

**North Jersey Partners  
USEDA - Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)  
April 2010**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**1. What is CEDs?**

It is the US Economic Development Administration's (USEDA) effort designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic road map to diversify and strengthen regional economies.

**2. How can North Jersey Partners activate and participate in CEDs?**

Based upon three years of participation and achievements under the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's (DOLETA) WIRED grant, North Jersey Partners' eight county collaborative (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris/Sussex/Warren, Union, Passaic and the cities of Newark and Jersey City) have an opportunity to evolve into a CEDs structure. USED A had approached North Jersey Partners as a WIRED collaborative and encouraged North Jersey Partners to apply for USED A CEDs support based on the similar goals and objectives between WIRED and CEDs – regional collaboration founded on the principles of innovation, transformation and the leveraging of resources for the common purpose of addressing and improving a regional economy for the growth of employment opportunities.

- As posted on USED A's website: "As of Fiscal Year 2007, EDA will offer multi-component investments targeted to multi-jurisdictional consortia and public/private partnerships to promote regional collaboration to benefit distressed communities....a greater emphasis will be placed on identifying and investing in projects within a larger regional strategy."

The clear implication is that USED A prefers a regional CEDs rather than a single county-based CEDs.

**3. Why should my county participate in a regional CEDs? What's in it for me?**

At a recent CEDs planning meeting between New Jersey's EDA representative and North Jersey Partners, the representative clearly announced that USED A is currently interested and focused on regional economies and a multiple county regional CEDs application will be looked upon more favorably than a single county CEDs application. This position is largely due to the fact that USED A's project budget had been reduced to \$250 million nationally, and that regional economies share common growth industry sectors fed by a mobile workforce.

Given that no individual county can access USEDA project funding without a USEDA approved CEDS, and USEDA's current position encourages regional CEDS, it would seem prudent to apply regionally.

Also, given that an approved, required CEDS Plan will need to contain multi-year USEDA fundable projects that must be drawn from other individual county master plans – than a regional CEDS Plan is intended to complement, not supplant individual county plans. In essence, individual county plans and projects would be incorporated as part of a connected, larger regional landscape. Our USEDA representative cited the Greater Philadelphia CEDS Plan (covering multiple counties in PA and NJ) as a nearby, perfect example of what they'd like to see.

#### 4. What steps are needed in forming a CEDS?

- (a) Apply for USEDA CEDS Planning Grant – USEDA makes planning funds available to facilitate the development of a CEDS. They require a 50% non-federal cash match of the total USEDA request.

The NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in its own commitment to regional collaboration and projects, has awarded \$61,000 to North Jersey Partners from the state-funded Regional Employment Development Initiative (REDI) as North Jersey Partners' match to a USEDA planning grant. This will allow North Jersey Partners to access over \$100,000 in REDI and USEDA funding to jumpstart the regional CEDS process. Such funding will allow North Jersey Partners to hire an expert consultant/facilitator to assist in the CEDS process.

- (b) Form a Required CEDS Strategy Committee – A regional CEDS Strategy Committee, with assistance from the consultant, must be formed per USEDA's required composition, i.e., business (50%), government, economic development, workforce development, education, community organizations, etc.

It was noted that a USEDA CEDS Strategy Committee is reflective of the WIB membership composition. Given that the CEDS Strategy Committee, like the WIB, requires its appointments from each county's chief elected official, it is preferred that the CEDS Strategy Committee be recruited from each county's current WIB membership as an assignment to a CEDS Committee, much like current WIB members already serve on various WIB committees. The methodology for each WIB to recruit appropriate WIB members for the CEDS Strategy Committee will be developed on a categorical basis so that there is balanced representation.

It is anticipated that some counties may still need their own Freeholder Board approval on such appointments, while other counties might consider the chief elected official's WIB appointments as license to assign to yet another committee. In either case, the

recruitment of WIB members to fill a CEDS Strategy Committee would be preferred and would create a natural linkage between the WIBs and the CEDS.

The scenario is to require each WIB to recruit five (5) of their own WIB members, per pre-determined CEDS membership categories, yielding a total CEDS Strategy Committee of 40 members that is reflective of the region's stakeholders.

- (c) Prepare the CEDS Plan. - The USEDA required CEDS Plan is the centerpiece of the CEDS process. It becomes a five (5) year blueprint of the region's assets, challenges, and needs for its economic vitality.
- With the assistance of the Planning Grant funded consultant, the CEDS Plan preparation will entail a lengthy process of assessing assets, problems, and needs by conducting community surveys and interviews, reviewing existing county-based plans with the ultimate aim of identifying and prioritizing projects for USEDA project funding over the course of five (5) years.

In its simplest form, each county can be asked to propose a single project from their existing plans that can offer a connected regional benefit while creating the greatest number of jobs.

The CEDS Strategy Committee will then be asked to prioritize the projects within the CEDS Plan for USEDA funding consideration.