



INNOVATE HOLYOKE

Innovation District Design and Development Task Force
Meeting #8 | December 15, 2010 | Holyoke Transportation Center



SESSION NOTES

Managing our Work and Inquiries for 2011
Making the Best Competitive Choices

SUMMARY:

The Innovation District Design and Development Task Force is moving into a period of inquiry, team-building, fact-finding, and decision-making about the best competitive choices to attract jobs and capital investment. This special, 2 ¼ hour formative meeting was designed to ensure the coming months of work will be characterized by Task Force discipline and sound project management, a spirit of inquiry, and clear signals when key data, discussions, and assumptions are in-play. These strengths will be applied to the ongoing project titled: Innovation-based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley. The Task Force members considered and edited a comprehensive statement of intent to guide their work in 2011; and began the important process of transforming portal communications <http://www.innovateholyokey.com/> into a primary resource for residents of Holyoke's neighborhoods, businesses, economic developers, and the ultimate decision-makers from all sectors who will consider doing business in the Innovation District. The Statement of Intent will serve as the Task Force's lead, contextual message for the coming year. As the project's consultant team, led by HDR, Inc., begins its economic/industry analysis and support of community engagement, Task Force members will publicly notice and come together at strategic points in the process

to consider findings, compare assumptions, and commission follow-ups.

The new Session Notes format, reflected in this document, will be used to document results and insights, and encourage focus on clear communications channels. The basic structure of Session Notes will be restated through 2011 in order to show progress and provide all audiences with consistency. The structure includes: Statement of Intent; Summary; Portal Alignment; Milestone Timeline; Key Assumptions and Learning; Action Items; and Data Requests. The Task Force includes a balance of Holyoke and regional leaders in economic development, business, workforce, state, federal, and municipal skill sets and perspectives. From an academic perspective, the Task Force agenda and deep leadership engagement presents students of economics and business with casebook access to issues of the new economy. From an applied economic recovery basis, the Task Force is anticipating the challenges of applying precious resources and assets to the most promising job creation agendas. The foundation for this work will include the formation of an Innovation-based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley. The Session also produced "jump-starter" information for HDR's strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, with all Task Force members weighing in on their own assumptions and experiences.



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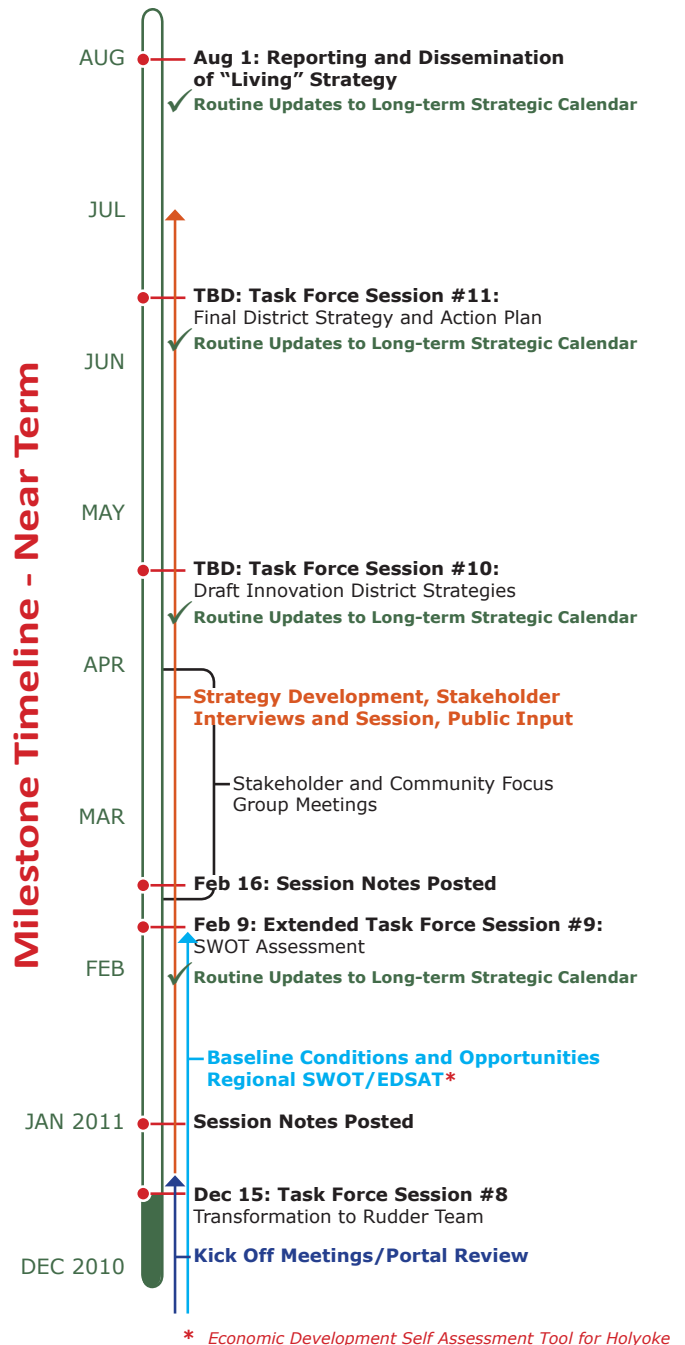
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We intend to identify and activate assets for jobs, enterprises, entrepreneurs, and investment by:

