

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

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Meeting Agenda

July 9, 2020 ~ 2:00 p.m.

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Agenda Approval**
3. **Approval of May 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes**
4. **Approval of June 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes**
5. **Consistency Findings on U.S. Economic Development Administration Applications for Grant Funding**
 - A. **Commercial Kitchen Project**
 - B. **South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan**
6. **Public Comment**
7. **Staff Comment**
8. **CEDS Committee Member Comment**
9. **Next Meeting – September 10, 2020**
10. **Adjournment**



Agenda items are available on our website at <http://www.tcrpc.org>

Special Needs: Participants with special needs can be accommodated by calling the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council at least 2 working days prior to the Meeting. We can be reached by phone at (772)221-4060, by fax at (772)221-4067, or by email at lgulick@tcrpc.org.

**DRAFT Minutes of the
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
May 14, 2020 Committee Virtual Meeting ***

Chair Duval called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: ROLL CALL

Ms. Heidt called roll.

Committee Members Participating Via Virtual Meeting:

Helene Caseltine	Indian River County
Bruce Redus	Indian River County
Ted Astolfi	Martin County
Kevin Kryzda	Martin County
Jared Gaylord	Martin County
Charles Duval	Palm Beach County
Gary Hines	Palm Beach County
Alan Chin Lee	Palm Beach County
Thuy Shutt	Palm Beach County
Peter Jones	St. Lucie County

Excused

Pauline Becker	Martin County
Kathie Smith, Alternate	Martin County
Ralph Davino, Alternate	Martin County
Peter Tesch	St. Lucie County

Absent:

Kelley Armitage	Indian River County
Nicholas Rojas	Indian River County
Pinal Gandhi-Savdas	Martin County
Nepoleon Collins	Palm Beach County
R. Douglas Bynoe	St. Lucie County

Council Staff:

Stephanie Heidt	TCRPC
Thomas J. Lanahan	TCRPC

Guests:

Matthew Kalap	Indian River County
William Schutt	Indian River County

- * This meeting was conducted virtually through the GoToMeeting platform pursuant to Florida Governor's Executive Order 20-69 authorizing use of communications media technology to conduct meetings.

Ms. Heidt indicated a quorum was not currently present. In order to give Committee members time to join, the meeting began with Agenda Item 4.

Agenda Item 4: CARES Act Recovery Assistance – Presentation by Gregory Vaday, AICP, Economic Development Representative, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

Mr. Vaday provided an overview of the opportunity available through the CARES Act federal funding allocation to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). This funding is being made available to advance locally-developed projects tied to regional long-term, sustainable economic development and recovery from negative impacts due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Mr. Vaday noted that EDA has determined that all injury from the pandemic constitutes a “special need,” therefore applicants do not need to demonstrate additional economic distress to be eligible. He indicated that the projects need to be designed to assist communities in catalyzing public-private partnerships to foster collaboration, attract investment, create jobs, and foster economic resiliency and prosperity. Additionally, funding can be used to establish business incubators and capitalize or re-capitalize revolving loan funds (RLF) to improve access to capital for small businesses. He noted that there is a 20% match requirement for each project, which must be committed and available for the same purposes at the time of the grant request.

Mr. Vaday indicated that each project must be consistent with the current regional CEDS Plan and EDA investment priorities. Additionally, proposed projects must clearly show how they will “prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus” or respond to “economic injury as a result of coronavirus.” He reviewed the process for applying for the grant and provided resource links.

Ms. Heidt stated that if anyone has questions they can send to her and she will forward those to Mr. Vaday and distribute the answers to all Committee members. She also indicated that the grants need to be submitted through the Grants.gov system, which requires a SAM.gov account. She noted that this takes a few days to obtain, so applicants should do this as soon as possible.

Ms. Caseltine asked what the maximum amount is that can be applied for under the RLF program. Mr. Vaday indicated that there are no set standards and that applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. He stated that if someone has a potential project they should contact him to discuss the specifics.

Mr. Astolfi stated that he would like to see the RLF programs run through regional planning councils. He asked if it made sense to tie into the South Florida Regional Planning Council’s (SFRPC) current RLF, or apply for a separate RLF. Mr. Vaday noted that it is not easy to set up an RLF program, so it may make sense, if it is allowed, to partner with SFRPC, especially since Palm Beach County has already been approved as a lending area for the program. Mr. Astolfi asked if the 20 percent match is also a requirement for an RLF program. Mr. Vaday indicated that the match requirement does apply.

Mr. Chin Lee asked if there is a pre-application process for grant projects. Mr. Vaday indicated that since all projects qualify under the special needs eligibility determination,

projects can be submitted directly through grants.gov without going through the proposal approval process.

Mr. Duval asked if there is a deadline for submission of applications. Mr. Vaday stated the funding is available on a rolling basis, but indicated that there is limited funding and applications need to be submitted as soon as possible.

Ms. Caseltine asked if any applications have been received, and what the timeline is for the review and approval process. Mr. Vaday stated he could not speak to how many applications have been submitted, but noted that construction grant review can take up to 8 months. He stated they will review the applications as quickly as possible.

