



DeKalb County Strategic Recommendations

Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategic Plan

August 19, 2014

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PREFACE

A successful economic development plan should be a living strategy, a set of goals set by community leaders with their sights fixed on the future. The plan must respond and adapt as the community grows and new opportunities appear on the horizon. Each year, the progress towards implementation of this plan should be assessed, and the goals and strategies realigned to reflect the progress being made.

In the same sense, no economic development strategic plan is an island. No attempt to navigate the economic environment, no matter how well-devised, can be successful without the input and support from community stakeholders. The County's strategy development benefited from the input of representatives from its Cities. The following strategic plan was developed with insight from a vast array of DeKalb County residents, business owners and managers, development companies and neighborhood leaders. Several organizations also volunteered valuable insight, including the Development Authority of DeKalb County, Leadership DeKalb and the Council for Quality Growth.

AE would like acknowledge a number of individuals who contributed to the project over and beyond expectations. Their vision and direction drove the county's quest for a new strategic plan and helped put in place a new agreement with the Development Authority of DeKalb County. We express our special gratitude to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT SCOPE



This Strategic Recommendations report is the fourth and final phase of an economic development strategic plan project for DeKalb County, Ga. The goal of the five-year strategic plan is to help the county diversify and grow its economy, becoming a leading force in attracting regional, national, and international firms and entrepreneurs. DeKalb County also strives to support the expansion and success of existing businesses.

Through an in-depth market analysis of the county and its benchmarks, and a careful examination of the clustering of current industries in the area, AngelouEconomics has worked with key stakeholders in DeKalb to construct a roadmap to future economic success. The purpose of this report, paired with the Market Analysis and the Target Industries Report, is to provide a valid understanding of the present economic situation and to identify the primary challenges and opportunities that are impacting or could impact the local economy in order to forge a new economic development strategy for DeKalb County.

Most of the strategic recommendations in this report can be implemented in the next five years (develop a marketing and branding plan, optimize incentives, secure appropriate zoning, etc.), while the creation of the recommended employment centers may require 20-40 years.

All final report deliverables include:

- Market Assessment
- Market Assessment Supplement
- Target Industry Analysis
- Target Industry Analysis Supplement
- DeKalb County Strategic Recommendations

All full-length reports can be found on the project website:
www.dekalbcounty2020.com

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

DeKalb County has a rich history and an ideal strategic location within the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The county has an abundance of strengths and assets with which to grow its economy. As with any community, it also faces significant challenges that could hamper future success.

Until 20 years ago, DeKalb County was the darling of economic development in the state of Georgia, evidenced by robust business and residential growth. Then came a slow decline that mirrored changes in the national economic landscape - loss of manufacturing jobs, eroded opportunities to earn middle class wages, and the decline of once thriving neighborhoods.

In 2014, economic factors have begun to change once more, this time to favor DeKalb County. History is calling upon the county again—to play an integral role in the State of Georgia’s economic development in the coming decades. The time is right, the county is poised, and new strategies have been determined that will arm the county as it marches into a new era.

Market Assessment

In December 2013 and January 2014, AE conducted site visits to DeKalb County, interviewing more than 200 stakeholders during private sessions and focus groups. In January, online surveys were launched, engaging the community in the economic development process and eliciting responses and additional input from 1,771 local residents and 126 area businesses.

That qualitative information was combined with quantitative data collected from state and national sources, including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Internal Revenue Service, the National Center for Education Statistics, the Energy Information Administration and numerous private sector sources including Decision Data Resources, and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Opportunities for collaboration and implementation of joint strategies with municipalities should be explored, particularly in areas where existing employment centers have blossomed that could positively impact the unincorporated areas.

The market assessment, based on that extensive research, examined the county’s demographics, economic capacity and characteristics, workforce, local assets and competitive position in comparison to the benchmark communities of Cobb County, Gwinnett County, and Prince George’s County. Information for DeKalb County was also compared to information for the 28-county area that comprises the Atlanta MSA, state of Georgia, and the U.S. as a whole.

Strengths

The analysis uncovered a region well-positioned to enter an era of economic health, signaled by the new Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Development Authority of DeKalb County. The IGA signifies a commitment to economic development that can transform the region.

In addition to its location next to the major Atlanta market, DeKalb County benefits from access to numerous highways, rail and air transportation options. Certain areas of the county are well-served by the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority. However, MARTA rail serves primarily incorporated cities, and public transportation services are less adapted to the southern portion of the county.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED (continued...)

Strengths (continued...)

Exceptional higher education institutions call DeKalb County home, including Emory, DeVry, Mercer, and Oglethorpe universities, Agnes Scott, Piedmont Technical and Georgia Perimeter colleges. The county is also home to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the national public health institute of the United States, a few miles northeast of Atlanta.

DeKalb County has many cities that offer opportunities for synergistic development between unincorporated and incorporated areas of the county. The Cities of Dunwoody, Decatur, and Brookhaven have well-established office markets, along with small and medium-sized business developments. The City of Dunwoody is one of the fastest-growing office markets in the region.

Buford Highway, a portion of which is located in the City of Chamblee, offers an eclectic, international commercial district, with ethnic restaurants and retail establishments. The area is highly accessible from the City of Atlanta and northern suburbs. Language barriers and a lack of appropriate marketing prevent this district from becoming a regional destination. Downtown Stone Mountain is also well positioned to be an employment center for tourism. Within walking distance from the Stone Mountain Park, the Stone Mountain Village enjoys historic structures and substantial potential for hotel and restaurant development that can more closely integrate the historic area amenities with the park.

DeKalb County is also home to several Community Improvement Districts that can be further leveraged to improve infrastructure and attract development. These districts include the Tucker-Northlake, Perimeter, East Metro, and Stone Mountain CIDs.

Ample opportunities for expanded tourism in the county exist, centered around numerous historical sites, Arabia Mountain, and Stone Mountain, which is Georgia's most popular attraction. The county has existing logistics, industrial and medical/healthcare corridors, some amount of vacant industrial space and considerable green space, mostly located in the southern portion of the county.

Issues

In counter balance to DeKalb County's strengths, a number of issues require attention as the county seeks to maximize economic opportunity. In the last decade, DeKalb County has experienced significant declines in revenue, due mostly to falling property values from the foreclosure crisis, the annexation and incorporation of cities, and the adherence to HOST, which incentivizes residential development at the expense of commercial development.

It is no secret that DeKalb County suffers a notable image problem. Recent indictments against public officials and investigation of other county employees furthers the negative perception, as does an adversarial media. Onerous and non-transparent governmental processes add to the negative impression for industries, and politics seem pervasive in government processes. However, significant strides have been taken to improve the permitting process with the Permitting Improvement Project.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED (continued...)

Strengths (continued...)

A negative perception of K-12 schools also plagues the county, although a wave of change appears to be starting. Changes should be made to improve public schools and their image.

An issue that concerns many stakeholders in the county and appears to impact current economic development is the polarization between various segments of the county. Residents are divided ethnically and, even more extremely, by measure of wealth and poverty.

Crime remains to be a great concern in the county, and although there has been a downward trend in recent years, the county has a way to go to reassure business interest in the county. Few well-defined employment centers exist in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Business leaders interviewed during the stakeholder engagement process indicated that the business community as a whole has expressed concerns about the state of the county government. Those concerns are resulting in few public/private partnerships and could cause problems for the Development Authority of DeKalb County as they seek to secure private sector funds. However, many business leaders expressed a willingness to come back to the table to work with the county in economic development if shown a valid strategic plan and some measure of success in attracting industries.

Retail Leakage

While a retail surplus is present in many of DeKalb County's individual retail sectors, overall the county has a net retail leakage of nearly \$400 million. This translates into a roughly five percent shortage of local supply relative to local demand.

The largest leakages are found in the following sectors:

- Automobile Dealers (\$300+ Million)
- Electronic Shopping (\$200+ Million)
- Health & Personal Care Store (\$135+ Million)

Conversely, DeKalb's greatest retail surpluses are occurring in the following sectors:

- Grocery Stores (\$100+ Million)
- Clothing Stores (\$85+ Million)
- Limited-Service Eating Places (\$65+ Million)

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED (continued...)

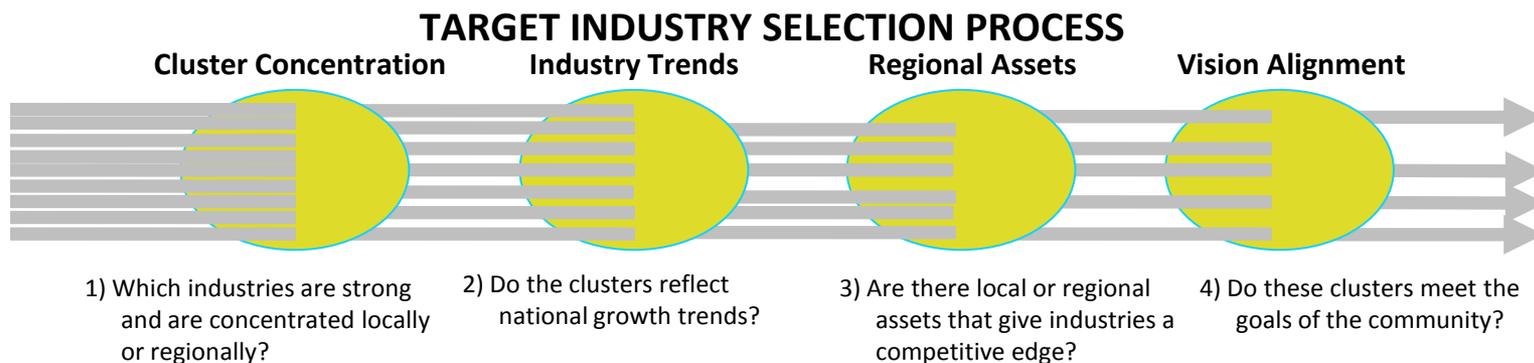
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to downtown Atlanta, Atlanta airport • Exceptional university/colleges • Exceptional medical/healthcare corridor • Centers for Disease Control • High patent activity • Highway/Air Transportation access • MARTA • Strong international corridor • Existing industrial corridor & logistics cluster • Growing, successful cities • IGA with Development Authority of DeKalb County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining county revenue • North/South polarization • Significant political fracture • High levels of violent and property crime • Current perception of public education system low • Not business friendly county development processes • Current perception of county governmental low • Vast majority of county already developed • Lack of adequate transportation in southern area • Lack of private funding & county funds for infrastructure • Inadequate support for entrepreneurs • Few well-defined employment centers
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses willing to support economic development • Residents strongly tied to neighborhood development • Vacant industrial space • High potential for redevelopment • Possible MARTA expansion • Strong potential for logistics development • High potential for growth in business support services • Significant tourism potential • Untapped potential in healthcare corridor • High potential of senior living centers • Upcoming redevelopment of former GM plant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current political instability • High foreclosure rate • Decreased property values • Racial division • Limited business engagement • Politics deeply embedded in county government • Adjacent counties with modern industrial space • Disenfranchised and adversarial media



WHAT WE HAVE DETERMINED

Target Industries

An in-depth examination of industry clusters in DeKalb County and the application of filters has led to the selection and analysis of six industries on which the county should focus its economic development efforts.



For each of these target industries, a number of “niches” were identified to allow for further concentration of efforts. The niches are generally 1) sub-sectors that offer particular value DeKalb County’s economy, 2) are witnessing strong growth or notability in the national economy, or 3) are supported by the current economic clusters and assets of the county.

Each of DeKalb’s target industries can either be incorporated into or will complement the establishment of new employment centers. These employment centers will require the development or redevelopment of underutilized or poorly utilized strategic intersections or corridors. As part of the County’s Comprehensive Plan, employment centers (also referred to as activity centers) have been established and the Target Industry Analysis complements that plan.

The selection of target industries is meant to focus limited economic development resources on industries that hold the greatest potential for sustained growth, however, it is important to understand that the selection of target industries should not be viewed as a strategy to ignore all other industries. If DeKalb County can successfully grow its targeted industries, many other sectors will benefit throughout the local economy.

WHAT WE HAVE DETERMINED: Target Industries & Niches

Economic Development Activities:		Professional & Business Services	Life Sciences	Tourism	Logistics	Construction & Support Trades	Advanced Manufacturing
Mature/Core Targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention • Expansion 	Consulting, Accounting, & Marketing	Biotechnology	Cultural Tourism	Warehouse Distribution	Homebuilding	Fabricated Metals Manufacturing	
	Engineering			Truck Terminals	Contracting	Light Manufacturing & Assembly	
Diversification Targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction • Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development 	E-Commerce	Health IT	Youth Sporting Events	Back Office Support Services	Construction Materials Manufacturing	Laboratory Equipment & Supplies	
	Creative Design	Proteomics	Bed & Breakfast Inns				
		Bioinformatics					
Emerging Targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion • Attraction • Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development 	Entrepreneur Enabled Businesses	Senior Care Centers	Dynamic Tour Packages	Specialized Freight Trucking		Medical Equipment & Supplies	

WHAT WE HAVE DETERMINED : Target Industries Overview

Professional & Business Services

2012 Employees: 31,700
2012 Total Payroll: \$2.6 Billion
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$82,000
2012 Total Businesses: 3,800
Current Total Square Feet: 30.4 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$9.1 Billion

Niches

E-Commerce

Consulting, Accounting,
& Marketing

Entrepreneur-Enabled
Business

Engineering

Creative Design

Notable Employers

US CDC Marketing

Broadspire Services Inc.

Schwan's Global Supply Chain

Johnson & Freedman, LLC

Primerica Financial Services

Life Sciences

2012 Employees: 28,700
2012 Total Payroll: \$1.7 Billion
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$59,600
2012 Total Businesses: 1,100
Current Total Square Feet: 22 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$5.3 Billion

Niches

Biotechnology

Senior Care Services

Bioinformatics

Health IT

Proteomics

Notable Employers

Emory University Hospital

Quest Diagnostics

US CDC Public Health

Atlanta Veteran's Administration
Medical Center

Emory University

WHAT WE HAVE DETERMINED : Target Industries Overview

Tourism

2012 Employees: 25,000
2012 Total Payroll: \$436 Million
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$17,800
2012 Total Businesses: 1,480
Current Total Square Feet: 16 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$2 Billion

Niches

Cultural Tourism

Youth Sporting Events

Bed & Breakfast Inns

Dynamic Tour Packaging

Notable Employers

Intercontinental Hotel Group

Holiday Inn

Candlewood Suites

Loews Hotels-New Orleans

Marriott-Evergreen Conference Resort

Logistics

2012 Employees: 7,700
2012 Total Payroll: \$350 Million
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$46,000
2012 Total Businesses: 280
Current Total Square Feet: 9.6 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$1.4 Billion

Niches

Specialized Freight
Trucking

Truck Terminals

Back Office Support
Services

Warehouse Distribution

Notable Employers

Old Dominion Freight Line Inc.

Bulldog Movers

UPS Freight

Transport America

Rayloc Merchandise Distribution Service

WHAT WE HAVE DETERMINED : Target Industries Overview

Construction and Support Trades

2012 Employees: 10,600
2012 Total Payroll: \$569 Million
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$53,600
2012 Total Businesses: 1,000
Current Total Square Feet: 17 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$9.8 Billion

Niches

Construction Materials
Manufacturing

Contracting

Homebuilding

Notable Employers

Zoom Plumbing

Trane

Sunbelt Structures Inc.

Metro Waterproofing Inc.

U Tec Construction Inc.

Advanced Manufacturing

2012 Employees: 2,500
2012 Total Payroll: \$152 Million
2012 Average Annual Wage: \$60,800
2012 Total Businesses: 95
Current Total Square Feet: 4 Million
Current Total Revenues: \$1.4 Billion

Niches

Fabricated Metals
Manufacturing

Medical Equipment and
Supplies

Laboratory Equipment
and Supplies

Light Manufacturing
and Assembly

Notable Employers

Donaldson Co

Kliklok Woodman

Alcan Corporation

Lonza Inc.

LPS Laboratories

STRATEGIC DIRECTION FRAMEWORK

The plan presented in this report was designed for DeKalb County, particularly the unincorporated portions of the county. With that said, it is important to maintain the perspective that DeKalb is not an isolated community, but rather part of a major metropolitan area. This plan should be implemented in coordination with, not in opposition to, the broader Atlanta regional strategy.

In the Strategic Plan created by the Atlanta Regional Commission, repeated emphasis was put on local community and government input and buy-in. Moreover, many of the over-arching goals of the ARC plan, such as livability and transportation, correspond directly with the DeKalb County strategy. While it is important that DeKalb take responsibility for its own economic development, DeKalb's incorporated cities, the ARC, Georgia Power and other regional players can be excellent partners in executing this plan.

Though difficult, this plan can bring about vital changes needed for an improved business climate, economic prosperity, a better overall quality of life and a bright future for all of DeKalb County's citizens.

This comprehensive economic development strategy is designed to redefine and provide a fresh start for the local economy. Towards this end, it can be seen in terms of three broad objectives that will encompass many of the needed changes.

While this report provides some specific policy recommendations, it is not designed to solve each individual problem the county faces. Rather, these objectives are intended as a framework to help conceptualize and act on the economic development needs of DeKalb County.

Three Broad Strategic Objectives:

1. **Make DeKalb County the most business-friendly county in Georgia**
2. **Revitalize Commercial Corridors and Embrace New Employment Centers**
3. **Enhance Quality of Place**

Strategic Objectives



MAKE DEKALB COUNTY THE MOST BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COUNTY IN THE REGION

The current business climate of DeKalb County suffers from negative perceptions. These negative perceptions are major deterrents to healthy and sustained economic growth.

