

CEDS Strategy Committee

Handout Packet

Tuesday, May 17, 2011

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(Listed in order of discussion.)

Possible Suggested Language

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- Chapter 4-The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity (*Suggestions from PERC*)
- Chapter 5-Implementation of the Berkshire CEDS (*Suggestion from PERC*)
- Chapter 4-The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity (*Suggestions from the City of Pittsfield*)
- Chapter 5-Implementation of the Berkshire CEDS (Goal 3, Business Development Assistance activity) (*Suggestion from MassDevelopment*)
- Chapter 5-Implementation of the Berkshire CEDS (Goal 6, Berkshire Brownfields Program activity) (*Suggestion from MassDevelopment*)
- Chapter 3-An Evaluation of the Berkshire's Competitive Preparedness (Regional Threats and Weaknesses) (*Berkshire Chamber of Commerce*)
- Chapter 4-The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity (Berkshire CEDS Project Priority List) (*Berkshire Chamber of Commerce*)
- Chapter 4-The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity (The Vision Statement for the Berkshire CEDS) (*Sheffield Land Trust*)

Chapter 6: Performance Measures

To move the Berkshires economy forward and to facilitate the ongoing economic planning process, the Berkshire CEDS has been completely rewritten for 2011, including the performance measures. The CEDS is required to be re-written every five-years; however, status reports are produced annually. The status reports help to verify the implementation of the CEDS, assess its overall effectiveness and provide a basis for periodic updates where needed. The reports are a way to proactively address the region's changing economy to make the CEDS an evolving (or living) document.

As part of the status reports, developed by BRPC, the CEDS Strategy Committee will examine the implementation progress of the 2011 Berkshire CEDS report. Performance measures will be used to ascertain the effectiveness of *The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity* chapter, specifically the progress towards achieving the region's goals, objectives and priority projects. To support this examination, current characteristic data from federal, state and other sources will be utilized to assist the assessment where appropriate. The CEDS Strategy Committee, through this process, will also be able to identify supplemental steps that are needed to address both local and regional economic changes and challenges.

The performance measures to be used include:

1. How many **quality** jobs have been created and retained (**determined through the use of characteristic data such as wage, industry sector employment, etc.**) after implementation of projects from the Berkshire Project Priority List?
2. What number and types of investments have been undertaken in the region?
3. What is the number of new business **and non-profit organization** startups since the implementation of the CEDS? What **economic** sectors are those businesses in?
4. What collaborative or partnership efforts have been initiated? What are the statuses of those initiatives?
5. What changes to the characteristic data for the region have occurred? The characteristic data sets to be evaluated, but not limited to, include:
 - Demographic
 - Economic
 - Environmental/Geographic
 - Governmental
 - Social
 - Transportation/Infrastructure
6. How has the gathering of data and project information improved?

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- Encourage economic vitality of emerging industry clusters, the creative economy and innovative businesses in the region
- Expand regional capacities to inventory and market sites and buildings for the region's economic development
- Attract new businesses and industries to the region to expand the region's economy

GOAL 4: TO STABILIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S WORKFORCE.

Objectives

- Develop a well-educated and highly skilled workforce of all ages to stabilize and expand the regional labor pool
- Align educational offerings and workforce development programs with the evolving needs of the marketplace
- Enhance and position the regional workforce system to align with and support regional job seekers and business needs
- Encourage all citizens of Berkshire County to achieve 16 years of education or training.

GOAL 5: TO ADVANCE HIGH-QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

Objectives

- Provide a 21st Century capable telecommunications infrastructure throughout the region
- Maintain and upgrade the Region's transportation network
- Support community-driven initiatives to improve urban and town centers to stimulate economic activity
- Build a modern, reliable and affordable energy network
- Ensure the orderly expansion and upgrade of housing and other support facilities to accommodate the region's expanding economy needs

GOAL 6: TO FACILITATE THE REGION'S ASSESSMENT, REMEDIATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BUILDINGS AND SITES.

Objectives

- Support regional initiatives and efforts to address contaminated properties in the region
- Create a mechanism for the redevelopment and reuse of underutilized mills and other buildings and sites

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GOAL 4: TO STABILIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S WORKFORCE.