Chair Duval thanked Mr. Vaday for his presentation.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Approval

Having obtained a quorum, Chair Duval called for a motion to approve the Agenda.

Committee Action: Mr. Hines moved approval of the agenda. Ms. Caseltine seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2020

Committee Action: Mr. Astolfi moved approval of the March 12, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Redus seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: CEDS Committee Member Discussion of Local Response to COVID-19 and Recovery Plans

Mr. Hines stated that Verdenia Baker, Palm Beach County's Administrator, has been working on the County's recovery plans with working groups that represent the various business sectors. He noted that the Business Development Board has developed a website, BizHelpPBC.com, which is designed to help companies struggling from the COVID-19 pandemic. He also noted they are doing calls every Friday that include federal, state, local elected officials, County administrative and departmental heads, and community business leaders.

Ms. Shutt indicated that the Boynton Beach CRA Board has approved approximately \$1.2 million to help local businesses with expenses such as payroll and inventory. She stated that the loans are being offered at \$10,000 per business. She said that they received over 90 applications in one week, and have already processed 31 loans. She stated she would provide all the information on the program to Committee members.

Mr. Chin Lee stated that the County will be doing a similar program to provide relief packages to businesses throughout the County that have 25 or more employees. He indicated the program will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners the following day for approval.

Ms. Caseltine stated that the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce has been promoting their businesses wherever possible through social media campaigns. She indicated they have created a GIS property search and list of restaurants that are open. She noted that since meetings cannot be done in person, they are posting pictures on all social media. She reported that manufacturers in the County have retooled to produce face shields, cotton masks, and surgical gowns.

Mr. Astolfi indicated that the Business Development Board of Martin County has set up a Biz Hub website to get out information to local businesses. He noted that the chambers throughout the County have been having events, such as outdoor movie night in a plaza with the local restaurants providing food to people's cars, and giving the proceeds to non-profits organizations. They are also working to get approval for restaurants to expand their seating to parking lots. He noted that in the City of Stuart they have started a campaign called "We Are Ready" that has a camera crew going around to various businesses to let people know who is open for business and show that safety protocols are taking place to build consumer trust. He stated they are also asking the County to waive impact fees, so if companies fail there will be others able to open in their place.

Mr. Jones noted that St. Lucie County is working closely with the other local governments, institutions, and non-profits. He stated that the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County has established a virtual recovery center that provides webinars, counseling, and training for local businesses and chambers of commerce, with experts at the ready to assist and answer questions.

Chair Duval noted that even though the staff of CareerSource is home, they have not stopped working. He indicated that their main concern is unemployment and they are receiving an overwhelming amount of calls for assistance with applying for benefits. He stated that they can only help with the application, and then it is in the hands of the Florida Department of Opportunity. He stated that they have partnered with the County library system to provide resources to the public and are providing virtual workshops to assist job seekers and let them know what is available.

Agenda Item 6: Public Comments

None

Agenda Item 7: CEDs Committee Member Comments

Mr. Astolfi thanked Chair Duval for his update from the workforce standpoint. He stated that he has noticed an increased level of collaboration among organizations, which has been a positive coming out of all this.

Agenda Item 8: Staff Comments

Ms. Heidt noted that District staff has been researching projects that could benefit from the EDA CARES funding opportunity presented by Mr. Vaday. She stated staff is available to assist with researching and preparing grant applications for projects in the Region.

Ms. Caseltine asked if the Committee will have to approve any projects. Ms. Heidt stated that it is an EDA grant requirement to show consistency with the Region's CEDS plan, so each project will need to be presented to the CEDS Committee for review. She indicated that as projects come forward there may be a need for a special meeting to conduct those consistency reviews in a timely manner. She noted that as projects start to develop, Mr. Vaday puts her in touch with the applicants to coordinate the consistency review. Ms. Caseltine noted that the next meeting is not scheduled until July, and by that time all the funding might have already been allocated. Ms. Heidt indicated a special meeting can be scheduled at the direction of the Committee.

Ms. Caseltine asked how the application is progressing to establish an RLF program in the area. Mr. Lanahan stated that he has been working with the SFRPC to determine if their lending area can be expanded to include the entire Treasure Coast Region. He noted that two years ago the program was expanded into Palm Beach County. He stated that it may be more efficient to build on an existing program that has a good track record, versus trying to stand up our own capacity. He stated he is exploring several scenarios, including the required match, and will update the Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Astolfi asked how much funding is available for Palm Beach County in the current program. Mr. Lanahan noted that the existing program is fully obligated, but SFRPC is getting additional money from the EDA CARES Act through recapitalization funding that has been made available to current programs. Mr. Astolfi asked if the match will have to be cash money. Mr. Lanahan indicated that it would need to be cash, and that typically the match for EDA money would be 50/50, but for this program that match is 20 percent. Ms. Caseltine asked if the northern counties pursue going through the SFRPC RLF program, would all seven counties be responsible for the 20 percent match. Mr. Lanahan noted that this is where it gets complicated and he still needs to work with SFRPC and EDA on the requirements.

