TOURISM SUMMIT
PHASE 1 FINAL REPORT

MARCH / APRIL 2015
GREATER BINGHAMTON
TOURISM TASK FORCE

ROBERSON MUSEUM AND SCIENCE CENTER
SUPPORTED BY THE GANNETT FOUNDATION
PREFACE

This booklet provides an overview of a project supported by a 2014 grant from the Gannett Foundation. The project involved a “first look” at tourism in the Greater Binghamton region, including data gathering and a “Summit” to which representatives of businesses, organizations, and agencies engaged in the tourism industry would be invited. The Summit concluded with the development by participants of three concept/white papers to be submitted for review in the process of shaping proposals to the Upstate Revitalization Fund in the Southern Tier. The work group has designated itself as the Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force.

This booklet contains the following material:

- A quick review of the Summit itself
- The agendas for the three Summit work sessions
- The list of participants
- The minutes of the Summit sessions
- The three concept papers submitted

As Roberson Museum and Science Center’s Executive Director, Terry McDonald, is noted on each concept paper as the “contact person,” she can respond to any questions arising from the pages of this document.
ROBERSON TOURISM SUMMIT

SPRING 2015

INTRODUCTION AND PREMISE - This is an effort to summarize those elements that made up what was designated as a Tourism Summit, held over 3 sessions at Roberson in the spring of 2015. The Summit emerged from impressions held by many that the tourism value of Greater Binghamton region was not fully presented within existing promotional channels and that it deserved further attention by a cross-section of local interests. Taking the initiative with this issue was Executive Director Terry McDonald, who proposed a series of 3 discussion sessions to be held at Roberson and led by a facilitator who could bring an objective and skillful process into the situation. The resulting approach was to retain the services of Sean Brady, owner of Prism Decision Systems, to schedule sessions of 2 ½ - 3 hours’ length on the mornings of March 18, March 26 and April 15, and to invite some 24 persons from a wide variety of businesses.

AGENDAS – The agendas for the 3 sessions were distributed to all participants in advance, with the original version included as Appendix A. These were modified as events warranted and as the project evolved, but the basic topics were preserved and addressed over the life of the Summit.

PARTICIPANTS – The make-up of the group assembled deliberately sought both key players with established responsibilities in the realm of tourism and “fresh faces” whose engagement with tourism was still new and/or underdeveloped. The resulting mix captured both expertise and creative direction. Those actually in attendance at the 3 sessions varied somewhat, as circumstances would necessitate that someone would be absent and that someone else would “cover.” The list of participants is included as Appendix B.

MINUTES – Sean Brady orchestrated all 3 sessions, honoring the agendas while flexing to accommodate valuable tangents. Time constraints were respected without cutting off important contributions. Within a day of a session, all participants received minutes that reviewed key elements of discussion and decisions arrived at. The minutes from all sessions are attached as Appendix C.

OUTCOMES – Session 3 logically incorporated summation of what had been decided and what could be defined as the product of work invested. Perhaps the most remarkable and positive outcome was the degree to which participants attended all 3 sessions and their willingness to “step up” to volunteer to take on specific tasks and organize into sub-groups. Probably the chief outcome was the decision to explore the submission of perhaps 3 concept/white papers for consideration within the development of proposals under the Upstate Revitalization Fund competition. The common theme across the papers would be that of tourism and economic development.
NEXT STEPS — In preparation for the May deadline, concept papers were drafted by sub-groups formed around the themes of sports park, entrepreneurial hub, food capital, and regional marketing. These will be ongoing efforts and should appear in other competitive venues in the coming months. It is uncertain at this point whether any/all of the subgroups will have continuing “lives” as such, although Sean proposed a reconvening of the full group at a later date.

ROBERSON PERSPECTIVE — In the eyes of Roberson staff members who were part of the Summit, this experience was highly successful. We can identify success from the standpoint of voluntary participation by so many persons from so many tourism-related sources, of the linear and orderly progression of meetings held; the clarity of purpose and level of enthusiasm for the project, the willingness of so many to continue activity in sub-groups and the valiant effort to draft concept papers on short notice. While most efforts have a large-scale or regional flavor, as they should for competitive purposes, the underlying belief held by Terry is that “what’s good for Greater Binghamton is good for Roberson.”

PHASE TWO — Beginning with whatever concept papers emerge and are submitted, we will watch for the evidence that any of these become integrated within the larger process of design of a Southern Tier package. Phase Two will evolve around fresh planning to continue ambitious promotion of the tourism-related elements of the Greater Binghamton area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here is an overview of my facilitation processes and tools.

- **Dynamic group processes**
- **Prism’s Group Decision Support System™**
- **Testimonials**

**Objective:** Identify a set of prioritized recommendations that will then be pursued as part of an integrated proposal to increase tourism in the Greater Binghamton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting #1</th>
<th>March 18</th>
<th>8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome &amp; introductions, planning objective &amp; deliverables, today’s agenda</td>
<td>Information sharing with Q &amp; A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism facts and figures</td>
<td>Current tourism initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overview of the governor’s $1.5B regional competition</td>
<td>Four specific markets to pursue and example categories that our various recommendations may fall under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assumption busting:</td>
<td>What historical assumptions currently drive our tourism efforts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which of those assumptions are no longer valid?</td>
<td>What new assumptions do we need to embrace to be successful now and into the future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify information needed or other action items required to prepare for meeting #2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting #2</th>
<th>March 26</th>
<th>8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome and review of progress</td>
<td>Quick evaluation of the state of tourism in Greater Binghamton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plusses: What are we doing really well to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? Where are we really strong?</td>
<td>Opportunity: What other opportunities are there to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? What are we not exploiting that we could be?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please consider joining hundreds of others and subscribe to my blog or enjoy my recent book, *You Are What You Decide: Eight Keys to Better Decision-making*.
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | · *Issues:* Are there issues related to how we attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? Where are we weak?  
   |   | · *New thinking:* In what new ways might we attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? List specific, substantive, high value or innovative ideas.  
   |   |   · Build on plusses  
   |   |   · Take advantage of the opportunities  
   |   |   · Overcome the issues  
   |   |   · Refine and converge on a list of possible initiatives to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton.  
   |   |   · Identify information needed or other action items required to prepare for meeting #3. |
| Meeting #3  
April 15  
8:30 a.m. –  
11:00 a.m. |   | · Welcome and review of progress  
   |   | · Finalize and then prioritize the list of possible initiatives to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton using two criteria: Impact and Feasibility  
   |   | · Converge and agree to a set of prioritized recommendations that will then be pursued as part of an integrated proposal to increase tourism in the Greater Binghamton.  
   |   | · Discuss and assign next steps. |
To: Greater Binghamton Tourism Summit Attendees
Cc: Terry McDonald & Jason Fiume
    Jeff Smith
    Dale Ketcham
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2015
Re: Tourism Summit meeting minutes – 3/18/2015

Thank you
Thank you all for a very productive first meeting.

Next meeting
We will meet at the Roberson, Thursday, March 26 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Note: in preparation for our next meeting, I strongly suggest that you peruse the summary of participant worksheet contributions. I believe that there are some interesting nuggets in there that were not shared in the group presentations.

