



A Transformative Economic Growth Initiative

Advance DeKalb is the 501(c)(3) non-profit committed to the economic strength of DeKalb County. Established in 2019, Advance DeKalb is supported by public and private investors and civic and business leaders to drive Decide DeKalb's vision of growing of jobs, businesses, and capital investment; fostering workforce development that integrates companies' needs with training organizations and educational institutions; and implementing a sound infrastructure system to revitalize the community with catalytic redevelopment projects.

An investment in Advance DeKalb is your contribution to the future growth of DeKalb's business community and overall economic future.

Economic Growth Initiative





Advance DeKalb



Letter From the Chair

DeKalb County has reached a critical time in its history.

With new and respected leadership and a new vision for the future, DeKalb County is perfectly positioned to tackle some of the biggest challenges to our long-term prosperity: increased competition for businesses, jobs, and workforce; older parts of our community in need of redevelopment; and negative perceptions that do not reflect today's realities.

We are prepared to take advantage of the many opportunities before us. Fueled by population growth, dynamic cities, and its location at the heart of metro Atlanta, DeKalb County has matured into a vibrant community that is one of the most diverse counties in the country.

But to do so, we need stronger collaboration between public and private sectors, a results-oriented plan, ADVANCE DEKALB, and the resources to implement it.

ADVANCE DEKALB is a five-year, multi-million-dollar transformative economic growth initiative to drive job creation in DeKalb County, benefiting all of metro Atlanta. It is a bold call-to-arms for DeKalb's public, private, economic, and community development leaders – the first in our community's history – and it is expected to result in a net increase of 17,206 new jobs and \$1.4 billion in value-added economic impact.

ADVANCE DEKALB includes three primary goals:

- Goal 1: Comprehensive Economic Development**
- Goal 2: Talent and Workforce Development**
- Goal 3: Infrastructure and Community Development**

For successful implementation, this effort will require significantly enhanced capacity and resources that DeKalb's private sector has not previously dedicated to economic development work.

The business community will commit significant resources to the effort with the expectation of a substantial return on our investment. Please join us. You can make a difference as we enhance Decide DeKalb's existing efforts with a solid plan that will guide our community and economic development into the next decade.

The time is now for DeKalb to take a bold step towards sustainable and inclusive long-term economic prosperity for its businesses and residents. We will not accomplish any of these goals without the financial support of investors like you.

Please join us in investing in this exciting and historic public-private initiative.



Ryan Millsap
Chairman
Advance DeKalb Campaign



Don Bolia
Chairman
Decide DeKalb Board of Directors

“DeKalb County is positioned to embrace the future, rise above challenges, and lead an economic renaissance. Our journey toward becoming an exceptional county has just begun. DeKalb County Government and ADVANCE DEKALB are working together to create a comprehensive economic development vision that encourages job growth, revitalizes blighted neighborhoods, and improves quality of life.”

Michael L. Thurmond

DeKalb County Government, Chief Executive Officer



“DeKalb County is in a heated competition with peer counties and regions around the country – and the world. To continue our success in recruiting and retaining jobs and businesses, it will take a proactive plan and additional resources. ADVANCE DEKALB is that plan.”

Bob Voyles
Principal, Seven Oaks





The Plan

GOAL 1

Comprehensive Economic Development

GOAL 2

Talent and Workforce Development

GOAL 3

Infrastructure and Community Development

The ADVANCE DEKALB Economic Growth Initiative

Based on the 2023 Strategic Economic Development Plan (2023 SEDP), and with the support of DeKalb and metro Atlanta's business community, Decide DeKalb, through its ADVANCE DEKALB Economic Growth Initiative, is committed to achieving these three equally important, interconnected goals.

Goal 1: Comprehensive Economic Development

Grow Jobs, Businesses, and Our Brand

Decide DeKalb will significantly and aggressively increase its capacity to perform the three core economic development strategies that will strengthen the county's economy: new business attraction, existing business retention and expansion, and entrepreneurial and small business development.

Benefits of Goal 1's success include increasing the average wage, lowering unemployment, and increasing the tax base of DeKalb County.