Improving DeKalb's business climate is one of the most important steps that DeKalb County can take to advance its economic well-being. Without a competitive business environment, the county will have difficulty attracting or retaining businesses. The key to becoming competitively viable lies in eliminating bureaucratic hurdles and streamlining cumbersome processes.

In addition to business attraction and retention, the county should facilitate entrepreneurship and small business development. Creating an incubator or an accelerator would support innovation in DeKalb County and strengthen the targeted industry clusters.

Reforming and optimizing incentives can enable the county to increase its competitiveness. Funding is a serious issue for the county; the Development Fund is struggling to remain viable. For this reason, the county should be frugal in its incentive offerings and only distribute awards to companies in the targeted industries that further the economic objectives of the county and also invest in the county's economic development efforts. Capitalizing on incentives offered by the state can help leverage opportunity, as with the County's efforts to pass an ordinance for expedited permitting for film industry projects that will build off the state's extensive incentives for that industry.

Infrastructure funding is a mission-critical issue for the county. DeKalb has negligible funding to maintain existing roadway systems or built

new ones. In order to bolster funds for economic development in the county, this report recommends either 1) reforming the current Homestead Option Sales Tax (HOST) to provision 25% - 35% of revenues to be redirected towards commercial development and roadway improvements or 2) adoption of a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) system. We recommend the county engage the business community in the evaluation of alternatives to reform HOST.

The action plan below details how DeKalb County can become the most business-friendly county in the region.

Business Climate Action Plan

1. Optimize Incentives
2. Support Entrepreneurs & Small Businesses
3. Support Existing Businesses & Foster Expansion
4. Finalize Implementation of Development Services Overhaul
5. Strengthen the Economic Development Organization
6. Improve Marketing, Branding, and Communication for the County & DADC



Improve
Business
Climate

REVITALIZE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS & EMBRACE NEW EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

DeKalb County is strategically located along major regional and national highways. The location advantages endow the county with many opportunities for successful economic development. The county is located near major hubs for air, rail, and interstate cargo.

Local businesses, especially those that operate in logistics or manufacturing, have such a competitive advantage with respect to location, that they overlook issues that might otherwise lead them to do business somewhere other than DeKalb County. Furthermore, the county is not in a financial position to improve the conditions of the transportation infrastructure that supports those industries.

DeKalb County's transportation fund only contains \$50 million for the next 30 years, \$15 million for new projects and \$35 million for maintenance of existing roadway systems.

Investing in commercial corridors and employment centers is a public policy choice to revitalize and diversify the economy. Economic growth is the best solution, both short-term and long-term, to overcome DeKalb County's budget shortfalls. The economic impact of more employers is increased sales taxes and increased property taxes. The tax revenues come from companies as well as the employees that work in the newly created jobs.

The action plan below details how DeKalb County can revitalize commercial corridors and embrace new employment centers.

Employment Centers Action Plan

1. Incentivize redevelopment and build public/private partnerships
2. Secure appropriate zoning
3. Develop appropriate marketing and branding for employment centers and target industries
4. Create employment centers throughout the region
5. Encourage clustering through target industry support programs



Revitalize
Commercial
Corridors &
Employment
Centers

ENHANCE QUALITY OF PLACE

DeKalb County is rich in historical and cultural assets. In time, the county could become a best practice for quality of place, but there are a few issues that are currently holding the county back. Those issues include schools, crime, insufficient infrastructure, and negative perceptions towards the county.

Focused economic development is the best solution to these problems. Business investments curb crime in surrounding areas. Families move closer to their jobs and demand better education in underperforming schools. The increased tax base bolsters property and sales tax revenues, which augment the infrastructure fund. The negative perceptions can be changed over time as their underlying realities are improved.

Marketing and branding are critical to this initiative. Any and all improvements should be celebrated and publicized. The negative perceptions cannot be alleviated unless the county spreads the word about its progress, this is especially true for those living outside the region.

As the quality of place in DeKalb County begins to reach its potential, the county will be able to attract game-changing projects, such as EB-5 visa investments.

Enhancing quality of place can tie all of the economic development efforts together and form the comprehensive DeKalb County package; DeKalb County is business friendly, it has strong industry clusters and commercial corridors, and it is a great place to live and work.

The action plan below focuses on key steps that would transform DeKalb County's quality of place.

Employment Centers Action Plan

1. Incorporate new employment centers in next comp plan update
2. Improve Infrastructure & Aesthetics of Major Corridors
3. Provide Support to School System to Facilitate Improvement
4. Address Crime
5. Develop Cultural Identity
6. Consider Game-Changing Projects



CREATING WORKING COMMITTEES

The goals and strategies put forth in this report represent solutions which will be implemented primarily by DeKalb County and the DADC. Through the IGA, the DADC has been designated as the economic development agency for the county. An active partnership between DeKalb County and the DADC will be critical to the success and implementation of this plan.

The county will generally be responsible for infrastructure improvements and the creation of incentives. The DADC is the agency that carries the weight of marketing the county and implements this strategic plan.

As part of that partnership, certain committees should be created to oversee critical aspects of this plan. Each of these committees covers a major subject of needed improvement and allows for multiple economic development efforts to be undertaken concurrently.

The creation of these committees will also allow for many different individuals to become engaged in the economic development efforts of the county. The committees will act as a vehicle to move the county towards common goals. The more people involved in economic development, the stronger the message that DeKalb County is a great place to do business and the perceptions that once defined the county are no longer true.

We recommend that committees be formed to develop specific plans, manage and implement the following:

- Incentives and Policy Reform
- Marketing and Branding
- Employment Center Creation
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Culture and Tourism
- Identification of International Program Strategy and Funding Sources (i.e. EB-5 Visa Program)

These committees should be primarily supported by members of the business community with participation from County Government and Development Authority representatives. They will also serve to ensure that the plan implementation process is transparent and that there is accountability to DeKalb residents and the business community.



DEKALB BECOMES BUSINESS FRIENDLY

DeKalb County is poised to make significant changes to overcome the negative perceptions that have hindered its ability to attract new businesses.

The County has begun a comprehensive overhaul of its permitting operations, and will be implementing recommendations to more efficiently issue permits and business licenses in accordance with established Service Level Agreements that are competitive with regional and national practices.

In addition, The Development Authority of DeKalb County has initiated plans to implement a new business incubator, and to create work collaboration space. These initiatives will be critical to cultivating and supporting innovation and small business expansion.



Business Climate Action Plan

1. Optimize Incentives
2. Support Entrepreneurs & Small Businesses
3. Support Existing Businesses & Foster Expansion
4. Finalize Implementation of Development Services Overhaul
5. Strengthen the Economic Development Organization
6. Improve Marketing, Branding, and Communication for the County & DADC

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 1: OPTIMIZE INCENTIVES

The State of Georgia currently has one of the most robust economic development support packages in the United States, and is consistently ranked as one of the top five business-friendly states in the U.S. Central to this support are state-offered financial incentives, which include tax credits, exemptions and subsidies that promote innovation, new employment, and infrastructure investment. CNBC ranked Georgia as the best state for business in 2014.

DeKalb County also has a number of tools to encourage the local economy including TADs, CIDs, and LCIs. While it has the tools, what the county presently lacks is a systematic application of these incentives to support entrepreneurship, target industries, and a broader economic development strategy. By developing a cohesive plan for incentives, the county can increase its functionality and increase its return on investment.

Finding county funds for incentives may be problematic. The Development Fund, which collects revenues through permit fees, has struggled in recent years and may not be able to fund incentives in the near future. Similarly, county owned utilities are dependent on capital recovery fees to pay for the cost of building capacity. The county may consider establishing a fund via tax revenues to supplement the Development Fund.

Key Steps

- 1) Reform HOST tax to subsidize both commercial and residential development**
- 2) Align tool kit with recommended Target Industries and broader Economic Development Strategy**
- 3) Conduct cost / benefit analysis of new incentives 2-3 years after implementation**

The incentives throughout this report are meant to be inclusive of all business types and sizes, provided that those companies advance the economic development efforts of the county. Even small businesses and entrepreneurs could benefit from exemptions to local, county-level taxes. The benefits to the county are much more significant from boosting economic growth than the cost of incentives that the county may have to provide to attract economic development. Moreover, permit incentives or capital recovery fees can be paid out over a number of years rather than paid up front.

While this report recommends specific incentives, it is ultimately up to the county and the committee appointed to oversee incentive reform to determine the size and scope of incentives that may be appropriate.

THE BROADER PERSPECTIVE

While refocusing DeKalb County's economic development efforts is important, it is equally important for DeKalb to be vocal in the broader discussion at the state level. One of the key issues currently facing the state is the current funding structure of governments. As it is now, cities receive a disproportionately high percentage of tax revenues, creating de facto "haves" and "have nots" within Georgia counties.

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Optimize Incentives

ACTION 1: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Reform HOST tax to subsidize both commercial and residential development: One of the largest shortcomings in DeKalb's incentive package is the existing structure of the HOST tax. As it stands now, HOST only subsidizes residential development and also funds a very small amount of transportation infrastructure, while completely neglecting commercial real estate development. This structure is unique to DeKalb County. The county already recognizes this issue and the CEO has appointed a special committee to recommend solutions.

Option 1. Secure legislative support for a Local Option Sales Tax system (LOST) to allow adequate funding of commercial real estate and for the maintenance of existing roadway systems and the construction of new infrastructure.

Option 2. Secure legislative support for the revision of HOST to allow 25%-35% of revenues to be redirected to support commercial development.

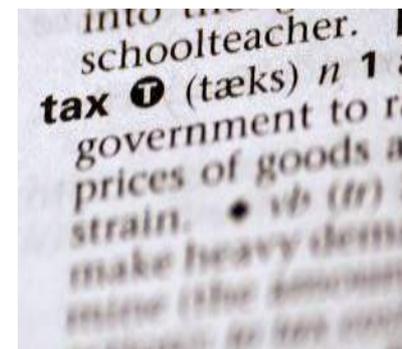
2) Align tool kit with recommended Target Industries and broader Economic Development Strategy:

The efficacy of financial incentives is greatly reduced if those incentives are not integrated into a broader ED strategy, especially in so far as they support small businesses and target industries. As previously discussed, the local utility sales tax can be waived for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and technology oriented companies. The reduction of permitting fees and capital recovery fees, similar to the single-year exemptions in Haralson County and Sandy Springs, can also be utilized to support small business and target industry growth.

- **Implement a 50% discount in development and permitting fees for capital investments less than \$25m; 75% for investments less than \$50m and 100% for investments greater than \$50m.**
- **Apply the same formula for property tax abatements.**
- **Implement a 70% discount for less than 15 employees. Both new and existing businesses should qualify for these incentives.**

3) Conduct cost / benefit analysis of new incentives 2-3 years after implementation: Refining incentives is a fluid process. Some incentives may be ineffective or their usefulness might wane over time, while conversely, previously unaffordable incentives may become viable. The county's incentives package should be reviewed every 2-3 years and fine-tuned to reflect current costs, economic conditions, and the county's broader needs.

- **DADC should purchase an economic impact software (IMPLAN) - \$2,500**



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 2: SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the driving force of economic development and diversification. As such, DeKalb County should actively encourage and promote small business success and entrepreneurship. The county is a fertile breeding ground for minority and women-led small businesses, with recognition for such successful enterprises. There is an opportunity to expand existing programs like these to promote business development. The County formed the DeKalb Enterprise Business Corporation to provide small business support through loans and training.

DeKalb has many features that make it appealing to entrepreneurs and small business owners, such as its affordability, proximity to a major market, and infrastructure. What the county presently lacks is a comprehensive toolkit to support entrepreneurship. While some organizations exist within the county to support entrepreneurs, they are poorly organized and largely ineffective. DeKalb must explore new options for promoting innovation in order to expand economic potential. The county's role in entrepreneurship is to encourage new institutional infrastructure through public/private partnerships that would remain under the control of educational and private interests.

Key Steps

- 1) Consider a technology / Life Sciences incubator in partnership with higher education assets
- 2) Create a women-led / minority-owned business accelerator
- 3) Explore the development of coworking spaces
- 4) Implement new financial incentives to support entrepreneurship
- 5) Engage angel investing network and crowdfunding for entrepreneurs

BEST PRACTICE

Start-Up NY

This statewide collaboration between public and private universities and state and local governments is one of the most forward-looking and heavily marketed incentive programs for entrepreneurs in the nation. The program aims to increase innovation and entrepreneurship by offering a 10-year 100% state and local tax exemption for qualifying small businesses and start-ups operating on or near university campuses. Additionally, the proximity to universities is designed to inspire collaboration between these small businesses and academic institutions.

For more information, visit:

<http://startup.ny.gov/>

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Support Entrepreneurship

ACTION 2: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Consider a technology/Life Sciences incubator in partnership with higher education assets:

As a start, DeKalb should create a multi-institutional technology incubator in partnership with higher educational institutions. These institutions already possess many tools required by entrepreneurs, such as research space, commercialization resources, and networking opportunities. The development of a partnered tech incubator would allow innovators within DeKalb to leverage these resources to carry a product or service from concept to commercialization. The recently-completed Medline Livable Centers Initiative should be taken into consideration as plans develop.

- ***A funding option is to secure a Federal grant from the Economic Development Administration to conduct a feasibility study and a second grant for the acquisition of equipment and construction of facilities for a 10,000 sq. ft building.***

2) Create a women-led / minority-owned business accelerator: Women and minority owned businesses play an integral role in the economy of DeKalb County. Roughly half of all businesses are owned by minorities and over a third of DeKalb's businesses are owned by women. Since businesses owned by women and minorities are so important to the local economy, steps should be taken to further the interests and ensure the success of these enterprises. Accelerators tailored to small businesses owned by these demographics can drastically improve their performance by providing coaching, networking, seminars, and much more. DeKalb should look to create such supportive organizations to ensure the next generation of DeKalb's business owners are ready to succeed.

- ***Collaborate with existing Small Business Resource Center. Secure a Federal grant from the Economic Development Administration for an accelerator (3-5 years).***

3) Explore the development of coworking spaces: The development of coworking spaces can provide affordable workplaces for entrepreneurs and encourage inter-business collaboration. Through creating public-private partnerships to establish these spaces, the county can incentivize their creation while still providing them the autonomy needed to let innovation flourish.

- ***Waive county-level sales tax on utilities for the portion of coworking space in an existing or new structure.***

BEST PRACTICE

Cincinnati Minority Business Accelerator

Founded in 2003, the program is focused on reducing disparity in the region's business community by driving economic activity for African-American and Hispanic-owned companies and increasing employment in underemployed segments of the region. MBA helps its member enterprises by seeking opportunities for them with major corporate customers and increasing awareness of their value with community business leaders. Average 2013 portfolio firm revenue was \$32 million.

<http://bit.ly/1vSBKwI>

Count Me In Women-Led Business Accelerator

Launched in 2005 with Founding Sponsor American Express OPEN, the renowned program inspires and elevates women to grow their small businesses with revenues of \$85,000 to \$750,000 to the \$1 million mark and beyond in annual revenues. The program offers coaching, marketing, technology assistance and free access to webinars and blogs, as well as expert talks and workshops at live events that address a wide variety of issues around scaling, finance, HR, marketing, product development, work/life balance, technology, sales and more.

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

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Support Entrepreneurship

ACTION 2: KEY STEPS DETAILED

4) Implement new financial incentives to support entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurial ventures, usually being small in scope and limited in funding, can benefit from a unique suite of incentives. The reduction or elimination of utility sales taxes for entrepreneurs may seem minor, but it can significantly reduce operating costs for emerging start-ups. Likewise, subsidized bandwidth, similar to the broadband upgrade program in Georgia's Elbert County, could be another key incentive, especially for tech-related ventures. Tax exemptions are another option. For example, New York's Start-Up NY program provides a generation 10-year tax exemption from all state and local taxes for qualifying new businesses, while simultaneously encouraging partnerships with academic institutions.

- ***Implement 5-10 year tax-free environment to lure entrepreneurs (waive permitting and business license fees, and county-level sales tax from utilities and property taxes on business property)***

5) Engage angel investing network and crowdfunding for entrepreneurs:

Securing funding is another essential aspect of successful entrepreneurship. The DADC should develop strong ties to local angel investor networks, such as the Atlanta Technology Angels, to better facilitate funding of promising DeKalb start-ups. The State of Georgia is the only state that allows for direct crowdfunding for start-ups. This represents an enormous opportunity for entrepreneurs, as it allows them to use a plethora of online crowd funding platforms to raise seed capital.

- ***DADC should market the above incentives and Georgia's crowdfunding opportunities aggressively nationally.***

BEST PRACTICE

How to Attract Angel Investment Triple Pundett, Bill Roth

The key to raising money is building investor trust. There is a formula for doing so. The entrepreneurs that succeed in raising capital for their business know the formula for crafting a compelling story that earns the trust and investment of angel investors. James Magowan is an angel investor. As an investment banker with Security Research Associates, he helps companies successfully bridge the trust gap with investors to gain the investment dollars needed to grow their business.

Magowan said it takes trust to get investors to contribute to an enterprise. He has five steps he recommends to build that trust:

- .Business Sense
- .Big Problem, Big Solution
- .People
- .Prudence
- .Excellent Communication

For more detail:

<http://www.triplepundit.com/2011/06/interview-angel-investors-five-keys-raising-capital/>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 3: SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES & FOSTER EXPANSION

If entrepreneurship is the driving force behind economic development, existing businesses are the foundation on which it is built. Support for existing businesses should be as good as, if not better, than that provided to entrepreneurs. Failure to do so will often lead current businesses to relocate to a friendlier environment.

A strong business climate will help ensure local businesses remain within DeKalb County. There must be a concerted effort to better understand the needs of the business community and take steps to meet their needs.

