

# PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

Updated July 2, 2003

## NEW ECONOMY PROJECT

**Summary:** Support economic development efforts that emphasize development of human resources, infrastructure, value added, and industrial retention and expansion rather than industrial recruitment and tax/subsidy incentives for footloose firms.

*Western Maryland Economic Development Task Force.* Support initiatives of the Western Maryland Economic Development Task Force as appropriate.

Progress: Supported creation of special committees to investigate recommendations of the “Delivery of Government Services” workgroup. Supported city-county consolidation efforts in codes, elections, and dispatching. Arranged work session presentation on Parks and Recreation consolidation issues. Recommended creation of new blue-ribbon panel to update regional economic development strategic plan.

*Firm Clusters.* Identify core industry clusters and local competitive advantages. Market the city with information from critical industrial self-study.

Progress: Helped draft ordinance (using Leesburg, VA model) that created Economic Development Commission. Supported hiring of Economic Development Specialist. Helped to locate source of funding for first formal economic development strategic plan in history to be initiated in fall 2003.

*Business Park Themes.* Develop “new economy” themes for municipal industrial parks and business districts.

Progress: Have supported neighborhood themes developed by Downtown Business Association and Neighborhood Associations. Supported Brownfield redevelopment in proposed area of South End Industrial Park and business park in Willowbrook Road area. Supported re-zoning plans to accommodate new medical and business enterprise expansion in existing commercial/industrial zones or ones adjacent to such zones.

*Firm Retention and Expansion Alert System .* Construct a firm retention and expansion alert system to identify firms that are likely to abandon the City and identify ways in which the City can facilitate their needs.

Progress: Attended training on Department of Business and Economic Development internet based firm retention system. This system is utilized by the City Economic Development Specialist.

*Fiscal Impacts.* Implement a fiscal impact instrument for evaluating and rewarding any tax and loan incentive packages.

Progress: Recommended that council hire consultant to develop formula to evaluate city annexations and other city development proposals. Although this recommendation was not accepted, have used own informal spreadsheet-based “fiscal impact” model to evaluate fiscal benefits of projects such as developmental rights and responsibilities agreements and annexation proposals.

*Coming Home.* Develop an online electronic database of former residents wishing to “come home” and a place to mount their qualifications for local employment opportunities.

Progress: The Allegany County Economic Development Office has developed a process to identify pool of former residents who are college graduates and might be interested in relocating to this area.

*Tourism Marketing Analysis.* Develop a visitor marketing analysis to identify service needs currently being met and any deficiencies.

Progress: Western Maryland Economic Development Task Force initiated Strategic Plan has been completed. This report was forwarded to the Community Development staff for follow-up.

*Information Capacity.* Provide support and encouragement for local information firms to expand reliance on locally generated critical information capacities.

Progress: Have helped make local consultants aware of bidding opportunities when available.

*Educational Partnerships.* Build new partnerships with local educational institutions and expand student internship participation.

Progress: Introduced use of Allegany College of Maryland student for GIS mapping projects in the City. Supported Frostburg State University COPC (Community Outreach Partnership Center) grant initiative and attended grant meetings. Working with the Board of Education to expand playground redevelopment and capital improvement efforts. Collaborated with consortium of educational and public health agencies in grants writing effort for Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grant to improve community physical fitness.

*Guaranteed Workforce.* Work with county educators to develop a “Guaranteed Workforce” plan.

Progress: Participate on Workforce Summit committee to develop and implement workforce improvement initiatives. During this time, the committee has sponsored an annual workforce quality surveys, an underemployment survey, a client service training program and is working on an Allegany County Employer Summit

*Community Technology Center.* Explore the possibility of developing a ‘Community Technology Center’ for the Cumberland area.

Progress: Have supported Carver Community Center renovation and program funding.

## **CYBERCITY 2010**

**Summary:** Improve information dissemination, on-line marketing, and customer service using new electronic technologies.

*Electronic Town Hall.* Create an electronic town hall which allows citizen web participation in city meetings, informal “straw polls” concerning city issues, and on-line payment of municipal bills and fees.

