



Appendix E

Notes from Community Stakeholder Focus Group Meetings

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2011 (8:00-9:30 am)

Location: Transportation Center (206 Maple Street, Room 400)

Participants: Manufacturer Group (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

2. Presentation

- Agenda
- Site Overview
- Four Key Project Objectives
 - i. Action-oriented agenda for Holyoke and Innovation District
 - ii. Define Industry Cluster Development Strategy
 - iii. Develop a regional innovation-based economic development strategy for the Knowledge Center
 - iv. Develop compelling information and message for communications and marketing plan
- Guiding Principles
 - i. Market-based vision
 - ii. Near-term and long-term (20-year) strategies
 - iii. Link to the on-going Urban Renewal Plan
 - iv. Parties responsible for implementation
- Schedule

- i. 9 Month Project: Public Workshop Stage (5th month) – stakeholder outreach
- Draft Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for Holyoke and Pioneer Valley Region
- SWOT – Foundations for Economic Development
 - i. Population Analysis
 - ii. Transportation Analysis
 - iii. Education Analysis
 - iv. Employment Shares by Industry
- SWOT – Energy
- SWOT – Industries
- Strategic Discussion
 - i. Three-part strategy
 - 1. Industry Clusters and Opportunities
 - 2. Energy Strategy – generation, R&D, manufacturing, etc
 - 3. Innovation eco-system: workforce, infrastructure, financing, etc
 - ii. What are the top priorities for Holyoke?
 - 1. Improve job opportunities and economic well-being for Holyoke residents
 - iii. Parties responsible for implementation
 - 1. Local/regional, public/private/non-profit, partnerships

3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Can you give us an overview of the site?
 - i. Site has been selected (shown on map). \$190 million for a facility and equipment inside
 - ii. Site remediation, demolition shortly: 12-18 months to operation. 2012 time frame
- Urban Renewal Plan

- i. Transit-Oriented Design District: pedestrian improvements to connect transportation building with other activity centers of the downtown core
- Infrastructure Projects
 - i. What type of public investment does the city need to bring in private investments
- Grant opportunities
 - i. Building energy efficiency grants, housing grants, Community Development Block Grants, etc.
- Need workforce development and more opportunities for education
- What types of industries are attracted to a computing center?
 - i. They typically are not, but will attract researchers. Some supplies – CMC, CISCO, but don't necessarily need to be located here
 - ii. Decision to locate in Holyoke is an investment choice by the organization
- Manufacturing and the paper industry are what got Holyoke to where it is today
 - i. Possible synergies for others to locate nearby
 - ii. There are a lot of resources within 50-100 miles
- Preservation
 - i. Preserve what is in Holyoke
 - ii. Power and cost is a big selling point for other manufacturing institutions
- Fix what is outdated
 - i. Heavy transportation trucks have a difficult time getting into the area at times
 - 1. More unobstructed connections to Holyoke are needed
 - a. Some bridges don't meet current truck standards of height clearances
- Skilled Labor
 - i. Skilled production labor is a challenge to come by at times
 - 1. Resources are regionally based, versus locally based

- ii. Chicopee has a high residence level for many employees of Holyoke
- iii. Many manufacturing companies are looking to mid-career experience
 - 1. How can students from the vocational schools get exposure?
- Marketing
 - i. Identify vacant locations and market the portfolio to industries
 - 1. Availability of space
 - 2. Low energy cost
 - 3. Accessibility from transportation corridors – 391, etc
 - ii. Enhance a company's competitiveness
 - iii. Identify and advertise for synergies with other companies
- Maintain energy costs down
 - i. Manufacturers are on a cost contract – expires next year (2012)
 - ii. Communication needed to maintain the asset (low price of energy)
 - iii. G and E owns most of the water wheels
 - iv. Low head hydro is considered a resource for renewable energy – permitted into renewable portfolio
- Collaboration
 - i. Yankee Candles came into town because of marketing effort
 - ii. Much more effective program when you bring in City reps, regional reps, private and non-profit
 - 1. Emphasis on marketing
- Opportunities for:
 - i. Whole foods sector: packaging, bottling, plastic, etc.
 - ii. Manufacturing – high tech
 - iii. Electric use of energy to thermal

