SYNERGETIC TRANSFORMATION
OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION

CN FORUM
MSU 2013

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MACKINAC ROOM, LANSING, MI 48909
A Transformed Great Lakes Economic Region

- Keep a vision for what we (economic region) want to become. Let’s transform from the "rust belt" to something nobler.
- Find ways to team up. States, cities, jurisdictions, municipalities don't matter like entire economic regions. They matter more, and united forces are the most powerful.
- Work on set resolutions of the region. Great Lakes Governors Council (GLGC.org) with provincial leaders set resolutions in June 2013. Pick one or two and say, "I think I can work on this one. I can help with this and I will”.
- Keep building of the New International Trade Crossing on track. It is the gateway to the world for the Great Lakes regional economy.
- Emphasize that Canada and the U.S. are the strongest international trade neighbors and economic partners in the world by doing more to claim this a barrier-free trade region. Make a statement with our actions.
Great Lakes Cross-Border Regional Cooperation/Transformation
Canada's Perspective

• Better integrate the Great Lakes Region, particularly Michigan and Ontario. University collaboration is one way, business group collaboration is another. How can we work together for mutual benefit?
• Make opportunities for more study of the Great Lakes partnership in both Canada and the U.S. and provide incentive for faculty and student engagement.
• How would synergetic transformation present itself? What can I do in my role to move it forward?
• Develop a regional consciousness by institutionalizing ways of working together (rather than episodic activity).
Great Lakes Cross-Border Regional Cooperation/Transformation
Role of Canadian Studies Centers

• What role should Canadian Studies Centers play? MSU's specifically?
• Become a more dominant organization in terms of what it can provide for students, and what the students can provide the region.
• Exchange visits for learning, research and tourism/cultural experiences.
• Be the model for the U.S. - Canada connection between the schools of business, agriculture, and public policy, to start. As the oldest (longest standing) Canadian Studies Center in the nation, MSU has an opportunity to cultivate knowledge and understanding of the bi-national relationship, as well as its unique virtues to the economy, but also, to the quality of life.
Transformation Begins at Home
Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Collaboration at the Local Level

- Work together more aggressively to address mutual problems, like water quality, aquatic invasive species, and industrial and pharmaceutical pollution.
- Put down on paper a vision that reflects innovation, technology, restoration, and conservation in waste water management areas of quality, quantity, treatment, and policy.
- Integrate more local government goal setting on a large scale, i.e., 15% water conservation by 2015; implement a Green Cities program.
- Create awareness and act on the understanding that the biggest environmental threat to Great Lakes may be sustainable municipal water mismanagement.
- Give national priority status to the health and efficiency of the Great Lakes Region in light of the fact that the region host a large percentage of the global economy. What can we do to best articulate this? Where does it need to be said? Who needs to hear it?
Create an environment that encourages Great Lakes regional innovation and expansion, particularly in known area strengths and growth potential.

- Apply best ways of doing business in agriculture at every level.
- Support manufacturing growth.
- Harvest big data, be proactive and apply it to business practice.
- Prioritize binational integration, update/modernize supply chain logistics, and increase awareness of the need for North American competitiveness in a worldwide market.
- Thoughtfully consider and plan for the impact of the Panama Canal expansion.
- Fund research that assists the region’s energy plan.
- Be progressive in planning for climate effects.
- Clarify for the general public why immigration policy changes are important to the Great Lakes region.
In order to make progress, we need to at least do the following:

• Our representation in Ottawa and Washington must be strengthened (it clearly has weakened).

• We must visit decision makers often with a combined and consistent message. (CGLG.org is a good place to start).

• Set benchmarks for getting to where we want to be. Celebrate small steps forward.

• Act expeditiously – be flexible on the objectives to get there. Collaborate.

• Give attention to labor issues that impact industry growth.

• Nurture the region’s tourism industry.
Collaborative Action

• Take Great Lakes Governors’ and Provincial leaders’ call and tackle the issues designated as priority, however one can or however one’s affiliation can.
  • Bi-national collaboration at all levels – state/provincial and sub levels – consciously be inclusive.
  • Focus on:
    • Bi-national agri-food production
    • Green chemistry innovations
    • Manufacturing innovation and support
    • Immigration attraction
    • Regional logistics solutions and modernization
    • Joint marketing
Future Steps:

- Expansion of collaboration
  - Institutionalize relationships
  - Product commercialization
  - Regional hub of logistics coordination and selected industries like advanced manufacturing
- Leverage individual funds for research, application, commercialization, and piloting.
Preeminent issues to consider for Collaborative Action

- Economic effects of changing Great Lakes water levels and quality
- Transportation funding (making it sustainable as well)
- Train border inspectors to recognize tradeoff between risk and trade
- Ask for grant programs for projects based on bi-national strategies for green bio-chem manufacturing, agricultural discoveries, and transportation logistics.
Questions Related to Building Collaborative Action

- How do we help others to recognize the brand of “The Great Lakes Region”? Need to better define it. Do we need a “Pure Michigan” campaign for the “Great Lakes Region” tailored for business attraction and voter education?
- How do we provide incentive for collaboration and cooperation?
  - Forge relationships with commerce groups in the GL region.
  - Develop regulatory agreements.
  - Create and stick to bi-lateral regional commitments.
  - Clarify the economic impact of the Great Lakes. Everyone loves the Great Lakes, but how can we drive their understanding of their economic impact?
- How does the St. Lawrence Seaway widening/deepening affect the future of trade? Could it be more efficient and make the GL region more competitive?

