



JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Submitted by Market Street Services, Inc.
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OVERVIEW

Jefferson City, Missouri is located in a prime geographical area between St. Louis and Kansas City. Considering the City's location as the state capital along with major employers and solid post-secondary institutions, it has the opportunity to take full advantage to grow and thrive economically. However, under unforeseeable circumstances the City has not grown in population since 2010 and the Jefferson City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has seen the same fate. To make matters worse, the City was hit with a major tornado in May 2019, leaving behind devastation to some of its citizens and employers.

In 2006, Market Street Services worked with the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce to create a holistic strategy for the area. While much work has been done following that strategy, followed by a second one, the need for an updated strategy is vital. There needs to be a comprehensive look at business retention and expansion; entrepreneurship and small business; and an extensive look at talent to see how Jefferson City can attract jobs to the City and grow in population. Fortunately, the City and Chamber recognize the need for an updated strategy that is responsive to the needs of Jefferson City and surrounding area.

Under the leadership of the Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Jefferson, the community is pursuing a collective vision for its future to ensure that population and economic growth is strengthened in order to create wealth, enhance quality of life, and strengthen its appeal as a destination for companies, visitors, and talent. To facilitate this process, the Chamber and City have contracted with Market Street Services. The initiative has brought together committed leaders to fashion a way forward for the area and create a holistic, actionable, and realistic strategy to help the Jefferson City area chart its course for the next five years.

This will be accomplished by leveraging robust data analysis and outreach to constituents across the Jefferson City area to determine competitive strengths, challenges, and opportunities and formulate an actionable strategic plan to advance the community towards its goals. The process will be overseen by a **Steering Committee** of influential public and private leaders who will inform the development of strategic deliverables, discuss and approve draft reports, and ensure that strategic implementation is positioned for success.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE JEFFERSON CITY, MO STRATEGIC PROCESS INCLUDE:

1. Community Assessment and Competitive Scorecards

It is important that local leaders have an honest appraisal of current trends affecting the Jefferson City area's competitive position. This Assessment synthesizes existing research, community and stakeholder input, and a wealth of quantitative data covering Cole County, Missouri to produce a narrative about the community – where it has been, where it stands today, and where it may be heading. Research and findings will be structured according to key narrative "stories" that emerge from the analysis. The stories presented in the Community Assessment include comparisons to three peer communities: **Boone County, MO (Columbia)**; **Cape Girardeau County, MO (Cape Girardeau)**; and **Shawnee County, KS (Topeka)**, as well as the state of

Missouri and the U.S. Accompanying Competitive Scorecards will illustrate how Cole County compares to the three benchmark areas as well as six additional communities.

Public input was a vital piece of this component. Feedback was gained from ten one-on-one interviews of key leaders, six focus groups, and an online survey that garnered over 1,600 responses.

2. Community and Economic Development Strategy

The Strategy represents the culmination of all the quantitative and qualitative research to date through the development of detailed action items geared towards addressing challenges and capitalizing on opportunities for a visionary future. The plan will be supported by innovative best practices successfully implemented by communities from around the country. Where possible, the Strategy will incorporate the numerous efforts already underway in the Jefferson City area. Upon approval by the project Steering Committee, the Strategy will serve as Jefferson City's blueprint for competitive enhancement across a broad range of strategic categories.

3. Organizational Assessment

The Organizational Assessment provides an opportunity to bolster the community's economic development programming through a review of Jefferson City's primary organizational economic development needs. The Assessment examines the need for a new organization that could be developed to fill any target needs identified, its mission and corresponding program of work, and its alignment with existing economic development partners.

4. Implementation Plan

A plan, no matter how visionary, is only valuable when it is implemented. The Implementation Plan represents a work plan for the Chamber and its implementation partners to ensure that the Strategy is activated and sustained for the next five years and beyond. The Plan will formalize timelines for phasing in the Strategy's multiple actions, identify lead and support implementation entities, determine existing and necessary financial and personnel capacity to drive implementation, propose optimal staffing and governance operations, and confirm performance metrics to track implementation progress and success.

STEERING COMMITTEE

This process is supported by multiple organizations and will be guided by a diverse Steering Committee comprised of representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. The following individuals have generously volunteered their time to serve the community and this process by providing strategic guidance, input, and oversight throughout the process, attending five meetings from September 2019 through March 2020.

INDIVIDUAL

Dave Minton, Committee Co-Chair

Darren Heckman, Committee Co-Chair

Carlene Bax

Gregg Bexten

Sam Bushman

Gasper Calvaruso

Morgan Delong Costello

Jeff Davidson

Kirk Farmer

Andy Fechtel

Diane Gillespie

Elizabeth Huber

Ken Hussey

Mike Kehoe

Larry Kolb

Larry Linthacum

Rick Mihalevich

Doug Otto

Quentin Rice

Shawn Strong

Carrie Tergin

Janet Wear-Enloe

Jerald Woolfolk

REPRESENTING ORGANIZATION

Central Bank

High 5 Communications

RE/MAX Jefferson City

Hawthorn Bank

Cole County

Capital Region Medical Center

DeLong's Inc.

Modern Litho Print

Farmer Holding Company

Fechtel Beverage

JC Convention & Visitors Bureau

Huber & Associates

City of Jefferson

State of Missouri

Kolb Properties

Jefferson City Public Schools

City of Jefferson

American Family Insurance

JQ's on High

State Technical College of Missouri

City of Jefferson

SSM Health

Lincoln University

Community Assessment: Key Findings



The Community Assessment represented the first step in Jefferson City, MO Community and Economic Development Strategy process, and it was a critical step in understanding the Jefferson City area’s position and the issues that it faces in an increasingly competitive environment for new jobs, talent, and corporate investment. It examined a wide variety of demographic, socioeconomic, economic, and quality of life indicators to tell a story about the community and uncover the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges that must be leveraged and addressed to support a more vibrant future. Quantitative analysis is complemented by community input received from interviews, focus groups, and a public survey. In total, public input was comprised of ten one-on-one interviews of key leaders, six focus groups, and an online survey that garnered over 1,600 total responses that informed the Assessment and this Community and Economic Development Strategy.

The Assessment presents the quantitative and qualitative research through the lens of four stories, each containing important insights that should influence the Jefferson City area’s strategic priorities as they relate to community, economic, and workforce development. These four stories are:

1. **Workforce Threats and Opportunities**
2. **An Economy in Stagnation**
3. **Community Attachment through Quality of Life and Place**
4. **The Needs for Regionalism**

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: KEY STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ **Competitive educational attainment levels:** The percentage of the adult population with a bachelor’s degree or higher is slightly higher than the average American community, lagging only Columbia in the report.
- ✓ **Sustainable, young workforce but this advantage is eroding:** There are enough 25-44 year olds in to eventually “replace” the community’s workforce aged 45-64, but this advantage is eroding.
- ✓ **Strong regional educational assets:** Jefferson City is home of Lincoln University, which is seen as a prime opportunity for growth and improvement, and the city is close in proximity to State Tech in Linn and University of Missouri in Columbia. As well, there is much pride in the public and parochial schools in the Jefferson City area.
- ✓ **Low commute times:** Residents enjoy the ease in moving throughout the area, with over 83 percent of Cole County residents spending less than 30 minutes in their commute to work.
- ✓ **Public safety:** Residents enjoy a strong sense of safety and exceptionally low crime rates.

