



**REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY
AND
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

METRO ATLANTA

Submitted by Market Street Services Inc.
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October 23, 2012

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Metro Atlanta Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

The ten-county metro Atlanta region – comprised of Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale Counties – is a diverse region anchored by the state capital, multiple universities and colleges, numerous Fortune 500 headquarters, and the world's busiest airport. The region has enjoyed tremendous growth in recent decades and has positioned itself among the most competitive economic regions in the world. But the region is not without its challenges. The Great Recession has erased all job growth since the start of the new millennium, resulting in a "lost decade" characterized by unemployment, a crumbling housing market, and budget cuts at every level. The region's school systems have faced a variety of challenges, from reductions in funding to cheating scandals to an ongoing debate regarding charter schools. Traffic congestion is stifling economic competitiveness and quality of life. Many are concerned that these challenges will adversely impact the region's ability to attract and retain young professionals. As metro Atlanta emerges from the Great Recession, it must have a clear roadmap to address these challenges and continually strengthen its position within an increasingly competitive, global environment for jobs and workers.

The development of this roadmap, the Metro Atlanta Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy, has been a collaborative process, designed to unify multiple stakeholders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors behind a consensus vision for the region's economic future. The final product will support the goals and objectives of PLAN 2040, the Atlanta Regional Commission's comprehensive blueprint to sustain metro Atlanta's livability and prosperity through mid-century and will meet the Economic Development Administration's requirements for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). However, this strategy should not simply be viewed as a document required for federal funding eligibility. Rather, it should enable regional leadership to advance more collaborative solutions to our region's greatest challenges.

Since the onset of this strategic planning process, great care has been taken to appropriately consider the specific community, economic, and workforce development priorities of local, regional, and statewide partners. This includes sub-municipal priorities identified by Community Improvement Districts and Livable Centers Initiatives; municipal and county-level priorities pursued by local governments, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations; regional priorities such as those advanced by the Innovation Crescent and Forward Atlanta initiatives; and statewide priorities pursued by a variety of partners from the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative to the Complete College Georgia initiative. This Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy is not intended to supersede any of the aforementioned or similar local, regional, or state initiatives, but rather, is intended to complement these initiatives and identify unifying objectives across these initiatives and the specific actions that can be pursued collaboratively in accordance with these objectives.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The nine-month strategic planning process includes stakeholder input, quantitative research, the development of strategic recommendations, the creation of an implementation plan, and the establishment of performance metrics to measure implementation success.

Strategic Initiative Inventory

One of the first steps in ensuring that the regional strategy is a coordinated effort, and not duplicative or uninformed of ongoing efforts, is the creation of a Strategic Initiative Inventory. *Market Street Services* and ARC assessed current local and state economic development priorities, goals, and strategies, with input and assistance from the Work Group. The Strategic Initiative Inventory has informed the development of new strategic recommendations for the metro Atlanta region.

Competitive Assessment

The Competitive Assessment analyzes the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the metro Atlanta region. The region's performance, as measured by a variety of demographic, economic, and quality of life indicators, was benchmarked against three peer metropolitan areas (Charlotte, Boston, and Dallas-Ft. Worth) that metro Atlanta competes with for jobs and workers.

Economic Cluster Review

The Economic Cluster Review evaluated and assesses the competitiveness of various business sectors that are currently being targeted by local, regional, and state economic development partners. The most competitive clusters and targets in the metro Atlanta region are identified, as well as specific niche opportunities for distinct communities and counties within the region.

Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy

This five-year Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy represents the culmination of the three previous phases and the beginning of the in-depth dialogues about the strategic goals and objectives that can best address regional challenges and capitalize on competitive advantages and assets. The Strategy answers the critical question – “What economic development goals should the metro Atlanta region pursue?” Best practices from around the country are identified and referenced when relevant and appropriate.

Implementation Plan

While the Strategy identifies **what** the metro Atlanta region should pursue, the Implementation Plan answers **how** the region will pursue these strategic initiatives. Specifically, it identifies lead and supportive entities in implementing individual recommendations, prioritizes actions, and provides a set of performance metrics to gauge implementation success. Portions of the Implementation Plan are integrated throughout the strategy itself beneath each individual potential action step.

FACILITATORS

Market Street Services

Market Street Services, a national economic, community, and workforce development consulting firm headquartered in Atlanta, was engaged to facilitate the development of the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy, and will lead the region through a process to identify actionable strategies that will help ensure that metro Atlanta sustains its livability and prosperity, and continually elevates its competitiveness in today's global economy. *Market Street* has worked in more than 150 communities across 32 different states, with extensive work in multiple communities throughout metro Atlanta since the company's founding in 1997.

Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county area including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties, as well as the City of Atlanta. For 60 years, ARC and its predecessor agencies have helped to focus the region's leadership, attention, and resources on key issues of regional consequence. ARC is dedicated to unifying the region's collective resources to prepare the metropolitan area for a prosperous future. It does so through professional planning initiatives, the provision of objective information and the involvement of the community in collaborative partnerships. ARC is the regional planning organization responsible for developing and maintaining an EDA-approved CEDS for the ten-county Metro Atlanta region. In this role, ARC serves as a convener of local and regional economic development partners and a facilitator of the dialogue necessary to develop the CEDS.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The strategic planning process is guided by a diverse Steering Committee of leaders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. These individuals have helped identify the region's strategic priorities and committed to serving as public advocates for effective and collaborative implementation.

Hon. Richard Oden (Steering Committee chair)	Rockdale County Board of Commissioners
Mr. Eddie Ausband	The Ausband Agency, Inc.
Mr. Richard Autry	Rockdale County Schools
Ms. Marsha Bomar	Stantec
Mr. Tony Britton	Community and Southern Bank
Mr. Danny Brown	SERVPRO of Henry & Spalding Counties
Mr. Patrick Burke	Fulton County Schools
Ms. Tedra Cheatham	The Clean Air Campaign
Mr. Pedro Cherry	Georgia Power Company
Mr. Justin Clay	NCR Corporation
Mr. Tracey Coker	Piedmont Fayette Hospital
Ms. Shan Cooper	Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company
Mr. Charles Craig	Georgia Bio
Ms. Ann Cramer	IBM Corporation
Dr. Stephen Dolinger	Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education
Mr. Rod Drake	Georgia Power Company
Mr. Todd Evans	Jackson EMC
Mr. Zaheer Faruqi	Aventure Aviation
Mr. Hans Gant	Metro Atlanta Chamber
Mr. Don Geiger	Marriott International
Mr. Stephen Green	Morris Manning Martin Green Consulting
Mr. Scott Gregory	Brock, Clay, Calhoun & Rogers, LLC
Dr. Ken Harmon	Kennesaw State University
Mr. Penn Hodge	Penn Hodge Properties
Dr. Tim Hynes	Clayton State University
Mr. Vaughn Irons	APD Solutions
Mr. Reynold Jennings	WellStar
Ms. Dana Lemon	Georgia Department of Transportation
Mr. Craig Lesser	Pendleton Group
Mr. Orlando Lynch	Atlanta Peach Movers
Mr. Lindsay Martin	Georgia Department of Economic Development
Hon. BJ Mathis	Henry County Board of Commissioners
Mr. Paul Michael	TPA Realty Services
Mr. Al Nash	Progress Partners of North Fulton Atlanta
Mr. Jason Nelms	Everlast Synthetic Products, LLC
Dr. Dan Papp	Kennesaw State University
Ms. Alicia Philipp	The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
Hon. Tom Reed	City of Chattahoochee Hills
Mr. Martin Small	State Bank & Trust Company
Mr. Michael Sullivan	Andersen, Tate & Carr
Dr. Alvin Wilbanks	Gwinnett County Schools
Ms. Betty Willis	Emory University

WORK GROUP

In addition to the Steering Committee, the research and strategic planning phases have been guided by significant input from a group of community, economic, and workforce development practitioners from individual communities and organizations throughout the ten-county metro Atlanta region.

Mr. Craig Lesser (Steering Committee Liaison)	Pendleton Group
Ms. Tedra Cheatham (Steering Committee Liaison)	The Clean Air Campaign
Mr. Joe Allen	Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District
Mr. Demming Bass	Cobb County Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Kali Boatright	Douglas County Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Fred Boscarino	Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Melanie Brandt	Technology Association of Georgia
Ms. Denise Brinson	City of Suwanee
Mr. Roger Brown	Georgia QuickStart Program
Ms. Kellie Brownlow	Partnership Gwinnett; Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Pamela Carnes	Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Mark Cunningham	Atlanta Metropolitan College
Mr. John Cushnie	Georgia Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Yulonda Darden Beauford	Clayton County Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Terry Durden	University System of Georgia
Mr. Alan Durham	Gwinnett County
Dr. Lisa Eichelberger	Clayton State University
Mr. Amir Farokhi	Georgia Forward
Mr. Matt Forshee	Fayette County Development Authority
Mr. Steve Foster	Georgia Power Company
Ms. Virginia Gibbs	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Ken Harmon	Kennesaw State University
Ms. Cinda Herndon-King	Atlanta CareerRise
Dr. Russ Hunt	Southern Polytechnic State University
Dr. Eloisa Klementich	Invest Atlanta
Mr. Terry Lawler	Regional Business Coalition
Dr. Earl Lewis	Emory University
Ms. Misti Martin	Cherokee Office of Economic Development
Ms. Y. Dyan Matthews	South Fulton Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Leonardo McClarty	DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce
Mr. David McCullouch	Gwinnett Technical College
Mr. Chuck Meadows	Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Alfie Meek	Enterprise Innovation Institute; Georgia Institute of Technology
Ms. Lynn Menne	City of Decatur
Mr. Glenn Pfeifer	Georgia Perimeter College
Ms. Kay Pippin	Henry County Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Chris Pumphrey	Douglas County Development Authority
Mr. David Purcell	Perimeter Community Improvement Districts
Mr. Trevor Quander	AGL Resources
Mr. Emil Runge	Fulton County
Mr. Glenn Sears	Conyers-Rockdale Economic Development Council
Dr. Dave Sjquist	Georgia State University
Mr. Richard Smith	DeKalb Technical College
Mr. Michael Starling	City of Dunwoody
Mr. Marshall Walker	Rockdale County
Mr. Bob White	Henry County Development Authority

REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY

The process of developing this Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy for Metro Atlanta began with a thorough review of existing strategic initiatives pursued by local, regional, and statewide partners in economic development, community improvement, and workforce preparedness. Qualitative input gathered from multiple focus groups and an online survey complemented significant quantitative research, highlighting the region's key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. This qualitative and quantitative input has informed the development of this Strategy, with guidance from the Work Group and Steering Committee. While this process was initiated by the Atlanta Regional Commission, it was done so on behalf of the entire region, and guided by volunteers from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Ultimately, this Strategy will serve as the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a document that will provide guidance regarding the region's strategic priorities and will support eligibility for Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding through its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. The document will also support the Atlanta Regional Commission's PLAN 2040 objective to "identify innovative approaches to economic recovery and long term prosperity."

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following framework for conceptualizing metro Atlanta's strategic priorities has been developed based on the key findings from the research phase, their strategic implications, and the input received from the Work Group and Steering Committee throughout the process. There are four goal areas that provide the overarching structure for the Strategy. These four goal areas are defined by four key assets and the attributes that should define these assets. Cutting across all four areas is a single unifying theme: the collective expectation that cooperative leadership – from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors – will support the Strategy's effective implementation. Each goal area includes multiple objectives and potential action steps, supported by best practices from around the country when relevant and appropriate. The four goal areas (encircled below) are as follows:



ALIGNMENT WITH STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

This Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy is intended to complement – not supplant – the successful efforts of the region’s many partners engaged in implementing local, regional, and state-level economic development programs and policies. It is hoped that this Strategy can advance the pursuit of more collaborative and cooperative approaches to regional economic development for the betterment of metro Atlanta and its individual communities. This will require tremendous support from the region’s individual communities, their elected leadership, and their community, economic, and workforce development practitioners. Likewise, metro Atlanta’s leaders will unquestionably need the support of the state of Georgia in advancing new, regional approaches to economic development. It is therefore critical that the strategic initiatives outlined within this Strategy are aligned with the state’s strategic priorities.

The Georgia Competitiveness Initiative is a collaborative statewide planning process launched in 2011. Governor Nathan Deal asked Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner Chris Cummiskey and Georgia Chamber of Commerce President Chris Clark to co-chair the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative, working with twenty-three business leaders representing Georgia’s various geographic regions and industry sectors, as well as state officials and representatives of both local government and the economic development community. This steering committee charged with reviewing public input and developing recommendations for the state and twelve distinct regions.

The Georgia Competitiveness Initiative identified six areas of focus: Business Climate , Education & Workforce Development, Innovation, Infrastructure, Global Commerce, and Government Efficiency. Within each of these six areas, the Initiative identified multiple strategies and actions to pursue at the state- and regional-levels. While the various recommendations are too numerous to list exhaustively, this Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy for metro Atlanta supports multiple statewide priorities and identifies actionable strategies to help achieve the state’s objectives. The following are just a few examples of objectives from the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative that are supported by actionable strategies within this Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy:

- ✓ Support the creation, implementation and use of proven alternatives such as charter schools, college and career academies, performance learning centers and distance learning.
- ✓ Continue the development of programs designed to encourage high school students to pursue postsecondary options that lead to quality jobs.
- ✓ Improve coordination throughout Georgia’s education and workforce development systems.
- ✓ Support the redevelopment of Fort McPherson as a state-of-the-art research center.
- ✓ Continue to support and expand the Georgia Research Alliance, the state’s Eminent Scholar program, and the Centers of Innovation program.
- ✓ Continue to promote conservation and water control improvements and innovations.
- ✓ Increase awareness of existing state programs that are available to help businesses grow globally.

EDUCATED



OBJECTIVE 1: ELEVATE PUBLIC EDUCATION TO THE TOP OF OUR LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE FUNDING AND PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES.

Implement a prominent, regional, public relations and advocacy campaign – "We Expect Better" – to advocate for necessary K-12 funding.

The "We Expect Better" campaign would recruit 52 private sector leaders from across metro Atlanta to each write an op-ed about the importance of K-12 education, and adequate funding for K-12 education, to their business, their employees, and the state's competitiveness. The campaign would work with editorial staff at the region's major newspapers to secure their commitment to run a regular, weekly series for one full year that publishes and spotlights these editorials. Each of the 52 private sector leaders/authors would be challenged to identify the ways in which they intend, as a corporate partner, to elevate their financial support for K-12 education. The campaign should be supportive and not critical, acknowledging innovative and successful elements of K-12 education in metro Atlanta and throughout the state of Georgia. However, each editorial would convey the same message with regards to K-12 education in the state of Georgia: "We Expect Better."

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Forward; Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Chambers of commerce

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal; resource support

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

Promote a variety of alternatives to support sustainable funding for the HOPE Scholarship.

With the HOPE Scholarship no longer covering full tuition (down to 90% of 2011 tuition, fees, and books for eligible students graduating with a 3.0 GPA) and with lottery proceeds likely to result in further cuts in coverage in the near future (state projections showing only

50% coverage in 2016), one of Georgia's greatest educational assets is threatened. The business community should partner with elected officials to formally evaluate a variety of ways to ensure that the HOPE scholarship is sustainably funded for many decades to come. This effort could encourage an expedited, formal evaluation of other sources of revenue, from changes in the percentage of lottery income that goes to prizes to the legalization of new forms of gambling that can bring in additional revenues. A cost-benefit analysis, potentially carried out by a partner in higher education, of recent changes in other states from altering (either reducing or increasing) the percentage of proceeds allocated to education could help inform policymakers in the identification of a politically viable way to fully restore HOPE funding.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Governor's Office; Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Higher education; chambers of commerce

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: \$20,000 - \$30,000

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: State funds

Develop an educational investment tax credit – the Georgia's Future Credit – that provides businesses with tax credits for qualifying investments in educational initiatives and foundations.

Best practice programs and policies are referenced throughout this strategy with detailed descriptions of each best practice included in the appendix.

