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The Oakland County Business Roundtable will provide advice to the County Executive on business, economic and land development matters in order to insure the preservation of the county’s quality of life and economic vitality for the benefit of its citizens, communities and businesses. The Roundtable will work to insure the implementation of

Roundtable Mission



its original recommendations, as well as identifying new issues and subsequent recommendations in order to successfully plan for the county’s future.

The Oakland County Business Roundtable, which was established in 1993, has given birth to a wellspring of innovative programs over the years that have enhanced Oakland County's economic strength and enriched the quality of life we all enjoy. The men and women from business, education and government who comprise this august blue ribbon panel of outstanding leaders have expended valuable time, energy and intellectual capital to make sure that Oakland County is fully prepared to meet the more competitive challenges of the 21st century.

Their hard work and dedication over the past eight years have given rise to such dynamic programs as the Export Assistance Center, the One Stop Shop for business development and the consolidation of all job training programs under a county-wide Workforce Development Board.

During the past year, the more than 100 individuals who provide the horsepower for the six Roundtable committees have developed recommendations which are set forth in the pages of this booklet. After reviewing the enclosed material, I'm sure you'll agree with

"...the end result of their year-long effort has been outstanding."



Dr. Gary Russi, Co-Chair
Oakland University

"...Oakland County has prospered and will continue to do so through uncertain times."

Mr. Robert Stempel, Co-Chair
Energy Conversion Devices, Inc.

It is my pleasure to serve as co-chair, with Bob Stempel, of the Oakland County Business Roundtable. The outstanding individuals who work on the advisory panels provide valuable input and counsel that truly benefits Oakland County. By giving freely of their time, talent and energy, this diverse group of more than 100 business, government and education leaders are a large part of what makes our county the success that it is.

The accomplishments and recommendations set forth in this report show why Oakland County has prospered and will continue to do so through uncertain times. There is no uncertainty in this: Oakland County is a premier place in which to live, learn and earn.

Oakland University is proud to be associated with this group, which works hard to ensure future prosperity by identifying trends and recommending strategies to keep our county at the forefront of economic development, quality of life, transportation and telecommunication, and education issues. And, Oakland University is honored to contribute to the county's well being by focusing its efforts on the leaders of tomorrow.

L. Brooks Patterson

me that the end result of their year-long effort has been outstanding.

I would like to publicly acknowledge and extend my sincere gratitude to the six committee chairs, the committee members and county staff who have worked in concert to provide a well thought out list of recommendations that are designed to push Oakland County forward to new heights. Of course a project of this scope cannot succeed without able and determined leadership at the top. For the past three years, the Business Roundtable has been fortunate to have at the helm Robert Stempel, chairman of Energy Conversion Devices and Dr. Gary Russi, president of Oakland University, as co-chairs of this dynamic body of individuals. Their leadership has inspired great accomplishments that fortify Oakland County's national reputation as a premier location in which to live, work, recreate and raise a family.

As the world becomes a more uncertain place, new challenges will confront us. But I remain confident that with the continued support, dedication and hard work of the men and women of the Oakland County Business Roundtable, our economic ship of state will continue to sail smoothly, even on the storm-tossed seas of the future.



Dr. Russi & Mr. Stempel

By working together toward the same goals, business, government and education are ensuring that Oakland County is prepared to meet the ever-increasing competitive challenges of the future.

Goal Statement: To discuss Business and Development issues in order to make recommendations that Oakland County can implement to increase and improve economic development.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OAKLAND COUNTY BUSINESS HELP DESK

The issue:

Government processes and procedures can sometimes be a barrier to business growth. The Oakland County Business Development Group provides assistance to aid businesses in cutting red tape and solving these business/government conflicts. The issue is that business does not always know that this assistance exists. While Oakland County government does reach out proactively to the business community, more needs to be done to make it easy for business to find their way to the business Development Group when they need assistance.

Recommendation:

Create an additional brand name for the services offered by the Business Development Group. Market this new brand name in addition to existing marketing programs. This will provide an additional way for business to find their way to the Business Development Group when they are in need of assistance.

