



REINVENTING OLDER COMMUNITIES: HOW DOES PLACE MATTER?

“NEW FACE OF INDUSTRY”

Breakout session

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Introduction

- Location and History of Johnstown, PA
- Overview of JARI Organization

Re-Building Basics

- Leadership (Public and Private)
- Determine strengths and opportunities
- Assign responsibility
- Seek funding and partners

Johnstown: A Case Study in Diversification

- JARI established
- Collaboration with Public Officials
- Agreement on initiatives
- Funding and partners
- Perseverance and Focus

Today's Successes

- Economy is diversified
- More employed than ever before
- Unemployment rates at 5% (vs. 24%)
- Strong health care system
- Defense contracting niche
- European companies
- Small technology companies
- Attention to growth-oriented non-profits

Today's Challenges

- City tax base and population continues to decline
- Need to recruit workforce
- Aging workers/obsolete skill sets
- Lack of interstate highways
- Old economy image
- Attraction/retention of youth

Bridging old and new economies

- Specific Business Examples
 - JWF/Gautier/Blacksmith Shop
- Meetings/Conferences and War Memorial/Conference Center
- Tourism Opportunities from History/Heritage
 - Flood Museums and Trails
 - Heritage Center
 - Cultural/Ethnic Festivals
 - Children's Museum
- Industrial/Infrastructure
 - Bethlehem water resources

Concluding Tips

- Old resources can have new uses
- Don't overlook assets (heritage, industrial plants, infrastructure, skilled workers)
- Look for and promote innovation in start-ups and in community planning
- Don't wait for outsiders to fix the problems; focus internally
- Community leadership with heart makes the difference in success of any community