The State of Georgia should evaluate the feasibility of developing a tax credit to help incentivize private investments in educational initiatives throughout the region and state. A variety of potential credit levels should be evaluated, seeking an appropriate level that maximizes the positive educational impact of the private investment while minimizing the fiscal impact of the tax credit. Credit tiers could be created for different levels and/or types of investments.

BEST PRACTICE: EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT (PENNSYLVANIA)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Governor's Office

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal; primarily staff resources

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

OBJECTIVE 2: INTEGRATE BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAMS INTO PRE-K-12 CLASSROOMS THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

Evaluate a variety of best practice programs at the regional and national level that can elevate student outcomes in metro Atlanta.

The Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) works with districts throughout the state to implement leadership development efforts, assist with performance evaluation, and advise district leadership regarding the integration of best practice programs

and policies. The region's school districts should work with GLISI and other relevant partners to evaluate best practice programs from around the region and state that may be appropriate for implementation in metro Atlanta. Such an evaluation should be a collaborative effort with existing organizations carrying out similar but more focused efforts, such as the Technology Association of Georgia's (TAG) annual STEM Education Awards. A consistent approach to evaluation based on measured student outcomes should be adopted and applied throughout the process. A parallel effort would identify and evaluate programs being implemented in various schools nationwide that could potentially be adapted and adopted in metro Atlanta. Examples of potential best practice programs are included below with full descriptions included in the Appendix to this draft. Additional best practice examples will be added in future drafts of this strategy as appropriate.

GLISI would work with administrators from metro Atlanta school systems and individual schools in metro Atlanta to evaluate student and institutional needs, identify best practices that could effectively address these needs on a local and regional scale, and evaluate the interest of individual districts and schools in serving as pilot program sites. GLISI would work with school districts to ensure that best practice programs are consistent with local-level strategic plans and supportive of regional and statewide initiatives such as the Georgia Career Pathways and Complete College Georgia initiatives.

**REGIONAL BEST PRACTICE: 12 FOR LIFE, SOUTHWIRE AND CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOLS
(CARROLTON, GA)**

**NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES: LEADER IN ME, A.B. COMBS ELEMENTARY (RALEIGH, NC) AND
DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS (DECATUR, AL)**

**REACH OUT TO DROPOUTS, HOUSTON INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT (HOUSTON, TX)**

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education; local school systems; University System of Georgia; Georgia DOE

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: \$10,000 - \$20,000

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Non-profit funds

Systematically implement and evaluate pilot programs to gauge success towards desired objectives.

Once best practice programs have been identified alongside interested and appropriate schools, GLISI could work with individual districts and schools to provide resource support in the development of action plans for implementing the programs, including but not limited to an implementation schedule, funding plan, and performance metrics to evaluate program success. All pilot programs should be evaluated based on locally-developed metrics as well as potential transferability to other schools and district in the region. Successful programs

should be recognized and pilot programs should be expanded to other interested schools with similar needs and objectives. A concerted effort to implement programs in a manner that increases equity in access to high-quality and innovative education throughout metro Atlanta is critical to this process.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Local school systems
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement; Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST: Highly variable depending upon programs pursued
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: State and local funds; national and regional non-profit educational foundation funds

Develop a privately-funded grant program to help fund the implementation and expansion of best practice programs throughout the region's schools.

In support of the implementation of pilot programs, a new regional education fund should be established, awarding competitive grants to school systems that lack available funding to effectively implement new programs. The fund would be supported by private contributions and would initially award small grants. The regional fund would work with other local education foundations and national charitable organizations, to secure additional funding to support implementation. Over time the regional fund would ideally increase the size and number of grants awarded as contributions increase with proven results.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement; Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Chambers of commerce; regional educational foundations
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST: Variable and dependent upon contributions
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private contributions; national and regional educational foundation funds

Expand the development of local magnet schools focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) while establishing a new, regional magnet – the Pioneer Academy – in partnership with the region's institutions of higher education.

Metro Atlanta is currently home to multiple STEM-focused magnet schools with many opening since the turn of the new millennium. The expansion of existing local magnets and the establishment of new magnet programs should be encouraged while evaluating the feasibility of developing a new regional magnet academy – the Pioneer Academy – that would seek to provide students with access to the world class STEM+E (STEM plus Entrepreneurship) education and research capacity at the region's institutions of higher education. An emphasis should also be placed on integrating design-centric arts curriculum into STEM education, acknowledging that many potential STEM-focused career paths in

emerging sectors will leverage creative thinking and design competencies that can be nurtured through integrated arts and STEM education.

The Pioneer Academy would more heavily emphasize entrepreneurial thinking by merging classroom learning with project-based learning, challenging students to develop solutions to real-world problems. "Senior projects" would provide students with the opportunity to spend more time outside the classroom "pioneering" and developing a capstone "innovation." The high school campus would ideally be housed on or near the campus of one of the region's leading research institutions, with instruction complemented by guest lectures from professors at the college/university. Graduate students could potentially provide hands-on assistance with project-based learning activities as a component of graduate assistantships. Instruction at the Pioneer Academy would ideally be developed and captured in a format that is transferable at no cost to other schools throughout the region and the state of Georgia.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Local school districts; higher education institutions

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia DOE; University System of Georgia

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Cost is highly variable by district and dependent upon a number of factors; construction of new campuses can exceed \$100 million with operating costs between \$8,000 and \$10,000 per student.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Local and state education funds

OBJECTIVE 3: ADEQUATELY PREPARE THE REGION'S STUDENTS AND WORKERS FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS AND CAREERS.

Better educate metro Atlanta's students regarding the nature of 21st century manufacturing in the United States.

Focus groups participants, survey respondents, and Work Group members all emphasized the fact that many students have misperceptions about the nature of manufacturing occupations in today's economy. The removal of stigmas attached to manufacturing activity through education and exposure was viewed as a critical component to any efforts that seek to improve the sustainability of metro Atlanta's manufacturing workforce. A comprehensive effort to educate and expose students to manufacturing careers should be developed, emphasizing that many manufacturing occupations today are high-wage and technology-intensive. Such an effort is consistent with and supportive of enrollment completion objectives in Complete College Georgia and should build upon successful initiatives such as Go Build Georgia. Program components could include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Encouraging manufacturers to conduct proactive outreach to local school systems to gauge their interest in scheduling field trips to expose students to manufacturing processes, emphasizing the integration of technologies from computer systems to robotics. Develop a system, potentially including a website,

where manufacturers can sign up and describe the types of technology and processes that students could be exposed to on the field trip while also providing teachers and administrators with a place to find appropriate trips.

- ✓ Developing a website that provides average wage information and/or starting salaries for various occupations, examples of regional companies employing such occupations, and video testimonials from young workers in the field.
- ✓ Developing a Technology Donation Tax Credit that encourages manufacturers to donate technologies and machinery to high schools, career academies, and technical colleges throughout the region.
- ✓ Establishing a set of summer academies in partnership with school districts, regional employers, and higher education institutions that provide middle and high school students with hands-on learning opportunities related to emerging and in-demand careers. The implementation of summer academies is a component of the Cobb's Competitive EDGE Economic and Community Development Strategy; Cobb County employers could potentially help launch one or more pilot programs.
- ✓ Developing an "Adventures in Technology" immersion program that provides high school students with the opportunity to spend a few weeks working in teams to develop or reverse engineer a product with guidance and mentorship from local employers.

BEST PRACTICE: ADVENTURES IN TECHNOLOGY, CATALYST CONNECTION & PITTSBURGH TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL (PITTSBURGH, PA)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Numerous lead implementers for various components; Educated Metro Atlanta committee (see Implementation Plan) could coordinate implementation

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Numerous partners for individual components

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Highly variable by component – as low as \$5,000 for website development and maintenance up to \$5,000 per student for development and management of summer academies and immersion programs.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: State and local education funds; private contributions from participating businesses; federal grants; grants from national and regional educational foundations

Establish a comprehensive and collaborative, regional on-the-job training program for graduates from the ten-county region focused on in-demand skill sets in a variety of emerging subsectors.

Formal and informal apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs have been effective workforce development tools for centuries. Although such programs have historically

supported skilled trades, they are emerging in manufacturing subsectors reliant on an aging workforce and facing an impending shortage of workers with the retirement of the Baby Boom generation. An effective regional program would include a few core elements: participating employers willing to sponsor education and training for new employees; flexible community and technical colleges willing to customize programs; and a state willing to provide a certificate of apprenticeship completion.

The state would work with interested employers in metro Atlanta to identify the appropriate skill sets and occupations to target. Programs should focus on areas with existing or impending workforce shortages (in industries such as aerospace) as well as emerging sectors for which the region will need to prepare an adequate workforce (from film production to health information technology to gaming). Participants would work part-time but receive full-time wages and would attend training part-time at the partnering community or technical college. Graduates of the program would be assured a full-time position with the sponsoring company. Programs could last anywhere from one to four years depending on employer and industry needs. Participants would be recruited from area high school during their senior year through partnerships with local school districts and guidance counselors, as well as the partnerships with the state's career centers seeking to re-train and re-employ displaced workers.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia DOL; Governor's Office of Workforce Development; Technical College System of Georgia; University System of Georgia; participating employers

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Workforce Investment Boards; local school districts

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Cost will vary depending on program components (courses and tuition required, student fees, training materials, etc.)

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private employers and participating individuals will share costs; some state or institutional funds could be used to manage program development

Develop and frequently update a sector-driven analysis of workforce needs in metro Atlanta.

Many studies have been conducted of skills gaps and workforce shortages in a variety of occupations across the region, state, and nation. However, there is not currently a comprehensive effort to gather information from the regional business community, clearly articulate their needs, and evaluate programmatic improvements at the region's institutions of higher education to meet these needs. Individual institutions carry out similar initiatives, as do the Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia on a larger, statewide scale as a component of Complete College Georgia. However, such efforts to expand college enrollments and more closely link program enhancements to private sector needs would benefit from a more comprehensive and annually-updated examination of workforce capacity and deficiencies within individual business sectors. Such an assessment

would not only seek to quantify regional workforce needs in terms of certificate and degree completions, but would also seek to identify employers that may be unaware of existing programs that can help fill open positions and support workforce sustainability. This latter objective could potentially be fulfilled by linking the qualitative (survey-based) portion of the assessment with a new coordinated approach to regional business retention and expansion outreach efforts (see Objective 6). Findings should be shared as a publicly-available dataset with practitioners and potentially prospective companies to convey the region's detailed and proactive approach to measuring and mitigating skills gaps.

The Economic Cluster Review developed as a component of this strategic planning process should be utilized in guiding which sectors are analyzed in greater depth.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education; Metro Atlanta Chamber

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Technical College System of Georgia; University System of Georgia; business community; higher education institutions; workforce investment boards; Georgia DOL; Atlanta CareerRise

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: \$40,000 - \$80,000

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Federal and state grants; private funds

Conduct collaborative program development workshops to ensure that higher education is responsive to the rapidly-changing needs of regional employers.

A series of annual program development workshops would bring together representatives from the region's employers, colleges and universities, organized around the various clusters of economic activity identified in the Economic Cluster Review component of this strategic planning process, to evaluate the aforementioned sector-driven analysis of workforce needs and develop a collaborative plan for augmenting curriculum and developing necessary programs. Each workshop, organized around the various economic clusters, would identify necessary and viable changes to curriculum and programs, and submit a series of recommendations to public and private administrators, the Technical College System of Georgia, and the University System of Georgia.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education; Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Technical College System of Georgia; University System of Georgia; business community; workforce investment boards; Georgia DOL; Atlanta CareerRise

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal administrative and meeting coordination costs

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: In-kind contributions

Encourage high school and middle school students to pursue Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses as well as dual enrollment.

A number of school systems throughout the region already possess strong AP and IB participation rates but there is certainly room for improvement. Such programs increase college readiness and often reduce the time to complete college as well as the financial burden facing families through reduced tuition.

A variety of methods to encourage participation should be developed at the local and state levels; such methods would be consistent with Complete College Georgia objectives to increase college readiness through higher enrollment in AP and IB programs. The state of Florida covers all student AP examination fees regardless of family income (free or reduced price lunch eligibility) or student performance on the exam, and has consistently ranked first in the nation in the percentage of graduating seniors taking AP examinations. The Georgia Department of Education has previously covered each student's first AP exam fee but at present only provides a waiver for those eligible for free and reduced price lunch. Small scholarships (\$100) could also be provided to each student for each AP examination passed or IB program completed. Scholarships could be applied to any public institution of higher education in the state of Georgia and could be used to cover student fees and books which are not currently covered by the HOPE scholarship. School systems could seek corporate sponsors for such scholarships in their community if state funding is deemed unviable. Fully-covering all student fees and textbook costs could help support participation in dual enrollment and early college programs.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Georgia DOE
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Local school systems; chambers of commerce; Technical College System of Georgia
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Highly variable depending upon the scale and scope of potential programs and incentives
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	State funding; private contributions for some scholarships

Promote the adoption of employer-matching continuing education funds in metro Atlanta.

In 2008, IBM launched the Matching Accounts for Learning program. Employees with five or more years of service are eligible to contribute up to \$1,000 per year to an account that was earmarked for education expenses. IBM matched 50 percent of all employee contributions in an interest-bearing account until the employee chose to withdraw funds to support professional education. The Aging Services and Workforce divisions at the Atlanta Regional Commission are actively working with regional employers to adopt best practice programs such as the IBM Matching Accounts for Learning program. A variety of financial and non-financial incentives for implementing similar matching accounts should be considered and

implemented if appropriate. Such incentives could include discounted tuition or waived fees for participating employees/employers or tax deductions for employer contributions similar to those applied to 401k accounts.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission, Area Agency on Aging
Employer Roundtable

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local employers

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: Ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: \$5,000 - \$10,000 in administrative, marketing, and communication costs; employer costs dependent upon employee participation

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Atlanta Regional Commission; local employers

Promote the expansion of mentoring programs that harness the talents of pre-retiree and retired employees to support training, knowledge-transfer, and workforce sustainability as the Baby Boom generation approaches retirement age.

Many organizations across the region and the country have developed innovative strategies to leverage the experience of tenured employees. Georgia Power implements the Retiree Reservist Pool, bringing retirees back on time-limited, seasonal, mentoring and/or emergency projects, providing essential training while also filling employment gaps. Pfizer's Green Jacket mentoring program leverages active, experienced employees to support knowledge-transfer within its workforce. Additionally, Pfizer employs its retirees to cover conference exhibits without having to take active sales force out of the field. The Employer Roundtable convened by the Aging Services and Workforce divisions at the Atlanta Regional Commission are actively working with regional employers to identify and promote best practice programs that can help promote workforce sustainability by leveraging the experience and knowledge of those at or near retirement age. In addition to expanding implementation of such programs to other large regional employers, an effort should be made to develop guidelines and educate small businesses in the region regarding the importance of such efforts and the ways in which impending and recent retirees can be engaged in ensuring the sustainability of a company's workforce and competitiveness.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission, Area Agency on Aging
Employer Roundtable

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local employers

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: Ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: \$5,000 - \$10,000 in administrative, marketing, and communication costs; employer costs dependent upon employee participation

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Atlanta Regional Commission; local employers

Challenge chambers of commerce in metro Atlanta to become involved in the expansion of "Georgia Apply to College" events in their communities.

Started in 2007, the "Georgia Apply to College" initiative seeks to provide high school seniors with the encouragement and assistance from trained volunteers to complete at least one application for college admission. Georgia Apply to College has a goal of providing all high seniors with the opportunity to apply to college online. The program has grown from eight participating high schools in 2007 to more than 200 high schools in 2011 supported by roughly 350 volunteers. With the assistance of local and regional chambers of commerce, metro Atlanta should lead the way in drastically increasing participation in Complete College Georgia events, training additional volunteers from the business community to support the process. Chambers of commerce should be issued a challenge with recognition from the Governor for the chamber and school district that collaboratively and successfully recruits the most new volunteers, serves the most students and families, and completes the most applications.

