



Community Economic Action Program

DON PETERSON



Rural Community Assistance Program



ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

Basic Overview

THE FOLLOWING OUTLINE IS THE FORMAT USED IN DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN. THIS ACTION PLAN WILL BE THE FINAL PRODUCT OF AN ACTION PLANNING GRANT.

Introduction

- WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION PLAN?
- HOW WAS THE ACTION PLAN DEVELOPED?
- FUTURE USE AND MODIFICATION OF THIS ACTION PLAN.

General Background

- SETTING

- POPULATION (DEMOGRAPHICS)

Economic Development

- COMPARISON TO STATE & NATIONAL ECONOMY
- STATE OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY
- LABOR FORCE
- NEEDS
- OPPORTUNITIES
- STRATEGIES CONSIDERED
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES: WHAT, HOW, WHO, & WHEN

Human Resources

- INTRODUCTION
- BACKGROUND
- NEEDS
- OPPORTUNITIES
- HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES: WHAT, HOW, WHO, WHEN

Capital Improvements (Infrastructure)

- INTRODUCTION
- BACKGROUND
- NEED
- OPPORTUNITIES
- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES:
WHAT, HOW, WHO, WHEN

Housing

- INTRODUCTION
- BACKGROUND
- NEEDS
- OPPORTUNITIES
- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES:
WHAT, HOW, WHO, WHEN

Appendix

- BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EXISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND STUDIES FOR THE AREA.
- ANNUAL WORK PLAN (ARRANGED BY STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED IN THE ACTION PLAN.)
 - PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS
 - STRATEGY SUPPORTED
 - CURRENT SITUATION
 - DESIRED CONDITION
 - STEPS/RESPONSIBILITIES
 - TIMELINES
 - FUNDING REQUIREMENTS/SOURCE
 - ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET
 - OTHER COOPERATOR FUNDS
- COMMUNITY CAPACITY ANALYSIS



Forest County, PA



1994 ACTION PLAN

Setting

- FOREST COUNTY IS LOCATED IN NORTHWESTERN PA, ABOUT 2.5 HOURS AWAY FROM PITTSBURGH, PA.
- ABOUT 40% OF THE COUNTY – OR 118,924 ACRES OUT OF 273,920 – IS IN FEDERAL OWNERSHIP (ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST).



Brief History

Population Growth

- SINCE 1950, THE POPULATION HAS STABILIZED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 4,500 – 4,900. IN ADDITION, PART-TIME RESIDENTS USE ABOUT 4,500 SUMMER HOMES AND CAMPS IN THE COUNTY.
- FOREST COUNTY HAS BEEN THE DESTINATION FOR MANY VISITORS WHO COME FOR RECREATION AND SIGHTSEEING.

Timber

- BY THE END OF THE 1930'S, ALMOST ALL THE MERCHANTABLE TIMBER IN FOREST COUNTY HAD BEEN HARVESTED.
- THE SECOND GROWTH FOREST CONTAINS MANY ACRES OF HIGH QUALITY BLACK CHERRY, WHICH COMMANDS A VERY HIGH PRICE IN THE INTERNATIONAL VENEER MARKET.



State of the Local Economy

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- FOREST COUNTY HAS A BLEAK DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC PICTURE, WITH NO REAL HOPE FOR CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE UNLESS SOME POSITIVE ACTION IS TAKE SOON

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- TIMBER HARVESTING HAS DOMINATED THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF FOREST COUNTY AND CONTINUES TO BE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE ECONOMY TODAY. RECENT AND EXPECTED CHANGES IN THE ALLOWABLE SALE QUANTITY (ASQ) LEVEL ON THE NATIONAL FOREST WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PEOPLE IN THIS AREA.

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- THE MOST IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE IN THE REGION IS THE FORESTS, BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLICLY-OWNED. LOCAL SAWMILLS PROVIDE SOME EMPLOYMENT TO RESIDENTS, BUT THERE ARE FEW SECONDARY PROCESSING OR VALUE-ADDED BUSINESSES TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS RESOURCE. MOST OF THE FOREST RESOURCE EMPLOYMENT IS IN THE PRIMARY PROCESSING ARENA.