Activity Name	Description	Activity Sponsor (***) and Partners	Status	Funding Sources	Next Steps	Target Completion
Industry Sector Initiative	This activity promotes the development of strategies to address critical workforce needs and shortages regionally and outwardly.	Berkshire County Regional Employment Board** , Berkshire Community College, Bard College at Simon's Rock, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Regional Educators and Others	Active	Commonwealth Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement Photovoltaic training program - Attract, train and retain healthcare employees - Implement CNA, LPN, RN training programs - Identify other industry sector priorities - Research/apply for industry sector grants 	Ongoing
Berkshire Compact	Utilize the Berkshire Compact and the region's education partnerships to prepare and strengthen the next generation of workers.	Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts** , Berkshire Community College, Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Bard College at Simon's Rock, Public Schools, Williams College, and Others	Active	Organization Funding Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide financial assistance for students completing milestones of the Berkshire Passport - Organize and work with industry clusters to identify workforce needs - Create linkages between educators and employers to meet regional employment needs <p><u>- All citizens in Berkshire County achieve 16 years of education or training</u></p>	Ongoing

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Projects Representing the Greatest Needs Regionally

- Regional Telecommunications Network
- Pittsfield Municipal Airport Safety Improvements
- Regional Highway Access Improvements
- Alternative Energy and Energy Infrastructure Improvements
- Regional Passenger Rail Improvements

Projects that Enhance the Region: Physical Development Category

North Sub-Region

- Development of the Greylock Glen Outdoor Recreation & Environmental Education Center
- Former Commonwealth Sprague Site
- Route 8 Corridor Redevelopment

Central Sub-Region

- Life Science Center @ William Stanley Business Park
- William Stanley Business Park
- Crane Stationery Mill Redevelopment
- Hubbard Avenue Development Area
- Sport Complex
- Berkshire Mall/Civic Center/Hotel

South Sub-Region

- New England Log Home Site
- River School Redevelopment
- Redevelopment of Great Barrington Fairgrounds
- Monument Mills Area Reuse Planning
- Redevelopment of Historic Great Barrington Firehouse
- Housatonic School Redevelopment

Projects that Enhance the Region: Physical and Technology Infrastructure Category

- West Street Water Line Upgrade
- DownStreet Art Project
- McKay Street Pedestrian Improvements and Parking Garage Reconstruction
- Limited Access Connector Highway

Projects that Enhance the Region: Programs and Initiative Category

- Adaptive Reuse of Mills
- City of Pittsfield Municipal Airport Industrial Park Feasibility Study
- Regionalization of the City of Pittsfield's Municipal Airport
- Berkshire Farm-to-School Feasibility Study
- Regional Economic Development District
- Housatonic Railroad Station Planning Feasibility Study
- Downtown Parking Strategy
- Berkshire Creative Initiative

Projects that Enhance the Region: Education and Workforce Development Category

- Berkshire Hills Internship Program
- Berkshire Creative Initiative

GOAL 3: TO INCREASE THE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS OF THE REGION IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY.

Activity Name	Description	Activity Sponsor (***) and Partners	Status	Funding Sources	Next Steps	Target Completion
Business Development Assistance	Develop a portfolio of tools for business development and start-up needs.	Lee Community Development Corporation, <u>Massachusetts Office of Business Development,</u> MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network, Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation, Southern Berkshire Community Development Corporation, Western Massachusetts Enterprise Fund, Inc. and Others	Active	Organization Funding Support	- Expand awareness and service capacity of assistance programs - Develop virtual clearinghouse for support programs and organizations	2011
Site and Building Locator	The locator is a web-based program that makes information about potential development locations accessible on the internet.	Berkshire Chamber of Commerce**, Communities, Economic Development Organizations and Others	Active	Organization Funding Support	- Expand visibility of Locator - Expand Locator database	2012
Angel Fund Network	The Angel Fund Network is a mechanism to connect investors or fund managers with emerging or expanding business prospects.	TBD	Concept	Organization Funding and Private Investment	- Identify organizational partners - Identify a sponsor - Secure funding and resources to implement	TBD

GOAL 6: TO FACILITATE THE REGION’S ASSESSMENT, REMEDIATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BUILDINGS AND SITES.

