

**RHODE ISLAND COMMERCE CORPORATION**  
**MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**

**June 21, 2023**

The Rhode Island Economic Development Planning Council (“EDPC”) met on June 21, 2023 at the Department of Administration (1 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908) pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.

The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Elizabeth M. Tanner, esq./Daniela Fairchild (Chair); Meredith Brady; Liz Catucci; Channavy Chhay; Andrew Cortes; Pamela Cotter; Roshni Darnal; Russ Griffiths; Roberta Groch; Carol Malysz; Jason Martesian; Oscar Mejias; Elizabeth Lynn; Chelsea Siefert; and Kira Wills.

Not attending were: Jude Amoako; Rilwan Feyisitan, Jr.; Shannon Gilkey; Lori Giuttari; Philip Gould; Bernadette MacArthur; Lisa Ranglin; Loren Spears; Mario Bueno; Dave Chenevert; Jane Cole; Krystofer Redden; and Michael Sabitoni.

Also in attendance were Patrick Duffy and Adam Isaacs-Falbel of RI Commerce as well as Rachel Selsky and Lindsay Johnson of Camoin Associates.

Members of the public included Alan Krinsky, Angela Rizzolo, and David Owoyemi.

The meeting was called to order at 8:50am.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the prior meeting of the Economic Development Planning Council on May 17, 2023, were unanimously approved.

Secretary Tanner gave opening remarks, discussing the stakeholder engagement and public outreach that has happened so far throughout the CEDS process, including over 100 different individuals and organizations. She asked the committee to consider and bring forward ideas to make the plan bolder and stronger. She highlighted things to focus on in considering the draft strategies presented by the CEDS team: working with the committee to understand and identify top priorities; a focus on equity, resiliency, linkages to past plans, and measurable impact; which draft strategies we might not need; and how we can move the strong strategies forward and make them more meaningful. She said that this meeting would be more interactive to get lots of feedback from the Council, and asked the Council to not be shy in suggesting edits or new ideas. Secretary Tanner then turned it over to Rachel Selsky of Camoin Associates for additional remarks.

Ms. Selsky welcomed Council members and outlined the preparation for this meeting, including a review of the data analysis, stakeholder conversations, previous plans, and more. Then, these items were incorporated into draft strategies for the CEDS, which were provided to the Council

for their reaction. The purpose of today's meeting is to act as a barometer for these strategies and for the holistic approach to the CEDS. She asked the Council to help shed light on what is missing, what needs tweaks, and what ideas need to be incorporated, all in an action-oriented way. She highlighted the CEDS process and necessary steps, mentioning that the goals, objectives, and strategies reviewed today will have action steps and tactics underneath them, including details such as implementation leaders and associated metrics. Tactics will be reviewed at the following meeting. Ms. Selsky then turned it over to Lindsay Johnson of Camoin Associates.

Ms. Johnson discussed the plan for the interactive workshop with the Council. Three stations were set up to align with the buckets of strategies and objectives sent around previously (increased prosperity, sustainable growth, and strong communities). Council members were asked to rotate to each station, placing a dot sticker next to a strategy or objective that they think is a priority. Additionally, they could add ideas that they didn't see represented or suggest edits to proposed items on a separate piece of paper at the station.

Elizabeth Lynn asked whether the Council should be focused on the strategy or objective level and whether they should be prioritizing the strategies.

Lindsay Johnson responded that they should be marking the items that they want to keep by indicating with a sticker, as well as recommending any new ones that they do not see represented. She added that the Council should keep in mind the timeline of different strategies given that the CEDS is a five-year plan and not everything can happen at once. Daniela Fairchild said that this sticker exercise will help to inform the prioritization. She said that the team is trying to strike a balance by being comprehensive (as required by EDA), which includes a lot of things that Commerce doesn't lead – meaning that the state will need other implementation partners to continue doing work and lead objectives. Additionally, the Council will need to help inform on what work is already ongoing by other partners and can be tied into the CEDS.

The Council then proceeded with the workshop as described.

Following the workshop section of the agenda, Lindsay Johnson, Rachel Selsky, and Roberta Groch summarized major points heard through the working groups.

In the Strong Communities group, Ms. Johnson said that one of the main themes was being bold about how we better connect the senior population and the early childhood population through better infrastructure, knowledge sharing, language learning, etc.

Ms. Selsky said that the Increased Prosperity table discussed workforce and the need to tie workforce needs to specific skills identified by the industry. Additionally, tying the larger corporations that are doing the buying in the state to the small businesses supply chain (especially minority and women business enterprises) in Rhode Island.

Andrew Cortes added that he said the same thing at every table, relating to Registered Apprenticeships as it is a strong data-driven solution.

Ms. Groch said that more transit and better service was a consistent theme throughout, as climate change can't be solved without transportation. A major theme was connecting people to their jobs and implementing the transit master plan, which cuts across agencies and implementation partners. Additionally, the group discussed funding and infrastructure needs to address climate change and resiliency, which needs a leader to determine what to fund. Infrastructure (including broadband) was another main theme, both hard infrastructure and people infrastructure.

Oscar Mejias added that small businesses need recovery plans in order to be able to respond to a crisis, as shown by the COVID pandemic.

Kira Wills mentioned the public interest of accessibility for elderly adults and individuals with disabilities (especially as it relates to the workforce), and that that should be a priority.

Lindsay Johnson gave a preview of the upcoming month, saying that the team will go back and reshape strategies and priorities based on what was heard today, and that will be shared via email. She emphasized that the next step will be spelling out tactics and that actions and implementation partners will be covered at the next meeting in July.

Elizabeth Lynn asked when we will start talking about metrics for the objectives. She said that understanding metrics will be important in prioritizing, based on which objectives will move the needle on the important metrics.

Rachel Selsky answered that some metrics will be incorporated starting at the next meeting in July and agreed that metrics will help to aid in the prioritization based on where there is capacity to make the biggest change.

Oscar Mejias mentioned we shouldn't forget the evaluation strategies in addition to setting KPIs and metrics.

Daniela Fairchild responded that the team has been looking at RI Rising (the last state approved CEDS) and RI Innovates 2.0 (CEDS equivalent from 2019) and trying to evaluate how we have done on those recommendations. The team is aiming to share this update at the next meeting. She further shared that upcoming priorities are making updates to objectives and priorities. She asked the committee that if there is one implementation tactic that they think would really move the needle, consider those and share them. For example, she cited that Channavy Chhay is focused on employee ownership/business succession and Chelsea Siefert discussed a fund to help manufacturers transition to cleaner energy options.

The meeting adjourned at 10:08am.

RHODE ISLAND  
Executive Office of Commerce

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING**

A meeting of the Economic Development Planning Council will be held on June 21, 2023 beginning at 8:45 a.m. at the Rhode Island Department of Administration, 1 Capitol Hill, Room 2A, Providence, RI 02908. The meeting will be held for the following purposes:

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes
3. Recap of Work to Date
4. Discussion of Proposed Strategic Priorities and Objectives
5. Preview of Upcoming Work and Milestones
6. Adjourn

This location is accessible to the handicapped. Those requiring interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation at (401) 278-9100 forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting. Also, for the hearing impaired, assisted listening devices are available onsite, without notice, at this location.

This notice shall be posted at the Office of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, the Executive Office of Commerce, the State House, and by electronic filing with the Secretary of State's Office.

Posted on June 16, 2023

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