Key Steps

- 1) Organize robust visitation and outreach program with existing businesses**
- 2) Use online platforms to periodically survey all businesses**
- 3) Match workforce training programs to existing business needs**

BEST PRACTICE

Matching Workforce Training ACC Biotechnology Program Austin, TX

The Biotechnology Program at Austin Community College (ACC) works in collaboration with the local bioscience industry to educate students in basic laboratory skills, math skills, genetic engineering, protein purification, cell culture, quality assurance and quality control principles, regulations, bioinformatics, computer skills, ethics, documentation, and teamwork. Students go on to work in positions that span the diverse range of biotechnology fields including Pharmaceutical, Molecular Diagnostics, Manufacturing, Cancer Research, Fisheries, Wildlife, and Cell Culture industries. The ACC Biotechnology Program was the 1st program in the state to formally adopt the Washington Skill Standards for Biotechnology and to receive program recognition from the Texas Skill Standards Board.

ACC Biotechnology Program offers a 1-Year Certificate, which provides students basic skills for entry-level positions; a 2-Year Associates of Applied Science (AAS) degree, which provides students with more advanced skills required to work as a biotechnician or to transfer to a university; and an Advanced Technical Certificate that educates post-baccalaureate students to work at the bench and is composed solely of biotechnology courses. At the end of the program, all students are required to do an internship in industry. Ninety-five percent of these students are hired during their internship with starting salaries ranging from 30k to 45K.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.austincc.edu/biotech/>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Support Retention & Expansion

ACTION 3: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Organize robust visitation and outreach program with existing businesses: An effective EDO can play a crucial role in providing this support, and institute a product improvement process from the collected feedback. To gain this knowledge, the DADC must organize a robust visitation and outreach program. This can include site visits to businesses, focus groups, business surveys, and conferences.

- ***DADC should organize annual visits to 100 local businesses, using local partners and volunteer ambassadors from local cities and their EDO's. Explore generation of new supply chain employer leads that may come out of these visits.***

2) Use online platforms (Synchronist, Survey Monkey) to survey all businesses:

While in-person interactions are important, it will be impossible to meet with every business in DeKalb. Online platforms such as Synchronist and Survey Monkey should be used to survey all businesses to make up for this limitation. Such tools are excellent for conducting surveys, managing contacts, building business profiles, and crafting an overall knowledge of the business community.

- ***By understanding the needs of businesses, the DADC and its partners can coordinate with local cities and the county to meet those needs.***

3) Match workforce training programs to existing business needs: One of the best ways an EDO can help meet the needs of area businesses is by identifying skills gaps and working to match job training programs to meet these gaps. The DADC, through working with the county government, DeKalb Workforce Development, and academic institutions, can be instrumental in ensuring that DeKalb's workforce has the skills required by employers. This not only allows businesses to flourish, but provides county residents with the training they need to gain better employment.

- ***Institute an annual workforce skills survey to identify training gaps and workforce skill shortages as part of the business expansion and retention programming. Participate/join in regional Atlanta MSA workforce surveys if possible.***

BEST PRACTICE

Chattanooga Business Surveys

Between March and July 2012, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce surveyed over 100 local businesses about various local economic conditions. The results were then compiled into an IEDC award winning "Executive Summary of the Local Economy" which provided a snap shot of the areas strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of the businesses who operated there. This tool was then used to further carry out the Chamber's mission of economic development and marketing for the region.

For more information, visit:

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



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 4: FINALIZE IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES OVERHAUL

Permitting is a fundamental function of local government and is one of the first criteria evaluated when assessing business climate. An onerous or inefficient permitting process costs businesses both time and money and encourages relocation to areas with more streamlined and less costly options. DeKalb County has initiated a project that aims to overhaul its antiquated permitting system with an efficient and modern business approach.

DeKalb has already begun to resolve issues within its permitting operation by commissioning a study on how to improve the permitting process, and beginning to implement its recommendations. Affecting meaningful improvements can be accomplished in a relatively short time span of one to two years, and can drastically improve DeKalb's reputation as a place to do business.

Key Steps

- 1) Implement Matrix report recommendations to achieve rapid permitting
- 2) Consider customized incentives in permitting
- 3) Integrate the DADC as liaison in the development/permitting process
- 4) Market changes in the permitting process

BEST PRACTICES

Northeast Indiana

In 2011, the Northeast Indiana Regional Opportunities Council voted on a streamlined permitting process as one of their “pillars” of economic development. Since then, they have taken several steps towards achieving this goal. These steps vary from regional “Permitting Excellence Workshop” to the creation of a regional non-profit organization to oversee the development and implementation of regional permitting and ensure all communities benefit from such a program.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.neindiana.com/vision/priorities/streamlined-permitting>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Improve Process & Permitting

ACTION 4: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Implement Matrix report recommendations : AngelouEconomics endorses the findings and recommendations in the Matrix Consulting Group report, with the final goal being a predictable, 45-day permitting process throughout all of DeKalb County. Specific emphasis should be placed on technological improvements, such as updated software , staff training and a better website to allow for online permitting. This will not only boost efficiency, but also improve transparency and public perception. Additionally, the county should work with the incorporated cities to develop a uniform permitting process county-wide. The third-party review process underway, is a step in the right direction.

- ***Implement automatic issuance of building permits if county does not process a fully completed permit application within 45 days. This should apply to both new and existing businesses.***

2) Consider customized incentives in permitting: Consideration should also be given to integrating customized incentives into the permitting process. These incentives should be designed to reduce costs of permitting to induce certain economic activity in the targeted industry sectors.

- ***Implement a 50% discount in development and permitting fees for capital investments less than \$25m; a 75% discount for investments of less than \$50m and a 100% for investments greater than \$50m.***
- ***Implement a 100% discount for small businesses with less than 15 employees and a 70% discount for companies with 15 to 50 employees. Both new and existing businesses should qualify for these incentives.***

BEST PRACTICES

Colorado Springs, CO

Recognizing that a streamlined permitting process for businesses is essential for successful economic development, the Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance works closely with several area governments and permitting entities. The Colorado Springs “Rapid Response Team” works to coordinate actions between permitting agencies, businesses, and their contractors to reduce permitting time by up to half.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.coloradospringsbusinessalliance.com/economic-development/business-climate/permitting>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Improve Process & Permitting

ACTION 4: KEY STEPS DETAILED

3) Designate a cross-trained point person within the Development Services division to serve as a liaison to the DADC: The permit reform currently being implemented is an important symbolic and practical first step in redefining DeKalb's business climate. However, to ensure that customers, developers, and other economic development organization are aware of the changes, it is important to market them locally and regionally. The County should work closely with the DADC to ensure that businesses looking at relocation or expansion are receiving a coordinated response .

- ***Appoint a staff member to serve as the main point of contact for clients in interactions with the county government.***

4) Market changes in the permitting process: As the changes to the permitting process, per recommendations from the Matrix Study, are implemented, a comprehensive marketing plans should be developed. These efforts should be marketed regionally and nationally to convey the improvements and get the word out that DeKalb County is competitive for businesses.

- ***The DADC and county should implement a marketing program that includes press releases, a site selection consultant's newsletter, a community newsletter, printed and television collateral and a website as tools to communicate these changes and their success.***

DeKalb County
A clean, green, safe, and thriving community!

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Permit Registration

Permits

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BOCA AEREA
DCDV
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EMERGENCY AFTER HRS SERVICE NUMBERS
FIRE RESCUE
JOB OPPORTUNITIES
OFFICE OF SENIOR AFFAIRS
ONLINE PAYMENTS
PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY
POLICE DEPARTMENT
PORTER SANFORD ARTS CENTER
PROPERITY AMBASSAD DEPARTMENT
PROCURING & CONTRACTING
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS
TAX COMMISSIONER

New! Same-day Permit Program Pilot Underway Space is limited

As part of DeKalb County's permitting improvement process, the Department of Planning & sustainability has established a Same-Day Permit Program to assist citizens in obtaining permits and business licenses in a more streamlined and expedited manner.

The Department will host the Same-day Permit Program the last Friday of each month, beginning May 31 - October 25 for a limited number of applicants.

Same-day Permit Schedule

- May 31
- June 28
- July 26
- August 20
- September 27
- October 25

Registration required in order to Participate



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 5: STRENGTHEN THE DADC

In modern America, EDOs play a pivotal role in ensuring the continued success of local and regional economies. By providing public policy input, regional marketing, industry information, and other business resources, EDOs help areas adapt to succeed in the rapidly evolving global marketplace.

Historically, the Development Authority of DeKalb County has played a limited role as a provider of conduit bond financing. The promise of a secure stream of funding from the county for five years represents an exciting opportunity for the organization. However, more than money is needed to transform the DADC into an effectual crafter of DeKalb's economic future. Engaging the business community as a strong participating partner in marketing and funding will be essential to long-term success.

In addition, an active partnership between the DADC and DeKalb County will be essential to the success of the DADC.

Key Steps

- 1) Gather local business input in defining DADC's scope of work
- 2) DADC should prioritize its scope of work
- 3) Hire Experienced Professional Staff
- 4) Secure private funding for the DADC
- 5) Join Economic Professional Development Organizations

BEST PRACTICE

Greenville, SC

The Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC) is an excellent example of a highly proficient EDO. The GADC has a healthy relationship with the local government, partakes in extensive marketing and outreach, and provides easy access to maps, demographics and community information, industry data and a variety of other information sought after by site selectors and corporate decision makers.

<http://www.greenvilleeconomicdevelopment.com/index.php>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Strengthen the DADC

ACTION 5: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Gather local business input in defining the DADC’s scope of work:

When prioritizing the EDO’s scope of work, local businesses should be included in the decision-making process. The DADC’s ultimate goal is economic growth through supporting businesses and fostering entrepreneurship. If local businesses do not support the DADC’s actions, the organization will ultimately be ineffectual in executing its mandate.

- **Organize a business roundtable discussion and use a professional facilitator to solicit input for defining DADC’s scope of work.**

2) DADC should prioritize its scope of work: The starting point for the revitalized DADC must be prioritizing a clear scope of work for the organization. As a start, the DADC should be focused solely on growing the economy, namely business attraction, expansion, and entrepreneurship. Initially, the DADC’s scope of work should be realistic, so as to not overwhelm the remodeled organization.

- **Implement an economic growth agenda for DeKalb’s economy (business attraction, retention & growth and entrepreneurship)**

3) Hire Experienced ED Professionals: Appropriately staffing an economic development organization is a challenging task. If too many people are hired, the organization becomes bloated and wasteful. If too few people are hired or the wrong positions are created, the organization becomes overwhelmed and ineffective. As a start, AE recommends creating seven full-time positions within the DADC, as well as retaining a public relations firm. These positions should be filled with experienced economic development professionals who are hired for their proven economic development talent and recruited from across the nation. The DADC should be evaluated for a period of two to three years, after which it should be expanded or reorganized as appropriate.

- **Retain professional search firm to fill key positions.**

Suggested Staffing	
Position	Salary
President	\$180,000
VP of Business Retention	\$90,000-\$120,000
VP of Business Attraction	\$90,000-\$120,000
VP of Entrepreneurship	\$90,000-\$120,000
Office Manager	\$40,000
Communications Manager	\$65,000
Director of Research	\$40,000-\$55,000
Public Relations Firm (Retainer)	\$6,500 / month

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Strengthen the DADC

ACTION 5: KEY STEPS DETAILED

4) Secure private funding for the DADC: The DADC anticipates generating revenues from some of its activities. In addition, the DADC must work to secure private funding. Private funding is a necessity for the long-term success of the DADC. Moreover, private funding directly links the interests of the DADC and local businesses, ensuring that the DADC works to meet business needs and the businesses continue to actively participate in the DADC.

- **DADC should hire a fundraising firm (in 2 years) to raise private sector funding for the economic development marketing program.**

5) Join Economic Professional Development

Organizations: The DADC should also actively participate in the broader economic development community by joining organizations, such as the International Economic Development Council, the Industrial Asset Management Council, and SelectUSA. Membership in these and similar organizations provides networking, access to research and marketing resources, professional development and certification opportunities, and access to professional conferences and journals.

- **DADC should implement continuous professional training and client networking opportunities for its staff.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Industrial Asset Management Council (IAMC)

Founded in 2002, the IAMC describes itself as “the leading association of industrial asset management and corporate real estate executives, their suppliers and service providers, and economic developers.” Membership in the IAMC provides access to the organization’s bi-annual meetings. These meetings provide high-quality education and networking opportunities in a low-key, professional environment.

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

American Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AmChams)

Organized under the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s International Division, AmChams are organizations of business leaders that represent U.S. business interests to the government, business leaders, and communities of the host countries. Currently, there are 116 AmChams representing U.S. business interests in 103 countries worldwide. Membership in AmChams not only provides networking opportunities and business leads, but also access to publications, libraries, and consolidated information on business climate’s and regulations.

<http://www.aaccla.org/amchams/>

SelectUSA

Created by the Federal Government under the Department of Commerce, SelectUSA was created to showcase the United States as a prime location for business. To this end, SelectUSA provides both industry profiles and a searchable guide on Federal grants, loans, loan guarantees, and tax incentives. SelectUSA also provides Economic Organization Development Counseling to state, regional, and local organizations. This counseling includes best practices, outreach methods, and marketing strategies.

<http://selectusa.commerce.gov/>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

ACTION 6: IMPROVE REGIONAL MARKETING AND BRANDING

While improved permitting, a strong DADC, and business support programs are all important, the DADC and the county must actively work to effectively market and rebrand the county as a business-friendly organization that is dedicated to providing efficient services to its customers. The DADC and county must reach out to the community to promote the “new DeKalb.”

The DADC has already undertaken steps to develop a comprehensive marketing program, which is a step in the right direction. Once the marketing plan is finalized, the focus should be on speedy implementation.

International marketing can be expensive. AE recommends that the DADC pursue an aggressive regional and national campaign initially. Only selective, low-cost international marketing should be considered in the first year.

Key Steps

- 1) Develop strong ties with the media
- 2) Implement aggressive national & international marketing
- 3) Develop collateral materials

BEST PRACTICES

Choose New Jersey

The website for Choose New Jersey, the state’s top economic development organization, serves as a one-stop shop for information important to site selectors and other economic development professionals. On the website, users can access information on incentives, New Jersey’s “growth zones”, country profiles, and much more. The website also provides access to additional collateral materials, such as an e-newsletter and the New Jersey Economic Development Guide.

<http://choosenj.com/home.aspx>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Marketing & Branding

ACTION 6: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Develop strong media ties: This starts with establishing an atmosphere of openness and transparency around county government, and supported by public policy. The county should highlight improvements and successes while also being open about shortcomings and the steps taken to resolve ongoing issues.

In a healthy environment, local media should act as both reporters and stakeholders, with an investment in the greater good of the community. Bring them on board as members of ED boards and committees, and hold them accountable for being key players in positive change.

- ***Retain the services of a professional public relations firm.***

2) Implement aggressive national & international marketing: Great emphasis should also be placed on marketing DeKalb County in the U.S. and to a select international community. Georgia's friendly business climate, Atlanta's transportation and logistics infrastructure, and the county's many assets all make DeKalb County a viable option for international shippers, manufacturers, and other business entities. The international market is one that remains largely untapped by DeKalb County, and can generate much economic activity if properly leveraged.

- ***Retain an economic development marketing firm to assist with marketing campaign implementation within the Atlanta MSA and the Southeastern U.S. during the first year. A national campaign should follow in the 2nd year.***
- ***Research opportunities in Europe and Asia for business attraction efforts. Consider one to two international marketing trips with US Select to Asian countries to promote an EB-5 visa investment program and to attract manufacturing projects.***

BEST PRACTICES

WorkIT Nashville

In 2013, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce executed a public-private six month marketing campaign to attract tech talent to the Nashville area.

Through creating a comprehensive website, developing print and digital marketing materials, and undertaking a targeted social media campaign, the WorkIT Nashville program was able to spread the word on tech opportunities and openings in the area.

Overall, the campaign was a success with over 1,000 tech professionals sending their resumes and looking for work in the area, allowing several companies to fill key tech positions.

For more information, visit:

<http://talent.workitnashville.com/>



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Marketing & Branding

ACTION 6: KEY STEPS DETAILED

3) Develop collateral materials: DeKalb County needs to develop collateral materials that highlight economic development assets and business successes within the county. The materials should clearly outline incentive programs, and describe expansion or redevelopment opportunities. Strong professional websites for both the county and the DADC that capture the environment and opportunities of DeKalb County should serve as the cornerstones of the marketing strategy.

The collateral materials developed should be incorporated into a broader comprehensive marketing strategy designed to promote the county. This campaign should include advertising, active social media presence, and targeted marketing toward site selectors, real estate developers, and corporate decision makers.

- ***The county has initiated the process of redesigning its website.***
- ***The DADC has retained a consultant to create a marketing campaign.***
- ***The GIS department is preparing to deploy ArcGIS with full mapping capabilities and data layers available to businesses and residents.***

Marketing & Branding Tactics

- Branding Profiling Research
- Logo, Slogan, and Brand Guide
- Economic Development Website
- Pocket Brochure
- Single-Sheet Brochures (Placed in pocket brochure)
- Tri-fold Brochure (For use as handout at meetings and events)
- E-Mail Marketing Campaign (Directly targeting target audiences)
- Online Banner Advertisements
- Online Advertising in Site Selection Industry Sector Reports
- Online Advertising in Area Development
- Online Advertising in Business Facilities

Marketing & Branding Tactics Explained

Branding Profiling Research: In order to fully understand the present brand position of DeKalb County, both locally and outside the area, a marketing firm should be hired to identify beliefs, key words, phrases, feelings, thoughts, and emotions as they relate to the county. By understanding the present attitudes and brand position, the research will help in the development of a message strategy that is much more likely to be accepted by the target audiences.

