

Crystal Morphis, CEcD, LEED Green Associate

Founder & CEO, Creative Economic Development Consulting, LLC

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Employment Experience

Founder & CEO, Creative Economic Development Consulting, LLC

July 2012 - Present

Crystal Morphis launched Creative EDC in 2012 to bring a new and innovative approach to her consulting practice. Creative EDC consults on strategic planning, product development, business recruitment, business retention and expansion, downtown development and the many other facets of a dynamic economic development program. Since its inception in 2012, Creative EDC has expanded staff, grown its market area, launched innovative programs, and given back to the field of economic development.

- South Carolina I-77 Regional Alliance – Creative EDC assisted York, Chester, Fairfield, and Richland Counties to develop a new regional alliance that jointly markets the region along the I-77 corridor in South Carolina. Creative EDC's work included a strategic plan and organizational development.
- Creative Entrepreneurial Community® - In 2015, Creative EDC purchased the Certified Entrepreneurial® Community program from AdvantageWest. The firm, in a joint venture with two other firms, is redesigning the program with plans to re-launch in late 2015.
- ElectriCities of N.C., Inc. – ElectriCities engaged Creative EDC to develop and implement a shovel-ready site qualification program. Smart Sites, or S², qualifies a site as ready for development through a series of due diligence steps and community analysis.
- NC Southeast Partnership - Since 2014, Creative EDC has worked as an extension of the NCSE staff providing on-demand research, client information management, e-marketing, social media, and impact analysis support to the NC Southeast Partnership. On a daily basis, our team supports recruitment projects across the 14-county region.
- CreativeSiteAssessment.com – In 2013, Creative EDC launched a new online site assessment tool for economic developers. It allows a local developer to rank and prioritize potential sites for development. It is the first online tool of its kind - providing an independent, quantitative assessment of business development sites.

Managing Partner, Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, LLC

January 2003 – July 2012

Crystal Morphis, along with two former local economic developers and a former NC Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary, grew a full service economic development consulting practice into a regional leader. The firm provided services to communities, regions, and states in economic development planning, operations and management, product development and financing. Projects include:

- South Carolina Power Team Funded Strategic Planning Projects: Sanford Holshouser provided economic development strategic planning services to counties through

grants provided by the SC Power Team from 2007 - 2012. Strategic plans were developed for York, Chester, Chesterfield, Greenwood, and Laurens Counties. Crystal Morphis was Project Manager on all of the planning projects.

- North Carolina Southeast Aviation and Aerospace Study - NCSE engaged Sanford Holshouser to determine if the aviation and aerospace sectors were viable targets for recruitment, develop a value proposition, benchmark with competing regions, identify prospective companies for recruitment, and conduct an appointment setting campaign. Crystal Morphis was Project Manager, lead researcher, and conducted industry analysis.
- Garner Redevelopment Study - Led a team of consultants to evaluate the redevelopment potential of the former ConAgra Foods Facility in Garner, NC. The team created a redevelopment vision, assessed the site and building, developed conceptual designs, identified targeted industry sectors for recruitment, and recommended a redevelopment strategy. The process included community engagement meetings as well as engagement with former ConAgra employees.

President & CEO, Surry County Economic Development Partnership, Inc.

May 1999 – December 2002

As President, Ms. Morphis reported directly to a non-profit Board of Directors. She implemented successful initiatives in new business recruitment, existing business support services, small business development, entrepreneurship, and workforce development. During her tenure, Ms. Morphis assisted in the expansion of local industries and recruitment of new companies, representing over \$100 million in new investment and 1,500 new jobs.

Specific projects included:

- Certified a 400-acre industrial park under NC Department of Commerce Certified Site Program.
- Developed the community's first shell building through a public-private partnership.
- Developed a five-year strategic plan for the county's economic development program that included initiatives in recruitment, existing industry, workforce development, small business development, and entrepreneur development.
- Conducted a successful \$560,000, five-year, private sector fundraising campaign.

Vice President, Surry County Economic Development Partnership, Inc.

March 1997 – May 1999

Prior to being promoted to President, Crystal Morphis served as the company's vice president and reported directly to the President. She created and implemented the county's first existing business program. The program included visitation, appreciation, networking, and expansion assistance.

Professional Development

- Member of North Carolina Economic Developers Association, South Carolina Economic Developers Association, Southern Economic Development Council, and the International Economic Development Council, actively participating in professional development programs, conferences, and committees.
- 2013 earned the LEED Green Associate credential from the US Green Building Council

- 1999 Graduate of the Economic Development Institute, University of Oklahoma-Norman. Research Project: “Implementing an Existing Industry Program in Surry County, North Carolina”
- 1997 Graduate of the Economic Development Course at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NCEDA designated Dan Stewart Scholar

Course Instruction

- Regular instructor at the Basic Economic Development Course at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and at Georgia Tech. Also a regular instructor for the UNC School of Government in economic development courses for elected officials.

Publication

- Morphis, C. and Pearson E. (2011). Creating Economic Opportunity: Multi-Jurisdictional Parks as a Product Development Tool. *Economic Development Journal*, 11, Number 3.

Education

- Master of Science, Major in Economics, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 1996
- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Economics, Salem College, 1995

Professional Certifications

- Certified Economic Developer (CEcD)
- LEED Green Associate
- Licensed North Carolina Real Estate Broker since 2000

Professional and Community Involvement

Crystal Morphis chairs the NC Community College Foundation Board. She serves on committees with North Carolina Economic Developers Association and the International Economic Development Council. She is a past board member of NCEDA; past board member of the Piedmont Triad Regional Partnership; and past Chairman of NC State University Industrial Extension Service. Crystal is involved in her community through Habitat for Humanity and G-Force, a girls running and fitness program for ages 8 - 12.