In addition to expanding participation in Georgia Apply to College events, potential exists for the program to be extended beyond the University System of Georgia to the Technical College System of Georgia, creating a collaborative initiative that seeks to improve enrollments to two-year and four-year institutions, providing equal assistance to those who are more interested in technical education than four-year degree programs.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Local school systems; local and regional chambers of commerce

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: University System of Georgia; Technical College System of Georgia

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal program coordination costs; largely volunteer-supported

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: University System provides resources to local school districts; chambers of commerce will help schools recruit volunteers

OBJECTIVE 4: RETAIN THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST GRADUATES FROM OUR REGION'S INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Develop an "Intern in Metro Atlanta" campaign targeting graduates of Georgia colleges and universities.

Internships are an effective way to increase the likelihood that a given student will remain in the region after graduation by increasing their professional network, ties to a specific employer, and experience as a professional and resident of metro Atlanta. The "Intern in Metro Atlanta" campaign would begin with efforts to solicit information from regional employers regarding summer internship programs (for both current students and recent college graduates) as well as commitments from regional employers to develop new

internships. The campaign should set a goal of inventorying a minimum of 2,000 internship opportunities throughout the region in the first year of the campaign, with increased capacity in subsequent years. Local chambers of commerce should be leveraged in soliciting commitments from their membership. A marketing strategy should be developed, potentially by a local marketing/advertising firm participating in the campaign, which should include media outreach, targeted advertising at college campuses throughout the state, and an interactive website that allows students to search for internship opportunities by keyword or by major/degree program.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Metro Atlanta Chamber

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local chambers of commerce

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Up to \$20,000 in local communication costs to solicit employers; up to \$20,000 in web development costs; up to \$50,000 in marketing costs (print, web, etc.) as well as free sources of marketing such as social media

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private contributions

Create a CorpsAtlanta fellowship program.

Another effective way to increase retention of recent college graduates is by increasing their connections to the community through service. The CorpsAtlanta program, potentially coordinated by the Atlanta Regional Commission in partnership with local governments, the United Way, and other service organizations, would pair recent college graduates interested in public service with local communities. Communities would submit applications for projects that would leverage CorpsAtlanta members, potentially receiving small grants to manage programs operated by the Corps members. College juniors and seniors interested in public service careers would be targeted for the year-long program whereby they would commit to working with a specific community or multiple communities after graduation in exchange for a small monthly stipend and an end-of-program award that is eligible for additional education in the metro Atlanta region and/or student loan repayment. The Atlanta Regional Commission could assist local communities with the identification of specific projects in a variety of areas (poverty reduction, redevelopment and revitalization, public education, planning and economic development, etc.) that would support community objectives as defined by local and regional strategic plans. Higher education institutions could partner with CorpsAtlanta to provide an introductory orientation and educational program that would cover basic community development concepts and introduce the Corps members to fundamental community challenges and opportunities, leveraging successful elements of regional leadership programs.

BEST PRACTICE: DETROIT REVILIZATION FELLOWS PROGRAM, WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY (DETROIT, MI)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission; United Way

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; higher education institutions

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2016 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST:

Up to \$50,000 in program development costs; annual program coordination costs will vary based on scale and scope of the program and is participating partners

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private contributions and grant monies supporting program development and coordination; local governments supports CorpsAtlanta fellows

Evaluate the viability of integrating post-graduate service and graduate retention into the HOPE scholarship.

The HOPE and Zell Miller scholarships are unquestionably the state's greatest tools for retaining its best and brightest high school graduates and supporting their pursuit of higher education. And as previously discussed, lottery revenues have been insufficient to fully fund HOPE scholarships to all eligible applicants and funding levels are likely to decline in future years. Objective 1 of this strategy outlines potential actions that could support enhanced revenues for these valuable scholarships. The state should also evaluate the viability of augmenting the HOPE and Zell Miller scholarships to include a third type of scholarship that rewards public service after graduation and/or commitments to remain with a Georgia-based employer for at least five years beyond graduation. If additional revenues are not secured to support 100% funding of HOPE scholarships, potential exists to guarantee that, while HOPE may only initially fund 90% of tuition (or some other percentage moving forward), that the state will repay/forgive any outstanding student loans secured to cover the remaining 10% and other educational expenses if the recipient can provide evidence of serving two years of public service in the state of Georgia or five years of service at a Georgia-based employer. In essence, such a policy would reinstate full HOPE funding for those students that commit to remaining in Georgia for an extended period following graduation.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Governor's Office; Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: University System of Georgia

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2016

POTENTIAL COST: Up to \$50,000 for evaluation

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: State funds

Expand and implement graduate Cooperative Education Programs at the region's institutions of higher education.

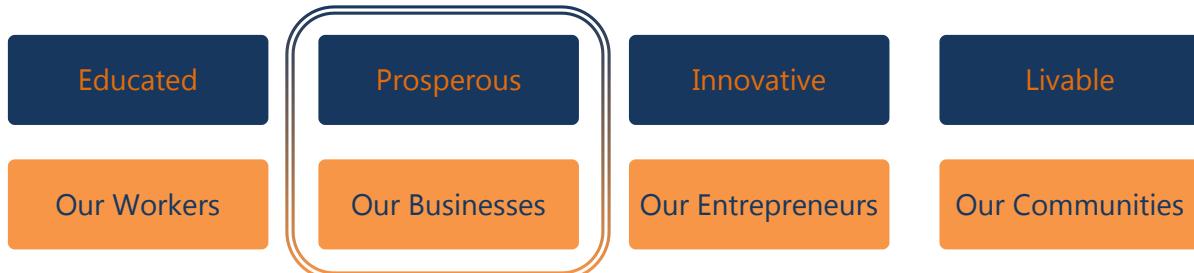
Cooperative education programs (co-ops) provide graduate students with the opportunity to work with public, private, and non-profit employers in areas related to their field of study while attending school. Similar to a graduate teaching or research assistantship where the student works on-campus, co-ops are similarly merit-based and provide students with similar financial benefits as an on-campus experience, except those financial benefits are supported by the employers that have partnered with the college or university. Georgia

Tech's graduate co-op program was started in 1983 and is currently the largest co-op program in the country. Most co-ops are part-time, allowing the graduate student to maintain their full course load. Co-ops, like internships, are an effective way to provide a pipeline to full-time employment in the region for the best and brightest recipients of master's, doctoral, and professional degrees from our region's institutions of higher education. Public and private institutions throughout the region should be encouraged to develop and expand similar programs to as many eligible students as possible. Outreach to employers could be coordinated with outreach efforts for the recommended "Intern in Atlanta" initiative (see first recommended action in Objective 5).

BEST PRACTICE: GRADUATE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM, GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (ATLANTA, GA)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Regional employers
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Minimal funds required for communication and administration in outreach to higher education
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Higher education; employers cover costs associated with co-ops

PROSPEROUS



OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF EXISTING BUSINESSES IN METRO ATLANTA.

Develop a framework for a coordinated, regional approach to existing business retention and expansion (BRE) outreach efforts.

Numerous studies have illustrated that up to and in some cases more than 80 percent of a community's job growth arises from existing business expansions, with the remaining portion coming from new business starts and relocations. Economic development organizations across the country are increasingly engaged in proactive BRE outreach efforts to help identify the challenges and opportunities facing existing businesses, and to identify both reactive and proactive measures to expedite business investments, mitigate reductions in labor force, and support expansions leading to new jobs. Many local chambers of commerce and economic development organizations throughout metro Atlanta are actively engaged in such outreach efforts and have many success stories to show for their efforts. However, there are unquestionably gaps in the services being provided throughout the ten-county region and there is a lack of a coordinated and cooperative effort to support existing business expansion in metro Atlanta. There is a need for a regional partnership to take on a coordinating role that: evaluates existing efforts and identifies gaps in scale, scope, and geographic service; evaluates the methods and technologies used by economic development partners to track and follow-up on information gathered from outreach efforts; and develop recommendations to fill these gaps and pursue regional efficiencies by sharing methods and technologies such as CRM software and survey tools.

Ultimately, a collaborative BRE effort should seek to share non-confidential company information from existing businesses across the ten-county region to inform policy improvement, workforce preparation, and economic development efforts. The program could also support a collaborative effort between economic development organization conducting BRE outreach and higher education institutions to work with large employers in the region on mapping their supply chains, leveraging this information to identify strategic business relocation targets and potential regional business development opportunities. Such supply chain mapping is recommended as a specific component of the Partnership Gwinnett

2.0 strategy; these efforts in Gwinnett could serve as a pilot and model for similar supply chain mapping efforts throughout the region.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Implementation Committee, Prosperous Metro Atlanta goal area council (see Implementation Plan)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; economic development organizations; chambers of commerce; GDEcD; utilities

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014

POTENTIAL COST: Costs are primarily staff time already captured by existing organizational budgets

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

Work with local governments to introduce policies that support and expedite existing business expansions.

Hundreds of executives and small businesses owners responded to the online survey seeking feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing metro Atlanta. When asked to evaluate various aspects of the business climate, these decision-makers rated the ease and speed of the permit review process lower than all other factors with the exception of the degree of coordination among local governments. During focus groups conducted throughout metro Atlanta, permitting and development review processes were among the most frequent complaints. Local governments should be encouraged to constantly seek feedback on their development review processes, establish single points of contact for businesses facing reviews in multiple departments, and adopt formal policies that expedite development review for existing businesses that meet specific economic and fiscal impact criteria. These efforts could be added to minimum and excellence standards for local governments in support of PLAN 2040 objectives. In addition, efforts to promote consistency in codes across jurisdictions would help the development community navigate the permitting process more easily and expediently.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Local governments

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Atlanta Regional Commission

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal cost for communicating and encouraging local governments; cost of adopting and implementing various policies at the local level will vary

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Minimal costs incurred by local government

Proactively develop new international trade relationships for metro Atlanta firms by increasing access to and utilization of existing state and federal programs.

The state of Georgia provides a variety of targeted international trade programs to promote Georgia exports including international trade missions, matchmaking appointments, trade

shows, and educational programs. The state's International Trade Division should evaluate utilization of existing programs and work with local chambers of commerce to identify ways in which they can increase their members' access to and utilization of their various programs and services. The state should also evaluate the Georgia Reaching Out Worldwide (GROW) Step by Step program – a one-year program scheduled to end in September 2012 and funded by a grant from the federal government – to determine if the program effectively met its objectives and is worth continuing with state dollars. The GROW Step by Step program included a variety of services targeted to selected small businesses to expand the quantity of exporting small businesses and the value of those exports. Efforts should also be made to promote greater utilization of existing services offered by the Small Business Administration (such as its International Trade Loan program) and the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank of the United States (such as its guaranteed term financing for international buyers of U.S. exports).

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): GDEcD, International Trade; Metro Atlanta Chamber
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia Chamber of Commerce; Governor's Office; local chambers of commerce; Small Business Administration; Export-Import Bank of the United States

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Expansion of Grow Step by Step cost depends upon program elements continued beyond initial round of SBA funding (roughly \$1 million for one year); cost associated with supporting other forms of export promotion would largely be captured by existing staff resources

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: State funding; SBA funds; grants from entities supporting export promotion such as the Appalachian Regional Commission

OBJECTIVE 6: EFFECTIVELY PROMOTE METRO ATLANTA AS A PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, VISIT, AND DO BUSINESS IN A COORDINATED AND COHESIVE MANNER.

Establish a new regional marketing alliance.

Work Group members and focus group participants throughout the region have frequently expressed a desire to see a new regional marketing entity take charge of place branding and marketing for metro Atlanta. The new alliance would have no other responsibilities related to economic development (policy, project/prospect management, workforce development, BRE, small business assistance, etc.) but would serve as a partnership between local, regional, and state agencies to create a cohesive message regarding metro Atlanta's collective identity, and promote that identity for the benefit of the entire region. Previous efforts to brand metro Atlanta and promote this brand in a cohesive manner have lost steam for a number of

reasons. Metro Atlanta has many defining features that transcend the identities of our individual communities. A new marketing alliance would communicate those attributes in a proactive and consistent manner, with campaign components determined by available funding coming from both public and private sources. Informal meetings between marketing and communications professionals at local, regional, and state community and economic development organizations have taken place in recent years; the networks and dialogue established at these meetings could help kick start the development of a formal partnership.

BEST PRACTICE: CLEVELAND PLUS MARKETING ALLIANCE (NORTHEAST OHIO)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Implementation Committee, Prosperous Metro Atlanta goal area council (see Implementation Plan)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local and regional economic development organizations; local and regional chambers of commerce; local governments; business community; numerous other relevant partners and potential investors

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015

POTENTIAL COST: An effective regional marketing alliance would possess a minimum annual budget of \$500,000; an annual budget closer to \$1.5 million would be closer to the budget of comparable marketing efforts in similar sized metropolitan areas

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Funding would come from members (local governments, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, development authorities, community improvement districts, etc.), potentially applied on a per capita or per employee basis as well as private contributions from member businesses

Clearly define single points of contact for prospect management in each of the region's ten counties, with memoranda of understanding (MOUs) supporting a structured, streamlined process.

Economic development professionals throughout metro Atlanta are keenly aware that prospective companies and site location consultants prefer to deal with a single point of contact during the site selection process. Simply put, they need rapid response and a coordinated process that minimizes the time it takes for them to collect information and make a decision. Economic development practitioners in the region's ten counties should work together to clearly define project management protocols supported by MOUs that ensure that partners are engaged at the appropriate time, maintain confidentiality, and share credit in successful deals. Local contacts should work with regional and state entities to ensure that they are aware of agreements and supportive of compliance during the prospect management process.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Prosperous Metro Atlanta goal area council (see Implementation Plan); GDEcD; Georgia Power
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Local governments; local and regional chambers of commerce; development authorities; economic development organizations
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2014
POTENTIAL COST:	Minimal costs associated with communication and meeting
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	All costs should be absorbed by existing staff resources

OBJECTIVE 7: ADVANCE PUBLIC POLICIES THAT MAKE METRO ATLANTA AND THE STATE OF GEORGIA MORE ATTRACTIVE AND COMPETITIVE PLACES TO DO BUSINESS.

Support continued expansion of Georgia's deal-closing funds as necessary for economic competitiveness.

The state recently added significant new monies to its primary "deal-closing" mechanisms, the Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) fund and the OneGeorgia EDGE fund. The significant injections of new cash into these funds helps Georgia boost its competitive position relative to many of its southern peers in terms of its capacity to incentivize highly-competitive projects. However, other states have greatly increased their capacity as well in recent years. The maintenance of such funding, and inherently the state's flexibility at critical stages of prospective relocation and expansion projects, is critical to metro Atlanta's communities and accordingly, should remain high on regional economic development policy agenda.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Georgia Chamber of Commerce
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Governor's Office; GDEcD; local chambers of commerce
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2013 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost ultimately depends upon the scale of expansion in authorized deal-closing funds and the utilization of these funds on an annual basis
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	State funds

Educate local governments and economic development partners in metro Atlanta regarding the benefits of establishing and expanding joint development authorities.

In 1994, enabling legislation was passed in the state of Georgia allowing counties to form joint development authorities (JDAs). Since then, Georgia counties have partnered to create more than 40 JDAs. Enabling JDAs created several opportunities including floating larger

general obligation bonds for major projects and the ability to qualify projects for larger job tax credits. Specifically, businesses located within the jurisdiction of a joint development authority are eligible to qualify for an additional \$500 tax credit per job in addition to qualifying for the highest tier tax credit available through the Georgia Business Expansion and Support Act (BEST). Businesses locating in Tier 1 counties can qualify for the highest available tax credit (\$3,500) while businesses located in Tier 4 counties qualify for the lowest available credit per job (\$750). Tiers are based on socioeconomic criteria including the unemployment rate, per capita income, and the poverty rate. Metro Atlanta's ten counties currently include Tier 1, Tier 3, and Tier 4 designations, with Clayton county being the lone Tier 1 county. The Metro Atlanta Joint Development Authority is currently inclusive of only four metro counties (Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, and Fulton) although all other six counties are currently a member of other joint development authorities. If the scale and scope of the Metro Atlanta Joint Development Authority were expanded, benefits would extend to a greater number of the region's counties. For example, Cobb and Cherokee counties currently operate a joint development authority but both are Tier 4 counties. The political viability of dissolving and/or expanding existing joint development authorities would need to be carefully evaluated by all metro counties with concerns regarding costs and benefits relative to local and regional competitiveness heard by all parties.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Implementation Committee, Prosperous Metro Atlanta goal area council

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Joint development authorities; local development authorities; local governments

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014

POTENTIAL COST: Negligible with the exception of potential legal fees

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Development authorities

Provide assistance to eligible local governments and economic development partners in pursuing Enterprise Zone and Opportunity Zone designation.

