

**MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT  
DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING #8**

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**Wednesday, December 15, 2010 at 2:30 p.m.**

**Holyoke Transportation Center  
206 Maple Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Holyoke, Massachusetts**

Task Force Members Present:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tim Brennan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission                               | <input type="checkbox"/> William Ward, Regional Employment Board   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathy Anderson, City of Holyoke   | <input type="checkbox"/> John Judge, Springfield Office of Planning and Development  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Gilbert, James Dowd and Sons/Holyoke Chamber of Commerce                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Felix Morales, Premier Accounting   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Messner, Holyoke Community College                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gladys Lebron-Martinez, CareerPoint  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kip Foley, Cover Technologies, Inc.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dan D'Alma, IBEW, Local 7   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Bay, Holyoke Works  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elaine Pluta, City of Holyoke  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Malone, University of Massachusetts  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Nakajima, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Doyle, CPA Consultant  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patrick Larkin, John Adams Innovation Institute – Massachusetts Technology Collaborative |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Lavelle, Holyoke Gas & Electric   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Vedovelli, Massachusetts Office of Business Development                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Douglas Bowen, Peoples Bank (Holyoke)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Henderson, MassDevelopment   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allan Blair, Western Mass. Economic Development Council                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Kurose, UMass/Dept. Computer Science   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Dunlavy, Franklin Regional Council of Governments/Pioneer Valley Connect           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helene Florio, Office of State Senator Michael Knapik                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Mullin, UMass Amherst   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natalie Blais, Office of U.S. Congressman John Olver                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dianne Fuller Doherty, Western Mass. Regional Office – Small Business Development Center | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brenna E. Murphy, Office of State Representative Michael Kane                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ira Rubenzahl, Springfield Technical Community College                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Kennedy, Office of U.S. Congressman Richard Neal  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carlos Gonzalez, Western Mass. Latino Chamber of Commerce (Holyoke & Springfield)        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donald R. Welch, Holyoke City Council  |

Guests Present:

Jessica Atwood, Franklin Regional Council of Governments	Charlie Lotspeich, Holyoke Heritage State Park
John Dyjach, City of Holyoke	Robert Kispert, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Indrani Kowlessar Gallagher, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission	Kathy McCabe, McCabe Enterprises
John Goodhue, MGHPC	James A. Moore, HDR, Inc.
Dan Hodge, HDR, Inc.	Zvi Rosen
Nancy Howard	Don Upton, Fairfield Index
	Linda Vacon, Holyoke City Council

1. Call to Order and Welcome With Brief Opening Remarks/Announcements by Co-Chairs

The eighth meeting of the Innovation District Design and Development Task Force was called to order at 2:35 p.m. by the Task Force's Co-Chair Tim Brennan who welcomed all those present. Mr. Brennan observed that it was a great opportunity for the Task Force members to be able to now meet in the Holyoke Transportation Center facility and he thanked the staff of Holyoke Community College for setting up the room to meet the Task Force's workshop needs for today's meeting. Mr. Brennan then asked Co-Chair Kathy Anderson if she had any announcements on projects related to the Task Force's work. Ms. Anderson noted that the first public meeting for Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan (URP) will likely be held in January. Ms. Anderson further stated that she has been talking with the Holyoke City Council members who represent the Urban Renewal study area to ensure that the proposed URP public meeting dates also meet with their approval. Ms. Anderson further noted that these dates will be announced after the Christmas and New Year holidays.

2. Minutes of Previous Task Force Meeting Which Was Held on October 27, 2010

Mr. Brennan then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Task Force meeting which was held on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.

MOVED BY DOUGLAS BOWEN, SECONDED BY LARRY BAY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 27, 2010.

Mr. Brennan asked if there were any questions, comments or corrections regarding the subject meeting minutes but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CORRECTIONS, THE MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 27, 2010 WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

3. Enlisting the Task Force as a Rudder Team: Understanding Key Assumptions, Strategies and Rules of Engagement

Mr. Brennan reminded the Task Force that the consultant team members for the Innovation District Project consist of HDR, Inc., Fairfield Index and Northeastern University and at the last Task Force meeting we heard from and interacted with consultant representatives Dan Hodge and James Moore of HDR. Mr. Brennan further stated that in addition to Dan Hodge and James Moore, Don Upton of Fairfield Index was in attendance at today's Task Force meeting. Mr. Brennan noted that Mr. Upton will be playing a key role as a facilitator for today's workshop-style gathering. Mr. Brennan then turned the meeting over to Mr. Hodge of HDR.

