

# Cape Fear Economic Development Council

## CFEDC/101

June 30th, 2010

'Sustainable Cities' seminar



**Cape Fear Economic Development Council**

*Promoting economic growth in the Cape Fear region through the limitless potential of innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.*

# What is CFEDC?- *outline*

- Brief organizational history
- Focus areas / interests
- CFEDC Vision/Goals/Values/Assumptions
- CFEDC Role and future plans
- Green Business Innovation Center (GBIC)
- Big Picture Proposal
- Questions + Discussion



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# Brief Organizational History

## 2009

- social networking and PR to generate buzz
- open meetings to brainstorm
- invited to present vision to Al Delia, Gov. Perdue's senior policy advisor

## 2010

- Incorporated in Jan
- NCGBF proposal for GBIC from Feb to May
- Monthly public meetings from Apr to Jun



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# Focus Areas / Interests

- Green business
- Sustainable agriculture / mariculture / fisheries
- Regional planning / zoning
- Arts council
- Education reform
- Official role in sustainable economic development



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# CFEDC vision and goals

- *The Cape Fear Economic Development Council (CFEDC) intends to provide a vision for the future economic development of the Cape Fear region that builds on existing economic strengths and discourages development that is incompatible or otherwise unsustainable.*
- Long-term prosperity of the region
- Quality of place: Education, environment, arts + culture , Clean roads, beaches, and waterways; Beautiful city, parks and neighborhoods
- Emphasis on connecting what's already here; inexpensive/qualified labor, lower business costs, reduced cost of living, quality of life
- Good business: Support, attract, promote and connect entrepreneurs, sustainable development, innovation and collaboration at all levels

## Wilmington region in the 21st century!!!

Entrepreneur led, technology-centered economy; Great paying jobs for knowledge sector workers

Vibrant arts community and competitive schools; *Quality of place* tuned to our natural environment



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# CFEDC: core assumptions

- Wilmington is a great place to live and run a business ;
  - #13 rank; Forbes Magazine – *Best Places For Business and Careers* – 2009
  - #14 rank; Fortune Small Business Magazine -- *Best Places to Launch a Business*- 2009
- The region has many unique advantages that give it the potential to become a true economic phenomenon- has wants/needs of knowledge workers, but is not living up to its full potential.
- Cape Fear area is **not** competing within state of North Carolina; it is competing with Charleston, Savannah, Virginia Beach, Jacksonville FL, and other 'coastal' business centers. (*programs such as Charleston Digital Corridor Initiative, Sustainable Savannah and Creative Coast Alliance*)
- Need to monitor + improve key factors:
  - Safety- Hospital/medical providers, Crime, Pollution*
  - Business Needs- Airport, University/community college, Workforce, Public / private financial incentives*
  - Quality of life- Affordable housing, Proximity to ocean/beach, Thriving arts scene, Primary education, Diversity*



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# Cape Fear Market issues

- Wilmington is a R & D/high-tech hub in the waiting; top employers are General Electric, GE/Hitachi, Corning, and PPD.
- Tourism economy is not a primary one; only 5% of employment in NH County.
- Recent success stories are not industrial they are knowledge workers; pharmaceutical contract research, medical and scientific devices, film and entertainment, marine biology, web tools and software, sophisticated call center management and provisioning, and B2B supply chain management.
- South Carolina; heavy into transportation cluster/sector: Charleston (Boeing), Greenville (BMW, Michelin), etc.
- With our geography, location, + infrastructure – and existing focus on energy efficiency – the Cape Fear region is situated to take advantage of more diversified green business interest and investment:

Connection and transportation infrastructure here: rail, sea port, interstate

Increasing density of coastal population

Existing transportation manufacturing facilities that can easily

be adapted

Geography: Large coastal “surface area” for state

provides ample wind potential, some hydro/marine

Agricultural center and

transportation hub for southeast

Temperate

climate attracts business, visitors



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# CFEDC's role in the region

