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**MEMORANDUM
COUNTY OF ERIE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

TO: Mark C. Poloncarz, Erie County Executive
Richard Tobe, Deputy County Executive

FROM: Elizabeth A. Burakowski, Sr. Economic Development Specialist *EB*

DATE: October 29, 2014

RE: Initiatives for a Smart Economy – July 2014 Reports

In July 2014, departmental staff provided periodic reports on the 64 initiatives comprising Initiatives for a Smart Economy. This memo, which is an updated version of a report I sent to you on August 30, 2014, will summarize the reports and highlight the successes already achieved as well as any areas of concern.

Please refer to the attached spreadsheet for a complete listing of the initiatives and the status of each. A full compilation of the reports is also available for your review.

Completed Initiatives

To date, six initiatives have been fully completed, representing 9% of the total. The completed initiatives are mostly within the ECIDA Reform category, but International Trade and Quality of Life are also included: 4.11 Implementation of New State Law, 4.15 One Stop Shop, 4.16 New ECIDA CEO, 4.17 Local Labor Policy, 4.24 EB-5 Capital, and 4.41 Arts and Cultural Funding. Note that #4.41 is an initiative that requires annual action to secure arts and cultural funding increases. This initiative has been considered complete for 2014 but will need to be addressed again for 2015.

In Progress Initiatives

41 of 64 initiatives are in progress, representing 64% of the total. There are initiatives in progress in all twelve sectors. Workforce Development, Agriculture, ECIDA Reform, Land Development and the Blue Economy have the greatest proportion of initiatives in progress, while Bi-National Logistics and Energy have the fewest.

Nine of the in-progress initiatives are at least 80% and/or are ongoing/annual commitments, so the total number of completed initiatives is expected to increase substantially within the next six months. For example, 4.21 Economic Development Office in the GTA, 3.31 Niagara Region Ventures Fund, 3.32 Support of Launch NY, 3.34 M/WBE Participation for Ralph Wilson Stadium

and 4.42 Lease with the Buffalo Bills could all be completed by the date of the next periodic report.

See the attached spreadsheet for notes on individual projects, including suggestions by initiative supervisors as to how the Administration can help advance projects that may be encountering challenges.

Initiatives Not Yet Begun

17 initiatives have not yet begun, representing 27% of the total. These initiatives are generally evenly distributed throughout the twelve sectors; however, there are no yet-to-be-started initiatives in Tourism, ECIDA Reform, or Land Development.

Areas of Concern

There are no areas of concern to report at this time.

Conclusion

Of the 64 initiatives, a total of 47 (73%) are completed or underway. Up to nine projects could be completed by the end of 2014, others will commence in 2015 and a few are dependent funding that has yet to be secured. The next set of periodic reports will be due in January 2015.

Initiatives for a Smart Economy
July 2014 Progress

Initiative Number	Initiative	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Begun	% complete	Notes
4.11	Implementation of new State law	X			100%	
4.15	ECIDA Move	X			100%	
4.16	New ECIDA CEO	X			100%	
4.17	ECIDA Local Labor Policy	X			100%	
4.24	EB-5 Capital	X			100%	
4.41	Arts and Cultural Institution Funding	X			100% for 2014; funding must be secured on annual basis.	
3.11	Academic Building for ECC		X		20%	Architect selection process in progress
3.12	Regional Workforce Advancement Center -Buffalo Billion/Advance Buffalo		X		Pilot phase 100% complete, scale up/permanent facility just beginning	Detailed information on lessons learned/challenges to service is being reviewed by NYS/ESD.
3.13	Apprenticeship Law		X		Ongoing	
3.15	Employment Training Resource Guide		X		Annual	Feedback consensus is that the guide should be converted to digital resource; exploring whether DISS has capacity for this type of resource.
3.16	Workforce Development Summits		X		Annual	Full report includes
3.17	Vocational ESL Program		X		5%	
3.21	Smart Growth Fund		X		15%	
3.22	Main Street Blight Demolition		X		66%	Project is comprised of three individual projects at varying stages of completion.
3.25	Cherry Farm Feasibility Analysis		X		5%	
3.31	Niagara Region Ventures Fund		X		75%	