Strengthen our brand and marketing capacity

Market DeKalb to the world, and extend our global reach as an ideal place for business **◀ NEW!**

Create customized and targeted marketing strategies for site location consultants, real estate brokers and developers, and target industries: **◀ NEW!**

- ◆ Healthcare and Life Sciences
- ◆ Corporate Headquarters and Business Operations
- ◆ Logistics and Distribution
- ◆ Advanced Manufacturing
- ◆ Emerging: Film, Arts, and Entertainment

Launch a local comprehensive branding, marketing, and PR campaign to proactively communicate DeKalb's successes **◀ NEW!**

Enhance our resources to attract, retain, and expand businesses

Conduct an aggressive business recruitment program including national and global business recruitment visits

- ◆ National and global site selection visits **◀ NEW!**
- ◆ Target industry visits **◀ MORE!**

Align and deepen Decide DeKalb's comprehensive business retention and expansion program

- ◆ Conduct 500 (100 per year) business retention and expansion program visits with area businesses **◀ MORE!**
- ◆ Connect companies to the extensive and varied available county, state, and federal resources **◀ MORE!**

Maximize the impact of DeKalb Entertainment Commission with additional resources

- ◆ Grow the industry's three sub-sectors of film & television, music, and digital entertainment **◀ MORE!**
- ◆ Attract more projects for local studios **◀ NEW!**

Increase investments in regional/statewide partnerships to better position DeKalb with target sectors **◀ MORE!**

Continue work to streamline the county's permitting process and assist in solving issues on specific project **◀ MORE!**

Nurture target industry start-ups and small business growth

Invest in additional entrepreneurial growth recommendations from the 2023 SEDP that could include: **◀ NEW!**

- ◆ Create new financial incentives to support entrepreneur
- ◆ Identify and engage with existing local crowdfunding and angel networks
- ◆ Create specialized academic programs

Recruit private sector-led incubators with co-working space **◀ NEW!**

Leverage and grow existing small business resources and partnerships to ensure training/professional development programs align with target industries' needs **◀ MORE!**

Support entrepreneurship growth for 2nd and 3rd stage businesses through annual events and programs with local partners **◀ MORE!**



Goal 2: Talent and Workforce Development

Attract, Retain, and Develop a Skilled Workforce

To achieve the first goal will require greater access to talent and workforce at every part of the talent pipeline.

Business leaders are concerned about finding qualified employees, and there is a global battle for talent requiring new local strategies to help companies attract and retain skilled people.

In partnership with the business community and local education institutions, ADVANCE DEKALB will help attract, retain, and develop the skilled workforce necessary to meet local business demand.

Assist employers in attracting, retaining, and identifying talent

Establish and expand internship and apprenticeship programs ◀ NEW!

Build greater awareness of the county's job opportunities and strong workforce ◀ MORE!

Partner with WorkSource DeKalb, agencies, and employers to coordinate solutions that address common barriers to talent acquisition and retention ◀ MORE!

- ◆ Connect HR teams with support tools ◀ MORE!
 - Re-training tax credits
 - On-the-job training salaries
 - Wage reimbursements
- ◆ Focus on under-served communities by providing training and addressing logistical impediments ◀ NEW!
 - Engage in on-the-job training contracts to serve under-served individuals which present a skills gap
 - Sponsor a one-stop-shop location to house training programs for specific employers for high-demand careers
 - Offer incentives to current employees to mentor individuals who enter on-the-job training or work-based learning programs

Invest in new workforce development recommendations from the 2023 SEDP, in partnership with the DeKalb Chamber, WorkSource DeKalb, and other educational entities ◀ NEW!

- ◆ Strengthen DeKalb's talent pipeline
- ◆ Explore target-sector job training programs
- ◆ Create specialized academic programs

Align education resources with existing business needs

Partner with companies to conduct annual employer surveys to determine critical needs ◀ MORE!

Support education and training institutions (K-12 to post-secondary) in strengthening our homegrown talent pipeline ◀ MORE!

- ◆ Advocate for new program/curriculum development that produces the skills and capabilities that match the needs of area business ◀ MORE!
- ◆ Identify educational gaps and work with educational and business leaders to identify innovative ways to address them ◀ MORE!
- ◆ Develop work-based youth learning programs including on-the-job training and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for high-demand careers ◀ NEW!

Leverage the DeKalb Entertainment Commission's impact by implementing programs that increase the qualified workforce in the sub-sectors of film and television, music, and digital entertainment ◀ NEW!

“With historically low unemployment, DeKalb employers struggle to find the right workers with the right skills. WorkSource DeKalb and ADVANCE DEKALB share a common goal – to increase employment, retention, and earnings of local residents while enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of local employers. ADVANCE DEKALB will provide much needed resources to accomplish this goal together.”

Theresa Austin-Gibbons
Director, WorkSource DeKalb





Goal 3: Infrastructure and Community Development

Invest in Revitalization, the Community, and our Future

Environment and quality of place are top location factors for businesses and talent.

To achieve the first two goals of ADVANCE DEKALB, it is necessary to protect and improve our quality of life and quality of place.

We must acknowledge our challenges and address them head on. We must learn from the best communities in the nation, invest in long-term solutions, and revitalize our blighted neighborhoods by reversing the trend that has led to what some leaders have called, "The Two DeKalbs," one of our biggest challenges—and greatest opportunities.

