

# Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative

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# The Challenge

- US DOE announced its plans to downsize and eventually close many of its facilities across the country in response to the end of the Cold War, including the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon
- PORTS is the largest employer in the 12-county area of south central Ohio
- What would be the impact to southern Ohio if PORTS closed?



# The DOE Response

- Fortunately, Section 3161 of the Defense Authorization Act of 1993 initiated the creation of “Community Reuse Organizations” across the US in response to the negative social and economic impacts of workforce restructuring
- DOE made a commitment to provide financial assistance for economic development and site reuse activities developed by the affected communities



# The DOE Response

- US DOE awarded a planning grant to the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission to formally create a Community Reuse Organization and to develop a Community Transition Plan
- 15 CROs were formed across the US
- \$284 Million dollars have been provided by Congress
- 42,750 jobs have been created



# The Community Response

- An economic assessment determined that the counties most adversely affected were Pike, Scioto, Jackson, and Ross
- 1 job at PORTS affects 1.4 jobs in the community
- The leadership in Pike, Scioto, Jackson, and Ross Counties worked cooperatively to address the impacts
- Over 90% of the workforce lived in one of the four counties now known as the “SODI Region”



# The Community Response

- Three Public Planning meetings were held, facilitated by CUED (now IEDC)
- The community set a goal for SODI:  
*“To diversify the local economy, to create high wage jobs, and to improve the quality of life, through investment in human and physical resources for economic development in the region.”*



# The Community Response

- US DOE recognized SODI as the designated Community Reuse Organization in 1995
- SODI was incorporated as a non-profit 501 c(3) Community Improvement Corporation in 1997
- SODI's Board of Directors is comprised of 16 members, including representatives from the four counties, Scioto and Seal Townships, USW, SPFPA, USEC, Labor Management, and one at-large



# The Community Response

- SODI's Articles of Incorporation state,  
*“The sole purpose for which the corporation is formed is to advance, encourage, and promote the industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development of Pike, Scioto, Ross and Jackson Counties in the state of Ohio.”*



# The Transition Plan

- Three Strategies emerged from the planning meetings:
  - Develop industrial sites
  - Create workforce education and training programs to match industry needs
  - Provide financial and technical resources for small and emerging businesses

# The Transition Plan

The strategies resulted in these projects:

- Zahns Corner Industrial Park (Pike)
- New Boston Industrial Park (Scioto)
- Regional Incubator Feasibility Study
- Enterprise Training and Development Program
- Southern Ohio Labor Market Analysis
- Regional GIS System
- Regional Marketing



# The Transition Plan

- Jackson County Speculative Building
- Gateway Industrial Park (Ross County)
- Regional Incubator (Endeavor Center)
- Worker Training Facility (Endeavor Center)
- Business Seed Fund
- Pike County Airport
- Intermodal Facility
- Reindustrialization of PORTS Site





# The Results

- New Industrial Parks in all four counties
- The US Department of Commerce National Award Winning Endeavor Center!!!
- GIS operable in all four counties
- Regional Marketing Plan
- Small Business and Business Seed Revolving Loan Fund with technical assistance for all four counties



# The Results

- Total Award for SODI Transition Plan Projects from US DOE = \$14,885,000
- Other Grant Funds leveraged with US DOE funds = over \$14,500,000
- Private Industrial Investment = \$110,000,00
- Total Jobs Created/Retained in four county area as a result of CTP = 2,461



# Unfinished Business

- One Transition Project is not complete:  
*Reindustrialization of PORTS*
- Purpose of the Community Reuse Organization is to *Reuse* the excess properties of the US DOE Site, i.e. give back to the community for community use
- SODI is the official CRO for US DOE PORTS



# Unfinished Business

- In 1998, SODI signed its first lease with US DOE to use the rail on the northeast corner of PORTS and subleased the property to Mead Corporation, now Glatfelter
- In 1999 SODI completed a “Target Industry Analysis” for the SODI Region, including a conceptual land use plan for US DOE PORTS
- SODI began to request properties for reuse...



# Unfinished Business

- Several critical decisions were made along the way that affected the reuse potential:
  - GDP Shutdown
  - USEC American Centrifuge
  - DUF6 Conversion Plant
  - Tc 99 Removal Project
  - GDP Cold Standby



# Unfinished Business

- The path forward for SODI is to function as the Community Reuse Organization by accepting and dispositioning excess personal and real properties from US DOE for the purpose of industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development within the four county area
- SODI has submitted four proposals for reuse



# Current Reuse Proposals

- 340-acre Parcel
- X-605 Well Field
- X-6619 Sanitary Sewer Usage Agreement
- Personal Property Transfer Agreement



## 340-Acre Parcel

- US DOE is preparing the Environmental Assessment for the title transfer
- Proposed uses include a variety of activities, including a joint project with The Ohio State University to develop a renewable energy research park, a Smart Office, or a rail-truck facility
- Actual end-use has not been determined



## X-605 Well Field

- US DOE reviewing SODI's proposal to have access to the well field as a capacity building project
- SODI will partner with the County to incorporate the water source into the Pike Water, Inc. municipal system, thereby increasing the available capacity of water for growth and development



## X-6619 Sanitary Sewer Usage

- USEC leases the X-6619
- SODI and Pike County have requested USEC to accept 150,000 gallons per day of wastewater from the adjacent areas
- Cost to construct a sewer line from Pike County Manufacturing Center to Village of Piketon WWTP = \$2,200,000
- Cost to construct sewer line to X-6619 = \$750,000



## Personal Property Transfer

- Includes all uncontaminated excess personal property
- Property is offered first for US DOE use, then to SODI for economic development purposes
- SODI disposes the property throughout the four county SODI Region, according to its “Asset Transition Plan for Economic Development”



# New Initiatives

- Develop the “Community Commitment Plan for Southern Ohio” that the US DOE will include in its D&D Contract that requires a seamless transition for the workforce, investments in education, community projects, economic development, and a regional purchasing program



# New Initiatives

- Create a Strategic Development Plan for the properties on and around US DOE PORTS for industry and tourism
- Construct a “Smart Office” (a high tech office building under Ohio’s Jobs Ready Sites Program) for Endeavor Center’s business incubator graduates, US DOE contractors, and private sector companies

# New Initiatives

- Upgrade the west entrance of US DOE PORTS, US 23, and Seif Road for safe access, ingress and egress to the Pike County Manufacturing Center
- Install Sanitary Sewer Lines at the Pike County Manufacturing Center, the area around North Access Road, and the 340-acre parcel





# New Initiatives

- Partner with The Ohio State University South Centers at Piketon to develop a renewable energy research and applications program
- Develop an interactive *Cultural Enrichment and Educational Center of Appalachia Ohio* featuring the role of PORTS in the Cold War and Nuclear Energy, the history of Appalachian Ohio culture, the profound Native American influence, an agricultural and ecological research laboratory and botanical gardens , a live labyrinth, and a student art studio.

# The Power of Partnership

