

Economic Development

Introduction

During the recent Reality Check Workshops, topical experts and members of the public worked together in small groups to examine a particular topic in-depth. During the two-hour workshops they worked with a trained facilitator to complete the following exercises:

- 1) Review of Ideas. Participants reviewed all of the ideas related to their topic that were collected during the community Idea Gathering Sessions.
- 2) Critical Questions. Participants engaged in a discussion of two Critical Questions, which had been identified by the *Vision for Staten Island* Steering Committee. The facilitator recorded the results of the discussion on flipchart paper, and then helped the group summarize major areas of agreement and disagreement.
- 3) Implementation Recommendations. At the end of the discussion period, each participant wrote down two practical, specific strategies or implementation steps to help Staten Island achieve its vision for their topic.

The results from the Economic Development group are provided below. Note that responses have been recorded verbatim, and some errors may remain due to handwriting legibility. Responses are numbered for reference purposes only; this does not indicate any sense of priority.

Quick Brainstorm:

Thinking about the borough as a whole, what are the most important economic development initiatives to pursue on Staten Island?

1. Focus on importance of small businesses
2. Revitalization of waterfront
3. Promote tourism
4. Upscale and wholesale food markets
5. Improve transportation on and off Island
6. Cluster hi-rise housing around transportation
7. Green zone
8. Job development – comprehensive strategy
9. Business improvement districts

Critical Question 1:

Which are the more appropriate economic development strategies to pursue in different geographic areas of the Island? Write your ideas below and, if appropriate, use the map provided to indicate locations for specific suggestions.

1. Enhance, revitalize industrial maritime uses from St. George to container port
2. Open up North Shore railroad to passenger traffic
3. Encourage Mid-Island colleges (CSI, Wagner, IBR, St. Johns) to host world class seminars and meetings to bring people to Island
4. West Shore: Define, protect and develop vacant parcels to attract hi-tech, clean tech, green businesses
5. Identify industry cluster for redevelopment of teleport
6. Foster and promote cultural institutions to increase local and off Island residents
7. Focus on tourism as cluster industry
8. Streamline regulatory processes
9. Use ball park implementation as model for other development
10. Relocate non-waterfront businesses to free up waterfront for appropriate uses
11. South Shore: create more small businesses to create focal points – town centers
12. West Shore Light Rail from Tottenville to Bayonne Bridge
13. Strategically place and attract larger retail stores, i.e. Trader Joes, etc.
14. Develop ferry terminals on both sides in terms of retail stores and restaurants
15. Develop factory farming near waterfront to allow for water purification treatment – can tap into farming and energy subsidies and provide low skill jobs

Critical Question 1 SUMMARY:

1. Focus on development of waterfront
2. Transportation infrastructure
3. Streamline regulations for property and business developments
4. Industry clusters like green zones
5. Promote tourism
6. Focal point development of town centers – walkable communities
7. Creation of zoning district overlays to facilitate mixed or complementary uses

Critical Question 2:

What kinds of businesses and industries are most consistent with the borough's character and our vision for the future of the Island? How can we attract these businesses?

1. Develop specific industries that address the needs of people who are language and skill challenged
2. Maritime businesses commercial and recreation uses
3. Support development of ethnic retail centers
4. Hi-tech, biotech, green industries (knowledge based businesses)
5. Greater variety of retail establishments – like wholesale food stores – Trader Joe's

Critical Question 2 SUMMARY:

No summary was provided

Implementation Recommendations:

Consider the draft vision statement, the ideas gathered from the public, and your group's discussion of critical questions. Please recommend two practical, specific strategies or implementation steps that you would recommend to help Staten Island achieve its vision for your topic.

1. Leverage public programs to facilitate redevelopment strategies – such as BOA to identify environmental issues; NYS Brownfield Cleanup Program to address remediation of key redevelopment properties
2. Identify potential areas to create overlay districts to promote mixed-use development
3. Develop jobs for people with education and language challenges, i.e. garment industry, factory farming which could tap into farm subsidies, new energy development, water purification and produce organic produce year round
4. Develop a Maryland Harbor-type waterfront project. This would provide local and tourist interest, include a consortium of ethnic shops and eateries. Also, museum that could exhibit stored arts from other NYC Museums
5. Hold mandatory summit of all city and state regulatory agencies with local elected officials to create an “open” period of streamlined permitting process for the top ten capital projects that would have the most economic impact for the borough
6. Increase and market with high exposure job training services to specific existing industries, ex. Maritime
7. Enhance the beauty of the Island with a major campaign to bring all facets of the community to make improvements – major cleanup, especially Richmond Terrace
8. Immediately revitalize the North Shore rail line from ferry to Western Avenue
9. Look at brownfields funding for nascent areas
10. Maritime businesses – BOA
11. Waterfront development – create a strategy to relocate non-necessary businesses to Nascar site and/or Fresh Kills
12. Streamline produce for development commercial and residential
13. Form a group that develops a process to streamline access to government – city, state, fed. agencies and to implement capital projects on timely basis and coordinate with elected officials
14. Coordinate all groups that focus on tourism – establish SI wide cultural tourism group. Advertise events on Island-wide level – bus stops, online connection to NY online
15. Create Economic Development Task Force to work in conjunction with a Housing Task Force to study and identify potential sites for commercial/housing mixed-use development (commercial or housing overlays) or conversion to alternative uses (housing to commercial or commercial to housing)
16. Present findings of task force to elected (local) as potential areas of rezoning/redevelopment
17. Take a first step by doing something that is achievable. Suggestions: work with R. Nicotra on development of the teleport. Infrastructure is there
18. Work with EDC to do impact study for business along the proposed North Shore Rail
19. Establish/make happen the West Shore Light Rail and open up/extend the North Shore Rail-Line for passenger service
20. Initiate a green zone to entice those firms involved in sustainable industries

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