Enterprise zones and opportunity zones are distressed areas within the state of Georgia where companies are eligible for specific tax credits. Census block groups with pervasive poverty, high unemployment, underdevelopment, and blight are eligible for enterprise and/or opportunity zone designation. Enterprise zones allow for property tax abatements while opportunity zones allow companies to qualify for the maximum state job tax credit of \$3,500 per job with the lowest job creation thresholds (two jobs). While applications for Opportunity Zone designation, coordinated by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), have increased during the Great Recession, many communities with eligible areas have not pursued designation. The region would benefit from a focus effort to identify all eligible areas, educate local officials regarding the process and the benefits, and provide necessary assistance in submitting applications and pursuing designation.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission; Georgia Department of Community Affairs

SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Local governments
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015
POTENTIAL COST:	Minimal costs associated with communication and applications
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Costs would be absorbed by existing staff resources at the Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia DCA, and local governments

Conduct an annual survey of the site selection community to identify areas of the region's economic policies and business climate that could be augmented to improve the state's competitiveness.

A variety of industry publications conduct site selection surveys that seek to rank and rate the various states' competitiveness according to a number of factors. While specific components are published, many do not provide the detail necessary for policymakers to make actionable, proactive changes. Regional and/or state chambers of commerce should coordinate the implementation of an annual survey or the site selection community (corporate and consultant) to identify specific actions that can elevate the state's competitiveness for new business investments and existing business expansions.

BEST PRACTICE: ANNUAL SITE SELECTOR AND EXECUTIVE SURVEY, GREATER AUSTIN CHAMBER (AUSTIN, TX)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Metro Atlanta Chamber or Georgia Chamber of Commerce
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Local chambers of commerce; development authorities; economic development organizations; GDEcD; utilities
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2014
POTENTIAL COST:	TBD
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	TBD

Ensure that local leadership is well informed of issues of regional significance by facilitating frequent dialogue and communication.

While each individual community in metro Atlanta has its own set of challenges and strategic priorities, there are numerous common challenges that extend throughout the region. As the region seeks to advance collaborative and cooperative approaches to economic development and community improvement, it is important that local leadership, including but not limited to elected and appointed officials, be well informed of the issues facing the region and the initiatives that need their support. A variety of forms of communication, from e-newsletters to regional forums and seminars, should be used to help establish a common understanding of those issues that cut across metro Atlanta's communities, and the ways in which local leadership can and should be engaged in regional planning.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Multitude of relevant partners supporting community, economic, and workforce development throughout metro Atlanta
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2013 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	\$25,000 - \$50,000
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Existing Atlanta Regional Commission funds supplemented by sponsorships for events; potential exists to utilize funds from the budget of the recommended marketing alliance to support internal marketing and communication efforts that are supportive of the alliance's mission.

OBJECTIVE 8: INVEST IN PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS.

Promote cooperation between local governments, Georgia Department of Transportation, the State Legislature, and the Governor's Office in the identification and pursuit of high priority transportation and transit projects.

The Atlanta Regional Commission maintains a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), PLAN 2040, detailing a vision for transportation investments. The latest federal transportation reauthorization, MAP-21, will decrease the long-range funding levels to the state of Georgia and ARC. During this time of decreasing federal investment in transportation, other non-federal transportation funding sources must be identified and needs prioritized. The Atlanta Regional Commission and its state planning partners will need to continue ongoing efforts to expedite the identification of the highest-priority regional road and transit projects, including those from the July 31, 2012 transportation referendum's project list, and work effectively with the Governor's Office, the Georgia Legislature and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to determine which projects can feasibly be supported by state and federal dollars in the coming years.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Atlanta Regional Commission
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	GDOT; Georgia Legislative Delegation; Governor's Office; local governments; transit agencies and authorities; community improvement districts; tax allocation districts
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2013 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost is primarily staff time and minor administrative costs
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	N/A

Identify alternative sources of local funding to support the implementation of critical transportation projects.

Over \$60 billion in unmet needs are identified in the PLAN 2040 Regional Transportation Plan. Although the recent defeat of the regional transportation referendum left many wondering where funding will come from for many of the projects that would have been supported by the proposed sales tax, there are some alternatives that prudent local governments and their partners in the State Legislature will evaluate. A detailed assessment of funding alternatives needs to be conducted, building on the ARC's 2010 report "Bridging the Gap."

Several options are available to consider, including such as strategies as local governments with strong credit ratings considering debt issuance (bond financing) to advance specific transportation investments. Additionally, the Legislature could evaluate a variety of methods to authorize greater local control over transportation funding. While a regional funding plan is needed for metro Atlanta, examination is needed for other strategies such as identifying potential projects of regional significance that may have a better likelihood of advancing locally as opposed to via regional referenda. Referenda at the local level, or referenda covering multiple jurisdictions that choose to work collaboratively, could raise funding for projects in specific parts of the region. While a regional discussion is needed at the policymaker level at ARC regarding the desirability of these options, such referenda, if enabled, could be fractional or whole penny sales taxes or gasoline taxes.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; transit agencies and authorities; community improvement districts; tax allocation districts; Georgia Legislative Delegation; Governor's Office; GDOT

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Cost is primarily staff time and minor administrative costs

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

Promote the utilization of transportation demand management resources that help reduce traffic congestion.

The state and region currently support an array of employer service organizations (ESOs), including The Clean Air Campaign and various transportation management associations (TMAs), that extend a variety of different resources to commuters and employers to help reduce the number of vehicles on our roads and ease traffic congestion. Such programs include but are not limited to incentives for carpooling and alternative commuting (walking, bicycling, and public transit usage) and assistance with the development of teleworking, flexible scheduling, and compressed workweek policies. The Atlanta Regional Commission should continue to work with ESOs on projects to help local government partners utilize clean commute resources. Chambers of commerce could work with ESOs to implement a

regionwide competition among chambers of commerce to increase the utilization of clean commute options by their membership. Such a competition could build upon the recommended "Alternative Commute Competition" recommended as a component of the Cobb's Competitive EDGE strategic plan. Details regarding the competition and its implementation are highlighted in the EDGE strategy.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Employer service organizations (ESOs)
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Atlanta Regional Commission; local governments; chambers of commerce
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2014 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Up to \$50,000 in new marketing and communications expenses to promote utilization of TDM resources
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	ESO budgets sourced from state and federal funds for TDM resources; chambers of commerce

Identify methods to enhance the economic impact of existing assets and planned expansions highlighted in Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport's forthcoming master plan.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is currently engaged in a process to update the airport's master plan for the first time in more than a decade. Among a variety of improvements, the plan will address gate and runway expansion. Meanwhile, the Atlanta Regional Commission has worked with local partners to convene an Airport Task Force to study ways in which the airport can be capitalized upon as an economic engine that fuels growth in the Southern Crescent. More specifically, it seeks to develop a roadmap for the establishment of one or more community improvement districts (CIDs) that would help fund complementary infrastructure around the airport and advance the area's development as an aerotropolis. The Airport Task Force should effectively engage property owners, businesses, and planning partners around the airport to identify untapped opportunities and present a set of recommendations for local and regional partners to pursue in support of developing an aerotropolis. This effort should coincide with the airport's master planning process to ensure that recommendations from both processes are effectively coordinated and harmonized.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Airport Task Force
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport; local governments; development authorities
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	Ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Up to \$200,000 for plan development and public engagement/outreach
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Federal funding; development authority funds

Provide leadership in advancing comprehensive solutions that support the sustainability of metro Atlanta's water supply.

While the state of Georgia benefitted greatly from recent court decisions indicating that it is legal for Lake Lanier to be used for metro Atlanta's water supply needs, the state continues to work with its neighbors to reach a water-sharing agreement. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and its many partners at the local, state and regional level all recognize that the region must continue to do all that it can to ensure that the region has a sustainable and sufficient supply of water for the future. New reservoirs are one option to provide for more storage, but continued and aggressive conservation planning and implementation must complement reservoir expansion.

Since the Georgia General Assembly created it in 2001, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District has worked with local governments, water and wastewater utilities, and stakeholders around the region and state to carry out its central mission: to develop a comprehensive approach to water resources planning addresses watershed protection, long-term wastewater management and water supply and conservation. The District's Water Supply and Conservation Plan includes a balance of water conservation measures and proposals for new storage to provide for regional water supply through the year 2035. Implementation of the conservation measures is required of local governments and utilities, and compliance is enforced through the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The District's 19 water conservation measures include tiered pricing, toilet retrofits and leak detection and repair. Local governments have adopted a suite of model ordinances to protect rivers and streams in the metro area as part of the Watershed Management Plan. The Wastewater Plan calls for returning highly treated wastewater to its sources. Gwinnett's F. Wayne Hill Plant, one of the most advanced treatment plants in the world, began returning treated wastewater to Lake Lanier last year. The continued development and promotion of a comprehensive and collaborative approach that educates various constituencies and incentivizes the adoption of such conservation techniques is necessary, complementing regional reservoir planning.

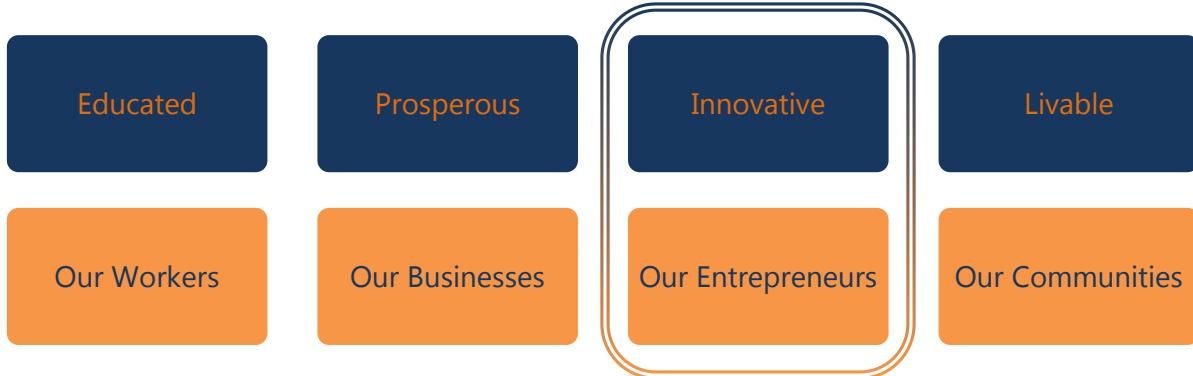
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia Environmental Protection Division; local governments; Georgia Chamber of Commerce; local and regional chambers of commerce; ARC; environmental organizations

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Up to \$100,000 for educational campaigns; cost of planning efforts and implementation of conservation techniques will vary tremendously.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Georgia Environmental Finance Authority; federal funding; relevant grants from organizations such as the Appalachian Regional Commission

INNOVATIVE



OBJECTIVE 9: ATTRACT AND NURTURE NEW STARTUP ENTERPRISES.

Establish the Startup University, a collaborative post-graduate fellowship program that facilitates student entrepreneurship.

The Startup University would be a new fellowship program, potentially supported by the Georgia Research Alliance, drawing recent graduates from the region's institutions of higher education with interest in transitioning from graduate school into small business ownership. The one-year program would require students to apply to the program during their first year of graduate studies in a competitive applications process. Once they have completed their core degree program, students would transition into the Startup University. The fellowship program would have two primary components: entrepreneurship education and business/product development. Students would devote the majority of their time each week to applied business and product development, working on their own in research facilities at their sponsoring institution of higher education. One day each week could be dedicated to classroom education, providing students with exposure to management, marketing, accounting, entrepreneurship, and other relevant curriculum. Additionally, time each week could be devoted to refining their business model with assistance from experienced mentors at SCORE, the SBDC, the Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI²) and/or incubators and accelerators such as the Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC).

The fellowship program would have a central campus for all classroom and mentorship activities – potentially the Global Learning Center at Georgia Tech – while applied product and business development activities would take place at the institutions where the students received their graduate education. The program would seek to graduate companies, rather than graduating students, by placing companies in incubators or accelerators throughout the region to continue to improve their concepts, connect to customers, and grow their ventures. Ideally, some graduates would be ready to launch sustainable companies no additional hands-on assistance at the conclusion of the Startup University fellowship. Fellows accepted into the competitive program would receive an annual stipend for their business

development ventures (potentially \$50,000), with personal financial needs partially met by extending assistantships similar in nature to graduate teaching and/or research assistantships.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Full spectrum of entrepreneurship and small business assistance service providers; University System of Georgia; Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI ²)
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2016
POTENTIAL COST:	Development and operational costs are highly variable depending upon scale and scope of operations
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Institution funds; some federal and nonprofit grant monies may be available for development costs

Support the growth of the region's accelerators and their participants.

Unlike incubators that typically provide office space and extensive hand-on mentoring for years, accelerators are short (usually a few weeks or months) that seek to provide relatively small infusions of cash (\$15,000 - \$25,000) and an aggressive mentorship program in exchange for a small ownership stake (typically less than 10%). Launched in 2011, the Flashpoint Accelerator is a partnership between Georgia Tech and Imlay Investments. While other accelerators have started and gained various levels of traction in metro Atlanta, the combination of the resources at Georgia Tech and the experience of the involved angel investors give Flashpoint a relatively high probability of success. All accelerators in the region need to attract the right companies that can benefit most from their specific programs. Their success can be supported by ensuring that the region's various entrepreneurial resources are engaged to best suit the needs of program participants upon completion. An effort should be made to ensure that companies completing the program are aware of and connected to available resources in the region that can support their viability and growth. A process for tracking accelerator participants beyond program completion would help the region and its accelerators measure the impact of their programs and ensure that program participants continue to receive the assistance that they may need to help their venture get off the ground and expand in metro Atlanta.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Startup Atlanta, an initiative of Invest Atlanta
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Accelerators; SBDCs; SCORE; SBA; chambers of commerce; full spectrum of service providers, training institutions, networks, and physical space (incubators, coworking facilities, etc.) that support entrepreneurs
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2016
POTENTIAL COST:	\$10,000-\$15,000 annually to support communication, tracking, and hands-on assistance to accelerator participants

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Startup Atlanta/Invest Atlanta via member-supported funds

Significantly increase the availability of business incubation space in metro Atlanta by developing facilities focused on niche markets.

Metro Atlanta is home to multiple incubators, most notably the successful Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC). Newer entrants include CollabTech at Georgia State University and the Alpharetta Accelerator, along with alternative models such as the Innovation Factory which targets and incubates medical technology innovations and then purchases the commercially-viable innovations it successfully incubates. However, there is room for growth in a variety of other areas for new incubation space. Potential new incubation programs would focus on niche markets that are currently underserved by existing incubators such as ATDC with long-standing success. Such niches could include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Retail incubation: there are a number of virtual retail incubator and flexible models that provide partially and fully subsidized rents to locally-owned and operated retailers. A retail incubator in metro Atlanta could be complemented by a physical marketplace providing emerging owners with low-cost or no-cost space to launch their concepts, or potentially subsidizing “pop-up” concepts in vacant storefronts in the region’s downtowns (see Objective 12 for discussion of a “Pop-Up Sign-Up” initiative supporting occupancy in the region’s downtowns).
- ✓ Restaurant and/or food truck incubator: relatively new to the incubation sphere are a handful of incubators around the country that focus on providing services to the growing food truck market and/or restaurant concepts. The Cookery in Durham, North Carolina and the Sylvan | Thirty Culinary Incubator in Dallas, Texas are examples of relatively new entrants.
- ✓ Entertainment, digital media, and mobile application incubator: such an incubator would support the region’s growing animation, gaming, and entertainment sectors.
- ✓ Health information technology incubator: supporting metro Atlanta’s emergence as a hub for health IT activity.

