



Town of Acton
Economic Development Committee
Presentation to the Board of Selectmen

Annual Oversight Meeting - November 2, 2009

- I. Introduction
- II. Mission Statement
- III. Progress to Date
 - Team Concept
 - Team Agendas
 - Team Staffing
- IV. Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce – Relationship
 - Committee Membership
 - Joint Activities
 - Marketing Coordination
 - Survey
- V. Demographics Team
 - Data Base of Acton Information
 - Format in circulation: Town Hall, Town Committees, Interested Publics
 - Coordination of Inputs
 - Maintenance Long Term
- VI. Marketing Team
 - Survey
 - Coordination and Support
- VII. Pending Teams
- VIII. Staffing and Leadership Challenges
- IX. Future Activities and Performance Measures

Presented by:

Doug Tindal – Chairman, Economic Development Committee
Sarah Fletcher – Executive Director, Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Town of Acton, Massachusetts 01720

MISSION STATEMENT

March 19, 2009

To help attract, retain and grow business and jobs in Acton to expand the commercial tax base, improve the economic environment, enhance the quality of life for its residents, and meet the long term needs of the community.

To increase the value and desirability of our community by supporting the needs of current commercial and industrial businesses.

To encourage the appropriate re-development or renewal of commercial property.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC) TEAMS AND DEFINITIONS (10/26/09)

Demographics and Inventory:

Research, document, monitor, and make more readily available to the public:

- Business demographics and inventory;
- Non-business (residential, community, etc.) demographics and inventory.

Public Relations:

- To educate and inform all relevant government agencies, as well as the public, business, and corporate community in Acton, the region, the nation, and internationally about the merits of doing business in Acton.
- To encourage current businesses to remain and expand in Acton.
- To encourage new businesses to come to Acton.

Marketing and Tourism:

Create and implement marketing strategies and materials to support the greater EDC efforts. This work group will also be responsible for the creation and implementation, in collaboration with area arts, retail, and dining organizations, of tourism opportunities – driving new revenue to existing businesses.

New Business Development:

Attract new businesses to Acton that support the mission statement.

Existing Business Development:

- Find ways to help business in Acton flourish by encouraging communications with “target businesses” to understand their goals, and to determine areas where cooperation would be of value.
- Develop concept/products that serve target segments, either events (in cooperation with marketing/PR), tax incentive programs, regional partnerships, etc.

Issues Management:

Evaluate the opportunities for improvement of the CIP / residential real estate tax ratio.

Application Inquiry Response Team:

Review development applications submitted to the Town in a timely fashion. Meet with persons who seek EDC assistance with existing or proposed business issues and provide guidance. Try to ensure development proposals meet the economic development goals of the Town (1998 Master Plan Update and Economic Development Committee (EDC) goals). Keep a log of non-residential development applications received by the EDC. Generally monitor non-residential and residential development activity in town and their economic impacts.

Coordination Project:

- Create processes and employ tools to assist in the coordination of activities between the EDC subcommittees/teams. These tools must be easy to use and flexible, but also conform to open meeting law.
- This project will have 2 phases, phase one is defining the processes and tools, and phase two is to drive the process and tracks the projects.

Future Teams:

- *Public/Private Leverage*
- *Strategic Issues*

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATABASE INVENTORY – (draft template)**

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population
 - Gender
 - Age Levels
 - Ethnicity/Race
- Income
 - Per capita
 - Per household
 - Single/Multiple wage earners
- Education Levels
 - High School
 - College/University
 - Graduate
- Housing
 - Home Values/R.E Taxes paid
 - Housing/Dwelling Units
 - Detached single family
 - Condos
 - Apartments
 - Housing density
 - Housing Owned/Rented/Vacant (%)

BUSINESS TYPES

- TRADITIONAL DRY GOODS

- I. Clothiers
 - a. Men
 - b. Women
 - c. Family/Children
 - d. Specialty Clothiers (e.g. EMS)
 - e. Shoes
- II. Gift /Jewelry Stores
- III. Misc. Dry Goods (e.g. Staples)
- IV. Sporting Goods

- FOOD

- I. Restaurants
 - a. Formal/Sit Down
 - b. Fast Food/Take Out
 - c. Ethnic Specialties (list)
 - d. Cafes
- II. Groceries
 - a. Supermarkets
 - b. Convenience Stores
 - c. Specialty Foods/Ethnic
 - d. Farm Stands
 - e. Liquor Stores

- AUTOMOBILES

- I. New
- II. Used
- III. Repair Shops
- IV. Body Shops
- V. Gas/Service Stations
- VI. Auto Rentals

- HOMES

- I. Hardware
- II. Home Furnishings
- III. Home Improvement
- IV. Carpet
- V. Computers/IT/Repairs
- VI. Video Store/Electronics
- VII. Electronic/Appliance Repairs
- VIII. Garden Centers
- IX. Art Galleries/Frame Shops
- X. Retail Home Sales
- XI. Home Services (heating, plumbing, painting, etc.)
- XII. Appliances
- XIII. Entertainment

