# Re-Energizing Our Economy:

## Monroe 2030 Action Team:
## Our Work Plan (Version 1.0)

**10/1/2016**

Monroe County needs a new approach to economic development. For the past decade or so, we've been stuck in a rut. Our local economic performance could best be described as "average." We took a big hit in the Great Recession, but the downturn was not as bad as other communities in our region. We have had some good news lately, with the arrival of new businesses and a steady, albeit slow, economic recovery. We're doing OK, but not thriving.

We can do better, and we can create a more vibrant economy here in Monroe County. That's the purpose of our Monroe County 2030 Action Team. We believe that smart decisions today can create a more vibrant future economy for Monroe County. We don't seek economic growth for its own sake. We've come together because we believe that we have no other choice. If we want to build a community where our children and grandchildren can live, learn, work, and play, we need to rethink how we support and promote economic development in Monroe County.

This report presents our preliminary ideas for moving forward—what we are calling the Monroe 2030 Action Plan, Version 1.0. We don't have all the answers; hence, the use of Version 1.0. But, we do know that we cannot continue with the status quo. We have not tried to address every economic challenge facing Monroe County, but have instead picked a few areas of high importance and where we believe that new policies and programs can make a difference. This action plan is not the last word. It is the first installment of what we hope will be a county wide conversation and commitment to a more prosperous local and regional economy.

## Where Have We Been? What's Happening with Monroe's Economy?

Economic data paint a mixed picture for Monroe County. We are blessed with a great location, a beautiful natural setting, attractive small towns, and several strong anchor industries, including tourism, health care, and manufacturing. Yet, in recent years, we've been less successful in building on these important competitive advantages. Some numbers from the annual Monroe County Economic Scorecard and other sources tell the story:

- **We Aren't Creating Good Jobs**: Jobs in Monroe County don't pay well. Our average wage is only 75% of the state average and is the lowest among all neighboring counties.
- **We Aren't Creating New Wealth**: Within our region, Monroe County has the lowest rate of per capita personal income growth. This is the most important measure of wealth generation.
- **We Aren't Creating New Economic Engines**: Between 2010 and 2013, the number of businesses and start-ups in Monroe declined and new job creation rates were significantly lower than statewide averages.

This lagging performance is no secret. Monroe County's community leaders and elected officials have recognized the challenges facing the region and have sought to change our economic trajectory. State and regional partners, such as the Northeast Pennsylvania (NEPA) Alliance and the Pocono Counties

Workforce Development Board, have also been engaged. These efforts have produced some useful analysis and research. For example, the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, its related Economic Development Implementation Plan, and the wider regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, prepared by the NEPA Alliance, all contain strong assessments of our economic challenges and some potential solutions. Our work builds on these analyses.

These reports offer a strong foundation, but, unfortunately, they have not generated action. We have good research and ideas on hand, but the studies languish on the shelf. That's where the Monroe 2030 Action Team comes in. We are a group of committed community volunteers seeking to generate excitement and enthusiasm about a new economic future for Monroe County. We want to change the conversation, the mindset, and most importantly, the direction of our economy.

## The Monroe 2030 Action Team

By focusing on action as opposed to more research, we hope to pioneer a new approach via the Monroe Action Team effort. We recognize that good data and analysis are essential, but much of this work has already been done. We don't need more studies; we expect results!

It is this shared commitment to results that brought our team together (see Figure 1 for a listing of our leadership). Many of us lead local businesses or other local institutions, and volunteer for various local, county, regional and state organizations. Over time, we have become frustrated about the state of economic development in Monroe County and the impact on those living and working here. We came together to see if we could try a new approach. Fortunately, we found a sympathetic ear in County Commissioner John Moyer who also wanted to see a new approach to countywide economic development. He and his fellow Commissioners encouraged us and supported the creation of a privately-led effort which became the Monroe 2030 Action Team. Our work was also supported by Erik R. Pages of EntreWorks Consulting, an economic development consulting firm based in Arlington ,VA.

**FIGURE 1: 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
-Anne Lamberton: Supervisor, Tobyhanna Township
-Sharon Laverdure: Former Superintendent, East Stroudsburg Schools
-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

We have consciously sought to bring a different perspective to promoting economic development in Monroe County. How are we different? First, we are a privately-led group. We are all volunteers and we do not have any formal connection to local or state governments. Second, we are inclusive. We have sought to engage a diverse mix of local residents and community leaders. In addition to our Executive Committee (noted in Figure 1), we have organized three working task forces that engage dozens of other County residents who support our mission. Finally, we have opted to pursue a limited set of objectives in Version 1.0 of the Monroe 2030 Action Plan. We need big changes in Monroe County, but we can begin the effort with smaller and well-targeted reform efforts.

