- Is your business located in other places?
- Which Public Infrastructure Investments do you consider critical to the success of your industry?
- Does your business depend on any services provided by regional organizations or local units of government? If so, which ones?
- Do the existing public resources and infrastructure serve your business well? If not, where's the gap?

**Connections with industry partners, supplies and local customers (Cluster linkages):**
- Where in the global economy are your key supplier relationships?
- How is it connected with related industry suppliers and the supply chain that supports your business?
- Do you have supplier relationships you are worried about in the current economy? Can we help in any way?
- Where are your suppliers located?
- Why do you do business with these suppliers rather than others?
- Do you have companies that you partner with to get better prices for your supplies?
- Has there been a change in your supply network in the past two years? If yes, what and why did that happen?
- Are there any local key supplier relationships that you are concerned about?
- Do you have “demanding local customers” with world-class expectations?
- Where are your customers located?
- Has demand rose or fallen for your most successful product in the last three years? Do you see demand rising or falling in the next three years? Next 10 years?
- Do you hope to create new product lines in the near future? If so, what product and what would help you reach that particular goal?
- Who are your competitors, and where are they located?
- Do you belong to an association that helps your business?
- What do you think your industry will look like in 25 years?
- What is it about your business structure that will help you remain competitive in the future?
Workforce Traits, Needs and Vision:
- What occupations are most critical to the success of your firm?
- Are people readily available to fill any open position you might have?
- What degrees are required of workers in these occupations?
- How important is access to employees with bachelor’s degrees to the success of your business?
- How important is access to employees with advanced degrees?
- Where do your workers acquire their initial training?
- Where do you turn for continuing training?
- Do you feel that the local educational and training institutions within a 50-mile radius are fulfilling your workforce development needs? Why or why not?
- What kinds of skills and training are required to address your company’s needs?
- Did the regional workforce have something to do with locating here?
- Are your workforce needs being met?

New Business Creation:
- Where do your business expansion ideas or products come from?
- Are your sales (revenue) growth opportunities predominantly local, domestic or international? What are the three largest revenue markets?
- Do local or state regulations prevent you from creating or expanding your business?
- How is the climate for new business creation here?
- What kind of new business growth do you see for the future of the Twin Cities metro region?

Access to Investment / Expansion Capital:
- Do you have adequate access to investment or expansion capital?
- Is the risk capital needed for growth available in TC?
- Is funding to realize productivity improvements readily available?
- Does your business plan adequately attract the appropriately risk priced investment capital?

Quality of Life or Cultural Amenities:
- What brought your business to the Metro Area and what is keeping you here?
- Do you and your employees enjoy living in this community?
- What elements of this community do you consider the most important for attracting and retaining the most valuable employees?
- Does the quality of life associated with our cultural amenities here in the greater metro area influence your stake in the region?