- PERSONAL SERVICES

- I. Medical
 - a. Doctors
 - b. Dentists
 - c. Chiropractors
 - d. Massage Therapy
 - e. Medical Services (e.g. Rehabilitation, Imaging Center)
 - f. Drug Stores
- II. Recreation
 - a. Gymnasium
 - b. Dance
 - c. Indoor Sports
 - d. Outdoor Sports
- III. Miscellaneous
 - f. Beauty/Barber Shops
 - g. Nail salon
 - h. Day Care
 - i. Dry cleaners

- j. Attorneys
- k. Architects
- l. Fitness
- m. Dance
- n. Martial Arts
- o. Tutoring

- COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES

- I. Warehousing/Distribution
- II. Manufacturing
- III. Finance/Lending
- IV. Home/Auto/Life Insurance Agencies

- NOT-For-Profit ORGANIZATIONS

- a. Manufacturing
- b. Services

LAND USES

- Housing
 - Rental
 - Owned
- Commercial
- Retail
- Manufacturing/Distribution
- Parks/Recreation
- Vacant/Available Land
 - Zoned Residential
 - Zoned Commercial (office/business)
 - Zoned Mixed Use (residential and commercial – village districts)
 - Zoned Industrial

- Zoned Agricultural, Conservation, Recreational
- EDIP Zone acreage

TOWN AMENITIES

- Libraries
- Parks/Recreation
- Conservation (Deed Restricted)
- Historic Districts
- National Register Buildings
- Museums
- Houses of Worship

EDUCATION

- Elementary Schools
- Junior High Schools
- High School
- Test score performance
- Class Room population
- Student-Teacher ratios
- Drop Out Rate
- Private Schools
- Nursery Schools
- Vocational Schools
- Specialty/Ethnic Schools

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BUSINESS (Section 1 of 4)

- 1) What kind of business do you operate?
- 2) Are you an independently owned business, franchise or part of a regional/national chain?
- 3) Are you the owner or manager?
- 4) How long has your business been located in Acton?
- 5) What resources did you use to find your location in Acton?
Text box
- 6) What were influencing factors in your Acton location choice?
- 7) Are you satisfied with your decision to locate your business in Acton?
- 8) Are you satisfied with your decision to locate in your present location?
- 9) Do you plan on staying in Acton?
- 10) Will you be expanding your business?
If Yes, are you considering expanding in Acton?
Would you like the EDC to contact you to see if we can help you find a location or help with the permitting process?
- 11) Do you know of other businesses who are interested in locating in Acton?
If Yes, will you share contact information so the EDC might contact them to offer assistance?
- 12) Are you meeting your business goals (i.e., sales goals, membership goals, etc.)?
If No, what % of your goals do you estimate your business is achieving?
What do you feel are the contributing factors?
- 13) What is your annual estimated gross revenue?
- 14) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities to conduct business in Acton?
- 15) Would you share three (3) key business challenges you face?
- 16) What do you feel are the greatest obstacles to conducting business in Acton?
- 17) Acton has received grant money to implement public transportation to improve commuter transportation; how could public transportation benefit your business?

18) Do any of your employees struggle with transportation issues?

19) Would a shuttle to/from the train station benefit your business?

MARKETING/PROMOTION (Section 2 of 4)

20) Is there something extraordinary/unique about your business that you would like to share?

21) What marketing/advertising options do you use? (Select all that apply.)

22) Which do you feel are most effective? (Select your top 5)

23) How much do you spend annually on marketing and/or advertising?

24) Do you track results from individual promotions/advertisements?

25) Do you work collaboratively with surrounding businesses to develop increased traffic and market visibility?

26) What kinds of business would be best suited in your area to help drive additional traffic to your business?

27) What kinds of business would you personally use (or would your business use) if they were located close to your business?

DEMOGRAPHICS (Section 3 of 4)

Please describe who you feel is your business clientele:

28) Gender

29) Age

30) Race

31) Market Reach; where does your business clientele live?

NEXT STEPS (Section 4 of 4)

32) What can the Acton Economic Development Committee, in collaboration with the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce, do to assist you in making your business more successful?

33) Are you interested in learning more about the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce and upcoming marketing opportunities and events?

If Yes, how do you wish to be contacted?

34) Are you interested in learning more about the Acton Economic Development Committee?

If Yes, which work groups are of most interest?

How do you wish to be contacted?

35) The Acton Economic Development Committee and the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce are committed to understanding and assisting the needs of our local business community. If we have not asked about important issues relating to your business success, please provide us with your comments. We both need and respect your feedback. Thank you again for your participation.