

Business Roundtable Recommendations 1998

Economic Development Committee

Timothy Morris, Chairperson

Marketing

- Continue to evolve, update and improve the web site for Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services.
- Link the Automation Alley website and other planned websites to the County site.
- Ensure all media information has a consistent format (web, printed, video, CD-ROM)
- Develop a CD-ROM as a marketing medium for use by the County with business prospects.

Year 2000 Software Problem

- Develop and offer a Y2K seminar for Oakland County small businesses.
- Schedule a series of “Y2K Computer Expert Days” for small businesses, identical to the current CPA and Legal Days offered by the County.

Minority business Development

- Establish a clearinghouse service whereby Oakland County firms can identify Oakland County based minority owned firms, particularly in the manufacturing sector, for possible supplier business opportunities.

Infrastructure & Land Use Committee

Alan Kiriluk, Chairperson

Redevelopment

1. Oakland County should develop a program to address and encourage redevelopment in urbanized communities. The first step would be to undertake an assessment of redevelopment opportunities in these communities, including:

- Defining criteria to identify areas for redevelopment.
- Identifying potential redevelopment uses.
- Providing information on new zoning districts that may need to be developed.

Workshops should be created and held for planning commissions and local elected officials and a small task force of local officials, planners, and developers could be created to provide input into the assessment process. Oakland County should encourage communities to evaluate their local master plans to accommodate redevelopment issues/uses and consider an economic base study as part of their plans. A brochure should be developed that explains to communities and developers what services the county has to offer to assist in redevelopment, as well as other resources.

2. Oakland County should encourage communities to provide incentives to projects proposed within identified redevelopment areas. Possible incentives may include:

- Expedited reviews, including any county reviews.
- Tax abatements.
- Reduced fees for tap charges, utility charges, or permit fees.
- Increased zoning density.

3. Oakland County should sponsor a forum for local communities and developers to discuss possible changes to TIFA (Tax Increment Financing Authorities), legislation. Key changes that are needed in TIFA legislation include:

- Flexibility in where TIFAs can be applied.
 - Possibility that a TIFA could be one building.
 - Possibility that it could be self-funded by the developer.
4. Oakland County should investigate if there is a role for the county to facilitate assemblage of land, including assistance in establishing or vacating rights-of-way or dealing with replanting requirements.
- A method should be developed to allow developers and/or communities to acquire clear title to tax reverted properties in a reasonable and expeditious manner. Oakland County should propose legislation to establish a statewide fund for title companies to insure these properties similar in nature to the uninsured motorist fund. If claim is made against a tax reverted property without clear title, the value of that claim should be limited to the value at the time of transfer to claim it.
5. Oakland County should develop a program to encourage businesses/developers to redevelop brownfield sites. The following should be elements of that program:
- Establish a working relationship with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for brownfield redevelopment.
 - Encourage targeted communities to create brownfield redevelopment financing authorities.
 - Identify sites in Oakland County to apply for Clean Michigan Funds now that Proposal C has passed.

Infrastructure

- The County should take a leadership role in raising awareness of potential Year 2000 problems regarding many water and waste treatment systems that are currently controlled by automated systems that rely on computers. The County should bring utility, infrastructure, and emergency services managers together to address the problem by identifying the affected systems; testing for year 2000 compliance; analyzing results; prioritizing critical systems; fixing or replacing critical systems; and contingency plans.
- That the County planning and infrastructure agencies develop a closer working relationship. Staff from Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services, the Road Commission for Oakland County Health Division, and the Oakland County Drain Commissioner should meet on a regular basis to share information and coordinate plans.

International Trade

Ken Dargatz, Chairperson

Foreign Trade and Exporting

Create a virtual reality expert system to assist Oakland County businesses to avoid roadblocks to international trade through identification of existing resources that are available to assist with major export considerations such as education, market analysis, finance, permitting, shipping, taxes, and other legal considerations.

Integrate the international trade expert system website to provide additional services for Automation Alley members and to avoid redundancy in website maintenance costs.

Assist all businesses in Oakland County to access international markets. Different initiatives may be developed for small, medium, and large companies.

Educate Oakland County businesses on services available in Oakland County through local, state, federal, university, and private sector sources. Make recommendations to existing

agencies active in international trade so their programs better support the business community.

Facilitate imports to Oakland County. Create an international trade import checklist to identify key considerations involved in facilitating governmental and commercial constraints on international trade. Refine the import trade checklist developed during the 1998 session for roll out to Oakland County businesses.

Establish benchmarks to chart our progress and measure change. Further develop the benchmarking of international trade progress through:

Automated analysis of website utilization including the number of hits registered on the international trade website.

An exit questionnaire integrated with the international trade website to identify the success of providing assistance to the user and additional services that would be of benefit.

Development of a questionnaire for routine use on business retention calls by the Michigan Jobs Commission and Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff.

