

Civic Task Force on International Cleveland

Recommendations to the City of Cleveland December 2003

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Group Meetings:

May 19, June 30, July 14, July 25, September 8

September 17, 2003
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Vision

A major goal of Mayor Jane Campbell is to grow Cleveland's population to at least 500,000 residents by 2010. To meet this goal, Cleveland will need to retain its current population and attract new residents. Increasing the city's international base is an integral part of the Mayor's plan for Strategic Action Partnerships. Most growing cities in the United States in past decades have grown due to an influx of people from outside the United States.¹ Cleveland has benefited from this in the past. Today, we have an excellent opportunity to revitalize Cleveland's economy through continued internationalization of Cleveland's population and employment opportunities.

One Line Vision Statement

Suggested Options:

- Wake up the Sleeping Giant: International Cleveland
- Come Home to Cleveland
- Cleveland: The World's Hometown
- One World: Cleveland
- Northeast Ohio: Gateway to Opportunity
- Where Global Opportunities Don't Knock – They Rock-N-Roll

Three Pillars of the Vision

Local Growth Through Internationalization

Globalization includes expanding the market for local products overseas and attracting foreign investment to Cleveland. By capitalizing on the opportunities of globalization, Cleveland's economy will grow and create new jobs to employ local residents. Economic revitalization also occurs through attraction of new international residents to start new businesses, fill key skilled industry needs, stimulate demand in our housing markets, and expand consumer markets.

Cleveland has a competitive advantage in the global market. There are 236 foreign-owned companies employing approximately 60,000 in the eight-county Cleveland CMSA.² Cuyahoga County leads all other counties in Ohio as a base for foreign companies. In terms of international exports, Ohio ranks sixth in the nation, and

¹ According to the 2000 Census, immigration accounted for nearly 60% of the population growth in the U.S. between 1990 and 2000. Six metropolitan areas – New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, DC, Miami and San Francisco – account for nearly 50% of the 13,178,276 foreign-born arriving in the US in that decade.

² World Trade Center Cleveland, 2003.

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Cleveland supplies approximately one-third of these exports.³ Cleveland has resources and infrastructure to develop more extensive connections. The region is well situated for attracting foreign investment because it provides excellent access to domestic and foreign markets. Within 500 miles of the Cleveland market is 42% of the U.S. population and 44% of U.S. effective buying income⁴. The region offers great infrastructure and human resources. Cleveland offers well-developed distribution infrastructure via water, air, rail and road. It also offers a prime geographic location; a multi-lingual population; a huge market for foreign products (imports are the precursor of foreign investment); and diverse, growing industries (healthcare, biotech, high-tech, polymers, material science, system controls, and machine building). As an added incentive to investment, Cleveland is designated a lower investment zone by the INS so foreign entrepreneurs only need \$500,000 to invest in a business to get a visa and gain access to the market.⁵

Building on the Strengths of Cleveland's International Neighborhoods and Communities

Newcomers to Cleveland find a plethora of nationalities, languages, and organizations to understand and meet their needs. Cleveland currently boasts international communities from 117 countries.⁶ The existing communities provide a strong social network to newcomers to help welcome and settle them in.

Although the city and county's population have decreased across the past few decades, foreign-born residents continue to move to the region. Cuyahoga County attracted 33,018 foreign-born residents between 1990 and 2000⁷. Asian and Hispanic populations in the county grew approximately 50% from 1990 to 2000. The metro area also has a fast-growing Middle Eastern community, ranked as the 11th largest in the nation.⁸ In addition, Cleveland area graduate schools attract 2500 foreign-born graduate students each year⁹. This influx represents a continuation of Cleveland's rich cultural heritage.

The Cleveland community has well-developed resources to serve newcomers. Local ethnically based chambers of commerce act as clearinghouses for immigrant entrepreneurs. Newcomers of any faith will find a diverse selection of places of worship and almost all ethnic groups are represented in the Cleveland dining-out experience. Ethnic commercial corridors provide an identifiable community for immigrants and nurture entrepreneurial potential.

³ World Trade Center Cleveland, 2003.

⁴ Greater Cleveland Growth Association, 2003.

⁵ The INS allots 10,000 EB-5 visas per year for foreign investors seeking permanent U.S. residency and whose investments directly result in the creation or preservation of at least 10 full-time jobs for U.S. workers. Of these, 3,000 visas are for those who invest in targeted areas such as Cleveland. The actual number of these visas awarded is much lower.

⁶ R. Zitiello and R. Herman. "In the New Global and Multicultural Marketplace, Immigrants Hold a Key to Revitalizing NE Ohio," 2003:9.

⁷ US Census, 2000.

⁸ Zitiello, 6.

