

Destination Erie: Regional Plan for Sustainable Development – Its Purpose & Benefits

What is it?

Destination Erie will create a vision and strategy to meet the Erie County region's economic, social and environmental challenges of the 21st century. The planning process coincides with Erie's bicentennial (2013) celebration of the Battle of Lake Erie. Building on the legacy of the landmark plans created by John Nolen in 1913 and Maurice Rotival in 1963, Destination Erie will set the course for the region to become a model of success in the 21st century.

Why do we need it, and how will it benefit Erie County?

1. Enhance Economic Development and Competitiveness

An economy that creates businesses and job opportunities for all of our citizens is critical to our future. Such an economy does not “just happen” – it must be visualized and planned for in a collaborative manner. Building our regional economy and increasing our economic competitiveness is a major theme of Destination Erie. The plan will examine our region's strengths and weakness, and explore strategies and opportunities to compete in a global marketplace.

2. Reduce Poverty through Effective Workforce Education and Job Creation

Reducing poverty in our region and creating jobs to get people working again is a top priority of Destination Erie. The plan will seek to identify current, projected, and long-term employment needs so that education programs and the training of our workforce can be effectively aligned with the needs of employers. The plan will include strategies to better connect residents with jobs and strengthen relationships between educational providers, employers, and residents.

3. Support Existing Communities

The Erie region has a mixture of community types (urban, suburban, and rural), each with its own unique heritage, resources, and issues. Ways to revitalize our existing communities, improve housing options, better connect people with community services, and preserve our heritage and cultural resources will be explored in the plan.

4. Improve Transportation and Infrastructure Systems

One of the most important elements to support our region's future will be a transportation and public infrastructure system that balances the needs of residents, businesses, tourism, goods movement, and recreation. Strategies will be developed to address concerns such as traffic congestion, limited access to efficient public transportation, air quality and bicycle and pedestrian safety.

5. Engage our community and build partnerships for action

Destination Erie seeks to involve a broad range of organizations and community members in the planning process. This collective input will help to create a vision and plan that is inclusive, represents the values of our diverse region, and identifies priority actions and programs to reduce barriers to education and employment, diminish blight, and improve access to safe and affordable housing, transportation, and jobs for all residents. Partnerships will be built to coordinate policies, leverage investment, and overcome inefficiencies and barriers to development.