- ✓ **Progress in the redevelopment of the Missouri State Penitentiary:** The Missouri State Penitentiary Community Partners group has moved the MSP redevelopment process forward. It plans to evaluate all proposals and make a recommendation to city council in early 2020.
- ✓ **Housing affordability but need for more choice:** With the exception of Shawnee County, Cole County is the most affordable among comparison geographies for housing on average. However, there is limited housing choice for moderately-priced housing, a need for improvement among low-income units, and a desire for accelerated redevelopment of downtown housing.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: KEY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

- ✓ **Population Stagnation:** Population growth in Cole County growth has not been surpassed only that of Shawnee County, KS over time.
- ✓ **Talent retention and competition with larger communities in the region:** Net migration data show that the community is experiencing out-migration, with residents moving to larger, more jobs-rich communities within a two-hour drive of Jefferson City.
- ✓ **In-migrants are less educated than the community-at-large:** On average, in-migrants to the community are less likely to hold a bachelor's degree or higher and more likely to not hold a high school diploma than the community's existing residents.
- ✓ **Economic diversification:** Government services (federal, state, local) and predominantly local-serving sectors (retail, food service, health care) represent a relatively large share of employment in the region. Export-oriented sectors that attract new wealth are relatively underrepresented.
- ✓ **Low wages and income:** Average annual wages, wage growth, per capita income, and PCI growth in Cole County lagged behind most comparison geographies.
- ✓ **Entrepreneurship:** The community is characterized by decreasing rates of self-employment and stakeholders have indicated that the area lacks sufficient support services for entrepreneurs.
- ✓ **Housing availability and affordability:** The availability of attractive and affordable housing was a frequently cited concern, particularly for military families and recent college graduates.
- ✓ **Entertainment and nightlife:** Stakeholders noted that they would like to see a greater variety of activities after 7 p.m., particularly in Downtown Jefferson City.
- ✓ **Openness and inclusivity:** Many would like to see the community do more to ensure that existing and prospective new residents from diverse backgrounds feel welcome and included.
- ✓ **Broadband connectivity:** There is concern that broadband limitations could impede economic development, particularly as it relates to talent retention and attraction.
- ✓ **Lack of branding:** There is concern among residents and stakeholders that the community does not have a clear identity or brand to market.

- ✓ **Collaboration and coordination:** That is concern that a historical lack of consensus among organizations engaged in community improvement has and could continue to inhibit implementation of strategic initiatives.

- ✓ **Troubling level of complacency:** Stakeholders throughout the process have stated that it is difficult in Jefferson City to push through the status quo.

JCMO COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Jefferson City, Missouri **Community & Economic Development Strategy** presents a series of **strategic initiatives** that are designed to specifically address the findings in each story of the Community Assessment and help the Jefferson City community achieve its **vision for the future**. After the Steering Committee has weighed in on the strategic initiatives that it will commit to implementing over the next five-year period, the final strategy document will include related best practices to provide context from similar initiatives and programs implemented around the country.

Following Steering Committee approval of the Community & Economic Development Strategy, an **Organizational Assessment** and later a complementary **Implementation Plan** will be developed to accompany the Strategy, detailing a variety of recommendations to support effective implementation of the strategic initiatives. The Organizational Assessment will provide direction to economic development partners on collaboration and cooperation efforts moving forward, followed by an Implementation Plan that includes but is not limited to guidance and recommendations related to: organizational and implementation structure required to effectively advance the Strategy and its various initiatives; financial and staff capacity; fundraising needs; priorities and timelines for implementation, and; performance metrics. The guidance contained in the Implementation Plan will be a critical companion to the Community & Economic Development Strategy. **The strategic initiatives outlined herein represent an ambitious approach to community and economic improvement in Jefferson City, one that will require new investment from partners across the region.** If effectively and efficiently implemented, it can change this community's trajectory in a manner consistent with residents' vision for the future.

The Jefferson City area has a choice: invest in its future with greater intentionality and coordination or accept the consequences that accompany complacency and accepting the status quo. As the research has illustrated, Jefferson City has many attributes, assets, and advantages that has buffered it from economic downturns and stagnant population growth. Without maximizing these advantages and committing to proactively tackling issues that has prevented the community from moving from good to great, trends indicate that Jefferson City faces many negative long-term implications. Rather than evolving into an economy that is increasingly entrepreneurial and characterized by a more diverse and highly trained workforce, it could devolve into a community that is increasingly characterized by and supportive of government services, while continuing to lose residents and jobs to communities in other portions of the larger region.

This strategy process reflects the community's collective recognition that action must be taken. The national economic landscape has changed significantly since Market Street developed the 2006 Strategy, and although some major wins have been accomplished since that time, there are some issues that have persisted since then. This Community & Economic Development Strategy represents the collective action that it must take with the future in mind. With adequate commitment to the initiatives contained herein, coupled with sufficient resource development and collaborative implementation, Jefferson City can realize its vision and provide greater opportunities for generations to come.

Workforce Development

A skilled, trained workforce is the #1 essential factor in shaping a region's economic competitiveness in today's economic environment. To sufficiently address this issue, there must be a holistic approach that encompasses every piece of the talent pipeline. Existing and new efforts must be considered in order to achieve a workforce that is prepared for current and future opportunities.

Overall

- ✓ Establish a task force to gather the current information related to the future job demands and skills for the region as compared to the programs that can feed the workforce supply to meet those future demands. As a result, the voids or lack of adequate resources can be documented, and steps can be mapped out and taken to remove the barriers. This task force should include selected representatives from the business, and educational sectors along with the Missouri State Council of the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM).
 - One important task for this group should be regularly collecting information from area schools related to enrollment by programs that develop in-demand skills and expertise and where their graduates live and work.

Pre-K to 12

- ✓ Support efforts to expand the availability and capacity of Pre-K.
- ✓ Work to consistently offer teacher and counselor opportunities for knowledge and skill advancement through formal and informal engagement.
- ✓ Provide all support necessary to ensure that all regional school districts offer multiple programs and pathways to careers in the region.
 - Enhance career guidance efforts at middle school and high school levels and ensure that students are aware of the career opportunities within the region as early as possible.
 - Establish and enhance a career readiness initiative that encompasses soft skills training, work-ready certification opportunities, and long-term pathway development opportunities for students.
- ✓ Explore the enhancement of the education foundation to provide an outlet for regional school officials to share best practices and coordinate with each other and with regional employers on various initiatives.
- ✓ Review, assess, and support the expansion of dual enrollment programs in all high schools with area technical colleges and universities to improve continuity and increased flow of workforce. Also, collaboratives where transferrable credits among the area educational institutions should be explored, developed, and/or expanded.

Postsecondary Education

- ✓ Based on identified needs, seek funding and support to establish and expand student internship programs with area employers and the public and private school systems, colleges, and Lincoln University.
- ✓ Support and assist Lincoln University with the additional expansion of their Nursing School.
- ✓ Consider developing a Link to Lincoln initiative that identifies, considers, and champions collaboration opportunities between the University, the city, private firms, and other organizations.
 - Opportunities include small projects such as coordinating with the Chamber and business associations to encourage members to offer student discounts or post welcoming signs for Lincoln students to foster community connection and engaging track students to develop or assist with a camp for high school students.
 - Opportunities may also include large projects such as an expansion of the LINC or the joint development of other facilities that can be used for joint purposes.
 - Organize local alumni who are well-known community leaders to participate in Lincoln career events, Lincoln recruitment events within the region, mentorship programs, and other connection opportunities to make Lincoln more visible and recognized as an existing and feasible option for students graduating from area schools as well as to make Jefferson City a worthwhile option for Lincoln graduates.
 - Expand the Lincoln University Speaker Series that is hosted by the Jefferson City Public Library as a means of exposure for Lincoln professors and connection point to the community-at-large.
 - Build on to current athletic support through the Blue Tiger Athletic Club and continue to garner community support at Lincoln sporting events.