- How does CFEDC complement other ED organizations in the region (WID, GWCC, CFF, NC SE, etc.)?:
- CFEDC 'fills the voids' left by current groups
- Assists region in diversifying prior industrial corridor image
- Support for the arts – organize, promote, finance
- Encourage low-impact/high tech opportunities
- Improve quality and range of education/STEM initiative
- Encourage private equity investment
- Tax incentives for private investors in the local economy



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# CFEDC organization

- **Why CFEDC?:** Open, agile, representative, inclusive, broad but business-minded (among other reasons!)
- **Board:** Five steering members currently, up to 25 slots in future.  
Primary Steering committee; Lloyd Smith- *entrepreneur, scientific instruments*;  
Elise Rocks- *RE broker, developer*; Ian Oeschger - *web developer, writer, Silicon Valley émigre* ; Scott Ogden- *architect/green building professional* ; Tom Looney- *business luminary, high-tech executive*
- **Membership:** More than 75 registered for membership
- **Subscribers:** More than 300 subscribers, e-blasts, newsletters, etc.
- **Events:** Monthly presentations by local/regional business leaders in key economic 'clusters' + areas of focus (NC MARBIONC, SENCFS, CFF, etc.)
- **Community partners:** WHQR, UNCW/E-center, BuenaSpace.....



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# Green Business Innovation Center

- **Goal:** encourage new companies, promote current start-ups + 'connect the dots'
- **2010 NC Green Business Fund (GBF)**  
**Grant:** will be seed money for beginning center (*through 2011*)
- **Emphasis on main 'green' economic clusters;** bio-fuels, clean energy (storage/generation), agri-business, green building, transportation, mitigation/education/conservation.
- **'Hub' to link community partners**
- **Status/schedule/next steps**



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# Green Business Innovation Center

- **Mission:** 1) connect green business entrepreneurs with capital, 2) serve as an advocate + counselor for green businesses in the region, 3) educate business and community leaders about the advantages of green business as a driver of our future economic prosperity + 4) promote the region's strengths as a place for entrepreneurs to start or relocate a green business.
- **Need:** NC ranks 41st for Cleantech jobs in country, yet Southeast is top region. If we were as successful as our southern neighbor (SC) we would have 6,000 more jobs. Rate of 'green job' growth will be triple other industries in this decade (2010-2020)
- **Objective:** to support + encourage investment in and attract businesses directly involved with products and technologies that save or produce energy from renewable sources and reduce emissions. Partner with other local/regional organizations + utilize existing, local resources to meet its innovation goals to encourage awareness and denser, more efficient modes of growth.
- **Key 'green' economic clusters;** bio-fuels, clean energy, agri-business, green building, transportation, mitigation/education/conservation.



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# Green Business Innovation Center

- **Build on present inertia:** New public and private programs/facilities currently in operation or planned; UNCW Environmental Sciences, UNCW MARBIONC incubator, UNCW E-Center, CFCC Sustainable Technologies program, City of ILM Sustainability Department, BuenaSpace,
- **Outreach:** Kiosks/content and displays @ local sites (ILM airport, new Convention Center, other ED meetings + events)
- **Education:** act as an ambassador for consumers to learn about innovative, efficient, and ecologically sound choices for building and living, their real availability in the region, their cost-effectiveness.
- **Development:** focus on new markets by lowering the barriers to entry for local green entrepreneurs. Assist the State in finding the “best of breed” in green innovation in the area, by attracting new investment and new activity in the green business sector to an area already well apportioned for entrepreneurship, conferences, state representation, tourism, relocation.
- **Facilitation:** communication between public + private sector interests in green business, sustainable investment, energy efficiency .



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# Big Picture Proposal

The challenge: to grow the economy sustainably with a long term vision

- Educate citizens about the current status and needs for a master plan
- Refine or merge many existing plans
- Produce summary version of master plan for public presentation and iterate on plan based on feedback
- Review budget, planning/zoning and related policies and ordinances for conformance with master plan
- Informed electorate presses for commitments from candidates and elected officials – the public “enforces” the plan



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# Discussion

Follow-up- how can Wilmington be a more  
'sustainable' city?



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