

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 3, 2018
TO: CRCOG Foundation Board
FROM: Lyle Wray and Tim Malone
SUBJECT: Metro Hartford Future Update (CEDs)

We last updated you on the Metro Hartford Future Project (the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) in June. The project is being led by CRCOG in partnership with the Metro Hartford Alliance and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Fourth Economy is the consulting firm.

In the past few months, the project team has made a lot of progress with a few highlights here:

- Formed a project Advisory Committee and held two meetings on March 19 and May 22
- Launched the project website at: <http://www.crcog.org/ceds>
- Conducted dozens of stakeholder interviews
- Held four working group meetings
- Gave presentations to the CRCOG Policy Board, Capital Workforce Partners, the Metro Hartford Alliance, and the United Way
- Developed a draft Situational Assessment compiling results of the stakeholder interviews, data analysis, and a review of previous planning studies (available on the project website)
- Held four strategy group sessions on June 26 and 27

Following the March 19 Advisory Committee meeting, three overarching goals were selected based on the committee's feedback. These goals were confirmed at the May 22 meeting. They were:

- **Collaboration:** Enhancing regional collaboration to promote and grow the region
- **Talent:** Creating a robust pipeline of talent that has the skills and experience that industry needs to succeed in the 21st Century
- **Quality of Place:** Investing in quality of place to retain and attract talent - including investments in transportation infrastructure (including bicycle and pedestrian amenities and transit)

A draft set of potential strategies was shared with the Advisory Committee on May 22 for their initial feedback. Based on their input, these strategies were then refined and

presented at the June 26 and 27 strategy working group meetings. Dozens of stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors attended these meetings. Participants were asked to help our team learn about existing initiatives related to the strategies, rewrite the strategy description, identify potential implementation leaders, and give us feedback on which strategies have the greatest potential to positively impact the regional economy.

The team is now working to develop the final list of “game changer” strategies for our region’s economy. Our next steps are to continue refining the list of potential strategies and potential implementation organizations. Meetings on these strategies will be held on October 9 and 11. Following these meetings we will begin vetting the list of strategies with the public, our partner organizations, and, hopefully, a group of prominent CEOs in the region. The results of this outreach will then be presented to our Advisory Committee and a final list of strategies will be compiled.

So far, the most promising strategies include:

- Creation of a workforce intermediary organization that would coordinate training efforts between employers, higher education, training providers, high schools, and industry associations.
- Creation of an employer/higher education intermediary focused on facilitating recruitment efforts aimed at local college students, as well as improvements to career/education counseling services at public schools.
- Development and implementation of a regional business retention and recruitment program.
- Development and advocacy for legislation permitting regional funding mechanisms for project delivery.

Following the vetting of the list of strategies, we will begin the process of assessing the capacities needed to implement these strategies. This will be done through stakeholder interviews and another set of strategy group sessions.

The goal is to finish developing the report by December of 2018. We will then move into the implementation phase of the project.