Progress: Have pushed to have every city department maintain a web presence (Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and City Commissions have been added so far). Online payment system is available and city forms have been added in Adobe Acrobat format. The city has conducted two Internet surveys concerning (1) the possible re-opening of the Cumberland Mall, and (2) the possible reconfiguration of the City parks system. Have designated summer 2003 to implement first citywide online Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

*Technology Plan.* Develop a technology plan for municipal government. Undertake a critical audit of the city’s technological capabilities and deficits.

Progress: Pushed technology audit to determine city deficits in the area of Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Helped to establish introductory training program for nearly one dozen staff members. Supported City-County GIS collaboration efforts.

*Web Business Directory.* Work with consortium of independent web businesses to build one stop access to local businesses having a web presence.

Progress: A private firm, Away Media, is developing a new Cumberland portal ([www.CumberlandMaryland.com](http://www.CumberlandMaryland.com)) on its own initiative.

*Web Cam.* Mount a web cam of central business district.

Progress: City is working with Board of Education to possibly mount web cam(s) on Circuit Courthouse building to provide panoramic view of city.

*eVillage*. Promote citizen awareness and use of electronic technologies. Measure community use of new technology and establish appropriate goals for the future.

Progress: Established own web-page to increase awareness of city government initiatives. Supported ALLCONET II funding. Attempted to establish “Government Access” television channel in partnership with Board of Education and Allegany College of Maryland but was denied by Charter Communications.

## **KIDS COUNT**

**Summary:** Improve recreational amenities, health, and safety for Cumberland’s children. ·

*Recreational Improvements*. Implement findings of parks and recreation plan.

Progress: Spearheaded new Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan that streamlined park system, infused record amounts of funding into capital improvements, generated new revenue streams, initiated new public/private collaborative recreational offerings, created a new annual Children’s event at Constitution Park, and generated new grant funding sources. Wrote successful Major League Baseball foundation grant that will leverage over \$50,000 in ball field improvements in FY 04. Vigorously lobbied state and county officials for Department of Natural Resources funds for City improvements. City developed “stakeholder” neighborhood park guidelines for jointly funding and maintaining deactivated city playgrounds.

*Safe Streets*. Make road maintenance, accessibility, signage and safety improvements in vicinity of schools, playgrounds, and bus-stops a priority issue.

Progress: Gave worksession presentation on state of Board of Education facilities and lack of upkeep. Met with Board President and Superintendent concerning this situation and also presented concerns to a Board of Education Public meeting. No unambiguous response received from Board.

*Fluoridation*. Help educate the electorate about the benefits of a water fluoridation plan that meets the needs of our area’s children.

Progress: City fluoridation commenced in September 2001.

## **GLOBAL CONNECTIONS**

**Summary:** Develop global partnerships that provide new models and perspectives for community development, that enhance international prospecting and exporting opportunities, and that complement municipal marketing efforts.

*Sister City*. Sponsor Sister City initiative through Sister City International with a European “best practice” city of similar size.

Progress: Established “Friendship City” arrangement with Tapa, Estonia.

*Babylon Network*. Develop an inventory of bilingual residents to assist in international firm recruitment and assimilation of international professionals.

Progress: No progress to date.

## **POTHOLE PLUS**

**Summary:** Improve information systems for transportation planning, emphasize infrastructure investment, and develop municipal services that are run more like the private sector

*Road Prioritization System.* Develop transparent system for prioritizing transportation needs and improvements and measuring municipal road surface quality.

Progress: Adoption of road prioritization system is a city strategic objective for the Engineering Department in FY 2004.

*Infrastructure.* Increase share of municipal grant spending on street maintenance and construction.

Progress: Funding for in-house paving program from Block Grant funds has increased over the last two years.

*Reinvent Government.* Apply building design, quality control, signage, and customer service standards similar to those employed in the private sector for municipal services.

Progress: City now allows on-line and credit-card payment of city bills. City is implementing computerized “complaint system.” City is studying additional ways to improve revenue generation through non-tax methods.

*Regional Airport.* Provide information support for critical infrastructures such as the regional airport.

Progress: No progress to date.

## **PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY**

**Summary:** Promote environmentally friendly development so that our municipality lives within the limits of nature and embodies quality.

*Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly City.* Create a pedestrian and bicycle friendly city by integrating Canal Trail, Allegheny Highland Trail, and potential Potomac River Greenway Trail with a municipal bike path grid that accesses points of interest in city.

Progress: Have supported downtown pedestrian mall, Allegheny Highlands Trail, and other pedestrian improvements. Ideas for bikeways master plan were presented to staff. Improvement in Downtown area were initiated to improve pedestrian access and safety.

*Monitor City Environmental Quality.* Report results of water, air, and solid waste pollution audits. Utilize sustainability indicators in marketing and accountability measurement.

Progress: This issue is being worked on by the Sustainable Development subcommittee of the Economic Development Commission. Have participated in regular meetings of this subcommittee.

## **SELLING OUR CITY**

**Summary:** Improve marketing efforts to increase visibility of Cumberland and its industrial/tourism assets to the region and world.

*Image and Identity.* Improve the identity, image, and marketing of the town by developing new municipal logos.

Progress: No progress to date.

*On-line Marketing.* Improve online (WWW) marketing of the city.

Progress: Numerous suggestions for new links, new pages, and new information were submitted to MIS department for incorporation into web page. MIS department used web-tracking software on trial basis to better understand Internet traffic to City webpage.

## **SMART CHOICES**

**Summary:** Reinvigorate the municipal strategic planning process and rationalize municipal service delivery.

*Mission and Vision.* Re-write the municipal mission and vision. Develop a revised statement that is achievable and measurable and link it with a revised strategic plan.

Progress: City is undergoing new comprehensive planning process and will soon begin work on a regional comprehensive economic development plan.

*Consolidation.* Support efforts to consolidate municipal services with County where appropriate.

Progress: Supported consolidation of elections, codes and dispatching. Arranged work session presentation on Parks and Recreation consolidation issues

*Municipal downsizing.* Tie municipal staffing levels more closely to population in service area. Reduce staff where appropriate and pass savings along to taxpayers.

Progress: Have supported EMA process that has resulted in staff cross-training and attrition. The number of full-time staff has decreased over the last three years.

## **SAFE WITHIN**

**Summary:** Take measures to increase safety in the Central Business District and improve municipal health care opportunities.

*Downtown Mall Safety.* Support stricter enforcement of loitering prohibitions in public shopping spaces.

Progress: Met with Police Department and Downtown Managers to develop plan to deal with Downtown loitering problem. Walked with city police foot patrols for two weeks during the summer of 2003.

*Parking Garage Safety.* Reserve first-level parking spaces in municipal parking garages for women during nighttime hours.

Progress: Reviewed statistics on crime in public parking garages and Baltimore Street railway underpass. Statistics indicated that no action is needed at this time.

*Regional Health Care Center.* Support consolidation needs in health care to assist local agencies achieve economics of scale and scope in health care delivery. Assist expansion of specialty clinics at Memorial Campus.

Progress: Supported lease agreement change to enable construction of parking garage on Memorial Campus.

*Health Care Targeting.* Identify unmet specialist needs in regional health care matrix. Participate in aggressive recruitment of qualified professionals.

Progress: Spearheaded effort to reform city zoning regulations to allow health clinics in existing commercial zones. Attended meetings of and supported Community Access Health Care initiative to provide health care product for the working poor.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY NOW**

**Summary:** Make elected officials accountable for developments that occur during their tenure. Improve public participation and provide leadership on key issues.

*Municipal Benchmarking.* Establish quantitative targets for important indicators of community economic, environmental, health, and social well-being and track annual measurements showing progress toward targets.

Progress: In progress. System will be introduced in FY 2004 with Project Scale-Up/Adventure Government initiatives.

*State of the City.* Encourage the city mayor to develop an annual “State of the City” address outlining achievements of past fiscal year and goals for the next.

Progress: Mayor delivered State of The City presentation to Cumberland Rotary Club during FY 2003.

*Diverse Viewpoints.* Encourage more diverse viewpoints on municipal action committees, including the participation of individuals who might oppose the action being studied.

Progress: Have appointed more diverse members to City commissions.

*Leadership.* Provide leadership on key issues affecting the welfare of the City.

Progress: Have increased exposure and awareness of Cumberland City Council in regional issues. Have communicated regularly with print, broadcast, and web-based media.