



**GOSHEN TOWNSHIP DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

*A course of action for community prosperity,
stability, and sustainability*

Adopted by the
Goshen Board of Trustees
December 16, 2008

A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Goshen Township is a community “rural” in character experiencing the early stages of the urbanization process. Making the most of this change will require a “blueprint” for action – a well thought out set of goals and strategic initiatives that can be put into motion to secure the long-term prosperity for residents, the fiscal stability of government services, and the sustainability of natural resources.

Based upon an analysis of existing conditions and projected demographic changes, it’s clear that Goshen Township currently doesn’t have an adequate number of existing buildings or “shovel ready” sites to meet the demands of revenue and job producing commercial/industrial growth opportunities. In addition, years of neglect and economic stagnation have resulted in the deterioration of the 200 year-old settlement footprint that once defined the Goshen community. This “sense of place” needs to be rekindled and woven into Goshen’s economic fabric.

This Strategic Economic Development Plan has been created by Goshen Township’s Department of Community & Economic Development (CED) to provide the Goshen Community Improvement Corporation (GCIC) board of directors a framework around which a *GCIC approved strategic economic development plan* is shaped. This GCIC sanctioned “blueprint”, its approval by the Goshen Township Board of Trustees, and its reference within the “Agreement” authorizing the GCIC as the economic development *agent* for Goshen Township is specifically called for in Section 1724.10 of the Ohio Revised Code.

VISION

Goshen Township will become a regional leader in the creation of economic and lifestyle opportunities bringing long-term prosperity to residents, fiscal stability to government services, and sustainability of the community’s natural resources.

MISSION STATEMENT

Establish Goshen Township as a regional leader in economic and lifestyle opportunities - bringing together the energy, skills, experience, determination and can-do spirit of its residents to broaden the non-residential tax base, create shovel-ready building sites, protect open spaces, and foster a sense of both community and place.

GOALS

- A. Promote a stronger local economy through new business attraction and the retention/expansion of existing businesses
- B. Leverage public/private financial resources to meet the infrastructure needs of new and expanding businesses
- C. Craft a comfortable balance between economic progress and the conservation of Goshen’s rural character
- D. Create a community identity - a sense of place that bolsters community pride and serves as the easily recognized “signature ” of Goshen Township
- E. Advance public awareness/participation in completing the strategic initiatives found in Goshen’s economic development plan

- F.** Foster mutual working relationships among county and statewide economic development agencies, regional business organizations, non-profit groups, universities, and local boards of education

GOAL A: Promote a stronger local economy through new business attraction and the retention/expansion of existing businesses

Strategic Initiatives

1. Provide services and information designed to promote Goshen Township as a business location for domestic and international companies or organizations and to assist those businesses already located in Goshen Township
2. Support the establishment of Goshen Township parks, recreational program opportunities, historic site restorations, and cultural events
3. Improve the coordination and application of building and zoning regulations to enhance the permit and development review process
4. Identify physical, demographic, historic, and cultural attributes unique to Goshen Township that can be utilized to create new civic and/or business opportunities
5. Promote the establishment of building sites serviced by sewer, water, telecommunications and road access to meet current and future demand for diverse businesses and industries
6. Enhance current retention and expansion efforts by improving availability of business development services and financing
7. Support the promotion of Goshen Townships' manufacturing and agricultural products

GOAL B: Finance and maintain appropriate infrastructure needs for new and expanding businesses

Strategic Initiatives

1. Improve and maintain the vitality of a Goshen town center through enhanced pedestrian access and parking facilities
2. Extend necessary infrastructure to existing manufacturing-zoned properties, creating sites that encourage business location retention, and expansion
3. Complete the GCIC formation process, including public/private capitalization and begin land acquisition and site preparation activities
4. Encourage Goshen Township to utilize its tax increment financing (TIF) capability to support private sector investments in appropriate ways
5. Encourage effort by Goshen Township to support the creation of fixed route transit service and non-motorized trails including those for hiking, biking and horseback riding

6. Finance priority infrastructure projects through short and long-term financing plans that maximize opportunities for grants and low interest loans
7. Build on public/private efforts in telecommunications development to create fiber optics “backbone” and/or wireless capability in Goshen Township, including private-sector efforts to extend services to the end customer
8. Seek efficiencies in the use of infrastructure through reuse and redevelopment of underdeveloped existing lands and buildings, and through in-fill of adjacent vacant lands
9. Complete an overall assessment of natural resources and public/private infrastructure conditions and needs throughout Goshen Township

GOAL C: Craft a comfortable balance between economic progress and the conservation of Goshen’s rural character

Strategic Initiatives

1. Put into operation farmland conservation and preservation programs to maintain a productive agricultural economy
2. Maximize the passive recreation potential of Goshen Township’s water and hillside resources
3. Take the environmental and social elements of sustainable economic development policies and integrate them with land use, transportation, and growth management goals, strategies and regulations

GOAL D: Create and promote a community identity - a sense of place that bolsters community pride and serves as the easily recognized “signature” of Goshen Township