⁹ World Trade Center Cleveland, 2003.

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Cleveland also has broad cultural, academic, and civic assets to build on and promote. From its excellent universities and medical institutions to its museums, symphony, and theater, Cleveland has the cultural infrastructure to draw and retain new residents. Opportunities for informal cultural experiences such as music festivals, sports leagues, and dance events abound.

Cleveland can capitalize on these existing resources to attract new residents. These types of assets appeal to immigrants, who first and foremost are driven by connection to others of the same nationality. An ethnically diverse, tolerant community also attracts the “creative class,” artistic and professional workers who value quality of place.¹⁰

Leading Destination for International Business and Population

The United States remains the top destination of choice for skilled, foreign-born nationals.¹¹ Cleveland should become a leading destination for these skilled individuals. Among Northeast Ohio’s strengths are biotech, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, instrumentation, and material sciences. These industries will benefit from growth in bilateral trade, attracting foreign firms that add to our regional competitiveness.

In addition to the international communities and business assets discussed earlier, Cleveland offers the warmth of a friendly small city with the cultural opportunities and amenities of a larger city. The local government and local organizations welcome the prospect of working with a larger international population. We offer a destination where the cost of living is low and housing is both attractive and affordable.¹² These attributes make Cleveland a great place to live and for business development. If properly promoted, we can attract people and businesses from elsewhere in the United States as well as from foreign countries.

¹⁰ Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Basic Books: New York) 2002.

¹¹ According to Richard Herman, a Cleveland immigration lawyer, these skilled individuals have access to visas with one major exception: nurses. Despite an estimated shortage of 800,000 nurses nationally expected by 2010, foreign nurses cannot help fill this gap until the H1A visa law is reenacted. This will require advocacy on behalf of NE Ohio.

¹² The cost of living index for Cleveland, OH was 97.4 in 2001, or 2.6 percent below the national average. The national average is 100. This compares favorable to those cities that are currently attracting the most international population. (Greater Cleveland Growth Association, 2003).

Proposed Action Items

The Civic Task Force on International Cleveland recognizes the clear commitment of this administration to help transform Cleveland into an international metropolis. With this in mind, two tiers of actions that build upon the three vision pillars are proposed. The three vision pillars are:

- Local Growth Through Internationalization
- Building on the Strengths of Cleveland’s International Neighborhoods and Communities
- Leading Destination for International Business and Population

Under each pillar, several action items are listed. They are tied to efforts of existing organizations, with concrete outcomes, which will benefit from the interplay of the city’s leadership. For each action item, a second tier of recommendations suggests the types of leadership Cleveland could best provide. These are straightforward items, generally requiring no budget line, that focus on communication, priority setting, and sending a consistent message.

The Task Force believes each of these items is important. However, given budget limitations of both local government and the participating organizations, the timeline for completion of each priority is uncertain. The members of the Task Force and their partners within the city government are committed to seeking out the necessary funding to realize these priorities.

I. LOCAL GROWTH THROUGH INTERNATIONALIZATION

1. Build strategic partnerships with foreign markets

The World Trade Center Cleveland (WTCC) has identified strategic foreign markets for Cleveland's economic development over the next ten years. It has developed a comprehensive plan for penetrating these markets and promoting Cleveland to them as an important trade partner.

- Working with Cleveland State University's Business School, the World Trade Center Cleveland will provide competitive intelligence to local companies to facilitate market penetration in target countries.
- WTCC will organize inbound and outbound trade missions that provide exposure to Cleveland's businesses and send an on-going message of Cleveland's international opportunities.
- WTCC is enhancing its research capabilities to target investment-ready prospects and to market the region internationally.

Leadership Role for the City:

- Meet with trade missions and express the city's commitment to international trade and facilitate their entry into the region's market. Articulate the type of assistance the City can provide.

<p><u>Outcome:</u> Engage 5000 individuals in WTCC business/education programming</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Provide 50 inbound/outbound trade missions</p>

2. Facilitate the entry of foreign businesses to Cleveland

World Trade Center Cleveland is developing office space that will be offered to foreign companies to help facilitate the establishment of businesses in Cleveland.

- The space will be at an initial low cost and will offer support services such as translation and assistance with credit.
- This initiative will work in conjunction with the creation of a World Trade Center Cleveland building (see subsequent section).

Leadership Role for the City:

- Work with the WTCC and the Greater Cleveland Growth Association to clearly articulate a package of incentives/assistance for international companies to attract and to facilitate their entry.
- Help solve the problems faced by international companies when they try to find local financing. The city can work with the WTCC and local banks to identify a means of providing credit to international businesses.