Implementation will unquestionably take time as federal and state sources of funding are sought for certain efforts in addition to private operational and funding models for others. However, the expansion of business incubation space is defined as an excellence standard for local governments supporting the Plan 2040 objective to “identify innovative approaches to economic recovery and long term prosperity” within the Local Government Implementation Plan.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Metro Atlanta Chamber

SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Full spectrum of existing service providers, training institutions, networks, and physical space (incubators, coworking facilities, etc.) that support entrepreneurs
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost varies tremendously depending upon the scale and scope of various incubation models pursued; business incubator budgets can run from \$100,000 to in excess of \$1 million with an average around \$350,000 according to the National Business Incubation Association.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Federal funding; institution, grant, or private monies depending on the incubator manager/operator

Advance the development of the Georgia Science and Technology Park on the former site of Fort McPherson.

A primary component of the redevelopment efforts at Fort McPherson is the proposed development of the Georgia Science and Technology Park, a nearly 130-acre development that would occupy roughly one fourth of the Fort McPherson redevelopment area. Tax allocation district (TAD) funding for infrastructure and utilities is available, the site has been designated as an Opportunity Zone, and the Governor has included funding for building acquisition and redevelopment in the 2013 budget to help expedite conversion of facilities to research space. The McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority will need the full support of local, regional, and state partners in economic development in the coming years to help advance acquisition of the property and realize its redevelopment vision. The Georgia Science and Technology Park could potentially house one of the aforementioned incubators as medical and bioscience research and development has been prioritized as a targeted activity in the Georgia Science and Technology Park.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Atlanta Regional Commission; local governments; U.S. Army; GDEcD; Atlanta Development Authority
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2013 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost for various redevelopment projects varies tremendously
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Source of funding will vary by project; federal, state, and local government funds are all available and applicable to various redevelopment projects; private monies will support many redevelopment projects and will ideally be supplemented by tax allocation district (TAD) revenues going forward

Develop a comprehensive inventory and network map of entrepreneurial activity in metro Atlanta.

Invest Atlanta has recently launched the initial elements of its Startup Atlanta initiative, including a comprehensive map of resources available to startups, from incubation and co-working space to service providers to capital sources. While the Startup Atlanta map is a tremendous start, the resource could be improved in a variety of ways, many of which Startup Atlanta intends to pursue. Ensuring that the map is inclusive of all available resources is the clear first step. Ultimately, the map should be expanded beyond startup assistance resources to actually map all startup activity in metro Atlanta. Leveraging proprietary business databases to complete the map, startups could be coded and categorized according to various attributes (business sector, age, revenues, revenue growth, employees, etc.), allowing for a complete picture of startup activity in a given area (e.g. all mobile application development startups, or all startups with revenue growth greater than %50 in a certain year). Once such a resource is developed, a logical next step would be to begin mapping the social and professional networks between certain establishments, their boards of directors, their executive leadership, and relevant "dealmakers" such as angel and venture investors. The ultimate goal is to better understand the startup activity in metro Atlanta and the connections that have helped catalyze growth.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Startup Atlanta, an initiative of Invest Atlanta
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Full spectrum of partners engaged in entrepreneurship and small business assistance
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	Ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Highly variable depending upon scale and scope of outreach efforts, available staff resources, and the potential need to engage outside assistance for research, mapping, etc.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Private contributions from participating businesses and Startup Atlanta members

Build support for initiatives that improve upward mobility and wealth creation through entrepreneurship and employee-ownership.

The Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta is currently developing the Atlanta Wealth Building Initiative, a comprehensive project designed to provide employment and ownership opportunities in targeted areas of the region characterized by generational poverty and disinvestment. The initiative seeks to develop a network of worker-owned, cooperative businesses that supply "anchor" institutions (universities, hospitals, etc.) in the region. The Community Foundation is advancing the initiative's planning and start-up efforts, but seeks to establish an independent, self-sustaining organization to manage day-to-day activities and grow operations. The Foundation will need the support of regional leadership in the public, private, and non-profit sectors to help establish a network of committed anchor institutions – the buyers – as well as network of leaders to provide ongoing support for the initiative and its transition to a self-sustaining organization. Local and regional economic

development partners should be encouraged to work with the Community Foundation to identify neighborhoods where such wealth-building initiatives would be welcomed and supported, while building support for the implementation of such initiatives within the community and the private sector.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Economic development organizations; chambers of commerce; local governments; development authorities; non-profit charitable organizations; National Development Council
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	Ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost will vary tremendously depending upon the scale and scope of the program
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Regional grant monies and charitable contributions; federal grants; Appalachian Regional Commission

OBJECTIVE 10: ESTABLISH METRO ATLANTA AS A TOP FIVE MARKET FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND COMMERCIALIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

Continue to expand the Georgia Research Alliance's Eminent Scholars Program.

Since the inception of the Eminent Scholars program, roughly \$90 million in investments in endowments and research facilities by the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) and partnering research institutions have supported 62 eminent scholars in a wide array of fields. These scholars have in turn secured more than \$1 billion in outside grants and launched 35 new companies. The return on investment is tremendous. However, state budget cuts heavily impacted the GRA in 2012, reducing funding from \$17 million in 2011 to \$7.5 million. The research institutions participating in the GRA should be challenged to work with the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), the State Legislature, and the Governor's Office to ensure that adequate funding for not only the program's maintenance but also its expansion is secured in the coming years.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Governor's Office; State Legislature; Georgia Research Alliance
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Georgia Chamber of Commerce; GDEcD
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2013 – ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Advocacy costs captured by existing resources of supporting partners such as the Georgia Chamber of Commerce
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Advocacy costs captured by existing resources of supporting partners such as the Georgia Chamber of Commerce

Promote the development of inter-disciplinary teams across the region's research institutions to explore new research and development opportunities.

The GRA and its member institutions should engage in an annual exercise to identify inter-disciplinary teams, within single institutions or across multiple institutions, that can potentially collaborate to address new problems of interest to individual researchers and consistent with personal and institutional research objectives. A secure web-based interface could be established whereby researchers could upload profiles inclusive of ongoing research interests and recent grant applications (open, secured, and rejected) to facilitate discussion between researchers on different campuses, exploration of research interests and capabilities, and ultimately the development of teams that can advance new research partnerships of value to the individual researchers and their institutions. The GRA should proactively seek to secure commitments from the state of Georgia and member institutions to fund new collaborative partnerships. While this effort is clearly part of higher education's mission and everyday activity, this recommendation seeks to formalize a process of identifying new research partnerships by comprehensively analyzing grant information, research interests, and facilitating professional networking. The Georgia Tech Research Institute and Emory University each support a variety of interdisciplinary research programs and centers at their individual institutions and advancing collaborative research between the two institutions in a few areas, perhaps most notably within the joint Department of Biomedical Engineering (home to the Predictive Health Institute). This action would seek to formalize a process to proactively identify new research collaborations such as those within the joint Department of Biomedical Engineering that could elevate research activity, commercialization, and startup activity.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Research Alliance

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Higher education institutions

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Program development and operational costs could range from \$10,000 - \$50,000 depending upon the scale and scope of operations

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: GRA and individual institution funds

Encourage the region's research institutions to incorporate commercialization and startup activity into the tenure consideration process.

Research institutions around the country, including but not limited to the University of Maryland and Texas A&M University, are increasingly giving consideration to commercialization and startup activity in tenure considerations. While patent activity is part of the evaluation process for some of Georgia's institutions, the commercialization of that patent and the development of job-creating enterprises typically are not considered. Incorporating these factors into tenure considerations will provide an incentive to young professors to engage in innovative research and development, with a focus on transitioning that research to the private sector, earlier in their careers. However, it will be important to

maintain an appropriate balance between scholarly pursuits, instruction, and research endeavors in tenure evaluation.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Georgia Research Alliance; University System of Georgia

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Higher education institutions

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2017

POTENTIAL COST: Minimal costs associated with evaluation

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Costs captured by existing staff resources

OBJECTIVE 11: IMPROVE CAPITAL ACCESS AND INCENTIVES FOR INNOVATION AT THE REGIONAL AND STATE LEVEL.

Expand the scale and utilization of the Technology Association of Georgia's (TAG) CapVenture program, and other similar programs, in metro Atlanta.

The Technology Association of Georgia (TAG) operates an annual educational and training program that seeks to "educate and equip early stage company executives for smarter and more productive capitalization of their business." The program includes weekly sessions spanning roughly one month in which various industry experts conduct workshops on topics such as preparing for due diligence, pitch presentation skills, and available resources in metro Atlanta. Chambers of commerce and other relevant partners should be encouraged to develop scholarships – and an accompanying application process for these scholarships – to cover fees (roughly \$300 per participant) for the event for a minimum of five member businesses that could benefit from the workshops.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Technology Association of Georgia

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Chambers of commerce

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2016

POTENTIAL COST: Costs will vary based on the number of scholarships (at roughly \$300 each) awarded

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Chambers of commerce and economic development organizations

Measure the supply of and demand for various forms of capital in metro Atlanta, and develop an action plan to mitigate gaps.

A university business research center should be tasked with conducting a comprehensive study of the supply of and demand for various forms of capital (venture, angel, mezzanine, private equity, etc.) and working with a committee of finance professionals (including but not limited to traditional lenders, Venture Atlanta, and angel investors) to develop an action plan to mitigate gaps when possible and better connect entrepreneurs to appropriate sources of financing.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Enterprise Innovation Institution (EI ²), Georgia Institute of Technology; Robinson College of Business, Georgia State University
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Full spectrum of suppliers of traditional and alternative sources of small business and startup financing; full spectrum of economic development partners at the local, regional, and state level
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015
POTENTIAL COST:	\$40,000 - \$80,000 for measurement, evaluation, and reporting
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Institutional funds from potential lead implementers may be available as analysis is consistent with research objectives; private grants or contributions from chambers of commerce and economic development organizations at the regional and state level

Evaluate a variety of targeted state incentives to support startup growth and systematically implement new incentives that support innovative, entrepreneurial activity.

A university business research center should be tasked with conducting a comprehensive review of incentives (loan programs, grants, tax credits, bond financing, etc.) available to entrepreneurs in competing states. This review should be presented to policymakers alongside recommendations of the most cost-effective and high-priority incentives to consider implementing in the state of Georgia. For example, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers startup enterprises access to a mezzanine capital fund, a venture capital fund, a sustainable energy technology development fund, cooperative research grants to support public-private research collaborations in the biomedical industry, and multiple other targeted incentives. The Commonwealth's Emerging Technology Fund can provide loans up to \$2.5 million to qualifying companies. Recent efforts by Georgia Bio to evaluate the state's tax climate and incentives relevant to the life sciences industry has identified transferable R&D tax credits, a reduction in employment thresholds for Quality Jobs tax credit eligibility, and expansion of Angel Investment Tax Credit as high-priority policy changes. This assessment could be used as a starting point for a broader analysis of policies that support startup growth and entrepreneurship in all sectors.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Enterprise Innovation Institution (EI ²)
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Georgia Bio; GDEcD; Technology Association of Georgia; Startup Atlanta
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2015
POTENTIAL COST:	\$40,000 - \$80,000 for research, analysis, and reporting
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Institutional funds from potential lead implementers may be available as analysis is consistent with research objectives

LIVABLE



OBJECTIVE 12: DEVELOP NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWNS, AND ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE RESIDENTS.

Encourage the integration of economic development objectives into regional planning and land use considerations.

The Atlanta Regional Commission's current long-range plan, PLAN 2040, integrates economic development as it defines the identification of "innovative approaches to economic recovery and long term prosperity" as one of its five primary objectives, establishing minimum and excellence standards for specific actions undertaken by local governments in support of regional planning, as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). However, there is value in ensuring that key takeaways from the research and strategic planning phases of this process are incorporated into ongoing regional planning efforts coordinated by ARC, including but not limited to local comprehensive plan review, planning assistance programs, and Livable Centers Initiatives (LCIs). Efforts should be made to ensure that land use policies at the local and regional level are supportive of broad economic development objectives (such as talent retention and attraction, or the development of specific target sectors such as arts and entertainment) and that economic development policies are supportive of priority regional land use objectives. Appointments of one or more liaisons between the Implementation Committee and/or goal area councils (see Implementation Plan) and the ARC Board of Directors and/or existing technical committees could help support this harmonization.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission; local governments

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Georgia DCA; GDEcD

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: None

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

Provide funding and resource support for a series of "Community Identity" forums throughout the region resulting in "Identity Improvement Ideas" for individual downtowns and activity centers.

Input received from focus group participants in a number of communities in metro Atlanta has indicated that residents and local leaders are often unsure if the individual communities in their counties possess distinct identities that are attractive to specific segments of the population. The Cobb's Competitive EDGE Economic and Community Development Strategy recommended a set of "Cobb's Community Identities" forums to help identify the distinguishing features of specific downtowns and activity centers (such as historic character, walkability, live-work environments, arts and culture hub, retail hub, professional services hub, etc.) and solicit "identity improvement ideas" from residents, businesses, and local leadership to enhance and market their unique identities on a regional scale. The Cobb forum series could serve as a pilot program for the larger region, expanded to other counties if successful. Each forum should focus on creative placemaking in an attempt to help advance these areas as "go-to" destinations for the community's residents. The series would be supported by mini-grants and staff facilitation from the Atlanta Regional Commission, potentially a pathway to larger LCI and/or Lifelong Communities grants. The specific components of the initiative as defined in the Cobb's Competitive EDGE strategic plan include:

- ✓ Work with a broad spectrum of municipal, county, and regional partners to develop and host a panel forum series on "Cobb's Community Identities." Program the series such that each forum focuses on successful, past initiatives as well as ongoing efforts within a specific downtown or activity center in the county's various communities.
- ✓ Invite representatives from the public sector (economic developers, planners, mayors, council members, etc.) as well as private businesses, developers, and other anchor institutions that have helped support the implementation of successful downtown development and/or activity center development to speak as panel participants.
- ✓ Host one or two special panels that include representatives from other Metro Atlanta communities outside of Cobb County that have developed thriving downtowns and activity centers and are willing to share information on their successful initiatives.
- ✓ Task each community/downtown or activity center with the assembly of an "Identity Team" that will attend each forum and will draft a set of "Identity Improvement Ideas" based on the successful efforts of other regional communities that could be applied in their respective downtowns.
- ✓ Work with local government partners, development authorities, community improvement districts, and all relevant implementation agents to review the "Identity Improvement Ideas" developed by their "Identity Team" and incorporate

these ideas into future strategic, comprehensive, and/or downtown development plans.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Atlanta Regional Commission
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	Local governments; community improvement districts; tax allocation districts
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	2016
POTENTIAL COST:	Cost is dependent upon the size and number of grants awarded; a program that provided \$10,000 grants and in-kind staff/resource support for facilitation and planning to five communities/neighborhoods annually would cost \$50,000; additional costs could also be incurred if implementation assistance is provided
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:	Planning funds could be supported by a mini-grant program administered by the ARC; implementation funds could come from various sources including but not limited to federal, state, and local government sources as well as non-profit grant monies.

Encourage transit-oriented development (TOD) that supports the expansion and establishment of existing and potential new employment centers.

Much of the region's existing rail transit infrastructure connects existing activity centers, but the scale, type, and age of developments that they connect vary tremendously. Relatively new developments such as the Lindbergh City Center have emerged in recent years as examples of transit-oriented development in Metro Atlanta. However there are multiple opportunity areas where transit-oriented development could help accomplish numerous economic development objectives. Areas in South Fulton and DeKalb counties, such as those surrounding the East Lake, Bankhead, West End, and Vine City stations (as well as others) are logical places for TOD that revitalizes neighborhoods and activity centers, providing housing and employment opportunities for residents in surrounding areas. An ongoing market analysis of TOD opportunities at various MARTA stations is currently underway and being coordinated by ARC. Collaborative planning between local governments, ARC, and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) that engages residents and property owners in areas where TOD is viable should be pursued, resulting in plans to catalyze appropriate development. Such plans should be based on the findings of the market analysis that is underway.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):	Atlanta Regional Commission
SUPPORTING PARTNERS:	MARTA; local governments; community improvement districts
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	Ongoing
POTENTIAL COST:	Up to \$200,000 for planning at individual stations; highly variable development costs

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Federal and state funding; private monies for feasibility analyses and development proposals

Help communities expedite implementation and expand economic impact of specific developments and transportation projects identified in LCI studies by linking LCI projects with CEDS project lists.

