



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** CITY OF RACINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** GORDON KACALA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
KRISTIN NIEMIEC, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

**DATE:** MARCH 22, 2011

**SUBJECT:** RACINE: SMALL BUSINESS CENTER OF THE CHICAGO-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR METRICS

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CHALLENGE ONE: To strengthen, revitalize and coordinate business assistance provided by the Partners that include CEDCO, UW- Parkside SBDC and WWBIC for both neighborhood and high impact entrepreneurs.

Strategy A: Increase the number of Stage One companies that mature into Stage Two companies.

Activities:

1. Identify Stage One companies located in the City of Racine. **Depending on data availability all State One companies within the City of Racine will be identified and the process of maturing 3 Stage One companies into Stage Two companies will be initiated by July of 2011.**
2. Provide assistance in determining and filling the gaps that exist in each of the assistance areas. **Together with the Lead Partners, RCEDC will identify gaps by December of 2011.**
3. Create a seed loan fund for entrepreneurs. **Working together with the City of Racine and Racine Development Group, a seed loan fund will be developed and funded by March of 2012.**

Strategy B: The Lead Partners will focus their roles and responsibilities to market and communicate the resources and services available to entrepreneurs within the City.

Activities:

1. RCEDC will coordinate quarterly meetings with Lead Partners to share ideas and encourage continued support for the City's new strategies. **Four meetings will be held between June of 2011 and May of 2012.**
2. Develop a list of services and references of private professionals (i.e. legal services, accounting services, etc.). This will provide a resource list of professionals for small business owners and entrepreneurs to use when seeking assistance in these areas of expertise. **The initial list will be developed by September of 2011 and will be reviewed and updated semi-annually thereafter.**

3. Develop a website and utilize social media marketing to educate the public on the resources available and as a resource for the Partners. **The website will be launched by December of 2011 with social media marketing following by March of 2012.**
4. Develop and market existing virtual training and networking opportunities for small business owners and entrepreneurs. **Virtual training and networking will start by December of 2012.**

Strategy C: Existing entrepreneurial services will be maintained and new programs and resources will be developed to address the gaps that prevent the starting and growing of new businesses within the City.

The following describes the current and proposed services:

Entrepreneurial Services	Organizations			
	RCEDC	CEDCO	SBDC	WWBIC
Business Financing	X	X		X
Mentoring		X		
Classroom Training			X	X
Counseling		X	X	X
Youth Entrepreneurialism	X			

**Existing services will continue to be provided from the start of the initiative with new programs and resources being added by September of 2011.**

Strategy D: Develop a Small Business Advisory Council to provide guidance, input and support for creating an entrepreneurial culture in the City.

Activities:

1. Designate the City's Economic Development Committee or establish a Sub-Committee as the Small Business Advisory Council. **This will be completed by June of 2011.**
2. Coordinate monthly meetings of the Small Business Advisory Council to oversee the initiative. **The Council will meet 12 times during the first year of the initiative, July 2011 through June 2012.**

Strategy E: Create a Small Business Enterprise center at RAMAC to serve as the one-stop location for all entrepreneurial and small business development services and resources.

Activities:

1. RCEDC to negotiate lease terms with RAMAC and establish the one-stop. **Completed by June 1, 2011.**
2. Market one-stop to the public through a series of press releases and grand opening. **Monthly press releases will be issued beginning during the first quarter of the initiative. Grand opening to be held in June of 2011.**
3. Create and develop criteria for co-working space for entrepreneurs. **Criteria to be developed by December of 2011.**

4. Develop marketing material to distribute to all Lead and Support Partners regarding location of one-stop and outlining services available. **Printed marketing material to be completed by August of 2011.**
5. Schedule all appropriate classroom training and off-site counseling at RAMAC. **Beginning in July of 2011 all appropriate classroom training will be held at RAMAC.**

Strategy F: Bolster the mentoring of small business and entrepreneurs, specifically for Stage One businesses moving to Stage Two and for a minimum of 2 years thereafter.