March 26 agenda:

- Welcome and review of progress
- Quick evaluation of the state of tourism in Greater Binghamton
  - Plusses: What are we doing really well to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? Where are we really strong? What are our assets?
  - Opportunities: What other opportunities are there to attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? What are we not exploiting that we could be?
  - Issues: Are there issues related to how we attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? Where are we weak?
- New thinking: In what new ways might we attract tourists to Greater Binghamton? List specific, substantive, high-value or innovative proposals.
- Next steps
- Adjourn

Attachments
Please find attached the five flip charts as well as a complete record of your worksheets listing invalid assumptions, new assumptions and new opportunities.

Please email me with suggestions, questions or concerns.
## Flip chart summary reports:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Invalid assumptions:</strong></th>
<th><strong>New, valid assumptions:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is nothing to do here.</td>
<td>• We have rich, cultural and recreational opportunities and everyone knows what they are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People do not expect to see success.</td>
<td>• If you create awesome, you will/can be successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We are a diversified community.</td>
<td>• Embrace our rich history (IBM, EJ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This is a great place to live, people should want to visit.</td>
<td>• We need new, exciting attractions. Unique.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### New opportunities:

- Focus marketing internally (build knowledge of opportunities). Include rural towns and villages.
- Build more family oriented programs.
- Become “The Southern Gateway to the Finger Lakes and Western New York.”
- Form alliances among people who believe in these new assumptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Invalid assumptions:</strong></th>
<th><strong>New, valid assumptions:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Binghamton can sell itself</td>
<td>• Gateway, signage, selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of optimism</td>
<td>• Put Binghamton on the map with what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of identity</td>
<td>• Pride → reeducating residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Silo”</td>
<td>• Cohesive branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### New opportunities:

- A food and beverage core
- Marketing as a regional hotspot with Greater Binghamton @ full partner
- Videos/photos
- Community pride meetings to “sell” offerings to residents (long-term)

### New opportunities:

- Blast YouTube.
- Eliminate the belief that “tourism efforts in Binghamton must be fair and all-inclusive.” We need to focus on our core strengths and build from there.
- Pool events/activities into a single week-long festival: BinghamtonFest.
- Focus on restaurant and art scene and on downtown Binghamton. Don’t be fair!
- Promote fun things people can do safely alone.
- Engage young people in community planning efforts.
- Binghamton must bypass state and regional efforts and create our own.
- Pay young, diverse people to participate in tourism efforts (e.g. “party” motivators)
- Work with business owners to bring back corporate policies encouraging employees to engage in community development.
- Future tourism efforts should focus on current strengths rather than on our history.

**New opportunities:**
- IMAX Theater, Rod Serling museum and a broadcast Education Center.
- Power of branding can create destination drive (food, culture, fun)
- Food/hospitality - positive media (business incubator)
- Return to the river: boat launches, kayak courses, zip lines, River Quest, Yagatta Regatta
- New sustainable revenue sources (city, county, regional)
- Passenger train service (New York City visitors)
- Merge airports (Syracuse, Ithaca and Binghamton)
- Restaurant passport with award incentive
- Purge this old assumption: government, BU, IBM will solve our problems or an agency exist that can handle it all.

**New opportunities:**
- Promote the positives of the community and start with the Gateways (physical transformations)
- We need a common perspective of what we are and then how to message that. We all need the same talking points. We need branding, fierce branding: restaurants, galleries, golfing, and snowmobiling.
- Coordinate “1” campaign, not try to all do something different. They are all good but we need the same messaging.
- Need our “leaders” to be our leaders in messaging. Then use social media to spread that positive message.
- We still need a “big thing” such as a sports venue.

**Summary of worksheets**

Below is a summary of your worksheets, clustered by category. Note: old and new assumptions are aligned across rows as you had them on your sheets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old, invalid assumptions:</th>
<th>New, valid assumptions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe</td>
<td>Vibrant city center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing to do</td>
<td>Food, culture, fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty/deserted</td>
<td>Young professional and family friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourists need one key destination to come to</td>
<td>Branding can create a destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There exists an agency whose purpose it is to promote Binghamton</td>
<td>A new entity can be created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with professional stake in tourism will defend their positions</td>
<td>The same professionals could be primary agents of change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People don’t know where Binghamton is and what it is about</td>
<td>We have an identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People know what’s happening (to do here)</td>
<td>We have fun things that happen here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once here, people have no idea where to go/what is available here</td>
<td>There is an accessible place letting us know what’s happening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are interested in seeing farms</td>
<td>What draws people to Binghamton? What is the highlight?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent is here</td>
<td>There are lots of new options: restaurants, breweries, events, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing to do in Binghamton</td>
<td>The community can pool events, activities into a single week-long festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no single unique tourism destination in Binghamton</td>
<td>Energized young residents are gaining power, don’t remember the “old” days and are seeing the recovery and growth in Binghamton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The old guard/residents dominate and create the perception that Binghamton is decaying</td>
<td>Need exciting, unique attractions - natural or created - that draw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because people might believe this is a great place to live, other should want to visit here.</td>
<td>Reduce government burdens, bureaucracies, taxes, overregulation that kill the entrepreneurial spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government entities are where the spark for economic recovery comes from</td>
<td>Make the city beautiful, not just acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretty pictures and cutting edge marketing can sell a fading infrastructure</td>
<td>We have rich cultural and recreational opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is nothing to do here.</td>
<td>The rivers can be one of our greatest resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rivers are one of our greatest resources.</td>
<td>This is a (?) community that celebrates with festivals throughout the seasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a (?) community and it’s cold.</td>
<td>Many people like solo activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have to be in a group to have fun.</td>
<td>We need to include more and different people in planning (racially diverse in age diverse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The current leaders should plan our future.</td>
<td>People don’t read as much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a good website is the answer.</td>
<td>We need to have pride in this area; convince people that they want to visit/live here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There isn’t anything to do in this area.</td>
<td>We need to focus more on appealing to students and families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University students cloud our town.</td>
<td>We need more billboards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binghamton isn’t on the map.</td>
<td>Put Binghamton on the map and have it identified within regional conversations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- There are many silos without a comprehensive, collaborative effort.
- There is nothing to do in Binghamton.
- Lack of community involvement. Independent political units in silos.
- Not attractive to young families.
- Not a lot to do. Not optimistic.
- Lack of entrepreneurship.
- That we can address tourism without first addressing the current “attitude” of the city.
- Tourism is only about “us.” We are really the important ones.

How are we defining tourism? Vacation free time?

Without IBM, EJ, others this community has nothing to offer. Promoting our area as a carousel capital has value. We can be a destination location of the just market it well.