Relevant Best Practices: Wilmington, DE HBCU Week; The Big College Event (Cincinnati, OH)

Talent Retention and Attraction

- ✓ Expand the Chamber's job board to include additional information on jobs available, skills required, and updated information on workforce needs, concerns, and opportunities.
- ✓ Develop a multi-layered brand initiative that highlights the community's current competitive advantages for talent.
- ✓ Host an annual local reception during a popular holiday season and/or homecoming weekend, encouraging former Jefferson City residents who are in Jefferson City to visit family for the holiday to see how the community has changed for the better since they moved away.
- ✓ Empower the Chamber's Young Professionals organization to work on economic and community development projects that are specific to their needs.
- ✓ Develop a high school leadership program that engages younger residents in a way that encourages community involvement and exposure.

Relevant Best Practices: Tulsa, OK's Young Professionals; Northwest Arkansas Emerging Leaders; Omaha, NE YP Summit; ImaginePittsburgh.com; Oklahoma, OK Greater Grads; Detroit, MI Homecoming Events; Wake Forest, NC Career Readiness Academy

Economic Development

All three legs of the economic development stool are paramount to a balanced approach to economic development. Data reveals that existing businesses and new startups account for the bulk of job creation within most communities, and existing businesses and newly recruited business drive capital investment. Small businesses provide an outlet and add options for existing and prospective talent with the right supports in place. All three of these rely on a community's "product," which consists of its workforce, existing sector composition, location, infrastructure, sites and buildings, place-based assets, and other factors. This sections will focus on proposed recommendations related to each leg of the economic development stool.

Existing Businesses

- ✓ Improve capabilities to track and respond to employer needs identified through business retention and expansion (BRE) activities.
 - Empanel an Existing Business Task Force of top regional executives to optimize the Partnership's BRE program. Focus Task Force meetings on discussions that would enable regional and local developers to customize a list of the most effective questions to ask in the BRE survey and during in-person interviews.
 - Refine the existing survey instrument to reflect business leaders' feedback.
 - Continue to utilize software to track BRE-derived input.
 - Proactively work with economic development partners to identify and address consistent themes, challenges, etc. that emerge from BRE activities.
 - Ensure that there is a formal network of city, county, workforce training entity, etc. contacts to address specific issues that a business reports as a challenge.
 - Work with business representatives to leverage economic development networks to identify new domestic markets for products and services.
- ✓ Establish a Health Care Task Force to actively work with the region's medical entities and all other key entities to become the lead organization helping to influence changes related to St. Mary's Hospital and the Capital Region Medical Center.
- ✓ Establish a Hospitality Task Force to actively work to connect existing and prospective businesses with existing talent training programs in the larger region, to explore the need for new training programs, and to consider developing a program within the Jefferson City CVB that promotes community pride among front-line workers who interface with visitors.

Relevant Best Practices: Richmond, VA Business First; Christian County, KY First Impressions Exchange

Business Attraction

- ✓ Update and publish the current inventory of land and buildings in the region suitable for desired business development. The goals of this inventory are the identification and creation of "shovel ready sites" and "ready to move in buildings". Based on the results, actively pursue developers to engage in public-private partnerships to meet the needs of existing and new business interests.

- ✓ Host a “red carpet” type events at least once per year for selected new and existing companies/consultants/developers and, separately, for the State Legislature to expose them to the opportunities for the region and ask for their support.
 - These should provide information on resources available in the Jefferson City Area designed to attract new jobs and capital investment. The inventory of sites and buildings could be highlighted for consultants and developers. There should be success stories from existing company executives about their businesses and why they chose the Jefferson City Area to grow and expand, which could include a tour of specific facilities.
- ✓ Engage in a targeted approach to business attraction and marketing.
 - Conduct a refreshed target business analysis, and use the data findings to develop marketing materials for each target area available for download on economic development websites.
 - Collaborate with state-level partners to participate in domestic and international marketing trips, trade show and industry conference attendance, and internal and external prospect meetings.
 - Work to more effectively map supply chains and identify relocation prospects in partnership with regional economic development partners.

Relevant Best Practices: *LaunchPGH.com (Pittsburgh, PA); Business Concierge, Columbus Chamber of Commerce (Columbus, OH); Tulsa Regional Chamber and GrowMetroTulsa.com (Tulsa, OK); OpportunityLynchburg.com (Lynchburg, VA); AugustaVABusiness.com (Augusta County, VA)*

Small Business Development and Entrepreneurship

- ✓ Establish a Small Business/Entrepreneurial Task Force focused on providing small businesses with the resources they need to effectively maneuver through various processes in order to launch, sustain, and expand.
 - This Task Force should work with the Lincoln University Small Business Development Center and the many small business development resource partners to develop one of the best “One Stop Shop” in the state.
 - The Task Force should develop a calendar of all existing programming for small business owners in the region, including classes, seminars, lectures, networking events and “meet-ups,” pitch contests, hackathons, and others. A method of sharing these dates should be developed to ensure the calendar includes dates from all partners.
 - An online entrepreneurial connection and information hub should be created as part of this effort for easy access to information as well as to serve as a key starting place for small business owners in the region.
 - Consider adding a staff position within the appropriate entity to coordinate small business development and entrepreneurship support activities.
- ✓ Ensure that city government policies and regulations optimize the local business climate for existing and new firms.

- Consider hosting a semi-annual workshop for business owners to learn about various processes to demonstrate small business-friendliness.
- Consider working with the county to streamline planning and zoning processes and ensure concurrency between city ordinances and county regulations where applicable.
- ✓ Work to ensure that Lincoln University's innovation resources, including its impending university research center, becomes a transformational resource for the Jefferson City area.
 - Ensure that regional employers, government officials (state and local), and key stakeholders are participants in discussions related to the research center's optimal programmatic impact on the community and local economy.
 - Work with the University to maximize research and development opportunities to create a sustainable innovation pathway.
 - Eventually consider developing an incubator for high-tech firms attached to the university research center.

Relevant Best Practices: Carolina Small Business Development Fund – HBCU Grant; Bristol, VA Developers' Roundtables; Emporia, KS Zoning Regulations Workshop Series; Jackson State University's Tiger Tech (Jackson, MS)

Sense of Place/Quality of Life

Jefferson City is undoubtedly a good place to raise a family. There are not major concerns of high crime. The various elements of the community tend to get along fairly well. Traffic levels and commute times are favorable. When major projects are discussed, they do not seem to be able to capture the vision and excitement of the masses within the community. The Missouri State Penitentiary (MSP) Site has tremendous potential, but it appears that the project has been left primarily to the public sector to work on the steps of determining whether it will become a reality. The absence of a conference center becomes another aspect which could unite the community in many ways. While there is tremendous work on the river, the airport, and the prison site, there does not appear to be a single focused effort that is backed by the majority of the leadership to ensure that these ideas and potential game changing projects become a reality. This section outlines initiatives to enhance the community's sense of place and add to its tremendous quality of life assets.