Implementation Strategies:

- Name the new brand: The Oakland County Business Help Desk.

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Economic Development Committee

- Establish a separate phone number for the Help Desk. The person answering this number will answer the phone, "Oakland County Business Help Desk."
- Create a new marketing piece that highlights the Help Desk.
- Do a press release.
- Advertise in local business publications.

CREATING TOOLS TO ANALYZE THE FISCAL IMPACT OF LAND USE PLANNING DECISIONS

The issue:

Community officials are responsible for the challenging task of making land use planning decisions to ensure the long-term economic health and quality of life of their community. These decisions are often made without the benefit of analytical tools to assist in creating a rational, consistent and repeatable decision making process. Analytical tools can assist in evaluating factual information on the current state of the community and identifying the effects of changes in land use that might not be obvious. These changes can include factors such as the effects on the tax base, future infrastructure needs, and effects on the natural environment. Such tools can not only project what changes will take place, but also the magnitude of such changes.

Sophisticated tools and processes exist to aid community officials in making good land use planning decisions. Access to sophisticated analytical tools and processes for predicting the effects of their decisions is often beyond the limited resources of local communities.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the County provide assistance to those communities that want to increase the level of analysis regarding land use planning process. It would be cost effective for the County to work with the communities to research, design and implement a set of tools and processes that can be easily customized for each community.

To accomplish this task the Committee recommends that the County seek sources of funds to implement this program.

Implementation Strategies:

Contract with a university or private consultant to develop tools, presentations and workshops. Development time: 2 years. Implementation of the program will include the following:

- Create a steering committee consisting of local officials, private developers, planning directors and consultants.
- Create 15-30 minute presentations for city council and planning commission meetings.
- Offer half-day workshops to elected and appointed officials.
- Offer all day workshops to communities. These workshops will use interactive simulation software to engage participants in exploring the effects of land use decisions on the community.

Creation of the following tools:

- Countywide projection of long term fiscal impact of current land use plans.
- Report on the economic impact of different land uses.
- Market report on the availability of and demand for industrial/R&D zoned land.
- Software to demonstrate the effects of different land use mixes on the local tax base.
- Develop case studies of the long-term fiscal impact of different land use mixes.
- Develop or purchase fiscal impact analysis software.
- Develop or purchase Simulation software (i.e., Sim-City).
- Develop business climate benchmarking system.
- Review of literature for examples of similar initiatives.
- Creating Tools to Improve the Site Plan and Building Permit Approval Processes

The issue:

Everyone who is involved in applying for or administering site plan approvals or building permits would probably agree that there is room for improvement. The processes are often staff intensive, expensive, unpredictable, lengthy and frustrating to all parties.

Improvements to these processes would have many benefits for the community. The community would benefit by more efficient use of their limited staff and budget resources. Elected and appointed officials might see a reduction in the number of times a project needs to be reviewed or tabled for additional information and changes. Improvements to a community's site plan approval and building permitting processes can strengthen the local business climate by enhancing their reputation among real estate and development professionals. Improved processes will also increase the consistency of the implementation of a community's master plan and application of zoning regulations and building codes. Lastly, it will also enhance a

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community's competitive position in attracting new tax dollars to support services to the residents.

To be competitive in the competition for new tax base, communities need to benchmark themselves against communities that community officials and professionals in the real estate field agree are the most effective. Communities can then apply techniques such as Lean Systems to identify and eliminate bottlenecks and improve their site plan approval and building permit processes.

Recommendation:

That the County will seek sources of funds for development of this program. This program will follow the completion of the "Creating Tools to Analyze the Fiscal Impact of Land Use Planning Decisions" program.

Implementation Strategies:

Contract with a university or private consultant to develop tools, presentations and workshops. Development time: 2 years. Implementation of the program will include the following:

Create a steering committee consisting of county and local officials, private developers, planning directors and consultants.

