



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

January 18, 2010

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

From: John Szerlag, City Manager
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Subject: Report on January Troy City Manager's Roundtable Meeting

A task of City Management is to assure that Troy is positioned to attract positive investment and retain growing businesses. To accomplish this we must create an environment that fosters innovation, leadership and customer service that cannot be found anywhere else. Thus, as part of our economic development strategy, City Management started a new program called the City Manager's Roundtable Meetings. These meetings are conducted on a monthly basis as an opportunity for executive level management to discuss ideas, solutions and initiatives that can drive Troy to the top of the economic development race. Thus far, we have conducted four roundtable meetings and all have brought a wealth of ideas and insights into how we can service the business community. The roundtable meetings have been intimate and informal conversations between City Management and high level executives within Troy. Combined, these companies represent close to 10,750 jobs in Troy.

On January 12th, City Management hosted its fourth roundtable meeting. Executives at the table represented a broad spectrum of our business community. Although it was a small group of businesses in attendance (four businesses), combined the group represented over 1,075 jobs in our community. From the small, family-owned manufacturer that has been in Troy for 25 years, to the \$23 billion corporation that has chosen to operate their North American Headquarters here, these business executives bring a perspective of our economy that we do not see on a daily basis. All four businesses were also fortunate to experience positive growth in 2010 and found themselves in a position to decide where they wanted to expend their capital investment in property and job creation. All chose to remain and expand in Troy. Their decision to expand in Troy will generate over \$21,000,000 in planned real and personal property investments.

It should also be noted that most of these executives already have strong relationships with our existing federal and state legislators and have opportunities to present insights and ideas to our new Governor. It is this connection that may provide Troy the opportunity to carry



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important messages to our legislators as they shape the future of our State. Below is a sampling of some of the ideas, thoughts and concerns that were expressed:

- The need for all forms of government in the area to come together and form a regionalist approach to operations and servicing the community. This would create a brand image of a Metro Detroit region that can compete with other significant regions in the country and throughout the world.
- Recognize the strengths and weakness of all cities and develop a strategy for communities to work together to reduce the duplication of work across municipal lines.
- The need for more collaboration between State, County and City on a regional economic development strategy which includes incentives (R&D credit, taxes, abatements, customer-driven directives) offered that must compete with incentives offered by other regions of the country and the world.
- Recognize the impact of the perception of the City of Detroit in the global business community and the need to work as a region to change this negative image.
- Develop ways to better help small businesses as they have created a large number of jobs in the past couple years, but on an individual basis.
- What makes Troy so attractive to some businesses is its proximity to “The Big Three,” creating a community that is the “Center for Automotive.”