Destination Erie: A Regional Plan for the 21st Century

Photos Courtesy of Cal Robinson (Edinboro Lake, left), Visit Erie (Tom Ridge Environmental Center, middle and Perry Monument, right)
Destination Erie: *A Regional Vision*

What We Will Cover

1. **Background (David Rouse)**
   - Sustainable Communities Update
   - Destination Erie Application
   - Erie’s Planning Legacy

2. **Scope and Issues (Jake Welsh)**
   - Erie County Region
   - Planning Process
   - Planning Issues

3. **A “Non-Planner’s” Perspective (Michael Fuhrman)**

4. **Questions and Discussion**
Destination Erie: *A Regional Vision*

Background
The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is part of the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which brings HUD, DOT and the EPA together to ensure that the agencies’ policies, programs, and funding consider affordable housing, transportation, and environmental protection together.
Livability Principles

1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate and leverage federal policies & investment.
2011 Appropriations

- $96 Million for Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants
- $500 Million in Funding Requests from 110 applicants in All 50 States

Applications from Pennsylvania

1. Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, Bethlehem*
2. Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh
3. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Harrisburg
4. City of Harrisburg
5. North Central PA Regional Planning & Development, Ridgway
6. Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
7. York County
8. Erie County

* Preferred Sustainability Status from 2011
Regional Planning Grants

29 Awards out of 110 Applicants announced November 20, 2011

2 Awards for Regional Planning in Pennsylvania

- **Erie County: $1,800,000**
  Funding to develop *Destination Erie: A Regional Plan for Sustainable Development* with the goals of creating a shared vision for a sustainable future and a measurable implementation program.

- **Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation: $3,400,000**
  Funding to develop the *Lehigh Valley Sustainability Plan* to promote the adoption of affordable housing policies at the municipal level and foster transit related land development to support public transportation.
Pennsylvania Applications

- City of Pittsburgh
- Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development
- City of Philadelphia Planning Commission
- Borough of Clarion
- City of Lancaster

No Community Challenge Grants Awarded in Pennsylvania FY 2011
What’s Next for Sustainable Communities Planning?

- No FY 2012 Funding
- Uncertain FY 2013 Funding

President Obama’s FY 2013 Budget Included $100 Million
- $50 Million for Regional Planning Grants
- $50 Million for Community Challenge Grants

2013 Congressional Budget Included $0 (Passed June 29, 2012)

“None of the funds made available may be used for any new grant under the livable communities program of the Department of Transportation or the sustainable communities program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development or to implement any transfer of funds for any such new grant.”

2013 Senate Budget Included $50 Million for Planning & Challenge Grants
Destination Erie: Ingredients of a Successful Application

- Broad-based Regional Consortium (72 Members)
- Geographic scope: Erie County (mid-sized region)
- Well-conceived work program / identified capacity to carry it out
- Addressed HUD’s rating factors
- Unique aspects that set it apart
  - Economic strategy: five counties in three states
  - Erie’s planning legacy
Erie’s Planning Legacy

Plan of Town of Erie, 1795
Railway in Corry
(Library of Congress)

General Electric, 1941
(Library of Congress)

Hammermill Paper Co.
(eriepostcards.com)
Waldameer Beach Postcard
(unknown)

Boston Store
(Under the Clock)

State Street North
(Epodunk.com)
Erie’s Planning Legacy: 1913 Nolen Plan
Erie’s Planning Legacy: 1963 Rotival Plan

I-79 to Pittsburg

Bayfront Parkway, next to Downtown

Bayfront View

Maurice Rotival

Photos:
Skyscraperpage.com,
Chamber of Commerce
Yale Digital Database
Perry 200 Celebration

- Celebrating Commodore Perry / Battle of Lake Erie during War of 1812
- Sparked Erie’s growth and development
- 30 Events over 18 months
- Coordination to generate enthusiasm, gain public input, educate public
Destination Erie: *A Regional Vision*

Scope and Issues
Destination Erie: *A Regional Vision*
Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program