Our initial focus areas emerged from past research, citizen input, and discussions at community events such as the annual Monroe County Economic Outlook Summit. Based on these discussions and input, we selected three topics for our early work.

- *Small Business & Entrepreneurship*: What can we do to create an environment that will enable an individual(s) to start and grow a business?
- *Community Collaboration*: How can we support our 16 townships and 4 boroughs with their economic development initiatives?
- *Workforce Development:* How can we help local people build successful careers and develop a local talent base that employers need?

We selected these targets because they are not only important to Monroe's future prosperity, but they are also areas where we felt a committed group of community volunteers could make a difference and produce tangible results. We chose workforce development because this issue is now among the most important in the field of economic development. In today's economy, companies seek talent (i.e. a skilled and resourceful workforce) as the most important ingredient in their location decisions. If we want existing firms to grow and expand and new firms to locate or start in Monroe County, we must first ensure that we are building and nurturing a talented and skilled workforce.

The Community Collaboration Task Force is assessing how we can make Monroe County into a community that supports growing existing businesses and recruiting businesses that will bring additional, appropriate jobs. The sad reality is that, at present, Monroe County is not business friendly. In many townships and boroughs, it is difficult, costly, and complex to expand an existing business, start a new business or to support new development. A complicated mix of local and state rules creates needless frustration and higher costs for local business owners. We need to change this mindset and build business friendly communities across Monroe County while still preserving the rich culture of our community.

Finally, we must create new economic engines for Monroe County. Some of this new activity will come from outside investments, such as the new Kalahari Resort facility in Tobyhanna Township. But, the vast majority of new jobs and new wealth will come from new businesses that start and grow here in Monroe. We don't have enough entrepreneurs in Monroe County, and the small business/entrepreneurship task force seeks to change this pattern.

Each of the task forces includes a group of committed volunteers who have been meeting on a regular basis to discuss how to improve Monroe County's performance in their specific focus areas. In addition to examining past research and learning from topic experts, the groups have each developed a menu of action items. These work plans are detailed in the next section of this report.

The task force groups have specifically embraced a new approach. Instead of addressing all of the economic development challenges facing Monroe County, they have sought to develop a short term menu of action items that can implemented relatively quickly and without a major new infusion of money. We recognize that this approach will not "solve" Monroe County's economic development challenges on its own. However, we also believe that, as the old adage states, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Version 1.0 of the Monroe 2030 Action Plan seeks to begin this journey by generating early results and building momentum. Along the way, we hope to change the conversation about economic development in Monroe County. We want to rebrand Monroe as the best place to do business in Pennsylvania.

# Our Work Plan

Version 1.0 of the Monroe 2030 Action Plan is presented below with a focus on the work of our three task force groups. Each of the groups pursued its own agenda, but all of them brought a similar perspective to their work. The groups developed action items that met several criteria:

- **Significant:** The action item addresses a pressing economic development challenge.
- **Feasible:** Strategies could be pursued without requiring major new investments, and could generate results within one to three years.
- **Tangible**: We can track our progress on these action items. We have identified lead individuals and organization for each item, and we intend to track our progress. Most importantly, we intend to hold ourselves accountable and will share our successes—or lack thereof—with the wider community.

Below, we present a general review of the work plans and action items developed by each of three task force groups. In addition to the summaries presented below, Appendix A also includes more detailed work plans for each of the action items. These plans provide a summary of potential costs and also provide milestones and timelines for implementation of each action item.

**Small Business and Entrepreneurship**

The small business and entrepreneurship task force, chaired by East Stroudsburg University's Mary Frances Postupack, began its work by highlighting a simple and compelling fact: the vast majority of new jobs in America are created by fast-growing new businesses. Places with high start-up rates and with higher concentrations of fast growing companies tend to be more prosperous and more successful. The future prosperity of Monroe County will greatly depend on our ability to support new local start-ups today.

To date, we're not doing very well on this front. Between 2010 and 2013, the number of business establishments in Monroe County actually declined by six percent. This decline was biggest among the smallest and newest companies, with an overall 17% decline in the number of new startups according to data from YourEconomy.com. Fortunately, job growth performance was not so dire. Overall, Monroe businesses saw a 0.9% increase in jobs between 2010 and 2013. However, the number of jobs at new companies declined by 1%. The 2010-2013 time period was challenging for many parts of the US, but Monroe's performance lagged behind both the US and statewide average. Larger and more established firms were able to hold steady, but Monroe's engines of new job creation remain weak.

Faced with such daunting statistics, task force members brainstormed about how to reverse these trends. Early on, the group noted that Monroe County's business reputation could be strengthened. Monroe County and the wider Poconos region have a good reputation as a beautiful place to visit and a nice place to raise a family. But, our region is not generally viewed as a good place to start or grow a business. The task force set a mission of starting to change that perception and the business culture in Monroe County.

