

Central New York Regional Economic Development Council

Public Participation Forum #2

SUMMARY

SUNY Oswego

Thursday, 20 October 2011

Agenda

Welcome and Introduction

Dr. Deborah Stanley,
President, SUNY Oswego

Regional Economic Development Council Process

James Fayle
Executive Director, CNY REDC
CNY Regional Director, ESD

Public Participation Process: Review Strategic Plan

Andrew Fish
Co Chair Public Participation Work Group
Executive Director, Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce

Facilitated Discussion

Public and Facilitation Team

Table Team Report Outs

Public

Close

Andrew Fish

Adjourn

FACILITATED DISCUSSION

Summary Comments:

There were approximately 70 participants in Public Forum #2 held at SUNY Oswego on Thursday, 20 October 2011. The following are summary comments drawn from Facilitated Table discussions and the general discussion during the session's close.

1. Prioritize Central New York's Industry Concentrations

In which **two industry clusters** do you believe Central New York should make these investments? Why?

- Two strongest industry clusters were **Clean Energy and Environmental Systems** and **Tourism**
- Many tables indicated they chose the industry cluster because it leveraged many clusters, funding projects in the cluster they prioritized would end up supporting projects/growth across many clusters
- Industry clusters could and should not be mutually exclusive; rather they should "be crossed" and leverage each other; for example, participants drew conclusions that Tourism and Small Business and Advanced Manufacturing and Small Business are strongly linked
- Emphasis on need for local purchasing
- Difficult to pick just two industry clusters

2. What policy changes (local, state, national) are necessary to drive economic growth in Central New York?

- Implement policies that support business growth, especially small business
 - Consider business costs, especially power and health care
 - Examine policies that may impede tourism
- Need for investment in infrastructure, including transportation
 - Strong infrastructure leverages positive growth in small business, tourism, manufacturing; e.g. shoreline stabilization; road creation and maintenance
- Implement policies that allows intellectual capital to grow/expand in NYS
 - Provide incentives, potential tax breaks to support job creation
 - Develop programs that support retention of students and young professionals in community

3. To be successful the Regional Economic Development Council process requires public engagement and input. How can we continue to actively include the public as we move forward?

- Use social media on an ongoing basis to inform and engage (blogs, Facebook, online forum)
- Importance of regional branding to bring counties together
- Marketing of initiatives through a variety of media, including local and regional newspapers, radio, and TV
- Regularly scheduled forums with a well-known schedule, on a local and regional basis
- Use existing resources to help promote; e.g. legislative officials informed and communicating with constituents; place information material in public areas, such as vehicle registration

FACILITATED DISCUSSION

Table Comments:

1. Prioritize Central New York’s Industry Concentrations

In which **two industry clusters** do you believe Central New York should make these investments?

These are the results from seven tables during Public Forum:

	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3	Table 4	Table 5	Table 6	Table 7
Clean Energy and Environmental Systems		X	X		X		X
Health and Biomedical Sciences							
Financial Services							
Agri-business and Food Processing	X						
Advanced Manufacturing				X	X		
Tourism	X	X	X	X		X	
Small Business						X	X

Why these two industry clusters?

- Two strongest industry clusters were **Clean Energy and Environmental Systems** and **Tourism**
- Many tables indicated they chose the industry cluster because it leveraged many clusters, funding projects in the cluster they prioritized would end up supporting projects/growth across many clusters
- Industry clusters could and should not be mutually exclusive; rather they should “be crossed” and leverage each other
- Emphasis on local purchasing
- Difficult to pick just two industry clusters

**Table Comments about specific clusters:
Clean Energy and Environmental Systems**

TABLE 1:

- Cheaper energy is a **must**
- Potential future, **jobs** are key
- Energy guidelines

TABLE 2:

- Development of alternative energy, use of bikes
- Emphasis on wind use research to diversify alternative energy.
- Perception on our area

**Table Comments about specific clusters (continued):
Clean Energy and Environmental Systems (continued)**

TABLE 3:

- Vast amount of resources (water especially) that are currently not being utilized
- Invest in intellectual capital in this area

TABLE 6:

- Compare to Niagara Falls
- Nuclear, but also hydro, windmill opportunities, renewable energy

TABLE 7:

- Current hydro and nuclear as well as expansion

Health and Biomedical Sciences

No comments

Financial Services

No comments

Agri-business and Food Processing

TABLE 1:

- Large agriculture area, needs monetary input
- More **organic** food growing and processing
- Get children involved with outdoor, producing; less involved in electronics
- Eliminated agriculture from curriculums, Farm Cadet Program
- Bring agricultural education back to Region
- Major agriculture manufacturing region
- Good agricultural practices: different standards per store makes growing and selling difficult
 - Legislative consolidation of GAP
- Incentives for franchises to carry **local** products
- Agricultural workforce: formal training
 - Training centers
- Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO)

