

The Tullahoma News

and Guardian

April 10, 2005

Tullahoma Industrial Development Board's economic strategist presented its Tullahoma Community Assessment to the industrial board's advisory committee.

AngelouEconomics Project Manager Lee Ann Woods, hired by the industrial board last November, led the March 29 meeting and presented the advisory committee with copies of the 50-page document.

The consulting firm, located in Austin, Texas, was retained to aid in planning Tullahoma's future industrial growth.

The Community Assessment, which provides an economic snapshot of the city, is the first step in developing a strategy for future growth.

In addition to the 16 advisory committee members present, all members of the industrial board and Mayor Steve Cope have each received a copy of the document.

"The scope of this project is huge and extends well beyond the limits of the industrial board," board executive director Kim Finn said, "because when we have AngelouEconomics' final recommendations, we'll need commitment from the city, private citizens, and different organizations within the city.

"This isn't just a plan for the industrial board; it's a plan for economic growth and this plan will address what it will take to make Tullahoma a success at several different levels."

When finished, Angelou-Economics will provide the industrial board with a list of targeted companies that includes several by-name points of contact.

In addition, the consultant will also furnish the board with recommendations for what it will take to get new companies and help grow those companies that have already chosen to call Tullahoma home.

To do that, an important initial step was to take an objective look at Tullahoma and identify its strengths and weaknesses.

"I think there may have been a few surprises when people saw the assessment, but it was definitely a first step in the right direction," Finn said.

Final touches are being put on the document, and it will be on the project website www.launchtullahoma.com this next week.

"Now comes the fun part," Woods said. "It's time to formulate recommendations based on all the research we've done to this point. I was very pleased with the participation from the advisory committee when I was here, and I believe Tullahoma is sitting in a very exciting position right now.

"If this community wraps itself around the tremendous opportunity it has for future growth and maybe focuses initially on a few key projects/ideas we'll present, Tullahoma could create a unique niche for itself in and aggressively market itself to specific markets. This would allow it to break out from the rest of the pack and attract some really strong businesses."

Final recommendations are expected from Angelou-Economics by the end of May.

"I encourage everyone to visit the website at www.launchtullahoma.com and look at the community assessment and information about the scope of this project," Woods said.