Our discussions centered on how to build a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem in Monroe County and the wider region. The term "entrepreneurial ecosystem" is being used in many regions of the world; it refers to the mix of capabilities and ingredients that make a region "entrepreneur-friendly" and easy place to start and grow companies. There is no single recipe for an entrepreneurial ecosystem and every community will have different capacities and capabilities. An ecosystem in Monroe County will look different from one in Silicon Valley or New York or elsewhere.

Figure 2 shows some of the ingredients for entrepreneurial success. The broader Monroe 2030 effort is addressing many of these factors, especially issues like responsive regulatory policies and a talented and skilled workforce. The Entrepreneurship and Small Business Taskforce opted to focus its attention on fostering a more supportive culture for entrepreneurs in Monroe County. This work has largely taken the form of identifying new tools and approaches that make it easier to start and grow a company here.

**Figure 2: Ingredients for an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

(Source: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2016).

In its efforts to make Monroe County more "entrepreneur-friendly," the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Task Force has recommended three sets of priority action items:

- Create a Monroe County Small Business Guide

- Expand the Availability of Business Coaching Services
- Promote Youth Entrepreneurship

*A Guide to Starting a Business in Monroe County*

The numbers tell us that hundreds of Monroe County residents start businesses every year, but we also know that many people dream about entrepreneurship. Yet they don't take the leap. They may opt out for many reasons, but we believe that a lack of needed information and support plays a role. Many people tell us that they have no idea who to contact if they have a business idea or where to go if they want to start a business in Monroe County.

In an effort to address this information gap, we have developed a new *Guide to Starting a Business in Monroe County*. Our guide is designed to welcome new businesses to our County and provides guidance on where to go for help. A new business owner will be busy with developing a business plan, seeking financing, marketing her company, and a host of other start-up issues. Our guide is designed to be an initial support tool that offers tips and support providers for most of the issues that face new companies in Monroe County. We intend for the guide to be available on-line and on site at host of locations across Monroe County.

We recognize that our small business guide is only a first step, but we hope that it can help encourage more local people to start businesses. We also want the guide to be the first in a series of initiatives to make it easier to start and grow a new business in Monroe County.

*Expanded Business Consulting Services*

Successful start-ups rarely go it alone. They rely on networking with fellow entrepreneurs and coaching, mentoring, consulting services that help them address business challenges and achieve rapid growth. Today, these essential business support services can be hard to find in Monroe County. They exist, but are often difficult to identify and access.

Our new business guide will help many start-ups find needed support tools, but we also believe that we need to expand the overall availability of services to Monroe County's new and growing businesses. This will be a long process and much will depend on our ability to build stronger local entrepreneur networks where business owners can meet and collaborate with fellow entrepreneurs. This is the real secret to a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In addition, we are seeking to expand the availability of basic business counseling services in Monroe County. As a first step, the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has agreed to expand its footprint in Monroe. The SBDC team already operates here, but we believe that more business owners would benefit from their services. Since 2005, the SBDC team has worked with 459 clients in Monroe County. They have done good work, but we believe that more business would benefit from SBDC coaching and services.

Expansion of the SBDC will be further bolstered by the creation of a local SCORE chapter. SCORE is national network of business executives who provide coaching and mentoring to business owners.

SCORE is a major force around the US and even in nearby regions like the Lehigh Valley. In 2014, for example, SCORE counselors assisted more than 56,000 businesses across the US. We intend to expand SCORE's operations in Monroe County so we enjoy these benefits as well.

*Youth Entrepreneurship*

The Small Business and Entrepreneurship's Task Force's final set of recommendations focus on youth entrepreneurship: how can we get more local young people interested in starting a new business? This is an important and achievable goal. We know from national surveys that as many as 70% of all high schoolers have interest in starting their own business. Very few actually follow up on these wishes, because, as young people note in survey responses, they lack the skills and knowledge about how to start a business.

Youth entrepreneurship training is needed to help more local young people pursue this dream. Fortunately, Monroe County has many excellent initiatives in place. FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) chapters operate at many local high schools, and the Monroe Career Technical Institute has a chapter of DECA, another organization focused on youth business. These resources are great assets, but we need to expand the availability of these opportunities for all youth in Monroe County. This is especially important for young people who are not thriving in schools as entrepreneurship education, and its focus on experiential learning, has been shown to be effective in engaging at-risk youth and in improving their performance in school.

We also need to find venues where young entrepreneurs can interact and learn from business owners and community leaders. Local role models and mentors can help youth understand the realities of entrepreneurship and also help existing businesses with new ideas and new energy.