Agenda Item 9: Next Meeting

Chair Duval asked if the Committee should schedule a special meeting to conduct consistency reviews. Ms. Heidt indicated that a meeting may be required within the next three to four weeks to accommodate potential EDA project applications. A special CEDS meeting was scheduled for June 4, 2020 at 2pm to conduct consistency reviews for any pending EDA applications.

The next regular meeting of the CEDs committee is scheduled for July 9, 2020.

Agenda Item 10: Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Duvall adjourned the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

**DRAFT Minutes of the
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
June 4, 2020 Committee Virtual Meeting ***

Chair Duval called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: ROLL CALL

Ms. Heidt called roll.

Committee Members Participating Via Virtual Meeting:

Helene Caseltine	Indian River County
Bruce Redus	Indian River County
Ted Astolfi	Martin County
Pinal Gandhi Savdas	Martin County
Jared Gaylord	Martin County
Charles Duval	Palm Beach County
Gary Hines	Palm Beach County
Alan Chin Lee	Palm Beach County
Thuy Shutt	Palm Beach County
Nepoleon Collins	Palm Beach County
Peter Jones	St. Lucie County
Peter Tesch	St. Lucie County

Excused

Kathie Smith, Alternate	Martin County
Ralph Davino, Alternate	Martin County
Kevin Kryzda	Martin County

Absent:

Kelley Armitage	Indian River County
Nicholas Rojas	Indian River County
Pauline Becker	Martin County
R. Douglas Bynoe	St. Lucie County

Council Staff:

Stephanie Heidt	TCRPC
Thomas J. Lanahan	TCRPC

Guests:

Elijah Wooten	City of Port St. Lucie
Joan Goodrich	BDB of Martin County
Nerissa Okiye	Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing

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Agenda Item 2: Agenda Approval

Committee Action: Mr. Astolfi moved approval of the agenda. Ms. Caseltine seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Consistency Findings on U.S. Economic Development Administration Applications for Grant Funding

Martin County Tourism Grant

Ms. Okiye, Tourism Director for the Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing, provided an overview of the proposed project that will be done in collaboration with the Business Development Board (BDB) of Martin County, Indian River State College (IRSC), and the BizHub team. The proposed project will create a Tourism Accelerator Program and Marketing Recovery Plan, based on the successful BDB Business Accelerator Program. She noted that the plan is consistent with the CEDS plan as it will promote and grow different industries in the area, support existing industries, and welcome new ones.

Ms. Okiye stated that due to the impacts of COVID-19 and environmental issues, they are seeing that it is becoming difficult for the small businesses to recover and pivot, because they do not have the necessary technical skills. She stated the plan is to model the current BDB plan components of how to better market the small businesses and navigate through difficult circumstances by providing a series of courses and a tool kit that can assist with moving these businesses forward. She indicated that the plan should take approximately 18 months to create the plan.

Ms. Caseltine asked if this will be available to businesses in the City of Stuart. Ms. Okiye indicated yes, and that they have been working very closely with the Downtown Stuart Business Association to find out what they need. She stated as they create their plan these discussions will be beneficial, because they want to address real needs and create a plan with real value.

Ms. Caseltine asked if the IRSC partnership will include the small business development center. Ms. Okiye said this will be on a smaller level, mirroring those programs and possibly using the same instructors. She noted that this plan will have a more robust marketing component that will include how to create a digital footprint. Ms. Goodrich, Executive Director of the BDB of Martin County, stated that prior to COVID-19, they were working on a similar concept that focuses on incentives for small businesses in targeted industries.

Ms. Gandhi Savdas asked when this program will be available, noting that the City of Stuart also does a business accelerator program with IRSC. She asked if it is similar to what the BDB is doing. Ms. Goodrich noted that the Stuart/Martin County business accelerator program has been delayed due to COVID-19. She noted that while these programs are designed to complement each other. Ms. Okiye stated that applying for the EDA grant is the first step, and the project is contingent on getting the funding. She

noted that if funding is not obtained, they will continue with the plan, but it will not be as robust.

Mr. Astolfi stated that the current program is great and he support this project because this is really needed for the business community. He commended Ms. Okiye and Ms. Goodrich for putting this together.

Ms. Heidt noted that the project materials contained recommended objectives and actions for consistency with the CEDS Plan. She asked if the Committee members agreed with those findings of consistency. Seeing no Committee comment, Chair Duval called for a motion to find the proposed project consistent with the CEDS Plan.