- iv. Warehousing, including freezer warehousing
- v. Breweries
- vi. Steelers
- vii. Rail ties – heat them to produce gas and sell
- Strategic Plan
 - i. Paint a picture for opportunities
 - 1. Involve all aspects of a thriving community
 - ii. Outreach/marketing effort
 - 1. Low cost opportunities
 - 2. Availability of labor
 - 3. Low cost of energy
 - 4. Incentive package
 - 5. Free-zone trading
 - 6. Marketing with the community
 - 7. Social service programs – understand the benefits of the industries
 - 8. Need shovel ready showcase sites for industries to envision what their business could look like
 - a. Environmental issues, land, etc. can sometimes be a problem
 - 9. Need sites that are presentable to potential businesses
- Internships, job shadow, etc
 - i. Opportunities for internships for students to gain manufacturing experience
- Get people to live, work and play in Holyoke

4. 9:30 am – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2011 (10:00-11:30am)

Location: Transportation Center (206 Maple Street, Room 400)

Participants: Local Business Owners/Landowners (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

2. Presentation

- Agenda
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- Four Key Project Objectives
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 - i. Market-based vision
 - ii. Near-term and long-term (20-year) strategies
 - iii. Link to the on-going Urban Renewal Plan
 - iv. Parties responsible for implementation

- Schedule
 - i. 9 Month Project: Public Workshop Stage (5th month) – stakeholder outreach
- Draft Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for Holyoke and Pioneer Valley Region
- SWOT – Foundations for Economic Development
 - i. Population Analysis
 - ii. Transportation Analysis
 - iii. Education Analysis
 - iv. Employment Shares by Industry
 - 1. Manufacturing generally higher in Holyoke and Massachusetts then rest of the County.
 - 2. Education and Health care generally higher in Holyoke and Massachusetts then rest of the County.
- SWOT – Energy
- SWOT – Industries
- Strategic Discussion
 - i. Three-part strategy
 - 1. Industry Clusters and Opportunities
 - 2. Energy Strategy – generation, R&D, manufacturing, etc
 - 3. Innovation eco-system: workforce, infrastructure, financing, etc
 - ii. What are the top priorities for Holyoke?
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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Threats
 - i. Reduce tax rate to bring business in, then raise to an acceptable value, but not to drive businesses out. More instances of businesses that haven't moved here because of taxes.
 - ii. Non-profits should be held accountable to pay taxes too. Massachusetts Latino Chamber of Commerce (MLCC) is an example of that.
- Arts and Innovation District
 - i. Overall picture and sticking with "innovation" model. City is unique, we're asking for this, so we need to talk to the companies and make sure the City interests are involved with what they do. In house education for employees and overall education for the community.
 - ii. Opportunities to keep history and build off of the foundation of history and combine with future. Innovation is really thinking outside of the box.
 - iii. North Carolina – Rebranded their image, involving artists, etc.
- Overall Aesthetics
 - i. First floors of all buildings should be shops, art galleries, crafts, clothing, etc. to highlight an area. Everything is image.
 - ii. Each ward could have a main street with buildings in-tune with the rest of the city, small businesses, etc. Different experiences in each area.
- Availability of Space
 - i. Open space outside of town
 - ii. Open space within downtown (i.e. empty buildings, some salvageable, others not)
- Utilize Existing Resources: Save Money
 - i. Utilize college student time, market to students for help and to bring their services to employers in Holyoke.
 - ii. Local non-profit is doing just that, but can be expanded
 - iii. Portal for announcements that can be implemented to advertise for opportunities
 - 1. Research and develop strategies for transportation to employers, other locations

- iv. Holyoke Bound – Five colleges put this program together to teach students about Holyoke
- Connecting Resources to Holyoke and Providing Linkages
 - i. Example: Linkages between Latin America, Puerto Rico and Holyoke
- What businesses are members of the MLCC?
 - i. Small professional services primarily: hairdressers, graphic designers, high technology opportunity, etc.
 - ii. Services are out there, but connecting them is not happening
 - iii. Free access to Wi-Fi for small business
 - iv. Holyoke has a recycle program to small businesses
 - v. Access to communication – small business should have websites, access to google maps, and other marketing tools to get their names out their in the community.
- Housing/Rental Community
 - i. Always a challenge to rent to upstanding individuals in the community
 - ii. In the last 20 years, the quality of renter base tenants have improved and come a long way
 - iii. Students bring a great energy to a community
 - iv. Educational center for college students downtown would be a significant leap and the most important thing to start with to improve the City
 - 1. Example: educational research center on green energy
 - v. Change in the last few years to bring in market rate tenants
 - vi. Influx of people moving into the City
 - vii. Residential incentive for gateway city urban areas
 - 1. Looking to get a first loft project for Fall 2012
 - viii. Quality of Life
 - 1. Walkable, urban environment is key