As previously mentioned, this Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy will serve as Metro Atlanta's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a document required by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in order for communities within a regional planning area to be eligible for specific Economic Adjustment Assistance and Public Works funds provided by the federal government through the EDA. A component of this process is the submission of a regional project list including specific investments that may be eligible for such funding. The actions contained within this strategy will serve as an initial project list, with ARC expanding upon this list in the months and years ahead by soliciting additional input from local governments regarding high priority investments. Certain investments may be drawn from existing project lists such as the transportation improvements outlined in PLAN 2040. ARC should annually update the CEDS document and its project list. The successful LCI program can be further enhanced by emphasizing economic development objectives outlined in the CEDS during the LCI process, by integrating investments identified in LCIs into the regional CEDS project list, and by providing assistance to local governments in seeking federal funding for eligible projects arising from LCIs that are consistent with CEDS objectives.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission; Implementation Committee (see Implementation Plan)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013 – ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: None

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: N/A

Develop targeted programs to support occupancy of vacant storefronts in the region's downtowns and activity centers.

The Great Recession has heavily impacted downtowns throughout metro Atlanta, with many continuing to see above average vacancy in retail storefronts. A variety of initiatives could be advanced throughout the region's downtowns and activity centers to improve short-term and long-term occupancy. Such initiatives could vary from showcasing local to organizing farmer's markets to recruiting "pop-up" retailers.

A storefront art initiative would seek to identify property owners that are willing to fill their vacant properties with the works of local artists while they attempt to find a permanent, long-term tenant.

A concerted effort to inventory available vacant properties and effectively market them as viable spaces to meet the needs of the rapidly-expanding television and film production sectors in metro Atlanta could bring short-term activity and vibrancy to specific areas.

An effort to identify retailers interested in establishing “pop-up” stores would seek to pair interested parties with property owners willing to provide low-cost and/or no-cost space to local businesses for a one or two month period. Pop-up shops are temporary, short-term retail operations that can be used by specialty/niche retailers to evaluate new markets, and have become increasingly popular as property managers seek short-term lease agreements in a down economy. A comprehensive, branded initiative could be advanced – The Metro Atlanta Pop-Up Sign-Up – identifying multiple storefronts in communities throughout the region and soliciting applications from interested parties to establish pop-up operations for a period of one or two months at highly reduced lease rates. Small grants could be issued to subsidize rents, increasing affordability and attractiveness of the initiative to retailers while ensuring that property managers receive income while their property is occupied by potential long-term tenants. Property owners would be encouraged to work with successful pop-up retailers to transition to a longer-term lease agreement by gradually increasing rents.

BEST PRACTICE: STOREFRONT ARTISTS PROGRAM (FALLS RIVER, MA)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission; Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Downtown development authorities; community improvement districts; local governments; chambers of commerce

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2017

POTENTIAL COST: Up to \$10,000 for branding, marketing, and communications associated with program development, complemented by staff assistance

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Downtown development authorities; community improvement districts; local governments; private grants/contributions

Develop a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Plan that complements existing paths and seeks to connect the region's communities and activity centers.

As a component of the long-range bicycle and pedestrian plan update underway, ARC should continue to work with relevant partners throughout the region to refine existing multi-use path recommendations, consistent with existing bicycle/pedestrian planning at the local and regional level. ARC intends to complete an update to the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in calendar year 2013. Such a plan would seek to provide greater connectivity between activity centers and existing transportation facilities in the region. A

framework for expediting implementation should be considered during all planning activities.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; Atlanta BeltLine; Atlanta Bicycle Coalition; PATH Foundation

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: Planning costs captured in organizational budget for 2013; implementation costs will vary depending upon the scale and scope of recommended projects

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Planning costs captured in organizational budget for 2013; implementation costs could be covered by federal grants monies, nonprofit grant monies, and local government funds

Implement an internal marketing campaign to inform and galvanize metro Atlanta residents behind the region's assets and community offerings.

Many public input participants indicated that metro Atlanta was in need of a pride-building exercise – that through difficult economic times, resident pride had eroded and there was a lack of recognition and appreciation for the truly remarkable aspects of our region and its individual communities. The region should engage in a comprehensive and collaborative internal marketing campaign that seeks to re-energize metro Atlanta's residents and rebuild pride and awareness of the assets and opportunities available to us in the place that we call "home." The campaign would emphasize regionalism while also recognizing the distinct offerings of individual communities. Such an effort would be inclusive of a variety of components, potentially including the following:

- ✓ An aggressive branding campaign that identifies unifying elements of the region.
- ✓ An interactive website showcasing what metro Atlanta's individual communities have to offer to residents living in other parts of the region.
- ✓ A messaging campaign that challenges and reminds residents to constantly seek to discover something new in metro Atlanta.
- ✓ A contest challenging residents to develop and submit short videos (no more than five minutes) profiling the region, its character, its assets, and/or their community pride in an interesting way.

BEST PRACTICE: THINK ONE KC (KANSAS CITY, MO)

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Recommended marketing alliance (see Objective 6); Implementation Committee, Prosperous Metro Atlanta and Livable Metro Atlanta goal area councils (see Implementation Plan)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local and regional economic development organizations; local and regional chambers of

commerce; local governments; development authorities; business community; numerous other relevant partners and potential investors in the recommended marketing alliance

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2016

POTENTIAL COST:

A successful campaign could cost as little as \$100,000 annually if heavy reliant on user-generated content and social media, and up to \$500,000 annually if more heavily reliant on branding, advertising and marketing leveraging traditional media

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Cost captured within marketing alliance budget

OBJECTIVE 13: ADEQUATELY PREPARE COMMUNITIES FOR THE DEMANDS OF AN AGING POPULATION.

Provide resource support to local communities to help integrate the concerns of an aging population into land use planning and development processes.

The Atlanta Regional Commission has already taken considerable steps in advancing preparation of local communities for an aging population. Since its inception in 2007, the Lifelong Communities initiative has facilitated dialogue on the issue and supported successful planning efforts throughout the region. The Lifelong Communities initiative planning efforts and charrettes should continue to be expanded while simultaneously continuing to educate local governments and planners regarding the design standards and development processes that are supportive of Lifelong Communities. This includes consideration for such standards in the review of local comprehensive plans. The appointment of liaisons between the Aging Services Committee, the Land Use Coordinating Committee, and the Transportation Coordinating Committee can help ensure that coordination is maintained at the volunteer-level in addition to the existing coordination at the staff-level at ARC. Local governments should incorporate minimum design requirements in development review that are supportive of developing Lifelong Communities. The Lifelong Communities Handbook developed by ARC is a resource for local governments and should be used accordingly to guide modification of existing codes and ordinances.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; community improvement districts; tax allocation districts

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: Ongoing

POTENTIAL COST: Costs are primarily staff time and resource assistance currently budgeted for and provided by ARC Aging Resources division.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Costs are primarily staff time and resource assistance currently budgeted for and provided by ARC Aging Resources division.

Encourage local governments to adopt policies and incentives that support residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments that are supportive of the needs of aging populations.

Local governments should be encouraged to work with ARC to evaluate the viability of providing additional incentive to developers to integrate Lifelong Communities design standards into their projects, going above and beyond those elements required by local code. Incentives such as development impact fee waivers and density bonuses could support the integration of affordable housing for senior living, remove barriers in zoning, and advance other Lifelong Communities objectives while helping local communities meet the excellence standard to “evaluate codes, services, and practices to identify regulatory barriers that obstruct the support of Lifelong Community principles” as defined in Plan 2040.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; community improvement districts; tax allocation districts

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015

POTENTIAL COST: Costs are primarily staff time and resource assistance currently budgeted for and provided by ARC Aging Resources division.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Costs are primarily staff time and resource assistance currently budgeted for and provided by ARC Aging Resources division.

Evaluate the supply and demand for residential housing by impending retirees to identify gaps in specific housing types in individual communities and throughout the region.

As the Baby Boom generation retires, demand for different types of residential and assisted living environments will increase rapidly. Research conducted during this strategic planning process illustrated that the region seems adequately prepared relative to the average American community in terms of residential housing and community care facilities for the elderly; as of 2010, metro Atlanta was home to one community care facility for the elderly for every 1,920 individuals over the age of 65, roughly equivalent to the national average. However, 84 percent of survey respondents aged 65 and over indicated that they were nearly certain or likely to remain living in metro Atlanta in 2017, with only 9.8 percent indicating that they were unlikely or certain to no longer be living in metro Atlanta. This illustrates that a large portion of the region’s residents at or near retirement age are likely to age in place.

The region would benefit from the development of a variety of housing stock and community supports that allow its older residents to remain at home including adequate affordable housing. Communities with walkability amenities and access to health services support healthier communities and greater vitality for all of its residents and lower auto-dependency, a key issue for older adults. A closer study is needed of residential housing mix,

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including the potential need for assisted care facilities relative to supply and demand in the decades to come. Such an effort would also seek to identify geographic disparities and opportunities for growth markets. Study results should be shared with the development community and used to aid local communities in planning efforts.

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Atlanta Regional Commission

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local governments; Georgia DCA; housing authorities

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015

POTENTIAL COST: \$40,000 - \$80,000 for research, evaluation, and reporting

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Federal, state, or nonprofit grant monies

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

While the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy defined “what” metro Atlanta should pursue to advance its economic development objectives, this Implementation Plan includes a discussion of the ways in which the region and its leadership can support the strategy’s effective implementation. Much of the core content of the Implementation Plan has been integrated into the strategy itself; key implementation considerations have been included beneath each potential action step. These considerations include the identification of potential lead implementer(s), supporting partners, a timeframe for implementation, potential costs, and potential sources of funding.¹ This Implementation Plan will go beyond these specific considerations for individual action steps and present a discussion of three key issues related to implementation of the strategy as a whole:

1. Implementation Roles and Responsibilities
2. Implementation Priorities
3. Performance Measurement

IMPLEMENTATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In defining the assets and desired attributes that frame the strategy itself (Educated Workers, Prosperous Businesses, Innovative Entrepreneurs, and Livable Communities), it was noted that one common theme should cut across each of these four areas: the expectation that collaborative leadership will support the region’s progress and the strategy’s implementation. This section of the Implementation Plan will define the ways in which collaborative leadership can and should support the strategy’s implementation, ultimately resulting in a more cooperative approach to regional economic development in metro Atlanta.

Implementation Committee

As the strategic planning process comes to an end, *Market Street* recommends that the Steering Committee transition to an Implementation Committee. The Implementation Committee would serve as the “keeper of the goals,” taking ownership of the outcomes, coordinating implementation efforts with the various lead implementers and supporting partners, and tracking progress over time.²

Composition: The Implementation Committee would ideally be comprised of roughly 30-40 individuals that are interested and willing to make a multi-year time commitment to advance the implementation of the various recommendations that they helped develop during the strategic planning phase. It is important that the Implementation Committee include key leadership from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Those members of the Steering Committee that are interested in continuing their leadership and service

¹ It is important to emphasize that these considerations are intended to be guidelines and not are intended to be prescriptive and inflexible. Rather, they should serve as a starting point for the goal area councils (see Implementation Roles and Responsibilities section) that will coordinate implementation.

² In an anonymous poll conducted during the September 2012 Steering Committee meeting, 86 percent of Steering Committee members endorsed the transition of the Steering Committee to an Implementation Committee.

should evaluate a list of potential invitees that were not engaged in the strategic planning phase to serve on the Implementation Committee going forward.

Leadership: The Implementation Committee would ideally be co-chaired by one public sector leader and one private sector business leader that have both been actively engaged in the strategic planning process. The co-chairs would rotate on an annual basis, nominated and elected by the Implementation Committee. All co-chairs would be required to serve on the Implementation Committee, at a minimum, during the years immediately preceding and following their service as a co-chair.

Meetings: The Implementation Committee would ideally meet quarterly, receiving reports from the goal area councils (see following section) at each meeting. The first meeting of the Implementation Committee would ideally occur during the first quarter of 2013 to ensure that implementation efforts begin immediately and that no momentum is lost following the conclusion of the strategic planning phase. This initial meeting should also include the members of Work Group and should begin the process of developing the aforementioned goal area councils supported by Work Group members.

Responsibilities: The Implementation Committee will fulfill multiple roles throughout implementation.

First and foremost, the Implementation Committee should serve as public advocates for the various recommendations contained with the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy, working with relevant partners to build support for implementation. The members of the Implementation Committee should personify the collaborative leadership that was defined as the expectation and unifying theme that cuts across all goals, objectives, and action steps within the strategy. In this role, the Implementation Committee members will serve as community ambassadors, educating relevant partners and the community at large regarding the strategy's various components, and communicating with partners and media regarding implementation progress.

As the primary coordinating body for implementation efforts, the Implementation Committee will receive quarterly updates from the goal area councils and help the members of these councils develop collaborative solutions to address any potential barriers to effective implementation.

The committee will also be responsible for maintaining an accurate record of progress towards implementing the various actions contained within the strategy, leveraging the reports of the goal area councils.

Evaluating the need for a formal public-private partnership: During the September 2012 Steering Committee meeting, a number of Steering Committee members endorsed the establishment of a formal public-private partnership to help coordinate implementation efforts, either complementing or in lieu of an Implementation Committee. It was noted that the development of such a partnership, and the scale and scope of its potential operations, would need to be evaluated in detail in cooperation with the region's various partners supporting economic development throughout the region. While such an evaluation is outside the scope of this strategic planning effort, *Market Street* believes that the Implementation Committee should take on this responsibility, evaluating the need for and potential benefits of establishing a regional public-private partnership to advance cooperative solutions – including those proposed in the

strategy – to regional economic development. Such a partnership could take on various forms (by way of incorporation), various sizes (in terms of staff and budget), and various funding models.

Branding: The Implementation Committee should consider adopting a name that resonates with the region's various partners in economic development, community improvement, and workforce preparedness, as well as the community at-large. The "CEDS Implementation Committee" or "Regional Economic Development Committee" would fall on the more technical side while a name such as the "Metro Atlanta Partnership (MAP)" would plant the seeds for a transition to a more formal partnership.

Goal Area Councils

The Implementation Committee should be supported by four councils aligned with the four goal areas of the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy: the Educated Workers Council, Prosperous Businesses Council, Innovative Entrepreneurs Council, and the Livable Communities Council. Alternatively, the four councils could be named the Educated Metro Atlanta Council, the Prosperous Metro Atlanta Council, the Innovative Metro Atlanta Council, and the Livable Metro Atlanta Council.

Composition: Each council should include between 25 and 40 practitioners from the community, economic, and workforce development fields throughout the 10-county region, with each council including key leadership from the relevant "lead implementer(s)" and "supporting partners" identified for individual actions within each goal area throughout the strategy. Accordingly, these four councils will be inclusive of individuals that are working on a daily basis to implement the various recommendations within the strategy. Members of the Work Group that helped guide this strategic planning process should be asked to serve on one goal area council that most closely aligns with their interests, their areas of expertise, and the mission of the organization they represent.

Leadership: Each council should be chaired or co-chaired by a member(s) of the Implementation Committee. These individuals will be responsible for providing quarterly updates to the Implementation Committee regarding progress towards implementation by the various goal area council members. Members of the existing Work Group and/or Steering Committee that have been actively engaged throughout the strategic planning process should be identified to fill these roles.

Meetings: The goal area councils should meet more frequently than the Implementation Committee as their membership will be more actively engaged in the day-to-day, on-the-ground implementation of the strategy's recommendations. Goal area councils should ideally meet monthly.