Development of the following tools:

- Review of literature for examples of similar programs.
- Benchmarking system for site plan approval process.
- Benchmarking system for building permit and building inspection process.
- Program to assist communities to identify and implement improvements to their site plan approval process.
- Program to assist communities to identify and implement improvements to their building permit and building inspection process.
- Awards event. Recognize communities that have implemented improvements to site plan or building permit approval process.
- Expand on MEDC study that will examine how Michigan's 10 largest cities stack up against those in other states in development processes such as permit-issuing speed and zoning.

The 2001 Quality of Life Committee under the direction of Kenneth Peterson, Chair, adopted the following mission statement for establishing quality of life indicators.

Establish social, economic and environmental indicators to measure and track trends in Oakland County's quality of life and encourage government to be more accountable and responsive to meeting the quality of life needs of its citizens in all socio-economic categories.

To this end, the committee reviewed and assessed several different quality of life and sustainability initiatives including local, state and national model programs and processes and personal interviews with practitioners and participants.

Based upon this review, it is the committee's recommendation that the Oakland County Executive initiate steps to develop a quality of life indicator program for Oakland County as follows:

Direct county staff to aggressively pursue potential grant funding for the development of the preferred process and to fund the ongoing development, adoption and revision of quality of life indicators.

Charge the Quality of Life Committee with oversight responsibilities for this process.

Quality of Life Committee

Achieve an ongoing Quality of Life Indicator Program that includes (1) a funded professional staff to administer the quality of life indicators program, (2) a public involvement process to identify community needs, opinions and recommendations, (3) creation of measurement tools whereby county departments and local units of government may measure and improve their service delivery over time and (4) a strong information sharing and communication capability.

In anticipation of this initiative, preliminary steps should be taken including:

- To the extent possible, review and assess all performance and quality of life indicator measures produced by the various county departments.
- To the extent possible, review and assess all performance and quality of life indicator measures produced by community and business organizations.
- Continue Committee efforts in defining, organizing, and structuring the Indicator Initiative. A sample of potential Indicator Categories include: Education, The Economy, Public Safety, Natural Environment, Health, Social Environment, Government/Politics, Culture/Recreation and Mobility.

The charge of the Transportation & Telecommunications Committee is to look at needs regarding these two topics and identify actions Oakland County can undertake. The committee focused on transportation and dealt with telecommunication issues through a sub-committee. Funding for roads was identified as the major transportation issue currently facing Oakland County. The committee also passed a resolution in May recommending the immediate implementation by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) of the conclusions of the Corradino I-75 Corridor Study. These conclusions recommend widening the I-75 Freeway through Oakland County, which also will provide improved access to the remainder of the state.

OAKLAND COUNTY ROADS NEED AN ADDITIONAL \$1.9 BILLION OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

Oakland County should develop a long range, comprehensive strategy to increase funding for road needs in Oakland County. The strategy could include both voter approved and non-voter options. A coalition of business leaders and government officials should be established to evaluate the following options, determine which should be pursued, prioritize the efforts, and start implementation.

Increase the amount of money the state legislature allocates to the Transportation and Economic Development Fund Category C (TEDF-C), road money for the five largest counties. One strategy is for Oakland County to approach the other large counties and work through the legislative process to increase funding. It is estimated that this option could generate \$40 million per year.

Pursue a more equitable distribution/return of Act 51 transportation dollars from the state. Education efforts will be needed to convince state legislators that Oakland County should receive a more equitable return of transportation dollars. This will allow the County to continue its economic growth, which is helping the whole state. It is estimated that this option could generate \$52 million per year.

Establish a prioritization process for MDOT funds so that the worst roads and most heavily traveled roads receive priority spending. Currently MDOT does not have a priority system but rather spends money throughout the state.

Consider passage of a countywide property tax dedicated to road improvements in Oakland County. One mill could generate approximately \$52 million a year. A major educational effort would be needed to convince county residents to vote for a millage increase.

Consider a 0.2 cent sales tax increase for purchases in Oakland County. This 0.2 cent tax money would stay in Oakland County and would be used for local road improvements. This option would require a change to the state constitution to allow for a local vote. The first step would be for the county to get passage of the enabling legislation. The second step would be to get county voters to approve the local tax. Prior to the local vote, a public information/education campaign would be needed to let county voters know why the tax was being proposed and how the money would be spent. This option could be a collaborative effort with the other large counties to approach the legislature. It is estimated that a 0.2 percent increase could generate approximately \$80 million a year.