As an initial first step in this work, we are sponsoring a partnership between local high school FBLA chapters and the Made in the Poconos initiative. Made in the Poconos is a regional marketing effort, spearheaded by ESU, to support and promote local crafts and other products made by local residents. Starting in fall 2016, local high school students will be partnering with local firms to address pressing business challenges, like building a social media presence or expanding marketing. These student projects will then be part of a countywide competition to honor and support our budding youth entrepreneur. Along the way, area youth will learn key skills while also helping to strengthen our local business capacity at the same time.

**Community Collaboration**

The Community Collaboration Task Force's mission emerged out of both frustration and hope. On the frustration side, many business owners and developers expressed serious concerns about the amount of regulation and red tape that accompanies any new development activity in Monroe County. These concerns have also been a regular issue raised by PMEDC and were a core area discussed in the Monroe 2030 Economic Development Implementation Plan.

On the hope side, our leadership group agreed that the process can work well even if only on rare occasions. The development of the new Kalahari Resort facility in Tobyhanna Township suggests that Monroe County has the capacity to recruit and attract major new businesses to our region. This was a complicated and large deal that proceeded from concept to completion via a relatively smooth and highly successful process.

The Community Collaboration Task Force sought to better understand what worked in this case and how we might apply these lessons learned to other projects across Monroe County. The group, chaired by Tobyhanna Township Supervisor Anne Lamberton, also includes representatives from Kalahari Resorts and other developers who are active in Monroe County.

The task force's primary goals were to improve collaboration between the County's boroughs and townships and to promote a business-friendly atmosphere and development processes that are less complex and costly. Building on these core objectives, the task force is pursuing the following action items:

- Update and Revise our Current Planning and Project Review Processes
- Support Local Pilot Projects that Test Cross-Township Collaboration
- Advocate for a new Regional Infrastructure Investment Fund

The complexity and cost of the local development process in Monroe County was, without a doubt, the number one concern raised throughout the work of the Monroe 2030 Action Team. There are few clear guidelines for how the process works, it takes too much time, and it adds significant costs for new and growing businesses. In addition, the process differs depending on locality, so that, at present, Monroe County has twenty different sets of rules and regulations related to planning and development.

We believe that current processes can and must be improved. As a series of first steps, the task force is recommending a number of reforms. First, we intend to develop a basic checklist of items and issues that can be shared with new businesses and those seeking new development across the county. This effort will align closely with our small business guide (discussed above) but will include a heavy emphasis on local and state rules related to planning, zoning, and environmental compliance. Tobyhanna Township now uses a checklist of this type and we intend to develop a sample development checklist that other townships could adopt. By providing clearer guidance and timelines for key decisions, the checklist can reduce uncertainty and complexity surrounding new development projects.

Second, we intend to create a new standing body—the Monroe County Pre-Application Review Team---that will be available to meet with all new businesses or those consider new development before they formally file a development application. This team will be composed of key personnel from countywide and local planning offices, the Monroe County Conservation District, and key state agencies such as PENNDOT and DEP. The team will be available to meet with any and all interested parties—from new home-based businesses to large new development like those at Kalahari or Camelback. These reviews will be informal and are designed to share ideas and expectations and to discuss potential problem areas in advance. We believe that this informal review process can have a huge impact in terms of reducing the time, cost, and complexity of new development projects.

Finally, we intend to work with the County Commissioners to review and update the role of the Monroe County Planning Commission. This effort will focus on how the Planning Commission staff can better support and promote local economic development. One concept under consideration is the creation of a county-wide Business Ombudsman, who will be available to assist the development process and trouble-shoot in cases where problems arise. This type of business support capacity has proved to be helpful and successful in communities around the US and overseas.

These tweaks to the local development process should improve local performance, but we also need to think bigger and find ways to promote better partnerships across Monroe's twenty local governments. As such, the task force recommends that Monroe County help support and sponsor a county wide competition where townships can partner and compete to win assistance to deal with a pressing shared challenge, such as issues related to water and sewer development. We believe that a multi-township project that tests new models and approaches is the best approach to promoting community collaboration in Monroe County. We are presently in the process of developing the plan for this project.

Streamlined and improved development processes are much needed, but we also need to expand the pool of resources available to Monroe County localities. For this reason, the Task Force is recommending that we develop new mechanisms to fund infrastructure in the County. We intend to create a separate Monroe 2030 Infrastructure Task Force to dig deeper into this issue, but the community collaboration task force is developing its own ideas as well.

The task force's initial recommendation is that Monroe County's leadership consider advocating for creation of a new Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund that is focused on generating new revenues for communities, like Monroe County, that are home to major resort facilities or other large tourism destinations. This Fund would initially be capitalized via small increase (perhaps 0.5%) in the local sales tax on purchases at local resorts and tourism-related activities. These additional funds could be used only at the local level to fund new infrastructure and other community improvements such as expanded police, fire, or ambulance services.