Responsibilities: The goal area councils would be tasked with working directly with the various implementers and supporting partners – many of whom will ideally serve on the councils themselves – to advance implementation of individual recommendations. Working in accordance with the implementation timeframes and priorities identified by the Steering Committee and Work Group, the goal area councils will help keep implementation on track and will maintain regular status updates of specific implementation efforts. These councils will also have the important task of identifying obstacles to implementation and developing tactics to overcome any obstacles. In addition, they will need to constantly evaluate the viability

of implementing specific actions and make recommendations to the Implementation Committee to revise the strategy or adjust implementation priorities when appropriate and as necessary.

Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission is the regional planning organization responsible for developing and maintaining this EDA-approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the ten-county Metro Atlanta region. In this role, ARC has served as a convener of the leaders and partners necessary to inform a regional vision for community improvement and economic progress: the Steering Committee and the Work Group. In convening these two groups, ARC has facilitated the dialogue necessary to establish this vision and develop the CEDS that will help realize this vision.

As the strategic planning phase transitions to implementation, ARC should maintain this important role as a convener and facilitator. While the Implementation Committee and its goal area councils will coordinate the implementation of the strategy, ARC can and should continue to provide staff support to the Steering Committee and Work Group as they transition to the Implementation Committee and begin developing goal area councils. ARC can continue to host meetings of the Implementation Committee and goal area councils, providing administrative support in coordinating meetings, recording meeting minutes, and keeping a single, comprehensive record of implementation efforts across the various goal areas. There is also a potential role for ARC staff in providing technical expertise, guidance, and advisement to the Implementation Committee and goal area councils as necessary and appropriate. Finally, ARC will be responsible for coordinating the submission of this strategy as the region's CEDS to the Economic Development Administration, while also developing and updating project lists and the strategy as a whole on an annual basis as needed and consistent with guidance from the Implementation Committee and goal area councils.

While ARC has been identified as a potential lead implementer for some individual actions contained within the strategy, ARC staff will not be responsible for implementing the strategy as a whole; clearly, effective implementation of a holistic, regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy will require the commitment and work of numerous partners throughout metro Atlanta.

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

This section presents the average ratings provided by Steering Committee and Work Group members in their evaluation of the strategy's potential actions and their relative priority. A value of "1" was assigned to actions that were perceived to be unimportant actions that were an extremely low priority while a value of "5" was assigned to actions that were perceived to be critical implementation priorities. These ratings have helped inform the establishment of the appropriate "implementation timeframe" for each potential action, as cited in the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy. A brief summary of the results can be found at the end of this section.

"Educated" Metro Atlanta

POTENTIAL ACTION STEP	AVERAGE RATING
Establish a comprehensive and collaborative, regional on-the-job training program for graduates from the ten-county region...	4.41
Implement a prominent, regional, public relations and advocacy campaign – "We Expect Better" – to advocate for necessary K-12 funding.	4.21
Develop and frequently-update a sector-driven analysis of workforce needs in metro Atlanta.	4.15
Conduct collaborative program development workshops to ensure that higher education is responsive to the rapidly-changing needs of regional employers.	4.06
Expand the development of local magnet schools...(STEM) while establishing a new, regional magnet...	4.03
Promote a variety of alternatives to support sustainable funding for the HOPE Scholarship.	4.00
Develop an educational investment tax credit – the Georgia's Future Credit – ...for qualifying investments in educational initiatives...	3.94
Better educate metro Atlanta's students regarding the nature of 21st century manufacturing in the United States.	3.94
Develop a privately-funded grant program to help fund the implementation and expansion of best practice programs throughout the region's schools.	3.91
Develop an "Intern in Atlanta" campaign targeting graduates of Georgia colleges and universities.	3.91
Evaluate a variety of best practice programs at the regional and national level that can elevate student outcomes in metro Atlanta.	3.82
Promote the expansion of mentoring programs that harness the talents of pre-retiree and retired employees...	3.82
Encourage students to pursue Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses as well as dual enrollment.	3.79
Promote the adoption of employer-matching continuing education funds in metro Atlanta.	3.79
Systematically implement and evaluate pilot programs to gauge success towards desired objectives.	3.76
Develop collaborative and targeted low-tuition programs at the region's institutions of higher education.	3.65
Expand and implement graduate Cooperative Education Programs at the region's institutions of higher education.	3.61
Challenge chambers of commerce in metro Atlanta to become involved in the expansion of "Georgia Apply to College" events in their communities.	3.50
Create a CorpsAtlanta fellowship program.	3.42
Evaluate the viability of integrating post-graduate service and graduate retention into the HOPE scholarship.	3.42

"Prosperous" Metro Atlanta

POTENTIAL ACTION STEP	AVERAGE RATING
Promote cooperation...in the identification and pursuit of high priority transportation and transit projects.	4.55
Work with local governments to introduce policies that support and expedite existing business expansions.	4.47
Identify alternative sources of local funding to support the implementation of critical transportation projects.	4.45
Ensure that local leadership is well informed of issues of regional significance through by facilitating frequent dialogue and communication.	4.41
Clearly define single points of contact for prospect management in each of the region's ten counties, with memoranda of understanding (MOUs)...	4.36
Develop a framework for a coordinated, regional approach to existing business retention and expansion (BRE) outreach efforts.	4.35
Support continued expansion of Georgia's deal-closing funds as necessary for economic competitiveness.	4.35
Promote the utilization of transportation demand management resources that help reduce traffic congestion.	4.30
Establish a new regional marketing alliance.	4.28
Educate local governments and economic development partners in metro Atlanta regarding the benefits of establishing joint development authorities.	4.24
Conduct an annual survey of the site selection community to identify areas of the region's economic policies and business climate that could be augmented...	4.24
Provide leadership in advancing comprehensive solutions that support the sustainability of metro Atlanta's water supply.	4.24
Proactively develop new international trade relationships for metro Atlanta firms by increasing access to and utilization of existing state and federal programs.	4.12
Identify methods to enhance the economic impact of existing assets and planned expansions...in Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport's...	4.03
Provide assistance to eligible local governments and economic development partners in pursuing Enterprise Zone and Opportunity Zone designation.	3.88

"Innovative" Metro Atlanta

POTENTIAL ACTION STEP	AVERAGE RATING
Significantly increase the availability of business incubation space in metro Atlanta by developing facilities focused on niche markets.	4.09
Evaluate a variety of targeted state incentives to support startup growth and systematically implement new incentives...	4.09
Continue to expand the Georgia Research Alliance's Eminent Scholars Program.	4.00
Promote the development of inter-disciplinary teams across the region's research institutions to explore new research and development opportunities.	3.97
Measure the supply of and demand for various forms of capital in metro Atlanta, and develop an action plan to mitigate gaps.	3.97
Build support for initiatives that improve upward mobility and wealth creation through entrepreneurship and employee-ownership.	3.85
Encourage the region's research institutions to incorporate commercialization and startup activity into the tenure consideration process.	3.81
Expand the scale, scope, and participation in the Technology Association of Georgia's (TAG) CapVenture program in metro Atlanta.	3.76
Advance the development of the Georgia Science and Technology Park on the former site of Fort McPherson.	3.67
Establish the Startup University, a collaborative post-graduate fellowship program that facilitates student entrepreneurship.	3.58
Support the growth of the region's accelerators and their participants.	3.45

"Livable" Metro Atlanta

POTENTIAL ACTION STEP	AVERAGE RATING
Encourage the integration of economic development objectives into regional planning and land use considerations.	4.39
Help communities expedite implementation and expand economic impact...by linking LCI projects with CEDS project lists.	3.97
Implement an internal marketing campaign to inform and galvanize metro Atlanta residents behind the region's assets and community offerings.	3.91
Provide funding and resource support for a series of "Community Identity" forums throughout the region...	3.70
Provide resource support to local communities to help integrate the concerns of an aging population into land use planning and development processes.	3.67
Encourage local governments to adopt policies and incentives...that are supportive of the needs of aging populations.	3.67
Develop a new bicycle and pedestrian connectivity plan that complements existing paths...	3.58
Evaluate the supply and demand for residential housing by impending retirees to identify gaps in specific housing types in individual communities...	3.44
Develop a "Pop-Up Sign-Up" vacant storefront initiative.	3.33

A total of 34 Steering Committee and Work Group members completed the prioritization survey. The results presented above illustrate that that Steering Committee and Work Group members, in general, believe that the strategy is inclusive of high-priority actions that the region should pursue in support of the objectives defined in the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy. All potential action steps received an average rating of 3.33 or higher, a testament to the tremendous amount of input and guidance that has informed the strategic planning process. Out of the 1,833 distinct respondent-action evaluations, only 34 (1.9 percent) scored an individual recommendation as a "1" (unimportant/low priority) on the scale from 1 to 5. No single recommended action step received more than two "unimportant/low priority" evaluations.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Performance metrics will allow the Implementation Committee, the region's collaborative leadership, and the population at-large to monitor and assess the progress towards implementing the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy. Performance measurement is critical to tracking:

- ✓ The region's collective success in implementing the various recommendations
- ✓ The impact of these implementation efforts
- ✓ The potential return on investment from implementation efforts

The following tables present two sets of performance metrics.

1. **Regional Context:** This table includes a set of performance metrics that may be impacted by effective implementation of the strategy's recommendations, but are heavily influenced by a variety of other factors unrelated to implementation. Measuring performance in various indicators – employment, high school graduation rates, vehicle miles traveled by commuters, etc. – can help provide the appropriate "regional context" for understanding community vitality, economic prosperity, and workforce preparedness.
2. **Implementation Progress:** This table includes a set of performance metrics that are more closely tied to individual recommendations within the strategy. Many of these metrics will need to be established by the Implementation Committee in partnership with the various lead implementers

In both tables, data has been included for the following periods when available and relevant:

- ✓ **Latest figure:** The most recently available data for a given indicator
- ✓ **Implementation start:** Projected values for individual metrics at the estimated start date for implementation efforts (2013), based on current trends
- ✓ **Implementation completion:** Goals for individual metrics at the estimated completion date for the strategy's five-year implementation cycle (2018)

Market Street arrives at such projections by examining historical trends using a variety of basic techniques, and then estimating the incremental improvement that could occur if these trends continue and if implementation is effective. Publicly-available and proprietary sources of demographic and economic projections are leveraged when relevant and reliable. Given continued economic uncertainty, *Market Street* errs on the side of being too conservative. As the Great Recession and subsequent sluggish recovery has illustrated, today's economy is very volatile and we continue to face a great deal of uncertainty.

Accordingly, just as the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy is a "living document" that should be revisited and modified as necessary in the years ahead, performance metrics should also be reviewed and revised as progress is made or as unexpected circumstances occur.

The metropolitan area's **unemployment rate will fall and remain below the national average**, reversing recent trends during the Great Recession

Rising in-migration:
Metro Atlanta will **attract roughly 50,000 new residents each year** from other parts of the country, supporting workforce sustainability

The percentage of adults with a **bachelor's degree or higher** will rise to **42%** across the metropolitan area

The number of startups emerging from the region's institutions of higher education each year will be doubled

The average ACT composite score across the region will rise to **22.0**, exceeding the national average

52 weekly editorials from private sector leaders calling for a renewed **commitment to public education**

Thousands of existing businesses will benefit from a new, **coordinated, regional existing business retention and expansion program.**

Thousands of the region's best and brightest will be retained through new **"Intern in Metro Atlanta"** and **"AtlantaCorps"** initiatives.

Increase the amount of **venture capital investment** the number of **venture capital deals** per employee by **25%**

Performance Measurement: Regional Context

Performance Measure	Latest Figure		Imp. Start	Implementation Completion		
	Value	Year	2013	2018	Raw Change	% Change
Overall Performance Metrics						
Annual net migration	8,858	2010	20,000	50,000	30,000	150.0%
Employment	2,333,200	2012	2,334,150	2,560,740	220,270	9.4%
Unemployment	8.9%	2012	8.8%	Below national average		
Per capita income	\$38,321	2010	\$39,091	\$47,351	\$8,260	21.1%
% of residents with a BA degree or higher	36.2%	2010	37.4%	42.0%	4.6 PCT	-
% of residents aged 25-34	14.4%	2011	14.1%	17.5%	3.4 PCT	-
Poverty rate	14.8%	2010	16.2%	11.5%	-4.7 PCT	-
Educated						
High school graduation rate			Track and measure by district		At least 85% in every district	
Per pupil expenditures			Track and measure by district		NA	
8th grade CRCT proficiency in math and science			Track and measure by district		95% proficiency in every district	
ACT math and science scores			Track and measure by district		22.0 student average across districts	
Advanced Placement (AP) test completions			Track and measure by district		NA	
Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)			Track and measure by district		NA	
Prosperous						
Exports (in billions)	21.6	2011	22.8	30.0	7.2	31.5%
Per capita water use	128 gpcd	2006	NA	116 gpcd	12 gpcd	-9.4%
Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per driver	Develop in conjunction with the Atlanta Regional Commission					
Average work time commute	Develop in conjunction with the Atlanta Regional Commission					
Innovative						
Startups generated annual by regional higher education institutions	12	2011	NA	24	12	100%
Active licenses and options executed at local higher education institutions	715	2011	NA	894	179	25%
Patent production from local higher education institutions	66	2011	NA	99	33	50%
Venture capital investment per employee	\$131.5	2011	\$133.3	\$166.6	\$33.3	25%
Venture capital deals per 100,000 employees	1.8	2011	1.7	2.1	0.4	25%
Academic R&D expenditures spent in engineering and biosciences fields (in billions)	1.1	2009	NA	1.8	0.7	64%
Livable						
Community care facilities per population aged 65 and over (in thousands)	2.0	2011	1.9	2.2	0.3	13.4%
% retiree population (65 and over)	9.3%	2011	9.2%	12.5%	3.3 PCT	NA
Number of arts-related businesses per 1,000 residents	3.7	2012	3.7	4.6	1.9	25%
Miles of sidewalks and bike lanes	Develop in conjunction with the Atlanta Regional Commission					
Park space per capita	Develop in conjunction with the Atlanta Regional Commission					

Performance Measurement: Implementation Progress

Performance Measure	Latest	Imp.	Implementation		
	Figure	Start	Completion	Raw Change	% Change
	Value	Year	2013	2018	
Educated					
"We Expect Better" private sector leaders recruited and op-eds featured in local newspapers	NA	NA	NA	52	NA
Number of new pilot programs launched local K-12 institutions					Develop internally in partnership with local school districts
Enrollment in STEM-focused magnets throughout the region					Develop internally in partnership with local school districts
Workshops conducted between higher-education institutions and regional employers	NA	NA	NA	20	NA
Number of schools participating in Complete College Georgia events					Develop and track with Complete College Georgia/USG
Annual number of new internships publicized via "Intern in Metro Atlanta" campaign	NA	NA	NA	2,000	NA
CorpsAtlanta Fellows	NA	NA	NA	100	NA
Graduate students enrolled in co-op programs					Establish in partnership with participating institutions
Prosperous					
Counties with identified single points of contact	NA		10	NA	NA
EDOs supporting and participating in regional BRE program	NA				All
Local governments with adopted expedited review and permitting processes for existing businesses	NA				100% of all municipalities
Identification of all potential Enterprise Zones and Opportunity Zones	NA				100% of all communities
Completion of annual site selection survey	NA		250	NA	NA
Regional e-newsletter circulation	NA		3,000	NA	NA
Integration of transportation projects as components of annually updated CEDS project lists					Completed annually
Innovative					
StartUp University fellows	NA	NA	NA	30	NA
Startup University companies graduating to local incubators or accelerators	NA	NA	NA	6	NA
Tenants/clients of business incubators and accelerators within metro Atlanta					Track in cooperation w/ incubators and accelerators
Number of individuals participating in CFGA's Wealth Building Initiative					Develop in conjunction with CFGA
Number of new businesses created through the Wealth Building Initiative					Develop in conjunction with CFGA
Funding for Georgia's Eminent Scholars program (in millions)	\$7.5	2011	\$7.5	\$17.0	\$9.5
Higher education institutions factoring commercialization and startup activity into tenure decisions					127% Track in cooperation with higher education
Livable					
Property owners enrolled in vacant storefront initiatives	NA	NA	NA	100	NA
Communities modifying codes and ordinances in support of Lifelong Communities Initiative					Develop in conjunction with Atlanta Regional Commission

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Beginning in January 2012 and continuing throughout the year, this strategic planning effort has represented a true opportunity to advance new, collaborative, regional approaches to community, economic, and workforce improvement in metro Atlanta. The region has endured its shares of setbacks in recent years as it has struggled to recover from the Great Recession and the bursting of the national housing bubble. State and local governments have in turn struggled with budget crises that have forced the region and state to make difficult sacrifices in supporting some of our most prized assets and addressing some of our most glaring challenges. If we are to find effective and efficient solutions, we must pursue them together, cooperatively, as a region and as a team of public, private, and non-profit leaders pursuing a common goal: a region that we are proud of, and a region that is envied.