Interaction with the U.S. Census Bureau to direct a targeted study of international trade activity, specifically in Oakland County.

Quality of Life Committee

Chairperson: Eldon J. Thompson

Crime Prevention/Public Safety

1. Oakland County should continue to support the utilization and development of CLEMIS, the Court and Law Enforcement Management Information System, which is a regional integrated information system used in fighting crime throughout Oakland County. Promote and encourage local government participation to fiscally support and utilize CLEMIS by all Oakland County communities.
2. Oakland County should continue to assess the merits and feasibility of operating an airborne law enforcement unit in Oakland County to help fight crime.
 - Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study of operating a law enforcement helicopter to fight crime in Oakland County. The study should focus on operating and financial considerations and assess the feasibility of various alternatives, including corporate support, shared utilization and leasing and cooperative agreements with other police agencies.
 - Continue working with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and the Oakland County Sheriff to assess the merits and feasibility of an airborne law enforcement unit.
3. Preserve and enhance programs and services designed to meet the special needs of troubled youth and families in Oakland County.
 - Promote, encourage and continue to annually fund and enhance existing programs and services operating to meet the special needs of troubled youth and families in Oakland County through the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, the court system and police officials.
 - Develop and fund programs and/or services to reduce the availability of firearms to youth.
 - Increase the County's capacity to recruit and train more volunteers needed to administer troubled youth programs.
 - Promote a passion for parenting in Oakland County. Develop and fund programs and/or services to enhance parenting skills.

- Assess the need and feasibility of developing small residential care facilities for mentally disabled youth.

Transportation & Telecommunications

Brent O. Bair, Chairperson

Rail Transportation

1. Support and encourage the creation of a major regional rail yard that would increase the efficiency of freight intermodal transfers of goods. Even if such a facility is not located in Oakland County, Oakland County would benefit from the creation of such a major yard and the resulting increased efficiency.
2. Support and encourage the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to enhance the efficiency of delivery systems, especially local truck deliveries from regional rail yards, including the use of automatic vehicle location and route guidance systems, nonstop weigh stations, etc.
3. Support efforts to obtain federal funding for the Midwest Regional Rail initiative that would provide lower rail-passenger travel times and improved service frequencies between Oakland County and Chicago, and points west.
4. Continue to collect data to study the transportation needs of both people and goods in Oakland County and the region, examining all possible alternatives for the provision of needed transportation services, including the use of high-speed rail and light rail.

Air Transportation

1. Oakland County should continue to strive to make the Oakland County International Airport a hub for business air transportation needs.
 - Realign Williams Lake Road at the M-59 intersection for road intersection safety and capacity improvements, (this would make space available for the expansion of the primary runway at the airport to accommodate planes with greater fuel loads). Encourage the Road Commission for Oakland County to seek funding for the realignment of the Williams Lake Road project from Federal, State and County sources. Construction should be completed by 2001.
 - Resolve swap of wetlands/parkland with U.S. Department of Interior/Michigan department of Natural Resources (MDNR).
 - Master Plan update – begin in Fall 1998.
 - Address citizens complaints regarding noise: fund the noise attenuation program within the 65 DNL contour; finalize purchase of 50+ adjacent residencies within the 70 DNL noise contour; and obtain funding and construct ground run-up enclosure for post maintenance run-ups.
 - Address needs for additional/larger hangars; GIS instrument approach systems; and upgrade the older southeast section of Oakland County International Airport.
2. Oakland County should preserve and enhance existing airports in and around Oakland County to provide relief to Oakland County International and other large commercial passenger service airports.
3. Oakland County should increase promotional activities for Oakland County International Airport. Emphasize that it is located in the center of the county, has sufficient capacity, skilled maintenance services for all types of aircraft, and has customs service to handle international business travel.

4. Improve accessibility to Oakland County International Airport.
 - Encourage extension of M-5 from I-96 to I-75.
 - Work with MDOT staff to maintain/improve M-59.
5. Encourage a dedicated State of Michigan funding source for airports.
 - Consider dedicating sales tax revenue from sales of aeronautical related fuel and equipment to airport capital improvements.
 - Develop allocation-funding formula for funds.
 - Support Michigan Business Aircraft Association efforts in this area.
6. Flint-Bishop Airport Support
 - Encourage increased cooperation between Genesee and Oakland County promoting Bishop airport as an attractive alternative to Detroit Metro for Oakland County travelers.
 - Visit national airlines and present case for expanded service.
 - Obtain testimonials from additional Automation Alley executives.
 - Expand passengers served from 250,000 per year to 500,000+ per year and encourage provision of additional gates and additional parking.