We believe that this type of new financing mechanism is essential to helping our local governments cope with impact of large resort and tourism operations. We are grateful for the new jobs and investments generated by these operations, but, as these companies themselves acknowledge, their operations can place a heavy strain on our small local governments. To give one example, the Kalahari Resort will be able to accommodate several thousand guests when it is completed. This large influx of people must be served and protected by a local police force that was originally designed to serve a township of only 8,000 people.

The Community Infrastructure Investment Fund is modeled on a similar financing tool that has been used in the Kalahari Resort's original home region in Wisconsin. Thanks to new revenues generated by the fund and paid for by resort visitors and users, the small Wisconsin Dells communities have been able to make major new investments in infrastructure, downtown improvements, and also bolster the capacity of local police, fire, and medical operations.

The task force recognizes that this concept is a big idea that will require additional research as well as a commitment to advocate for new legislation in Harrisburg. In an effort to get the ball rolling, we are creating a task force to help develop and advocate for the idea in Monroe Count y and across Pennsylvania.

**Workforce Development**

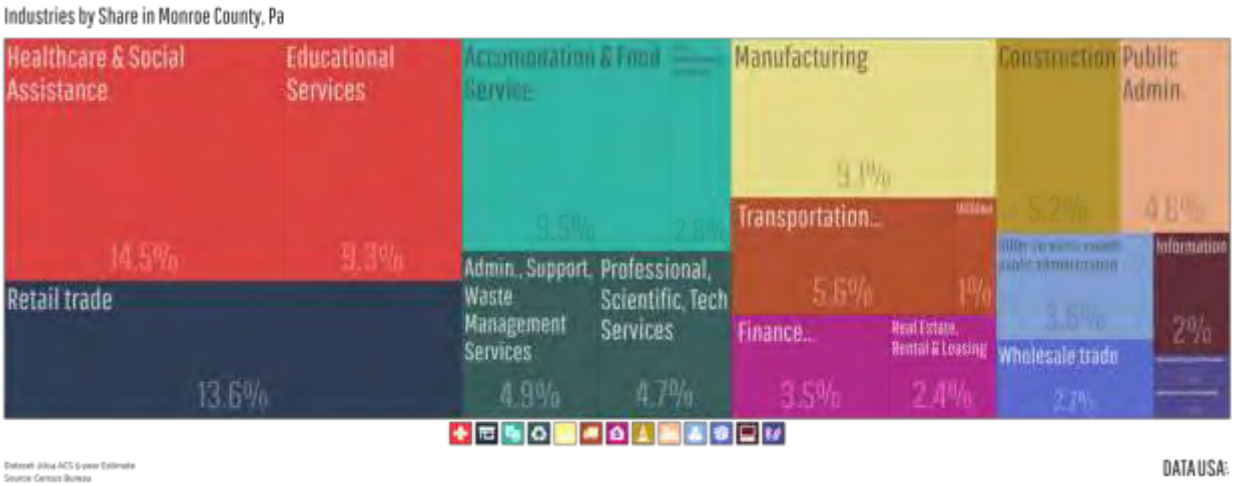
The Monroe 2030 Action Team's Workforce Development task force addressed the most pressing economic development challenge facing any community today: how to groom, retain, and attract talent. America's most prosperous and successful communities are chock full of talent. In other words, they are home to workers, entrepreneurs and community leaders who are skilled, creative, and innovative.

In some regions, these talented individuals have Ph.Ds or other advanced degrees. In others, they work in manufacturing facilities, teach school, or run Main Street businesses. There is no one single recipe for building a regional talent pool, but we do know that we can and should do better here in Monroe County.

Monroe County has many talent assets. We are home to high quality schools, along with two college campuses at ESU and NCC's Monroe campus. Business owners regularly speak of a good work ethic among County residents. But, we also know that problem areas exist. Employers in growing sectors like health care and hospitality report troubles in finding and keeping workers. In other sectors, like manufacturing and the trades, new employees may lack critical soft skills like collaborating in teams or providing high quality customer service. Data also indicate that Monroe can do better in terms of both retaining local young people and in attracting more highly educated newcomers to considering relocating here. Originally chaired by Rachel Frick Cardelle of Northampton Community College, this task force is now led by Sharon Laverdure, former Superintendent of East Stroudsburg schools

First, we intend to work with MCTI's existing Occupational Advisory Boards to identify workforce needs in advance and to fund the necessary training and infrastructure to support workforce growth. These kinds of councils are common across the US, and they presently exist to serve individual schools or organizations.