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- THE ECONOMICS OF FOREST COUNTY ARE ALMOST ENTIRELY BASED ON NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS TIMBER, OIL, GAS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM.



Opportunity

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- TO ENCOURAGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTY, THERE ARE TWO INDUSTRIAL PARKS THAT COULD BE DEVELOPED, ONE ON EACH SIDE OF THE COUNTY. THERE ARE ALSO SUITABLE VACANT BUILDINGS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE COUNTY THAT COULD BE USED IMMEDIATELY.



Strategy Development

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- WE DIVIDED THE PROJECTS INTO THREE STRATEGY CATEGORIES:
 - MANUFACTURING & BUSINESS
 - RECREATION & TOURISM
 - INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

Manufacturing & Business Strategy Team

- CREATE A SPECIALTY PARTS MANUFACTURING CONCERN FOR AUTO INDUSTRY.
- WORK WITH VIDEO PRODUCTION STUDIO THAT WOULD LIKE TO LOCATE LOCALLY.
- PROMOTE FOREST COUNTY'S BUSINESS CLIMATE AND RESOURCES.
- ESTABLISH A SATELLITE MINIMUM SECURITY CAMP FROM FCI MCKEAN.

Recreation & Tourism Strategy Team

- ESTABLISH A FULL-TIME TOURIST PROMOTION AGENCY (CURRENT TPA IS PART-TIME).



Florence County



ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Priorities of Participants when Asked:

“What Strategies can Florence County use to Improve the Local Economy?”

1. BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO GAIN MORE SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.
2. RECRUIT OR EXPAND VALUE-ADDED WOOD MANUFACTURING.
3. OFFER ATTRACTIVE SERVICE ALTERNATIVES TO THE IRON MOUNTAIN, MI AREA.
4. SEASONAL RETAIL/TOURISM OUTLETS.
5. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS.
6. UPGRADING DOWNTOWN SIGNING/COUNTY VISUAL QUALITIES.
7. IMPROVING BUSINESS IMAGES.
8. INTERPRETIVE EXHIBITS/DISPLAYS AT THE NATURAL RESOURCES CENTER.
9. UPGRADING OF OLD HOUSING.

Areas to Improve the Florence Economy

COMPLETE LIST

-
- VALUE-ADDED WOOD MANUFACTURING
 - UPGRADE DOWNTOWN (SIGNING)
 - ADVERTISING (ARTICLES). *EDUCATING LOCATING COMMUNITY OF WHAT BUSINESSES WE HAVE HERE.*
 - FAST FOOD STORE. *HARDEES OR SUBWAY/BLIMPIES.*
 - GARAGE (AUTO REPAIR SHOP) (EXPAND HOURS)

Action Plans Concerning Florence County Economic Analysis

FROM DECEMBER 22, 1994
PLANNING SESSION

Action 1

WHAT

- LOCATE VALUE-ADDED WOOD MANUFACTURING

WHO

- UW-EXTENSION, RC&D, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HOW

- MAKE CONTACTS

WHERE

- HERE

WHEN

- AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Value-Added Possibilities

1. LOOK AT VERTICAL INTEGRATION OF EXISTING WOOD INDUSTRY.
 1. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE TO HAVE AN EXISTING SAWMILL USE THE LUMBER TO PRODUCE A SECONDARY PRODUCT SUCH AS FURNITURE OR FLOORING.
2. USE EXISTING LOCAL TALENT TO PRODUCE A HIGH END PRODUCT SUCH AS ROLL TOP DESKS.
 1. IT IS EASIER TO EXPAND A SMALL BUSINESS THAN IT IS TO RECRUIT A BUSINESS FROM ELSEWHERE.
3. PRODUCE HIGH QUALITY NOVELTY WOOD PRODUCTS
 1. LASER ENGRAVED WOOD PRODUCTS, BUTCHER BLOCKS, WOOD CARVINGS ETC.

Value-Added Possibilities Continued...