Mr. Hodge stated that he would begin with a brief project update and answer any questions on the work the consultant team has done thus far. Subsequently he will hand the meeting over to Mr. Upton who will work through the core of today's meeting agenda which involves Task Force-specific work. Mr. Hodge underscored this work consists of developing a clear statement of intent and to initiate a discussion of how the project's progress will be tracked in a transparent fashion. Mr. Hodge noted that the consultant team wants to begin a discussion focusing on the region's assets, industry-specific opportunities and vision with a focus on competitive market advantages and challenges. Mr. Hodge mentioned that the direct input provided by the Task Force members will be used to develop an essential Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) assessment. Mr. Hodge then stated that today's meeting will conclude with a discussion of next steps on the part of the consultant team as well as the Task Force itself.

Mr. Hodge reviewed the project's four key objectives and stated that the first and overarching objective was to think of the high-performance computing center and other activities in Holyoke as the catalysts for economic development and the need to uncover recommended strategies that can best maximize these opportunities. Mr. Hodge next cited the three other key strategy objectives which consist of:

- Defining an industry cluster development strategy for Holyoke and the region.
- Developing a regional innovation-based economic development strategy for the Knowledge Corridor.
- Developing compelling information for a communications and marketing plan.

Mr. Hodge then presented Task Force members with an update of HDR's project-related efforts thus far and he noted that Task 1, which is underway, involves an array of preparatory activities such as a series of kick-off meetings with Task Force members as well as with other key resource people such as Pat Larkin and his project team at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC). Mr. Hodge also stated that the consultant team has conducted an initial review of the Innovate Holyoke website.

Mr. Hodge stated that Task 2 is the current focus of the consultant team's work and he explained this work consists of data collection and reviewing existing reports and studies that are relevant to this project assignment. Mr. Hodge noted that a key component of this task involves applying an Economic Development Self Assessment Tool (EDSAT) to the City of Holyoke which is an assessment tool that has been developed by the Dukakis Center of Northeastern University and applied to approximately 70 municipalities in New England and nationally. Mr. Hodge added that the EDSAT for Holyoke was completed approximately five years ago but the Holyoke EDSAT needs to be updated with the assistance of Holyoke officials Ms. Anderson and Mayor Pluta as this will be a key input to the consultant team's SWOT assessment. Mr. Hodge noted that Tasks 3, 4 and 5 involve carrying out preliminary interviews with Task Force members and other stakeholders to help with the identification of industry opportunities and areas of competitive strengths and challenges.

Mr. Hodge reviewed the consultant team's nine-month project schedule which was depicted in the consultant team's PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Hodge indicated that the project schedule includes four in-depth Task Force working sessions and he commented that today's meeting is the first of these four in-depth sessions. Mr. Hodge stated that the consultant team will meet with the Task Force again in February and this second in-depth session will be used to present the SWOT assessment so that it can be reviewed, critiqued and refined. Mr. Hodge then stated that Sessions 3 and 4 with the Task Force will focus on strategy development.

Next Mr. Hodge displayed a PowerPoint slide which encompassed a preliminary list of stakeholder interviews. Mr. Hodge added that detailed meeting notes will be developed for each session with these stakeholders. Mr. Hodge thanked Task Force members for their suggestions on key stakeholders that the consultant team should interview and he emphasized that the consultant team will continue to do more outreach to existing businesses in Holyoke and the region to get their perspective on which regional strengths that can be leveraged to advantage in Holyoke and the surrounding region. At this point, Mr. Hodge concluded his report and Mr. Brennan indicated we'd move to item #4 on today's agenda.

4. In-Depth Task Force Workshop Focusing on Assets, Industry Opportunities and Vision for the Market With the Discussion Facilitated by the HDR Team

Mr. Hodge introduced and handed over the workshop portion of the meeting to Don Upton, President of Fairfield Index, noting that Mr. Upton is a leader in economic development in the areas of meeting facilitation, site location selection and linking target industries with workforce strategies.

Mr. Upton thanked Mr. Hodge for his introduction and he observed that there are other "rudder teams" such as the Task Force all over the United States which have a catalyst project that inspires them to work together as a family in order to promote and improve their community and their region. Mr. Upton further noted that he would be using terms like "rudder team" and "family" when referring to the Task Force throughout this meeting and he then reviewed the roles and expectations of the Innovation District Task Force from his perspective which included:

- Draft, approve, and advance to all stakeholders a comprehensive Statement of Intent – what does the Task Force intend to accomplish?
- Work in the context of the full project—a project milestone timeline—so that the Task Force moves from being listeners and advocates to something that embodies the team, specifically, a nine-month project management system.
- Serve as a "rudder team" for stakeholders, and investors and partners of the future.
- Serve as a "rudder team" for launching a balanced portfolio of strategic objectives to help advance a winning agenda for the region.
- Operate as a center of encouragement and collaboration.
- Be the best equipped leadership team in North America.

