

**SUBJECT: Economic Development and Sage Policy Group Report**

**BACKGROUND:**

In November 2014, the Advisory Planning Board discussed the draft economic development study prepared by Sage Policy Group, Inc. The Board acknowledges the Study was a good first step in advancing the city's economic viability but believes that an effective economic development strategy requires a more detailed comprehensive study of the City's assets, infrastructure, impediments and wider community participation. At the Board's request, Council referred the report to the Board for further review.

**ANALYSIS:**

Since economic development encapsulates a wide breadth of activities, strategies, and topics, much of the Board's discourse concentrated on the what, who, and how this task could best be undertaken in Greenbelt. To this end, the Board has prepared recommended actions that may help frame the economic development discussion. The goal of this framework is to guide and focus the city's actions through:

- Providing a clear understanding of the current state of affairs in the city;
- Selecting and targeting specific economic development issues in the city;
- Understanding what types of organizations and/or personnel are best suited to address selected issues.

**RECOMENDATION:**

To assist Council, the Board recommends the city consider the following pursuits:

- 1) Quantify and qualify the city's fiscal health and future needs in context of:
  - anticipated major capital improvements
  - how funding decisions are prioritized
  - missed revenue streams
- 2) Identify and inventory existing business assets throughout Greenbelt including companies, establishments and real property.
- 3) Evaluate the city's relationship with existing businesses and of current outreach programs.
- 4) Study how the adjacent communities of Hyattsville and College Park have identified and implemented economic development strategies.
- 5) List the type of entities that exist to guide economic development.
  - How are they set up?
  - What are they best suited to accomplish?
  - What are their advantages and disadvantages?

It is not clear if the Advisory Planning Board is best suited to undertake these recommended actions. It may be that additional advisory boards, a task force, city staff, temporary hire or a consultant is better able to accomplish these goals. We reiterate our prior recommendation to establish a dedicated economic development coordinator. The Board further recommends that the above actions would benefit the city in its pursuit of tackling economic development.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Gibbons  
Chair

This report was adopted by a vote of 5 present members and 2 retroactive electronic approvals.