- There is nothing to do in Binghamton.
- It’s okay to talk down Binghamton
- Binghamton is not a destination location.
- We will never compete with Corning, Ithaca or Cooperstown.
- We can never work together. No one wants to share ideas.
- There is nothing to do in Binghamton.
- The University/colleges are entities unto themselves not within community.
- Binghamton is an ugly city (armpit of New York)

- We have a cohesive effort to create and package a branded tourism marketing initiative.
- The idea of “eat, play, live.” What do you want to do? We have that in Binghamton.
- Community driven community development. Collaborative local and regional alliances.
- Attractive place to raise a family, get an education, work and play.
- Lots to do here and in the greater area.
- Hotspot of technology and new business development.
- For Binghamton to succeed with generating tourism, we must be “fiercely proud.”
- Tourism is not as much about “us” as it is about the people coming in. Looking to the future: how do we address changing tourism trends?
- How do we think of tourism differently? What are we trying to get out of tourism? What is tourism to Binghamton? Define it.
- We are good mix of old (IBM, etc.) and new economies with solid employees now mixed with new startups and entrepreneurship’s that have made this a vibrant economy again. We need more than just marketing to become a destination: museums, galleries, restaurants are the new answer but do we need more?
- Not true
- We need to be fiercely proud and fight back.
- Growth of students downtown has changed our direction.
- Resources are now available to address physical issues.
- Growth, restaurants, the food scene have changed perceptions - to some degree.
- Binghamton is a vibrant, exciting community with lots to do.
- BU & BCC are actively involved in revitalization and creation of a vibrant community and region.
- Binghamton has tremendous beauty and architectural value. Rebrand!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Binghamton has no claim to fame.</th>
<th>Binghamton area has a rich cultural and historic value.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The rivers are a liability.</td>
<td>The rivers offer opportunity! Reinforce infrastructure and use them for events, recreation etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New opportunities:**

- Positive energy, increased local pride
- New synergies and partnerships
- New investment streams
- Rod Serling IMAX theater, museum and Broadcast Education Center
- Creation of a non-profit (semi-permanent) with mission to promote the region
- Brand Binghamton: eat, play, stay
- Website, signage, maps, brochures, events
- Work with business owners and corporate policies to support employees community involvement
- Engage new, young folks with energy to plan our future
- Create a restaurant row
- Open “Southern Gateway to the Finger Lakes and Western New York.” Start wine and beer trails here. Build an actual, physical arch or Gateway over the highway system.
- Focus marketing or cultural and recreational opportunities that exist so that everyone (kids, students, professionals, elderly) know it. Include the rural towns and villages!
- Continue building river trails, open up for public consumption, add new on-the-water opportunities (kayaking, community events, amenities along the water such as restrooms, parking, eateries).
- Ambassador program, marketing, winter* festival, spring festival.
  *Capitalize on the cold weather and get people outside in the winter.
- Blast YouTube.
- Promote fun things people can do safely alone (with or without others around them)
- Pay young, diverse people to do things in the community (e.g., party motivators)
- Cleanup initiative.
- Get Binghamton on the map - literally!
- Teach key hotel personnel how to deal with questions about the area.
- Community involvement.
- Improve signage, maps, and references to Binghamton.
- International tourism marketing initiatives.
- Branding of greater Binghamton: the foodie capital of upstate - hub of activity.
- Food and beverage core.
- Community action groups to implement specific improvements.
- Regional hotspot with greater Binghamton as a full partner.
- Advanced Ag development strategy.
- Log on to Facebook and write a paragraph about something positive about Binghamton.
- Do not stand for negativity, whether that is in a person or online.
• Stop looking at our location as an end all be all destination but rather as a launching pad for destinations around the state. We can be the “front door” to New York State.
• Need a “big thing” to bring people here who can then enjoy all that we have to offer in terms of museums, galleries, restaurants, etc. Sports venue that will bring families here.
• Promote our proximity to the “natural” destination locations that surround us instead of trying to become not organically one of those destinations.
• Instead of vacations per se, become a quick “getaway” for people from other areas.
• Greater Binghamton can become a destination location: i.e., food foodie capital, taste of Binghamton.
• Placemaking can happen - leverage funds to do the big and little things.
• University centers will try to change face of urban core supporting the tourism ecosystem.
• Walk Binghamton campaigns.
• “Food capital” of New York, festivals, culture, arts, sports (baseball!)
• Community and college event coordination
• Culinary school downtown incubator/food center/culinary Institute
• TV sports channel connection
• Architectural and historical tours: people and places of greater Binghamton
• Spotlight on greater Binghamton history and historical figures: TV, books, periodicals
• Travel magazine articles
• Social media marketing
To: Greater Binghamton Tourism Summit Attendees
Cc.: Terry McDonald, Jason Flume, Jeff Smith, Dale Ketcham
Date: Thursday, March 26, 2015
Re: Tourism Summit meeting minutes – 3.25.2015

Thank you
Thanks to each of you for an extremely energetic, positive, forward-looking and very productive session.

Attached
Attached please find the TRANSFORMATIVE initiatives that emerged from today’s meeting. As an addendum, I have included a transcription of your 3 x 5 cards to ensure that no details are lost.

Next steps
The group willingly self-organized based on interest in the emergent clusters of transformative initiatives. Prior to our April 15 meeting, these subgroups will meet to complete the following task:

_Synthesize and extend your cluster into a tight, transformative initiative and supporting projects. Prepare and present (a one-page brief or a three minute radio commercial or a YouTube video or a ....) at the start of the next meeting clearly defining the initiative’s scope and impact._

Subgroups are as follows:

- Food pioneers/Taste of Binghamton & New York: Debbie, Cherrie, Marie, Trista, Bob
- Beautify Binghamton: Frank, Terry, Bonnie, Dave, (there is a fifth person here but the ink smudged so if you are that person please contact this team to be included)
- The Entrepreneurial Capital of Upstate New York: Jeff, Stacy, Bob, Deb, Bonnie
- Welcome Center to Upstate New York: Jason, Terry
- Multipurpose Sports Venue: Tracy, Darcy, Judi, Cherrie
- Open Source, Shared Network/Website: Stacy, Dave, (Tom?)
- Binghamton Gateway Train Station: Dave, (I might have missed a second person here)

Note: we did not have time to identify subgroup leaders so someone will have to take the initiative to organize the subgroup and keep the momentum going.

Next meeting
We will meet at the Roberson Museum on Wednesday, April 15 from 8:30 AM to 11 AM. I look forward to seeing you all then.

Please consider joining hundreds of others and subscribe to my blog or enjoy my recent book, _You Are What You Decide: Eight Keys to Better Decision-making_.
## Emergent Transformative Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food pioneers/Taste of Binghamton &amp; New York</strong>&lt;br&gt;Debbie, Cherrie, Marie, Trista, Bob</td>
<td><strong>Food Pioneers:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Culinary Institute downtown&lt;br&gt;• Food festivals&lt;br&gt;• Food competitions&lt;br&gt;• Agri-tourism&lt;br&gt;• Farmers Market (centrally located)&lt;br&gt;• Demonstrations and education to the public&lt;br&gt;• Connection to local restaurants&lt;br&gt;• Advanced agricultural ideas (hydroponics)&lt;br&gt;<strong>A “Taste” of Binghamton &amp; New York:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Food&lt;br&gt;• Local artisans&lt;br&gt;• Eco tourism&lt;br&gt;• Bike rides &amp; marathons&lt;br&gt;• Rod Serling Festival&lt;br&gt;• Use students to support and run the events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beautiful Binghamton</strong>&lt;br&gt;Frank, Terry, Bonnie, Dave, (one other?)</td>
<td>• River walk connections and greenway&lt;br&gt;• Link to scenic and cultural venues downtown&lt;br&gt;• Bike map, kayaking map, hiking map&lt;br&gt;• Central hub/consistent signage&lt;br&gt;• Colorful (art)&lt;br&gt;• Clean &amp; inviting&lt;br&gt;• “Chelsea Market” shops, etc.&lt;br&gt;• Gateway from and to downtown area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Entrepreneurial Capital of Upstate</strong>&lt;br&gt;Jeff, Stacy, Bob, Deb, Bonnie</td>
<td>• Includes “Shark Tanks” - recruit from around the world and televide via WSKG&lt;br&gt;• Provide winners higher-level financial award, space in incubators and mentoring&lt;br&gt;• Engage participants and winners in the community&lt;br&gt;• Geo-target areas like Metro New York City by identifying our cost advantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greater Binghamton as the Welcome Center to Upstate New York</strong>&lt;br&gt;Jason, Terry</td>
<td>• Start, sample your New York adventure here&lt;br&gt;• Binghamton as the hub with focal point that radiates to other nodes within the eight counties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Multipurpose Sports Venue | · Centrally located in the region  
|                          | · Benefits all three urban cores  
|                          | · Enjoyed by locals but will draw thousands  
|                          | · Millions of dollars leave our community every year: we could recapture these dollars  
|                          | · These visitors will then support food, hotels, culture outlets and all three urban areas and everything in between  
|                          | · Build multipurpose complex: hotel rooms, restaurants, jobs, concert venue  
|                          | · Sports medicine  
| **Tracy, Darcy, Judi, Cherrie** |  

