

## **Ash Institute Summer Fellowship in Urban Policy Project Description | 2009**

### **Louisville Metro Government, Louisville, Kentucky “Connecting Park Hill Corridor’s Workforce”**

**Background and Context:** Once Louisville’s center of industry and economic growth, the Park Hill Corridor now severely demonstrates the common systems of inner city-disinvestment and abandonment, including perceptions of and actual crime, vacant and under-utilized properties and a workforce with insufficient skills to meet evolving employment opportunities. Although failing to attract investment in recent years, development potential exists for this area. The Corridor is the only large infill industrial development area within Louisville and minutes from the Central Business District, is within easy access to major air, rail and highway transportation networks, including UPS’ Worldport, and is surrounded by a substantial workforce.

**Project Description:** Louisville Metro’s Economic Development Department is leading an effort called the Park Hill Industrial Corridor Master Plan/Implementation Strategy. The goal is to develop a master plan to redefine the 1,400-acre industrial area near Louisville’s city center to attract investment and stimulate job creation. The Park Hill Industrial Corridor is roughly bounded by Broadway to the north, the California neighborhood to the west, Algonquin Parkway to the south, and portions of the Old Louisville neighborhood and the University of Louisville campus to the east.

(<http://www.louisvilleky.gov/economicdevelopment/PlanningStudies/ParkHillIndustrialCorridor.htm>)

This master plan process is currently underway and is led by EDAW, Inc, a national planning and urban design firm located in Alexandria, Virginia. Scheduled for completion in Spring 2009, the Master Plan/Implementation Strategy will build upon the recommendations of recent economic and transportation studies, as well as Initiative for a Competitive Inner City’s West Louisville Competitive Assessment and Strategy Project (2001) and International Economic Development Council’s Planning for the Marketing and Redevelopment of the Rhodia Site (2004). The Master Plan will integrate the input of West Louisville and other stakeholders to provide a specific road map for repositioning Park Hill as a key component of the competitive regional economy.

(<http://www.greaterlouisville.com/westlouisville/history.asp>)

One of the important issues surfacing from the process to date is the workforce component. While this master plan is not a workforce study, the consultants are assessing the “system” in place and identifying several constraints: workforce programs are not geographically focused; a high school diploma is required to enter into many of the skill training programs (and this is a low to moderate income area); and a lack of support services needed for people to take advantage of opportunities exists, i.e. childcare and transportation. The consultants will be making recommendations on how to fill the gap between the people and the training resources that exist. Louisville Metro will need to fully develop these recommendations into a strategy and set priorities for implementation.

**Expected Product:** The Fellow will develop a strategy around one or all of the workforce recommendations and initiate implementation, to include:

- Reaching out to partners that provide workforce training to participate in the strategy.
- Identifying information/data gaps that may exist (i.e. data on specific training, needs of businesses, etc.).
- Identifying key partners to help fill the “gap,” with particular emphasis on existing outreach networks.
- Facilitating a dialogue among the partners/stakeholders to create a strategy to improve the workforce training system.
- Designing a framework to assure the system’s continuation.

**Work Environment and Collaborative Partners:** The student will work as a staff member within the Economic Development Office, Metro Development Center, 444 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 600, under the supervision of Bruce Traugher, Director of the Economic Development Department. The fellow will have a fully equipped office and will work with other department professional staff members. The office regularly hosts high level interns and those involved in capstone projects. In addition to a variety of Metro Louisville departments, the Ash Fellow will have the opportunity to work closely with Kentuckiana Works (Greater Louisville’s Workforce Investment Board), Greater Louisville Inc., area universities and technical colleges, churches and other workforce development organizations.