- ix. Knowledge Corridor – where do these students go? Guess is many of them leave
- x. Train station is key
 - 1. Passenger rail scheduled for Fall of 2012
 - 2. Cost is less than \$2 million
- xi. Canal walk completion is huge, second phase would be the next step forward to highlight a good community that residents are proud of
- xii. Where are the key nodes and activity centers?
 - 1. Rail lines
 - 2. Synergies
 - a. Theater and train station
 - b. 2-way street on High Street
 - 3. Jeff Garcia – light up the canal
 - 4. High Street: Can improve lighting, etc for a good neighborhood feel
- Marketing Plan needed
 - i. DVD, brochure, materials available for people possibly trying to move to Holyoke
- Transportation
 - i. Transportation connections between the 5 campuses
 - ii. Reps from the 5 college incs are interested in coming up with a solution to provide transportation for students coming to Holyoke.
 - iii. Opportunities for manufacturers, distributors, etc. Trade zone is free. Opportunities for importing and exporting
 - iv. Transportation Master Plan
 - 1. Can focus on connections, infrastructure and corridors

4. 11:30am – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2011 (1:00-2:30pm)

Location: Transportation Center (206 Maple Street, Room 400)

Participants: Community Based Organizations (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

- Site placement (See map)

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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Get 5 Universities involved to apply their resources to encourage workforce development

- Majority of employees are under 35
- Issue is beyond workforce development, but age group between 18 and 35 want to:
 - i. Fix things that they own, fix their cars, grow their own food/raise things:
 - 1. Urban gardens, urban farms, roof tops
 - 2. Indoor organic farming in some of the larger mill buildings
 - 3. Green house in the farm and one in the City
 - 4. Massachusetts will be a pilot program to change what students have on their cafeteria trays
 - a. Over 30% of students under 18 have heart issues
 - b. Small farms in Massachusetts are not considered small business
 - 5. Housing Authority – mobile healthy food program
 - ii. Springfield technical community college – certificate program that has importance in the community
- Education
 - i. Life skill training
 - ii. Getting a successful candidate through a GED is generally problematic
 - iii. Raising the level of education – some students graduate without being able to write
 - 1. May be an option for employers to reach into the schools to begin a training program
 - iv. A lot of kids that go to school in the Holyoke public education do not enjoy going to school
 - 1. It's difficult to do this when the parents themselves have not had a good experience in the system
 - 2. Bring higher institutions as a resource to understand how they raise their testing levels
 - v. Bilingual program is not working

1. Kids are not writing or reading either language well
- Family Self Sufficiency Program
 - i. Basic English language, GED, etc
 - ii. Save the rent that usually would have been increased and get it back if they complete the program
 - iii. First time homebuyer Program
 1. Help with down payment assistance and closing costs
 - Supportive Services
 - i. Can this become a piece of the education?
 - ii. Skills for parents to take home and pass on to their kids
 1. Equipping parents with things they need to teach their kids basic life, language and education
 - Technology
 - i. Current access to technology is important to improve education
 - ii. Computer centers in low income neighborhoods – come out of federal programs
 1. Can this be attached to a formal requirement of graduating?
 - iii. Computer and access to internet is needed for the entire community
 - iv. Training applies to teachers too
 1. Classes are not on-line
 - v. Recognizing Innovation
 1. High performance computing center came at a good time for students
 - Community Place
 - i. Downtown Holyoke is not an appealing place for the community
 - ii. East Hampton – has a lot of restaurants
 - iii. Security

1. Perception of place
 - iv. Look of the neighborhood is important
- Healthy Housing Market
 - i. Attract young professional market to downtown – middle to higher level home market
- Working youth
 - i. Distance Learning
 - ii. Some incentives
 - iii. Work program – they realize the potential
- Economic Development
 - i. Design should generate more foot traffic, more retail, create a lively street
 - ii. Possible façade improvement programs?
- Teacher incentive programs to target specific teachers that mesh with the demographic of students in the class
- Partnerships
 - i. For-profit and non-profit (social-profit) collaboration opportunities and synergy
 - ii. Corporate Partnerships
 1. How do you leverage these partnerships?
 2. Example: ING with Girls, Inc – money given to girls to open an investment portfolio, and money made on that goes into a scholarship fund for them to use
- Business Development program
 - i. High school level tours through various local companies to understand what they can do when they are done with school – e.g. assembly line,
- Resources
 - i. 5 college collaborative