Logo, Slogan, and Brand Guide: Following the findings of the Brand Profiling Research, a new logo and slogan should be produced for DeKalb County Development Authority or for the overall DeKalb County economic development marketing effort. The color palette and design elements featured in the new logo will drive the entire visual direction of all marketing activities. Once a final version is selected and approved, the logo will be delivered in pre-press formats, including EPS, JPG, and PDF. A brand standards manual, including logo, slogan, and brand narrative guidelines, should be developed.

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Marketing & Branding

ACTION 6: KEY STEPS DETAILED

Marketing & Branding Tactics Explained

Economic Development Website: The website should be created using Responsive Mobile technology, assuring that visitors will see pages that are ideally sized for the device being used, including tablets and phones. The written copy is also very important, search engines such as Google, Bing!, and Yahoo need to be able to find and appropriately rank the site. The website should include fully branded maps, including: a U.S. Map indicating the location of DeKalb County and its relationship to major metropolitan areas; a map of Georgia indicating DeKalb County and the county's location within the state; and a map which relates DeKalb County to its regional counterparts, such as Atlanta, Macon, Columbus, Augusta, and Savannah. Additional maps should include rail lines, ports, airports, industrial parks, interstate highways, and state highways.

Pocket Brochure: A visually powerful brochure design should be produced that is both creative and impactful. The goal is to make the reader feel that the brochure was designed just for him/her.

Single-Sheet Brochures: These single-sheet brochures are two-sided and designed to fit into folder pockets. They can be easily inserted into a wide range of marketing materials. Brochures could be best used for industry profiles, education resources, workforce profiles, transportation resources, or demographic data.

Tri-Fold Brochures: The simple 6" x 9" tri-fold brochure is ideal for promoting the county as an economic development location. Because of its basic design, it is best suited for events, meetings, trade shows, and any other venues where large numbers of brochures might be needed.

Email Marketing Campaign: For the purpose of introducing DeKalb County and promoting its key business advantages, multiple e-mailers should be sent out each year. The hired marketing firm should develop the message strategy, and write, design, program, and distribute the e-mails to a list of site selection consultants, real estate brokers, and c-suite executives, and economic development professionals.

Online Banner Advertisements: Using available research findings, a strategic message should be developed that fully connects with the anticipated audience(s) in a powerful and emotional way. The goal is to visually and verbally *connect* with the readers, encouraging them to respond.



IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE: Marketing & Branding

ACTION 6: KEY STEPS DETAILED

Marketing & Branding Tactics Explained

Online Advertising in Site Selection Industry Sector Reports: The DeKalb County Development Authority banner ads should appear in ALL of the site selection online Industry reports for a full year, including all archived reports as far back as 2010. It is anticipated that each ad would generate approximately 15,000 to 20,000 impressions per month.

Online Advertising in Area Development: With over 171,000 pages indexed with Google, *Area Development* has sector specific reports that reach thousands of monthly subscribers. *Area Development* offers quality advertising; the publication recently ran a Google Analytics report for 2013 and eliminated all user sessions 10 seconds and less.

Online Advertising in Business Facilities: The *Business Facilities* E-Newsletter goes out to an opt-in email list of over 22,000 executives each Thursday



REVITALIZE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS/ EMBRACE NEW EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Most commercial corridors in DeKalb County provide a link and serve as anchors for employment and activity centers. If appropriately developed, corridors will provide continuity to these areas. The County's Comprehensive Plan identifies them as linkage corridors.

DeKalb County's strategic location provides many opportunities for successful economic development. Its close proximity to the City of Atlanta provides a ready market for professional and business services and a major partner for attracting tourism. Likewise, its location near significant hubs for air, rail, and interstate cargo make it ideal for manufacturing and logistics related businesses.

Unfortunately, much of DeKalb's strategic location is currently being underutilized. Most of the county has developed as a residential bedroom community to support the Atlanta MSA. Moreover, the county is nearly built out, with few commercial corridors and employment centers left in unincorporated DeKalb to support its economy. Growth is stifled in many areas of the county by a lack of sufficient access to transportation services. Public transportation and other infrastructure investments are required to facilitate the Clifton Corridor economic development. In addition, the Stonecrest Mall area could greatly benefit from access to public transportation services.

The purpose of this strategy is to focus employment along existing commercial corridors to foster job creation and economic growth.

In addition to the business employment centers specified in the county's Comprehensive Plan, AE has analytically examined other strategic sites in unincorporated DeKalb that could serve as candidate sites to support the county's commercial and industrial development long term. These sites extend the county's employment centers beyond the year 2015 envisioned in the Comp Plan. These sites must now be vetted with the communities, neighborhood leaders and landowners to further ascertain their commercial feasibility and suitability. The next update of the Comp Plan should include this process.

The selection of these sites was done by applying several filters such as 1) strategic location, 2) existing commercial activity, 3) land availability and 4) potential development.

Memorial Drive, the major thoroughfare that bisects the county and provides connectivity between the City of Atlanta and Stone Mountain Park, has many segments ripe for redevelopment and new development. These include opportunities for high-value mixed-use projects. Moreland Avenue, Candler Road, Glenwood Avenue/Road and Covington Highway are also key commercial corridors that define the central part of the county. The Clifton Corridor encompasses Emory University, the Children's Hospital, the CDC, Emory Point, and high end residential and commercial establishments. There are opportunities for redevelopment in many of the commercial corridors. Redevelopment in the Memorial Drive corridor can effectively connect the economies of DeKalb County with the City of Atlanta.



REVITALIZE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS/ EMBRACE NEW EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Successful redevelopment necessitates a concerted effort from both the public and private sectors. The county CEO has taken the lead in improving critical corridors by appointing a task force to review the plans and discuss options for revitalizing Memorial Drive. Such options include the opportunity to locate the county's government center there and work in partnership with MARTA to incent to a Transit Oriented Development.

Through public/private partnerships, the county can attract investment into key employment centers in addition to those provided by the Comp Plan. This investment can spearhead development and redevelopment of key intersections and corridors to accomplish their best uses. These centers can build off of existing clusters or encourage the formation of new clusters and inter-industry collaboration. The new employment centers can also be developed countywide to ensure broad spectrum economic development that benefits all of DeKalb's citizens.

The County has partnered with the Atlanta Regional Commission to develop Livable Centers Initiative plans (LCIs). These LCIs can serve as road maps to guide the redevelopment of these corridors. Examples include Northlake, Kensington, Candler Road, and Stone Crest.

Several key initiatives are needed for successful revitalization of the employment centers. These are outlined in the action plan below.



Employment Centers Action Plan

1. Incentivize redevelopment and build public/private partnerships
2. Secure appropriate zoning
3. Develop appropriate marketing and branding for employment centers and target industries
4. Create employment centers throughout the region
5. Encourage clustering through target industry support programs

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 1: INCENTIVIZE REDEVELOPMENT AND BUILD PUBLIC / PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The modern economy is extremely dynamic, with new technologies and innovations constantly changing how business is done. Commercial real estate must change as well to suit the ever-shifting needs and preferences of businesses. To ensure economic relevance, DeKalb County must encourage redevelopment, especially at key intersections and corridors.

This effort should be focused on concentration of employment centers and does not promote expansion of commercial areas. Proper consideration should be given to protection of residential areas in relation to commercial areas via zoning.

Private sector participation is essential for ensuring optimized redevelopment. By properly supporting redevelopment, the county can encourage private developers to acquire and redevelop strategic tracts of land, similar to public land banking practices.

A concept plan for the redevelopment of the GM plant has been proposed, and closing on the project is expected in 2014. The concept includes office, residential, commercial, and light industrial developments. This is of significant regional importance and should be completed through public / private partnerships.

Key Steps

- 1) Refine incentives to encourage private redevelopment
- 2) Participate in targeted public-private collaborations
- 3) Leverage New Market Tax Credit Program
- 4) Concentrate Community Development Block Grant funds

BEST PRACTICES

Science Accelerator, Prince William County, VA

An excellent example of public-private collaboration, the Science Accelerator project created 9,000 SF of new wet lab space to foster the Life Sciences industry within Prince William County, VA. To build the facility, the Prince William County Department of Economic Development teamed up with two private companies to share costs. Additionally, all three will work out in collaboration to build-out leased spaces to tailor them exactly to tenants' needs.

The facility is praised as a tool to catalyze the growth of the Life Sciences industry within the County. Additionally, it is hoped that the partnership will foster further private development within the County.

For more information, visit:

<http://manassas.patch.com/groups/politics-and-elections/p/pwc-s-new-wet-lab-space-targets-emerging-life-science-companies>

<http://accelerate.pwcecondev.org/>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Incentivize Redevelopment

ACTION 1: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Refine incentives to encourage private redevelopment: The county can foster private investment by offering specific incentives to companies that are renovating or repurposing existing buildings. These incentives could be tax credits, subsidies, or below market rate loans, similar to Illinois' program to encourage manufacturing investment. Since there is currently a shortage of discretionary funds in the county budget, exemptions on future taxes may be the best way to incentivize redevelopment. Essentially a de facto TIF, the county could guarantee a 50%-70% reduction of property taxes and new capital recovery fees that result from the higher assessed property values associated with redevelopment. These exemptions, at least initially, should be dedicated to the industries most in need of drastic infrastructure development or renovation, namely manufacturing and logistics.

- **Consider 50-70% discount on incremental property tax valuation.**
- **Apply incentive of 50-70% discount on capital recovery utility connection fees.**
- **Waive 50-70% of building permit fees.**

2) Participate in targeted public/private collaborations: DeKalb County should also consider direct public/private collaboration on certain projects. Not only can these projects directly target specific economic or social needs of the community, they also help create a spirit of cooperation between the local government and the business community. One such program could be the attraction of private investment through the EB-5 visa program.

- **Share cost of creating a regional EB5 visa center in DeKalb County with a private sector entity.**

BEST PRACTICE

Washington County, PA

The Washington County Council of Economic Development has partnered with state and federal agencies to provide to provide loans to manufacturing and related businesses. Created to promote manufacturing, advanced materials, biotech and other industries, the program funds up to 40%, or \$100,000, of capital improvement or development projects. Qualifying endeavors include machinery or equipment purchase, construction, and repair and modernization among others.

<http://washingtoncountypa.org/loan-programs/cdfi-tech-21-loan-program/>

Illinois Manufacturing Modernization Loan Program

The Manufacturing Modernization Loan Program is designed to provide manufacturers with access to adequate and affordable financing for upgrading and modernizing their manufacturing equipment and operations. The Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCEO) will participate with local lending institutions in loan amounts between \$10,000 to \$750,000, or 25% of the total project, which ever is less. The participation amount will be at sub-prime rates. The term of the loan is a maximum of 10 years and a fee of 1-2% of loan amount may be required.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.rockfordil.com/incentives/p/dir/25/item/40>



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Incentivize Redevelopment

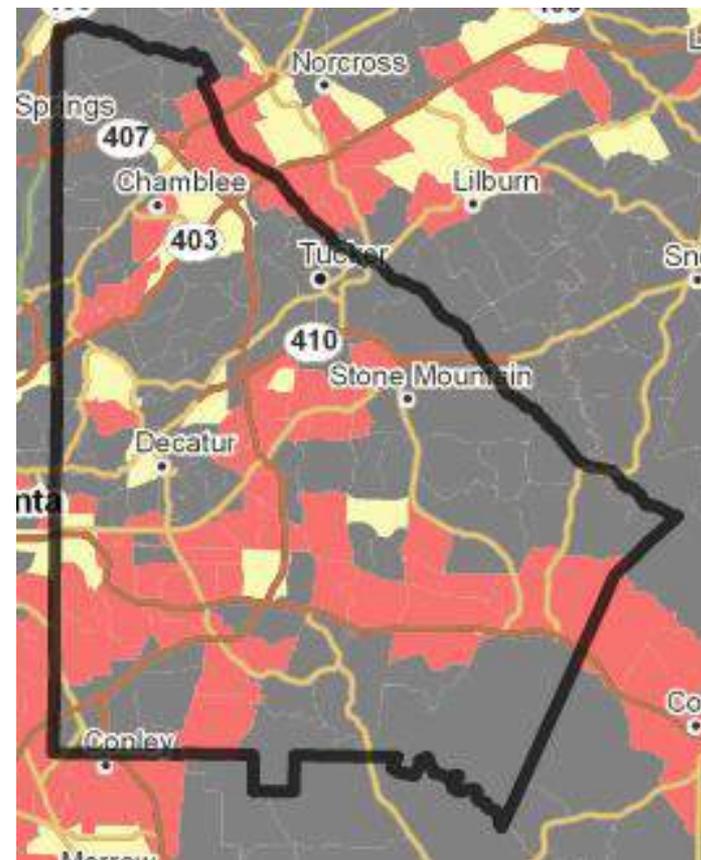
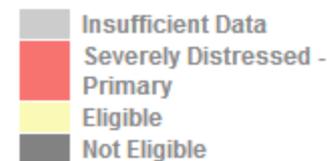
ACTION 1: KEY STEPS DETAILED

3) Leverage New Market Tax Credit Program: Created in 2000, the New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) program seeks to provide local control of Federal tax credits to promote investment in economically distressed communities. The program allows qualifying Community Development Entities to collect voluntary taxpayer funds and use them to invest in local businesses and entrepreneurs in the form of loans or equity. This allows local entities, with their knowledge of the needs and advantages of the community, to direct badly needed funds to promising local enterprises. Moreover, the tax payers who choose to invest in the program are rewarded with a 39% tax credit on their invested funds over the course of seven years.

In the map to the right, the areas marked with red are the areas of the county that are classified as severely distressed and would qualify for NMTCs. DeKalb County currently has large tracts of land, particularly in South and Central DeKalb, that are considered priorities for NMTCs. The DADC should utilize this program to further encourage investment and redevelopment in these parts of the county.

4) Concentrate Community Development Block Grant Funds: Each year, DeKalb County receives over \$1 million dollars from the Federal Government to distribute in the form of Community Development Block Grants. DeKalb County should concentrate these funds into two or three specific areas, preferably to be used in conjunction with CIDs, TADs, and other redevelopment funds.

Targeting the funds to small areas ensures that they will generate visible improvements and build a foundation on which future economic development can take place.



Source: New Market Tax Credit Resource Center



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 2: SECURE APPROPRIATE ZONING

Ensuring appropriate or optimized land use is an essential part of any comprehensive economic development strategy. Zoning is one of the county's most powerful direct action tools for determining land use.

DeKalb's Zoning Code is being updated after several years of work. The current code was last updated in 1999 and the new code (adoption 2014) is more user-friendly, includes graphic illustrations, provides new flexible mixed use zoning districts, follows current development trends, and furthers the mixed use activity centers of the adopted comprehensive plan. The new zoning code includes significant contributions from the residential community, business community, and professional organizations such as the Council for Quality Growth. There has been extensive community input through the public involvement process. The new zoning code facilitates the adoption of appropriate zoning for strategic commercial corridors and employment centers. The future economic prosperity of the county and its commercial development opportunities will depend on the future zoning decisions made by elected and appointed officials.

Key Steps

- 1) Develop zoning to optimize land use
- 2) Implement anticipated zoning

BEST PRACTICE

Cincinnati Uptown / MLK Corridor

Although Uptown Cincinnati is robust employment center, Martin Luther King Drive, a major arterial, is drab and underutilized. To begin fixing this issue, the City of Cincinnati commissioned a study by urban planning firm Sasaki and Associates to analyze the issues and develop a plan to correct them.

To accomplish this, the Sasaki study utilized traffic studies, economic analysis, and community outreach to guide future planning. The end result was a "...plan for a new MLK that enhances vehicular access while anchoring a walkable district [and] provides a strategy and tools to guide land use, infrastructure, and institutional investment."

<http://www.sasaki.com/project/344/cincinnati-uptownmlk-corridor-vision/>



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Secure Appropriate Zoning

ACTION 2: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Envision zoning to optimize land use: The adopted comprehensive plan is based on “character areas” such as Suburban, Neighborhood Center, Town Center that provide a generalized vision and description for future development. The DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan establishes the blueprint for future development, including scale, density, and intensity. Each character area allows for a range of zoning districts, densities, and intensities consistent with its generalized vision for development. The first step toward optimizing zoning is to educate the public and land owners of the potential opportunities and incentivizes to those owners for rezoning the land to its highest and best use. Because rezoning must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, DeKalb should initiate Land Use Amendments consistent with the new employment centers and commercial corridors identified in the Economic Plan and follow the public hearing process to gain support.

- ***Implement this process during the next update of the county’s comp plan.***

2) Implement anticipated zoning: Currently, the adopted Comprehensive Plan (2007) follows the policy direction of the elected officials which encouraged protection of single family neighborhoods. As a result, a primary premise of the current Comprehensive Plan led to “retrofitting” the existing and often outdated single purpose shopping centers that developed as a result of urban sprawl. The goal of the adopted Plan is to redevelop these centers into pedestrian-oriented mixed use activity centers that include places to live, work, and play (residential, office, and retail). During the Comprehensive Plan update (2016), the goal should be to expand activity center boundaries to include residential areas prime for redevelopment. These transitional areas can be redeveloped with a higher density and intensity that will complement the employment centers and mixed use activity centers/commercial corridors. The staff, neighborhood organizations, business community and elected officials must work together to anticipate the change in the Future Development Map that reflects the expected growth and development to provide a sustainable economic base for years to come.

- ***Implement this process during the next update of the county’s comp plan.***



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 3: DEVELOP APPROPRIATE MARKETING AND BRANDING FOR TARGET INDUSTRIES AND EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Though general marketing is important, DeKalb County must expand its promotional efforts beyond broad spectrum campaigns. The success of the target industries and employment centers is just as important for DeKalb to achieve its economic potential as reforming business climate. As such, these elements should not be diluted in the broader marketing and branding of the county.