Public Engagement

- ✓ Form a Task Force called Vision Jefferson City that engages with the public to hear their opinions, create awareness around ongoing projects, and create excitement and momentum around those projects.
 - Engage the major elements of the community with identified projects, particularly the MSP project, and provide support for a Speaker's Bureau, public relations efforts, and an active focused effort of getting the community to support the critical steps in its success.
 - Hold regular update meetings to allow the public to hear and give input on the status of the projects.

- Establish a communication tool which would encourage citizens to offer suggestions and ideas for improvements that should be considered. This tool would be monitored and kept current so that the community would know what is being discussed and the status of the ideas that are currently being developed.

Assets and Amenities

- ✓ Ensure that the Missouri State Penitentiary Redevelopment project maximizes economic development return on investment while celebrating the area's quality of life assets, such as the river.
- ✓ Invest in broadband infrastructure – potentially including a free public wireless network – to facilitate job creation and talent retention and attraction.
 - Free public wireless internet can serve multiple purposes beyond infrastructure and access; deployment would support the area's positive image and identity, contribute to an entrepreneurial climate, and enable new business activities.
 - Empower a Broadband Task Force with the development of recommendations to improve high speed internet access. Consider a public-private approach to support the deployment and maintenance of infrastructure. Potential exists to identify one or more corporate or non-profit partners; many corporations have sponsored wireless deployment in communities around the country, including but not limited to Toyota, Google, AT&T, and Comcast.
- ✓ Effectively support the implementation of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) 2045 & Beyond Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- ✓ Support the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department in determining the gaps in parks and recreational facilities throughout the city and become an advocate for the changes and additions as warranted. Examples of additions are as follows:
 - Consider investing in youth athletics facilities to host large youth sports tournaments.
 - Consider installing splash pads and dog parks within existing parks.
 - Extend and connect (where possible) existing walking and bike trails.
- ✓ Work with existing entities to determine the key needs and concerns for developing a thriving downtown for shopping, entertainment, dining, and living.
- ✓ Ensure that there is a formal beautification effort that benefits the various corridors of the community.

Relevant Best Practices: Columbus, GA Downtown Revitalization; Northeast Ohio Public High-Speed Internet Connectivity; Macon-Bibb County, GA 5x5 Program; Front Door Fort Wayne (Fort Wayne, IN); Des Moines, IA Neighborhood Revitalization Program

Housing

- ✓ Seek to incentivize timely repair of existing housing or the development of new housing and supportive neighborhood retail (e.g. pharmacy, grocery, dry cleaning, etc.) where applicable in targeted neighborhoods, particularly those impacted by the recent tornado.

- Work with the city and county to optimize zoning and development regulations and examine all available incentive options to support this development.
- Assess existing property upgrade tools and determine their efficacy for low- and middle-income residents.
- Determine how to optimize programs to facilitate increased usage of home improvement loans, including leveraging government incentives for energy-efficient and “green” retrofits.
- Consider developing a specific loan program for middle-income property owners.
- ✓ Create an inventory of all downtown “second-floor” spaces (essentially, all space available in downtown buildings above street level) to identify opportunities to create new residential spaces in existing buildings.
 - Review zoning and development regulations to ensure that there are no unreasonable barriers to the redevelopment of downtown properties.
 - Ensure that potential developers are connected to all available incentive opportunities, including historic tax credits, etc.
- ✓ Consider creating a Jefferson City Land Bank Authority to leverage resources to obtain land and properties for the purpose of neighborhood revitalization.
 - Determine the optimal entity or entities to create, staff and manage the Authority.
 - Determine the geography to be targeted by the Authority and begin outreach to local community partners.
 - Secure initial funds to capitalize the Authority.
 - Identify processes to vet opportunities and identify alternate visions or uses for subject properties.
 - Identify and/or propose city ordinances that penalize negligent rental property owners.
 - Conduct a survey of properties to identify high-value parcels to be acquired.
 - Begin strategically securing properties based on anticipated revitalization opportunities.

Community Inclusion

- ✓ Work with local non-profits, community organizations, small businesses, and other entities to develop an annual festival and/or other high-profile events that celebrate the various cultures of residents in the community.
 - Re-launch an annual diversity event with dance, ethnic foods and crafts, children’s entertainment, informational booths, and other activities.
 - Formalize a follow-up agenda to enable participants to understand how diversity impacts and enriches their everyday lives.
 - Host lecture series and diversity fairs on diversity-related topics with top regional and national speakers.
- ✓ Ensure that recommended Task Forces have adequate representation of key groups in the community.

Regionalism

Regionalism is the lynch pin to successful economic development across the country. Much input was received during the Community Assessment Phase of this strategy process in support of establishing some type of regional effort to at least include Jefferson City and the surrounding communities. An enhanced focus and commitment must be developed and implemented to ensure that the regional needs, both present and future, are addressed.

One of the biggest hurdles to overcome is defining what the region should actually encompass geographically. To some, the region consists of Jefferson City and Cole County. To others, it consists of the counties within the MSA and even the neighboring Columbia, MO MSA. Deciding the area to be included in any type of regional entity is important for many reasons.

Funding becomes a critical consideration for the organization to be charged with the planning and execution of a regional plan. Each government entity in the region will benefit directly and indirectly when new jobs and new capital investment are created in the region. The payroll dollars and commerce generated will flow through the regional economy regardless of where the actual location of the jobs and capital are generated. However, questions must be carefully answered, including:

- What will the intergovernmental collaboration entail?
- Should each entity share equally in the costs of funding the effort?
- Should there be a “public/private partnership” created where investments from both sectors are pooled to support a regional effort?

The governing board for the entity should reflect the funding sources to ensure that the process of ensuring maximum return on the investments are obtained. This Board would contract with the appropriate entities to provide the services needed to execute the delivery of the elements of the approved regional plan.

Action items for consideration:

- ✓ Survey the region to determine the current and future regional needs with specific focus on workforce development, health care, business, broadband internet/Wi-Fi connectivity, tourism, and quality of life issues.
- ✓ Work with existing entities to enhance and take advantage of potential economic development that might come from better utilization of the Jefferson City Memorial Airport and its property.
- ✓ Work with Columbia leaders to support the possibility of expanding the Columbia Regional Airport to provide greater and more convenient access to air travel.
- ✓ Actively support the development and activation of the Heartland Port as a part of the region’s economic development approach.

Relevant Best Practice: Charlotte Regional Business Alliance (Charlotte, NC)

APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

WILMINGTON, DE HBCU WEEK

The City of Wilmington, Delaware, in an effort to promote HBCUs, particularly Delaware State University, to local students, declared proclaimed September as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Month in the city. During the month, the City has hosted a week-long series of events in partnership with Delaware State since 2017. Events include a tour of Delaware State for middle school students, an alumni networking reception, various panel discussions, a college fair, a battle of the bands, and more.

In 2019, the week was featured in a live broadcast of ESPN's "First Take" with commentator Stephen A. Smith during the college fair. In 2018, it was reported that over 1,500 students attended the college fair, and nearly 700 received college offers based on their high school transcripts and ACT or SAT scores. More than 225 students received offers of scholarship assistance totaling over \$1 million. The number of colleges participating in the fair in its first year was 13—in 2019, that number increased to an expected 25. The expected attendance for 2019 was 4,000 students. Additionally, in 2019, close to 7,000 people attended the HBCU Battle of the Bands, which featured five HBCU bands from the larger region.