1. Information on jobs, internships, resource tool, etc

- ii. <http://www.holyokec3.org/>

- Teacher Resources

- i. Teacher incentive programs to target specific teachers that mesh with the demographic of students in the class

- ii. Web-ex

1. Teachers can teach kids at home through their laptops

4. 2:30pm – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2011 (4:00-5:00pm)

Location: Girls Inc (6 Open Square, 2nd floor)

Participants: Holyoke Youth Commission (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

- Youth commission helps out in the community. Works with the mayor and chief of police. Latest project – text a tip to fight crime or report bad behavior. Teen pregnancy education. 100% graduation rate is the new goal.

2. Presentation

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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Issues
 - i. No places to go to

- ii. Trash on the ground
- iii. Safety
 - 1. South Holyoke
- iv. No good jobs in Holyoke
- v. Empty lots
- vi. Abandoned buildings
- vii. Walkable
 - 1. It's not just a physical condition, because if you're afraid to walk even with nice sidewalks, you won't do it
- viii. Bikeable – yes and no
- Opportunities
 - i. Hang out
 - ii. Sports – indoor/outdoor
 - iii. Some jobs
 - iv. Careers
 - 1. Identify jobs and skills required for a position
 - 2. Understand the items that you need to successfully obtain a position.
- What would you like to see in 10-15 years?
- Majority of employees are under 35
- Goals for Holyoke
 - i. Community centers to go to
 - ii. Sports facilities to go to and attend
 - iii. Lighting
 - iv. Parks/open space for youth and families to use

v. Questionnaire

1. What can a Computing Center do for Youth/Community in Holyoke?

vi. Vision map – The Future of Holyoke

1. Highlights of collected ideas for what the students see the future to be

a. Bike shop has been opened at the YMCA

i. Help to maintain, fix and get a bike

ii. Bikes donated here

4. 5:00pm – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011 (8:30-10:00am)

Location: Holyoke Workers (100 Front Street, 4th Floor)

Participants: Holyoke Workers (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

2. Presentation

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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Jobs
 - i. Are there opportunities to retain jobs in the area?
- Education

- i. No opportunity to go to school as young adults. There should be more opportunities for adults to learn and obtain new skill sets to go out into the workforce
 - ii. More opportunities and resources similar to Holyoke Workers
 - iii. Continuing education for workers even while they are at work is an issue
- Housing
 - i. People are important and they must need have a place to live
 - ii. Rent control and market rent/value that is affordable
- Language
 - i. Some people with kids that now need to support their families, but before they get education they need to find a job that has English skills, can read, write and talk in English, and have some computer skills
 - ii. On the flip side, a lot of positions are bilingual, and not everyone is bilingual
- Manufacturing businesses in Holyoke
 - i. They have a very positive outlook on the future of their business and their status in the community
- Tested Programs
 - i. Sharing of ideas that have worked in other communities (e.g. taking the internet home – Boston)
- Database of skill sets
 - i. Need to obtain a list of skill sets from the community to understand what kinds of businesses should be in Holyoke
- Implementation
 - i. Establish a group to meet regularly
 - ii. City and state should give businesses a tax break to attract more businesses into town
- School closures
 - i. Education is needed but at the same time schools are overloaded and closing

1. Can you take some of the university students and have them help to provide the teaching assistance to Holyoke?
 - ii. Opportunities outside of school – Girl, Inc and Holyoke Youth Commission
 - iii. Opportunities for free internet create more resources for educational opportunities
- Adult basic education system – 20% of Holyoke residents are not literate to an adult level and in need to education
 - i. Adult Ed Collaborative
 - ii. Holyoke Works
 1. Can sustain 5% of the services
 - iii. If everyone else is providing services to the community, then the universities should set up and provide resources – i.e. one years tuition can have a large impact on the community
 1. Relationship between the City of Holyoke and the consortium of school bodies
 - Other recommendations of areas and what has come out from their process?
 - i. Each particular situation is slightly different
 - ii. Charities (philanthropies) have created job placement and resources for the workforce, etc
 - iii. Recommendations will highlight areas where money resources can be brought in for the community
 - Perception
 - i. Improve the perceived image of the community. There may be some opportunities for students from the universities to help with some sort of marketing plan
 - InnovateHolyoke.com
 - i. Resources for analysis
 - ii. Adult based education programs being run at the University level

