



Planning for Economic Development at the Local Level

Chapter 2 of the Somerset County Business Partnership's Economic Development
Toolkit for Local Elected and Appointed Officials

“Planning for Economic Development at the Local Level” is the second in a series of publications from the Somerset County Business Partnership’s economic and tourism development staff. We hope you find this information useful and we encourage you to contact us with any immediate questions you might have or if you have suggestions on future topics that would be beneficial to your community’s leaders.

August 2009

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Introduction to Economic Development Planning

In Chapter One: “Organizing for Economic Development”, we wrote about establishing an Economic Development Committee at the local level. The purpose of the local Economic Development Committee is to build relationships with the business community and to provide a venue where the economic strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and challenges can be examined in detail.

In Chapter 2: “Planning for Economic Development at the Local Level”, we examine how to leverage the local Economic Development Committee to produce a plan for improving the local economy.

New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law allows for the adoption of an economic element to the local Master Plan. The economic element of the local Master Plan will prove to be a valuable tool for understanding the current economic condition and the strengths and weaknesses of the community. An economic element of the local Master Plan can and should communicate a vision for where the community wishes to be in 5 to 10 years from a business, employment, and economic perspective.

It is advisable to approach economic development planning in the context of the other documents which affect economic development in the community, most notably the local land use and zoning ordinances as well as the circulation, housing, and environmental elements of the community’s Master Plan.

The United States Economic Development Administration has published guidelines for producing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report. These guidelines provide the structure and format for producing a local economic development element of the community’s Master Plan.

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There are many factors affecting economic investment in any particular geographic region, and it is important that economic development planning be placed in this context. In addition to the built environment and geography of the community there are existing documents that impact economic investment; the local land use and zoning ordinances, the local Master Plan and its housing, circulation, environment elements, and the functioning of local construction code enforcement operations.

In establishing an Economic Development Committee to review and make recommendations on economic development planning, all of these interests, as well as those of the business community, should be well represented. With a diversity of concerns and interests represented, the economic development committee will be in a position to undertake economic development planning.

At the request of the governing body, the Economic Development Committee can conduct an in-depth review of the existing local Master Plan, land use ordinance, zoning ordinance, and other documents. This examination should be focused on identifying any inconsistencies and/or

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conflicts among these documents. It may also be useful for the Economic Development Committee to note omissions in the documents based on present circumstances.

After examining constraints limiting economic investment in the community, the Committee would be in a position to forward written recommendations for implementation to the local governing body consistent with Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy guidelines.

The United States Economic Development Administration (USEDA) outline for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report is a valuable tool for economic development planning. The guidelines provide a well thought out road map for documenting a local economic development vision, examining issues, and formulating an action plan.

In summary, the USEDA CEDS guidelines call for an economic development plan structured around four elements:

- Background
- Vision
- Issues
- Implementation

Most communities have substantially completed the Background and Vision elements of a local economic development plan through their work on the municipal Master Plan. Existing municipal Master Plans are required to address housing, circulation, and the environment. The municipal master plan should express a vision for the future of the community that is codified in the local land use ordinance and zoning ordinance.

Fundamentally, the local Economic Development Committee would engage in:

- Creating interaction between the “investor” community and local elected and appointed officials,
- Identifying constraints impacting the efficiency of economic investment,
- Examining local processes and procedures to insure efficiency,

Utilizing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy guidelines, the Economic Development Committee could begin to construct a local economic development plan, or element of the local master plan, as follows:

Background: This section should contain an analysis of demographic, socio-economic, and statistical trends both locally and regionally. A review of the community’s economic origins should be included, as well as a review and analysis of existing ordinances, laws, and planning documents from an economic development perspective. Where inconsistencies, errors, and/or omissions are noted these can be carried through to the Issues chapter of the economic development strategy report.

Vision: The Economic Development Committee will spend much time in crafting an economic development vision for the community. The Vision should take into account opportunities such

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as natural features and undeveloped/underdeveloped properties, recognize constraints, and leverage resources such as public transportation, unique assets, and/or cultural amenities.

Issues: This section is reserved for clearly stating external and internal forces affecting the ability to achieve the Vision. Issues identified will be carried through to the Action Plan where clear strategies for overcoming impediments to success will be documented.

Action Plan: Perhaps the most important element of an Economic Development Plan, the Action Plan brings together the Vision and Issues in a way that communicates clear goals, objectives, and outcomes necessary to achieving the Vision.

Some time spent on a thorough discussion of the future economy of the municipality will greatly aid the committee in examining issues impacting that vision and the creation of an Action Plan to overcome the impediments to success.

While most communities will want to craft a grand vision for their economic future it is important to consider the drivers behind economic investment; land use, zoning, and master planning. An adequate economic vision could be one of identifying and eliminating conflicts and inconsistencies among and between various local ordinances that stand as impediments to economic investment.