Create best practices for our community and sense of place

Conduct two to three community benchmarking missions to peer communities to learn from and implement best practices to make DeKalb's economy more vibrant, diverse, and globally competitive **◀ NEW!**

Create more modern, attractive industrial spaces, and update the county's infrastructure by implementing the DeKalb County Industrial Land and Economy Study prepared by Georgia Tech **◀ MORE!**

Revitalize older areas with catalytic redevelopment projects

Conduct at least one tour per year of the county to highlight development and redevelopment opportunities to commercial real estate and development professionals **◀ NEW!**

Develop new relationships with development partners to drive catalytic redevelopment projects within the county, for example:

- ◆ Master plan development for the Kensington MARTA station area
- ◆ Implement Conley Area Industrial Study recommendations **◀ MORE!**

Invest for the long-term through creative financial tools

Conduct a tax allocation district assessment and implement recommendations to fund public improvements to attract private investment **◀ NEW!**

Apply for/receive a new markets tax credit allocation to attract private investment and revitalize targeted DeKalb neighborhoods **◀ NEW!**

Pursue opportunity zone designations in specific older commercial and industrial areas of DeKalb to incentivize business growth, redevelopment, and revitalization efforts **◀ NEW!**

Explore targeted legislation to create new beneficial economic development tools for development authorities in the region and throughout the state **◀ NEW!**





Budget

2019-2023 Strategic Initiative Five-Year Budget

Decide DeKalb estimates that it will need a five-year total increased budget of \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 (\$350,000 to \$400,000 per year) to implement the “NEW” and “MORE” strategies and tactics contained in the ADVANCE DEKALB Initiative.

Of note, Decide DeKalb currently receives \$750,000 from the County and generates approximately \$700,000 from project issuer/annual fees annually for a total of \$1,450,000 per year.

This campaign would increase the total to \$1,850,000 per year or \$9.25 million over five years

Use of NEW ADVANCE DEKALB Resources

GOAL	ANNUAL	2019-2023 TOTAL
1. Comprehensive Economic Development	\$175K	\$875K
2. Talent and Workforce Development	\$120K	\$600K
3. Infrastructure and Community Development	\$105K	\$525K
TOTAL	\$400K	\$2M

TOTAL FIVE-YEAR BUDGET

YEARS	NEW	EXISTING PUBLIC/FEES	TOTAL BUDGET
2019	\$400,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,850,000
2020	\$400,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,850,000
2021	\$400,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,850,000
2022	\$400,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,850,000
2023	\$400,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,850,000
TOTAL	\$2,000,000	\$7,250,000	\$9,250,000

Investor Relations

Premise for Funding

Oversight, Accountability, and Investor Relations

Investor confidence in, and support of, the ADVANCE DEKALB Initiative will only be maintained through the highest level of transparency, communications, and accountability. It will also require that DeKalb County’s “first team” of business leaders take an active role in keeping the Initiative on task, on time, and on budget.

Specific oversight of the Initiative will be vested in an Investor and Stakeholder Steering Committee, which will evolve more fully after funds have been committed to **ADVANCE DEKALB (“Decide DeKalb Economic Development Foundation, Inc.”) a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.**

The steering committee will be comprised of individuals whose financial investment clearly identifies their commitment to the program’s success.

Join Us

Investments in this program should be based on each organization’s/individual’s financial capacity, potential for direct benefit, and community leadership.

Now is the time for private- and public-sector leaders of DeKalb County to form and drive a partnership that will accelerate economic and community development. Now is the time for the business community and county government to assume a new level of leadership and influence over driving economic growth in DeKalb County.

By investing in this plan, you will be among the few exclusive leaders taking DeKalb County to the next level of economic prosperity.

Thank you.



Advance DeKalb Leadership

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Chairman and CEO,
Blackhall Studios

Don Bolia
Founder and Principal,
Peachtree Government
Relations

Campaign Advisory Council

Dr. Claire Sterk
President, Emory University

Dr. Jonathan Lewin
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the Board, Emory Healthcare

Doug Jenkins
Metro North Region Manager,
Georgia Power

Campaign Operations Committee

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Kim Adams
Papa John's

Al Edwards
Corporate Environmental Risk
Management (CERM)

Linda Johnson
Perimeter CID

Ann Hanlon
PerimeterCID

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Decide DeKalb

Development Authority

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decidedekalb.com/advance



Support Advance DeKalb

Please select your preferred investment level for Advance DeKalb by checking the appropriate box. Fill in your contact information and signature and email the completed form to Kristin Oblander at kristin@theoblendergroup.com. Please call 404 873 3600 for assistance.

Investor Contact Information

Name

Job Title

Company Address

City, State, and ZIP Code

Email Address

Phone Number

Signature

Preferred Investment Level

Bronze - \$2,500

Silver - \$5,000

Gold - \$10,000

Platinum - \$25,000

Titanium - \$50,000

Send your contribution payable to:

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