

Comprehensive Economic Development Planning and Implementation for Somerset County, NJ

Somerset County Planning Board
August 17, 2010

FINDINGS

- Land Use Ordinances, Zoning Ordinances, and Master Plans are the drivers for a local job creation and economic investment vision
- Local land use planning and master planning must be connected, through strategic initiatives and actions, to job growth and economic investment
- New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law provides for an Economic Element in the local Master Plan

OUTCOMES

- A defined set of priority investments and activities that will contribute to job creation and economic investment in Somerset County, New Jersey
- A County-wide economic development strategy driven by local land use, zoning, and master plan priorities
- Regional and statewide economic development strategies driven by local and county priorities

GOALS

- ✓ To provide an opportunity for municipalities to fully engage in job creation and economic investment planning and implementation
- ✓ To leverage local job creation and economic development planning in the establishment of regional and statewide priorities
- ✓ To utilize local job creation and economic development planning in securing regional, State, and federal infrastructure investments

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders approved submission of an application for funding to the United States Economic Development Administration (USEDA) on June 22, 2010
- The Somerset County Business Partnership (SCBP) Executive Committee approved submission of an application for funding to the USED A on July 8, 2010
- The Somerset County Business Partnership presented a draft Planning Investment application to the USED A on August 6, 2010

COORDINATION

- Work in partnership with the United States Economic Development Administration (USEDA) to finalize and submit an application for a Planning Investment that serves the County, its municipalities, and the region
- Communicate with municipalities, County, regional, and State partners on the status of the application
- Finalize funding and endorsement of program management commitments

ACTIONS

- Outreach to municipalities and regional partners for resolutions and letters of endorsement (September 2010)
- Finalize submission to the United States Economic Development Administration (September 2010)
- Establish program management structure and coordinate Somerset County and Somerset County Business Partnership program planning and budgeting throughout (October 2010)
12 month program implementation beginning on date of Planning Investment Award by United States Economic Development Administration

METHODOLOGY

- Establish Economic Development Strategy Committee to govern project implementation
- Draft a proposal for a master contract to inventory existing documented economic development related priorities and compile baseline demographic and statistical data
- Engage in the collection of additional locally identified priorities
- Draft and issue municipal level reports for discussion by local governing bodies and local planning boards
- Draft and issue county level report to Somerset County and regional partners for discussion

QUESTIONS

- ? Establishing the geographic areas for regional or sub-regional economic development planning and implementation efforts
- ? The role of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and connections to their possible Sustainable Communities grant program
- ? The role of existing and newly formed state-wide entities such as the NJ State Planning Commission and Choose New Jersey

CONNECTIONS

- ❖ **A strategy for engaging all levels of the workforce delivery system is critical**
 - **Displaced workers**
 - **Immediate employer needs (Health Care Industry Grant)**
 - **Long term employers needs**
 - **Greater Raritan Workforce Investment Board**
 - **Raritan Valley Community College**

- ❖ **Leveraging Business Partnership Activities**
 - **Business Call to Service**
 - **Reform Agenda**
 - **Infrastructure Investment**
 - **Emerging Industries of the Future**

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