• Supports multijurisdictional efforts to integrate planning and investments

• Address Challenges:
  1. Economic competitiveness and revitalization
  2. Social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity
  3. Energy use and climate change
  4. Public health and environmental impact

• Outcomes:
  1. Regional plans aligned with local plans & investments
  2. Aligned region with federal planning & investment
  3. Increased participation by marginalized groups
  4. Reduced disparities among regional population
  5. Decrease vehicle-miles-traveled and emissions
  6. Decrease housing & transportation costs
  7. Increase infill redevelopment and minimize displacement
  8. Increase low income access to transit
Regional Planning Process

**Phase 1: Initiation and Regional Assessment**

*Where are we now?*

- Public Participation Plan
- *Public Launch / Stakeholder Interviews*
- Project Website
- Existing Conditions & Trends Report

Mar 2012 – Dec 2012

**Phase 2: Vision, Scenarios, & Strategy Development**

*What do we want to be?*

- *Public Workshop #1*
  - Trend and Alternative Scenarios
- *Public Workshop #2*
  - Regional Vision Statement
  - Preferred Future Direction

Sep 2012 – Oct 2013

**Phase 3: Vision & Action Plan**

*How do we get there?*

- *Public Workshop #3*
  - Plan Framework & Strategies
- *Public Workshop #4*
  - Draft Plan Development
  - Final Plan

Nov 2013 – Feb 2015

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**
1 Task Force / 5 Work Groups

- **Community Engagement Task Force** (Improve public participation, involve hard to reach communities across region)

- **Work Groups**
  - **Transportation and Infrastructure** (transportation, mobility, water and sewer, telecommunications, energy, freight, shipping)
  - **Environment** (water, environmentally valuable land, parks, recreation and open space, agricultural resources, climate and air quality, historic and cultural resources)
  - **Housing and Neighborhoods** (community form, housing, affordability)
  - **Economy and Workforce** (employment, economic growth, tourism, linkages to education, housing, transportation)
  - **Community Facilities** (regional institutions and services, major cultural and nonprofit organizations, public safety)
Transportation and Infrastructure

Milestones in Erie Transportation

- 1800: Erie County Established
- 1825: Erie Canal Opens
- 1830: Welland Canal Opens
- 1849: Erie and North East Railroad Opens
- 1913: Nolen Plan
- 1960: First Segment of I-90 in PA Opens
- 1963: Maurice Rotival Plan
- 1966: Founded
- 2012-2014: Destination Erie
Transportation and Infrastructure

Roadway System

ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

Current Average Daily Traffic Volumes (Countywide)
- 0 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999
- 10,000 - 19,999
- 20,000 - 29,999
- 30,000 - 39,999
- 40,000 and above
Newer housing in townships is higher-valued housing.

Median housing value in Erie City is $82,400 compared to $111,300 for Erie County ($159,300 in PA).

Wide range of median housing values across the County with lowest median values found in central Erie City and several older boroughs.

**Median Housing Value, 2010**
- Below $50,000
- $50,000 to $75,000
- $75,001 to $100,000
- $100,001 to $125,000
- $125,001 to $150,000
- $150,001 to $175,000
- More than $175,000
Economy and Workforce

Examples of Larger Regional Economic Assets

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Post-secondary Schools (2010 Graduates)
- Penn State Erie-Behrend College (736)
- Gannon University (622)
- Mercyhurst College (603)
- Edinboro University of Pennsylvania (585)
- Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (485)
- SUNY at Fredonia (425)
- Jamestown Community College (348)
- Allegheny College (225)
- University of Pittsburgh-Titusville (40)

Waterborne Commercial Traffic 2010
- Port of Ashtabula: 6,346,279 tons
- Port of Conneaut: 3,558,487 tons
- Port of Erie: Less than 700,000 tons
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A “Non-Planner’s” Perspective
Community Engagement

- Public Workshops
- Meetings in a Box
- Open Houses, Events
- Website, Social Media
- Community Engagement Task Force
- Focus Groups
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Questions and Discussion

PA Chapter of the American Planning Conference
2012 Annual Conference
October 15, 2012