| Open Source, Shared Network/Website | There were three options here:  
| **Stacy, Dave, (Tom?)** | · Create an open source, shared network to market activities and events and showcase community themes, track response and demonstrate collaboration. No single owner  
|                          | · Create an open-source projects and activity website/portal: centralized, transparent, use posts to tell an overarching narrative of Binghamton, hosted by city, open source to city (built by University? Students?)  
|                          | · Everything Binghampton website: start a business, book a concert, paint a mural, bring your goods to sell, fill out forms which get directed to the right person  

| Binghamton Gateway Train Station | · Hi-tech train system to surrounding areas  
| **Dave, 2nd person?** | · Create a committee  
|                          | · Create collaboration of buses, transportation systems  
|                          | · Build relationships with other counties and create a coalition that recognizes the benefit on a state level  
|                          | · Riff on the above: implement the trolley/train concept just within the community to improve our own transportation corridors  

<p>| Be the Link | · Focus on River utilization with Eco tourism theme. |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Festival capital (every weekend)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Branding</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on quality</td>
<td>Brand ourselves who we want people to think we are</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Education and community collaboration</td>
<td>• Healthy living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engage city population &amp; SUNY Broome &amp; BU</td>
<td>• Outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give groups/businesses/individuals something concrete to work towards. Showcase. Collaborate.</td>
<td>• Food</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Culinary program and hospitality</td>
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<td>• Small business &amp; entrepreneurship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Signage to lead people</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Arts and entertainment</td>
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• Link gorges in Ithaca, rivers in Binghamton, river/trails in Elmira
• Includes artist & involves beautification projects
• Promotes a healthy lifestyle
• Encourages cross promotion within regions
• Be the link for many paths of adventure: hikes, hotspots, food, nature, accommodation.
To: Greater Binghamton Tourism Summit Attendees  
Cc.: Terry McDonald, Jason Fiule, Jeff Smith, Dale Ketcham  
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2015  
Re: Tourism Summit meeting minutes – 4.15.2015

Thank you
Let me quote Bonnie Palmer for this meeting’s thank you: “The flow of creativity and commitment to community expressed throughout those sessions has been extraordinary.”

Transformative Initiatives and projects
As each group presented their transformative initiatives and related projects, it became obvious that the set of initiatives are complimentary and additive. Together, the subgroup proposals may become the projects that support a single, transformative initiative.

I agree with Tom Kowalik’s observation that subgroups who are motivated should quickly prepare a white paper (see below for template and instructions) and then submit it to the newly formed Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force (GBTTF) who will then decide whether or not to pass those white papers on to Bonnie Palmer or to combine them into a single white paper.

I propose this placeholder timeline and then defer to the GBTTF for a final schedule.

- By Friday, April 24, sub-groups draft and submit white papers to the GBTTF.
- By Wednesday, April 22, the newly formed GBTTF will meet to decide how to get the white papers submitted by May 1.
- By Friday, May 1, the GBTTF will submit white paper(s) to Bonnie Palmer.

Immediate Next Steps
You have four options for continuing your involvement in efforts to transform Greater Binghamton into a thriving tourism destination

- By end of day tomorrow Friday, April 17, please inform Terry McDonald if you’d like to serve on the Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force. (See Appendix #1: draft task force mission.) The Task Force’s first deliverable will be to submit the white papers by the May 1 deadline.
- By end of day tomorrow Friday, April 17, please inform Terry McDonald if you’d like to draft the white paper for your subgroup’s Initiative and supporting projects. (See Appendix #2: list of initiatives and subgroups. See Appendix #3 for Bonnie Palmer’s description of key criteria for a successful white paper submission. See also attached file: URL White Paper Fillable Form 3.13.15.pdf)
- Self-organize to pursue additional, smaller projects as opportunities emerge.

Please consider joining hundreds of others and subscribe to my blog or enjoy my recent book, You Are What You Decide: Eight Keys to Better Decision-making
Reassemble as a summit group in mid- to late-May to monitor progress. A meeting date and time will be forthcoming.

Attachments to email
Attached to the email distributing these minutes are the following files:

- URI White Paper Fillable Form 3.13.15.pdf
- Why Binghamton needs a multi-purpose sports facility.pptx
- Make GB China Ready.pptx
- GB Welcome Center to NYS.docx

Appendix #1: Draft Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force Mission

- By May 1, prepare and submit a white paper or white papers that describe TRANSFORMATIVE initiatives and related for consideration relative to the Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI) competition.
- Further develop other high priority ideas and projects so that they can be considered for funding in various State and Federal programs, beginning with the REDC and the CFE
- Continue to explore and leverage the four markets: international tourists, college students and their parents, spontaneous visitors, and sports, conventions and community events
- Generate innovative ideas and specific plans for increasing tourism
- Become a repository of innovative ideas and plans for increasing tourism
- Collect and analyze tourism data; possibly set targets

Appendix 2: list of initiates and subgroups

- Food pioneers/Taste of Binghamton & New York: Debbie, Cherrie, Marie, Trista, Bob
- Beautify Binghamton: Frank, Terry, Bonnie, Dave
- The Entrepreneurial Capital of Upstate New York: Jeff, Stacy, Bob, Deb, Bonnie
- Welcome Center to Upstate New York: Jason, Terry
- Multipurpose Sports Venue: Tracy, Darcy, Judi, Cherrie
- Open Source, Shared Network/Website: Stacy, Dave, (Tom?)
- Binghamton Gateway Train Station: Dave, (2nd person)
- International tourism – “China ready”: (Julie)

Appendix #3: criteria for successful white paper (from Bonnie Palmer)

Key Words:

- Innovation
- Transformation
- Metaphysical change
- Visionary
- Collaborative
- Measurable
Sustainable

Objectives:

- Create jobs
- Increase wealth
- Attract private investment (5:1 minimum overall)
- Reshape the region’s economic future

Selected initiatives must align with the regional priorities established in each region.

URI Priorities & Musts:

- Job creation and private sector investment
- Innovation — should cross through every activity to bring about “metaphysical change”
- Leveraged private sector investment: minimum of 5 to 1 ratio in private investment over the aggregate of the plan (5 years). Not each individual project must meet the ratio; BUT some will need to exceed the ratio in order to achieve the overall ratio. Not sure yet whether not-for-profit and federal money can be counted.
- Advancement of industry clusters
- Global trade: Increased exports and attraction of foreign investment
- Connectivity: Geographically, industry clusters, regional incubator plan, etc.
- Sustainability: Demonstrate how the positive results will be maintained over time. Address how spinoff from investments will be retained within the region and NYS.
- Workforce Development: short-term and long-term focus to address issues related to aging population, etc.
- Hard-to-place workers: Outline how obstacles to employment and growth will be overcome; i.e., educational opportunities, workforce training job linkage programs. How can they become part of the success story?
- Community reinvestment: Link community rebuilding efforts to the overall growth strategy to create jobs, advance target industries, increase wealth, and attract private investment. Smart growth principles apply. The 5-1 ratio applies.
- Collaboration: Region-wide public engagement necessary to achieve consensus. Demonstrate support and ability to implement the plan.
- Readiness: Demonstrate that there are some projects that are ready to go. Also, demonstrate the region is equipped to use the entire funding investment over time.
- Leverage other state initiatives: Demonstrate the intent to compete for and use other State programs. Discuss how gaps need to be filled by URI funds.
Concept papers are being received by the Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier as one of many tools to identify possible Strategic Initiatives that demonstrate a collaborative approach to improving the region’s economic climate, and have the potential for broad regional impact and measurable results.

