

# **WSC Regional Planning Meeting**

## **Pre-Survey Results**

### Common Value, Mission, Vision and Goals

**Berkshire Region**

Strategy Matters LLC.

April 2017

# VALUES



- “Be responsive and open to change and innovation”
- “Support and Access”
- “Diversity and inclusion”
- “Integrity and engagement”,  
“Integrity/honest”

# VISION



- “Quality workforce development activities resulting skilled workforce”
- “Partnership with business and industry, economic development organizations, education, labor community agencies, government agencies and individuals”
- “greater economic growth”

# VISION

- to excel as the primary workforce resource in Berkshire County area for labor market information, skills enhancement, customized training, and youth college/career readiness programming. Working in partnership with business and industry, economic development organizations, education, labor, community agencies, government agencies and individuals, the BCREB provides quality workforce development activities resulting in a skilled workforce that exceeds the needs of today's employers and tomorrow's job challenges.
- To provide the finest vocational/technical education in the Commonwealth
- To diversify and grow the economy in the Berkshires.
- Reinvent the bounds of innovation to advance our customer's mission
- Berkshire Community College is a dynamic learning community, transforming lives and preparing students to succeed in an increasingly complex, diverse, and changing world.
- BRPC, as an indispensable source of support and leadership to municipalities, organizations and citizens, effects positive change through its collaborative efforts to achieve Sustainable Berkshires principles and a high quality of life for County residents, including greater economic growth, sustainable resource management, environmental, social and economic equity, and effective governmental and educational services.

[illegible]

- “Provide leadership”
- “Promote excellence in learning and teaching”
- “Committed to access, academic excellence, student access, and leadership in community”

# MISSION

- to facilitate the social and educational growth of our students through the development of new skills enabling them to succeed in their communities
- To provide leadership for workforce development in Berkshire County by aligning education and training with local labor market needs.
- To graduate technically skilled, academically prepared and socially responsible individuals ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century.
- To advance the economy of the Berkshires
- Discover new ways to rapidly deliver a full-spectrum of mission critical solutions in an ever-changing world by partnering with our customers, teammates, suppliers and communities.
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) is the Commonwealth's public liberal arts college and a campus of the Massachusetts state university system. MCLA promotes excellence in learning and teaching, innovative scholarship, intellectual creativity, public service, applied knowledge, and active and responsible citizenship. MCLA prepares its graduates to be practical problem solvers and engaged, resilient global citizens.
- Berkshire Community College (BCC) strives to place higher education within reach of all residents of Berkshire County and beyond. BCC is committed to access, academic excellence, student success, and leadership in the community. BCC helps students overcome financial, physical and/or social barriers and welcomes the into a college environment of academic excellence. BCC provides quality programs that prepare student to enter or progress within the workforce and/or for transfer, while fostering a lifelong enthusiasm for learning. BCC provides resources and services students need to be successful, to meet our academic standards, an to achieve their personal and professional goals. BCC provides leadership by furthering the engagement of our students in the community: by working collaboratively with civic leaders, organizations and employers; and by serving as a center for diverse educational and cultural activities.
- BRPC provides leadership and assistance to the County's municipalities, organizations and citizens in achieving County-wide inter-relationships, prosperity, opportunities, quality of life, strength and vibrancy.

## What changes do you anticipate? - Funding, staffing issue and other resources

- Lack of **qualified staff** continues to constrict further growth and development.
- **Budgetary constraints** and limitations will impact **staffing**; Commitment to fostering change may be challenging for some organizations; strength is that our region already collaborates
- **Budget restraints**
- **Budgetary** changes have already impacted our **staffing and available resources** for promoting the region. Currently - the three challenges that we're most concerned about are the continued increase in energy costs (Eversource), access to skilled workforce to fill existing industry needs and the availability of resources to promote the region and attract businesses.
- The United States **Budget** can cause increases or decreases.
- **Regional demographic shifts.** Declining **resources**.
- It would be extremely helpful to have the Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC) **funded and operational**. We would provide the administrative backbone for that operation and would be connected in realtime to the needs of a very important industry sector in Berkshire County. We need **funds** for some **additional training space**, and more support for Workforce development. This used to be **funded** based on performance but the funds have dried up and the work goes on. I am appreciative that Massachusetts appears to be bucking a national trend to reduce funding for public Higher Education, but honestly, 1% increases will not support the work we all must do to address the critical needs in Berkshire county> We need **more faculty** in some key areas but currently the **resources** aren't there to support this. We continue to seek out grants and support the needs of key industry partners by whatever means we have at our disposal.
- The proposed FY 2018 **federal budget** submitted by the President is a severe threat to our continued viability as an organization. The State has been very supportive on the other hand and continuation of that support is equally as important.

