

Flint Rotary World

Charter No. 220 – **Rotary Club of Flint, Michigan** – Organized April 7, 1916

Rotary theme for 2009-10 – “The Future of Rotary is in Your Hands”

John Kenny, Grangemouth, Scotland, President, Rotary International - Tanya Wolff, Sarnia, Canada, Governor, District 6330

Coming up this week: Congressman Dale Kildee

Last week’s meeting featured Genesee County’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Continuing with the Government and Legislative Series, **Rob Jewell** introduced **Win Cooper of Cooper Commercial** and **Keith Edwards of the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce** who presented a summary of the Genesee County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This effort was the result of a massive community effort and is required by law in order for the community to apply for Governmental Economic Development Grants. This represents the first time our community has assembled a strategy to apply for economic development grants. The group began their work in October 2009 and is comprised of 51% private sector and 49% public sector.

The goal of the CEDS strategy was:

- 1) Secure federal funding for priority economic development projects that benefit the entire county
- 2) Focus strategic thinking on economic development, to start moving the County forward gain
- 3) Recommend short-term strategies to retain jobs, along with mid-term and long-term strategies to re-ignite job creation.

The plan contains over \$1 billion in projects across the county could support creation of over 16,000 jobs and about \$1.8 billion in wages, both in the construction industry, and in other sectors.

Some of the weaknesses and threats the study revealed:

- The decline of GM has dramatically reshaped the local economy, which is far less integrated today when compared to 20 years ago.
- Fragmented public leadership and duplication of public services
- A fragmented and under-funded approach to countvwide economic development *Continued on page 3*

VITAL STATISTICS

For the February 12 meeting:

Kevin Keane served as the greeter, with introduction of guests and visiting Rotarians provided by **David Smith**. **Melissa Jacobsen** led us in song and **Jonathan Hohn** offered the inspirational message. **Kim Egerer** sold 50/50 tickets. Set up and take by **Kylie Gates** with assistance from **Don Barrow** and **Dick Cordell**. As always, thanks to pianist **Paul Vanston**.

Upcoming Programs

February 26 – State Senator Deborah Cherry

March Programs To Be Announced

Officers and Directors

President - James Franklin III

President Elect - Jerry Johnson

Vice President - Don Rockwell

Vice President - Tiffany Flynn

Director - Joe Fioroni

Director - Joy Martinbianco

Director - Kevin Keane

Director - Dawn Hibbard

Past President - Roxanne Caine

Club Administrator - Amy van der Putte

Treasurer - Rebecca Millsap

Secretary/Treasurer Emeritus - Richard Cordell

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- The reality of continued public sector financial challenges for the next 24 months, fed by near term reductions in state shared revenue and further reductions in property value.

A comparison between Genesee County and Battle Creek in terms of the amount of dollars spent on economic development is startling. Battle Creek spends \$27 per capita while Genesee County spends closer to \$2-\$3 per capita. Local governments will be impacted with the shrinking tax base. From 1995-2005 local governments saw an expansion of that base. Over recent years we have seen erosion that could see the tax base decline to 2001 levels.

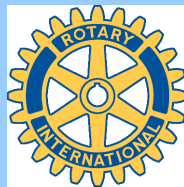
There is a brighter side to this; our community has a multitude of strengths and opportunities. Some of the top ones:

- The County offers a considerable supply of labor with competitive wage levels and skills that are applicable to numerous advanced manufacturing opportunities.
- A considerable inventory of vacant land and office, industrial, and distribution space is available at highly competitive rates.
- Robust rail and interstate transportation infrastructure is also in place to support existing office and industrial space, with connections to nationwide rail and interstate supply chains.
- Access to fresh water in a national context where fresh water supplies are increasingly limited
- Institutional financial support through groups such as the C.S. Mott Foundation, along with a broad array of incentive tools.

Job growth/creation is key. This study expects the county to add 200 to 300 positions per year. Longer term the need exists to create 1,000/year, the study presents a 12 year goal to create 9,000 new jobs in Genesee County. This job growth will be driven by health care and education, finance, insurance, and real estate, professional and technical services, transportation and utilities.

Copies of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy can be found at

<http://www.co.genesee.mi.us/gcmpc-plan/>



The Rotary Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

- 1. Is it the TRUTH?**
- 2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?**
- 3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**
- 4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?**