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<tr>
<td>Contact Person</td>
<td>Terry McDonald</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Executive Director, Roberson Museum &amp; Science Center</td>
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<td>Additional Contact Person</td>
<td>Marie McKenna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Co-Owner, Lost Dog Cafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>607-771-6063</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-Mail</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marie@lostdogcafe.net">marie@lostdogcafe.net</a></td>
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</table>
Proposed Strategic Initiative

Proposed Strategic Initiative

Impact area; i.e., entire Southern Tier Region, or one or more target areas within the Southern Tier.

Empire Eats

Initially, the Southern Tier region leading to 62 counties and states bordering New York. Binghamton, NY as a location amidst I 81, 86/ NY17 to all eight Southern Tier counties.

Describe the proposed Strategic Initiative and its collaborative elements, including the partners.

Empire Eats establishes Binghamton, NY as a central hub for Food & Culinary Tourism, Food Exchange and Education throughout the region.

Food & Culinary Tourism:

Through the creation of a Culinary Tourism Alliance the promotion of culinary tourism would be strengthened in the region. This Alliance would promote tourism both individually (a city or county) and collectively (i.e. wine or beer trail that crosses through many counties): develop strong relationships between growers/farms, suppliers, restaurants, accommodation providers, event venues, government and chambers; facilitate communication and ideas between the counties and across regions on how each are engaging their stakeholders to develop local food communities, and best practices for developing food tourism products.

Culinary tourism would focus on experiences surrounding food and beverage, including but not limited to food, wine & beer festivals, farm-to-table restaurant dining, cooking classes, artisanal foods, production facility tours, and packaging wellness with food via "food adventure packages" which would capitalize on each region's geographical and historical assets (including rivers, trails, etc).

Proposed initiatives been contemplated elsewhere that would tie in with Empire Eats:

1. Multi-purpose Sports Complex
2. SUNY-Broome Hospitality & Culinary Center

Initiatives necessary for the success of Empire Eats:

1. A centrally located year round Farmer's Market in Binghamton, NY for the exchange of farmed and processed products and goods. A suggested location could be the Binghamton Plaza due to its central location near the river. (See Blueprint Binghamton's proposal on the advantages of this site).
2. Creation of the Upstate Exchange Complex: This is a second, larger facility in Broome County whose main purpose includes year-round agritourism farming, a small farm and kitchen incubator for entrepreneurs looking to explore ideas in the culinary arts and food production industry. In addition, the facility would also be large enough to serve as a potential distribution center to bridge the gap between upstream and downstream offering a space for growth and partnership between local and regional businesses within our food system.
3. Creation of other outlets for adventure such as opening the river (creation of a boat launch, kayak, sculling, paddleboarding) and the establishment of safe bike paths and lanes (complete the Greenway).
4. Wegmans Grocery as a possible connector to the upstream farms - they have a relationship with Cornell University and Upstate Farmers to build the NY Cheese Industry. An idea is that they could be a partner and help manage or stock this Farmer's Market with NY State cheese, wines & agriculture.

Additional Initiatives that would strengthen the success of Empire Eats:

1. A music venue that can attract some A and B market talent that would make this area a destination for music lovers. Traditions at the Glen rap bistro can accommodate 180-200 people. They have started small but eventually want to grow to make their entertainment venue a destination.
2. A convention and/or center for trade shows, expos, beerfood/wine fests, etc.

Proposed collaborators and partners include but are not limited to: Taste NY, Buy NY, our newly formed Culinary Tourism Alliance, eastRING (stakeholders in Binghamton restaurants), STIR (Southern Tier Independent Restaurants), Wegmans, I Love NY, City of Binghamton, The Agency, Binghamton University, Binghamton University's Feeding a Hungry World, Cornell Cooperative Extension, SUNY Broome Hospitality & Culinary Center, VINES, Regional Farmers Markets, Milnes, Local and Regional Farms/Producers/Artisans, Local and Regional Wineries/Breweries/ Distilleries, Traditions at the Glen, area hotels.
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative directly supports the Southern Tier's vision to improve its business climate and support sustainable economic growth.

Sustains agriculture locally and regionally.
Insulates against volatile food markets.
Eventual elimination of food deserts.
Environmentally more sound.
Creates jobs and offers an entrepreneural incubator.
Opens wider market access within our regional food system.
Offers expanse of educational services to be provided in the future.
Brings in dollars from outside the region. The effect of increased tourism has a direct economic impact such as increased business for hotels, restaurants, retailers, transportation; more money staying local. An indirect economic impact would be increased tax revenues for each community from sales and hotel taxes.
Impacts the quality of life in region necessary for retaining young individuals after graduation.

If there are individual projects within the overall proposed Strategic Initiative, briefly describe each one and the respective start/end dates.

2. Outline and implement a plan that includes financing, management, strategic goals, sponsorship of events, and services offered to the community and region. Development of key relationships between: farmers/growers, artisanal food and beverage suppliers, restaurants, schools, accommodation providers, event venues, government and chambers. January 2016- April 2016.
4. Creation of New York State Culinary Tourism Alliance, housed in Farmer's Market Facility. Stakeholders should be the primary players in the alliance. Promotion of individual and collective experiences through many counties or cities. Facilitates communication and ideas between counties, across regions and among stakeholders. Share how each area is engaging stakeholders to develop local food community and identify best practices for developing food tourism products.
5. Purchase and rehabilitate property to house Upstate Exchange Complex. Early 2017-? Dependent on feasibility.
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is visionary and transformational; and will set the Southern Tier apart from other regions in NYS.

There is currently no existing Hub that combines and connects food producers (agriculture & processed), educators, consumers, entreprenuers and epicurians.

Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative leverages one or more regional strengths or opportunities.

Use quantitative data and other supporting evidence.

Examples:
World class assets, i.e., universities, international corporate leaders, tourism destinations, agriculture, etc.

Innovation and intellectual capital of the private sector and academic institutions

Entrepreneurship and commercialization of technology

Potential for growth in one or more target industries: manufacturing, transportation, technology, tourism, healthcare, rural and forest-based economy

Private sector investment

Meaningful public-private sector partnerships

Capacity to provide a highly skilled workforce, physical infrastructure, and vibrant communities and urban centers

Transportation network and access

1. Educational Assets: Binghamton University, SUNY Broome proposed Hospitality and Culinary Center, Cornell University.
3. Thriving and Growing Restaurant Scene (30+ diverse independent restaurants centralized in Binghamton, NY alone) including stakeholder-led organizations: eatBING and STIR.
4. Four local breweries and a growing brewery community state wide. In March 2015 the governor's office announced a 59% increase in craft breweries statewide between 2013 and 2014. The economic impact was around $3.5 billion dollars.
5. Thriving Arts Scene and Organizations related: The Anderson Center, BCAC, Tri Cities Opera, Binghamton Philharmonic, First Friday Art Walk & GWGA, Roberson Museum & Science Center, etc...
6. Vacant, under-utilized properties throughout the Greater Binghamton area.
7. Recreation: Rivers, cycling & running trails, parks
8. Location: Binghamton is at the center of I81, I86/17 connecting it to a vast expanse of region.

