

Executive Summary
April 24, 2009

DuPage Regional Development Alliance - Choose DuPage
Economic Development Roundtables

Suburban Economic Development Roundtables Process

Three interactive roundtables hosted by the DuPage County Regional Development Alliance known as "Choose DuPage" were conducted to serve as "listen and learn" sessions on the state of the local economy, its challenges and opportunities. The overall goal was to generate Choose DuPage economic development action plans that can be implemented within the next 6 months. Three DuPage County audiences were targeted for each roundtable session:

- Health and Human Services Providers
- Education and Workforce Development
- Business

Approximately 131 leaders in the public, private, and not for profit sectors attended the three sessions.

Roundtables Major Issue/Opportunity Identification

- ▶ Decreasing available resources from all health & human service agency sources & increased agency & client stress
- ▶ Increasing demand for health & human service agency services and increasing complexity of the services required & provided
- ▶ Need for strategic communication plan that connects business, health & human service providers, funders & government; everyone needs to know what each organization is doing
 - Unique opportunity for health and human service providers collaboration/consolidation/creative restructuring and creating "shared services" capacity
- ▶ Need to overcome current business/financial fear and create confidence to move forward; need for more business financing and investment; more positive press
- ▶ Need for stimulating small business development perhaps by determining the feasibility of a small business incubator capacity
- ▶ Need strategic communication plan that connects and business, workforce development, education providers & government
 - Lack of awareness of existing/planned programs and resources
 - Need for more emphasis on the development of transferable skill sets by education providers
 - Preparing students/incumbent workforce for the future employment opportunities
 - Align workforce demand and supply
- ▶ Encourage business/user friendly, flexible government regulation; work together to minimize needless or onerous regulation/legislation; workforce housing
- ▶ Educate, explain and capitalize locally on the federal stimulus available resources and develop "local" stimulus programs

Choose DuPage Action Plan

1. Investigate feasibility of creating a “management services organization” to serve the consolidated “back room” business needs of the health and human service providers in DuPage County.
 - a. Research the capabilities of Back Office Cooperative

2. Investigate the feasibility of creating a DuPage County Health & Human Services Opportunity Fund to direct additional resources to the DuPage County health and human service providers.
 - a. Define and prioritize the “outcomes” expected to be impacted
 - b. Seek the advice and counsel of the DuPage Community Foundation

3. Establish a Choose DuPage Health & Human Services Taskforce or Steering Committee to guide Choose DuPage in the creation of a draft action plan and identify training/professional development opportunities focused on raising the productivity and effectiveness of the health & human service providers in DuPage County through regular, planned meetings of the agency leadership.

4. Conduct a “Federal Stimulus 101” workshop that educates and explains the resulting DuPage County potential business opportunities.

5. Form a joint public/private task force to review current DuPage County legislation and regulation to enhance and encourage immediate business incentives and/or development and increased employment opportunities.

6. Encourage increased business sector participation in the DuPage Workforce Board’s American Diploma Project local task force and the planned “high visibility” business/education event on September 24, 2009.
 - a. Provide increased support and private sector participation for the DuPage Workforce Board’s Healthcare and Manufacturing Leadership Councils and the formation of the planned Finance and Logistics Councils

7. Convene a joint private/public task force to recommend possible resource and program improvements to significantly increase small business development in DuPage County.

8. Create a joint Choose DuPage/DuPage Workforce Board/workNet taskforce to recommend possible improvements to collaboratively communicating and marketing existing workforce development programs and resources.

9. Conduct a DuPage County Business Success “best practices” workshop focused on sharing new, improved and emerging successful business strategies. Utilize the workshop output to create a positive press and public relations campaign focused on real world, DuPage County business success.