- ➔ Testing ideas and assumptions every step of the way with the people who make the real decisions about jobs and investment
- ➔ Making honest, data-driven decisions about the most meaningful opportunities for our community
- ➔ Producing and continually updating an Innovation District Strategy with our expectations for growth and redevelopment in the District, drawing on our strengths and heritage, and linking to enterprises and jobs of the future
- ➔ Leveraging the full extent of Pioneer Valley regional assets and connectivity with state and federal resources, and doing our part in transforming the reputation and future of our region

Notes on Draft Statement of Intent

Task Force members focused on two areas for edit and improvement: ensuring research and assumptions are tested with people who make the ultimate decisions about the location or expansion of a business; and emphasizing the importance of determining the character and growth characteristics of the Innovation District.





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This near-term milestone timeline will supplement a long-term timeline resource in the months to come. Task Force members are providing a broad range of milestones, activities, and events that will provide context when future decisions are made about marketing, partnerships, policy, and customer relations. A first view will be provided at Task Force Session #9 in February.

Key Assumptions and Learning

Item 1 Draft and Approve a Comprehensive Statement of Intent

The Task Force agreed to utilize a simple Statement of Intent which guides and aligns communications with all stakeholders. See above.

Item 2 Task Force Operates as a "Rudder Team"

The Task Force will act as a "Rudder Team" in the months to come. By doing so, the team will: test assumptions as a family of leaders; document progress in "plain view" of the people who call Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley "home"; focus on the individuals who will make decisions about jobs and investment in Holyoke over time; be characterized by transparency; and ensure operational and tactical steps are connected to strategic objectives. According to the consultant team, "Rudder Teams" in communities like Holyoke are vital to a transformational process or catalytic project because they are the first to represent to the global economy proof of a commitment to customers, strategic thinking, and consensus to take action for industry targets.

Item 3 Why are We Here?

Members were asked about why they made individual commitments to the Task Force. Highlights of the discussion include leaders' emphasis on balancing their aspirations for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley with ensuring they

do their part in tapping into their own networks of expertise and resources. Examples include: exploring ways to tap into federal resources; improving the competitive reputation of Holyoke and the region; utilizing available buildings and land; ensuring regional assets are inventoried and used as effectively as possible; bringing in resources to support workforce development; improving choices for employment and careers for families and students in the region, and retaining talent; making personal commitments to the community; promoting job creation; establishing a global reputation for Holyoke; ensuring the strengths of Holyoke Gas & Electric, especially their portfolio of renewable energy, are touted and appropriately utilized to inspire investment and grow jobs; and evaluating and tapping into the values of the Green High Performance Computing Center (GHPCC).