Sponsors for the 2019 Week included presenting Sponsor JP Morgan Chase, The Chemours Company and ESPN (Diamond Sponsors), Live Nation Urban (Platinum Sponsor), Delaware State University and 38/15 Media (Gold Sponsors), Toyota (Bronze Sponsor), and the Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau (Silver Sponsor). The earned media, the community pride, the students' exposure to Delaware State and others, and connecting with area alumni are all positive outcomes from this city-led effort.

<http://www.hbcuweek.org/>

<https://www.delawarepublic.org/post/delaware-state-university-and-city-wilmington-team-hbcu-week>

THE BIG COLLEGE EVENT (CINCINNATI, OH)

Hosted at the Duke Energy Center, the Big College Event brings together local employers, interest groups, community and social organizations, and college and university students throughout the Cincinnati region. By bringing these groups together, the Cincinnati Regional Chamber fosters student discovery, exploration, and interaction with all that the Cincinnati region has to offer them upon graduation. To this end, the Big College event better connects graduating students to the community through internships, co-ops, and post-graduation employment opportunity.

In 2017, 300 small and medium-sized business along with 2,000 students from higher education institutions throughout the region participated in the event.

<http://www.cincinnatiachamber.com/talent-initiatives/talent-attraction/engage-future-talent/the-big-college-event>

TULSA'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AKA "TYPROS" (TULSA, OKLAHOMA)

Tulsa's Young Professionals was founded by the Tulsa Regional Chamber in 2005 in response to the region's "brain drain" of new graduates and young professionals to other cities and states. The mission of Tulsa's Young Professionals is to attract and retain young talent in the Tulsa region while also establishing Tulsa's next generation of business and community leaders. TYPros has grown to more than 7,000 members. The organization is a key component of the Tulsa Metro Chamber's regional economic development plan, Tulsa's Future, now on its third campaign.

To ensure that the group was maturing into an active facilitator of community change, TYPros developed "work crews" allowing young professionals to have a collective voice and impact on a number of community concerns and initiatives. TYPros has organized work crews around the following issues: Business Development, Colleges & Universities, Community Ambassadors, Community Redevelopment, Diversity, Government Relations, Next Generation Leadership, Special Events, and Sustainability. The Government Relations Crew organized has organized legislative days in which they rent buses and take a large consistency of young professionals to the state capital for a day of meetings with state representatives from the region. The Diversity Crew promotes greater diversity within TYPros membership while hosting a number of events to promote dialogue about diversity in Metro Tulsa.

In 2009, TYPros hosted numerous brainstorming sessions to discuss the vision for redevelopment in downtown Tulsa. Members raised more than \$12,000 for community initiatives, supporting the group's various volunteer efforts. The group also raised money to donate a 12-foot sculpture to the City which is currently displayed in a park in downtown Tulsa. In 2010, TYPros launched The Forge, a business incubator specifically targeting young professionals. Other major programs of TYPros include Street CReD, an annual event that focuses on community redevelopment in a specific neighborhood each year by "showing what Tulsa can become when it creates the change it wants to see," a board internship program, and TYPros Foundation (TYPF), started in 2014. The mission of TYPF is "Bridging economic development with efforts to create a sense of place." Many events raise money for TYPF's strategic projects to accomplish its mission.

<https://www.typros.org/>

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS EMERGING LEADERS (ROGERS-LOWELL, ARKANSAS)

Realizing the need to connect to the young professionals and future leaders of the community, the Rogers-Lowell Chamber developed the Northwest Arkansas Emerging Leaders (NWAEL) program in 2008. Membership and participation in the program is open to anyone in the area that is looking to get involved in the community and strengthen their leadership skills. Membership has increased significantly since the formation of the program, with the number of members growing from approximately 100 in 2009 to nearly 450 in 2013.

One of the strengths of the program is that rather than simply teaching members how to leader through educational sessions, as some traditional leadership programs do, the Northwest Arkansas Emerging Leaders aims to develop leadership skills through experience by actively engaging the members in workgroups, projects, and programs. There are five workgroups – legacy, political and government affairs, sustainability, greenways and trails, and community enrichment – that members can be a part of based on their individual

interest. Each workgroup meets monthly and is charged with developing programs that will benefit the community. Furthermore, the program provides board service training to interested participants and helps place these participants on nonprofit boards in the community following completion of their training. This helps promote leadership development and community attachment among young professionals.

Over the past several years, the organization has hosted dozens of events and programs aimed at educating and engaging the members and making a positive impact on the community. Such projects include Lunch with a Leader, the aforementioned Board Service Certification Program, a Bike to School Initiative, a Voter Registration Drive, and the creation of a Recycling Alliance. The Greenways and Trails Workgroup also helped to develop a Community Bike Program, which provides free bikes for the public to use on the city's network of trails.

The program provides valuable opportunities to its members and as a result, is helping the members to strengthen their leadership skills and knowledge, grow their careers, and expand their networks. The education and support provided to these members is invaluable in helping to build a stronger future generation of leaders in the Northwest Arkansas region.

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

OMAHA, NE YP SUMMIT

Hosted by Greater Omaha Young Professionals, the annual YP Summit brings together young professionals and community and business leaders to discuss community issues affecting Omaha's youngest and next leaders. The speakers and breakout sessions of the YP Summit are focused on nurturing and challenging young professionals in Greater Omaha, but the event is open to anyone with an interest in the future of the community. National speakers headline the event, which also includes breakout sessions facilitated by young professionals. YPs and community members can apply to host a breakout session related to the year's theme. (The 2013 theme was "Transformation;" the 2014 theme will be "Empower.") The YP Summit also connects summit attendees with volunteer and community engagement opportunities, serving as a major network for regional non-profits to connect with potential volunteers.

<http://omahayp.org/yppsummit/>

IMAGINEPITTSBURGH.COM (PITTSBURGH, PA)

The Allegheny Conference on Community Development, a local economic and community development organization launched the ImaginePittsburgh website as a communications platform and a searchable job listing aggregator to connect job seekers with local employment opportunities. The website showcases the region as a place not only to work, but also as a community to live, play, and learn. The talent attraction initiative sponsors events in the community, has hosted online job fairs during which participants can chat in real time with recruiters at regional employers, and features a "Neighbors" section on the website that profiles Pittsburgh natives, settlers, and "boomerangers" where the residents offer their personal perspective about living and working in the region. The ImaginePittsburgh.com talent portal has continued to be expanded upon and improved, with the Allegheny Conference recently introducing strategic marketing initiatives to target talent such as veterans leaving military service, IT talent, and "boomerangers." Additionally, the

Allegheny Conference and partners launched the ¡Hola Pittsburgh! initiative aimed at targeting and attracting Latinos, especially Puerto Ricans, to the area.

<https://imaginepittsburgh.com>

OKLAHOMA, OK GREATER GRADS

Greater Grads is an initiative of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's Education and Workforce Development division. It launched in 2006 to build Oklahoma City's talent base by connecting Oklahoma graduates—a vital component of the City's future workforce—with employers in the Oklahoma City region. These connections will help Oklahoma City's flourishing economy, creating even more opportunities in the years to come. Upon recognizing that the Oklahoma City region was experiencing brain drain and that it is home to over 120,000 college students every year—with regional higher education enrollment as large as Boston or Philadelphia—the Chamber launched a targeted effort necessary to focus those students on opportunities available to the locally.