Consider a 3-cent local gas tax for gas purchases in Oakland County. This option would require a change to the state constitution to allow for a local vote. The first step would be for the county to get passage of the enabling legislation. The second step would be to get county voters to approve the local tax. Prior to the local vote, a public information/education campaign would be needed to let county voters know why the tax was being proposed and how the money would be spent. This option could also be a collaborative effort with the other large counties. It is estimated that a 3-cent increase could generate approximately \$19 million a year.

MAXIMIZE FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

Investigate other revenue generating options, such as increased driver license fees, license plate fees, etc.

TRANSIT OPTIONS NEED TO BE AVAILABLE TO GET WORKERS TO JOBS.

Oakland County should encourage SEMCOG and SMART to continue to pursue vanpools and other transit options proven to be viable and successful in addressing Oakland County's needs.

THERE IS A LACK OF A GOOD NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR IN WESTERN OAKLAND COUNTY WHERE POPULATION GROWTH IS RAPIDLY OCCURRING.

Oakland County should continue to show leadership on improving north/south mobility in western Oakland County between I-96 and I-75 by collaborating with the Road Commission for Oakland County and local communities to work towards a solution and increase capacity.

LAND COSTS IN OAKLAND COUNTY SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE COST OF ROAD PROJECTS; THEREFORE, THERE IS A NEED TO PRESERVE FUTURE RIGHT-OF-WAY.

Oakland County should encourage cities, villages, and townships to continue to adhere to appropriate building setbacks from future right-of-way as designated on the Road Commission's Master Right-of-Way Plan.

MANY ROAD CORRIDORS IN OAKLAND COUNTY ARE NOT AESTHETICALLY PLEASING.

Oakland County should encourage cities, villages, and townships to incorporate appropriate landscaping and roadway appurtenances for beautification of existing roads, during reconstruction of roads, and as new roads are proposed. Identifying road corridor beautification as a goal in every community's master plan will assist in establishing this as an important effort for each community. This effort will require community participation/contribution and the involvement of adjacent property owners. To aid in this effort, the County should provide guidelines and examples of best practices and should assist communities in implementation.

THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS DOES NOT ADEQUATELY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FUTURE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS OF OAKLAND COUNTY.

As a part of the economic development process, Oakland County should encourage architects, developers, etc. to design and construct new buildings and/or residential developments with the infrastructure necessary to meet the communications needs of occupants, including but not limited to high speed Internet Access.

Oakland County should promote the development of high-speed Internet service by encouraging regulatory parity. The County should also provide incentives to providers that construct and maintain high-speed backbone infrastructures that extend throughout the County and enable all residents to access high-speed broadband service.

THERE IS NO CENTRALIZED RESOURCE TO IDENTIFY CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVIDERS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES.

Oakland County should create and promote a brochure for businesses that highlights the competitive environment among communications providers in Oakland County, identifies the companies actively competing for business here, identifies the infrastructure that has been installed locally and what new services are available as a result.

THE LACK OF A UNIFORM RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMITTING SYSTEM SEVERELY INHIBITS THE INVESTMENT AND PLACEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE.

Oakland County should pursue the enactment of uniform municipal right-of-way permitting systems, including common rules and fee schedules for all carriers, on a state or local basis. The County should identify or create a model process for expedited review and approval agreements for the use of road right-of-way for communication purposes and work with local communities to adopt this process.

THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH ADEQUATELY TRAINED HIGH TECHNOLOGY WORKERS TO MEET THE NEEDS IN OAKLAND COUNTY FOR IT TO MAINTAIN ITS HIGH TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP.

Oakland County should partner with local community colleges to develop and implement a curriculum (i.e., training program) that aids in the diversification of its workforce through the training and placement of skilled communications workers.

