

# A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## LI execs look ahead



NEWSDAY PHOTO/7. CONRAD WILLIAMS JR.

**Rob Basso**, owner of Advantage Payroll Services, a Freeport company that serves many small businesses on Long Island.

**Economic outlook:** The economy would recover and grow more quickly if there were fewer taxes, regulations and other governmental obstacles to business.

**Job outlook:** The prospects for those in high-tech industries or for the highly educated are good.

“I think with the growth and potential of renewable energy products and services, as well as some high-tech ventures, I think that’s where this Island is going and where it should go.

Some of the assets that we have that will help this region are our great universities. Between Hofstra University, Stony Brook and all the significant educational facilities that we have... we’ve got a tremendous brain trust here on Long Island.

I think there’s just going to be more high-tech jobs. I think there’s going to be more people using the Web to make their livings than there are now. Only the strong will survive, so no matter what you do, you better be on the top of your game because competition in every business is getting steeper because of technology and the use of it. And you don’t have to have \$1-million seed money to have a million-dollar idea and bring a winning concept to the marketplace.

**John D. Cameron Jr.**, founder and managing partner of Cameron Engineering & Associates, Lp, in Woodbury; chairman of the Long Island Regional Planning Council.

**Economic outlook:** Long Island is resilient, but the high costs and lack of infrastructure funding are major hurdles.

**Jobs outlook:** Island needs to increase student proficiency in science and grow its science, technology, engineering and math sectors.

“There are some major challenges on the Island — lack of a diversity of affordable housing on the Island, high cost of doing business, including taxes, property taxes, income taxes, business taxes, etc.

We are highly taxed here on Long Island. The high cost of energy even though we have a fairly reliable source of energy here on Long Island. We have an aging infrastructure and that presents unique challenges to us.

We’re also the nation’s oldest suburb, so as a result, while we are a mature suburb, that presents some unique challenges... Whether it’s the state or local governments, there is an insufficient amount of funding available to upgrade that infrastructure. And if we don’t continue to upgrade our infrastructure, the quality of life that we’ve grown to love here on Long Island is seriously put at risk.

Until we do something with some public entitlements in New York State — Medicaid, public pensions as well as in health insurance — these public entitlements are making it incredibly difficult for even local governments to continue to operate. So as a result they do not have the funds necessary to invest in our infrastructure.

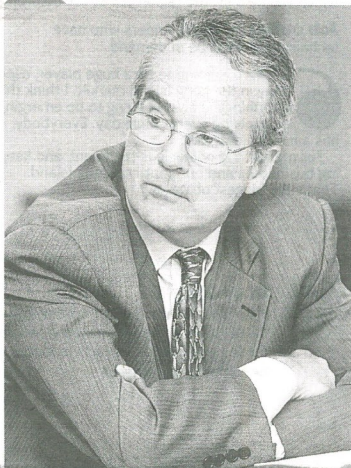


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**Kevin Gershowitz**, president of Gershow Recycling

**Economic outlook:** Long Island is losing companies to red tape and the lengthy, uncertain process of establishing a business.

**Jobs outlook:** Not everyone can be a doctor or lawyer. Long Island needs a good mix of jobs, ranging from industrial to professional.

“What I consider a primary focus of why Long Island has trouble is getting through the red tape... Whether it’s a development project or a business wanting to expand or a storefront wants to knock a wall down to another storefront, you need a permit. And that process is incredibly slow. It’s almost backwards. Today you may have the wherewithal, or the money or the capital to expand your business, but 18 months from now, you may not. Business has to strike while the iron is hot.

The economy goes in a circle. And it contracts and it expands. And businesses go out of business and come into business. So when businesses go out, where are the new ones coming in? Part of Long Island’s problem is we don’t bring new ones in because of the fence, so to speak, to get into Long Island, the red tape, the controls, the timeline. So if you’re in business and you’ve been able to find funding to open up your factory and you can get an approval in the Carolinas in six months and you can’t do that anywhere else and you already have the funding lined up, you’re going to the Carolinas. You’re not coming to Long Island.