The program consists of three parts:

- ✓ *InternOKC Summer Program*: Interns can be enrolled in this four week series that includes a kick-off session and four lunch sessions that highlight the benefits of living and working in the Oklahoma City region. This fosters peer networking and provides resources to help students transition from college to career.
- ✓ *Greater Grads Career Fair*: The career fair is held each spring with more than 100 recruiters from local companies. A link on the Greater Grads website provides attendees with resume and interviewing tips to maximize their success and efficiently utilize the time of participating employers.
- ✓ *Website for graduates and employers*: This website focuses on promoting Oklahoma City to recent college graduates and young professionals and connecting them with jobs available at local businesses.

In just the first six months of the site's launch, traffic increased by 300 percent. Site data shows that the average length of stay is 10 minutes, which is 400 percent above Greater Grad's goal of two minutes (generally considered the standard benchmark for successful sites). Ten internships were posted on GreaterGrads.com at its launch; now the website features over 100 during peak intern hiring periods.

A year after Greater Grads' debut, a partnership was formed with the Alliance of Emerging Professionals (AEP), Oklahoma City's young professionals group. These recent college graduates returned to their campuses to promote the Greater Grads program and website to college students during monthly AEP social events.

Greater Grads is one of the primary programs of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's Education and Workforce Development department and a direct tactic of the Chamber's economic development strategy. It is staffed by a full-time manager of education and outreach programs.

greatergrads.com

DETROIT, MI HOMECOMING EVENTS

Detroit Homecoming aims to reconnect Detroit expats with their hometown by providing news, events, and opportunities to live, work, or invest in Detroit. Recently, the program hosted its third class of expats back home to participate in and celebrate the city's rebirth. More than 200 Southeast Michigan expats attended the invitation-only event, with speakers that included former Microsoft Corp. CEO Steve Ballmer. Over the past two years, the event has resulted in more than \$260 million in pending investments in metro Detroit by participating expats.

<http://www.detroithomecoming.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/detroithomecoming/>

WAKE FOREST, NC CAREER READINESS ACADEMY

The Wake Forest Career Readiness Academy allows high school students to learn leadership skills, gain an internship or apprenticeship opportunity with a local business, receive job training from industry experts, and learn basic financial literacy skills. The program includes eight monthly leadership and job training sessions that are conducted during the school day and one full semester completing an internship at a local business. Students learn job readiness and soft skills, such as resume writing, interviewing, and work place etiquette; information about various industries; leadership skills; and financial literacy skills. The goal of this program is to develop well-rounded youth, who have necessary career ready skills needed for their future. The overall program is 150 hours, and graduates receive a leadership and soft skills certificate of completion. Local businesses are encouraged to support the academy by offering internships (paid or unpaid) to participating students. The Wake Forest Chamber Foundation was one of five recipients in the United States to receive a grant from the U.S Chamber of Commerce Foundation for its program.

<https://wakeforestchamber.org/category/chamber-programs/leadership-programs/>

RICHMOND, VA BUSINESS FIRST

Launched in 2006, Business First is a collaborative, regional, existing business retention and expansion (BRE) program of the Greater Richmond Regional Partnership (GRP) and its local government partners. Professional economic development staff and trained volunteers from the business community interview CEOs and other top company officials to fully understand the company's competitiveness and its long-term prospects for growth. Interviews cover a wide range of topics and findings include hiring prospects for the next year, perceptions of the regional workforce and specific skill shortages, projected sales, and business climate issues. The data allows the GRP to gauge the health of the regional economy, develop an early warning system to foretell potential future layoffs, and provide targeted solutions to existing businesses. Typical services offered through Business First visits include:

- Expansion support;
- Connection to state and local incentive programs;
- Workforce recruiting and training;
- Financing;

- Business planning;
- Coordination of municipal services; and
- Downsizing prevention and management.

<https://www.grpva.com>

CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KY FIRST IMPRESSIONS EXCHANGE

The Christian County Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Henderson-Henderson County (KY) Chamber of Commerce to conduct First Impressions Exchange visits. This program is designed to help communities develop a more robust understanding of the “impression” they leave with visitors and newcomers. Each chamber organized a delegation of 10-12 volunteers who visited the other community during the month of June to compile a report on their first impressions. The undercover teams experienced many aspects of the community and offered feedback on cleanliness and appearance, directional signage, neighborhoods, downtown areas, retail options, friendliness, customer service orientation, parks and recreation, green space, industrial parks, key intersections and corridors, and many other areas of consideration. Representatives of each chamber then gave a presentation of their first impressions to the boards of the other chamber.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS EXCHANGE (CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KY)

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LAUNCHPGH.COM (PITTSBURGH, PA)

Launchpgh.com is an online portal operated by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) that connects entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs in the Pittsburgh area to the entrepreneurial resources they need to thrive. The website is both visually appealing, intuitive, and comprehensive in the information it provides to connect area entrepreneurs with an extensive network of business opportunities. The website provides a guide to starting a business in Pittsburgh, a “Funding 101” guide, and key information about available resources, upcoming events, and other areas of interest to current and prospective entrepreneurs. This includes detailed information about funding available at various stages, as well as resources from coworking spaces to incubators and accelerators to mentors. A specific portion of the site is devoted to the

needs and interests of the maker community. The website was an IEDC “Gold” winner in 2015 for the category of Special Purpose Website for a community with a population of 200,000 to 500,000 people.

LaunchPGH.com

BUSINESS CONCIERGE, COLUMBUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (COLUMBUS, OH)

In the landscape of economic development organizations in the central Ohio region, the Columbus Chamber recognized that its “sweet spot” was member businesses that were in growth mode, in business for three to five years, with at least 10 employees, and over half a million in annual revenues. As relatively small but growing businesses, these existing and preoperative future members represented enterprises that had potential to significantly impact the community’s desired economic outcomes. The Chamber developed a business concierge model that offers business market research, talent solutions, government navigation, and targeted connections to businesses. The services are offered based on their firms’ membership level. The Chamber’s research team leverages its proprietary data subscriptions to run reports identifying new customers and markets, untapped geographies, competitors, suppliers, and labor markets. The talent connections services assists companies in sourcing workforce, connecting with workforce service providers, and attracting new talent to the region. The Chamber runs over 200 reports through its market research service and has over 2,000 engagements with businesses annually. As a result of the very high satisfaction of member businesses, over 80 percent of businesses engaged through the concierge program have promoted the Columbus Chamber to business colleagues.

<https://columbus.org/solutions/market-research/>

TULSA REGIONAL CHAMBER AND GROWMETROTULSA.COM (TULSA, OKLAHOMA)

GrowMetroTulsa.com is the primary economic development website for the Tulsa region. The website houses a variety of print collateral materials available for download including brochures on each of its target sectors and its award-winning general purpose print brochure, Grow in a Vibrant Region, a multi-purpose full-color brochure highlighting Tulsa and the surrounding region. It provides users – particularly site selectors, brokers, and corporate decision-makers – with an option to generate custom reports with specific information of interest to the user, selecting from a variety of categories covering sites and buildings, labor market information, infrastructure, business costs, quality of life, and others.