**Figure 3: Top Industries in Monroe County**




We also propose expanding awareness of career awareness initiatives in place in our schools. In doing so, we will look to expand programs for local internships. In addition, we want to develop and promote career pathways at the K-12 level. This effort will involve a major new engagement initiative with particular focus on school guidance counselors, students, and their parents.

# What's Next?

This work plan is Version 1.0 and that title was no accident. We expect—and hope—to see many more versions on new thinking about economic development in Monroe County. We want this effort to be viewed as the beginning of a countywide conversation about our economic future.

We specifically avoided adopting or promoting a new vision or mission statement for the Monroe 2030 Action Team's work. This choice arose from our belief that past studies and research had generated many good ideas, but also from a sense that more people need to be engaged in these conversations. Our volunteers come from diverse backgrounds from across Monroe County, but we a small group. We want to see more people engaged in the mission of making Monroe County into a good place to live, learn, work, and play.

We intend to move forward and work to implement the ideas presented in Version 1.0 of the Monroe 2030 Action Plan. More specific work plans are presented in Appendix A. This material includes our best assessments of who will lead the effort, what it will cost, and how much time it will take. We do not expect to achieve success on every action item, but we intend to aggressively pursue success in every case. We also intend to be accountable and will provide a regular public report card on our work; this report card will be available at the Monroe County website at: http://www.monroecountypa.gov/Dept/2030Action/Pages/default.aspx.

Finally, we intend to continue this work. Three task forces have made preliminary recommendations and are starting the harder work of implementation and execution. They will also be continuing to identify other opportunities related to their focus areas. Other groups and focus areas are under

consideration.  In particular, we expect a new Infrastructure Task Force to kick off its work in coming weeks.

We encourage you to join us and look forward to your thoughts and ideas on these proposals.

# APPENDIX A: Work Plan for Key Action Items

| Small Business & Entrepreneurship Action Items: As of July 2016 | | |
|---|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **1) Develop Guide to Starting a New Business in Monroe County** | |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | Local people and those interested in locating to the County lack knowledge on where to get help. Monroe County does not adequately welcome new business start-ups **or** provide a centralized entry point for entrepreneurs. | |
| GOAL: | Publish and Disseminate the Guide to ensure that more local people and newcomers know where to get help in starting a new business. | |
| KEY MILESTONES | June 1, 2016: Complete Draft Guide (Done)<br>June 2016: Review of Guide by Local Partners<br>September 2016: Fully designed guide available on-line and from key partner organizations. | |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Review of draft guide by key partners such as Chamber of Commerce and SBDC team | |
| **Success Measures** | | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | Completion of Guide<br>Use of guide (web page hits and circulation numbers<br>Change in new business start-ups<br>Increase in use of local business services (e.g. SBDC counseling) | |
| **Potential Threats** | | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | | |
| **Partners** | | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | ESU Innovation Center Team | |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Entrepreneurship and Small Business Task Force<br>Chamber of Commerce<br>University of Scranton SBDC<br>SCORE Partners | |

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| **Funding Considerations** | |
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Design Support—possibly donated by local marketing/vendor? |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Small Business & Entrepreneurship Action Items | | |
|---|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **2) Expand Local Availability of Business Consulting/Counseling Services** | |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | Local people and those interested in locating to the County lack knowledge on where to get help. Not enough residents are starting businesses or tapping into existing business service resources. | |
| GOAL: | Expand the local knowledge and use of existing business consulting services provided by the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the SCORE chapter presently operating in the Lehigh Valley. | |
| KEY MILESTONES | April-May 2016: Assess current state of local SBDC/SCORE operations (Done)<br>June-July 2016: Develop Plan for Expanded Services in Monroe<br>September 2016: Begin expanded SBDC/SCORE activities in Monroe<br>December 2016: Assess performance and progress | |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Review possible locations and timing for expanded SBDC/SCORE visits<br>Identify potential local partners and volunteers to supplement Lehigh Valley SCORE team | |
| **Success Measures** | | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | Increase in local SBDC/SCORE consulting hours in Monroe<br>Increased SBDC/SCORE customer base in Monroe<br>Improved Customer Satisfaction Levels<br>Increase in local startup and business growth rates | |
| **Potential Threats** | | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | | |
| **Partners** | | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | ESU Innovation Center Team<br>University of Scranton SBDC<br>Lehigh Valley SCORE | |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Entrepreneurship and Small Business Task Force<br>Chamber of Commerce<br>PMEDC | |