- Some companies are required to hire Holyoke residents; understanding the skill sets of the community is important for future opportunities
 - i. Resources from the City are there for this communication bridge

4. 10:00am – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011 (10:30am-12:00pm)

Location: Transportation Center (206 Maple Street, Room 400)

Participants: Church Representatives (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

2. Presentation

- Agenda
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 - v. Comments
 - 1. People will shop where they want to shop and spend their money. Sometimes it's not about what they need
- SWOT – Energy
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 - i. Three-part strategy
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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Schools
 - i. MCAS test scores need to improve

- ii. Morgan, Sullivan, Holyoke Community College
- Open space/park space should be located around the community
 - i. Morgan School kids don't have park space. They have to walk two blocks for their baseball fields
 - 1. Canal/Bridge Street – rough area
 - ii. Nice park near Holyoke High, used to be Highland School – can be a nice example
 - iii. Area around Canal Street – Big Pool
 - 1. Take that and put something near that
- Assistance to homeowners trying to revitalize their homes and then rent out?
 - i. Owns a home with 6 units, but can't get a loan with this classification, only if it is a 4 unit
 - ii. Community Development Department
 - iii. Opportunities for possible CDBG grant opportunities
 - iv. Boston is an example
 - 1. You can buy a home next to nothing, but you need to agree to build up
- Transportation
 - i. Railroad is a real positive component
 - 1. Great to have connections to and from Holyoke
 - ii. New Haven – Greenfield
 - iii. How do you connect downtown to the other campuses to improve both physical and intellectual connections?
 - iv. Private trolley?
 - 1. Downtown trolley or streetcar
 - 2. Middle of each of the four wards
- Restaurant opportunities

- i. Disposable money is needed
- ii. Are there ways to bring people from other areas of the community here
 - Hotel accommodations in the downtown core?
 - i. Talk about parts about the Holyoke house having an area dedicated to a hotel
 - Goal is to develop a strategy to bring recommendations and solutions to the community
 - Urban Renewal Plan ties into this program

4. 12:00pm – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011 (1:00-2:30pm)

Location: Holyoke School Department (57 Suffolk Street, 6th Floor)

Participants: Holyoke School Department (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

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3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Governor has pledged \$25 million into the Green High Performance Computing project
 - i. Commitment to work with Holyoke on an Economic Development strategy
 - ii. Task Force – 25 people
- Serious Challenges within the school system

- i. Designation of underperformance for over 4-5 years
- ii. Continually tied to State scrutiny
- iii. Trying to develop a new school district improvement plan – budget, professional development, etc
- iv. Social, emotional support that kids needs, which is tied to achievement
- v. Responding to what the State is expecting from the district (1 of 4 in the State)
- vi. Explanations, not an excuse for the change
 1. Mobility of the kids and transiency, and how far you can go to control that
 2. Transiency program
 - a. Classroom size
 - b. Testing
 3. 10% homeless rate
 4. Highest pregnancy rate
- vii. Mobility issue
 1. Economics or Familial issue
 2. Housing issue – takes 4 months to evict someone from their house
 3. Homelessness
 - a. Where voucher slots open up for people is where they go
 - b. First stop type of city for a lot of people
 4. In and out, not just out
- viii. Socioeconomic issues, then secondary issues: social and emotional abuse
- ix. Social Funding
 1. Academic achievement sometimes falls second to taking care of homelss, teen pregnant moms, etc sometimes because they do such a good job of doing this

- x. Drop out rate
 - 1. Need to deal with the social and emotional issues
 - 2. Cut down on student dismissal from school
 - 3. If you could do some
- xi. Access to high band width
 - 1. Some initiatives talked about for families to have access
 - 2. Can possibly remotely to tie into the classroom
 - 3. Boston – “Tech Goes Home”
 - a. Wi-Fi hot spots
 - b. Hardware that goes home and training for parents
 - 4. Ed-Line
 - a. Parents check on homework assignments and grades via the internet or cell phones
 - 5. UMASS Amherst
 - a. Amherst has tremendous Wi-Fi , can you help deliver this kind of bandwidth to Holyoke
 - b. Holyoke Gas and Electric controls the poles
- xii. EZ-Rate
 - 1. Benefit based on statistics
- xiii. MIT
 - 1. Plans to donate a fiber when they come into town
 - 2. May eliminate bandwidth issues
- xiv. 1100 miles of fiber in Western Massachusetts
 - 1. Would then need to purchase bandwidth on the fiber
- xv. Transportation

