INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION—Business Plans, Job Growth, Economic Competitiveness

“We form America’s natural pragmatic caucus, close to the ground, hungry for results, prizing place over party, solution over dogma and collaboration over conflict.”

-Bruce Katz, Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution at the December 8th Global Metro Summit in Chicago.

The recent Global Metro Summit (December 7-8, 2010) showcased the year-long efforts of the team lead by ULI Minnesota/Regional Council of Mayors, the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Itasca Project, Target Corporation, and the Department of Employment and Economic Development around Metropolitan Business Planning and entrepreneurship development.

To give RCM members a taste of the Chicago event, ULI Minnesota brought Robert Weissbourd, President of R.W. Ventures and Senior Non-Resident Fellow at the Brookings Institution, to the Twin Cities to describe the rationale and next steps for the Metropolitan Business Planning efforts. As a member of President Obama’s transition team, Weissbourd and Bruce Katz from the Brookings Institution were focused on how to integrate federal programs and break silos. Highlighting that population and economic assets and outputs are clustered in metros, they also advocated for a “metro policy” that gives region’s the flexibility to develop a prospectus, with clearly defined benchmarks and outcomes, from which the federal government can invest in a more holistic manner.

Weissbourd shared the details of the business planning approach with the audience noting that it “is a new way of doing business for governments: it is grounded in economics and business, is focused on continuous implementation, and it gets the job done.” It is in essence, performance-based funding.

Click here to access Weissbourd’s detailed presentation.

In March 2011, the Brookings Institution will hold another summit geared toward a federal audience that will also feature MSP’s work.

Accelerate MSP
Mayors Chris Coleman and R.T. Rybak reprised their Chicago presentation that focused on the region’s year-long effort to develop a business plan and a new effort to aggressively support entrepreneurialism in the region.

As the Mayors discussed, the region is blessed with an educated workforce, a high quality of life, and premier research institutions, but at the same time faces challenges with modest wage growth, a persistent achievement gap, flagging talent attraction, and a contraction in
innovation. The mayors highlighted five integrated regional strategies that will be a key to the region’s success:

1. Regional Economic Development Partnership
2. MSP Regional Cluster Initiative
3. Thinc. Green MSP (green manufacturing, creating green jobs of tomorrow)
4. Corridors of Opportunity (place growth in places with transportation capacity)
5. Entrepreneurship Accelerator

Through the work with Brookings, the region has focused energy on creating the new Entrepreneurship Accelerator (EA) in partnership with JumpStart, a Cleveland, Ohio based non-profit focused on catalyzing entrepreneurship. The EA will create a coordinated framework and single-point of access to pool local, state, and federal resources. The EA will help to move ideas to market and will be research, data, and results based. Through the work of the EA, the region hopes to drive additional connection and collaboration among existing local/regional and private-public economic development efforts; increase state support for a metro-focused economic development approach; and increase cohesion across the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Beth Fitz Gibbon, JumpStart’s Chief Operating Officer, said that they are currently in the research phase to develop an operational business plan. They are interview investors and the entrepreneurial community to gather baseline data and input. This will work will continue through winter 2011.

**Regional Cluster Initiative (RCI) Update**

Mayor Stan Harpstead will be stepping into a support role as he leaves his mayoral post and Mayor Gene Winstead will be the new initiative leader. Harpstead challenged mayors to continue to talk to more business executives. The 2011 RCP objectives include:

- Integrating the work with the EA
- Continue to have mayoral interviews with Fortune 500 companies to understand what’s important to them and why they are here.
- Begin work on the medical device cluster—while it has germinated in the private sector, connection to the mayors is critical.

**MSP Regional Economic Development Partnership**

The Itasca Project’s Kathy Schmidlkofer updated RCM members on the REDP status noting that they are in the closing stages of the CEO search. The goal is to have the position occupied by February 1. Funding for the partnership is on-track to exceed its first year goals and Ms. Schmidlkofer thanked the mayors for their support and contributions.

In a discussion sessions the mayors suggested getting these various activities under one umbrella and that a fruitful area may be looking at the possibility of common permitting across jurisdictions to make it easier to do business in the region. Mr. Weissbourd talked about developing a “value proposition” for the region in the Metropolitan Business Plan. Mayors also talked about the need to have a more direct relationship with the Metropolitan Council on economic development issues.

The meeting ended with an agreement that a larger, local Metropolitan Summit would be an excellent next step to broaden the tent on all of the economic development work underway.
COMING UP
The January 2011 RCM meeting will be on Monday, January 10th at Dorsey & Whitney.

ATTENDEES
Mayors
Chris  Coleman  City of St. Paul
Holly  Dahl       City of Lakeville
Jerry  Fraust  City of St. Anthony
Debbie  Goettel  City of Richfield
Mary  Hamann-Roland  City of Apple Valley
Bill  Hargis  City of Woodbury
Stan  Harpstead  City of Arden Hills
James  Hovland  City of Edina
Marvin  Johnson  City of Independence
Dean  Johnston  City of Lake Elmo
Elizabeth  Kautz  City of Burnsville
Steve  Lampi  City of Brooklyn Park
Peter  Lindstrom  City of Falcon Heights
Mike  Maguire  City of Eagan
Sandy  Martin  City of Shoreview
Gene  Maxwell  City of Hopkins
Nick  Ruehl  City of Excelsior
R. T.  Rybak  City of Minneapolis
Terry  Schneider  City of Minnetonka
Mark  Steffenson  City of Maple Grove
John  Sweeney  City of Maple Plain
Ken  Willcox  City of Wayzata
Janet  Williams  City of Savage

Guests
John  Adams  University of Minnesota
John  Bailey  1000 Friends of MN
Bake  Baker  McGough
Allison  Barmann  Itasca
Cecile  Bedor  St. Paul
Steve  Berg  MinnPost.com
Bill  Blazar  MN Chamber of Commerce
John  Brightinger  Northmarq
Colleen  Carey  The Cornerstone Group
Rick  Carter  LHB
Rick  Collins  Ryan Companies
Jon  Commers  Donjek
Erin  Dady  Mayor Coleman's Office
Beth  Eliot  City of Minneapolis staff
Bonnie  Elsey  DEED
Beth  Fitz Gibbon  JumpStart
John  Foley  4FRONT
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