<p><u>Outcome:</u> Facilitate the entry of 50 foreign businesses in Cleveland</p>

II. BUILDING ON THE STRENGTHS OF CLEVELAND'S INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES

1. Create a Cleveland Coalition of International Organizations

Cleveland has approximately 65 entities – non-profit and governmental -- working on international issues. Unfortunately, many of them do not know of each other and their efforts are not coordinated. To project a common message to the world about international Cleveland, they need to be brought together under a loose umbrella to facilitate dialogue and cooperation. CIP-USA will take the lead on organizing the Cleveland Coalition of International Organizations. It will not be a new organization but rather a coalition of organizations working toward a common goal: economic development through internationalization. This involves attracting people, business, and tourists to Cleveland while educating the population about the cultural and economic importance of internationalization.

The Coalition is a logical continuation of this Civic Task Force. It will strive to be inclusive and an important resource for City Hall. It could provide quarterly recommendations to the city about:

- Unmet international needs
- International business opportunities
- International promotion of Cleveland.

The coalition should monitor and measure progress towards internationalization.

Leadership Role for the City:

- Take the initial lead on bringing together a core group of international organization directors to show the city's interest in such a Coalition and to mobilize the groups behind the idea.
- Request that the Mayor be a member of the Coalition and provide her assistance seeking financial support for its members.

Deliverable: Cleveland Coalition of International Organizations up and running with broad membership

2. Proclaim 2004 the Year of International Cleveland

Anyone involved in international issues in Cleveland recognizes that it is already a very international city. Unfortunately, many Clevelanders do not realize this; nationally it is not perceived as an international center; and internationally, it is generally off the radar screen. Numerous international organizations in Cleveland are ready to rally around a year of promotion of our international resources to change this image.

- The newly created Coalition of International Organizations will develop a calendar of all cultural, artistic, academic, sporting and business events throughout the year. Many are already planned as annual events. An illustrative list includes:
 - The 2004 International Children's Games
 - International Piano Competition at CIM

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- World Trade Conference
- Trade Delegations
- The Glasshouse at the Botanical Garden
- Indian Music Festival
- Neighborhood Festivals (Little Italy, Puerto Rico, etc.)
- Promote the city's international neighborhoods, festivals, businesses, restaurants, and events more broadly. For 2004, develop stronger visual identities along main ethnic commercial corridors.

Leadership Role for the City:

- Task the Greater Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau with developing promotional materials and packages to promote the year of international activities.
- Extend formal invitations to each country to attend the International Children's Games and to bring business trade missions with them in selected industries, particularly those in polymers, instrumentation and controls, paints, biotech, LCDs, fuel cells, and automotive.
- Request that the community development department and CDCs work with ethnic neighborhoods to develop identifiable commercial/cultural corridors through signage and other methods.
- Add national flags around Malls A, B, and C (or another visible public space) to give a visible and colorful international appearance to the city.

Outcome: Cleveland recognized
in national and international
media for its international
endeavors in 2004.

3. Make use of our existing international community's contacts abroad

The International Services Center, Jewish Family Services, World Trade Center Cleveland, the International Community Council, and others all recognize the untapped resources of Cleveland's international communities. Individuals in these communities have important business, government, and family connections in their home countries that could be tapped for Cleveland's benefit.

- The WTCC plans to collaborate with these communities to develop trade missions.
- JFSA, ISC and other groups will work with these communities to facilitate the attraction of skilled workers to move to Cleveland.

Leadership Role for the City:

- Make a special effort to reach out to each international community to express their importance to the city and its growth.
- Task ethnic community leaders to attract new residents and new businesses from their home country. Set a goal of ten new residents per nationality each year. Consider creating incentives for international communities to use their networks to attract investments.

Outcome: Over 1300 skilled
foreign-born workers attracted

III. Leading Destination for International Business and Population

1. Communicate all Cleveland has to offer

Cleveland needs to do a better job marketing itself internationally. Very few people abroad have any image of Cleveland, let alone a positive one. A public relations campaign should be developed, in conjunction with Cleveland's international community, that sings its praises (top hospitals, top orchestra, top art museum, second largest theater district in US, birthplace of Rock and Roll, etc). The international community is ready to assist in this effort.

- The World Trade Center Cleveland currently has a website that provides information to foreign companies interested in doing business in Cleveland. They are seeking to enhance that website to promote Cleveland and to serve as a clearinghouse of information for companies and potential new residents. By working with the proposed Coalition of International Organizations, the website could be *The International Cleveland* site and include information on housing and neighborhoods, training programs, schools, how to get needed licenses, immigration services, translation, houses of worship, shopping, legal aid, etc. It could also contain a calendar of events for international Cleveland (events, films, trade missions, restaurant openings, special religious events, etc).
- Market Cleveland globally as a center for the development of technologies in the areas of: fuel cells, LCDs, biotech, polymers, IT, and other technologies.

