

6/6/2017

**Western CT Economic Development
Strategy Committee**

Held at the Comstock Community Center
180 School Rd, Wilton, CT 06897

MEMBERS

Hal Kurfehs	Coldwell Banker Commercial
Joe Ercolano	CT Small Business Development Center
Christal Prezler	Newtown, Planning Department Economic and Community Development
Lisa Mercurio	Business Council of Fairfield County
Lisa Scails	Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut
Ed Musante	Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
Betsy Paynter	Town of Brookfield, Economic Development

ALSO ATTENDING

WestCOG staff Elizabeth Esposito and Nicole Sullivan.

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 PM by Associate Planner, Elizabeth Esposito.

DISCUSSION

The group reviewed the project solicitation process and the project solicitation form.

Elizabeth gave an overview of the purpose of the evaluation framework as being for the Region and the plan itself, not for the project proposals.

The group then reviewed an initial draft of the evaluation framework. Changes to it were explored. A second draft is attached. Members not in attendance may give their input to Elizabeth by June 15.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Next Meeting: Will be July 19, at 2pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Implementation & Evaluation

With the data collection complete, the strategic action plan set, and the regional projects prioritized, the Western Connecticut Economic Advisory Group must carry out this plan and measure its progress.

Implementation

The success of this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will ultimately depend upon the coalition of businesses, local governments, non-profit organizations, and individuals who have worked for more than a year to create the plan, to continue to work together to implement it.

A critical component of any implementation effort will be leveraging the resources and influence of both the public and private sectors – and often through public-private partnerships – in pursuit of the Region’s goals. Developing the political support and obtaining the funding necessary for these investments will require the business community and the public to voice their support for these key projects. Likewise, initiatives spearheaded by non-profit and for-profit organizations may require the support of elected officials and perhaps legislative changes at the local or state level. Only by working together can these groups achieve the goals the Region has selected.

As the most likely organization to oversee implementation of this CEDS, the Western Connecticut Economic Advisory Group, will require substantial support. A broad commitment must be made to provide the management resources necessary for implementation. The area’s regional planning organization, the Western Connecticut Council of Governments, is positioned to play an important role in generating widespread municipal support for moving forward with the implementation of the CEDS.

It is recommended that the major players meet quarterly to review the work accomplished for the previous quarter and to state the proposed work for the coming quarter.

Annual Performance Reports

An Annual Performance Report is required and must be submitted to EDA. It is the opportunity to gage the progress the Region has made and to update the project list. Any updated CEDS Performance report resulting in major change to the project list will be made available for public review and comment.

Evaluation

The Western Connecticut Economic Advisory Group recognizes that for a plan to be implemented effectively, it must be monitored and evaluated. This section lays out measures of program outcomes and general indicators of success, including variables that demonstrate that the regional economy is moving in the desired direction. These data will inform ongoing implementation of and future updates to this plan.

Goal 1: Regional Planning and Cooperation		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Participation at quarterly meetings	Western CT Economic Advisory Group records	At least 50%
Number of meetings with strategic partners	Staff Records	At least 1 per quarter
Number of meetings with interregional partners	Staff Records	At least 2 per year

Goal 2: Improved Business Climate		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Amount of activity seen by existing business resources	Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Development Center, SBA, etc.	Increase
Number of new business support organizations and services	Municipalities, other strategic partners	Increase
Number of municipalities using CT Main Street Center Resources	Municipalities	Increase
Number of municipalities evaluating the efficiency of their zoning process	Municipalities	At least 4 per year
Number of municipalities conducting education programs for their staff and volunteers on municipal boards and commissions	Municipalities, CEDAS, CERC, NEMO	At least 4 per year
Sales tax revenue by municipality and in the retail, service, and entertainment sectors	CT Dept. of Revenue Services, Data.ct.gov	Increase

Goal 3: Cultivated Conditions to Support a Diverse Workforce		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Percent of population 20 – 29 ages group	ACS/Census	Increase
Percent unemployment for ages 50+	ACS/Census	Decrease
Number of dual enrollment and early college programs	CT Dept. of Education/ Schools	Increase
Number of students completing dual enrollment and early college programs	CT Dept. of Education/ Schools	Increase
Number of high school and older students receiving career ready certifications beyond graduation	CT Dept. of Education/ Schools	Increase
Number of multifamily housing units built or renovated per year	Municipalities	Increase
Percent of multi-unit housing in suburban and rural municipalities	ACS/Census	Increase
Number of affordable housing units in the Region	Municipalities, Partnerships for Strong Communities, NLIHC	Increase

Goal 4: Improved and Maintained Transportation and Public Infrastructure		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Percent of residents walking, biking, or taking transit	ACS/Census	Increase
Percent of residents driving alone	ACS/Census	Decrease
Public transit delays, cancelations, and travel time	MetroNorth, Transit Districts, CTtransit	Decrease
Access to improved internet speeds	CTgig, Broadbandmap.gov	Increase
Number of elements of TOD Plans that have gone to construction	Municipalities	Increase
Percent of projects in the CEDS that utilize alternative energy	Western CT Economic Advisory Group records	Increase
The forthcoming infrastructure condition standards approved by CT DOT for the Western CT Region	CT DOT, MPOs, WestCOG	On par or exceeds

Goal 5: A Region More Resilient to the Impacts of Climate Change		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Percent of projects in the CEDS that concur with Regional Plan of Conservation and Development	Western CT Economic Advisory Group records	Increase
Percent of projects in CEDS that are infill/reuse	Western CT Economic Advisory Group records	Increase
Number of brownfield sites remediated and or developed	Project records	Increase
Number of municipalities participating in the Community Rating System	WestCOG	Increase
Number of municipalities with identified strategies specific to business and commercial areas in their Hazard Mitigation Plans	Municipalities	Increase
Number of repetitive flood loss properties in the Region	CT DEEP	Decrease

Goal 6: A Positive Regional Identity		
Indicator	Data Source	Desired Result
Number of awards given to regional partners	All strategic partners	At least 1 per year
Number of workshops held for businesses	Western CT Economic Advisory Group records	At least 1 per year
Tourism Industry Sales	CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development – Tourism Division	Increase
Town, Region, or State rankings in major publications	CERC	Improved
Impressions on online resources with positive portrayals of the Region	AccessWesternCT.com, other sites and partners	Increase