In addition to the Chamber’s intensive efforts to maintain relationships with consultants and brokers influencing site location decisions, the Tulsa Regional Chamber’s corporate recruitment efforts have increasingly focused on a limited number of high-value marketing opportunities. Its digital marketing campaign was recently recognized by IEDC in its 2017 Excellence in Economic Development awards; the relatively low-cost per contact program created online ads promoting GrowMetroTulsa.com to a targeted group of individuals. The Tulsa’s Future monthly consultant newsletter keeps key contacts informed about new developments in the region.

GrowMetroTulsa.com

OPPORTUNITYLYNCHBURG.COM (LYNCHBURG, VA)

There are countless examples of high-performing websites used for economic development marketing, though they all share similar features that include attractive designs and layouts, up-to-date information, information on incentives and programs, an inventory of available properties, detailed data and information about the region, and they are easy to navigate. One such example is the Opportunity Lynchburg website (www.opportunitylynchburg.com) that was launched in December 2014 by the Lynchburg Economic Development Authority in Virginia. In less than four months, site visits increased by over 500 percent and new contacts converted from the site increased by more than 600 percent. The organization earned a national medal from the IEDC in 2015 and the site serves as an excellent example of a quality website that helps stakeholders access the information they need quickly and efficiently.

OpportunityLynchburg.com

AUGUSTAVABUSINESS.COM (AUGUSTA COUNTY, VA)

Augusta County, Virginia (population roughly 75,500 in 2019) redesigned its Economic Development website (augustaVAbusiness.com) in 2016 to improve the county's image and more proactively communicate its assets and advantages. The site offers real-time accessibility for industrial prospects, site selection consultants, existing or new businesses looking to build or expand, small business, and entrepreneurs. Augusta County's growth, agricultural foundation, workforce, location and access, and speed-to-market as well as educational and healthcare systems all influence the positioning statement – Augusta County, VA: where industrial growth meets exceptionally beautiful living.

Augusta County Economic Development won a Gold Excellence in Economic Development Award for its website from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2017. The website provides all of the necessary information on starting, locating, and expanding a business in the county such as sites and buildings, incentives, demographics, and small business resources. Its resources include downloadable infographics, overviews, and reports with relevant information on the workforce, target sectors, transportation, etc. Users are also able to make customized reports that compile the requested information into one seamless PDF. The website has a user-friendly mobile version.

AugustaVABusiness.com

CAROLINA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND – HBCU GRANT

In early 2019, the Carolina Small Business Development Fund was awarded a \$2.8 million grant from the Wells Fargo Diverse Community Capital program to support economic development through its growing partnerships with Shaw University, Johnson C. Smith University, Elizabeth City State University, and Fayetteville State University. With the funding, over the next three years, the number of participating HBCUs will increase to build small business capacities through group, one-on-one and online training. The goals of the initiative are to ensure that a spirit of entrepreneurship is fostered, to increase access to capital, and to enhance economic development, both on HBCU campuses and in minority-owned businesses in their service areas.

<https://carolinasmallbusiness.org/2019/03/wells-fargo-awards-2-8-million-for-csbdf-expansion-of-hbcu-initiatives/>

BRISTOL, VA DEVELOPERS' ROUNDTABLES

The City of Bristol, Virginia's Community Development Office is hosting a series of workshop for developers and property owners to provide a forum for information sharing. The two-hour workshops will be hosted in City Council chambers in City Hall. The focus of the first workshop in January 2020 was on property investment incentives and included information about the city enterprise zone incentives, particularly the rehabilitated real estate tax exemption, the Virginia Industrial Revitalization Fund and opportunity zones.

According to Ellen Tolton, the community development coordinator for the city, "the overall goal of our program is to reach out to real estate owners and investors to find ways to encourage more investment to improve existing buildings."

<https://www.believeinbristol.org/calendar/city-news/developers-roundtable/202001151237451419>

EMPORIA, KS ZONING REGULATIONS WORKSHOP SERIES

The Lyon County, Kansas and City of Emporia Planning and Zoning Departments hosted a series of zoning regulations workshops in 2019 to educate residents and respond to their concerns regarding new proposed regulations in the county and city. The workshops were held weekly, rotating in locations including the Lyon County Annex, the Emporia Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Civic Building. The topics covered were agricultural, industrial, commercial, and residential.

Lyon County Zoning and Floodplain Manager Sam Seeley and City Zoning Specialist Joe Foster directly answered resident questions and concerns about the impact of the new regulations, creating an environment for dialogue and trust-building.

<https://lyoncounty.org/index/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ELC-Z-Worshop-Flyers.pdf>

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY'S TIGER TECH (JACKSON, MS)

In 2014, Jackson State University in Jackson, MS celebrated the grand opening of Tiger Tech, the first Apple Authorized Campus store in Mississippi and the second of its kind nationally at an HBCU. Located in the university's Student Center, the store offers discounts to students, faculty, and staff on Apple computers and accessories. Jackson State's Vice President of Finance and Business worked with a professor in the Entrepreneurship Department among others to pursue and win the project. In fact, Students played an active role in bringing the store to the campus. A team of entrepreneurship students wrote the business plan. The grand opening occurred just weeks after JSU's designation by Apple, Inc., as an Apple Distinguished School. Jackson State received its first recognition as an Apple Distinguished School in 2013 and again in 2015. Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of leadership and educational excellence that demonstrate Apple's vision for learning with technology and that have incorporated innovation into its curriculum and/or facilities.

Jackson State has made many upgrades to its campus and curriculum in recent years. JSU's CyberLearning Ecosystem won national acclaim as a recipient of Campus Technology magazine's Teaching and Learning Innovation Award. The HBCU also received a \$1.2 million award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as an institutional partner and a \$2.9 million award from the Department of Education's First in the World Grant.

<http://www.jsumsnews.com/?p=10057>

COLUMBUS, GA DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The City of Columbus, Georgia began its comprehensive downtown revitalization efforts in the 1980s by forming Uptown Columbus, Inc. and starting a Business Improvement District (BID), a self-taxing district that would devote funds to beautification, streetscaping, and public safety to improve the vitality of Uptown Columbus.

Just a few years later, the City opened the first phase of the Chattahoochee RiverWalk, a 22-mile paved walking and biking trail that follows the Chattahoochee River through the Columbus region and serves as an anchor amenity (a riverfront boardwalk) in Uptown Columbus. Shortly thereafter, Phenix City, Alabama (located across the Chattahoochee River from Columbus) opened a 3,500 seat riverfront amphitheater in 1996 directly across the river from Uptown Columbus, a first step in many towards bi-state, regional collaboration on riverfront activation.

That same year the Olympics were hosted in Atlanta, Georgia, just 90 minutes away from Columbus. At the time, a suitable venue for Olympic whitewater canoeing/slalom was not available in Georgia and an alternate location was secured in nearby North Carolina. This sparked a vision among John Turner, the third-generation leader of W.C. Bradley Company, based in Columbus: what if the Chattahoochee River could be transformed into the world's greatest urban whitewater experience? What began as a seemingly infeasible idea was advanced over the course of many years of diligent conversations with various local, state, federal stakeholders including two state governments, two city governments, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration among many others. Nearly fifteen years later work began on the conversion of the river to an urban whitewater course. Two dams were removed and the river was rerouted during construction. The roughly \$24 million project was financed by \$13 million in private contributions, \$5 million from the City of Columbus, and \$5 million from the Corps of Engineers. The final result – the largest urban whitewater course in America at 2.5 miles completed in 2013 – has received global acclaim, won the American Planning Association's Excellence in Economic Development Planning Award in 2014, and has been featured in numerous national publications.