Committee Action: Mr. Tesch moved approval of the consistency findings for the Martin County Tourism grant application. Mr. Chin Lee seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Extension of Hegener Drive into Port St. Lucie's Southern Grove Jobs Corridor

Elijah Wooten, Business Navigator for the City of Port St. Lucie, provided an overview of the grant request to fund infrastructure improvements in the Tradition Center for Commerce. He noted that the City is requesting \$3 million in grant funding to extend Hegener Drive and open up over 100 acres for development. He noted that with the extension of the road the City will be able to retain the TAMCO Group, a City Electric Supply subsidiary, who recently built a 411,00 square foot manufacturing facility, and plans to create 50 jobs over the next 5 years. The new road will also serve to retain OCULUS Surgical, a manufacturer of medical devices, that is planning to expand their operations center. He also noted that there is interest from an aviation manufacturing company that is in the process of purchasing property in the corridor to open a manufacturing facility that will create 125 jobs. Additionally, this project will serve the Somerset Academy, that will focus on technical and skills training for middle and high schools students.

Mr. Wooten stated that the City believes that this project is consistent with the CEDs Plan and will create jobs and capital investment. He noted that in addition to acquiring Martin Memorial Health, Cleveland Clinic has acquired the former VGTI building, which is now the Florida Research and Innovation Center. Also, Torrey Pines was acquired by Florida International University, which has created a great nucleus of manufacturing, healthcare, and research.

Chair Duval asked if there is a pipeline to funnel the Somerset Academy students into available jobs. Mr. Wooten stated that is the intent, but at the present time they are still in the process of deciding if they want to purchase or lease the land. He stated that a couple years ago when the 1,200-acre area was given to the City, they began a plan to have Somerset work directly with industry to advocate for training to fill the jobs that are in demand. He noted that the City also wants the other manufacturers and companies in the area serve on a board of advisors so there is a nexus between industry and education.

Ms. Caseltine asked how Somerset Academy will be accessed without the road extension. Mr. Wooten stated that the property under consideration can be access by Village Parkway. Ms. Caseltine asked if there are plans for the other areas that will be opened up with the road extension. Mr. Wooten indicated that the City is currently working with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) to develop a master plan, which will include how this area is developed. Ms. Caseltine asked what types of industry is anticipated. Mr. Wooten noted that the current master plan for the Southern Grove planned unit developed is a combination of uses such as manufacturing, research and development, office, commercial, retail, and residential. He stated that City staff anticipates the area will be similar to St. Lucie West. He said there is a strong interest in companies wanting to locate to the area, even with COVID-19.

Ms. Gandhi-Savdas asked if the developers are required to contribute any funding for off-site improvements. Mr. Wooten noted that the existing road was funded through a Florida Job Growth grant and contributions from the City. He stated that part of negotiations for land sales in the commerce park area is provision of infrastructure.

Committee Action: Chair Duval made a motion to find the project consistent with the CEDS Plan. Ms. Caseltine seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND SERVICE AREA AND FUNDING EXPANSION

Mr. Lanahan indicated that several years ago the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) set up a revolving loan fund (RLF) with EDA funds for their region, which includes Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties. That programs was put together to provide loans for small and medium-sized businesses that could not obtain traditional funding. In 2018, TCRPC authorized the expansion of that program into Palm Beach County, because SFRPC was looking for additional projects to fund. He noted that through CARES Act funding, SFRPC is receiving money to recapitalize their existing RLF program.

Mr. Lanahan noted that the current proposal is to expand the service area to include Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties as well as provide additional capital for the current RLF. He noted that this aligns well with EDA's goal of a regional approach. He stated that the proposal is to partner with the SFRPC and extend their current RLF programs, because he feels there is a lot efficiency to be gained by utilizing the administrative apparatus of an already established and successful program. He noted that one challenge is to raise the matching funds that will be needed for the request of \$2.3 Million. He indicated that he has been working with EDA to see if this can be done with 100% federal funding and no required match, but it does not appear that this will be approved. He stated that he has looking at using population per county as a way to calculate what each participating county will be required to provide in matching funds, which works out to be 25% each for Martin and Indian River counties and 50% for St. Lucie County. He indicated he will be working with each of the counties to get commitments on the matching funding before moving forward with submitting the application. He suggested that one way to lower the match amount would be to lower the funding request.

Mr. Chin Lee stated that he has been told by Mr. Vaday to always request what you think is reasonable, and then leave it up to EDA to decide what amount they will fund the project. He stated that he would recommend a request of \$2.3 Million. Ms. Caseltine asked if this would be a request for \$2.3 Million with a match. Mr. Chin Lee stated that the match percentage would remain the same. He stated that what EDA will typically do, depending on the number of applications, is determine which applications are strong and eligible for funding first. Then they will determine if the funding request is warranted based on the scope of the project, or they may reduce the funding request depending on the number of good projects.

Ms. Caseltine asked if there is any criteria that would exempt a project from the match requirement. Mr. Chin Lee indicated that things such as high poverty and high unemployment can qualify for an exemption. He suggested contacting Mr. Vaday early in the application process to get his input. Mr. Lanahan noted that one of the criteria for match exemption is if you are at your taxing authority limits and have fiscal constraints, which would not be the case in our Region.

Ms. Caseltine stated that she supports moving ahead with the proposed project. Mr. Tesch agreed, stating that an RLF program is needed in the Region, and in terms of capacity and scale, it is better to partner into the SFRPC program. He asked if there will be any type of local or regional banking committee established to review potential loans in the Treasure Coast Region, or will that be handled by SFRPC. Mr. Lanahan stated that his inclination is to use SFRPC's administrative apparatus, but TCRPC will promote the program and identify clients in our region.