Once the county has identified and started developing key employment centers or target industry clusters, a targeted marketing campaign can make the difference between vibrant success and continued anemic performance.

Key Steps

- 1) Create specific collateral (print/digital media) for employment centers, retail centers, and industry trade organizations
- 2) Maintain updated target industry sections on the DADC and DeKalb County websites
- 3) Develop targeted marketing materials for industries and employment centers
- 4) Create a DADC site selector's newsletter and annual report/magazine

BEST PRACTICE

Concord, NC

The International Business Park (IBP) is a 520-acre corporate park located in Concord, NC. Its website, developed in conjunction with a broader marketing strategy conducted by Walker-Marketing, Inc., is an excellent example of corporate park marketing.

The website is comprehensive, professional, and easy to use. It is one stop shop that details the parks location, current tenants, and available space.

Additionally, the IBP's website provides a detailed list of government incentives that are offered to companies operating in the corporate park.

Overall, the website serves as an excellent first resource for companies looking to relocate, and has been partly credited for the IBP's turnaround. Today, the IBP has over 26 companies which employ over 3,000 employees.

<http://internationalbusinesspark.com/>

<http://www.walker-marketing.com/case-studies/economic-development-tourism/international-business-park/>



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Marketing & Branding

ACTION 3: KEY STEPS DETAILED

- 1) **Create individual collateral (printed/digital media) for major employment centers, retail centers, and industry trade organizations:** As with the county as a whole, successful marketing for these entities begins with a clear impactful messaging (i.e. “DeKalb open for business”, “You can tell a County by the companies it keeps”, etc.). Develop uniform communication standards for external communication throughout county departments related to Economic Development.
 - *Promote the employment centers and their digital collateral through the county and DADC’s website.*
- 2) **Create and maintain a key industries section on the DADC and DeKalb County websites with a page or more for each industry:** Include pertinent information that would be important for companies within that industry looking at DeKalb County as a possible new location. Link to business or industrial park websites and real estate information that details the size, location, etc. of available facilities or properties.
 - *Engage with Georgia Power’s Select Georgia property search tool.*
- 3) **Develop targeted marketing materials for industries and employment centers:** Electronic brochures, infographics and video testimonials are the most effective methods to date for economic development marketing. Additionally, attendance of the industry conferences recommended in the Target Industries report can be an excellent opportunity to promote DeKalb as a place of business to industry professionals.
 - *Develop appropriate collateral with the assistance of an economic development marketing agency.*
 - *Attend one target industry conference annually.*
- 4) **Create a DADC Site Selector’s Newsletter and annual report/magazine:** A monthly electronic newsletter that includes news and information pertaining to target industries, celebrates local success stories and provides public policy updates can be emailed to existing and potential businesses and carried by link on the website. An annual print profile publication should also be considered that focuses on business development in DeKalb County.
 - *Develop annual report for the DADC for marketing purposes.*

BEST PRACTICE

Business Development Board of Palm Beach County

The not-for-profit organization was founded in 1982 by local Chambers, the Economic Council and local business leaders to further economic development. Their website includes tabs to Target Industries, Relocation & Expansion information, Available Properties & Land and other resources. The website Media Center section offers numerous publications, including *Life Science News* and the organizations’ annual business magazine, *Profile*, which showcases economic leaders and successful industries.

Website: <http://www.bdb.org/>

Profile: <http://bit.ly/1jbWejJ>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 4: CREATE EMPLOYMENT CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION

Each of the individual strategies for protecting key employment centers are important. To be truly effective, they should be used in conjunction with each other to establish and develop specific employment centers. These employment centers should be created at strategic, historically underutilized intersections or sites.

The establishment of employment centers represents an opportunity to strengthen target industries. The new employment centers can use incentives and prime locations to support existing industry clusters and to create new ones. It is important to remember that employment centers should not focus solely on the target industries but should also provide opportunities for supporting mixed-use development that includes housing and retail.

The following section contains a detailed analysis of the relative strengths of each of the employment centers selected in the unincorporated area of DeKalb County. It will also detail target and supporting industries that would be well-suited to meet the economic needs and provide appropriate opportunities for each center. Every potentially significant employment center was included in the following analysis, regardless of geographic or district location.

The development or redevelopment of employment centers will take 20-40 years. As a start, these employment centers need to be incorporated into the next Comp Plan through public input, land assessments, and appropriate zoning changes. Additionally, they will promote target industry growth and infrastructure development within the county by creating custom incentives packages and actively marketing them to prospective businesses and developers.

It is also important to keep in mind that the employment center options listed within this report are only suggestions without set boundaries.

The selection of the sites was completed by applying several filters that included evaluation measures such as 1) strategic location, 2) existing commercial activity, 3) land availability and 4) potential development.

While the proposed locations are strategically located, redevelopment planning should not be limited solely to any specific location, if detailed planning reveals better redevelopment opportunities located nearby. Moreover, development of the employment centers will be market driven.

METHODOLOGY

In writing this report, AE took into account the Employment Centers, Overlay Districts and LCIs in the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan. While some of the employment centers proposed here overlap with employment and town centers identified in the plan, there are also substantial differences. AE methodology in selecting employment centers focused specifically on unincorporated DeKalb County and considered not only existing infrastructure but also the potential for future development. Methodology included:

- 1) Analysis of current industry clustering and infrastructure to identify which target and supporting industries are best suited for each part of the county.
- 2) Identification of key intersections and corridors in Unincorporated DeKalb that contain or are close to existing industry clusters.
- 3) Consideration of existing commercial real estate, developable land, and transit infrastructure to assess redevelopment viability.
- 4) Analysis of economic activity within a 0.5 mile radius of the proposed employment center

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 4: CREATE EMPLOYMENT CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION

BEST PRACTICE	BEST PRACTICE	BEST PRACTICE
<p>Land Banking to Protect Against Incompatible Use Omaha Municipal Land Bank (OMLB) Omaha, NB</p> <p>The Omaha City Council recently voted to create the OMLB to accept donations of tax-delinquent, run-down or abandoned properties, vacant lots and other problem properties and then sell them for appropriate use redevelopment. The OMLB is run by a seven-member board, with each member representing one of the county’s districts.</p> <p>The OLMB organization is funded by proceeds from the sale of properties uses a two-part process of assessment and acquisition to identify and secure problem properties. Three types of properties are targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Those that impose, at the present time, the greatest harms to a community but, with repair or demolition, could prevent greater abandonment of a neighborhood •Those that impose the greatest likelihood of future harms to adjoining properties •Those that have an immediate end-user <p>For more information: http://bit.ly/Y5KYvU</p>	<p>Land Banking to Protect Against Incompatible Use Genesee County, MI</p> <p>In 1999, the Michigan State Legislature created a new, streamlined system for returning tax-reverted properties to productive use. The state opened the door for communities to reclaim, reinvest in and rebuild their neighborhoods.</p> <p>The Genesee County Land Reutilization Council (LRC) was created 2002. In 2004, the LRC became the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA). The GCLBA uses the amended tax law as a constructive community development tool: avoiding the potential neglect or misuse that comes from selling land at auction, the County is able to acquire abandoned land through the foreclosure process and determine the best use of that land. The GCLBA assembles land for transfer to adjacent homeowners, develops long and short-term green spaces, and assembles land for new housing and commercial development. The objective is to restore the integrity of the community by removing dilapidated structures and redeveloping abandoned properties.</p> <p>For more information: http://www.thelandbank.org/history.asp#sthash.ZFLrk4WM.dpuf</p>	<p>Tacoma Downtown Commercial District Tacoma, WA</p> <p>Tacoma, Washington’s international financial services district has succeeded in attracting corporate investment into its downtown core through a combination of incentives and infrastructural improvements. B&O tax is eliminated for international finance management companies. Residential units have been added close to the downtown employment center, and preexisting neighborhoods have undergone enhancements. Inducements target investment by support service industries. The city is funding training at a trading floor facility at the University of Washington, Tacoma to train students in the financial markets. Public-private funding was allocated to stronger financial and business curriculum programs in primary and secondary schools. It added venues to improve the cultural and artistic resources downtown and overall quality of life. The city incentivized Russell Investments to maintain its global headquarters in the district, and attract other corporate entities.</p> <p>For more information: http://bit.ly/1sWE87A</p>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 4: CREATE EMPLOYMENT CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION

BEST PRACTICES: DESIGN AND USE OF INCENTIVES

The following are basic principles that should be incorporated into the use of incentives at state, regional and local levels.

- 1. Define Specific Goals, Objectives, and Limitations:** Economic development incentives should be guided by the use of specific goals and quantifiable objectives. This includes determining who the policy will be targeting, how the targeted sectors will be subsidized, the length of received benefits, the desired impact the incentive policy will achieve, and any funding limitations of a particular policy. Market research should be conducted to support and determine the optimal tax incentive that will achieve each policy's defined goals.
- 2. Ensure an Appropriate Incentive Policy Duration:** In order for an incentive to be effective, it must create certainty in the marketplace. Stable and reliable incentives will encourage sustained growth. The appropriate term of an incentive policy will vary by project.
- 3. Determine the Optimal Amount for the Incentive:** Equilibrium must be found with regard to incentive amounts. The benefit of the subsidy must be high enough to attract the targeted projects but low enough to avoid market distortions. Incentive benefits should diminish over time allowing for a consistent, sustainable transition once incentivized markets become established and demand strengthens.
- 4. Monitor Performance Standards and Compliance:** All economic development policies should be held accountable to performance standards and monitored regularly. By doing so, the efficacy of the economic development program can be monitored and maintained. Economic development programs should routinely meet or exceed performance standards defined by the policy.
- 5. Implement an Evaluation Process:** The evaluation process should measure the performance of economic development criteria based on the proposal, cost/benefit analysis, impact on tax base and businesses, and the overall success of the program. Key performance measures should be quantifiable in nature. Clear and concise evaluation procedures will ensure a high level of consistency and transparency in a economic development policy.

BEST PRACTICE

Tacoma Downtown Commercial District Tacoma, WA

As part of an economic development strategic plan AE designed for Tacoma in 2008, the city focused efforts to develop its downtown into a major employment center, leveraging successful world-class financial institutions and its unique geographic location at the crossroads of a region of more than a million people. Central to the plan was a vision to develop the downtown area into an urban fabric of live, work, play and shop opportunities, emerging as a place of thriving neighborhoods and business venues, an attraction for urban dwellers, creative talent, tourists, local citizens and surrounding communities.

To achieve the vision, Tacoma set certain economic development goals:

- Attract target industries
- Foster an entrepreneurial culture
- Foster greater awareness of independent local businesses
- Stimulate investor interest in downtown
- Develop downtown into a "talent magnet"
- Support and expand the ED agenda of the University of Washington-Tacoma
- Increase retail opportunities in downtown
- Raise international profile of downtown

For more information: <http://bit.ly/1sWE87A>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

NORTHERN DEKALB:

The northern part of DeKalb County, and much of the district's western half is comprised of the incorporated cities of Dunwoody, Doraville, and Chamblee.

The incorporated cities are successful, housing strong clusters of economic activity. These clusters, as well as Mercer University and the regional airport, make this region ideal for knowledge-oriented industries, namely Financial and Professional Services and Life Sciences. These industries will require IT support and the higher incomes the industries generate will support specialty retail and educational support services.

There are three potential employment centers in this unincorporated area of Northern DeKalb:

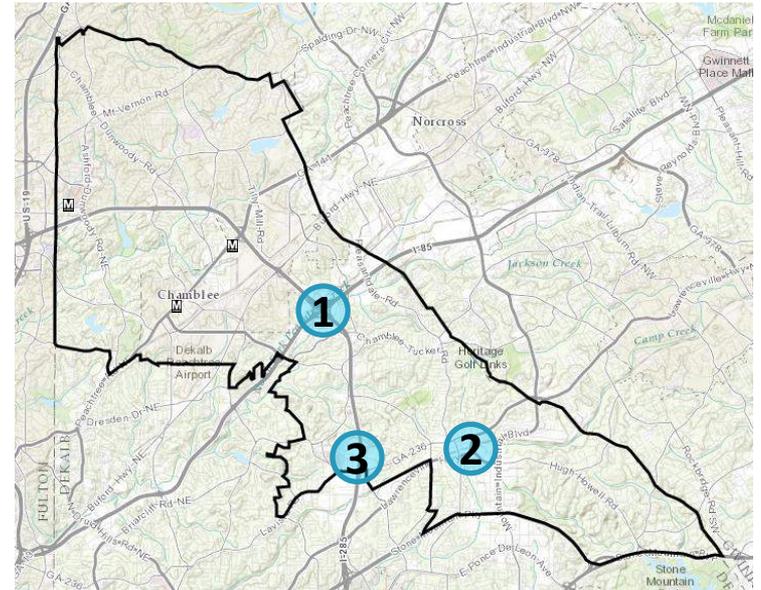
- 1) **The I-85 / I-285 interchange.** Though significantly developed, the strategic interstate crossing and proximity to both Mercer University and the airport indicate this location is currently underleveraged. Investments to expanded transportation options should be considered to enable efficient mobility and facilitate development in this area
- 2) **Downtown Tucker.** Linked to a population center in Northeast DeKalb, the three-way intersection at the center of town, if properly redeveloped, could rival the success of the district's incorporated cities.
- 3) **Northlake Mall.** Located at I-285 and Lavista Road, the Northlake Mall is an existing employment center that should continue to be supported through this plan and the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Target Industries

- FPS
- Life Sciences
- Tourism
- Logistics
- CST
- Manufacturing

Supporting Industries

- Specialty Retail
- General Retail
- IT Services
- Educational Support Services



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

NORTHERN DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

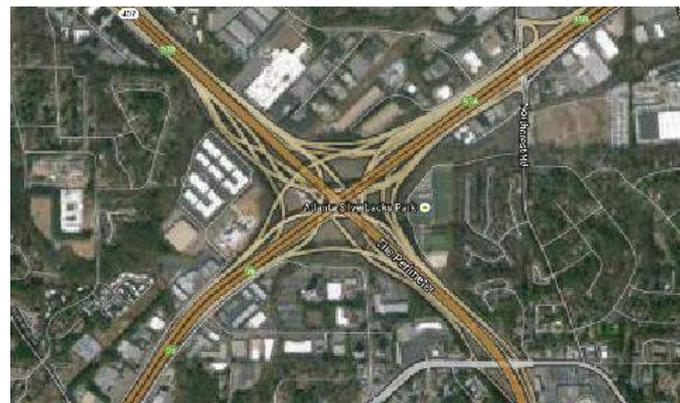
I-85 / I-285 Interchange

Employment: 3,700

Businesses: 291

Total Square Feet: 3 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$650 Million



Downtown Tucker

Employment: 6,600

Businesses: 805

Total Square Feet: 6.4 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$2 Billion



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

NORTHERN DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Northlake Mall

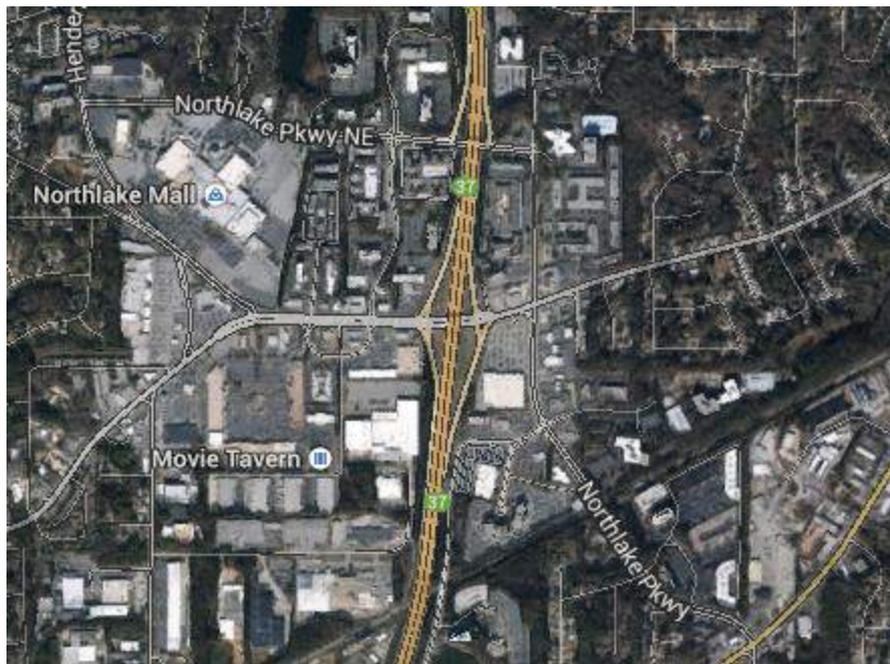
Employment: 7,500

Businesses: 549

Total Square Feet: 7.5 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$1.7 Billion

Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

WEST CENTRAL DEKALB:

The West Central portion of DeKalb County includes the incorporated cities of Brookhaven, Decatur, and portions of Atlanta, and encompasses the heart of the County.

The presence of the CDC, Emory University, several MARTA stops, and a close proximity to Atlanta all contribute to the area's success. These factors make it ideally suited for the same industries as the northern region of DeKalb. Decatur, with its own downtown draws and its strategic location as the midway point between downtown Atlanta and attractions of Eastern DeKalb, is ideally suited as a hub for Tourism. Near the intersection of Scott Boulevard and North Decatur Road, the Medline area was the subject of a recently created Livable Centers Initiative Study. The area has expansion opportunities and is currently anchored by major medical facilities, as well as a diversity of restaurants and retail establishments.

