

Exhibit B



Rockville Economic Development (REDI) FY 2022 Strategic Initiatives and Work Plan

Introduction

Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI) is a non-profit organization with a mission dedicated to identifying and developing economic opportunities to help Rockville prosper. REDI provide economic development services to the City of Rockville, Maryland through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and works with the Mayor & Council as well as city staff to position Rockville as a 21st century city for business. The MOU requires REDI to provide a Strategic Initiatives and Work Plan for the coming year.

REDI is the City of Rockville's economic development organization and the point of contact for businesses who are looking to locate in the City or that have needs to help them grow or stay within the City. REDI works to increase jobs, the tax base, and capital investment within the City by assisting such businesses, as well as partnering with other economic development agencies such as Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) and the State of Maryland Department of Commerce with whom we collaborate to bring new companies to Rockville. We also collaborate with other business organizations such as the Washington Board of Trade, Connect DMV, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce and the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce in order to be visible to businesses who may need our services as well as to keep our hand on the pulse of business needs. Our services include:

- Assisting with expansion efforts
- Site selection assistance
- Fast track development coordination
- Assistance in navigating the governmental regulatory process
- Economic incentives for qualifying businesses
- Information about access to capital
- Access to economic data and demographic research
- Educating businesses about procurement opportunities
- Access to subject matter experts
- Serving as liaison to all levels of government

- Coordination with workforce development

Target Industries for Rockville:

- Bio Tech/Bio Health
- Technology/Cybersecurity
- Professional Services
- Hospitality
- Creative Industries

This document outlines the Strategic Initiatives and Work Plan that the REDI Board developed in 2021 to provide guidance for staff and the Board moving forward to meet the mission and vision of the organization in FY2022.

For FY2022, the Board is focusing on the following key areas:

- Marketing
- Business Retention/Expansion/Attraction
- Workforce/Talent Alignment
- Small Business Assistance

Each of these areas was discussed by the Board to determine a diagnosis of the top problem the organization would focus on solving, along with strategy and tactics for that issue.

The plan for growth in these areas are discussed below, along with qualitative and quantitative metric goals used to show performance.

Key Focus Areas

MARKETING

Diagnosis of the Problem:

Rockville still does not tell its story comprehensively enough about quality of life or reach a broader audience.

Strategy:

REDI will focus on highlighting livability in the greater Washington area emphasizing quality of life that includes diversity, housing, education, parks, arts and culture, restaurants, and events in order to attract the creative class by targeting businesses that enhance quality of life, as well as businesses, brokers and site selectors looking to locate where employees will have a great quality of life and be near key industry sectors.

Tactics:

- Hire a full-time marketing person to further craft and tell our story.

- Brand Rockville Commercial Districts and support programming that will attract visitors and businesses.
- Work to tell our story visually with video and photography.
- Work with the City to create and Arts and Entertainment District
- Work with the City on impactful projects like the Rockville Metro Station, Town Center, King Farm Farmstead, and RedGate Park.
- Enter into an MOU with Visit Montgomery to amplify our local tourism and participate on their Board.

Metrics:

- Place at least 2 advertisements in regional/national publications.
- Promote Rockville as a place to do business with at least 50 digital ads.
- Promote at least 150 Rockville companies through social media.
- Post at least 40 external articles sharing news about Rockville’s industry sectors.
- Track page views on the new REDI and MWBC websites.
- Create and Launch the Rock East District.
- Create a Mural Program in the Rock East District.
- Create a tourism website and highlight Rockville’s commercial districts and attractions.
- Participate and add business need perspective to City project discussions.
- Hire a full-time communications professional.

BUSINESS RETENTION/EXPANSION/ATTRACTION

Diagnosis of the Problem:

Businesses do not know about Rockville’s competitive advantages.

Strategy:

Work to gather data, benchmarks, and information about business needs to craft a formal business retention, expansion and attraction plan as well as to provide more precise information about how Rockville meets business needs.