TABLE 2:

- Emphasis on local purchasing

TABLE 6:

- Chobani – Madison County
- Corn production, Ethanol facility
- How much is really coming from our 5 counties
- Milk production is huge; top 1.5 percent of counties nationally
- Vegetable production ranks in top 2% of counties nationally
- Growth of organic farming is developing

Advanced Manufacturing

TABLE 4:

- There has not been substantial growth in this area
- We have to keep intellectual capital in our area to advance
- Jobs – for every job that is created in advanced manufacturing 5+ jobs are created from that => strong multiplier effect

Table Comments about specific clusters (continued):

Tourism

TABLE 1:

- Based on geography, geography cannot be outsourced: Oneida Lake, Erie Canal, Salmon River, Tug hill; heavily used as is, could be improved

TABLE 2:

- Historic development, bicycle friendly
- Emphasis on quality of life, can drive small business
- Small business and Tourism have synergistic relationship

TABLE 3:

- Quality of life in areas of Central New York need to improve in order to keep people here
- Also tourism will give avenues of work to wider base of skills in art, music, etc.

TABLE 4:

- Largest industry in NY
- Brings people here with disposable income,
- Supports the growth of small business
- Helps to brand NYS, BUT this needs to be improved
- Already large but has even more potential to improve

TABLE 6:

- Waterways, fishing, Audubon Centers, Montezuma
- Play to our strengths
- History: preserving, small Main Streets, underground railroad
- Port Authority
- How do we recruit people to this area from the mid-west
- Determine how to make Oswego starting point for travel/attract people to on-land experiences (wine country)

Small Business

TABLE 1:

- Beginning of large businesses, innovations from small businesses as well

TABLE 2:

- Our foundation it effects our quality of life; it effects families
- Has to market toward tourism more
- Small business and Tourism have synergistic relationship

TABLE 3:

- Small business is important in all of these areas and should not be a category of its own but coupled with all of these areas

TABLE 6:

- Organic food
- Most growth is coming from 2-3, 10-20 employee sized businesses
- Employees: technology assists that
- Small Main Streets as example of informal incubators
- SBA says that most employers have 500 employees or less
- Revitalization and reinvestment
- Small business more all encompassing than others industry clusters

TABLE 7:

- Many other clusters are included in this

2. What policy changes (local, state, national) are necessary to drive economic growth in Central New York?

TABLE 1:

- Make licensing for snowmobiling easier
- Consolidate good agricultural practices between stores for food processing and buying
- Shoreline stabilization for canal system with bicycle trails
- Regional calendar of events for upcoming tourism
 - Make sure counties are equally represented
- Introduce agriculture education in curriculums
- Make energy more affordable

TABLE 2:

- Awareness about policies – understand benefits
- Quality of education coming from community and teachers
- Road blocks and yellow tape for initiatives and small business. Yellow tape is necessary but awareness about that so people can make these initiative happen.
- A state facilitator to ‘cut through the tape’
- State mandated energy levels from green energy.
- Remove yellow tape from alternative energy initiative
- Who is the go-to person to talk about these policies
- Small business and citizens need more empowerment

TABLE 3:

- Taxing the rich
- Local level decisions and policy making
- Collaborate and include Indian nations on strategic and economic development
- Health care costs
 - Leverage resources
 - Lower costs policy has no coverage in specialty area
- Term limits for local, state, and national
 - Especially Congressional seats
- Social welfare reform
 - Oversights
 - Time limits for receiving benefits
- Leveraging unions to get more collaboration

2. What policy changes (local, state, national) are necessary to drive economic growth in Central New York? (continued)

TABLE 4:

- Mandated costs, utility, taxes => makes our property taxes what they are; can only be changed at the National level for some of these mandates. These need to change.
- Commodity costs: change how the commodity is priced. Price of power which helps and is involved in every one of these clusters; effects large manufacturers especially
- State policy that allows intellectual capital to grow/expand in CNY
 - Subsidies
 - Need incentives
 - Tax breaks
 - Co-op opportunities (education)
 - The policy also needs to promote manufacturing job growth
 - Allow students to work in industries through co-op, subsidies
 - Develop policy to keep graduate students in the region
 - Income based loan repayment
- Available funding for transportation (creation of roads, structures)
 - Must be Regional Policy to facilitate decision on how to expand transportation
 - This funding will also help to bring more business to areas who do not have the large companies (Wegmans, etc.)
- Nuclear/clean energy national and state policy =>we need infrastructure in place, we will be behind the ball
 - Creative of more renewable resource
- Health insurance/workers comp
- Policy => eliminate barriers to entry for business