Oakland County should develop and host, in conjunction with Automation Alley, a Telecommunications 101 Forum to promote awareness among Oakland County businesses concerning the characteristics and potential of communications technology available in the County.

The Committee's Charge: The Oakland County Business Roundtable's Workforce and Education Committee will provide the County Executive advice on workforce development and education matters.

The Committee's Key Accomplishments: The Committee's recommendations have resulted in numerous innovations for workforce development and education in Oakland County. Four such innovations follow:

1. All workforce development programs are consolidated under a County-wide Workforce Development Board.
2. An Oakland Schools' video highlights six career pathways (i.e., business, management, marketing and technology; engineering/manufacturing and industrial technology; the arts and communications; health sciences; human services; and natural resources and agriscience) for students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators.
3. Several new workforce development programs (e.g., the Workforce Investment Act, Welfare-to-Work, the Partnership for Adult Learning, and the Michigan Talent/Job Bank) have been implemented for adults, youth, and dislocated workers.
4. A County-wide Labor Demand Study that identifies high-demand jobs and the

Workforce and Education Committee

skills these jobs require was developed and completed. This unique study provides a foundation for training curricula development, establishes training priorities, and is a useful resource for career counselors.

The Committee's Recommendations for Calendar Year 2001:

MARKET OAKLAND COUNTY'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Recommendation:

Elevate a target population's awareness of Oakland County's solutions to workforce and education issues, by:

- Identifying a target population that will include, but that may not be limited to, students (including those who are at-risk), parents, educators, workers (including those from outside the County), and employers;
- Establishing a clearinghouse that will coordinate and bring into focus workforce development, education, and training opportunities throughout Oakland County; and
- Initiating pilot marketing strategies that benchmark how effectively the target population's awareness has been elevated. These marketing strategies should a.) highlight Oakland County's quality of life and high-tech job opportunities; b.) motivate youth to stay in or return to school, and to train for skilled jobs that are currently unfilled; and c.) be coordinated with K-12 schools, colleges, and businesses.

Implementation Strategy:

This recommendation directly relates to a goal in the Strategic Plan that the Oakland County Workforce Development Board and its Education Advisory Group (EAG) recently drafted. Thus, the Board, the EAG, and the Workforce and Education Committee will jointly oversee the implementation strategies that the Strategic Plan identifies for this goal/recommendation.

DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS

Recommendation:

Develop more partnerships between business and workforce development/education providers as students, job seekers, and current workers are trained and/or retrained for Oakland County's jobs. These partnerships should:

- Include small, as well as large, businesses, because many small employers may not have the resources to retrain workers in a changing market place;
- Use new technologies (e.g., the Internet, web casting, and video conferencing), so training resources are shared among small businesses;
- Involve business in curricula design; and
- Assist employers in the design, implementation, and management of innovative programs, including student internships, teacher externships, and mentoring activities.

Implementation Strategy:

This recommendation directly relates to another goal in the Oakland County Workforce Development Board and the Oakland Education Advisory Group's (EAG's) Strategic Plan. Thus, the Board, the EAG, and the Workforce and Education Committee will jointly oversee the implementation strategies that the Strategic Plan identifies for this goal/recommendation.

RETAIN, TRAIN, RETRAIN, AND RECRUIT WORKERS FOR OAKLAND COUNTY'S HIGH DEMAND JOBS

Recommendation:

To ensure that Oakland County has an available and qualified labor force for the County's high-demand jobs, workers should be retained, trained, retrained, and recruited.

To retain and recruit workers, Oakland County's multiple job opportunities, reasonable cost of living, excellent schools, and other quality-of-life benefits should be effectively marketed.

To train and retrain workers, educators and trainers should focus on tomorrow's, as well as today's, jobs, so training is proactive and not reactive. In addition, adults and youths should be taught "how to learn"; so they recognize that learning is a lifelong process.

Implementation Strategy:

This recommendation directly relates to the missions of the Oakland County Workforce Development Board and its Education Advisory Group. Thus, the Board, the EAG, and the Committee should collaborate with each other, and with the County's educators, trainers, and Michigan Works! Service Centers, to develop implementation strategies.

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