Tactics:

- Survey Rockville businesses to understand their needs including space needs, location and/or growth plans, amenity needs for employees.
- Survey brokers and site-selectors to understand how Rockville is perceived.
- Analyze who our competitors are – is Northern Virginia a competitor that we need to focus on?
- Analyze information about how our taxes and fees stack up to competitors.
- Comparison of our educational institution resources, quality of life, and amenities to competitors.
- Review of Incentive Programs to make sure they continue to be as effective as possible.

Metrics:

- Conduct at least 140 business visits or contacts (in person or virtual).
- Award at least 7 MOVE/Expansion grants with an average annual salary of \$95,000.
- Fill at least 35,000 square feet of space by incentive grantee firms.
- Increase jobs by at least 100 through incentive programs.
- Hold/participate in at least 4 economic development/broker events sponsorships
- Host/promote at least 8 industry sector events.
- Complete the business/site selector surveys and develop conclusions and next steps.
- Survey all incentive recipients to determine effectiveness of programs.
- Develop a list of businesses in each target industry in Rockville.
- Continue to support the growth of Bio/Health businesses.
- Advocate for development of more small lab space in Rockville.

WORKFORCE/TALENT ALIGNMENT**Diagnosis of the Problem:**

Rockville and Montgomery County have a talent gap issue where the employment needs of businesses are not met by the output of our local educational institutions.

Strategy:

Continue to work with the business leaders and educational leaders to highlight the topics of concern and make sure critical conversations are occurring to address the gap.

Tactics:

- Work with Worksource Montgomery, the Department of Commerce, Montgomery College, the Maryland Tech Council, the Universities of Shady Grove, the Chambers, MCEDC, Connect DMV, the Washington Board of Trade and MCPS to understand issues and facilitate conversations.
- Determine if Bio Health/Bio Tech are areas of most need? Are there other sectors? What is the emerging role of Quantum?
- Continue to champion the idea of a data portal between businesses and educational institutions – or other tool that will allow for planning to address the talent gap.
- Support and highlight the efforts of the Maryland Tech Council, Worksource Montgomery, Montgomery College, USG, and MCPS to provide training programs and resources to help businesses close the talent gaps.

Metrics:

- Facilitate/participate in meetings regarding employment/education pathways.
- Facilitate conversations between business and education leaders regarding talent needs and solutions.

- Promote area programs to businesses available to meet their talent needs.
- Encourage regional focus to address the talent/workforce needs.

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

REDI provides small business and entrepreneur assistance through the SBA certified Maryland Women’s Business Center (MWBC), as well as supports area incubators, especially the one located in Town Center. We also partner with other organizations that provide small business resources and assistance. Morgan Wortham joined the organization as the MWBC Managing Director in July 2020 in the midst of the pandemic. More specific strategic planning is anticipated with the Board in FY2022, which had to be on hold while responding to the national crisis.

Diagnosis of the Problem:

Small businesses were hit especially hard by the pandemic and have needed resources to respond, pivot and recover.

Strategy:

Continue to provide services through the MWBC to support businesses start, sustain and grow.

Tactics:

- Assist businesses with workshops and one on one counseling to help them start, grow and sustain.
- Provide support to childcare businesses with targeting workshop trainings.
- Assist businesses in applying for relief programs and finding funding sources.
- Assist women veteran entrepreneurs through a target program and access to Growth Wheel in partnership with area WBC’s.
- Expand and refine the retail incubator program and highlight the client successes.
- Continue to provide programming on business plans, marketing plans, social media, procurement, import/export, remote operations and management, cybersecurity and financial literacy.
- Continue to refine the We Grow program that helps businesses scale.

Metrics:

- Provide at least 130 workshops through MWBC.
- Serve at least 1,200 MWBC workshop attendees.
- Strive to infuse at least \$500,000 in capital through MWBC client assistance within the City of Rockville.
- Assist at least 175 minority owned/operated businesses in Montgomery County and at least 30 in the City of Rockville through the MWBC.
- Participate on tenant review committee for the Rockville Incubator.

- Staff will act as mentors through the Maryland Tech Council program to support entrepreneurs in the technology and life science fields.
- Add new Advisory Board Members.

CONCLUSION

We look forward to serving the City in FY2022 and continuing to identify and develop economic opportunities for Rockville to make it as strong and resilient as possible, and to reinforce efforts to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Rockville as an attractive business location.