Public Transit

1. Seek coordinated regional transit system(s).
2. Investigate a metropolitan transit tax.
3. Identify alternative dedicated and assured funding sources.
4. Promote van-pooling and car-pooling as transportation alternatives.
5. Aggressively endorse the benefits and convenience of public and para-transit.
6. Use demographic information to identify specialized populations countywide in order to determine where greatest transportation needs lie in the county.
7. Coordinate/consolidate independent service to increase efficiency and expand use of existing resources.
8. Intermodal coordination is needed.
9. Use advanced technologies to improve service.
10. Future transit mileage requests should be made as part of General Elections to maximize voter turnout.
11. Benchmark Southeast Michigan to other major metros with regard to number of public transit agencies, ridership, service provided, funding by source. The results should be published and made available.
12. The Regional Transit Coordinating Council must be an effective group with a common vision for transit so that a cooperative environment exists.
13. Accelerate adoption of common standards for: fare boxes, regional pass, computer software for scheduling, radio systems and purchasing.
14. Develop a broad-based marketing program, which effectively sells public transit.
 - Television and print media should maximize public awareness of the availability of specialized transit services.
 - Business should be more actively involved in supporting, marketing and financially contributing to the transit and the transit's role in economic development and quality of life.
 - A marketing brochure should be developed and distributed by businesses.
 - Endorsements/testimonials from current riders/employees should be sought.
 - Community and church groups should be involved in the development of the marketing program.
15. Support the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transit, (SMART), mileage renewal.

- Continue progress on redesigning its fixed route bus systems to better serve the area, put real meaning into “community transit,” and eliminate its accrued deficit of \$20 million in a five-year period.
- Transit operators are encouraged to evaluate the cost effectiveness of privatizing portions of their operations.

Workforce and Education Committee

Chairperson: Terence Adderley

Target Training & Recruitment Resources

1. The County should expand successful training programs for adults.

A number of successful programs merit expansion, these include the Welfare-to-Work training program, programs focusing on teaching English to new immigrants, and training programs that help people make career changes and move into high demand jobs.

Implementation should be led by the Oakland County Employment & Training Division under the policy direction of the County Workforce Development Board and County Executive.

Programs should be targeted to individuals who are not part of the workforce such as displaced homemakers, new immigrants, and public assistance recipients.

2. The County should aggressively recruit new workers.

Growing our own skilled workforce through education and training is the preferred way to fill jobs in Oakland County today and in the future.

Oakland County should develop an effective recruiting program targeted at selected demographic and geographic markets. Employee recruitment should reach regionally, statewide, and nationally. In-state graduates of high schools, colleges, and universities should also be targeted using retention programs that are aimed at keeping graduates in the state and in Oakland County.

Implementation by Oakland County should be led by a dedicated team assembled by the County Executive and should focus on developing and implementing recruiting programs as well as coordinating activities with private business recruiting programs, placement offices of colleges and universities, and others.

3. Prepare a video for students that describes today’s workplace

A short video presentation on the workplace of today and the future should be prepared to inform students of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for success in the workplace. Relevant local and national labor market data should be part of the video along with steps that describe how to access this information. Current information on high demand jobs should be highlighted, along with career entry requirements.

Implementation of the workplace video should be by Oakland Schools, working closely with the County Executive, his staff from Planning & Economic Development Services, Employment & Training and Media & Communications; also with County businesses and the County Workforce Development Board.

Utilize the Internet

1. The County should list available training programs on an internet-based Human Resources Directory.

- A directory of Oakland County workforce development training and educational programs and services should be compiled and placed on an Internet directory. This directory should include contact names, locations, hours of operation, eligibility requirements, cost to the

participant, and brief program descriptions as well as links to additional sites on the Internet. Seminars that describe how to access and use the Directory should be held.

- Implementation of the Internet directory should be managed under policies established by the County Executive and County Workforce Development Board; the directory should link seamlessly with existing sites including educational and private business sites.
2. List new options to traditional course work on the Internet based Human Resources Directory.
- Innovative educational programs that provide options for students, and address individual variations in learning styles and educational delivery methods should be listed on the directory.
 - Implementation of this portion of the directory should be by Oakland Schools working with local schools, the County Executive and his staff, and the County Workforce Development Board.
3. List scholarships, co-op jobs, internships, apprenticeships, summer jobs, and work/study opportunities for students on the Internet based directory. Implementation of this portion of the Internet directory should be managed by Oakland Schools, working closely with the Oakland County Employment & Training Division, the County Workforce Development Board, higher education institutions in the county, employers, and other providers of scholarships.

Elevate Public Awareness

Launch a vigorous and ongoing public information campaign.

- The campaign should promote successful education and training programs, advertise and market new programs, and monitor public awareness levels.
- Oakland County should be responsible for this campaign and should support it as a standard operation. Business, education, and various associations should be involved to advise and contribute their expertise. Implementation should be led by the County Executive who could develop the work program through his various departments and/or outsource as needed.