

Economic Competitiveness Strategy 2015 Implementation Update and 2016 Strategic Goals

Implementation of the Economic Competitiveness Strategy is carried out by four committees: Educated, Prosperous, Livable and Innovative. In some cases, the objectives of the original strategy document are carried out by partners in the region. In these cases, the committee receives updates and actionable information, from these partner organizations, and implementation success is reported to EDA, and included on annual reports. In many cases, there is no existing partner that is implementing each objective in a regional manner. In this case, each Committee prioritizes these objectives and pulls together members to take regional action. This is a summary of implementation accomplishments for 2015, and initial goals for 2016.



Figure 1: Prosperous Committee members and Site Selection consultants at the Regional Marketing Alliance event, November 12, 2015

Note from the Chairman:

This has been an outstanding year of achievement from each of the four committees of the ARC Competitiveness Initiative. What started out with less than fifty participants a few short years ago, has now blossomed into a full blown community wide engagement. Through the leadership of our committee chairs, both past and present, hundreds of Atlantans, who might not otherwise be part of the process of setting policy, are having their voices heard and contributing their thoughts and ideas to the discussions about how we want to continue to enhance this metropolitan area we call home.

With the wise counsel and assistance of the ARC staff, the Competitiveness Initiative is bringing people and organizations together. As you will read in the report, discussions and recommendations are being made through collaboration across many previously uncultivated lines of communication.

As we look at the progress being made here and in many other collaborative efforts across the region, we can only say bravo, and commit to sharing the news with your neighbors, co-workers and friends so they too can be a part of this growing community effort.

Craig Lesser

Prosperous Committee

2015 Accomplishments

Objective 1: Develop a Framework for coordinated, regional approach to existing business retention and expansion (BRE)

- Established a working group of this committee, led by Misti Martin of Cherokee County Economic Development. This group has developed a draft list of business survey questions that communities have agreed to complete for their largest businesses in order to pool data to get a regional picture of existing business retention/expansion needs. (draft survey attached)

Objective 2: Proactively develop new International Trade relationships for metro Atlanta firms

- This continues to be implemented by the Metro Export Plan, funded by Brookings and led by the Metro Atlanta Chamber. The Prosperous Committee members participate on the MEP committee, and hosts update meetings so that all community economic development staff can learn of the resources and implementation actions of the MEP.

Objective 3: Establish a Regional Marketing Alliance

- Victory!! After several meetings on this topic in 2014 and early 2015, a working group made up of each county's economic development organization, formed a Regional Marketing Alliance (an informal working group, but the agreement to call it that was important). They accomplished the objective of jointly planning and funding a marketing event for the region. The Metro Atlanta Economic Development Forum was held on November 12, 2015, and was attended by national site selection consultants who are based in metro Atlanta. Invitation and attendance list attached.

Objective 4: Identify methods to enhance the economic impact of existing assets and planned expansions at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

- This is being successfully implemented by the Aerotropolis Alliance. The Prosperous committee regularly gets updates on Aerotropolis status, and the Aerotropolis area was featured heavily in presentations at the Metro Atlanta Economic Development Forum.

2016 Goals

- Solidify Regional Marketing Alliance by asking each member to explicitly budget for a 2016 event. Hold a regional marketing event in 2016; Identify a long-range event for the group to pursue (i.e. hosting the 2018 Site Selectors Guild conference)
- Finalize and implement the regional BRE survey
- Activate a regional economic development policy group to take action on feedback heard from site selection consultants during the 2015 Metro Atlanta Economic Development Forum.

Educated Committee

2015 Accomplishments

Objective 1: "Develop and Implement a regional advocacy campaign to elevate public education to the forefront of regional policy concerns"

- Implemented a bi-monthly newsletter, "*Where Achievement Meets Success*", sharing regionally relevant education news. Circulation of 600 contacts involved in the Strategy. Newsletter composed by Educated Committee members and published electronically by ARC communications staff (newsletter attached).
- GPEE expanded presentation of their Economics of Education to local governments in Metro Atlanta, tailoring data to each local government (list attached).
- Added GPEE Economics of Education session to GMA's training roster – opening up this info to local government officials who have not had a specialized local presentation.
- Partnered with the Georgia Vision Project (http://gavisionproject.org/?page_id=2320) to present at bi-monthly Educated Committee meetings and expand circulation of their public service announcements in Metro Atlanta. Metro Atlanta circulation of this campaign began in Sept 2015.

Objective 2: Implement Cradle to Career Best Practices to "Move the Needle"

- There is a working group of the Educated Committee focused on implementation of Learn4Life. This group completed alignment work with United Way's education program in 2015. This group continued to support the Learn4Life Leadership Council in 2015 as they recruit the Executive Champions, developing a Learn4Life one-pager (attached).
- The Learn4Life Data Council launched in 2015, convening 3 times, focused on presentations from each of the 6 Learn4Life districts. Sharing best practices across districts for the FIRST TIME EVER for using data to drive improvements in student achievement.
- Educated Committee members requested action in Thomasville Heights neighborhood after hearing a summary of the Poverty Equity and Opportunity tour in September. As a result, representatives from Thomasville Heights and the Educated committee have reviewed a proposal for a CHISPA program from Families First, modeled on their program in the Norcross Mobile Home Park. A second review meeting is scheduled for Dec 2015, and a funders meeting scheduled for Jan 2016 (proposal and budget attached).