Meanwhile, Uptown Columbus was undergoing another transformation driven by immense investment from its largest institution of higher education. Columbus State University is home to nearly 7,000 undergraduate students. The University's main campus is located roughly six miles from Uptown Columbus. The University intended to develop new facilities to support its performing arts program, and realized that Uptown Columbus - outside of its main campus - could be a potential location for new facilities. The City and the

private sector came together in the early 2000s to develop a new performing arts center, the \$86 million RiverCenter for Performing Arts. After much planning, the University relocated its Art, Music, Theatre departments to Uptown Columbus, co-locating with the new RiverCenter and developed complementary student housing. The University also partnered with the City to create new greenspace in Uptown, Woodruff Park, which serves as a gateway to the Chattahoochee RiverWalk. Adjacent to the park and the RiverWalk are a few major revitalization projects, including the conversion of the old Eagle and Phenix Mill into condos, apartments, and a restaurant space located above the old mill's water wheel in the middle of the Chattahoochee River, and accessible via pedestrian bridge.

The City has also recently established a tax allocation district (TAD) to encompass Uptown and provide another financing mechanism to support redevelopment efforts. TADs enable tax increment financing (TIF) whereby property values are frozen at a certain level within the boundaries of the district and all future incremental property tax revenues are devoted to support redevelopment and infrastructure needs in the district.

NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC HIGH-SPEED INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Unable to find a private-sector provider to partner with to procure super-high-speed internet connectivity, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and a number of other large, publicly funded regional institutions including hospital systems, the regional transit authority, public broadcasters, and others created their own gigabit fiber network. The network was incorporated as a nonprofit known as OneCommunity that sought out universities, schools, hospitals, local governments, and other large nonprofits as their initial customer base. Demand led to capital infusions necessary to expand into a \$200 million fiber-optic network. Eventually, OneCommunity found an investor that understood the complexity of the nonprofit network and also how they could receive a healthy rate of return. The resulting partnership, branded as Everstream, shares infrastructure and support teams with OneCommunity to provide over 2,500 miles of fiber connectivity across a 34-county region at 10 gigabit speeds.

MACON-BIBB COUNTY, GA 5X5 PROGRAM

The City of Macon's 5x5 program is an initiative whereby enhanced city services are targeted to a five block area for five weeks to beautify the community's neighborhoods and support revitalization. Numerous departments are involved in the collaborative effort, including the Mayor's Office, the Police Department, the Fire Department, Inspection and Fees, Engineering, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Central Services, Economic and Community Development, and Emergency Management. The program engages residents in the targeted areas by soliciting their input on the specific areas that need services, and encouraging their involvement in clean-up efforts. In Ward I, the program helped remove 18,000 pounds of debris and solid waste, paint more than 8,000 feet of curbs and 200 feet of crosswalks, install 52 new signs, and fix potholes and sidewalks that required patching. The program was extended to other parts of the community following the consolidation of city-county (Macon-Bibb) government in late 2013.

<http://www.maconbibb.us/5x5/>

FRONT DOOR FORT WAYNE (FORT WAYNE, IN)

Front Door Fort Wayne is a comprehensive plan to enhance the major points of entry into the city. Developed with the assistance of an appointed advisory committee, the plan is a framework for improving the appearance, efficiency, and economic potential of the city's major gateways while also enhancing navigation for visitors. Improvements are intended to assist with marketing and promotion of the city, boosting public pride, and fostering economic investment. The plan is a culmination of two years of study and input from business and community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public coupled with an analysis of existing conditions and a review of national best practices. Front Door Fort Wayne includes both short- and long-term strategies to improve the function and aesthetics of the city's existing and future points of entry and gateway corridors.

<http://www.fwcommunitydevelopment.org/planning/front-door-fort-wayne>

DES MOINES, IA NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

The City of Des Moines and the Polk County Board of Supervisors created the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) in 1990 to help stabilize and improve Des Moines' neighborhoods. A key component of the revitalization effort is the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC), a 501(c)(3) entity that serves as the central source for the delivery of funds for assistance to both homeowners and developers. The NRP uses a strategy that calls for neighborhood residents, the City of Des Moines, Polk County, local business leaders, and the NFC to develop a public/private partnership that addresses revitalization issues within the Des Moines area. The NRP gives citizens the opportunity to organize and create neighborhood organizations that can be officially recognized by the City Council and County Supervisors.

Approximately every two years, all recognized neighborhoods are invited to apply for designation status. At that time, the existing designated neighborhoods are evaluated and if they have met their goals, they can be moved to charter status. Recognized neighborhoods that are applying to become designated submit their applications to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board. The NRB is a citizen board appointed by the City Council. Each City Council member appoints three citizens from their ward representing a low income citizen, a neighborhood resident, and a business/nonprofit/educational representative. The NFC has one representative, and the local business leaders' organization has one representative on the NRB.

Once the NRB has designated a neighborhood, the residents, City, County, and NFC work together to develop a neighborhood action plan. The neighborhood planning process relies on active resident groups to identify critical neighborhood issues in their area. For example, the River Bend neighborhood plan lists their priorities as housing, economic development, community building, infrastructure, neighborhood image, and strengthening the neighborhood association. The staff of the Neighborhood Development Division provides technical assistance and planning coordination. Neighborhood Planning staff work with the neighborhood group to develop appropriate goals and a feasible action plan. Neighborhood action plans provide a list of activities and identify parties responsible for implementation efforts. Success of the neighborhood action plan depends on a continued coordination of efforts between the neighborhood organization, the City, County, NFC and private organizations.

Since its inception, twenty-two neighborhoods have completed the action planning process. Of those neighborhoods, sixteen have successfully completed the process by accomplishing the bulk of the activities

in their action plans. They are capable of continuing implementation activities with less support from the City and have graduated to charter status.

https://www.dsm.city/departments/community_development-division/neighborhood_development/neighborhood_revitalization_program.php

CHARLOTTE REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE (CHARLOTTE, NC)

Charlotte, North Carolina is an early adopter of a private sector, regional economic development organization. Until this year, the Charlotte Regional Partnership was a nonprofit, public/private economic development organization serving a 16-county region. This effort included 12 counties in North Carolina and four counties in neighboring South Carolina. This private sector regional economic development group served communities in different states because that was their natural market. They were funded by public and private sector dollars, and elected officials were not in charge of the organization.

The Charlotte Regional Partnership implemented economic development services related to business retention and expansion marketing. These efforts included meeting with corporate site location executives about existing and new company opportunities, promoting the region through global marketing and news story placement on the success of the region. The Charlotte Regional Partnership was funded by 190 private sector companies and governments, benefiting from both public and private sector funding opportunities.

In 2019, the Charlotte Chamber and Charlotte Regional Partnership merged to create the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, representing a vision for greater collaboration and unity across the region. The purpose of the merger is “to build on the experience and passion of both organizations to galvanize the 16-county Charlotte region through a shared vision and coordinated efforts,” according to a statement by both former organizations. The new organization is responsible for business, including BRE, business recruitment, innovation services, and intelligence support; marketing and branding; talent attraction and retention; and economic and public policy advocacy.

The Charlotte Regional Business Alliance is divided into chapters that play a key role in driving the mission to connect, innovate, and grow opportunity for businesses in Charlotte by serving as liaisons between the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance and its geographical membership. Chapters offer member engagement and events.

<https://charlotteregion.com>