The local governing body and/or planning board may want to provide some guidance to the Economic Development Committee as they begin to craft an economic vision for the community. Staff and professional consultants under contract to the municipality can be a valuable source of information and can provide needed guidance in this process, although care should be taken to insure that the economic vision is one that the community can support and not just one of the professional advisors.

Conclusion

In order to take charge of a community's economic future it is necessary to spend some time and effort conducting analysis, expressing a vision, and crafting a plan of action. The Somerset County Business Partnership hopes that the information we have provided here is of benefit to local elected and appointed officials, and we are available to consult with your community in helping you to achieve your goals.

BACKGROUND

The Somerset County Business Partnership serves as central New Jersey's regional Chamber of Commerce. Members and investors represent public, private and community organizations, working in partnership and dedicated to maintaining and promoting economic prosperity and quality of life in Somerset County. The Somerset County Business Partnership is an essential partner for doing business in Somerset County, and as such is the premier regional business organization in New Jersey. The Business Partnership seeks to achieve four key outcomes; public leadership, advocacy, economic and community development, and value/engagement, providing LEADERSHIP, OPPORTUNITY, AND RESULTS to the Somerset County Business Community.

Somerset County Business Partnership
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Somerset County, New Jersey New Companies February – July 2009

| Company Name | Building Name/Suite | Address | City | Zip | Phone # | Occupied SF | Move Date |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Advanced Clinical Concepts | S/K 520 Suite 3 | 520 US Highway 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | 908-456-5660 | 9,103 | 04/01/2009 |
| American Lung Association | | 1031 US Highway 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | | 3,293 | 04/19/2009 |
| AXCAN Pharmaceuticals | Bldg 1 | 100 Somerset Corporate Blvd | Bridgewater | 08807 | 205-991-8085 | 20,000 | 06/15/2009 |
| Citadel Risk Management | Bridgewater Plaza | 1011 Route 22 West | Bridgewater | 08807 | 203-595-9650 | 2,690 | 02/01/2009 |
| Concierge GRP Mortgage | Martinsville Schoolhouse | 1973 Washington Valley Rd. | Martinsville | 08836 | 908-251-5600 | 1,300 | 04/01/2009 |
| Cornerstone Relocation Group | Liberty Corner Corp. Center | 106 Allen Rd. | Basking Ridge | 07920 | 908-580-9600 | 10,630 | 03/01/2009 |
| Dennemeyer & Company | Franklin Square 1 | 100 Franklin Sq. Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 732-356-3445 | 2,275 | 06/12/2009 |
| Dermatology Associates | Bridgewater 745 | 745 Rt 202 S. | Bridgewater | 08807 | | 1,975 | 03/25/2009 |
| Down To Earth Landscaping | | 110 West Main St. | Bound Brook | 08805 | 732-952-8610 | 1,728 | 04/02/2009 |
| Firebrand Strategies | Crossroads 1 | 1 Crossroads Dr. | Bedminster | 07921 | 212-349-3473 | 8,500 | 04/01/2009 |
| Galaxy Systems | Somerset Executive Square 2 | 2 Executive Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 732-868-0400 | 29,354 | 06/04/2009 |
| Gen Psych PC | Bridgewater Place | 1065 US Highway 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | 732-356-3255 | 3,229 | 03/01/2009 |
| Greenberg Farrow | Franklin Square 1 | 100 Franklin Square Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 732-537-0811 | 3,974 | 02/01/2009 |
| GSG | | 2 Worlds Fair Drive | Somerset | 08873 | | 1,180 | 03/15/2009 |
| Huawei Futurewei Technologies | Building 4 | 400 Somerset Corporate Blvd | Bridgewater | 08807 | 732-739-6080 | 14,069 | 02/01/2009 |
| Hudson Environmental | | 87 West End Ave | Somerville | 08876 | 800-483-7661 | 220 | 03/01/2009 |
| Human Concepts | Bridgewater Place | 1065 US Highway 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | 888-821-1261 | 2,190 | 02/16/2009 |
| Industrial Combustion Associates | Suite C | 20 Worlds Fair Dr. | Somerset | 08873 | 908-964-6161 | 5,000 | 06/29/2009 |
| Industry Dynamics Associates Inc. | Hocroft-Franklin | 285 Davidson Ave | Somerset | 08873 | 732-805-3434 | 7,726 | 07/02/2009 |
| inVentive Health, Inc. | Suite A | 500 Atrium Dr. | Somerset | 08873 | 732-748-4666 | 154,032 | 07/01/2009 |
| Jody McCain, Psychiatrist | Fountain Plaza | 425 Amwell Rd. | Hillsborough | 08844 | | 340 | 02/01/2009 |
| Li Esquire | | 1031 US Highway 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | | 565 | 02/01/2009 |
| Mylan Laboratories | Bernards 78 | 110 Allen Road | Liberty Corner | 07938 | 724-514-1800 | 53,517 | 01/01/2012 |

