

DRAFT

**Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
Meeting 5
SUNY Rockland County Community College
October 20, 2011
3:00pm-6:00pm**

Meeting Notes

Opening Remarks

Lt. Governor Duffy, and Regional Council Co-Chairs Len Schleifer and Dennis Murray welcomed the Council and members of the public to SUNY Rockland County Community College for the fifth meeting of the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council.

Co-Chair Dennis Murray opened the meeting with an overview of the agenda for the meeting which included: a presentation on the CFA scoring process; a presentation and discussion on the Council strategies document; a discussion of the priority projects; and public comment.

Consolidated Funding Application

Irene Baker, Director of Chamber Affairs for Governor Cuomo, presented a power point on the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. The presentation provided an overview of the application process and the timeline for when applications are due and how they will be scored in accordance with the Council's approved endorsement criteria. Her presentation also provided a description of how the Council will coordinate the scoring of applications. She described the web-based program that will allow voting members of the Council to view application summaries and details and assign points. She also described the recommended plan that the Council assign 2 voting members to review and score the applications, and present the recommended list to the full Council for final approval in an executive session of its next meeting.

The Council discussed Irene's presentation. Several questions were asked about the balance between CFA application choices and priority projects and how the \$40 million is apportioned and the process by which priority projects must be applied for. It was noted that priority projects need to use the CFA if funded is being requested but that the regional plan can include priority projects that are not within the CFA. Irene also clarified several points about how scoring will be averaged and normalized across regions, saying that there is a statistical process in place for this purpose. In response to questions, Irene also clarified that state agencies are responsible for the due diligence to ensure that applications are eligible for CFA programs and that they meet program requirements.

Industry Cluster/Strategies Workgroup Report

Councilmembers Jonathan Drapkin and Marsha Gordon presented a power point on the draft strategies section of the council's plan. They provided an overview on the following strategies:

Strategy #1: Target job creation investments in identifiable industry “clusters” (red circle industries) such as biotech, high-tech manufacturing, and IT.

Strategy #2: Develop strategies to retain and stimulate more mature (purple circle) industries.

Strategy #3 – Leverage the region’s outstanding natural resources in a “natural infrastructure” strategy that views agriculture, tourism, and the environment (green circle industries) as quality of life attributes that are critical to attracting and retaining high-quality jobs for all key industry sectors.

Strategy #4: Improve key regional infrastructure to make the region more business-ready

Strategy #5: Housing

Strategy #6: Urban Strategy (to be developed)

Strategy #7: Workforce Development

Strategy #8: Provide more integrated and accessible resources to small and medium-sized businesses.

Strategy #9: Make the region and NY State more business friendly by removing tax and administrative policies that are major disincentives to businesses locating and staying in the region (eliminate MTA tax outside NYC, reform SEQRA, include targeted industries in Excelsior program, reform Department of Environmental Conservation permitting process). [Co-chairs should pursue this with the statewide RC co-chair group, as some of these are statewide issues too.]

Strategy #10: Develop non-mandated programs that encourage, educate, foster green development projects as part of developing a green Mid-Hudson Valley economy.

Strategy #11: Develop “win-win” strategies with other NY State regions.

Strategy #12 - Make the Mid-Hudson region more attractive to young educated professionals in order to stop “youth flight” and “brain drain” in the region.

Strategy #13: Waterfront Development (to be further developed)

Strategy #14: MWBEs (Minority and Women Owned Businesses; to be developed)

Strategy #15: Align Government Support for Regional Economic Development

Marsha and Jonathan noted that the strategies take a holistic approach to the regional plan that can be used as a framework for a plan now and into the future.

The Council discussed the presentation.

Comment: The issue of pension dollar investment in New York State companies should be included. It was noted that this is an issue that could be brought to the Chairmen's committee.

Comment: The strategies should more specifically include small businesses—a key economic engine in the region.

Comment: Strategy three should be supplemented to include the protection of farmland.

Comment: The priority should be creating high paying jobs. There is a problem of underemployment that the strategies don't mention.

Comment: Glad to see that all regional issues are represented, including those from Sullivan County. Question about whether the health care industry sector captures residential health care.

Comment: Why are the arts not included? The arts are a significant economic engine.

Comment: Would like to submit more ideas on the addressing the issue of access to capital.

Marsha noted that Council members wanting to add content to the document should submit their entries in bulleted format.

Comment: It was suggested that the priorities be summarized into one "cheat-sheet" in the plan.

The Co-Chairs asked for public comment before taking a vote on the plan:

Comment: The process is very symbolic and potentially an historic opportunity to create synergy in the planning process. The Council should be commended for its work.

Action:

Council member Jim Taylor moved, and Wiley Harrison seconded, a motion to approve the Strategies document, with possible changes based on comment during the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Comment: Will the strategies be posted on the website?

Council members responded that yes, a document will be posted.

Open Council Discussion

Comment: The plan as presented thus far captures the regional diversity in terms of industry sectors

Comment: The 5 year plan positions the region well to compete for dollars that are immediately available. Moving forward, it would be helpful to develop a marketing strategy and plan. The

Council discussed that a marketing strategy could be included in the implementation section of the plan.

Council staff Thom Kleiner reminded the Council that community forums have been scheduled for Oct. 25 (Westchester County) and Oct. 26 (Rockland County).