Leadership Role for the City:

- Collaborate on publishing an International Cleveland newsletter. It will tie-in to the website described above and would be an important marketing tool.
- Create an International Cleveland web page within the City's website that links to the external web page above as well as all other appropriate resources and partners. Provide the City's electronic welcome to all things international.
- Collaborate with the Ohio Department of Development Overseas to aggressively market the city to foreign businesses and governments.

Deliverable: Launch International Cleveland Website

2. Attract and retain foreign students through internships and assistance with visas

The World Trade Center Cleveland has started a Foreign Graduate Student Internship program that aims to provide internships in area businesses to foreign-born graduate students. These students, with their language skills and knowledge of different cultures, are great assets to Cleveland businesses looking to move into international markets.

Leadership Role for City:

- Meet with university presidents to discuss recruiting more international students.

Outcome: 3150 internship placements

3. Advocate for changes to foreign visa legislation

Task Force members identified long delays and problems for many people seeking visas (including L1, H1, and J1) to the United States. For Cleveland, this means that even if we are successful in attracting foreign students, investors, and employees, they may not be able enter the country within a reasonable timeframe. The political landscape behind these visa barriers is not likely to change in the near future although advocacy in this area could begin to change the tide. One type of visa, however, may very well have a good chance of being reintroduced and expedited: the H1A visa for nurses.

The healthcare sector plays a pivotal role in Cleveland's economy. Unfortunately, Cleveland, like the nation as a whole, faces a shortage in qualified nurses. Recruiting foreign nurses from English-speaking countries such as India and the Philippines is an excellent solution, however, there is currently no short-term non-immigrant worker visa available to nurses¹³. Bringing a nurse in with Permanent Residency (Green Card) takes approximately 1½ to 2 years. The H1A work visa was terminated in 1997; it allowed tens of thousands of nurses to enter the U.S. quickly to alleviate a nursing shortage. Congress may be interested in reintroducing this visa. Representatives of Senators Voinovich and DeWine have indicated an interest in discussing possible immigration solutions to the nursing shortage, which research indicates is putting U.S. patients safety at risk.

This effort will involve advocating for a change in visa legislation as well as facilitating the accessibility of US nursing licensing exams in foreign locations, recruitment, and helping foreign nurses assimilate to Cleveland. Members of the Task Force are willing to participate in a core planning committee to push these efforts forward.

Leadership Role for City:

- Leverage Cleveland's position as a national leader in health care in order to lobby our Congressional delegation to revive the Immigration Nursing Relief Act of 1989. Convene a meeting with leading hospital and nursing executives in Northeast Ohio to seek their support on the H1A visa. Include them in a core planning committee.
- Invite Cleveland's Philippine and Indian communities to partner in this effort. These communities contain many medical professionals with substantial networks in their home countries. Include them in a core planning committee.

<p><u>Outcome:</u> Increase the foreign nursing population residing in Cleveland by 10,000</p>
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4. Establish Cleveland World Trade Center building

Cleveland already owns the rights to the internationally respected name World Trade Center. The time is right to establish a building downtown that carries that name and serves as a shining beacon of international Cleveland. All tenants would have access to a

¹³Other than the H1C visa, which is limited to qualifying medical facilities in designated underserved areas, and is limited to a maximum of 25 to 50 visas per state per year, depending on the state's population.

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receptionist, shared conference space, duplication services, and potentially teleconferencing capabilities. The World Trade Center Cleveland is currently looking at building options and has high hopes to make this move quickly with the right people on board. The following details would probably be added in phases.

- In addition to housing the WTCC, the downtown building would offer space to:
 - Nonprofit organizations that provide services or assistance to the international community
 - International businesses seeking to establish a presence in the Cleveland market (as described in earlier section)
 - Entrepreneurs in key international markets (e.g., Israel, Russia, India, China)
 - Government offices (local, federal and foreign) that work on international issues.
 - Local companies providing services: visa assistance, translation, market research, relocation services, IT, accounting services, legal services, etc.
- The World Trade Center Cleveland building would provide a supportive and comprehensive welcoming environment for businesses and people considering the move to Cleveland. By housing all of the international service providers together, a person looking to move to Cleveland has a centralized point of contact. Collaboration between organizations is facilitated and access to assistance and services is eased. Existing programs and services for the international community can be packaged in an appealing, one-stop manner.

Leadership Role for City:

- Support the international community in securing a building to house the World Trade Center Cleveland.
- Work with the international organizations to market the “packages” of business and social service incentives available at the World Trade Center Cleveland building.

<p><u>Deliverable:</u> A World Trade Center building established</p>
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