# What do you hope we can accomplish during our first regional planning session?

- **Consensus, partnership, Shared vision and mission, action plan, understanding of the challenges**

- Determine **priorities**
- **Consensus** on Core Team Notion to not be all things to all people Develop short and long term **action items**
- creating training **partnerships** partnerships
- It would be great to develop a **deeper understanding** of the challenges we're dealing with here in the Berkshires. While our economy has a few well known high-points, our economic health pales in comparison to those regions inside of the 495 belt.
- To all get on the **same page** and be able to put a **plan** together to move forward
- Recognition and common **understanding of problem.** Some sense of **common vision** for future such as identifying 1-2 key things we can rally around.
- Identifying the **key industry sectors and determining a way to collaborate**, support mutual needs and move forward collectively.
- Arrive at a **clear, collectively agreed upon mission.** Achieve honesty in understanding where we are falling short and move outside of our own organization's box of self-interest.

# What do you think is important in order to ensure that the regional planning process is successful?

- Realistic **expectations**
- **Consistency and timely information.** **Commitment** and active **participation.** **Follow through.**
- **partnerships**
- Better access to **state funding** and **support** for universally agreed upon regional opportunities.
- Everyone's **voice is heard** but then we all move forward with one voice
- **Balance of talk at and talk with.** So....a design **process** to shape the conversation and deliverable.
- We have excellent partnerships in the Berkshires, building on this and resolving the BIC will go far to **mobilizing efforts and securing a collective will and belief** that we will succeed broadly.
- Arrive at **3-5 achievable and specific actions** to match good jobs needed by employers with people who can thrive and grow in those jobs, again setting aside our inherent organizational biases and interests.

## Is there anything else you think our team should know about your unique perspective or experiences?

- I think it is important to share that as a region we're beginning to feel like the Commonwealth is listening, but not always acting. We have a variety of identified needs that have been stagnant in the pipeline. We could use stronger state leadership in dealing with our educational funding shortfalls, the significant disparity in energy costs for Western Massachusetts and the growing competition we face from New York, which we geographically reside right beside. We're doing very good collaborative work, and have tremendous support from the limited number of large businesses remaining in the Berkshires. But we need a stronger partner in the Commonwealth to prepare our region for the future. We're proud that Massachusetts is considered the best state to live in America, but we do not feel that same level of prosperity in the Berkshires that is felt in Eastern Massachusetts.
- I am working on several regional task forces including a regional leadership council. This due to the fact that we have many sector specific conversations but not as many cross sector coordinated efforts. It would be ideal if this could complement but not compete with other efforts. To the degree you all had a working understanding of those would be useful in aligning.
- We are very fortunate in the Berkshires in that our geography gives us a very clear sense of connection. We are facing a stiff headwind with a declining population especially of 22-40 year olds and we have major retirements coming in the county. If the Commonwealth would recognize how perfectly positioned the Berkshires are to test ideas and concepts, you would have willing partners in business and industry, economic development organizations, municipal government and education. We work really well together. Everyone cares and most seem willing to make personal sacrifices especially in the short term for long term gain. There is a decent tolerance for risk but we need some "wins" soon to keep everyone on board. We continue to work with the K-12 system to illustrate Berkshire career opportunities to keep more of our residents in the County or returning to the County. I feel so fortunate to live and work in Berkshire County. And we have wonderful, smart, savvy, dynamic and committed leaders across the board.
- My view is colored by my bias that our greatest regional export has become our most capable young people and we are not doing a good job of recognizing that jobs such as in the skilled trades can be really good employment - our education system, even the tech high schools, seem to disdain those. We also tend to listen "from above" as somewhat elites in the community and don't listen well to the average small business owner or the potential workforce.