



Oakland County's One Stop Ready program provides communities with ways to continuously improve processes that will help them achieve their economic development goals.

## BEST PRACTICE

# Citizens Academy



To attract and retain both businesses and residents, it's effective to build two-way communication methods, like regularly running a Citizens Academy. Residents and business owners can better understand what local government does and why. You can receive valuable feedback for improvement — outside a specific development proposal or issue.

The scope and complexity of local governments varies widely, but all have similar elements of what they do and how they do it. Using the appropriate mix of your community's staff and consultants, you can develop a series of interactive workshops to cultivate a more informed and engaged group of community advocates.

The size of each academy class and how often they are offered is up to your community. To not over-burden staff, you could start with one class a year of 20 to 30 participants. After a few years, your community has a good foundation of Citizens Academy graduates who understand local government and can share that knowledge with neighbors and business colleagues. A typical academy outline would include:

### Topics

**WEEK 1**  
Local Government Basics

**WEEK 2**  
Local Government Finances —  
Summary, Forecast, Goals, Budget

**WEEK 3**  
Public Services

**WEEK 4**  
City Clerk and Library

**WEEK 5**  
Planning, Building, and  
Economic Development

**WEEK 6**  
Keeping Citizens Safe — Police

**WEEK 7**  
Keeping Citizens Safe — Fire and EMS

**WEEK 8**  
Opportunities to Serve

Questions? Contact:  
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