Ms. Caseltine asked if SFRPC already has the lending criteria established. Mr. Lanahan noted that their program is operated by a staff member that is a retired banker, so he brought their program to a new level.

Mr. Redus stated he looked at the SFRPC program on-line and it appears their minimum for a loan is \$25,000. He asked if the same criteria would apply for smaller communities and if lower loans could be considered. Mr. Lanahan stated he would have to check that with SFRPC. Mr. Redus noted that is something to look at, because our area is more rural, and there might not be a need for that much funding. Mr. Lanahan indicated he will see what is driving that amount, noting that sometimes it is because it takes the same amount of work to loan \$5,000 as it does to loan \$25,000. Mr. Redus asked how the rates are established in the current program. Mr. Lanahan stated that he believes it is an increment above the prime lending rate. He noted that this program is designed to help individuals who cannot otherwise get traditional financing, so the interests rates are very competitive.

Ms. Caseltine asked if commitments from the counties are required to submit the grant application. Mr. Lanahan indicated all three counties would need to provide commitment letters that are required to be included as part of the grant application. She asked when these commitments would be needed. Mr. Lanahan stated that although funding is still available, EDA is processing applications and are eager to get the funding awarded, so it is important to move as quickly as possible. Mr. Redus stated that he has

been in discussions with the SFRPC staff and presented different scenarios, and they have been very receptive to the idea of expanding their lending area.

Mr. Astolfi indicated that he cannot speak on behalf of the Martin Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), but he believes they recognize the need for this type of program and feels confident the match will not be a problem. He stated he believes that the request for \$2.3 Million is reasonable, and it is a great advantage that this is a multi-county proposal, with two regional planning councils working together. He offered his support and encouraged moving ahead with this project as quickly as possible.

Committee Action: Ms. Caseltine moved approval of finding the proposed application consistent with the CEDS Plan and staff working with each of the County Commission boards for funding commitments. Mr. Astolfi seconded the motion.

Mr. Jones noted that the St. Lucie County BOCC will be meeting the following Tuesday to discuss the preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. He suggested making an informal presentation of this project to the Commissioners at that meeting. He stated that he supports this project with the understanding that it is up to each of the County BOCCs to make a final approval for providing any financial commitments.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Expansion of Regional Broadband Service

Ms. Heidt provided an overview of the project, which is to create a plan that will identify infrastructure needs, and public/private partnerships to expand broadband services to underserved communities in an effort to address the “digital divide” in the Region. This plan will focus on ensuring that broadband access is available and affordable for personal home use to connect students to e-learning programs; job seekers to training and employment opportunities; and individuals to telehealth services. Mr. Lanahan noted that broadband has become a necessary service, much like electricity, as we are learning that the economy is moving from the storefront to the living room due to COVID-19. He noted that the request for funding is \$100,000 and he will be requesting Council to approve funding the match of \$20,000.

Mr. Gaylord asked if the funding request is enough. He noted that the Martin County School District has been working on this, and it is more of an issue of need than access. Ms. Heidt indicated that although this project is to create a plan and partnerships opportunities, it will also identify infrastructure projects that are needed and ways to get financing to build those projects, however this funding will not be used to build any of that infrastructure.

Chair Duval indicated that he supports this project and believes that it is a step in the right direction. He noted that the pandemic has really exposed the digital divide, especially in the rural areas, which is preventing many children from being able to get the education they need and keep from falling behind.

Committee Action: Ms. Caseltine made a motion to find this project consistent with the CEDS Plan. Mr. Gaylord seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Lanahan noted that an effort is underway among the economic development organizations and the two regional planning councils in Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties to develop a joint plan to address the economic impacts caused by the Coronavirus. The plan will include providing skills training for individuals from the tourist and hospitality industry that will allow them to work in other industries. The plan will also look at Life Sciences and supply chain and logistics opportunities for the four-county region. That project will be brought forward at a future meeting for a consistency finding from the Committee.

Ms. Gandhi-Savdas asked if staff was aware of any other applications that may be coming in for review. Mr. Lanahan stated that one potential project may be an application from IRSC to build a virtual health science lab.

Ms. Shutt stated that the City of Boynton Beach may also have a project to develop a cooperative working program. Mr. Lanahan suggested they get with Ms. Heidt and EDA for preliminary vetting of the application and to get on a future CEDS meeting agenda for the consistency finding. He also congratulated Ms. Shutt on the success of their local business assistance program. Ms. Shutt indicated that they were able to get out \$1 million in 3 weeks, and the process was all done remotely.

Mr. Chin Lee suggested staff may want to ask prospective applicants when they are anticipating completing and submitting their grant applications. If it appears that they will be submitting before the next meeting, then staff can have the Committee consider another emergency meeting. Ms. Heidt indicated she will contact potential applicants and update the Committee as needed.