TABLE 5:

- Tax credit: to bring in a business
- Provide incentives to potential employees/employers -- HOW: include communication between not for profit industries (hospital, schools, etc)
- Change in policy of water treatment/transportation
- Reuse of existing building/improve infrastructure – HOW: tax incentives
- Strengthen transportation systems – HOW: incentive
- Require elected official to hold economic forums so that the *Voice of the Public* is brought to them directly

TABLE 6:

SMALL BUSINESS

- How to we strengthen our support for small business?
 - Address new government does business with small business
 - We are not a small business-friendly state
 - Costs make doing business prohibitive
- Lower utility rates
- Make enrollment more simple to enroll in
- Employee taxes make it difficult for employers to keep employees
 - Find ways to address job creation without making it cost-prohibitive
- Workforce development: along the lines of CCC, WPA, CETA

2. What policy changes (local, state, national) are necessary to drive economic growth in Central New York? (continued)

TABLE 6 (continued):

- Businesses
 - Need technology assistance in ways that are free
 - Address dropout rates **in high school**
 - Address housing

TOURISM

- Investment in infrastructure will assist development of tourism
- Policies to protect fisheries and the fishermen while they are here visiting

I LOVE NY

- Reinvest in I LOVE NY and market region through the established brand
- Impact seasonal outmigration
- How to keep multi-generational family connected in this area
- Change in property tax base

TABLE 7:

- Regulation and taxes – financial responsibility aligned with program responsibility, for example, Medicaid funding NYS take over Medicaid
- Relief of unfunded mandates – legislative and regulatory
- Economic development aid tied to other criteria besides just job creation
- Less regulation in business – any regulations has to be analyzed in terms of economic impact on small business
- Maintain transportation infrastructure (road, rail, ports, air)

3. To be successful the Regional Economic Development Council process requires public engagement and input. How can we continue to actively include the public as we move forward?

TABLE 1:

- More regional forums, face to face
- Video conferencing and webinars
- Email list – official REDC for members
- More newspaper advertising, especially local
- Blogging, if advertised properly
- Proper advertising => catchy, interesting, informative
- Facebook page with constant updates
- Town meetings, smaller conference
- Local papers, advertising
- County website should post updates, information

TABLE 2:

- Use email list to inform communities about forums
- Entrepreneurs and grass roots movements need more recognition
- Make meetings less formal and less intimidating
- Make campaigns more personable
- People do not understand their roles
- ‘Dumbing down’ communication, simplifying communication to your audience, using images
- Using expertise to make this master plan through a just process
- Marketing about these types of forums to create awareness
- Having more creative ways to create a stir about policies and civic engagement
- More local advertising, out of higher education
- Identify major organizations in local communities and have a facilitator that works w/them
- Regional meetings more than ‘once in a while’ (once a month)
 - The environment factor draws tons of minds

TABLE 3:

- Rob Simpson, CenterState CEO, was not able to answer when meetings, forums were taking place
 - All offices should know when these events are taking place
- Social networking
- Email
- Sustainability
 - Dynamic website
- There is a need for a variety of marketing efforts in all areas
- Meeting minutes from council meetings should be archived on websites => public transparency
- Use of wiki books
- Lieutenant Governor helpful with Indian Nations
- More information need on current policy to drive further communication

3. To be successful the Regional Economic Development Council process requires public engagement and input. How can we continue to actively include the public as we move forward? (continued)

TABLE 4:

- Benchmarking to see what works, what needs to be improved upon
- Search what works in other counties, regions => apply that here
- Keep all levels of government involved; updated
- Regional Distribution Model – our region needs to create a venue for forums/meetings
- Market the different ways/tools created much more / branding
 - Chambers
 - Facebook
 - Email
 - TV
 - Radio
 - Online forum
 - Must be continuous to keep people involved on updates
 - This needs to be done through the same outlets
- Region needs to be brought together; not the counties separated
 - Needs to be looked at from the region and council need to be impartial
- Need to create a focus => show the people of the region with a study that these are the industries that are driving our region; let’s continue to develop these

TABLE 5:

- Social media to spread awareness
 - Blogging
 - Facebook page
- Utilize state elected officials

TABLE 6:

- More advance notice for meetings
- A more comprehensive branding and marketing campaign
- Traditional print media
- What about television ads
- A concern that there is not sufficient regional marketing

TABLE 7:

- Use e-collaboration – blogs
- Correct dysfunction in State government in order to decrease public apathy about processes such as this
- Committee of Citizens needed to oversee how funds are spent
- Guest editorials in local newspaper
- Social media
- Information at public areas such as vehicle registration; perhaps even an economic reward for taking a survey, i.e., reduction in registration cost