New York State of Opportunity's Agricultural and Annual Report for 2014 discusses that a NYS-NYC Aggregation Food Hub Task Force was designated in December to identify sites for the distribution of upstate agricultural and processed food to downstate markets including restaurant, institutional and government buyers. A final report is expected in July 2015. Additionally, the increasing popularity of Culinary Tourism has not gone unnoticed, according to Skift Report (cit the US topped $201 billion in 2012 on tourism expenditures in food service alone. With this need in mind, Empire Eats aims to embrace our existing resources, making the Southern Tier hub for Food & Culinary Tourism, Food Exchange and Education.
Describe the clear and measurable impact of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

Examples:
- Creation of jobs with competitive salaries and exciting career tracks
- Growth of an industry that outpaces the national average
- Expanded global markets
- Renewed entrepreneurial spirit and new business development
- Expansion and development of major tourism destinations
- Exciting technology advancement and new product development that will change the daily lives of people nationwide
- Attraction and retention a young and talented workforce
- Expansion of inclusionary job training and employment opportunities
- Vibrant communities and urban centers

Empire Eats as a project aims to:
1. Create a vibrant, connected cultural community
2. Connect families and businesses to the regional food system via establishing regional food system resiliency & fight food insecurity
3. Enliven creative & innovative entrepreneurial activity
4. Generate tourism revenue
5. Provides resources for small business growth

Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is focused and leverages the investment of partner entities; i.e., private sector, academic institutions, municipalities, etc.

A Within the private sector - farms & growers, suppliers, restaurants, event and music venues, Wegmans, river company entrepreneurs collaborating with the academic institutions - Binghamton University, SUNY Broome, Cornell University/Cornell Cooperative Extension in conjunction with City of Binghamton and other municipalities
Describe Best Practices used to guide development of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

The feasibility study would play a large role in mediating exactly which practices would best work for the Empire Eats initiative, however, there are quite a few resources in terms of developing the various aspects of the project.

There are several studies regarding food hub creation published at this time. This initiative would follow the lead of others, including, but not limited to The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service April 2012 publication: "Regional Food Hub Resource Guide: Food hub impacts on regional food systems, and the resources available to support their growth and development" found online at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5097957>

Additionally there are several groups and cites devoted to Food & Culinary Tourism, one such being the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance and Team Skift's 2015 special report: "The Rise of Food Tourism" which outlines development strategies and trends in food tourism.

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<td>Additional Contact Person</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Greater Binghamton Convention &amp; Visit</td>
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Proposed Strategic Initiative

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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Complex to be sited in Broome County with easy interstate access. Healthy Tourism Initiatives to be promoted along I-86/ NY-17 corridor to all eight Southern Tier counties.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the proposed Strategic Initiative and its collaborative elements, including the partners.

Develop a sports complex to attract sports tournaments, provide for local recreation and connect to achievement of regional health care goals. The youth sports market alone is a fast growing 7-billion dollar market. Families travel throughout the east coast to take their children to sports tournaments. We would like to capture some of this market and develop a year-round tourist attraction. In addition the region wants to improve its level of community health, especially in the areas of obesity and diseases such as diabetes. Sports medicine would also be a potential consideration.

Over the past ten years, several sports centers have been developed in the United States, but not in Upstate New York. In Upstate New York, the development has been largely limited to a single sport (e.g., "Field of Dreams" for baseball in Cooperstown, various tennis centers, etc.) This facility will include indoor and outdoor sporting facilities for basketball, volleyball, wrestling, gymnastics, soccer, baseball, table tennis, lacrosse, hockey and many more. These facilities will be large enough to attract major sports tournaments.

We envision partnerships in the following areas:
- BC Youth Sports Network (new operating name for Southern Tier Sports & Recreation Development Center, Inc. a non-profit 501(c)(3)
- Sports complex developer such as Sports Facility Advisory
- Private developer/manager
- Local, regional and national sponsors
- Regional health care providers and government health organizations
- Sports medicine providers
- Secondary and higher level education such as SUNY Broome's Sports Management Program

Several models and feasibility studies are available across the country.
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative directly supports the Southern Tier's vision to improve its business climate and support sustainable economic growth.

1. The Greater Binghamton Area wants to increase its year-round tourism market. We currently host 160 conventions, events and sporting competitions in the county with an impact of $22 million, but there is room for growth, especially in the winter months. Occupancy rates drop from November to February. These months are all below 50%, with December and January being the lowest, around 35% to 40%.

2. Currently the youth travel market is taking place in locations outside of New York State. Upstate NY needs a strategy to improve its performance in this growing market. A sports complex for Greater Binghamton can be a test case for other regions.

3. A sports complex with strong ties to the healthcare community will be a great way to improve overall wellness measures for our region. The Gallup organization measures wellness for cities around the world. Binghamton scores in the fourth quarter due largely to high measures of obesity and low measures of optimism. New innovative programs can be established to improve our performance and supplement a variety of new developments that promote physical activity and improved eating habits.

4. The Greater Binghamton Tourism task force has identified 8 strategies to improve the attraction of our region in a variety of tourist markets, including foreign travel by Chinese and other significant tourist countries. The International presence of Binghamton University supports the development of new strategies. The development of a Sports Complex is considered a key piece of the overall strategy.

If there are individual projects within the overall proposed Strategic Initiative, briefly describe each one and the respective start/end dates.

1. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the scope and cost of the project. Involve potential partners. September through December 2015.

2. Develop an implementation plan including financing, management, services offered, sponsorship agreements and schedule. 1st Quarter 2016.

3. Construction would take place in 2016 or 2017, depending on the time required to secure funding sources and gather competitive management and construction contracts.

4. Marketing plan to maximize the value of the facility and tourism to our greater community.
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is visionary and transformational; and will set the Southern Tier apart from other regions in NYS.

1. This project will introduce the value of a Sports Complex to the Southern Tier. Currently our families are spending millions travelling to other locations. We will capture part of that expenditure while enhancing tourism to our region.
2. As described earlier, our area already has a considerable sports scene that is underreported. A Sports Complex will enhance our reputation as a leading sports and health community. One example is minor league baseball. Our community hosted its first minor league team in 1877, just one year after the National League was formed. This year we are in our 101st year of minor league baseball. Over 750 players who have played in Greater Binghamton have also played in the Major Leagues.
3. The tie to community wellness is a critical factor in accelerating our performance in regional health.
4. The creation of a Sports Complex adds to the regional attractions in the Southern Tier. Several regional tourism trails are being considered to enhance the reputation of the region. Having a growing national reputation for Binghamton and Ithaca as “college towns” and entrepreneurial hot spots will also add to a compelling story of our region. The national reporting on Ithaca has been outstanding. Greater Binghamton strives to be an equal partner in this evolving story.
5. The combination of a Sports Center, along with our strong presence in professional and amateur sports can lead to a strong regional presence in sports training and sports medicine.