Item 4 Jump-starting SWOT Analysis: *What are our Assets?*

Task Force members were asked to jump-start the consultant team's SWOT analysis by sharing perceptions on the most competitive assets in Holyoke and the region. The Team provided the following for consideration:

- Renewable energy portfolios
- Low New England energy pricing
- A stand-out, best practice municipal utility characterized by innovation
- A city and region in the spotlight
- An innovation capacity and business legacy/A region known for "knowledge factories" of the past
- Solid workforce/talent delivery systems
- A concentration of centers of higher education excellence
- Economic development proficiency – Understanding of how to "go-to-market", provide customer service, locate sites and



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resources, connect with talent, and provide on-time delivery of permits

- Innovation and strength in not-for-profit sector
- A crossroads for data and the fiber optic infrastructure to attract data intensive businesses
- The right scale to execute on an economic development and jobs agenda – The ability to share agendas and take decisive, fast action
- Scalability – Capability to improve systems that matter to growing industries to new levels – Capability, given existing assets like buildings and land, to scale to significant footage, manufacturing, and employment site needs
- Large enough to be a competitive market with resources, but small enough to facilitate collaboration and partnerships
- People – Significant talent pool
- Diversity – Multi-lingual, multi-cultural capacity
- Massachusetts location – Close proximity to innovative job engines and additional centers of higher education
- Colleges and universities as idea factories – Innovation District as destination for early stage companies
- Legacy of manufacturing and promising present-day precision manufacturing companies
- Water resources
- A collaborative disposition in the culture of the community
- Product – Legacy buildings and real estate potential
- Historic design/architecture
- Mobility and strong future improvements in access across the Pioneer Valley and New

England – highways, inter-city rail, local transit

- Quality of Life with relatively lower costs of living
- Inexpensive office space
- Neighborhoods
- Consensus at federal, state and regional levels that economic action and competitiveness in Holyoke and the region matters

Item 5

Jump Starting SWOT Analysis: *What are the Possible Target Industries (Given our Assets)?*

Given the discussion of assets, Task Force members were asked about ideas or assumptions regarding potential industry targets. Responses ranged from connecting to business processes and proximity to Massachusetts employers, to specific industries. They included:

- Data intensive companies and data centers
- Providing proof of customer satisfaction, purpose and results in the form of the GHPCC
- Entrepreneurs and their start-up companies
- Affiliations with research universities and their spin-out commercial and incubated ventures
- Precision and other niche manufacturing
- Linkage to food producers; and processors and packagers
- Linkage of businesses to the smart grid – Attract companies with high expectations for renewable energy sources and carbon footprint standards
- Evaluate firms specializing in green design and integration of construction components
- Software
- Testing and product research



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- Centers of excellence in higher education
- State and federal government facilities/assets
- Expansions, growth, and redundancies in Eastern Massachusetts markets

Action Items and Next Steps

Task Force members were reminded of the four key project objectives for the consultant team and the Task Force in 2012. They are to develop and articulate: an action-oriented agenda; an industry cluster development strategy, including energy strategy development; a regional, innovation-based economic development strategy for the Knowledge Corridor; and compelling information and messaging for communications and marketing. Action Items and next steps include:

1. Consider all potential milestones, events, policy calendars, and partner activities through 2013 so that the near term milestone calendar may be expanded into a long term project calendar.
2. Review Session Notes
3. Prepare to participate in next Task Force Session scheduled for February 9 at the Holyoke Transportation Center – Extended meeting focused on SWOT analysis
4. Respond to consultant team's inquiries and follow-ups as needed

Data Requests

NONE

Contact Information

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Tim Brennan - (413) 781-6045

Executive Director of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

The Consultant Team:

HDR, Inc.

Fairfield Index, Inc.

Dukakis Center of Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University

The Innovation-based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley is coordinated through:

The John Adams Innovation Institute of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative

For more information on the Task Force, catalyst activities, and strategy development please visit:

<http://www.innovateholyokey.com/>

Next Task Force Meeting

February 9, 2011 • 1:30 - 4:00 pm
Holyoke Transportation Center