With the strategic planning process complete, the region must come together to advance implementation. The hard work that goes into implementing the various recommendations is the difference between a strategy that sits on a shelf and one that catalyzes positive change. As the region emerges from the most recent recession with the competition for jobs and talent stronger than ever, there is no better time for a renewed commitment to regionalism, to collaboration, and to "doing" instead of just "saying." This process has been one of many initiatives that has helped advance the dialogue with regards to the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The aforementioned commitment to "doing" – to implementing the various recommendation of the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy – must be demonstrated in the months and years ahead if metro Atlanta is committed to being an enviable region to live, work, and do business.

APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

This Appendix provides brief descriptions of the best practice programs and organizations referenced throughout the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy. Additional best practice programs and organizations will be referenced in later drafts once feedback has been received on the preliminary recommendations.

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT (PENNSYLVANIA)

Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program allows businesses to make qualifying investments in educational initiatives (scholarships and charitable education organizations) and receive a credit for state sales tax. The state Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) evaluates eligibility, processes applications, and awards credit equal to a percentage of the business's contribution, up to a maximum \$200,000 credit. The state sets a total credit limit for all applications each year and businesses are awarded credits on a first-come, first-serve basis.

<http://www.newpa.com/>

12 FOR LIFE, SOUTHWIRE AND CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOLS (CARROLTON, GA)

12 For Life is a public-private partnership formed by Southwire and Carroll County Schools to address the community's dropout rate. Students, selected for the program, are identified by graduation coaches, counselors, or program administrators in Carroll County Schools as requiring additional support to complete high school. Upon selection, students are provided with a holistic effort to help them with support and guide them through graduation. Such support includes a one-on-one mentorship program that assists students with school and homework, advocates on their behalf, and guides them through issues like problem resolution, budgeting, social skills, and goal setting. Along with learning valuable life skills, students are given the opportunity to acquire in-demand job skills such as:

- ✓ Shipping
- ✓ Quality Assurance
- ✓ Data Entry
- ✓ Record Keeping
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Responsibility
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Professional Communication

In order to ensure the program's success, Southwire, a manufacturer of power transmission and distribution cables, constructed an independent operating facility to host 12 For Life students. The facility is operated by students who work in one of four shifts throughout the day, completing manufacturing centric

tasks to produce final products. These tasks include packaging products, assembling cable spools, and support functions (quality assurance and data entry) and, ultimately, lead to a final product that is shipped to Southwire customers. Through their labors, students earn a pay-check that is above minimum wage as well as an opportunity for increased performance-based pay.

Since 2007, 301 students who may not have otherwise obtained a high school diploma graduated from high school. Nearly 40 percent of the students go on to pursue their college education while others become full time Southwire employees.

<http://www.12forlife.com/>

LEADER IN ME, A.B. COMBS ELEMENTARY (RALEIGH, NC) AND DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS (DECATUR, AL)

In 1989, Steven Covey released the best-selling book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In 1999, A.B. Combs Elementary in Raleigh, North Carolina was struggling with low academic performance and lack of engagement among faculty and parents. Administrators and teachers began searching for a solution, including learning principle-based leadership skills and *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. The lessons learned by teachers were taken back to the classroom, integrated into curriculums, and passed on to students. A.B. Combs formalized its leadership initiative to blend leadership training and character education into every facet of a school's curriculum and culture. Students are taught that "leadership is a choice, not a position" and are equipped with the self-confidence and skills that complement their academics to become 21st century leaders. Students are taught how to set goals and track those goals throughout the year. In addition, students are taught public speaking skills and social etiquette, in an effort to prepare them to face the world head on.

In a short amount of time, end-of-grade tests improved dramatically. In just over one year, average end-of-year passing grades for students jumped from 84 to 94 percent. Discipline problems dropped significantly. Parents began reporting incredible shifts in their children's attitudes and behaviors. Students began problem solving and engaging in more positive ways with each other. The school saw significant and sustained increases in students' self-confidence and impressive increases in teacher and administrator job satisfaction. Today, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* has become completely integrated into the curriculum at A.B. Combs, and the school is widely recognized for its focus on leadership development.

In 2008, Covey released a new book, *The Leader in Me: How Schools and Parents Around the World are Inspiring Greatness, One Child At a Time*, which details the successes at A.B. Combs Elementary. Other schools around the country are beginning to adopt similar approaches.

- ✓ In Alberta, Canada, Joseph Welsh Elementary is reporting that parent satisfaction with what children are being taught has increased from 67 to 98 percent.

- ✓ In Decatur, Alabama, a local businessman and chamber of commerce president adopted Chestnut Grove Elementary and sponsored it as a leadership school. As of 2011, all elementary schools in Decatur have incorporated components of the Leader in Me program.
- ✓ In Adams County, Illinois, documented improvements in academic success at Dewey Elementary captured the eye of the United Way, which is now working to ensure that all 10,000 students in the county receive the same opportunity.

This program has been an excellent way of getting community and business leaders actively involved in and supportive of cultivating home-grown talent. In just eight years of implementation, A.B. Combs became recognized as a National Title I Distinguished School.

<http://www.theleaderinme.org>

<http://combses.wcpss.net>

REACH OUT TO DROPOUTS, HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (HOUSTON, TX)

The Houston Independent School District first implemented a program in 2004 that sought to re-engage students who had recently dropped out of high school. This program – Reach Out to Dropouts – has been tremendously successful in its short history and has been adopted by other surrounding communities in Texas as well as other school districts nationwide. The program is supported by volunteers from throughout the community (concerned citizens, teachers, administrators, business leaders, and the United Way) who walk door-to-door in teams to visit the families of students that have not re-enrolled in school within the first few weeks of a new school year or failed to graduate the previous year for a variety of reasons.

During the 2008 walk in Houston, nearly 1,200 volunteers made contact with more than 680 students or parents, and 60 students began the re-enrollment process on the day of the walk. Many more re-enrolled in the following days with subsequent follow-ups by volunteers. The Fort Bend Independent School District replicated Houston's program in 2009. With only one participating high school, 68 volunteers visited 106 homes, contacted 72 students or parents, and re-enrolled 20 students. The Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, also located in Fort Bend County, visited 65 homes, spoke with 37 students or parents, and re-enrolled 26 students.

<http://www.houstonisd.org>

ADVENTURES IN TECHNOLOGY, CATALYST CONNECTION & PITTSBURGH TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL (PITTSBURGH, PA)

Adventures in Technology brings together high school students in southwestern Pennsylvania students to solve real-world problems faced by regional manufacturers. Students are enrolled in an eight-week, hands-

on project that involves designing, building, or re-engineering an existing product, process, or system. Throughout the eight week program, students meet company management and employees, tour the company facility, and receive an overview of the company's product, service area, and economic impact on the larger business economy. Past Adventures in Technology projects include:

- ✓ Alternative Packaging Methods – Respirronics, Inc., a medical respiratory product manufacturer, consulted with Franklin Regional High School (Westmoreland, PA) students to analyze packaging process for one of the company's products that were being damaged during shipping resulting in a return-to-manufacturer cost. Students designed and built a packaging prototype as well as an implementation cost savings estimate (\$11,000 annually).
- ✓ Automobile Hard Drive – Seagate Technologies, a leading provider of computer storage products, partnered with Forbes Road Career and Technology Center (Allegheny, PA) students to design an automobile hard drive. As a final product, the students developed and installed a prototype hard drive with MP3 player capabilities into an automobile.
- ✓ Mask Flow Chart – Students of Laurel Highlands (Fayette, PA) were utilized by Berkley Surgical, a medical manufacturer, to design a lean manufacturing process flow chart that would track a particular medical product throughout the manufacturing process. Students designed a process flow chart that included the delivery time of raw materials, materials on-site, process materials, quality checks, staging area, packaging area and shipping. Berkley Surgical plans to implement the students' findings as a training tool for new employees.

Since the program's inception in 2002, more than 1,000 students from 50 high schools and technical schools have worked with over 50 companies. Along with immersing students in the day-to-day problems of businesses, manufacturers were given the opportunity to promote career opportunities in the local manufacturing community.

Adventures in Technology is funded by the Grable Foundation and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers in collaboration with the Pittsburgh Technology Council and Catalyst Connection, an economic development organization dedicated to advancing small and mid-size manufacturers in southwestern Pennsylvania.

<http://catalystconnection.org/Regional-initiatives/Adventures-in-technology.aspx>

DETROIT REVILIZATION FELLOWS PROGRAM, WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY (DETROIT, MI)

Faced with increased competition from foreign automobile manufacturers, Detroit has shrunk from nearly two million residents in 1950, to just 713,777 in 2010. The decline of the city has caused significant economic and social hardship on the city's local residents. In an effort to encourage economic revitalization and development of Detroit, Wayne State University developed the Detroit Revitalization Fellows Program to attract, develop, and retain the young professionals who will lead the community's rebirth. The program

combines two years of full-time employment with executive development-style education. Along with the education program, fellows are afforded the opportunity to participate in networking events, professional coaching, and mentoring. During the program, fellows work in a variety of project management and leadership roles as employees of a local organization seeking to transform Detroit. As a result, students are exposed to a variety of topics germane to urban revitalization:

- ✓ Urban development, including housing, transit, and real estate;
- ✓ Community and neighborhood development;
- ✓ Planning and financing for an adaptable, sustainable, and resilient city;
- ✓ Economic development, including attracting, retaining, and growing new economy businesses.

Fellows selected for the program are employees of one of 29 partnering organizations that include: the City of Detroit, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, Detroit Institute for the Arts, Detroit Land Bank Authority, Invest Detroit, Next Energy, and Vanguard CDC.

<http://wayne.edu/detroitfellows/>

GRADUATE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM, GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (ATLANTA, GA)

Established in 1983, the Georgia Tech Graduate Cooperative Education program is the largest program in the United States for science and engineering academic programs. Students enrolled in the cooperative program are granted the opportunity to work with industry and government leaders in the student's respective area of concentration. Participating students are afforded flexible options including full-time positions (the student remains enrolled as a full-time, non-course taking student) and part-time (a combination of courses and work experience). For full-time students, no tuition is paid during their cooperative education program, while part-time students are awarded reduced tuition as well as a stipend.

The Georgia Tech Graduate Cooperative Education Program is a boon to attracting students into the institute, and the region. The reduced tuition, stipend, and the opportunity to gain real world experience from one of 500 of the country's top companies is a deciding factor for many international and domestic students. Many students participating in the Graduate Co-op program are hired into full time employment upon completion of their graduate studies.

<http://www.gradcoop.gatech.edu/>

CLEVELAND PLUS MARKETING ALLIANCE (NORTHEAST OHIO)

Cleveland Plus (Cleveland+) is a regional marketing alliance and campaign covering 18 counties and the metropolitan areas of Cleveland, Akron, Canton and Youngstown in Northeast Ohio. The campaign was launched in 2007 by its three founding partner organizations – the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO and Positively Cleveland. It is heavily supported by funding from the private sector. The campaign has five primary goals:

1. Attract business and jobs to our region, with our partner Team NEO (Cleveland Plus Business).
2. Raise the profile of Northeast Ohio as a tourist, meeting and convention destination with our partner Positively Cleveland.
3. Garner positive national media coverage of the region's economic development progress, its growth industries and its quality of life amenities.
4. Disseminate positive news and information, particularly in the area of economic develop, to community influencers within the region.
5. Help corporations, institutions and organizations attract talent to Northeast Ohio

The campaign's specific tactics consist of branding, media relations, direct marketing for business development, targeted tourism marketing, and internal marketing and communications to develop regional pride and unity. The Cleveland+ moniker is intended to represent the geographic region (Cleveland plus surrounding areas) as well as a positive (+) regional attitude.

The alliance initiated a comprehensive study of the region's assets and best practices in community marketing from around the country. This research helped identify what positives are perceived by external audiences what attributes of the Northeast Ohio went unrecognized. The campaign was designed to reinforce the positive perceptions and raise awareness about those that didn't register. Key messages and marketing collateral was developed and tested on focus groups of tourists and business investment decision makers within the region and in a variety of competing metropolitan areas, including metro Atlanta.

<http://www.clevelandplus.com>

ANNUAL SITE SELECTOR AND EXECUTIVE SURVEY, GREATER AUSTIN CHAMBER (AUSTIN, TX)

In 2011, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce commissioned a private research and polling company to survey site selectors and C-level executives to evaluate Austin's competitive position for business relocations. The goals for the survey included:

- ✓ Evaluation of how site selectors and executives view Austin as a potential city for either relocation or expansion.
- ✓ Examine the key criteria that executives evaluate when thinking about moving.
- ✓ Identification of perceptions of and "make or break factors" in Austin held by survey respondents relative to other cities.
- ✓ Identification of where in the corporate chain expansion or relocation decisions are originated.
- ✓ Identification of the most efficient and compelling ways to lure a firm to Austin.

The research company assembled a national sample of 100 C-level executives and sent out an online survey to a random sample. The sample reflected a mix of C-level positions, large and small companies (valued between \$25 million and \$10 billion), and a diverse array of business sectors. To supplement the

executive survey, the company contacted 45 site selection professionals via telephone. Each set of respondents responded to separate surveys, allowing for separation of answers by respondent group.

The results of the two surveys provide an overview of the business factors that not only play a role in site selection, but how Austin measures up to the rubric. Areas for improvement were identified, including need for better infrastructure, and areas of strength were also distinguished, the presence of a tech community being perceived as most advantageous. By tapping into the often nebulous world of site selection, the Chamber was able to take a proactive approach to understanding the site selection process, and can now better position Austin to compete.

<http://www.austinchamber.com/the-chamber/opportunity-austin/files/Benchmark-Study-2011.pdf>

STOREFRONT ARTISTS PROJECT (FALL RIVER, MA)

The Storefront Artists Project was launched in downtown Fall River by the Narrows Center for the Arts, in partnership with Arts United/Fall River, the Fall River Office of Economic Development and the Chamber of Commerce. The project is further supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Fall River Storefront Artists approaches landlords of empty storefronts to lend their vacant street front space to an artist or arts organization – defined as anyone engaging in a creative endeavor, including the fine arts, performance arts, architecture, interior design, graphic design, or new visual media. Artists transform windows into an ever-changing art project, are visible working at their studio inside, and open their space to viewers every Saturday for four hours and one to three evenings a month. The artists assume responsibility for their utilities, and for keeping the street façade clean. In return, landlords provide the space rent-free until they get a signed lease and give a 30 to 60 day vacancy notice. The Arts United organization acts as a property manager, and when necessary, intervenes to deal with legal or logistical issues and provides funds to handle emergencies. Landlords are able to specify the kind of arts activities that would be appropriate to their space and artists are matched accordingly.

www.fallriverstorefrontartist.org

THINK ONE KC (KANSAS CITY, MO)

An effort to raise the bar in city branding, the Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) launched the OneKC and ThinkKC campaigns in 2004 using several billboards. The goal of "ThinkKC" is to promote the Kansas City region as an attractive place to live and work and upgrade the region's national image. "OneKC" is the regional unity portion of the campaign—to create a regional mindset, create a unified product to increase the region's competitive advantage, and to give residents a renewed sense of place and pride. To share the overall message, "Together we are stronger. We are all KC," KCADC commenced an aggressive grassroots level effort by making over 150 presentations to organizations throughout the metro area. Other initiatives to advertise the brand included naming a major road OneKC Way, leaders signing the "Declaration of Interdependence," and launching a KC merchandise line.

<http://www.thinkkc.com>