Greater Binghamton has a very strong sports culture. In our community we have a double-A baseball team, AHL Hockey, Division-1 college sports, a spot on the Champions Professional Golf Tour, a professional tennis tournament, and numerous running, biking and water events. Our high school teams are very competitive and our community is currently home to two New York State football championship teams. The development of a sports complex would enhance our already strong position in sports. In 2015 alone, we are entering our 101st year of minor league baseball, our 45th consecutive year of hosting professional golf, and 42 years of hosting professional hockey.

Binghamton is centrally located in the Northeast market. We enjoy a great highway system, located at the intersection of three major highways: I-81, I-88 and NY-17 (future 86). We have growing restaurant and hotel capabilities. Our urban development strategies, reputation as a college town, and growing capabilities as an entrepreneurial region are beginning to have an impact. Binghamton and Ithaca are the only rated “college towns” in New York State, with Ithaca being number one in the country.

Preliminary conceptual plans for a major sports complex in Greater Binghamton have been previously developed. These plans call for a building structure of approximately 100,000 sq. ft. including:
- 2 full Soccer fields
- 3 hard courts
- Hockey rink
- Pro shop
- Raised Running track
- Welcome Center designed as a central rotunda

There exist several potential sites that will be explored through the feasibility study. These include:
- BAE site, Johnson City
- K-Mart Plaza, Binghamton
- Sow Manufacturing, Binghamton
- Charles Street Business Park, Binghamton
- Former Conklin Sports Park

We have, in place, Broome County Youth Sports Network, a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization Incorporated in New York. BCYSN offers a wide range of sports programs with the objective of promoting health and fitness, providing positive character building opportunities for area youth, and educating coaches and parents involved in youth sports. The organization serves as the dba for the Broome County Field Hockey Club, Youth Golf Association, Boys Lacrosse Club and the Broome Youth Sports Network.

Use quantitative data and other supporting evidence.

Examples:
- World class assets, i.e., universities, international corporate leaders, tourism destinations, agriculture, etc.
- Innovation and intellectual capital of the private sector and academic institutions
- Entrepreneurship and commercialization of technology
- Potential for growth in one or more target industries: manufacturing, transportation, technology, tourism, healthcare, rural and forest-based economy
- Private sector investment
- Meaningful public-private sector Partnerships
- Capacity to provide a highly skilled workforce, physical infrastructure, and vibrant communities and urban centers
- Transportation network and access
Describe the clear and measurable impact of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

Examples:
Creation of jobs with competitive salaries and exciting career tracks
Growth of an industry that outpaces the national average
Expanded global markets
Renewed entrepreneurial spirit and new business development
Expansion and development of major tourism destinations
Exciting technology advancement and new product development that will change the daily lives of people nationwide
Attraction and retention a young and talented workforce
Expansion of inclusionary job training and employment opportunities
Vibrant communities and urban centers

This proposal will have a positive impact on the following metrics:
- Tourism visits and investment
- Occupancy rates for area hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues
- Improved levels of community wellness

Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is focused and leverages the investment of partner entities; i.e., private sector, academic institutions, municipalities, etc.

The feasibility study will explore alternative ownership and management structures. We anticipate a private investment that can be leveraged with public funding. A number of relationships will be established:
- Travel sports organizations
- Work with the Chamber and others to identify alternatives uses of the facilities for events
- Collaborate with municipalities and other organization in the region to create significant events
- Develop a relationship with regional health care organizations for new wellness programs and sports medicine opportunities
- Develop a relationship with professional and amateur sports organizations for events, sports training and promotion
- Participate in the development of a community marketing program
- Participate in the development of tourism trails for the Southern Tier and neighboring regions
- Develop synergistic relationships with all levels of education in our community
Describe Best Practices used to guide development of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

A number of sports complexes have been built across the nation in the past 5 years. Their experiences can help guide our process. Their results can help provide justification to our financial plans.

Our project will be more closely tied to regional health performance, and similar initiatives across the country should be reviewed.

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**Estimated Cost (if known)**

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<tr>
<th>Total anticipated cost</th>
<th>Feasibility study: $250,000</th>
<th>Implement</th>
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**Possible funding sources, including private sector:**

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<th>Other Funding Source</th>
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Date: May 1, 2015
Concept papers are being received by the Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier as one of many tools to identify possible Strategic Initiatives that demonstrate a collaborative approach to improving the region’s economic climate, and have the potential for broad regional impact and measurable results.

### Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead/Administrative Organization Name</th>
<th>Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
<td>30 Front Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Binghamton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Broome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip Code</td>
<td>13905</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Contact Person                       | Terry McDonald                        |
| Title                                | Executive Director of Roberson Museum and Science Center |
| Phone Number                         | 607 772 0660 x231                     |
| E-Mail                               | tmcdonald@roberson.org                |

| Additional Contact Person            | Jeff Smith                            |
| Title                                | EA Board Member                       |
| Phone Number                         | 607 754 0673                          |
| E-Mail                               | jsmith1532@aol.com                    |
Proposed Strategic Initiative

Place a concerted focus on accelerating entrepreneurial development and job creation in the Greater Binghamton Area to be a stronger partner with the Ithaca area and the Southern Tier Start up Alliance. Develop a network of public and private resources throughout Greater Binghamton to create a leading edge reputation for job creation. Use significant entrepreneurial events (i.e. competitions, business plan competitions, shark tanks, collaborations and meet-ups) to build a national and international reputation for Greater Binghamton to grow entrepreneurship and to improve tourism. Coordinate several community events including entrepreneurial activities to create a week-long annual festival in Greater Binghamton. Some of the business plan competitions will attract participants from around the world, and we will capture entrepreneurs to stay with a showcase of supporting agencies.

The Greater Binghamton Tourism Task Force has identified two critical strategies for moving forward on an expedited basis. The first is to accelerate our entrepreneurial development initiatives to attract and retain the skills our community needs for success. At the same time we need to accelerate development of the urban environment that attracts and retains. Details of the urban development strategy are included in another proposal.

The Southern Tier has some unique advantages that have been developing over the past few years. First a LinkedIn group (Binghamton & Southern Tier NY Business Community) has been operating in the Southern Tier with the purpose of improving the economy of the region. This group now has almost 2,000 members. It provides the opportunity for on-line collaborations as well as planned meetups. A day-long conference on entrepreneurship marked the second anniversary of the site with over 300 in attendance. Due to the generosity of sponsors, there were no costs to the participants.

SUNY BEST has been using a collaboration of University, Industry, Government and interns to develop programs on the economy and well being of the region. A major focus has been placed on “College Town” strategies and clean energy technology. Ithaca and Binghamton are the only rated “college towns” in New York State, with Ithaca being number one in the Country. The downtown center for Binghamton University is home to much collaboration in the community.

The Entrepreneur’s Alliance meets at the downtown center and is a private organization devoted to mentoring startup companies and working collaboratively with all other organizations in this space. Working under the guidance of Upstate Venture Connect, a $2,000,000 private angel investment fund is planned for the end of the year. This initiative is self-funded, and thousands of hours have been devoted to starting the organization, mentoring and collaborating throughout the community.

Industry Building Blocks (IBB) is a proprietary research tool with the world’s most granular industry classification system of over 18,000 industries. The business is located in Binghamton NY, and it manages the world’s second largest Corporate Strategic Planning LinkedIn group with over 30,000 members. These tools improve the ability for entrepreneurs to network with industry experts and to assemble market research required for effective business plans.

