



Milwaukee County

Legislation Text

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From the Director of Economic Development, DTPW, an informational report on the Milwaukee County Comprehensive Economic Development Plan progress. **(INFORMATIONAL ONLY UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE COMMITTEE)**

BACKGROUND

Milwaukee County, in order to compete for talent and investment in the global economy, needs to continuously improve its capacity to support the generation of economic growth. Developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is a first step towards building a framework to drive long term economic growth in Milwaukee County.

The need for a Comprehensive Economic Development Plan for Milwaukee County could not be greater. Currently, Milwaukee County is the only county in the seven-county region that does not have a Comprehensive Plan, putting Milwaukee County at a distinct disadvantage as it works to integrate and leverage its economic development drivers to grow industries and create value. Compared to other rustbelt counties in the Midwest (Allegheny, Marion, Hennepin, Cuyahoga, Wayne) Milwaukee County - the 44th largest county in the United States - is the only county without clear strategy for growth.

The State of the economy also underlies the need for a Comprehensive Economic Development Plan: The population of Milwaukee County has been relatively stagnant for two decades; a large percentage of the workforce is unprepared for the jobs in new “innovative economy” of the 21st century - and, even if they were, there is no regional transportation system to them to where the jobs are. The City of Milwaukee has recently been designated the fourth poorest city in the United States; a dubious honor that is only compounded by the fact that the region is considered one of the most segregated in the country. Faced with increasing competition and looking to cut cost and improve productivity, local businesses are constantly reassessing whether the county of Milwaukee gives them the competitive edge to compete in the global economy.

The good news is that Milwaukee County has the Economic Drivers - infrastructure, workforce and the business climate - to support the growth of industries. Milwaukee County also has a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that has fueled the growth of the region since 1835. The Comprehensive Economic Development Plan will provide Milwaukee County a “blueprint” for leveraging its assets to generate to grow a local economy that can compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

To move the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan forward, the Board of Milwaukee County approved (16-0) a resolution “authorizing and directing the Director of Economic Development to prepare an Economic Development Plan for Milwaukee County.” This Progress Report is also required as part of the Board’s resolution.

STATUS OF PLANNING PROCESS

Plan Development

The Development of the Plan is detailed in the “Scope of Work” provided by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC). The SEWRPC is coordinating the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan with County staff. The Scope of work has six parts, identified

in the table below:

Scope of Work	Timeline
Study Organization: Review the purpose of the plan to be outlined by the Commission staff with the assistance of the Milwaukee County Director of Economic Development. SEWRPC/Milwcnty Staff	June 2011
Review of Economic Development Conditions in Milwaukee County: An analysis will be prepared of the present economic conditions in Milwaukee County, and historic trends. SEWRPC	
Assessment of County Infrastructure: An assessment will be made of County infrastructure including: transportation, utilities, parks and open space, educational infrastructure, and community services. SEWRPC	
Analysis of Existing Economic Development Efforts in Milwaukee County: Identify economic development activities of various agencies in Milwaukee County. SEWRPC/Milwcnty Staff	September
Surveys of Economic Development Activities and Needs: Convene a number of focus groups of stakeholders in Milwaukee County who have an interest in economic development matters, including Milwaukee County elected officials, neighborhood-based economic development organizations, businesses and business groups and organizations, universities, and local units of government. SEWRPC/Milwcnty Staff	October
Formulation of a Milwaukee County Economic Development Plan Define economic development goals, measurable objectives, vision statement, measurable objectives and an Action Plan for Milwaukee County. SEWRPC/Milwcnty Staff	December

Plan Timeline

Milwaukee County Economic Development Staff working with the SEWRPC is planning on completing the CEDS by end of year 2011. The Advisory Committee has been appointed by Board Chair Lee Holloway, and we are planning to schedule the first Advisory Committee meeting for late June 2011. Much of the data collection analysis for the current conditions and assessment of infrastructure should be complete by mid-June 2011. Focus groups will take place in September and October 2011. Based on the current timeline we expect to submit a final version of the Plan to the Economic Development Committee by January 2012.

Advisory Committee

Below is the list of Advisory Committee members for the Plan. The Board Chairman has appointed all Advisory Committee members. The Advisory Committee represents a broad cross-section of the community. The Advisory Committee will oversee the development of the plan and provide valuable feedback and guidance on the development of the plan. The Advisory Committee will meet three to four times during the planning process.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Mark Levine, Senior Fellow UWM Center for Economic Development

Dr. Michael Burke, President Milwaukee Area Technical College
Hermann Viets, President Milwaukee School of Engineering
Don Sykes, Director The MKE Area Workforce Investment Board
Nancy Welch, Director of Community Development, City of Wauwatosa
Matt Schuenke, Village Manager Village of Whitefish Bay
Willie Wade, Alderman COMMON COUNCIL - CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Doug Seymore, Director of Community Development City of Oak Creek, Wisconsin
Mark F. Irgens, President Irgens Development Partners LLC
Joaquim Artoro, VP of Associated Bank
Max Rasansky, Managing Director CBE Richard Ellis
Erbert Johnson, CPA President and Chief Executive Officer North Milwaukee State Bank
Supervisor Johnny Thomas
Supervisor Joe Sanfelippo
Supervisor Peggy West

FUTURE ACTION

- Meet with Advisory Committee: Milwaukee County Economic Development Staff and the SEWRPC will meet with the Advisory Committee to review the scope and purpose of the CEDS. This will be the first of approximately three or four meetings with the Advisory Committee.
- Creating Focus Groups: Milwaukee County Staff, working with SEWRPC and the Advisory Group will create several focus groups, and then meet with the Focus Groups in September and October.
- Community Meetings: The planning process will include at least five community input sessions, held throughout Milwaukee County. These meetings will likely begin in September.

Damon M. Dorsey
Director of Economic Development

Cc: Chris Abele, Milwaukee County Executive
Lee Holloway, Chairman of Board of Supervisors
Jack Takerian, Director, Department of Transportation and Public Works