Note: Betty Sue Sutton, who served as a U.S. Representative for Ohio from 2007 to 2013, is the new Administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.
Making Collaboration Easy

- Inform: Could current governors and provincial leaders do an op-ed piece on the importance of regional collaboration & run it in major, regional newspapers – maybe run a special series of articles?
- Connect: Strengthen interaction between student, faculty and industry/business interaction.
- Leverage research expertise, scale up technology and put it to market.
- Leverage: Ease the difficulty for academic and government institutions to match resources and leverage their strengths -- both domestically and internationally.
- Innovate: Does the GL region have an innovation culture? We are not doing enough for problem solving and growing good ideas for the next generation. Is there venture-capital funding in the region? Have we asked manufacturers to move/return and supported cross border transactions?
Business Transformation in the Great Lakes Economic Region

- Understand that supply chain considerations are basic to every business.
- What can we do in the three areas that underline the supply chain capabilities of a business organization -- Infrastructure, Organization, Talent?
- Can we impact their competitiveness in a positive way as they deal with energy costs, expensive shipping, risk management, reliability, safety and security, workforce talent needs?
- What is the region’s value proposition?
The GL Region can boast of a central geographic position with close access to large markets. The majority of the North American population lives within 500 miles of the Great Lakes region.

Diverse industry to support business growth and interaction resides in the region.

Needed infrastructure, especially intermodal transportation, is here.

Training and intellectual resources in supply chain capability is rich across the Great Lakes with top-rated programs at Michigan State (#1), Ohio State (#5), and University of Michigan (#10).
Business Transformation
What more do we need?

Five objectives:
1. Refine inter-modal operations
2. Do everything you can to ease cross-border operations.
3. Speak up on stories of collaboration and success.
4. Prioritize infrastructure needs, funding support, and business input.
5. Invest in human capital. Technologically skilled workers are in high demand.

The efficiency of freight management at the Metro Detroit Airport is critical to bringing more shipping business to the Great Lakes Region.
Know that everything that happens on one side of the border has effect on the other side. That is just how unintentionally connected the U.S. and Canada are, and how globally interdependent we are.

Transformation is certainly happening. The question is how can we impact it in a way that plays out in a positive way for the regional economy.

Consider that urbanization is a driving force while rural areas are suffering. Technology is rewriting the rules for what is needed to remain competitive. Talent is growing at an exponential rate, requiring reinvention time and time again throughout one’s career as well as consistent skill sharpening.
Synergetic Transformation Strategies for the Great Lakes Region

- Promote industry clusters where talent already lies.
- Project a consistent, balanced approach to recruitment, global branding, business creation and retention.
- Integrate higher education completely into economic development.
- Cultivate leadership networks for communication and quick action.
- Benchmark, Benchmark, Benchmark.
- Choose projects wisely and strategically – Do not overload, be realistic AND optimistic. Be reliable. Reliability builds trust, something you need for collaboration.
- Celebrate small, successful moves forward. Collaboration is not about love and being stuck together. It is about outcomes.
- Focus on the future, not the now.
Twenty of the world’s top 100 universities are in the bi-national Great Lakes Region – more than anywhere else in the world.

• Ambitious effort to grow inter-modal transport in the region is alive and moving forward.
• Potential for Public –Private Partnerships (P3s) is growing in efficiency – needs attention.
• Manufacturing strength in the region is unparalleled.

Create a regulatory environment that eases trade and transportation of goods through the border.

• Welcome both skilled and labor immigrants to help reinvigorate production and the economy.
• Raise efficiency of electronic files. This is an area of much needed improvement for the movement of goods.
Further Advocating for Synergetic Transformation

- Canadian – U.S. partnerships are critical to sustainability in every sense.
- There must be better communication within industry about sustainability. When our region is recognized as safe, clean, and focused on people’s quality of life, the business economy will grow.
- Industry will most likely spearhead regional sustainability.
- Binational industry representatives must be at every table discussion of synergetic transformation.
- Joint degree programs have been very successful between the U.S. and Canada. We need more development here for students as well as business leaders and particularly among policymakers. The political system on either side is misunderstood.
- Sault Locks need attention as an essential conduit for international trade of pore and aggregates in particular. This will need policymakers’ and voters’ attention.
Take initiative on at least one thing, invite someone else to help you get it done

This audience is accountable for what happens or does not happen in the Great lakes Region.

Do we need a U.S. – Canada Chamber of Commerce?

Do we need a U.S. – Canada movement in education, policy, business?

What programs/projects can we begin and take to the end, resurrect and grow to benefit the Great Lakes Region quality of life?
Immediate Action

Look through the notes of the forum.

Find which of these agreed upon priorities and suggested action steps forward you want to individually work on and engage others in helping you to drive synergetic transformation of the Great Lakes Region.

Keep us in the know on what you would like to communicate to the group and we will send it on.
Thank you for your participation and contribution to the CN Forum.

Please extend appreciation to key sponsors of the discussion:

- CN
- Canadian Studies Center at Michigan State University
- GLITTH Initiative – Great Lakes International Trade and Transport Hub Initiative
- MSU Institute for Public Policy and Social Research
- Business Leaders for Michigan
- Broad College of Business – International Center at MSU
- Consulate General of Canada in Detroit
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