These organizations are collaborating together and with all organizations involved in creating a dynamic environment for entrepreneurs in the Southern Tier: Regional Economic Development Council, Southern Tier Start up Alliance, ESD, IDA, BU, SUNY BROOME, Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, STOC, BLDZ, BLDC, BLDC-EAP, Incubators, City, County, Towns, Work Force Development and many other public and private enterprises. Many success stories have already taken place.

- SUNY Broome runs the BLDC/Broome Triad Entrepreneurial Assistance Program, one of 23
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative directly supports the Southern Tier's vision to improve its business climate and support sustainable economic growth.

The simultaneous development of attractive urban centers and the acceleration of our entrepreneurial startups for Greater Binghamton are mutually supportive and critical to the creation of positive momentum. A strong Greater Binghamton along with Ithaca's high ratings and stronger performance in the Elmira/Corning area have the potential to create one of the hottest regions of entrepreneurship in Upstate NY and quite possibly the Northeast. Our performance should be measured on a per capita basis for job creation and venture capital investment. Community performance factors such as average income and lower outward migration of young adults should exhibit the first positive signs in a long time.

If there are individual projects within the overall proposed Strategic Initiative, briefly describe each one and the respective start/end dates.

Near-term
- Complete mapping system of startups and support organizations and link to Upstate and Global entrepreneurial support systems: 2015, volunteers
- Define the support network for Greater Binghamton and the Southern Tier: 2015, volunteers
- Complete formation of $2,000,000 private angel investment fund: 2015, self-funded volunteers
- Develop resource teams for the areas of prime importance to the region: clean energy technology, ag technology, Internet of Things, technology and transportation: 2015, collaboration
- Schedule all events for entrepreneurs for 2015 and 2016. Develop some high impact business plan competitions with world and national attraction. $1,250,000 for competitions and marketing: 2015, collaboration
- Link several activities together including the business plan competition to create a week-long festival event in Greater Binghamton: 2016, $100,000
- Grow an economic development and entrepreneurial process that is welcoming, efficient, collaborative and transparent. Permitting new projects can be a challenge, especially given the number of political jurisdictions we have. We look forward to a process that is more efficient and many of the issues have been thought through ahead of time. We want Greater Binghamton to be a place where it is easy to do business, where red-tape has been minimized, and where on-line and printed resources are available that answer all the questions one might ask: 2016, all, $100,000
- Review incentive programs in other regions that have been used to motivate individuals who bring start-up and other business leads to our community

Longer term:
- Business accelerator along with additional incubator capacity – tbd
- Additional angel funds - tbd
- Bring in entrepreneurs from NYC, Silicon Valley and other key areas to infect our entrepreneurs and to support accelerators and to connect to larger sources of capital
- Interest a group of companies and foundations to join with public resources to create a leading edge regional approach to technology deployment, project learning and
Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is visionary and transformational; and will set the Southern Tier apart from other regions in NYS.

Greater Binghamton was once the third highest producer of patents in the country. By leveraging the success of Ithaca and other leading edge regions, and being more collaborative than any other area, we can regain our prominence.

The groundwork has been laid over the past few years with public and private investment of capital and labor. Projects are coming on-line that increase our technical capacity. Entrepreneurs are being mentored. Ithaca and Binghamton are already nationally ranked college towns. We need to complete a world-class process and collaboration and conduct significant events and competitions that begin to build a reputation for our area and region. These events can be combined with other venues to create significant week-long festivals with considerable attraction to our community.

We also need to establish resource teams on the areas critical to our future where we know the market better than any other region in the country.

Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative leverages one or more regional strengths or opportunities.

*Use quantitative data and other supporting evidence.*

- Our major Universities and Colleges will be linked into the overall process and be a major source of collaboration
- Our businesses will be linked into the overall process
- Our region already has significant resources in critical areas: clean energy technology, ag technology, Internet of Things, technology, transportation
- All organizations supporting entrepreneurs will be linked together
- Leveraging the strength of nearby Ithaca gives Greater Binghamton a strategic advantage. Ithaca has received numerous recognitions in both entrepreneurship and quality of life. Forbes ranks Ithaca as #4 Best for Entrepreneurship.

Examples:

- World class assets, i.e., universities, international corporate leaders, tourism destinations, agriculture, etc.

Innovation and intellectual capital of the private sector and academic institutions

Entrepreneurship and commercialization of technology

Potential for growth in one or more target industries: manufacturing, transportation, technology, tourism, healthcare, rural and forest-based economy

Private sector investment

Meaningful public-private sector partnerships

Capacity to provide a highly skilled workforce, physical infrastructure, and vibrant communities and urban centers

Transportation network and access
Describe the clear and measurable impact of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

Examples:
Creation of jobs with competitive salaries and exciting career tracks
Growth of an industry that outpaces the national average
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Exciting technology advancement and new product development that will change the daily lives of people nationwide
Attraction and retention a young and talented workforce
Expansion of inclusionary job training and employment opportunities
Vibrant communities and urban centers

The development of a strong support culture for entrepreneurs and the creation of an urban environment that attracts and retains are two critical strategies for turning the economy of Greater Binghamton in a positive direction. These strategies build upon and support other initiatives that have already been approved including the new high tech incubator, Start-up New York and the Southern Tier Start-up Alliance. We have a great example to follow in the capabilities developed in the Ithaca area. Also the long-standing efforts in Boulder, Colorado, provide another good role model for Greater Binghamton. Both Greater Boulder and Greater Binghamton have an MSA of 250,000 and both are near to major urban areas. Boulder is home to five private mentoring and angel investment networks focused on specific target areas deemed critical to the success of the region. These entities are networked to all of the other organizations that support entrepreneurship and economic development. Our goal is to move the needle on our core measurements:
- Jobs created per capita
- Venture capital invested per capita
- Reduced outward migration of young adults
- Highest level of volunteerism and collaboration
- At the same time developing a national reputation in this area bolsters and complements our tourism programs and objectives

Describe how the proposed Strategic Initiative is focused and leverages the investment of partner entities; i.e., private sector, academic institutions, municipalities, etc.

- Thousands of volunteer hours have already poured into the development of The Entrepreneur's Alliance, an entrepreneur support group. By the end of the year the first private angel investment fund of approximately $2,000,000 will have been established.
- Efforts have already started to map and link all start-ups and supporting organizations. We cannot reach our goals without being the most collaborative area and region and having economic development processes that are welcoming, efficient, collaborative and transparent. On-line and printed resources will be available that answer most questions that a potential entrepreneur or relocating business might have.
- Funds requested provide the opportunity for more significant business plan competitions that will capture national and world-wide attention and supporting marketing. Some funding will be used for development of on-line and printed reference materials. A support team representing several organizations will plan and manage the recommendations. Efforts will be coordinated with other community activities to assure the biggest impact can be achieved.
Describe Best Practices used to guide development of the proposed Strategic Initiative.

- Collaborating with the Southern Tier Startup Alliance and the overall success story in Ithaca.
- Working with Upstate Venture Connect and their focus on best practices.
- Following best practices in the Book “Start up Communities” by Brad Feld.
- Using the capabilities of Industry Building Blocks for analysis of companies and industries.
- High level of collaboration across the Southern Tier.
- Taking advantage of other New York State Business Plan competitions.

Note on Estimated Cost: Just includes the cost of marketing and entrepreneur events and competitions for Greater Binghamton. Thousands of hours per year will be donated by proven entrepreneurs and business owners.

Estimated Cost (if known)

| Total anticipated cost | $3,350,000 |

Possible funding sources, including private sector:

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<td>Private Angel Investment Fund</td>
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Date | May 1, 2015 |