1. There are some opportunities to get around, just need more
- xvi. High Performance Computing Center
 1. Is there a way that this may help with the drop out rate?
 - a. Remote connections to some of the colleges
 - b. Ties to MIT and MIT could reach out and work with the school system
 - c. Teachers need more professional and development training
 - d. Design of the Green has a classroom space
- xvii. On-line education piece
 1. MIT has an on-line education piece
 - a. Would be great to replicate this
 - i. Summerville
 - ii. Much more sophisticated in their high school connection
 2. Looking to buy inexpensive on-line education pieces
- xviii. Student teaching piece
 1. Come to the district and teach
- xix. Other opportunities that the district may not even know about
- xx. Resources to organize all of the opportunities available for the local school districts
 1. E.g. one person/group that organizes the transportation, etc.
 2. Central place where all of the resources, college resources to be matched up, etc
- xxi. C4 \$600,000 grant submittal – 5 colleges made the application, Coordinator to manage
- xxii. Is it possible to interact with the High Performance Center?
 1. Data shop at the vocational school

- xxiii. A lot of age inappropriate kids (i.e. 15 year old, 7th graders)
 - 1. Is there a way to get them to stay, graduate, but give them class time via the Green facility?
 - a. Technology supported alternative
 - b. Has to be interesting
 - i. Case studies on the computer, through Science and Biology, etc
- xxiv. Teachers are competing with the technology that all the kids have
- xxv. PD for teachers
 - 1. Training Center to try things out on a computing center
- xxvi. Schools should not only be open until 4pm
- xxvii. HPCC have asked to have some sort of classrooms space(s)
 - 1. Computer science faculty are adamant to have this space into their deign
 - 2. Would be great to have classroom space at the computer center to have as a resource for the kids that are in the middle of their program or at the top the class

4. 2:30pm – Meeting Adjourned

Project: Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley

Subject: Public Outreach

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011 (7:45-8:30pm)

Location: Transportation Center (206 Maple Street, 3rd Floor)

Participants: Holyoke Community College (See Attachment: Sign-In Sheet)

1. Introductions

2. Presentation

- Agenda
 - i. Discuss strategies and opportunities
- Site Overview
- Guiding Principles
 - i. Market-based vision
 - ii. Near-term and long-term (20-year) strategies
 - iii. Link to the on-going Urban Renewal Plan
 - iv. Parties responsible for implementation
- Schedule
 - i. 9 Month Project: Public Workshop Stage (5th month) – stakeholder outreach
- Draft Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for Holyoke and Pioneer Valley Region
- SWOT – Foundations for Economic Development
 - i. Population Analysis

- ii. Transportation Analysis
- iii. Education Analysis
- iv. Employment Shares by Industry
- SWOT – Energy
- SWOT – Industries
- Strategic Discussion
 - i. Three-part strategy
 - 1. Industry Clusters and Opportunities
 - 2. Energy Strategy – generation, R&D, manufacturing, etc
 - 3. Innovation eco-system: workforce, infrastructure, financing, etc
 - ii. What are the top priorities for Holyoke?
 - 1. Improve job opportunities and economic well-being for Holyoke residents
 - iii. Parties responsible for implementation
 - 1. Local/regional, public/private/non-profit, partnerships

3. Strategic Discussion with Participants

- Access to capital
 - i. People may have a business plan, but sometimes finding access to capital is a challenge
- Family restaurants are needed
- The downtown needs to be cleaned up
- Housing needs to be cleaned up, rebuilt, cleaned up, etc
 - i. Habitat for Humanity is a good idea
- Urban gardens
- Little San Juan?

- North Hampton is a good example
 - i. Restaurants
 - ii. Stores
 - iii. Book stores
 - iv. Cafes
- Are there local organizations that are committed to the community? A group
- Things for teenagers to do?
 - i. Music
 - 1. Studios for singers
 - ii. Place for them to showcase their talent
 - iii. Connections
 - iv. Can they go to a big City and perform on a stage?
- Puerto Rican Festival
 - i. Block parties in Holyoke that no longer exist
 - 1. Kids, families, etc
 - 2. Fights, gang members sometimes, scuffles
- Drop out rates
 - i. Keep kids in school
 - ii. Afterschool programs
 - iii. Train teachers to understand behaviors
- Closures of schools
 - i. Improve testing to not have schools close down
 - ii. Kids don't want to move schools, they want to stay in the same facility

4. 8:30pm – Meeting Adjourned