

BUILDING A MORE PROSPEROUS MONROE COUNTY

THE MONROE 2030 ACTION TEAM

A Call to Action: January 2016

We need a new conversation about economic development in Monroe County. Our economy is doing OK. Unemployment is down and some new projects have come to our region, but we're not really thriving. Our county is stuck in a rut. Some good things are happening, but it's not clear where our economic future lies. We need to act now to change our economic trajectory and build the next economy of Monroe County.

Our new group---the Monroe 2030 Action Team---is committed to this vision. We are a small group of community leaders and volunteers who want to make Monroe County into a thriving place where our kids and grandkids can live, learn, work, and play. We're not trying to reinvent the wheel. Monroe County has funded many studies, such as the Monroe County 2030 Comprehensive Plan, to look at our local economy. They contain good ideas, they don't have a plan for turning good ideas into actions. We intend to change that.

In an effort to jumpstart a new countywide commitment to economic development, we've asked a group of local volunteers to work on three task forces* that will address key elements related to Monroe County's economic future.

- *Small Business & Entrepreneurship:* What can we do to make it easier to start and grow a business?
- *Community Collaboration:* How can our 20 townships and boroughs work better together to support economic development?
- *Workforce Development:* How can we help local people build successful careers and develop a local talent base that employers need?

We do not intend to simply study these problems; we view ourselves as an action team that wants to make change happen. Our goal is to develop a set of strategies in each of these issue areas. We will then take these solutions and make them happen---in partnership with local business, community leaders, and our elected officials. Over the next several months, we will be developing our work plan and sharing our ideas with the wider community. We will release our preliminary findings in summer 2016 and begin executing on our strategies immediately. We don't expect that every one of our ideas will succeed. But, we think it's time to start doing something that will make Monroe County into Pennsylvania's best place to do business.

By doing good work together, we seek to generate excitement and enthusiasm about a new economic future for Monroe County. We hope you will join us in this effort. To learn more, visit the 2030 Action Team link at <http://www.monroecountypa.gov/> where we will provide regular updates on our progress.

* A fourth task force on infrastructure is also being developed.

Monroe 2030 Action Team

Executive Committee Members

Matthew J. Connell (Chair): Dean, Monroe Campus, Northampton Community College

Rachel Frick Cardelle: Associate Dean, Northampton Community College

Phil Hosbach: Vice President, Sanofi Pasteur

Annie Lamberton: Supervisor, Tobyhanna Township

Troy Nauman: Owner, Nauman Contracting

Gary Olson: President/CEO, ESSA Bank & Trust

Mary Frances Postupack: Vice President, East Stroudsburg University

Steve Somers: President, Vigon International

Michael Tukeva: Executive Director, Pocono Alliance

Marcia G. Welsh: President, East Stroudsburg University