Development potential for this area of the county needs transit support. Plans exist for a rail line that links the Lindbergh station to Emory University and support the Clifton Corridor.

There are three potential employment centers in this area:

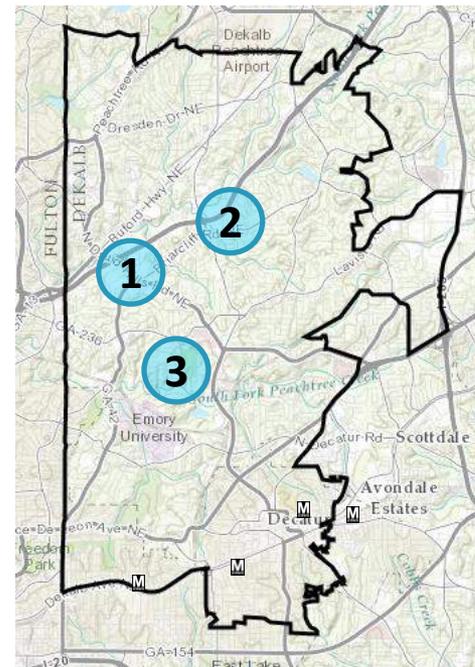
- 1) Intersection of Briarcliff Road North Druid Hills Road:** With direct access to I-85, this area contains office and retail space, and is linked to the healthcare engines of the Clifton Corridor. A significant opportunity exists to expand the life sciences cluster. Only a short distance north of Emory and CDC, this currently only houses a strip mall and has potential for further development.
- 2) Intersection of I-85 and Clairmont Road** Serving as a major interstate access for much of the district, this strategically located exit can build off of the success of adjoining Brookhaven. This employment center can build on existing development nearby at Executive Park.
- 3) Intersection of N Druid Hills Road and Lavista Road:** Offers opportunity for expansion. Currently houses a Georgia Department of Labor career center, restaurants, office space and retail establishments. Existing infrastructure would have to be upgraded to allow for greater density in this area.

Target Industries

- FPS
- Life Sciences
- Tourism
- Logistics
- CST
- Manufacturing

Supporting Industries

- Specialty Retail
- General Retail
- IT Services
- Educational Support Services



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

WEST CENTRAL DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

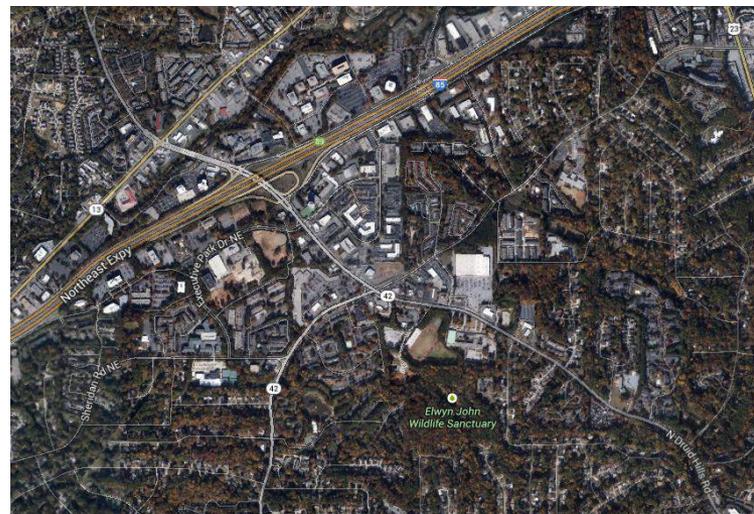
Intersection of Briarcliff and North Druid Hills

Employment: 6,425

Businesses: 580

Total Square Feet: 5 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$ 1.1 Billion



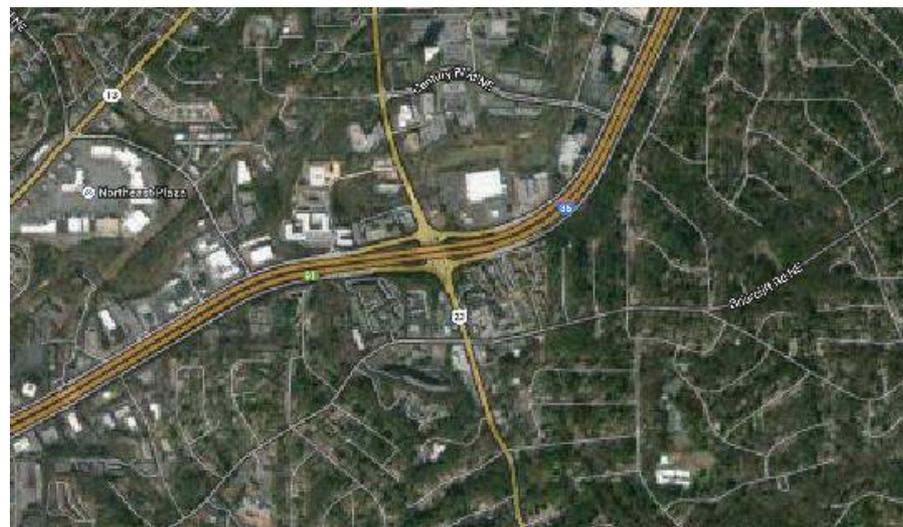
Intersection of I-85 and Clairmont Road

Employment: 5,100

Businesses: 456

Total Square Feet: 3.6 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$1.5 Billion



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

WEST CENTRAL DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

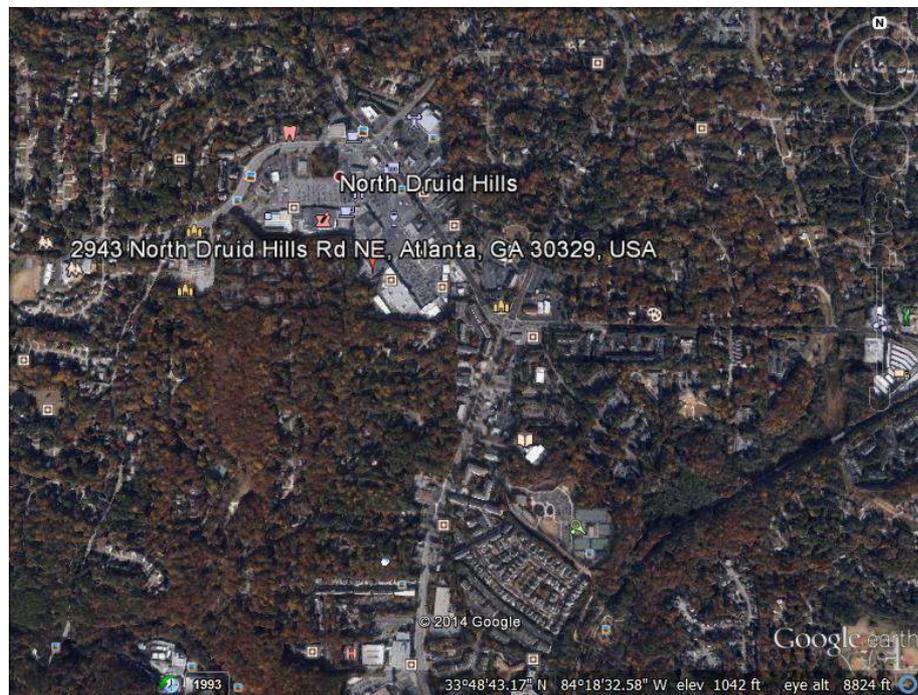
Intersection of North Druid Hills and Lavista Road

Employment: 3,100

Businesses: 287

Total Square Feet: 3.6 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$467 Million



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHWEST DEKALB:

The Southwest corner of DeKalb County contains portions of the City of Atlanta.

Currently, this area of the county has few clusters of robust economic activity. However, the district possesses many assets that will support future economic development. The area contains two interstate highway interchanges, the Moreland Industrial corridor, and significant portions of Memorial Drive, a major corridor leading into Atlanta. Additionally, the district has, relatively speaking, an abundance of developable land. The infrastructure and space lend themselves to the development of skills-oriented industries, such as Logistics, Construction, and Manufacturing. The easy access to Atlanta and other cities supports both specialty and general retail.

There are four potential employment centers in the unincorporated parts of Southwest DeKalb:

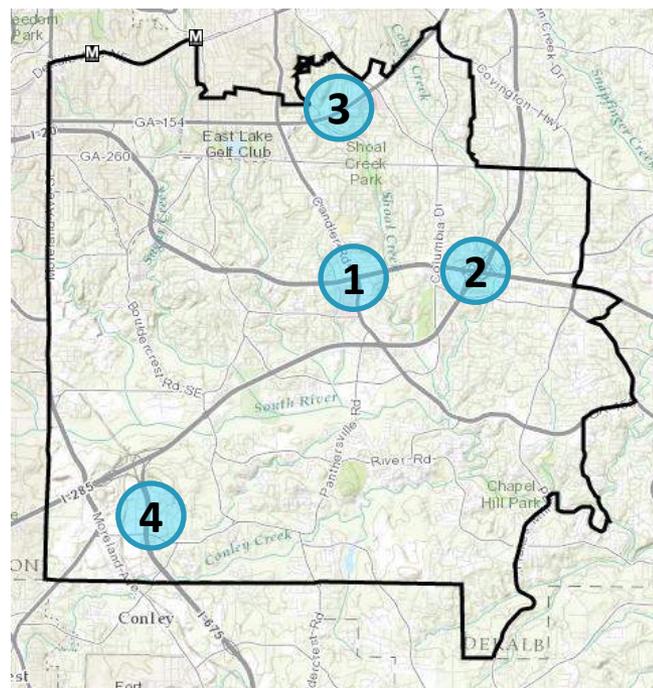
- 1) **I-20/ Candler Road** Currently housing the South DeKalb Mall, this exit is well positioned and has plenty of available infrastructure for redevelopment.
- 2) **I-20 / I-285 Interchange:** This junction of two interstate highways has large tracts of undeveloped land located nearby.
- 3) **Memorial Drive:** The segment of Memorial Drive between Atlanta and Avondale Estates could stand to benefit greatly from redevelopment and currently only houses underperforming or underutilized retail and commercial establishments.
- 4) **Moreland Area:** Already a substantial commercial logistics and manufacturing corridor, the Moreland area is close to the I-675 / I-285 Interchange and has room for additional growth.

Target Industries

- FPS
- Life Sciences
- Tourism
- Logistics
- CST
- Manufacturing

Supporting Industries

- Specialty Retail
- General Retail
- IT Services
- Educational Support Services



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHWEST: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

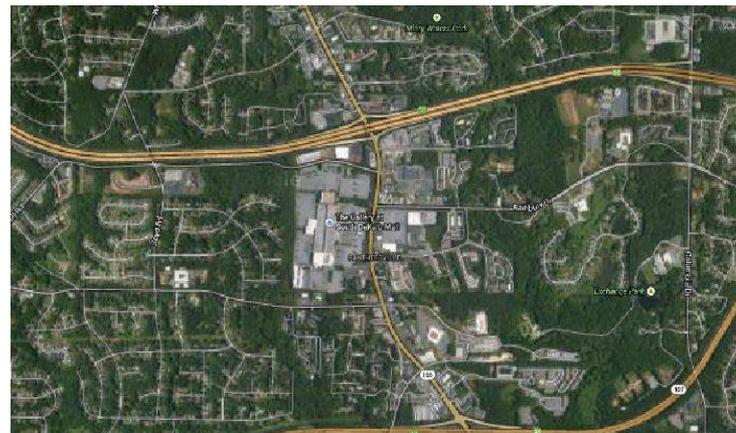
I-20/ Candler Road

Employment: 2,900

Businesses: 495

Total Square Feet: 3.4 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$540 Million



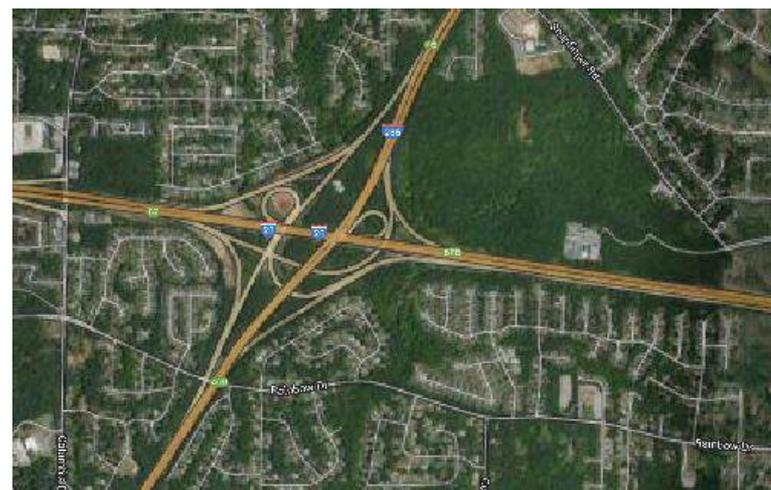
I-20 / I-285 Interchange

Employment: 60

Businesses: 23

Total Square Feet: 470,000 SF

Total Revenues: \$13 Million



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHWEST DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

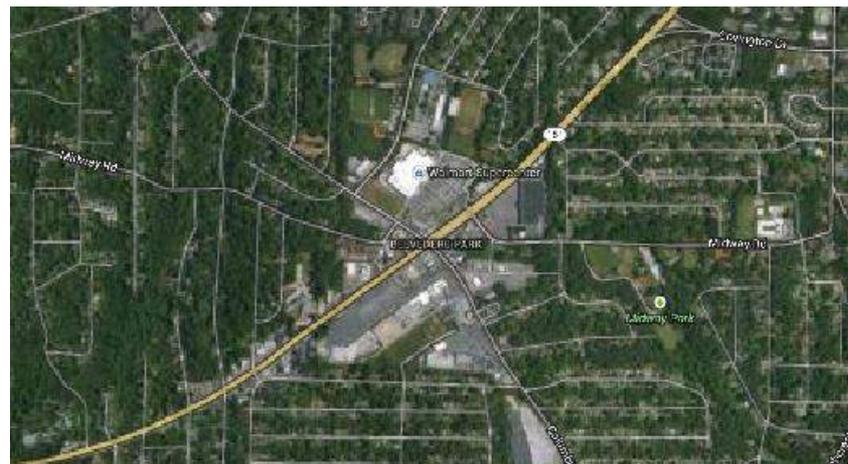
Memorial Drive

Employment: 2,050

Businesses: 202

Total Square Feet: 1.5 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$290 Million



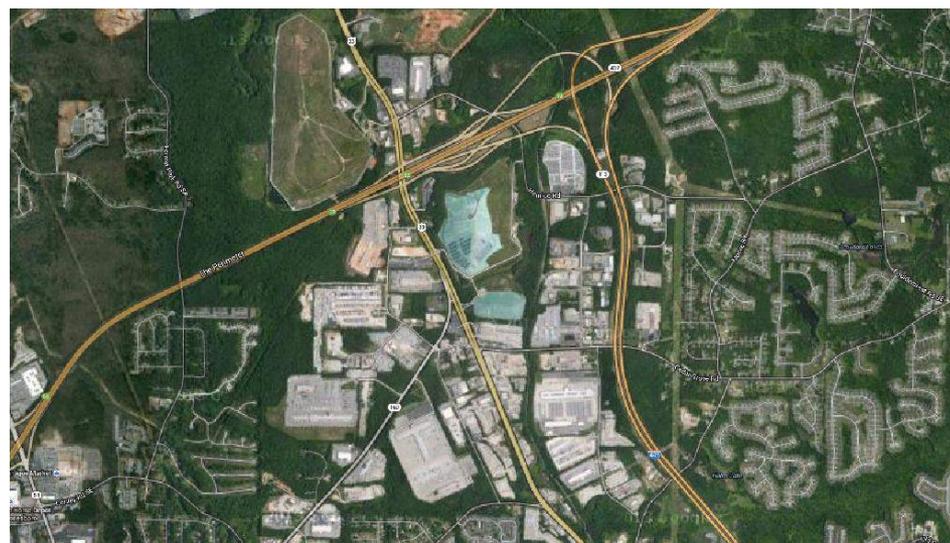
Moreland Area

Employment: 2,250

Businesses: 90

Total Square Feet: 1.1 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$410 Million



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

EAST CENTRAL DEKALB:

East Central DeKalb encompasses the incorporated cities of Avondale Estates, Clarkston, Pine Lake, and Stone Mountain.

The presence of Stone Mountain lends itself directly to the development of Tourism clusters within the area. Other economic clustering is found throughout this area, mostly centering on the incorporated cities. The unincorporated area is best suited to develop Logistics and Construction, as well as general retail.

There are two potential employment centers in the unincorporated parts of east central DeKalb:

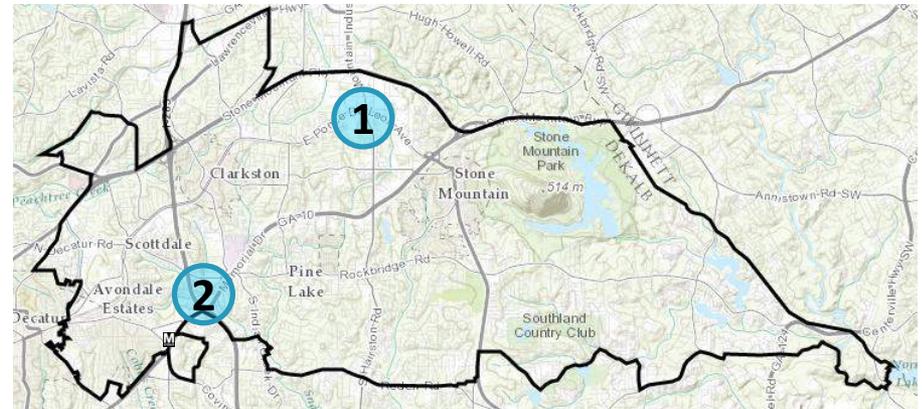
- 1) Stone Mountain Industrial Park:** Located near the intersection of two major roads, this industrial park has a well established CID and is a strong candidate for further development.
- 2) Memorial Drive, I-285 Interchange:** Despite the presence of the county jail, the importance of this interchange and the proximity of a Transit Oriented Development priority MARTA station make this area viable for redevelopment.