**Initiatives for a Smart Economy
July 2014 Progress**

3.32	Support of LaunchNY		X		10%	With hiring of Marnie LaVigne as new CEO, we are hopeful that we will be able to move forward with this initiative in Q4 2014 or Q1 2015.
3.34	M/WBE Ralph Wilson Stadium		X		85%	All participation numbers are exceeding goals at this point.
3.41	Agribusiness Park		X		10%	
3.42	ECIDA Agribusiness Development		X		25%	
3.43	Food Hub Feasibility Study		X		50%	Study nearly complete; staff is beginning search for food hub operator.
3.44	Food Policy Council		X		80%	Council has been formed, strategic plan/bylaws in process. Grant funding has ended and less time is being dedicated to the project because of volunteer nature of project. Initiative supervisor is requesting dedicated staff from Poloncarz Administration.
3.45	Regional Agricultural Brand		X		20%	NYS Ag & Markets has indicated that regional efforts should be put on hold in light of state efforts.
3.51	Downtown Convention Center Feasibility Study		X		5%	
3.52	VBN Funding Advisory Board		X		10%	
3.61	Erie County Energy Management Office		X		10%	Expected to be complete by 12/31/2014.
3.63	Energy Conservation Revolving Loan Program		X		25%	
3.64	WNY Sustainable Business Roundtable		X		50%	Awaiting federal grant funding decision.
3.74	Portageville Road Bridge		X		30%	
4.12	Adaptive Reuse Policy		X		20%	

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4.13	"But-for" Test		X		10%	
4.14	Cooperation with Town IDAs		X		50%	
4.21	Economic Development Office in GTA		X		75%	Completion expected Q4 2014.
4.22	Cross-border influence		X		Ongoing	
4.25	ECIDA International Program		X		50%	
4.31	Bethlehem Steel		X		30%	Proposed solar farm on property may conflict with rail rationalization project in progress.
4.32	North Youngmann Commerce Center Industrial Park		X		15%	
4.33	River Bend Industrial Park		X		5%	NYS in process of purchasing remainder of land from BUDC.
4.34	Brownfield Remediation		X		Ongoing	Project is comprised of five individual remediation projects at this point in varying stages of completion.
4.42	Buffalo Bills Lease		X		86% (renovations); annual obligations ongoing	
4.43	New Stadium Working Group		X		5%	
4.51	Lackawanna Wastewater Treatment Plant		X		10%	
4.52	Rush Creek Interceptor Project		X		50%	Project also pitched to CFGF/Heron Foundation for mission related investing purposes.
4.53	Southtowns Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility		X		5%	

**Initiatives for a Smart Economy
July 2014 Progress**

4.54	Beach Closure Forecasting		X		90%	Initiative supervisor requesting budgetary support for project. Detailed data and analysis provided by project supervisor.
4.57	Buffalo River Habitat and Corridor Public Access		X		20%	Timing problems presented by City of Buffalo and NYSDOT projects at Bailey Avenue site.
4.58	Buffalo River County Parks		X		5%	
3.14	Employment Resource Coordinating Council			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q4 2014.
3.23	Erie County Complete Streets Policy			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q1 2015.
3.24	Niagara River Greenway Funding			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q3 2014.
3.33	Entrepreneurship Boot camp Event			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q3 2014.
3.35	M/WBE ECC STEM Building			X	0%	Project dependent on design and construction of building.
3.46	Agritourism			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q4 2014.
3.62	Interdepartmental Green Team			X	0%	Awaiting CFA announcements. Initiative supervisor requesting establishment of Green Team without funding in interim.
3.65	Feed-in-Tariff Feasibility Study			X	0%	Funding not secured. Also need to secure commitment and support from State
3.66	Climate Smart Communities Coordinator			X	0%	Awaiting CFA announcements.
3.71	EC International Marketing Campaign			X	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin in concert with GTA office.
3.72	Manufacturing Distribution Capacity			X	0%	Awaiting CFA announcements.
3.73	Canadian Pacific Draw Bridge			X	0%	Funding not secured, expected to begin Q3 2014.