Agenda Item 4: Public Comment

None

Agenda Item 5: Staff Comment

Ms. Heidt thanked the Committee members for their assistance and support with the project consistency recommendations.

Agenda Item 6: CEDS Committee Member Comment

Mr. Redus expressed his appreciation for staff's work to get these projects moved forward for the Region during these difficult times.

Agenda Item 7: Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Duvall adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN... A Growth Kitchen for Entrepreneurs

Location: 1301 10th Street, Lake Park, FL

Total estimated Cost: \$10 Million

Source of Funding: USEDA CARES Act & Private-Non-Profit Community Initiatives Development Corporation

Impact: Estimated 200 Skilled Food Service and Beverage Jobs

The Town of Lake Park and Community Initiatives Development Corporation (CIDC) are seeking USEDA funding per the provisions of the COVID-19/CARES Act for construction a Commercial Kitchen as described more fully herein. Accordingly, the Town of Lake Park and CIDC are presenting information for review and requesting a determination that this project is consistent with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Council's determination of consistency with the regional CEDS plan will be essential in demonstrating not only local but regional support for Lake Park's project and enhance its opportunity for securing USEDA/CARES funding.

Summary

The Community Initiatives Development Corporation (CIDC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, working on behalf of the Town of Lake Park in collaboration with the County of Palm Beach, O3 Asset Management LLC, is applying for US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (US EDA) funding to construct a 25,000 square foot Commercial Kitchen located at 1301 10th Street in Lake Park. In addition, there will be approximately twenty-five, 400 square foot commercial kitchen spaces available for rent along with ancillary facilities on-site. The "missing link" in the food service industry is a safe and affordable place for budding restaurateurs and artisan food makers to develop their enterprises and grow into self-sustaining businesses. CIDC proposes to create a multi-faceted facility in the Town of Lake Park to support the development of restaurant, food and beverage entrepreneurs. The CIDC will seek to attract a major tenant for the facility to establish operations and provide management services for the overall commercial kitchen operation. Among the current prospects expressing interest in the commercial kitchen is Oceana Logistics. The commercial kitchen will result in an estimated 200 new job opportunities in the food service and beverage industry.

Commercial Kitchens and Cold Storage

The commercial kitchens will provide production space for businesses from various food service sectors, including ghost kitchens, grocery preparation services, and co-packing services. The Commercial Kitchen will also include a large cold-storage facility and areas for product packing equipment which will also be available for existing tenants and for both short- and long-term rental contracts. This project will:

- Promote entrepreneurship among employees who transition from employee to employer;
- Create job opportunities by offering education, training, and capacity building in all aspects of culinary arts and beverage services, including preparation, production, distribution, sales and management; and
- Increase focus on impacts of COVID-related business closures, specifically job loss, by providing employment opportunity options and new job skills.

Distress in the Region

US EDA application guidelines provide that the distress criteria can be based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located. Reflecting on the fact that the County considers this an important regional project and that USEDPA permits applicants to define the “region”, the Town of Lake Park has identified the four census tracts (11.01, 13.01, 13.02, and 14.04) as the immediate area, but asks that the Planning Council consider this project as one that has far-reaching impacts on the entire County and Treasure Coast Region as a whole.

This series of identified census tracts are among the most economically distressed areas in the Treasure Coast Region. The four US Census tracts that make up the area have an unemployment rate of 9.0%, which is more than 1.5 times the national rate and almost triple that of neighboring Census Tracts to the north. The Per Capita Median Income of this target region is below \$17,000 which is 51% of the national average and nearly half of that of neighboring areas. These statistics are based on the *2018 American Community Survey Estimates* and have certainly increased dramatically with the onset of the COVID-19 Emergency.

COVID-19 Impacts

The *2018 American Community Survey Estimates* show a 5.5% unemployment rate in the Town of Lake Park as a whole. While local unemployment statistics are not available, the *2018 ACS Estimates* lists the unemployment rate of the County of Palm Beach at 3.8% unemployment, while as of April, 2020, the unemployment rate for the County skyrocketed to an unprecedented 13.9%, according to the monthly report released by CareerSource Palm Beach County and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The Town of Lake Park has felt impacts similar to that of the County. Further, the Accommodations and Food sector represent nearly 25% of total unemployment claims of 117,943 (as of May 30, 2020) in the County. These data points clearly demonstrate that not only is Lake Park in need of assistance to address this economic injury, but the Accommodations and Food sector is particularly impacted and is in need of immediate intervention.

The significant job loss and consequential hardships associated with loss of income for those in the lowest income spectrum with the jobs most at-risk is particularly impactful among the Town’s lower income population which are most affected by the business closures and failures.

Funding

The US EDA has released a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) announcing a program designed to address economic injury due to the COVID-19 Emergency. This program aims to provide Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) to public and private ventures that will positively impact the economic injury caused by the outbreak. This funding is designed to help plan and implement economic recovery strategies in response to the pandemic, especially in areas that have been severely impacted. The CIDC estimates the total cost of the project at \$10M. They will make application to the US EDA for \$5M, while the remaining \$5M will be funded through 501(c)(3) bonds issued by the CIDC itself.