Objective 3: Grow/Recruit/Retain Talent in the Region

- Implementation of the MAX (Metro Atlanta eXchange for Workforce Solutions) working group has increased alignment of workforce development stakeholders in the region, data shared with Educated Subcommittee, increasing participation, use of data and hosted November 4 Workforce Showcase Event.
- Workforce Trends Sector Report, produced by MAX, shared with Educated Committee

- Metro Atlanta Chamber's iNav site, is a free job posting site that automatically sends job postings to 33 colleges in Atlanta, expanded via presentation to the Prosperous Committee, asking regional economic developers to share the site with their employers, increasing job postings to >500 in 2015; and offering iNav /Internship Initiative, which included Mobility Live Internship Summit in 2015, attended by over 75 students and the Health IT Summit Internship Forum – attended by over 125 students.
- Atlanta CareerRise is a regional workforce funders collaborative managed by United Way of Greater Atlanta that continues to provide leadership in employer-driven sector strategies to prepare individuals for middle-skill careers.
- Regional CTAE Workforce Development Summit - connected metro CTAE and other education career services offices to workforce trends and employer info.

2016 Goals

- Coordinate communications across the region:
 - Prepare and submit advocacy articles and op-ed to the media (AJC, ABC, social media)
 - Work to coordinate messages within ARC
 - Work to coordinate messages with partner organizations (all Chambers, education institutions, non-profit organizations, etc)
 - Leverage social media (ChooseATL, Millennials, committee)
 - ASK committee members and others to communicate key/strategic messages
 - Determine most appropriate/effective ways to leverage the Vision project
 - Coordinate PR professionals within the Region's public school districts
 - Continue to use the "good news"/promising practices vehicles: eg: "Where Achievement Meets Success", CareerRise and MAX
- Continue implementation/sharing of Best Practices:
 - Ensure Implementation of Learn4Life: the collective impact initiative will implement the leadership team, a public education data team to align data and information, and PR/Communications team to share consistent messages
 - Present GPEE Economics of Education - for the municipal (GMA) and county officials (ACCG) in the Atlanta region, ARC Board, and economic development organizations
- Continue existing work to grow/recruit/retain talent in the region (Workforce Trends Sector Report; MAX Workforce work; iNav)
 - Work to expand the APS Workforce Development Summit to all Workforce Investment Boards and the region led by APS Office of Career, Technical and Ag Education.

Livable Committee

2015 Accomplishments

- Appointment of new chairman, Jim Durrett (Buckhead CID)
- 3 Working Groups established: Placemaking, Affordable Housing and Implementation Resources

Objective 1: Develop Neighborhoods, Downtowns and Activity Centers that are Attractive to Existing and Potential Residents

- Pop-Up Shop Guide completed (see attachments)
- Survey distributed to Bike/Ped/TOD organizations
 - Results compiled and provided to ARC staff for consideration in Bike Ped planning, workgroup members encouraged to participate in Bike Ped plan update process; Not a priority for Livable Subcommittee in 2016 as work is being successfully implemented by ARC and Transformation Alliance.

Objective 2: Adequately Prepare Communities for the Demands of an Aging Population

- Commencement of Housing Vernacular Guide work
 - Initial research conducted
 - GA Board of Realtors contacted to see if this type of guide exists; BOR interested in seeing finished project and potentially using as training material.

2016 Goals

- Develop “position paper” on Zoning/Subdivision regulations that inhibit affordability
- Pilot project with local community to update regulations allowing for the development of affordable housing
 - Using “Missing Middle” research from Housing Vernacular Guide
- Complete Housing Vernacular Guide
- Develop plan to distribute Pop-Up Shop Guide
 - Potential training opportunities for local governments, main street organizations, etc.
- Develop online placemaking resource for region’s citizens
 - Crowdsource what people love most about how people gather in neighborhoods
 - A “how-to” guide for bringing people together in the public realm

Innovative Committee

2015 Accomplishments

- Appointment of new co-chairs, Nelson Chu (Kinetic Ventures) and Jennifer Sherer (Metro Atlanta Chamber)

Activities encompass multiple objectives

Objective 1: Attract and Nurture New Startup Enterprises

Objective 2: Establish Metro Atlanta as Top 5 Market for Academic Research, Innovation and Commercialization in the US

Objective 3: Improve Capital Access and Incentives for Innovation at Regional and State Level

- First iteration of Heat Map completed (www.preinc.org)
 - Developed, maintained and hosted by AT&T Foundry
 - Heat Map is an online searchable database that maps resources for start-ups and entrepreneurs.
 - Highlights areas of “Innovative” concentration around the Metro Atlanta region.
- “Plug and Play” working group mapped Innovation Landscape (see attachments)
- Developed recommendations for accelerating the Innovation Cycle (see attachments)

2016 Goals

- Continue working on Heat Map
- Develop Playbook (toolkit to accelerate Innovation in Atlanta Region)
 - Pursue a single industry sector for a Prototype of the Playbook with Cyber Security or FinTech potentially being used as the first case study
- Select a leader for each of the 3 elements of the Playbook and develop action items for each element: Promote, Connect, and Train