Mr. Upton then identified and reviewed the following key points that will ultimately determine how this project will become successful, including:

- The Team: Mr. Upton emphasized that the Task Force's knowledge of the project's goals is critically important.
- Playing field: At the end of the nine-month timeline Mr. Upton noted that the Task Force should have a better understanding than anyone else of the project's assets and how to use them to advantage in order to compete.
- Intent: Mr. Upton emphasized that it was imperative for the Task Force to have a clear statement and understanding of the project's goals.
- Resources: Faithful and dedicated service.

Mr. Upton said that today he wanted to work with the Task Force to develop a statement of intent so that this project can be described to others in a clear and understandable way. Mr. Upton then asked each Task Force member to briefly explain why they decided to become a member of this rudder team. A variety of reasons for participating were cited by Task Force members including:

- The desire to get this region on the map as a destination.
- To foster workforce development initiatives including:
  - Finding resources to train and educate individuals living in the City of Holyoke.
  - Positioning the high-performance computing center to act as an economic catalyst for this area and to provide education and regional employment opportunities.
- To help children in the area understand the importance of economic development and how it can affect their future in a positive way.
- To export interest in maximizing the assets of the City of Holyoke and the region.
- To act as a liaison to federal and state officials to explore ways in which state and local government can support this project.
- To generate interest in helping to determine what are the competitive advantages for Holyoke and the region and telling this story.
- To ensure that the City of Holyoke is being promoted.
- To help promote a favorable environment for entrepreneurial activity in the City of Holyoke and the region.
- To leverage the region's multiple assets and resources.
- To test the premise that regions throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can be competitive and can enjoy the benefits that urban centers in the eastern part of the state have through the catalyst of strategic investment such as the Holyoke High-Performance Computing Center.
- To fully leverage the high-performance computing center as an asset to Holyoke and the region as a whole.
- To ensure there is economic development created in the area that Holyoke residents can benefit from.
- To utilize Task Force members as a collection of "scouts" to map out the economic future of the City of Holyoke as well as the region.

Mr. Upton thanked the Task Force for their input and he explained that the purpose of the rudder team is to test assumptions and to document the project's progress. In addition, Mr. Upton further stated that another important role of the rudder team is to focus on customers and to make sure that its actions are characterized by transparency. Lastly, Mr. Upton stated that the Task Force should tie its operations and tactical steps to its key objectives.

Mr. Upton used a PowerPoint slide to display the Task Force's mission and goals and although he acknowledged the importance of this text, he stated that this is not a statement that is yet ready to be broadly distributed. Mr. Upton next displayed a PowerPoint slide with a draft statement of intent that he had prepared for the Task Force's consideration which

was developed by reviewing all the available Task Force materials. Mr. Upton noted that the final version of the Task Force's statement of intent needs to clearly define and explain the goals of the project. Mr. Upton's draft statement of intent read as follows:

"We intend to explore and activate assets for jobs, enterprises, entrepreneurs, and investment by:

- Making honest, data-driven decisions about the most meaningful opportunities for our community;
- Producing and continuously updating an Innovation District Strategy which will draw on our strengths and heritage, and link to enterprises and jobs of the future;
- Leveraging the full extent of Pioneer Valley regional assets and state resources, and doing our part in transforming the reputation and future of our region."

Mr. Upton asked the Task Force for their feedback on this draft statement. James Kurose observed that the statement appears to be pushing product out but not pulling people from the outside into the project by addressing potentially interested parties such as the site locators. John Goodhue thought that the draft statement implies that the project isn't going to engage the prospective customer base until after nine months have passed. However, Eric Nakajima noted that he liked the line, "Making honest, data-driven decisions about the most meaningful opportunities for our community" because he had interpreted this as being a reality-based exercise to discern and test propositions. Mr. Nakajima suggested a re-write to make sure that the statement characterizes the intent is to test ideas in the early stages and well before full implementation.

Mr. Brennan stated that he did not like the word, "explore" and noted that a key word that's missing is "connect" because this region has many assets that are independent of each other and this project is about the importance of networking and connecting these assets to gain competitive advantage over other areas. Richard Henderson noted that the second bullet does not refer to the implementation of the strategy and he thought that it would be important to have text referring to this objective. A member of the audience commented that he thought the objective was to create an innovation district and he wondered why this is not embodied in the draft statement of intent.