4. PRODUCE PRODUCTS THAT COULD BE MARKETED ALONG WITH PRIDE'S PRODUCTS. ITEMS THAT WOULD COMPLIMENT PRIDE'S PRODUCTS.
 1. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE DISPLAYS FOR GOLF TEES.
5. START OR EXPAND A BUSINESS IN THE SPECIALTY FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY AS DISCUSSED IN AGRICULTURE INFORMATION BULLETIN 666.
 1. EXAMPLES WOULD BE WREATHS, MAPLE SYRUP, MUSHROOMS, CONES, BIRCH BARK PRODUCTS, ETC.
6. HELP MARKET EXISTING SECONDARY WOOD PRODUCTS.
 1. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE KERR'S HANDCRAFTED WOOD CANOES.
7. FILL A NEED FOR A PROCESSED WOOD PRODUCT IN THE AREA.
 1. AN EXAMPLE MIGHT BE MAKING WOOD TRUSSES FOR LOCAL USE.

Action 2

WHAT

- POTENTIAL SPECIALTY FOREST PRODUCT BUSINESS
 - BIRCH BARK USES
 - WREATHS – BALSAM/PRINCESS PINE
 - CEDAR BOWS
 - PINE CONES FOR CRAFT
 - MAPLE SYRUP (MAKE MARKET BIGGER)
 - WOOD BEDDING PRODUCTS
 - BIRCH TOPS – ORNAMENTAL TREES
 - WOOD PALLETS (I.E. KHOURY'S)
 - COMPLIMENT PRIDE PRODUCTS
 - PANELING/FLOORING PRODUCTS

Action 3

WHAT

- POTENTIAL RETAIL/TOURISM BUSINESSES:
 - QUICK STOP SERVICE STATION(S). WORK WITH EXISTING BUSINESSES IN SAME FACILITY?
 - FAST FOOD BUSINESS
 - GANDER MOUNTAIN OUTLET/CABELLAS (ELECTRONIC ARCHERY SYSTEM?)
 - HWY 2 – 101/70 INTERSECTION HUB FOR THESE DEVELOPMENTS ALSO TOURIST SHOP(S) – GIFT/CRAFT SHOPS, T-SHIRTS WITH OTHER ATTRACTIONS (LOCAL OUTLET)
 - PROMOTE VISITOR/INTERPRETIVE CENTER MORE
 - MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS



Rural Area Economic Diversification



MAY 2004 ANALYSIS AND PLAN

2001 Survey of Community Businesses: Opportunities for Betterment

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ MAKE PROPERTY AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL LIVING (LAND PURCHASE OR TRADE)■ MOTELS, CABINS, ETC.■ RECREATIONAL FACILITIES■ COMMUNITY PROMOTION■ RESIDENTIAL HOUSING (HOMES AND APARTMENTS)■ VALUE-ADDED WOOD MANUFACTURING■ ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN (I.E. SOCCER)■ SPORT SHOP■ GROCERY STORE■ RURAL FIRE PROTECTION (UPDATED EQUIPMENT, DRY HYDRANTS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ HERITAGE TOURISM■ MULCH PRODUCTION FROM EXISTING WOOD WASTE■ CO-GENERATION PLANT FROM EXISTING WOOD WASTE■ COMMUNITY EVENTS■ AUXILIARY BUSINESSES■ REGARDING CHILDREN - SURVEY THEM■ MORE TECHNOLOGY ACCESS TO SCHOOL COMPUTERS DURING SUMMER■ GOLF COURSE■ POWER, SEWER, WATER AT INDUSTRIAL PARK■ COMBINED SCHOOL DISTRICTS■ OLD HOUSE RENOVATION |
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Summary: Areas to Improve the Local Economy