Target Industries

- FPS
- Life Sciences
- Tourism
- Logistics
- CST
- Manufacturing

Supporting Industries

- Specialty Retail
- General Retail
- IT Services
- Educational Support Services



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

EAST CENTRAL DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

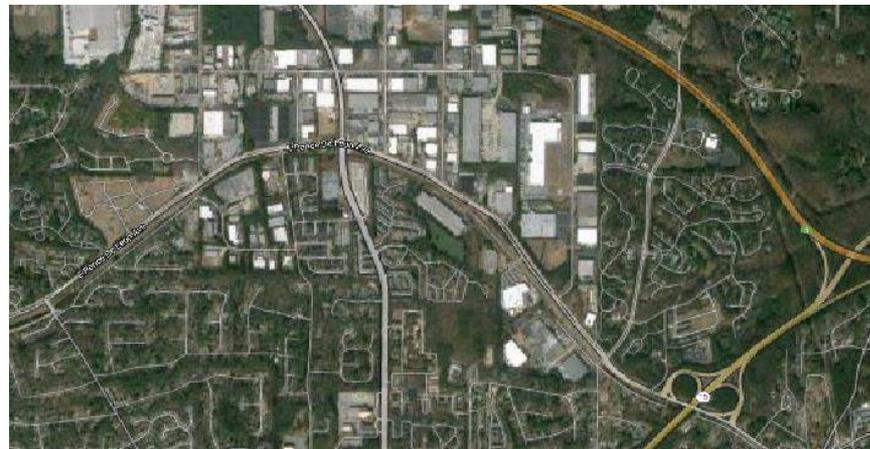
Stone Mountain Industrial Park

Employment: 2,550

Businesses: 149

Total Square Feet: 2.2 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$1.3 Billion



Memorial Drive / I-285 Interchange

Employment: 5,500

Businesses: 186

Total Square Feet: 2.1 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$500 Million



Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHEAST DEKALB:

The southeast DeKalb area contains only one small incorporated city, Lithonia. This area has historically been an industrial hub, and its business clustering and infrastructure assets are advantageous for general Logistics and Manufacturing industries. It also offers opportunity for some Advanced Manufacturing related to Life Sciences applications. Additionally, the large Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve offers a variety of natural attractions capable of sustaining a Tourism cluster. Stone Crest Mall, the county's largest retail shopping mall, is also located in this region.

There are five potential employment centers in the unincorporated parts of southeast DeKalb:

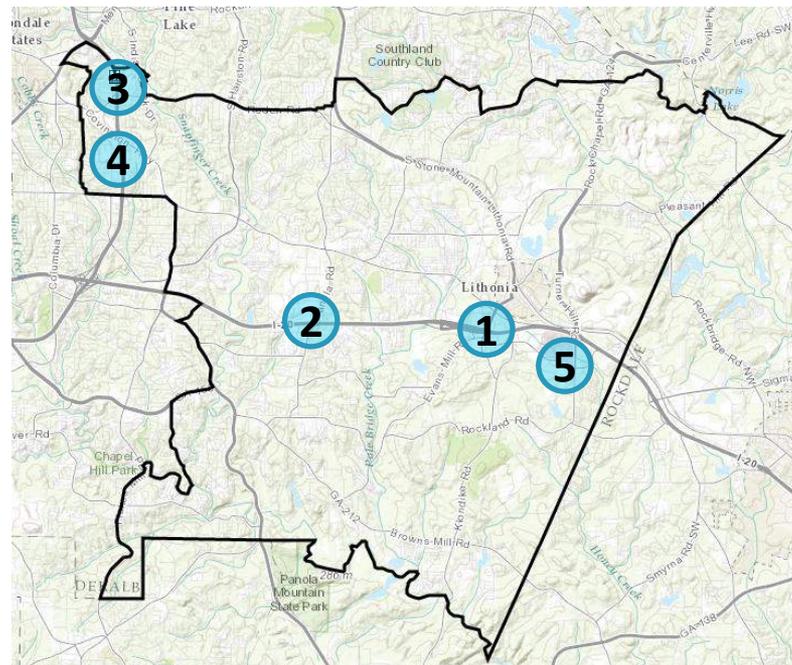
- 1) **I-20/Lithonia Industrial Blvd:** Located South of Lithonia where Lithonia Industrial boulevard meets I-20, this site is located close to existing industrial infrastructure and in close proximity to developable land.
- 2) **I-20/Panola Road:** The junction of I-20 and Panola Rd., one of the major north-south running arterials in the district, is well located and has ample pre-existing commercial real estate and some developable land.
- 3) **I-285/Indian Creek MARTA Station:** Found along the border between Districts 4 and 5, this location houses both a MARTA station and open land which make it a potential candidate for further development. (Currently a MARTA-only exit.)
- 4) **I-285 / Covington Hwy:** This strategic intersection is centrally located in the county and already contains several retail and other commercial developments.
- 5) **Mall at Stone Crest:** This large mall is conveniently located on I-20 and has large tracts of developable land nearby to diversify its role as an employment center. To fully reach its potential, this employment center will need expanded transportation options.

Target Industries

- FPS
- Life Sciences
- Tourism
- Logistics
- CST
- Manufacturing

Supporting Industries

- Specialty Retail
- General Retail
- IT Services
- Educational Support Services



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHEAST DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

I-20/Lithonia Industrial Blvd.

Employment: 500

Businesses: 40

Total Square Feet: 470,000 SF

Total Revenues: \$54 Million



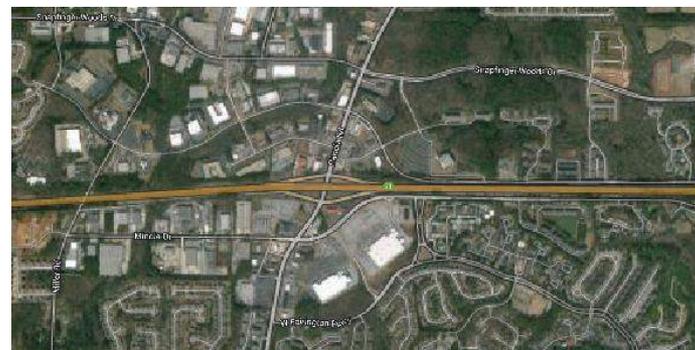
I-20/Panola Road

Employment: 3,900

Businesses: 295

Total Square Feet: 2.2 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$980 Million



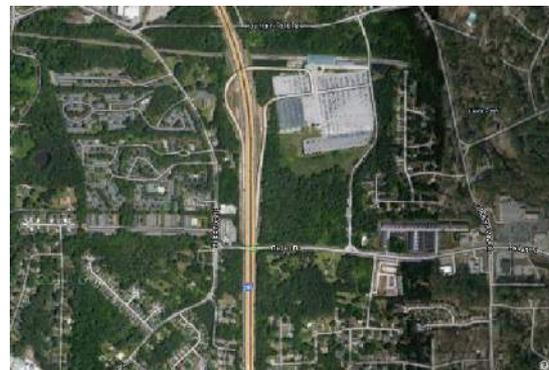
I-285/Indian Creek MARTA Station

Employment: 150

Businesses: 41

Total Square Feet: 250,000 SF

Total Revenues: \$40 Million



Source: ReferenceUSA

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

SOUTHEAST DEKALB: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

I-285 / Covington Highway

Employment: 680

Businesses: 121

Total Square Feet: 820,000 SF

Total Revenues: \$120 Million



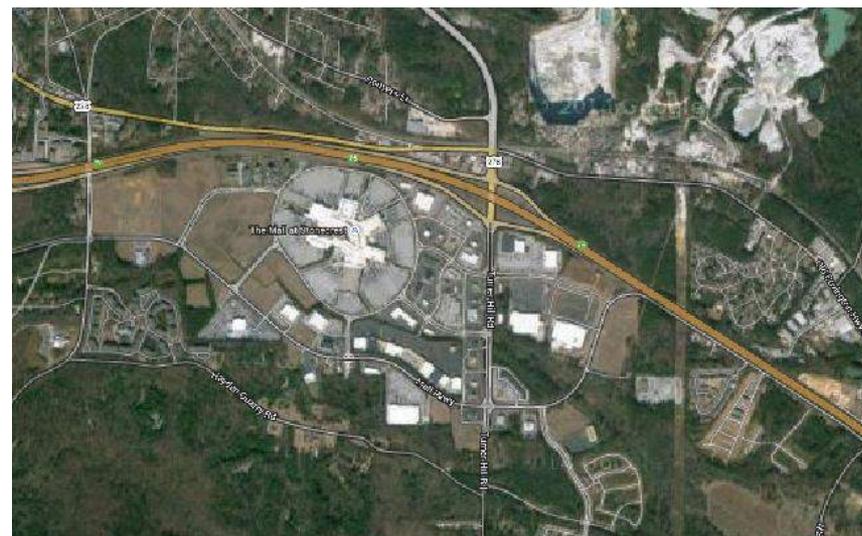
Stone Crest Mall

Employment: 4,630

Businesses: 363

Total Square Feet: 2.9 Million SF

Total Revenues: \$660 Million

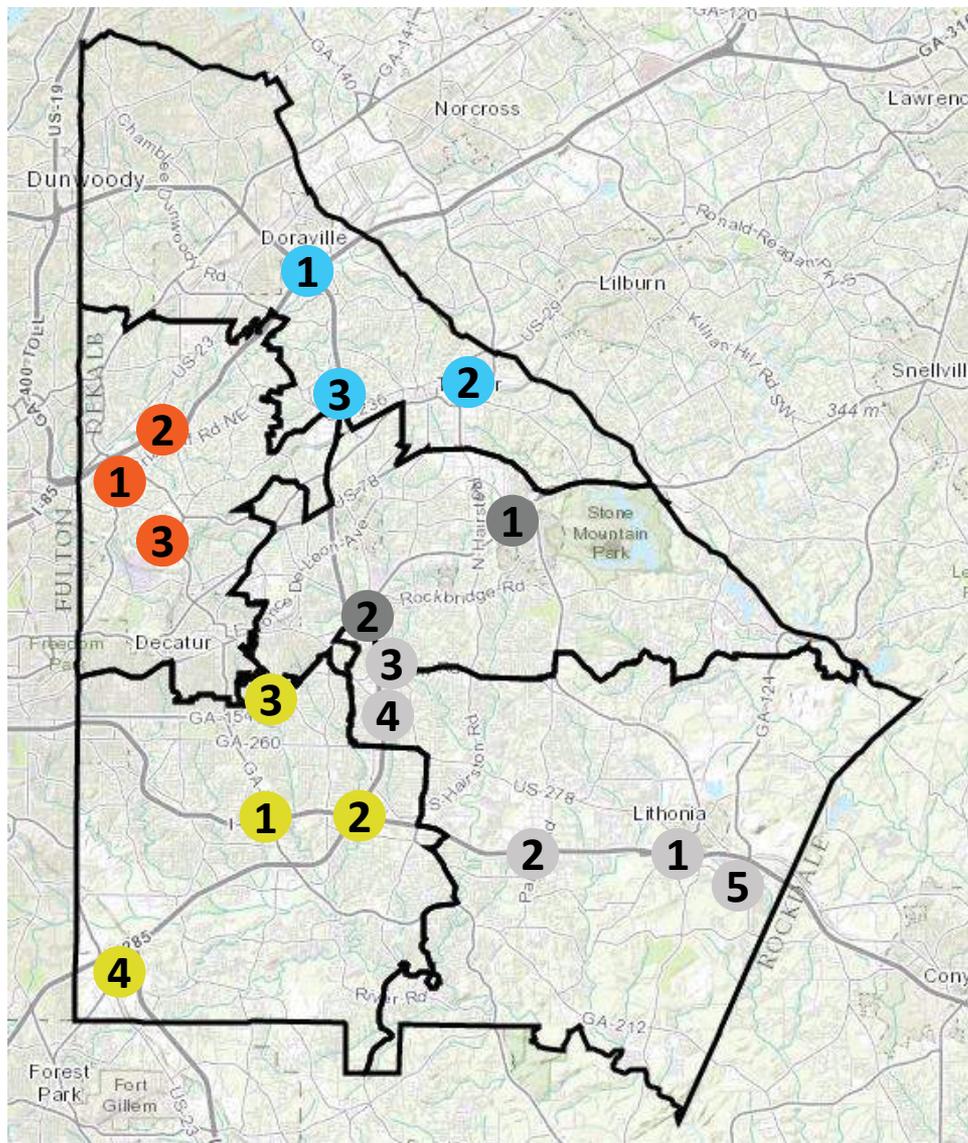


Source: ReferenceUSA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

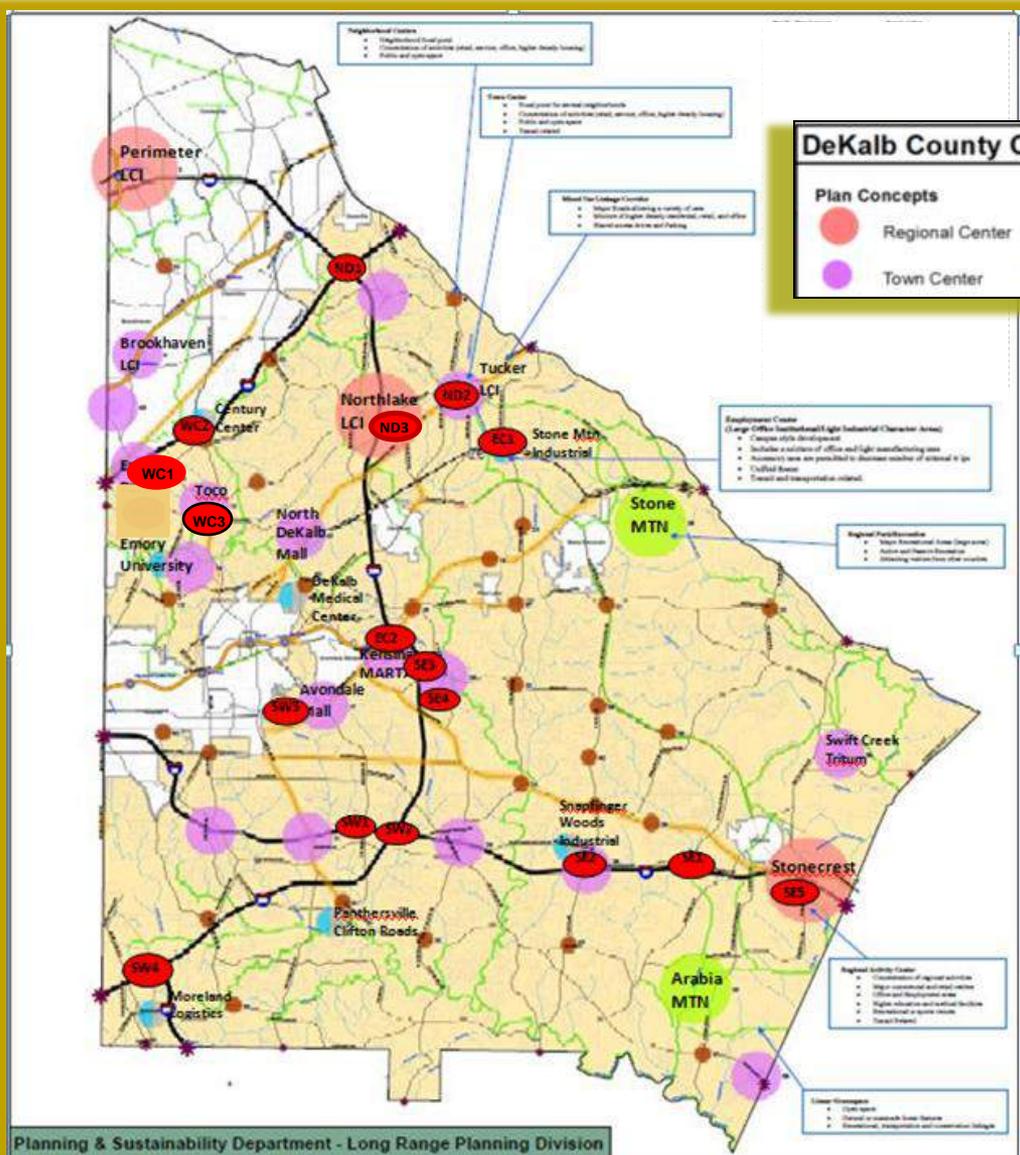
EMPLOYMENT CENTERS SUMMARY



	North DeKalb	West Central	South West	East Central	South East
FPS	✓	✓			
Life Sciences	✓	✓			✓
Tourism		✓		✓	✓
Logistics			✓	✓	✓
CST			✓	✓	
Manufacturing			✓		✓
Specialty Retail	✓	✓	✓		
General Retail			✓	✓	✓
IT Services	✓	✓			✓
Educational Support Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Employment Centers

EMPLOYMENT CENTERS SUMMARY



•The filters utilized for the selection of the employment centers included strategic location, data regarding levels of employment concentration and existing commercial activity, land availability, and affinity with target industries.

•The employment centers proposed offer new development and redevelopment opportunities.

•Emphasis for proposed employment centers was placed on prospects with higher concentrations of employment.

•There is significant congruence between the proposed centers and the County's Comp Plan.