Mr. Upton then moved to a discussion on the structure of a project system for the Task Force. Mr. Upton observed that if the Task Force is going to have a project system which will document the group's work in a new way that will be shared with all audiences he wanted the Task Force to consider and approve the components of communication. Mr. Upton further emphasized that it was important to demonstrate proof of learning and a commitment to action. Mr. Upton then used a PowerPoint slide to display the following recommended components of the session notes that he intended to use to document this meeting, including:

- Statement of intent
- Alignment across the portal in everything the Task Force does
- Summary of today's discussion
- Nine-month milestone timeline
- Key assumptions and learning: what the Task Force got out of the session and next steps
- Action items: Homework or questions for HDR and the consultant team
- Data requests

Mayor Elaine Pluta indicated that she needed to leave soon for another meeting but first wanted to revisit the draft statement of intent. Specifically, Mayor Pluta stated that there was a need to clarify what an Innovation District was going to look like in the City of Holyoke because individuals and organizations are already looking to undertake projects here in the City. Mayor Pluta stressed that there needs to be a plan in place to search for activities and projects that to fit into the Innovation District, rather than waiting for companies to come to the City of Holyoke and then try to fit them into the plan. Mayor Pluta expressed her feeling that it would be far better to plan ahead and thereby maximize the benefits of an Innovation District.

Mr. Upton asked if the organization of the session notes that he had presented met with the Task Force's approval. After the group agreed on the components of the session notes by consensus, Mr. Upton distributed copies of the project timeline and he asked Task Force members to indicate specific milestones and policy events that should be noted on it and to return these marked-up timelines to him. Mr. Upton stated that when he receives the edited timelines from Task Force members these key events will be integrated into the project timeline.

Mr. Upton then commented that HDR had asked him to help the consultant team in gathering information from the Task Force to be used for the SWOT analysis. Accordingly, Mr. Upton noted that this part of the Task Force meeting will consist of soliciting feedback from the Task Force centering on the region's assets, target industries and vision for the regional market. Mr. Upton noted that he would start with a discussion on the region's competitive market assets which matter most to Task Force members. Mr. Upton then went around the room and asked each Task Force member to comment on what they thought the region's key assets include. The following assets were identified by Task Force members and other meeting attendees:

- Green, lower-cost electric power.
- Great connectivity within the City of Holyoke through major pipelines around the City and throughout the region.
- Great access to rail, roads and airports.
- The region is cost competitive within the Northeast compared to other markets of this size.
- The resident workforce is competitive especially in the area of precision manufacturing.
- The diversity of the region's population.
- The natural beauty of the open space in the region.
- Good housing stock.
- There is a wealth of nonprofit services offered in the area.
- Holyoke and the region have the potential to have affordable, attractive, and sustainable neighborhoods and relatively inexpensive office space to capture the young people who graduate from the local colleges and universities.
- Good physical location with respect to major markets such as Boston and New York.
- The municipal Holyoke Gas and Electric Company in terms of its capacity, pricing and organization.
- Strong and numerous community colleges, colleges and universities operating in the Pioneer Valley.
- Professional economic development acumen in this area such as the Holyoke Office of Planning and Development and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.
- A demonstrated ability at the federal, state and local level to arrive at consensus in helping the region to move forward with the help of government resources, funding as well as a firm commitment to action and implementation.
- Great creativity in the City of Holyoke's government and its various institutions.
- There is a sense of urgency here. "When you're down a bit you fight a little harder and that's a major asset."
- The region has a collaborative disposition.
- The region enjoys strong artist and cultural community.
- Well-known regional medical facilities and unique tourist attractions.
- The region's scale is large enough to offer a variety of resources but not so large that it's overwhelmed by complex and unsolvable problems.
- Excellent and plentiful water resources.
- University of Massachusetts is a valuable academic research institution.

- An important cluster of precision manufacturing companies located in Holyoke.
- Huge reservoir of bilingual talent in Holyoke that could be tapped for current and future workforce needs.

Mr. Upton then asked Mr. Hodge to comment on the assets which had been highlighted by the meeting participants. Mr. Hodge observed that no one had specifically mentioned the Holyoke High-Performance Computing Center (HPCC) but noted that the consultant team will explore how the community can leverage the assets of the research institutions that are partners in the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center (MGHPCC) from a community investment perspective. However, Mr. Hodge cautioned that concerns have been expressed in the local community that the MGHPCC may use so much energy that it could become a threat to the host community. Mr. Hodge then asked Mr. Lavelle if he would address this concern. Mr. Lavelle responded that Holyoke Gas and Electric (HG&E) is mindful that once the Holyoke HPCC is established and operational it will add a significant additional load to the HG&E's facilities. However, Mr. Lavelle emphasized that HG&E is in the process of developing a long-term plan to address this scalability challenge and he is confident this challenge can and will be successfully addressed.

