

Introduction to Green Jobs & Economic Opportunity Research by the Delta Redevelopment Institute

The Delta Redevelopment Institute is a non-profit environmental and economic development organization that works with community and business partners in the greater Chicago region to identify potential green job-creating reuse opportunities for brownfields, especially in weaker market areas.

In early 2010, Delta agreed to assist Sterling's Downtown Riverfront Redevelopment Task Force to explore the feasibility of reusing key vacant river-edge properties for green job uses relating to emerging green industries such as wind turbine component manufacturing, local food systems or eco-tourism. After meeting with some members of the touring Sterling's riverfront brownfields in March, Delta provided assistance to the City and Task Force in applying for an EPA Brownfields Areawide Planning grant to pay for a team of planning consultants.

While the planning consultants are just beginning to assess the City's downtown and riverfront assets and opportunities, Delta is focusing on how these assets could potentially lead to jobs relating to a greener economy for Sterling than its legacy of heavy industry.

The attached worksheets were discussed at a Task Force meeting held on August 4, 2010. The objective was to get feedback from the Task Force on how Sterling's assets relate to four potential sectors of the green economy that may have potential for Sterling's riverfront brownfields:

1. Green Tourism,
2. Green Building,
3. Alternative Energy
4. Local Food & Biofuel

Draft findings from the August 4th Task Force meeting are attached for additional review and comments (please submit by August 16).

Next Steps:

1. The Delta Redevelopment Institute will submit a written memo by Sept. 15 summarizing potential opportunities and recommendations for next steps.
2. The Task Force will decide by early October on 1 or 2 specific green opportunities it would like Delta to focus additional attention on this fall and next year.

Funding for Delta's work is provided by the U.S. EPA through a brownfields research, training & technical assistance grant.