With USEDPA’s “investment” in this project, the Town of Lake Park and Palm Beach County will catalyze public-private partnerships and attract significant private investment which will create jobs and foster economic resiliency and prosperity.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – Action Plan

The application for the US EDA's EAA Grant Program includes a requirement to demonstrate that the project is consistent with the CEDS plan for the area in which the project is located. This project aligns with multiple objectives listed in the CEDS Action Plan, including:

Objective 2: Innovation & Economic Development

Action 2: This project is directly related to the development of the restaurant and food service capabilities in the region. With the creation of these commercial kitchen spaces, entrepreneurs will be able to advance from production in a home kitchen without the substantial operational costs of a full-fledged restaurant or production facility. The advantages associated with shared physical spaces, including dry and cold storage spaces, give a unique financial advantage to burgeoning businesses in the food service space.

Action 3: Oceana Logistics, a major tenant, has shown strong interest in locating their Oceana Coffee Roasters, commercial-space management company, and several other subsidiaries within the commercial kitchen facility. Oceana Coffee Roasters was established in 2009 in Florida and roasts single origin coffees from all over the world. They have 2 locations in Palm Beach County and ship both within the region and throughout the United States and Canada.

Action 4: While there are no direct partnerships with local colleges and universities *at this time*, partnerships will be welcome especially with regard to education and training programs in the various food and beverage preparation, production, packaging/distribution components and will contribute to the success of the project as a whole.

Objective 4: Business Climate and Competitiveness

Action 3: This project supports ongoing collaboration between the County of Palm Beach, the Town of Lake Park, and the CIDC, which will create opportunities to attract various commercial kitchen tenants seeking specialized space in the food and beverage sector. The relationship between these public and private organizations is one that addresses not only economic revitalization in the region, but also encourages future generations of local entrepreneurs who will participate in and positively impact the regional economy.

Objective 7: Economic Resiliency

Action 1: The proposed project aims to help further develop the food service industry while simultaneously introducing innovation into the sector. The variety brought to bear with these business sectors further reinforces resiliency and preparedness in the future.

Action 9: Creating a space where entrepreneurs can manufacture their products or anchor their services with minimal operational overhead leads to a business environment that is minimally impacted by interruptions in a setting which conforms to FDA/ISO Standards and is cost competitive. By introducing this business model into the local marketplace, this opportunity provides a place where businesses can continue production while not being subject to the various negative impacts that are a concern in major interruptions. In fact, this project creates the infrastructure needed to enable the Town to respond to the impacts following a disaster or other major event (such as COVID) by having food and beverage resource capability to support local food banks and similar support facilities.

South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan

Proposed Project

This project will directly further COVID-19 recovery, economic resiliency / diversification and development efforts in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties. A consortium of partners (Partnership) from the four-county region and beyond have come together in a unique, broad-based, public-private effort to respond to the profound impacts of the coronavirus pandemic in South Florida. This partnership is submitting an application under the U.S. Economic Development CARES Act funding opportunity to develop the *South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan* (Plan). The proposed Plan will analyze and update county-wide economic development strategies in light of a changed and rapidly evolving economic environment due to COVID-19, and focus on the areas of talent development, manufacturing, the life sciences supply chain, and technology utilization to respond to the coronavirus and its economic injury.

To create this regional framework and action / implementation plan, the Partnership proposes to begin with documentation of the magnitude of economic injury and dislocation caused by coronavirus, followed by the critical review and analysis of existing county-based economic development strategies through an ongoing/post-COVID-19 lens to understand the economic sea change that is still underway. The Partnership will then dive deeply to research and identify the transformational steps and investments needed to fast forward the development and deployment of expanded technology utilization, manufacturing and supply chains, life sciences supply chain and logistics, and healthcare industries, coupled with workforce training and development to help pivot displaced workers into new, better paying employment opportunities. We also seek to attract new jobs and workforce to the region to meet the employment needs of a growing population and high wage industry sectors. Enhanced regional cooperation and communication, shared learning, pre-competitive collaboration, and networking will connect Partnership members and companies with growth opportunities and labor, and facilitate greater public / private investment and employment opportunities in the region's 124 Opportunity Zones. Given the importance of South Florida's military and federal investment, the Partnership will explore what steps should be taken to support and grow this very important sector of the economy and community. Further, as the impact of COVID-19 has pushed many occupations into telework, the South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan will identify gaps and obstacles to 5G and broadband access which limits economic recovery and the ability to study, train, and work remotely. Having this ability is critical to a resilient economy, recovery, and adaptation to emerging structural changes in the regional economy.

Schedule: The total project will last 24 months and consist of five phases. The Partnership will work with a competitively selected consultant to develop a South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan by the 14th month of the project and actively undertake implementation of the Plan in months 15 - 24, and beyond following the conclusion of this project.

Project deliverables will include, but not be limited to:

September - December 2020 / Months 1-4: Continued expansion of the Partnership; Organization of Partnership Oversight and Management Committee; detailed work plan development, RFP development, advertisement, and distribution of RFP to potential consultants; development of RFP Review and Selection Committee; RFP submission, consultant selection and onboarding; third party data analysis.

