

Innovation Cluster at St. Elizabeths

Overview of Economic Development Study & Implementation Strategy

Background

The consolidation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the West Campus of the historic St. Elizabeths hospital, along with the District's plans for redeveloping the East Campus, present a once-in-lifetime opportunity for local and federal partners to create a significant, new economic activity center east of the Anacostia River.

With support from the U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA), the District is investigating the potential for an innovation cluster that leverages the DHS economy and draws on District assets. EDA has provided a grant to the District and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) to evaluate how best to take advantage of the consolidation and to develop a robust implementation strategy. In a parallel effort also funded by EDA, CMU will identify the feasibility of a regional innovation cluster centered on the DHS economy.

The Opportunity

The transformation of St. Elizabeths has the potential to stimulate economic and community revitalization at multiple levels—

- Creating a range of jobs and business development opportunities tied to the technology, security and manufacturing sectors.
- Linking District residents to jobs, business and educational opportunities through pathways to employment, training and entrepreneurship.
- Positioning the District at the center of a new regional innovation cluster that takes advantage of direct transit access at St. Elizabeths.



- Attracting private sector investment to support business and job expansion.
- Developing an education and training hub that equips residents with the skills to access the innovation economy.
- Acting as a model for national security, innovative approaches in research and development, incubation, commercialization, as well as for regional collaboration and community growth.
- Supporting neighborhood revitalization, with new retail and creative amenities on the East Campus and in Congress Heights.

District of Columbia
Office of Planning



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Study Components

The District-led team is undertaking a five-phased assessment that seeks to leverage the consolidation of DHS and develop a homeland security cluster centered at St. Elizabeths. The study will take place over a two-year period, beginning October 2010.

- **Task 1: Conduct an Asset and Opportunity Analysis**
Develop a baseline understanding of the DHS economy and related assets. Assess the District's ability to access employment and business opportunities, taking into account the DC's current and emerging strengths and competitive position.
- **Task 2: Develop Blueprint for Innovation Hub & Cluster**
Produce a blueprint for an Innovation Hub, centered at St. Elizabeths. Conduct a targeted best practices assessment of innovation clusters.
- **Task 3: Screen Opportunities and Assess Implementation**
Screen the hub opportunities for resources, implementing entities, partnerships and other criteria.
- **Task 4: Local Innovation Implementation Strategy**
Develop a roadmap for actions related to business and workforce development, research and education, incubation and commercialization, and support infrastructure.
- **Task 5: Engagement**
Conduct stakeholder engagement with the public, private and non profit sectors in support of Tasks 1—4.

About the Team

The team is led by the DC Office of Planning (DCOP) in collaboration with the Deputy Mayor's Office for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). The District is partnering with Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and Virginia Tech (VT). CMU is also the lead entity for a grant EDA awarded for a DHS regional innovation study. By leveraging the regional work and strategy development, the District will be better positioned to be competitive in this sector within the region.

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Dr. Christine Gabriel, *Carnegie Melon University*

Dr. Gabriel is an expert and practitioner at CMU in leveraging the innovation economy for the benefit of local communities. She is also President of the University Energy Partnership, an organization that supports collaborative energy technology research and innovation. Until 2010, she was the Director of Innovation Economy at The Heinz Endowments, where she capitalized on research strengths of universities, medical centers and laboratories to promote economic growth. Prior to this, she was Provost and Chief Technology Office at CMU, and directed industry-university collaborative centers programs at the National Science Foundation, becoming the deputy head of the engineering directorate.

Dr. Heike Mayer, *Virginia Tech*

Dr. Mayer is professor of economic geography at the University of Bern in Switzerland and an adjunct professor in urban affairs and planning at Virginia Tech in the US. Her research is in local and regional economic development with a particular focus on innovation and entrepreneurship, science and technology policy, place making and sustainability. Dr. Meyer recently published *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Second Tier Regions*, which focuses on the role of new venture creation in knowledge-based economies. She is also co-author of *Small Town Sustainability*, and has published articles in the field of economic geography and urban planning in various journals, including the Journal of Urban Affairs and Economic Development Quarterly.