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| **Funding Considerations** | |
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Services can be expanded w/in existing SBDC/SCORE budgets<br>Marketing |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Small Business & Entrepreneurship Action Items | | |
|---|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **3) Promote Youth Entrepreneurship in Monroe County** | |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | -Local people (youth and adults) and those interested in locating to the County lack the knowledge and skills to start businesses<br>-Local youth may not see entrepreneurship as a viable career option<br>-Too many area youth are un-engaged in school and may benefit from new experiential learning techniques, like youth entrepreneurship training<br>-Youth in Monroe County are often unprepared for the world of work | |
| GOAL: | Expand Monroe County's youth entrepreneurship offerings so that all youth have access to these resources and that the wider community gets more interested and engaged. | |
| KEY MILESTONES | June-August 2016: Develop new program to link Made in the Poconos Initiative to Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapters now operating in several area school districts.<br>September 2016: Unveil New Partnership and Program/Engage Students<br>December 2016: Hold Awards Program | |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Develop guidelines for FBLA projects related to Made in the Poconos program<br>Engage students and business owners<br>Develop rules for countywide award program<br>Raise funds to support awards | |
| **Success Measures** | | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | Kickoff of Competition and Award Program<br>Program participation by students and business<br>Funds raised for awards<br>Expansion of program to new schools and students<br>Increased sales for businesses | |
| **Potential Threats** | | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | | |
| **Partners** | | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | ESU Innovation Center Team<br>FBLA Advisors at regional school districts<br>Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau | |

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| **PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS:** | Monroe 2030 Entrepreneurship and Small Business Task Force<br>Chamber of Commerce<br>University of Scranton SBDC |
| **Funding Considerations** | |
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Design Support<br>Marketing<br>Award/Scholarship Funds: $1,000.00 |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | Pocono Mountains Angel Network<br>Grants<br>Sponsorships |

| Community Collaboration Action Items: As of July 2016 | | |
|---|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **1) Create Development Process Checklist** | |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | The process for reviewing and approving new development activity is too complex and costly.<br>Developers and business owners need a process that is clear and transparent, with deadlines and timelines known in advance. | |
| GOAL: | Create a Development Checklist Template that can be customized by each township and borough for its own use. | |
| KEY MILESTONES | September 1, 2016: Complete Checklist Template<br>September 2016: Review of Guide by Local Partners<br>October 2016: Share checklist with all townships and boroughs and publicize its availability throughout Monroe County. | |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Review of draft checklist by key partners and by local government officials via Council of Governments. | |
| **Success Measures** | | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | Completion of Draft Checklist<br>Adoption by all Boroughs & Townships<br>Use of guide (web page hits and circulation numbers<br>Customer Satisfaction | |
| **Potential Threats** | | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | | |
| **Partners** | | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Annie Lamberton<br>Michelle Bisbing<br>John DeCusatis | |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Community Collaboration Task Force<br>Monroe County Planning Commission<br>Council of Governments<br>PMEDC<br>Chamber of Commerce | |

| Funding Considerations | |
|---|---|
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Design Support<br>Marketing |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Community Collaboration Action Items | | |
|---|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **2) Create Monroe County Pre-Application Review Team** | |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | The process for reviewing and approving new development activity is too complex and costly.<br>Developers and business owners need a process that is clear and transparent, with deadlines and timelines known in advance.<br>Many problems in current process could be ironed out in advance with informal review and discussion before a formal application is filed. | |
| GOAL: | Create a standing Pre-Application Review Team who would be regularly available to provide an informal review and feedback on concepts for new development or activities that require changes in zoning or planning rules. This committee would include key state and local officials including representatives from local governments, Monroe County, key state agencies like PENNDOT and DEP, and the Monroe County Conservation District. | |
| KEY MILESTONES | July-September 2016: Identify & Recruit Potential Team Members<br>October 2016: Initiate Services and Kickoff Initial Meetings<br>December 2016: Assess performance and progress | |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Identify location and timing for Team meetings<br>Identify and recruit potential team members | |
| **Success Measures** | | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | No. of Meetings Held<br>Usage of Service<br>Reduction in litigation/cost of new development<br>Customer Satisfaction | |
| **Potential Threats** | | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | | |
| **Partners** | | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Craig Todd<br>Annie Lamberton | |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Community Collaboration Task Force<br>Council of Governments<br>Conservation District | |

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|---|---|
| | PENNDOT<br>PA DEP<br>Monroe County Planning Commission<br>PMEDC |
| **Funding Considerations** | |
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Services can be expanded w/in existing budgets<br>Marketing |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Community Collaboration Action Items | |
|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **3) Update Role of Monroe County Planning Commission** |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | -The Planning Commission has a skilled and talented staff that could also be deployed to support countywide economic development work.<br>-At present, the staff are an under-utilized resource<br>-Economic development activity needs to be viewed from a countywide or regional lens. |
| GOAL: | Identify new ways to engage the Planning Commission in supporting economic development. One concept is creating a Business Liaison position, which could operate within the County Government or elsewhere such as the PMEDC. This individual will help businesses seeking to start or expand operations in Monroe County. |
| KEY MILESTONES | September 2016: Convene Meeting with Planning Commission team<br>November 2016: Develop work plan for new roles and functions |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | |

| Success Measures | | |
|---|---|---|
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | | |

| Potential Threats | |
|---|---|
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | |

| Partners | |
|---|---|
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Annie Lamberton<br>Others? |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Community Collaboration Task Force<br>Monroe County Planning Commission<br>PMEDC |

| Funding Considerations | |
|---|---|
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | Funds to Support New or Redesigned Business Liaison Position |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Community Collaboration Action Items | |
|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **4) Create Community Infrastructure Investment Fund** |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | -Local townships and boroughs, especially those near major resorts and tourism sites, face major challenges in providing needed services to these facilities.<br>-Resorts place great stress on nearby physical infrastructure.<br>-Tax base to support expanded services and high quality infrastructure is limited. |
| GOAL: | Identify and advocate for new ways to help finance needed infrastructure and other services, such as police or ambulance services, in locations affected by large-scale resort activities. |
| KEY MILESTONES | October 2016: Complete concept feasibility study<br>November-December 2016: Begin focused advocacy efforts |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | -Assess legal issues related to fund concept<br>-Assess whether other PA communities can/should be engaged in effort<br>-Identify legislative supporters/sponsors for the plan |
| **Success Measures** | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | -Development of Final Fund Design<br>-Passage of new laws and regulations<br>-Implementation of concept<br>-Increase in local government revenues<br>-Improvements in local service quality |
| **Potential Threats** | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | |
| **Partners** | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Annie Lamberton<br>Others? |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Community Collaboration Task Force<br>Council of Governments<br>Kalahari Resorts and other private partners?<br>PMEDC |
| **Funding Considerations** | |
| FUNDING NEEDS: | Funds to Support Research and Advocacy Efforts<br>-Pro bono Legal Support? |

| | |
|---|---|
| | -Other costs |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Community Collaboration Action Items | |
|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **5) Promote Local Government Collaboration** |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | -Local government in Monroe County is too fragmented, increasing costs and complexity. At the same time, townships and boroughs lose out on the potential efficiencies that come with cross-government partnerships. |
| GOAL: | Create a county wide opportunity for multijurisdictional collaboration and partnership by offering a pilot planning exercise. A request for proposals will be distributed for municipalities for their participation. Funding will be provided as cost share with the successful municipality (s). |
| KEY MILESTONES | December 2016: Design draft RFP to promote cross-township collaboration.<br>January 2017: Open up Countywide RFP process. |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | |
| **Success Measures** | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | |
| **Potential Threats** | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | |
| **Partners** | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Craig Todd<br>Others? |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | Monroe 2030 Community Collaboration Task Force<br>Monroe County Planning Commission<br>Monroe County Conservation District |
| **Funding Considerations** | |
| FUNDING NEEDS: | Funds to Pay for Project ($50K-100K ???) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | |

| Workforce Development Action Items: As of July 2016 | |
|---|---|
| IDEA OR CONCEPT | **1) Workforce Councils** |
| CHALLENGE OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED: | Monroe County's Career and Technical Institute utilizes Occupational Advisory Councils comprised of business and education leaders to ensure graduates of MCTI possess the skills and knowledge to be successful in their chosen field. Expanding the scope of these groups to the wider Monroe County region will enable MCTI, K-12, and the post-secondary institutions to work with local employers to achieve a workforce that meets current and future needs of Monroe County employers, and eliminate duplication of work for all involved. |
| GOAL: | Engage with MCTI to develop a plan that will widen and deepen the impact of the Advisory Councils across all educational systems in Monroe County. |
| KEY MILESTONES | September 2016: Approach MCTI with the concept<br>October-November 2016: Develop a plan that accomplishes the above stated goal.<br>January 2017: Implement the plan; promoting accomplishments every 6 months. |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO MOVE FORWARD | Commitment levels and potential resources from partners and key business leaders |
| **Success Measures** | |
| OUTPUT AND OUTCOME METRICS: | Plan is developed and implemented by January of 2017 |
| **Potential Threats** | |
| IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL THREATS | |
| **Partners** | |
| CONVENER (OR LEAD) ORGANIZATION(S): | Monroe 2030 Workforce Development Group |
| PARTICIPATING/ STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: | ESU<br>NCC-Monroe Campus/PATH<br>MCTI<br>Pocono Workforce Development Board<br>Area School Systems<br>Firms in Key Sectors: Health, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Education |

| Funding Considerations | |
|---|---|
| **FUNDING NEEDS:** | MCTI and School Districts constantly look to upgrade equipment and resources used by students in their educational experiences. Support from the community in the form of direct contributions or indirect assistance is needed. |
| **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES:** | Grants; equipment donations. |