January - April 2021 / Months 5-8: Continued expansion of the Partnership; Partnership Oversight and Management Committee meetings; stakeholders meetings, literature review, focus groups, baseline data, GAP analysis, SWOT analysis, surveys, refinement of performance and outcome measures, etc.

May - October 2021 / Months 9-14: Continued expansion of the Partnership; Partnership Oversight and Management Committee meetings; stakeholders meetings; data analysis reporting; strategy development, strategy reporting, recommendations development, recommendations reporting, and full report presentation of the South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan. Finalization of the Plan after review and feedback.

November - December 2021 / Months 15-16: Continued expansion of the Partnership; Partnership Oversight and Management Committee meetings; development of deep dive implementation details including identification of additional partners, their activities and opportunities for leverage / coordination, general opportunities, and implementation role / responsibilities of individual partners and organizations.

January - August 2021 / Months 17-24: Continued expansion of the Partnership; Partnership Oversight and Management Committee meetings; Implementation activities and Final Progress Report.

Implementation of this Plan will advance the goals of the 2017 – 2022 South Florida Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 1) Innovation and Competitiveness; 2) Opportunity and Prosperity; and 3) Vitality and Sustainability, and the 2018 - 2023 Treasure Coast Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan. The strategic

plan will then form a joint chapter of the South Florida CEDS and Treasure Coast CEDS.

A key objective will be to provide educational and workforce partners the information they need to identify, train, and retrain the region's displaced labor force and attract new talent for employers seeking to invest in emerging, higher wage industry opportunities that will advance the prosperity and security of residents, the State of Florida, and the United States. The Plan will survey South Florida's workforce development programs and educational institutions and work to align K-12 career pathway programs, apprenticeship and internship programs, and cohort workshops that will strengthen South Florida's workforce pipeline for the targeted industries and expansions. Especially critical will be new methods of training delivery and rapid credentialing that will combine distance learning with work-based learning strategies. It will be our intent to have the industries drive the training in a sector strategies approach.

The Plan will also identify specific companies and life science clusters that are poised for engagement in re-shoring and near-shoring opportunities close to South Florida. The Plan will analyze opportunities to promote job growth and economic development in life science industries including pharmaceutical, medical device, agribusiness, and aqua innovations. Solutions may include strategies to support local life science entrepreneurship or implement a marketing strategy specifically targeting certain types of companies for expansion or reshoring.

High impact outcomes of the development and implementation of the Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Document magnitude of regional economic injury and dislocation
- Work with regional partners to:
 - Identify Talent gap in focus industries which may be new components of existing industries or industries which have not gained a foot hold:
 - Talent gap in Manufacturing, Life Sciences Supply Chain, and technology utilization and challenges to developing these focus industries
 - Survey South Florida's workforce development programs and educational institutions
- Identify opportunities to drive investment in focus industries:
 - Strategies to promote tech businesses and innovations particularly in 5-G
 - Identify specific companies and life science clusters that are poised for re-shoring and near-shoring opportunities
- Identify opportunities to support federal military investments, local defense contractors, and veteran entrepreneurs

- Identify opportunities to drive investment in Opportunity Zones
 - Determine suitability of developing prospectus for regional Opportunity Zones following example of Miami-Dade Beacon Council
- Develop recommendations for regional strategic initiatives to diversify and attract new talent
- Develop rapid credentialing recommendations for local training providers to quickly reskill the existing talent for these new focused, targeting industry expansions.
 - Develop recommendations to Align K-12 and internship career pathway programs for these new industries and occupational areas.
- Devise implementation steps and assign responsibilities to carry out identified opportunities
- Create post-Covid economic resiliency element in SFRPC and TCRPC CEDS
- Create recommendations for economic resiliency for any new pandemic.

Approach and Budget

The Strategic Plan will be developed with the South Florida Regional Planning Council as the lead organization, working in partnership with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, to manage the contract and coordinate this regional effort among these key partners. The partner economic development organizations will contribute their expertise and data to support the effort of measuring performance of the strategic plan's efforts. Additionally, it is planned that an outside consultant will be brought in and managed by the South Florida Regional Planning Council to conduct SWOT and talent gap analyses, and to compile necessary secondary data.

The estimated budget for the *South Florida Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan* is \$600,000. The grant request to EDA will be for 80% of that amount (\$480,000) with the 20% match (\$120,000) provided by the regional partners.

CEDS Plan Consistency

Talent Supply & Education

Objective: Provide the best Pre-K to 12 and vocational high school programs in the State of Florida.

Action 7: Address identified skills gaps for existing and emerging industries through high school, state college, and university programs, such as expanded apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.

Innovation & Economic Development

Objective: Promote innovation and competitiveness, preparing the region for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

Business Climate & Competitiveness

Objective: Create a business climate supportive of existing industries and welcoming of new ones.

Action 3: Encourage communication, collaboration, and partnerships between the public and private sectors.

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