Activity Name	Description	Activity Sponsor (***) and Partners	Status	Funding Sources	Next Steps	Target Completion
Berkshire Brownfields Program	This is a regional program geared towards the investment of capital and resources to identify, assess and remediate sites containing contaminants from past development.	BRPC**, Communities, Southern Berkshire Community Development Corporation, Lee Community Development Corporation, <u>MassDevelopment</u> , Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation, Pittsfield Economic Development Authority and Others	Active	Federal, Commonwealth and Local Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand awareness and visibility of program - Facilitate the release of funds from the revolving loan fund to facilitate the utilization of underutilized sites and buildings - Continue to work with communities and property owners to identify, assess and remediate contaminated sites - Secure additional grant funds 	Ongoing
Regional Adaptive Reuse of Mills Initiative	Collaborate with communities throughout the region to evaluate, address and better utilize vacant and underutilized mills throughout the county.	BRPC**, Communities and Others	Concept	To Be Determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inventory mills throughout the county - Survey interest of communities - Secure funding and resources to implement Commence study of individual mills 	Ongoing

**Chapter 3: An Evaluation of the Berkshire's Competitive Preparedness
Regional Threats and Weaknesses**

Built-Environment Constraints

Throughout the region, as a result of previous development activities, there exist sites and structures that are labeled contaminated, which pose an impediment to economic development and in general create a negative stigma for development in the Berkshires.

When an industry sees uncertainty in a region, due to past or present contamination issues, the potential for investment in new or expanded facilities is greatly reduced. Industries become hesitant to invest in regions that could hurt their corporate image or employees. This hesitancy is the result of an assumed impact; most industries will choose to an alternate site or area that does not carry this stigma. In the long term, this can lead to reduced economic investment and disinvestment in a region.

Deleted: An example is the General Electric site/Housatonic River, which is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other hazardous substances. This consists of the 254-acre (103-hectare) GE manufacturing facility; the Housatonic River and associated riverbanks and floodplains from Pittsfield, MA, to Long Island Sound; former river oxbows that have been filled; neighboring commercial properties; Silver Lake; and other properties or areas that have become contaminated as a result of GE's facility operations. ¶

¶ In some instances, such as the example above, the long lasting affects that stem from these sites has yet to be determined. ¶

Possible Language

Project Name: Regional Highway Access Improvements
Project Location: Regional
<p>Project Summary: The Regional Highway Access Improvements project, a project grouping of highway improvement proposals from the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and more recent special studies, looks to install a wide array of highway improvements throughout the county. These infrastructure projects will improve traffic flow and safety from the I-90 interchange in Lee to the municipalities in central and north Berkshire County. The project proposals in this grouping include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Street (Rte. 7/20) Improvements include replacement of poor pavement, relieve corridor congestion relief, enhancements of side street access and improvements of unsafe locations with signal upgrades and slight geometric changes within the City of Pittsfield; • Route 8/Friend Street Intersection Improvements project is comprised of correcting safety deficiencies and enhancing traffic flows in the Town of Adams; • Berkshire Medical Center (BMC) Area/North Street Improvements will address several intersections and roadway deficiencies and improve safety conditions on the east side of the BMC's complex in the City of Pittsfield's downtown and improve regional north-south traffic flow along Route 7; • Route 7/20 Corridor Access Management Improvements will reduce turning conflicts and improve safety conditions in concert with changes to zoning and development bylaws administered by the City of Pittsfield and the Town of Lenox; • East Street Reconstruction project will add capacity and replace deficient sections of roadway between downtown Pittsfield and Merrill Road, one of Pittsfield principal industrial corridors, improving regional traffic flow and facilitating redevelopment of the Williams Stanley Business Park; • First Street Improvements will increase capacity and turning movements on US 7, the main north-south truck route through the City of Pittsfield, while upgrading the Americans with Disabilities Act retrofits, pavement reconstruction, and signal modernization; • Route 20 Traffic Improvements (Lee/Lenox) Projects or Pursuit of a new I-90 Interchange seek to alleviate heavy truck traffic, improve walkability, promote economic development, and ease congestion in the Town of Lee's downtown and improve regional access to I-90 (the Massachusetts Turnpike); • Westside Connector project establishes a new connector road between West Housatonic Street (US 20) and West Street in Pittsfield to reduce traffic congestion at critical downtown intersections along Routes 7/20; • Route 8 Alternating Passing Lane (Cheshire/Lanesborough) will add capacity, improve safety, and alleviate congestion to coincide with anticipated increases in north-south travel between the central and northern Berkshires. <p>Poor access to freeways is a significant detraction to economic development for the urbanized areas of the central and northern Berkshire County. The lack of a modern limited access highway creates congestion, negatively impacting redevelopment efforts in Pittsfield and Pittsfield and major town centers and is a significant transportation limitation to the region's economic competitiveness. The construction of north to south highway improvements listed in the RTP, above, would benefit the region's economy through improved access (primarily to freeways) and the facilitated movement of goods, people and services. Construction of a true limited access highway from the Massachusetts Turnpike to central and northern Berkshire County would be more beneficial from regional access and economic development perspectives, due to the high financial cost, environmental impacts, and lack of unified political will at the federal, state and local level. Alternatively, the RTP projects listed above, which have been endorsed at the federal, state and local level as part of the adopted regional transportation plan will serve to materially improve access and can be advanced in a realistic</p>