Activities:

1. Develop an entrepreneur mentoring strategy. **Strategy to be created by November of 2011.**
2. Develop criteria for mentor program i.e. what's expected of both the mentor and the client. **Criteria to be developed by December of 2011.**
3. Establish a network of mentors that can provide specific expertise. **Commitments from mentors in place by March of 2012.**
4. Utilize social media to develop a virtual network for small businesses and entrepreneurs. **Launched by June 2012.**

CHALLENGE TWO: To act as a Small Business Ombudsman that will serve as an intermediary and champion between the entrepreneur and the Partners, as well as City agencies

Strategy A: The Ombudsman will guide entrepreneurs through the network of small business development service providers to ensure their interests and needs are met.

Activities:

1. Develop assessment tool to ensure entrepreneurs are referred to the appropriate partner organization, public and/or private service provider. **Intake form to be developed by July of 2011.**
2. Investigate creation of a local crowd funding site similar to Kickstarter.com or ProFounder.com. Crowd funding is described as the collective cooperation and trust by people who pool their money and other resources together to fund business ideas posted, usually via the internet, by entrepreneurs. **Develop preliminary framework and identify a partner to manage site, if necessary by September of 2012.**

Strategy B: The Ombudsman will review and make recommendations to the Racine Economic Development Small Business Advisory Council regarding the initiative.

Activities:

1. The Ombudsman will make recommendations to the Small Business Advisory Council regarding how to make the City more business friendly. **As issues arise the Ombudsman will present recommendations to the Council. The Council is scheduled to meet monthly beginning in July of 2011.**

2. The Ombudsman will suggest changes to City codes and regulations that may adversely affect the local business climate. **As issues arise the Ombudsman will present recommendations to the Council. The Council is scheduled to meet monthly beginning in July of 2011.**

CHALLENGE THREE: To encourage more people to consider entrepreneurship as a potential career option by creating and feeding the entrepreneurial pipeline and creating an entrepreneurial culture in the City.

Strategy A: To aggressively promote youth entrepreneurship in order to make this a career option for Racine's youth throughout their adults lives.

Activities:

1. Coordinate these efforts with Junior Achievement to maximize the benefit to youth entrepreneurs. **Establish relationship by January of 2012 and begin coordination by April of 2012.**
2. Host a youth business plan competition. **Begin to solicit business plans in April of 2012.**
3. Create a local youth entrepreneurship boot camp that will foster the entrepreneurial spirit in middle and high school students through a hands on experience designed to guide students in becoming business owners. The Madison SBDC currently offers a boot camp program. For more information visit: [www.sbdc.wisc.edu/specialprograms/yec/default.asp](http://www.sbdc.wisc.edu/specialprograms/yec/default.asp). **Hold first boot camp in January of 2013.**
4. Create a job shadowing mentor program with local businesses – providing mentoring and guidance from local business leaders. **Developed in conjunction with Challenge One, Strategy F for development in March of 2012.**
5. Identify funding source to develop a seed grant program or micro loans to youth for starting their own businesses. **Developed in conjunction with Challenge One, Strategy A for development and funding in March of 2012.**

Strategy B: Cultivate broad public support and recognition for the importance of entrepreneurship.

Activities:

1. Create a Mayor's award series including Entrepreneur of the Year or New Business of the Year. **The first series of awards to be made by March of 2012.**
2. Host a business plan competition. **Begin to solicit business plans in April of 2012.**
3. Create an adult entrepreneurship boot camp that will foster the entrepreneurial spirit in adults (high school and up) through a hands on experience designed to guide them in becoming business owners. **Hold first boot camp in January of 2013.**

CHALLENGE FOUR: To focus on a proactive retail trade industry recruitment and growth program that will create and retain jobs as well as create tax base and increase personal income in the City of Racine.

Strategy A: RCEDC will implement a targeted and proactive retail trade recruitment and growth program.

Activities:

1. Make available market data both on the RCEDC website and in hard copy that provides key demographic information necessary for retail businesses. **Data to be posted by September of 2011.**
2. Develop a highly detailed building and land inventory that includes buildings located in older traditional retail commercial districts. **Completed by December of 2011 and updated quarterly thereafter.**
3. Develop a strong network of brokers and developers with whom RCEDC staff has frequent contact regarding the retail trade and service industry opportunities. **Beginning in June of 2011 and on-going. This includes the recruitment of two new retail trade businesses in 2011.**

Strategy B: Provide staff assistance to businesses and the City of Racine that supports retail trade recruitment and expansion.

Activities:

1. Explore sources for development of an incentive/financing program specific to retail trade establishments. **Developed in conjunction with Challenge One, Strategy A for development and funding in March of 2012.**