

## **Mayor's New Tools 2009**

An Action Plan for Building an Economically Self-Reliant Kansas City

### **Task Force Meeting Summary**

**May 4, 2009**

**4 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

#### **Welcome and Agenda Review**

Chairman Ajamu Webster welcomed the task force members and the audience to the meeting. He asked that each person in attendance introduce themselves.

Mayor Mark Funkhouser thanked the task force for its work and emphasized the importance of it for the future of Kansas City.

Mr. Webster then explained to the task force that from this meeting forward, the task force would be asked to reflect on the information generated from the Village Forums and committee research and provide direction to the New Tools initiative, using their extensive knowledge and experience to help identify the new tools.

#### **Village Forum Review: Assets in the distressed areas**

Spark Bookhart, chair of the community engagement committee, provided an overview of the first round of four Village Forums at which the community was asked to identify assets. He outlined the "leaky bucket exercise" in which it was exhibited that if capital of all kinds stays within the community, it thrives. Mr. Bookhart told the task force that the participants were asked to view their community with a "new set of lenses" to look at assets rather than needs and then identify assets within seven areas of capital. Mr. Bookhart provided a list of the assets that were identified.

#### **Turning Assets Into Action: Where do we go from here?**

Patty Gentrup of Shockey Consulting outlined again the goals of the task force work. In the distressed areas, the goal is to:

1. Increase population and density.
2. Increase individual economic opportunities, including increasing individual income, employment and number of quality jobs.
3. Increase business activities and business profits.
4. Increase property values.
5. Develop safe and livable neighborhoods.

Upon review of the assets, Mrs. Gentrup asked the taskforce to the task force to brainstorm how those assets might be turned into tools for economic development. She said the task force should focus on two of the listed outcomes: increasing individual economic opportunities (jobs) and increasing business development.

She said that the task force could consider:

- What programs are could use any of these assets to create jobs or begin businesses?
- Whether other communities have programs, projects, or best practices, that have capitalized on these assets to create jobs and foster business development?
- Whether there were projects within the Kansas City region that have turned a similar asset into new jobs or businesses?

A list of suggestions were identified and are at the end of this document. However, the significant ideas that emerged from the discussion are:

- Create a world-class work force
- Keep the money within the community: plug the holes in the leaky bucket.
- Create a pipeline to take advantage of the green economy and biosciences.
- Plug into government initiatives.
- Use creative methods to make credit available.
- Support projects under development and be creative in approach.
- Use diversity as an asset.

#### **What do we need to move forward?**

Chairman Webster said the committees would review these suggestions and determine what kind of research and evaluation needed to take place to develop tools to achieve these actions.

#### **Schedule**

Mr. Webster announced that the next meeting of the ask force would be June 1, 2009 and asked that they be prepared again to be actively involved in determining the best new tools for the community.

## Turning Assets Into Action

- Explore solar panel strategy.
- Locate solar panel manufacturing plant in this area.
- Develop a turnkey approach to approving new housing in the area, to provide jobs and home ownership.
- Create a zoning overlay for higher density.
- Make sure that overflow control funds are spent in this area.
- Explore waste recovery/waste to energy efforts.
- Bring technology to the area.
- Focus on employment for people in distressed areas. Don't bring in jobs for new people.
- Tap into the weatherization program.
- Affordable comfort; develop a green workforce booklet. Use existing resources.
- Change the current university model from on demand to motivational.
- Create a pipeline for training for green jobs.
- Educate and recruit trainees through the Full Employment Council, Kauffman Foundation and others.
- Develop tools not just for distressed area but for all of Kansas City, Missouri.
- Investigate using KC Community Source Link as a means to bring resources together.
- Create world class schools.
- Educate community members about the assets they have.
- Turn trash into art
- Develop micro lending strategies
- Promote tourism, capitalizing on the Negro Leagues Museum
- Identify ways to transfer knowledge.
- Decentralize support systems.