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| Company | Building Name/Suite | Address | City | Zip | Phone # | Occupied SF | Move Date |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Northeast Power Dry | | 1EA Chimney Rock Road | Bridgewater | 08807 | 908-725-0303 | 10,000 | 05/23/2009 |
| NEI Corporation | Suite E | 400 Apgar Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 732-868-3141 | 9,200 | 02/02/2009 |
| Novell Labs | | 390 Campus Dr. | Somerset | 08873 | 908-603-6000 | 41,368 | 06/15/2009 |
| Office Solutions Inc. | Davidson Building | 265 Davidson Ave. | Somerset | 08876 | 732-356-0200 | 6,548 | 02/23/2009 |
| On Guard Fence Systems | | 18 Culnen Drive | Branchburg | 08876 | 866-321-0001 | 68,466 | 03/01/2009 |
| Palmieri Movers | Building A | 77-81 W. Chimney Rock Rd. | Bridgewater | 08807 | 732-465-0020 | 6,800 | 04/01/2009 |
| Phoenix Communications | Somerset Executive Sq. 1 – Suite 270 | 1 Executive Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 201-807-0888 | 1,760 | 07/01/2009 |
| Physician's Weekly LLC | Suite 205 | 75 Claremont Rd. | Bernardsville | 07924 | 908-204-0010 | 1,052 | 05/03/2009 |
| Piping Solutions Inc. | Building A | 77-81 W. Chimney Rock Rd. | Bridgewater | 08807 | 732-537-1009 | 30,000 | 09/07/2009 |
| Power Container Corp. | | 33 Schoolhouse Rd. | Somerset | 08873 | 732-560-3655 | 83,920 | 05/29/2009 |
| Sam's Video Tape | Suite 103 | 789 Route 202 | Bridgewater | 08807 | 201-963-6150 | 952 | 03/01/2009 |
| Sealaska | Somerset Executive Sq. 1 – Suite 220 | 1 Executive Dr. | Somerset | 08873 | 907-586-1512 | 1,771 | 4/24/2009 |
| Shane Wiekes | | 1931 West Rt. 22 | Bridgewater | 08807 | 732-560-4443 | 2,500 | 06/01/2009 |
| Shimadzu | | 19 Schoolhouse Rd. | Somerset | 08873 | 800-477-1227 | 8,003 | 06/18/2009 |
| Shivam Info Tech | Rt. 27 Professional Park | 1303 State Rt. 27 | Somerset | 08873 | 732-398-1164 | 1,300 | 03/01/2009 |
| Spatial Data | Somerset Executive Sq. 2 – Suite 200 | 2 Executive Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 732-357-1280 | 3,100 | 07/01/2009 |
| Symyx Inc. | Bedminster One | 135 US Highway 202/206 | Bedminster | 07921 | 408-764-2000 | 7,855 | 04/01/2009 |
| The Chubb Corporation | | 15 Mountain View Rd. | Warren | 07059 | 908-903-2000 | 3,000 | 07/16/2009 |
| The Management Network Group | | 400 Atrium Drive | Somerset | 08873 | 913-345-9315 | 2,910 | 02/09/2009 |
| Viasource | Liberty Corner Corp. Ctr. | 106 Allen Rd. | Basking Ridge | 07920 | 908-394-7778 | 4,000 | 04/01/2009 |
| Xanodyne | Allen Center-Suite 101 | 150 Allen Rd. | Basking Ridge | 07920 | 908-604-2143 | 8,198 | 02/02/2009 |

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Sources for Data:

Pages 5 & 6, "Somerset County New Companies: February-July 2009", Source: Costar Group Inc. 7/22/2009:
Website: [Http://www.costar.com](http://www.costar.com)

ABOUT THE SOMERSET COUNTY BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

The Somerset County Business Partnership has 4 goals as an organization; Public Leadership, Advocacy and Influence, Economic Development, and Member Value and Engagement. Advocacy and Influence maintains the Partnerships focus on remaining a powerful, unified and dynamic voice advocating for the Somerset County business community through programs such as the Somerset County Energy Audits program, the Legislative Affairs Committee, Environmental Health and Safety, Emergency Management and Business Continuity, as well as many other successful initiatives. Economic Development focuses on the commitment to smart growth in order to create a successful and thriving business environment; enhanced employment opportunities for its residents, an increased tourism industry, and a continuing focus on enhancing the attractiveness, physical infrastructure, and social capital of the community. Through Member Value and Engagement the Somerset County Business Partnership provides business advocacy, educational forums, visibility and exposure, and networking and information sharing among peers to maintain the partnerships unique value to its members. Public Leadership refers to the Somerset County Business Partnerships ability to function as a proactive team-oriented regional player in economic and community development and quality of life initiatives such as Shared Services, Workers Compensation, Share Grant, and the Somerset County Hazardous Mitigation Plan.

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