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Project Name: Regional Highway Access Improvements
timeframe.
Funding Source(s): Federal and Commonwealth Transportation Funds
Projected Job Creation: The exact number of jobs to be created or retained is unknown at this time. <i>(The upgrading of highway access improvements across the region, specifically from north to south, may create local employment opportunities in the construction of those improvements and has the potential to support business growth and job creation as a result of improved access. Specifics about the type, number and specific location of jobs are not yet known.)</i>
Related Linkages: The roadway improvements proposed within this grouping are designed to improve the region's transportation network, specifically along the north to south corridor, to accommodate vehicle capacity demands and congestion and is vital to the region's multimodal transportation system. The installation of these improvements will complement and support all of the region's industries through the facilitation of truck movements and the accommodation of employees and customers to and from places of business. As a result of these upgrades, there is the potential for adjacent commercial properties to be developed or redeveloped. In particular, the Williams Stanley Business Park (Pittsfield) and Greylock Glen (Adams) will be materially advanced with specific enhancement projects (East Street in Pittsfield; Route 8/Friend Street in Adams).
Timeframe: Each of the roadway improvements projects is at a different stage of assessment, design, permitting and development; therefore, the implementation of each project is unique. In most instances, each project is pending the appropriation of funding and progression through the Commonwealth and Federal project cues. For a detailed discussion of each projects timetable, readers should consult the most recent RTP and Transportation Improvement Program.
Most Recent Update: April, 2011

Possible Landmarks

Chapter 4: The Action Plan for Economic Prosperity

A Vision Statement for the Berkshires

To establish the Vision Statement for the 2011 Berkshire CEDS, the CEDS Strategy Committee reviewed example CEDS Vision Statements from previous Berkshire CEDS planning efforts (*2001 CEDS* and the *draft 2004 CEDS*), from CEDS from other Massachusetts Regions, a previous economic planning document (*2006 Rural Clusters of Innovation: Berkshires Strategy Project*) and the comments received from the EDA about the 2001 Berkshire CEDS. At their January 11, 2011 meeting, the CEDS Strategy Committee created the Vision Statement for the 2011 Berkshire CEDS.

The Vision for the Berkshires: To create a diverse and robust economy that creates sustainable prosperity for all its residents. While capitalizing on the region's heritage, intellectual vigor, cultural assets **and agriculture** and natural resources we will encourage innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurial spirit.

The 2011 Berkshire CEDS Vision Statement acknowledges the Berkshires' traditions of industrial innovation and manufacturing, which continue to evolve and support the region to this day, but also understands the need to look towards the future. The vision embraces new opportunities and emerging economies; such as the tourist and service trade and creative economy, which is being fueled by the Berkshires' inviting natural beauty and its renowned music, art, academic and recreational destinations. The Vision statement for the 2011 Berkshire CEDS sets the "framework" for the region's economic prosperity.

With this Vision Statement, the 2011 CEDS Strategy Committee renewed a cooperative regional process of establishing and implementing the region's economic development goals, objectives and activities, while striving for greater economic stability and vitality in the years to come.