Mr. Upton observed that there are certain key industries that are of special importance to the region, and he asked Task Force members to identify what they felt were these key industries. Task Force members noted the following key industries in the Pioneer Valley:

- The manufacturing industry sector especially because it may offer advancement opportunities for people with lower or middle skill levels.
- Higher education because it's all about talent and fostering a better educated/skilled workforce.
- Successful entrepreneurs and startups in the City of Holyoke and the surrounding region.
- The computer industry and the ways in which synergy with this industry can be built around the high-performance computing center.
- Financial service organizations which are located and remain here due to more affordable costs.
- The software development industry because it benefits from the better connectivity and the higher education assets found throughout the region.
- The supply chain configuration in the area where companies frequently subcontract their work to local precision manufacturing companies.
- Robotic engineering and precision tooling.
- The confluence of activities such as the MGHPCC, Cisco's Smart Communities Initiative and the Holyoke Gas and Electric's operations, among others.
- The ambitious and far reaching research agenda from the University Consortium for the MGHPCC.
- The presence of innovative food producers in Holyoke as well as the Pioneer Valley.
- The higher education institutions that can serve as incubators for new start-up companies.
- Electronic assembly companies.

Mr. Upton then called on Mr. Hodge to review the project's next steps. Mr. Hodge noted that the consultant team will put together session notes summarizing today's meeting and these will be distributed to Task Force members for their review. Mr. Hodge further noted that the HDR team will work on a data-driven SWOT assessment and, as was noted earlier in the meeting, Holyoke officials will be updating the City's economic self-assessment that helps define Holyoke's strengths and weaknesses. Mr. Hodge noted that the results of the SWOT assessment, as well as the Holyoke self-assessment, will be presented at the February 9<sup>th</sup> Task Force Meeting. Mr. Hodge added that the consultant team will also continue with its stakeholder outreach and public input process work. Mr. Hodge further commented that the City of Holyoke has identified a few tentative dates for public meetings in late January and early February on Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan and therefore the consultant team is working on how to best coordinate these public meetings with the work of the Innovation District Task Force's work due to the overlap of these two planning efforts. Mr. Hodge then commented that the consultant

team will continue compile its research and will pursue due diligence analysis regarding energy, industry and eco-system strategy opportunities.

After Mr. Hodge concluded his remark, Mr. Brennan confirmed that the next Task Force meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at the earlier start time of 1:30 p.m. and the meeting time will be extended to end at 4:00 p.m. There being no more questions or comments for Mr. Hodge or Mr. Upton, Mr. Brennan thanked them for their engaging presentation and asked John Goodhue to take up the next agenda item.

5. Informational Updates from the Holyoke High-Performance Computing Center University Consortium

Mr. Goodhue noted that bids are due for the contractor who will be selected to prepare the Holyoke HPCC site for construction to ensure that it meets applicable environmental standards. Mr. Goodhue further reported that site work will likely begin in the January/February time frame. Mr. Goodhue added that a less visible element of the MGHPCC project is that the first coalition of scientists is now in the planning and proposal stages for a project that if funded, would bring substantial high end computing equipment to the MGHPCC facility. Mr. Brennan asked if there were any questions Task Force members had for Mr. Goodhue. There being no questions for Mr. Goodhue, Mr. Brennan asked Ms. Anderson to address the next agenda item.

6. Informational Updates from the City of Holyoke on Various Projects and Activities Relevant to the GHPCC Facility and the Innovation District

Ms. Anderson stated that she and the Holyoke Planning and Development staff had recently met with Jeff Brancato, the University Consortium's liaison to the Task Force, and John Goodhue on pre-permitting the future MGHPCC development site. Ms. Anderson added that she will be updating Holyoke City Council on the progress of the MGHPCC project in at a future meeting to be held in January.

7. Other Business Including Confirming a Date for the Next Full Task Force Meeting on Either February 2 or February 9, 2011

Mr. Brennan asked if there was any other business that needed to be addressed today, but none were forthcoming. Mr. Brennan thanked Task Force members for their active participation and work at today's meeting, and there being no further business to conduct, Mr. Brennan wished everyone Happy Holidays and he adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m. without objection.