Strategic Initiatives

1. Ensure that public and private new development, redevelopment and expansion in the Goshen Town Center be designed with an architectural style and to an appropriate scale and contains a relationship with to an identified “sense of place
2. Promote innovation in design for all public and private development, redevelopment or expansion within the Goshen Town Center that makes full use of landscaping, desirable building materials, and overall quality of building design
3. Work with local and regional organizations to strengthen and enhance arts and cultural facilities/programs in the Goshen Town Center
4. Establish visual “gateways” to Goshen’s Town Center – the historical footprint of the community that serves as both a formal and informal gathering

GOAL E: Advance public awareness/participation in completing the strategic initiatives found in Goshen’s economic development plan

Strategic Initiatives

1. Create a Goshen Community Improvement Corporation (GCIC) web site with a link to the Goshen Township government web site offering public access to detailed demographic data, market analyses and specifics about current development proposals
2. Offer the public a variety of opportunities to learn and comment utilizing focus groups, resident and business surveys, small group presentations, panel discussions, and two-hour informational “open houses”
3. Encourage policy-making organizations and civic groups to incorporate economic development strategies in their planning efforts
4. Publish print materials about the coordinated efforts of the Goshen Community Improvement Corporation (GCIC) and the township’s Department of Community & Economic Development (CED)

GOAL F: Foster mutual working relationships among county and statewide economic development agencies, regional business organizations, non-profit groups, universities, and local boards of education

Strategic Initiatives

1. Include federal and state agencies in local economic development strategic planning
2. Increase leadership and collaboration by improving information sharing between local organizations about development opportunities requiring technical assistance and funding
3. Provide for the ongoing maintenance, updating, and implementation of the Strategic Economic Development Plan for Goshen Township
4. Work cooperatively with all jurisdictions in the region to help develop appropriate economic, transportation, and environmental initiatives
5. Coordinate data development relative to economic development, such as needs assessment, demographic/economic data, geographic information systems, transportation modeling, and economic impact analysis

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Successful economic development efforts engage professional staff that receives policy direction from a board composed of both private and public sector leaders. The board can be either advisory or exercise direct authority over the program and its budget.

The proposed administrative structure for the Goshen Township strategic economic development effort blends public sector staffing and non-profit contractual outsourcing arrangements to achieve program objectives. It also proposes that a Goshen Community Improvement Corporation (GCIC) be formed. Composed of public and private sector leaders, the GCIC would propose policy direction for the Goshen Township Board of Trustees, but the Goshen Board of Trustees would retain full authority and accountability for program outcomes.

Primary staff accountability would be assigned to the Director of the Department of Community & Economic Development (CED). Approximately 50% of the CED Director's annual work effort would be allocated to the strategies administration. Principal duties would include participation in direct marketing, coordination of incentive package development, obtaining and applying for specialized development grants, leadership of project teams, and oversight of partnership agreements. In addition, the Director would provide executive staff services to the Goshen Township Board of Trustees and the Goshen Community Development Corporation.

TIMEFRAMES, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND EVALUATION METHOD

Six strategic economic development plan goals along with a specific listing of strategic initiatives have been proposed for Goshen Township. The economic conditions with these goals are designed to address will require a multi-year effort to achieve. However, incremental progress can be assessed in two ways. First, when the strategic plan is adopted, detailed activity/action plans will be written for each strategic initiative. Specific monthly benchmarks will be established and monthly reports will be prepared for both the GCIC and the Goshen Board of Trustees which will provide clear, measurable indications of progress toward completion of activities.

Although this progress data is useful for maintaining accountability for program progress, it does not address the fundamental question of whether the activities are bring about positive change in Goshen Township's economic conditions. This form of impact data will need to be obtained from indicators that directly measure changes in the Township's economic performance.

A wide variety of performance indicators exist and are tracked by various agencies. Any one measure is not adequate to give a complete picture of evolving changes in the Township's economy. Therefore, it will be necessary to choose multiple indicators. Potential indicators that could be reviewed, on at least a semi-annual basis include the following:

1. Increase (decrease) in average household income
2. Growth (decline) in retail sales
3. Level of new capital investment
4. Net rate of new business starts/closures
5. Growth in tax receipts
6. Achievement of desired balance between commercial and residential valuations
7. New housing starts
8. Population growth

The GCIC and the Goshen Board of Trustees will need to decide which of these or alternative indicators will be used to gauge the impact of the strategic plan's implementation. Once the indicators are established, baseline conditions can be established for each.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND ANALYSES

This strategic economic development planning process is based on observations and analyses of ten detailed demographic and economic data sets and extensive field observations developed by Kleingers & Associates and Gem Public Sector Services as part of a fourteen month consultant contract with Goshen Township. The additional 108 pages of data tables, market analyses, field observations and needs recommendation, completed in August 2007 are an integral part of this Strategic Economic Development Plan. This data resource provides the baseline and activity forecast information needed to gauge economic program success and identify future needs.