

## Public input sought for economic growth study

By TIM STANLEY World Staff Writer  
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### Web site set up to collect opinions of Broken Arrow residents and businesses through surveys.

A consulting firm helping the city develop an economic development strategy says it will rely heavily on public input. The firm -- Austin, Texas-based Angelou Economics -- has posted surveys on a new Web site to gauge public opinions and interests, officials announced last week.

The consultant's final report will cover, among other things, the city's strengths and weaknesses in competing for development, industries that would be a good fit for the area, and any improvements and incentives the city might use to attract them.

City leaders say the consultant's recommendations will serve as a guide for the newly formed Broken Arrow Economic Development Corp., an independent nonprofit established by the city, chamber and school district to oversee economic development.

"We selected Angelou to develop our strategic plan because they have a respectable track record of guiding communities of all sizes to a higher level of economic growth," Chamber President Ted Allison said.

Angelou has completed economic plans for cities around the country and in Oklahoma, including a recent economic impact study for The Channels, a proposed river development project in Tulsa.

"They also have an impressive client list of Fortune 500 companies," Allison said. "We feel Angelou is best-positioned to help address the needs of our existing employers as well as recruit new companies."

The study will cost the city \$120,000, with the Chamber contributing some of the total.

Angelou's report on Broken Arrow should be ready by March, officials said.

The firm's principal, Angelos Angelou, met with city leaders last week and held a press conference.

"There is significant opportunity to expand Broken Arrow's economic capacity over the next five years," Angelou said.

"We are looking forward to creating a strategy that complements the assets of Broken Arrow and leads to greater prosperity for its residents and businesses."

The economic development corporation was proposed in 2005, after the city and school district butted heads over a now-shelved economic stimulus plan.

Having an independent board oversee economic development will ensure more harmony and teamwork, proponents said.

The members, local business leaders with Broken Arrow ties, include Narissa Rampey, Bruce Binkley, Joe Robson, Rick Hudson and Jack Ross. A replacement for former member Jim Dawson, who died, has not yet been named.

The city budgeted \$200,000 this fiscal year for the BAEDC's expenditures.

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Broken Arrow residents and businesses are asked to register their opinions about the city's economic direction at [www.brokenarroweconomicdevelopment.com](http://www.brokenarroweconomicdevelopment.com)

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Development consultant Angelos Angelou, principal of Angelou Economics, addresses listeners at a press conference at the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce last week.  
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