Weighted Votes

27

16

10

8

6

**Utilities at the Industrial Park, with Power
Being the Most Important**

Motels/Housing

Available Properties

Grocery Store

Value-Added Wood Manufacturing



Capital Improvement Strategies

WHAT

- UTILITIES AT THE INDUSTRIAL PARK
- POWER IS THE PRIMARY CONCERN AT THIS POINT

HOW

- MAKE CONTACTS WITH WPS & OTHERS LISTED
- DETERMINE POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
- WORK WITH WPS TO IMPLEMENT
- INVESTIGATE THE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL PARK BIOMASS POWER/HEATING PLAN
- WORK WITH OTHER UTILITY PROVIDERS TO ESTABLISH THEIR RESPECTIVE UTILITIES AT THE INDUSTRIAL PARK

Economic Development Strategies

WHAT

- RECRUIT OR EXPAND VALUE-ADDED WOOD MANUFACTURING (CEDAR LOG FURNITURE, CEDAR MULCH, MILL WORK, MOLDINGS, PALLET MANUFACTURERS, CO-GENERATION PLANT)

HOW

- CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY
- USE THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL BUSINESSES TO RECRUIT OR EXISTING BUSINESSES
- ASSIST INTERESTED BUSINESSES IN ACQUIRING THE NECESSARY FUNDING

Capital Improvements

WHAT

- INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MOTELS/CABINS IN THE AREA

HOW

- MAKE CONTACTS WITH THE PEOPLE LISTED ABOVE IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL GRANT OR LOAN PROGRAMS THAT COULD BE USED TO ESTABLISH A MOTEL
- IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SITES FOR A MOTEL
- THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WILL WORK WITH POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND OWNERS TO ESTABLISH A MOTEL



USDA Economic Recovery Program



2005

Economic Recovery Program

- NEW ACTION PROGRAMS – REPLY DUE MAY 6, 2005
 - IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT PROPOSALS – REPLY DUE MAY 27, 2005
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IF A COMMUNITY OF COUNTY CONTAINS FS LANDS AND HAS LOST NATURAL RESOURCE BASED JOBS OR BUSINESSES SINCE JANUARY 1, 1999, AND MEETS ALL OTHER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, PLEASE CONSIDER THE COMMUNITY ELIGIBLE FOR THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM.

Determining Rural Community Eligibility

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A “RURAL COMMUNITY” **MUST** MEET ALL FOUR ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.
 - LOCATION
 - MUST BE NO MORE THAN 100 AIR MILES FROM A NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY
 - POPULATION
 - A COUNTY MAY BE OF ANY POPULATION. A UNIT OF GOVERNMENT OR AN UNINCORPORATED AREA WITHIN A QUALIFYING COUNTY MUST HAVE A POPULATION LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 10,000
 - ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY
 - AT LEAST **15%** OF THE TOTAL COUNTY-LEVEL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LABOR AND PROPRIETOR INCOME IS DERIVED FROM FORESTRY, WOOD PRODUCTS, AND FOREST RELATED INDUSTRIES
 - ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
 - ECONOMIC HARDSHIP DUE TO THE LOSS OF JOBS OR INCOME DERIVED FROM INDUSTRIES OR ENTERPRISES RELATED TO NATURAL RESOURCES.



Action Plan Implementation Proposals

Types of Projects Funded

- FOREST SERVICE FUNDS CAN BE USED TO IMPLEMENT PROJECTS OR ACTIVITIES WHICH FIT WITHIN THE OVERALL FOREST SERVICE MISSION. TYPES OF POTENTIALLY FUNDABLE PROJECTS INCLUDE:
 - STUDIES
 - BUSINESS FORMATION
 - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/SERVICE
 - TRAINING/EDUCATION
 - FACILITIES
 - RECYCLING
 - MARKETING/MERCHANDISING
 - TOURISM
 - ESTABLISH/IMPROVE SERVICES
 - INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT
 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

The Forest Service Will NOT Fund

- INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS RECRUITMENT FROM ONE COMMUNITY TO ANOTHER
- DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
- STAFFING, EXCLUDING CONSULTING AND CONTRACT SERVICES
- PAYMENT OF INTEREST ON EXISTING LOANS; INTEREST RATE BUY-DOWN
- PROJECTS ON NATIONAL FOREST LAND NORMALLY FUNDED THROUGH OTHER BUDGET LINE ITEMS