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

ACTION 5: ENCOURAGE CLUSTERING THROUGH TARGET INDUSTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Clear, practical financial incentives and a friendly business climate are both indispensable assets in attracting and retaining businesses. However, given the increasingly competitive nature of the national economy, more comprehensive support for industries is required to remain a viable location choice. This support must expand beyond financial incentives and attend to wider business considerations.

There is much DeKalb County can do to provide support required by target industries, including:

- 1) become more business friendly*
- 2) actions that develop appropriate infrastructure*
- 3) ensure workforce needs are met*
- 4) encourage industry innovation and entrepreneurship*

Moreover, a targeted marketing campaign begins with:

- 1) marketing to specific industry conferences & trade shows as identified in the Target Industry report*
- 2) profiling each target industry in DADC's collateral material and website*

The following section will provide an action plan to encourage clustering and growth for each of the DeKalb County's target industries. These action plans were created to expand the opportunities of DeKalb County in attracting new companies, growing and retaining its existing stock of businesses and also growing new companies through entrepreneurial activities.



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Professional and Business Services Tool Kit

The PBS industry can generally be defined as work traditionally done in office spaces. This includes not only finance and insurance but also a variety of technical services such as legal support, accounting, computer design services, and others.

As part of one of the biggest Metro areas in the Southeastern United States, DeKalb County has great potential to have a flourishing PBS industry. DeKalb has potential to be competitive for regional offices and local entrepreneurial business service endeavors.

Industry Action Plan

1. Enact strategies to fundamentally change DeKalb's business climate
2. Encourage development of Class A office space and flex space within the county
3. Strengthen talent pipeline by creating professional service programs for high school students (Engineering, Architecture, etc.)
4. Supplement state level tax incentives for businesses that create well-paying jobs, i.e. 25% higher tax abatement for wages that are 20% higher than county average wages
5. Market to industry related conferences & trade shows as identified in the Target Industry report

BEST PRACTICE

FinanceMalta

FinanceMalta is a non-profit public-initiative that was established as Malta was joining the Eurozone. FinanceMalta was influential during the transition and has helped Malta develop into a highly respected center for international finance. The organization promotes Malta's assets for business and finance such as the low costs and friendly tax environment as well as collaborating with industry and government agencies to ensure a responsible yet efficient regulatory environment.

<http://www.financemalta.org/about-finance-malta>



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Life Sciences Tool Kit

This industry encompasses services that provide care and support the wellbeing of the body and mind as well as those businesses that support but do not directly participate in Health Care. These include research into new technologies and innovations, manufacturing of medical devices, and the development of “Health IT” software that consolidates and streamlines access to medical records and other information.

With its many world class research and academic institutions, DeKalb County has an abundance of prominent resources in the Life Sciences industry. The industry is already one of the largest employers in DeKalb, and is poised for continued success as the industry continues to surge nationally.

Industry Action Plan

1. Implement tax incentives to offset major costs to Life Sciences businesses, specifically for R&D equipment and high property costs of Life Sciences endeavors. Discount local taxes and fees by 50%, maximum \$250k benefit
2. Create a wet lab/technology incubator with local universities through public-private partnerships and Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants (3-5 years) to foster innovation and support for entrepreneurs.
3. Increase Venture Capital funding through corporate partnerships, similar to the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center Corporate Consortium program
4. Attend one to two industry related conferences & trade shows as identified in the Target Industry report

BEST PRACTICE

Science Accelerator

An excellent example of public-private collaboration, the Science Accelerator project created 9,000 SF of new wet lab space to foster the Life Sciences industry within Prince William County, VA. To build the facility, the Prince William County Department of Economic Development teamed up with two private companies to share costs. Additionally, all three will work out in collaboration to build-out leased spaces to tailor them exactly to tenants’ needs.

The facility is praised as a tool to catalyze the growth of the Life Sciences industry within the County. Additionally, it is hoped that the partnership will foster further private development within the County.

For more information, visit:

<http://accelerate.pwcecondev.org/>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Tourism Tool Kit

The tourism industry encompasses not only the natural and man-made attractions that draw tourists, but also the other businesses that support their visits. This includes travel-planning services, food services, lodging, and other accommodations.

The Development Authority has initiated discussions with the state about the possibility of establishing a Tourism Megasite designation. If this opportunity is realized, the county could become significantly more attractive to tourism-related businesses.

With Stone Mountain, DeKalb County already possesses the largest tourist attraction in the state of Georgia. The proximity to Atlanta, cultural sites, and other attractions such as Arabia Mountain all make the county viable as a tourism hub. The county boasts widespread historical sites and a plethora of natural environmental assets that can be combined to form weekend packages.

Industry Action Plan

1. Create and market two-day vacation packages that combine natural attractions, historical sites, arts, and retail
2. Diversify hotel options & encourage development of bed & breakfast facilities
3. Develop additional tourist attractions between Stone Mountain and Arabia Mountain
4. Improve infrastructure and safety of major thoroughfares between DeKalb and Atlanta
5. Explore development of a Convention Center and Sportsplex through public/private partnerships, funded by EB-5 Visa investors

BEST PRACTICE

Broad Street Arts and Cultural District

Located in Richmond, VA, the Broad Street Arts and Cultural District is an excellent example developing a cultural attracting to promote tourism and the arts. Featuring several different cultural “hubs”, the District provides several program and incentives to create artists live / work spaces, promote building restoration, and generally market and promote tourism and the arts within the district. Additionally, the District is expected to vastly broaden the city’s tax base as it encourages the restoration and use of underutilized buildings.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.yesrichmondva.com/neighborhood-revitalization/Broad-Street-ArtBiz-District>

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Logistics Tool Kit

The logistics industry is defined by the process of moving goods from the producer to the consumer and includes all of the planning, storage, and transportation this entails.

The Atlanta MSA is home to one of the world's busiest cargo airports, a robust rail network, and an interstate network with access to most of the Southern United States. DeKalb County, with easy access to those assets, is well positioned to build its Logistics industry.

Industry Action Plan

1. Improve road transportation infrastructure and aesthetics of the region with CIDs and TADs, specifically in the Moreland area
2. Participate in FTZ #26 with designation of industrial sites as FTZ's (2-5 years)
3. Develop additional incentives to companies operating under the FTZ designation, i.e. 20% higher tax abatements
4. Work with local high schools, universities, and trade schools to develop effective job training programs which teach modern logistics skills and practices
5. Create and implement aggressive marketing campaign which promotes DeKalb as a hub for air, road, and rail transportation and has access to major sea port (Savannah)

BEST PRACTICE

Arizona Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)

Arizona's FTZ program is considered the most progressive in the United States because along with offering all the benefits of a foreign trade zone it provides between 75-80% reduction in state property taxes. The reduction in property taxes applies for the entire length of time the company remains within the FTZ.

For more information, visit:

<http://pinalcountyz.gov/ed/incentivesprograms/Pages/ForeignTradeZone.aspx>

For information on the Georgia FTZ, visit:

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



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Construction & Support Trades Tool Kit

The CST industry involves the building of new or the renovation of existing man-made structures. This can be the construction of residential, commercial, or industrial buildings and also civil projects such as utilities or roads. This industry also encompasses businesses that enable construction, such as those who provide raw materials or construction equipment.

Construction & Support Trades is a unique industry in that it is difficult to directly incentivize and stimulate. Rather, the success of the construction industry often depends on the success of other local industries and the regional economy as a whole.

Industry Action Plan

1. Work with local high schools and trade schools to develop needed workforce development programs for construction and related trades
2. Implement a shovel ready certification program to attract development and streamline development and permitting process
3. Continue to encourage green and sustainable construction practices throughout DeKalb County

BEST PRACTICE

Iowa Shovel Ready Program

Shovel ready certification programs are designed to provide a standardized method of evaluating a site's development potential. Often times to be considered "shovel ready" a third party must ensure that all permitting and infrastructure is in place to develop the site. Once sites are shovel ready, they are aggressively marketed to site selectors and business decision makers as sites that will minimize the time and financial costs of their business expansion or relocation.

In 2010 the Iowa City Area Development Corp adopted a shovel ready program which encompasses seven counties in Eastern Iowa. The purpose of the program is to "create an inventory of pre-qualified, speculative sites ready for immediate development by end-users." Currently, the shovel ready program is marketing three certified sites totaling over 270 acres of development ready land.

For more information, visit:

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



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS: Encourage Clustering of Target Industries

Advanced Manufacturing Tool Kit

The Advanced Manufacturing industry is defined as the sector of the broader industry which best represents its future. This means smarter, greener, more innovative processes which evolve with the needs of the modern consumer.

The economic recovery, changing global business climate, and evolving public preferences have all led to a resurgence for some sectors of American manufacturing. DeKalb County, with its relatively low labor costs and access to transportation infrastructure, can utilize this resurgence to help accomplish its own economic revitalization.

Industry Action Plan

1. Incentivize improvements to industrial parks to enhance competitiveness
2. Implement comprehensive strategy to encourage modernization of existing manufacturing infrastructure
3. Implement a shovel ready certification program to attract new industries
4. Leverage existing industry clusters to encourage related manufacturing, i.e. use prominence of Life Sciences industry to promote medical device manufacturing within the county
5. Create a “Makers’ Space” to support manufacturing entrepreneurs and promote innovation
6. Market the county’s high school and tech school manufacturing job training programs

BEST PRACTICE

Makers’ Space

A relatively new development, makers’ spaces provide access to workshop space as well as cutting edge manufacturing tools such as 3D printers and laser cutters to their members. The growing prevalence of such spaces is changing the business model for entrepreneurialism in manufacturing. Individuals with an idea no longer need \$100,000 in capital to produce a prototype. By sharing in the cost of equipment and space through membership dues, the barrier to entry can be reduced to the range of roughly \$2,000 to \$4,000 for entrepreneurs looking to produce a prototype. The Federal Government has begun a partnership with TechShop, a prominent player in the maker space industry, to offer veterans free membership through GE’s Get Skills to Work coalition.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/alltechconsidered/2014/04/30/306235442/high-tech-maker-spaces-helping-little-startups-make-it-big>

http://www.techshop.ws/press_releases.html?action=detail&press_release_id=54



Enhancing Quality of Place

For many businesses, quality of place and employee satisfaction are important considerations when choosing a location. This is increasingly true as the economy continues to recover and cost factors are not as dominant a concern, allowing businesses to have more flexibility in their decision making process.

DeKalb County has many of the natural assets to be a leader in quality of place. Locations such as Stone Mountain and Arabia Mountain, as well as its close proximity to the City of Atlanta, allow residents access to both natural and urban attractions. Many cities in DeKalb County have strong quality of place as well.

Establishments in the Life Sciences and Professional and Business Services industries provide well paying jobs, and many of the cities have vibrant suburban neighborhoods and excellent schools.

However, this quality of place does not extend countywide. Therefore, countywide plans must be implemented to address quality of place. In addition to very real issues faced by many residents, this reputation further perpetuates the cycle by discouraging business investment and reducing opportunities for advancement.

For an economic development strategy to be effective and benefit all of DeKalb's citizens, it is essential that measures be taken to address these quality of place issues. The action plan below focuses on key steps that should start this undertaking.



Employment Centers Action Plan

1. Incorporate new employment centers in next comp plan update
2. Improve Infrastructure & Aesthetics of Major Corridors
3. Provide Support to School System to Facilitate Improvement
4. Address Crime
5. Develop Cultural Identity
6. Consider Game-Changing Projects



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 1: REVIEW & FINALIZE NEW EMPLOYMENT CENTERS IN NEXT COMP PLAN UPDATE

DeKalb's current Comp Plan establishes a thorough framework for the county's future development. This report builds upon the County's comprehensive plan and provides a path for enhancements through the year 2040.

The proposed employment centers need additional vetting and we recommend that they be incorporated into the next revision of the DeKalb County Comp Plan.

The vetting process should consider items such as:

- 1) **Land ownership**
- 2) **Definition of boundaries**
- 3) **Key stakeholder and neighborhood acceptance**

A complementary approach to land use and zoning must be implemented to support the establishment and growth of the employment centers.



Key Steps

- 1) **Conduct a thorough assessment of proposed sites**
- 2) **Provide connectivity for employment centers**
- 3) **Create Gateways**
- 4) **Implement Appropriate Zoning Changes**



QUALITY OF PLACE: Include Employment Centers in Comp Plan

ACTION 1: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Conduct thorough assessment of proposed sites: Public input is an essential to further assisting the viability of the proposed centers. We recommend incorporating the employment centers as part of the comprehensive plan, with neighborhood feedback for any potential zoning changes or proposed development. Likewise, land ownership patterns and other potential conflicts should be vetted to ensure proactive resolution of issues impacting the employment centers.

2) Provide connectivity for employment centers: As part of the broader strategy, effort should be made to better connect the employment centers. This could be accomplished through improving existing road infrastructure and street connectivity in and around the centers. Additionally, consideration should be given to expanding transit options. While heavy rail expansions may be currently unattainable due to funding, more busing, increased car pool incentives and other measures can reduce traffic and increase commercial activity.

3) Create Gateways: Another important way to integrate these employment centers in the Comp Plan and develop their identity is to encourage the creation of “gateways.” These gateways should include prominent and effective signage, landscaping, and a name that defines their identity. These gateways not only clearly delineate the geographical boundaries of the employment centers but also help develop a brand and culture around the employment centers and for the county.

4) Implement Appropriate Zoning Changes: Finally, the anticipated zoning discussed in the last section should be incorporated into the Comp Plan to ensure compatibility with broader development strategies and increase transparency.

SAMPLE GATEWAYS



Atlanta Beltline (<http://beltline.org/visit/trails/>)



Dallas, TX: The Design District (<http://www.dallasdesigndistrict.net/>)



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 2: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE & AESTHETICS OF MAJOR CORRIDORS

The creation, redevelopment, and integration of employment centers is critical for the county's economic vitality. However, it is important that DeKalb County emphasize broader redevelopment. Specifically, the county needs to invest in infrastructure improvements, such as walkability, street connectivity, and beautification projects along its major corridors.

Many tools are available to promote this redevelopment. Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) can be utilized to fund infrastructure and beautification projects that will encourage further investments. CIDs are a proven strategy in DeKalb County, with Perimeter CID often cited as one of the best in the state. **DeKalb should leverage the investments of the existing Stone Mountain, Tucker-Northlake, and East Metro CIDs.**

CIDs, essentially a voluntary tax on businesses, require significant community buy in to be effectively implemented. Tax Allocation Districts are a viable, if slightly riskier, alternative to CIDs as improvements are not funded by direct taxes but rather by the expected higher property taxes that result from the improvements. Important to their success is the participation of the school system.

Key Steps

- 1) Utilize CIDs and TADs to fund infrastructure and beautification projects, especially along South Memorial Drive**
- 2) Package highway interchange improvements to accommodate logistics industry in Moreland area**
- 3) Consider different options for long-term transportation financing**

BEST PRACTICE

The Atlanta Beltline Tax Allocation District Atlanta, GA

One of the largest redevelopment and mobility projects in the U.S. The comprehensive revitalization effort provides a network of public parks, multi-use trails and transit by re-using 22-miles of historic railroad corridors circling downtown and connecting 45 neighborhoods directly to each other. The plan was created to change the core dynamic of the city, bringing a number of disparate neighborhoods together under one vision that will transform the individual neighborhoods into one cohesive community, while still maintaining the individual character of each.

The project is powered by Tax Allocation District (TAD) Funding that anchors a 25-year financial plan. Since 2005, the Atlanta Beltline has received \$120 million from TAD bonds/tax increment, and \$179.5 million from private and local government sources, including \$37.5 million donated by private and philanthropic organizations.

For more information: <http://beltline.org/>

QUALITY OF PLACE: Improve Infrastructure & Aesthetics

ACTION 2: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Utilize CIDs and TADs to fund infrastructure and beautification projects, especially along South Memorial Drive: Capitalizing on the already successful employment centers in the County's municipalities will enhance the opportunities for success within the unincorporated area corridors. It is one of the most important commercial corridors, passing through the heart of DeKalb County and linking it to Atlanta.

Other major corridors such as Covington Highway and Glenwood Road can also play important roles. As these corridors are transformed to become more attractive, commercial appeal is increased and people from Atlanta and other surrounding areas are more likely to be interested in DeKalb.

The CEO's task force to spearhead development at key segments of Memorial Drive is an important initiative and a step in the right direction. A CID for the Moreland area and a joint CID between DeKalb County and city of Atlanta should be considered for South Memorial drive (from 2nd avenue to Columbia Drive) following the joint model of the Perimeter CID. The CIDs will provide funding for cleaning up and beautification projects and later a TAD is recommended to spear private sector investment on for these important corridors.

2) Package highway interchange improvements to accommodate logistics industry in Moreland area: Another prime candidate for targeted infrastructure improvements would be at the Moreland Industrial and Logistics cluster. Two major interchanges have been identified on HW 675 and HW 285 to accommodate the growth and needs of existing businesses.

Improving transportation infrastructure there would greatly enhance shipping capacity and increase logistics and commercial activity in the area. Federal grants from the Economic Development Administration could be utilized to secure funding for feasibility studies of these projects and help promote their undertaking.

Efforts must be extended to include these projects on the state's future transportation capital investments. The Moreland area is the first inland port from the Port of Savannah, and the closest logistics cluster to the City of Atlanta, so these projects are important to the county and also to the state in order to promote the growth of the Logistics industry in the Atlanta MSA.

BEST PRACTICE

Louisville International Airport

The Louisville Renaissance Zone is a 3,000-acre zone south of Louisville International Airport that was established as a tax-increment financing (TIF) district to fund infrastructure improvements that would encourage industrial development. The TIF allowed for public infrastructure improvements, formation of the Renaissance South Business Park and establishment of the Renaissance South Business Park Owner's Association. In 2008, UPS located its regional ground-sorting operation, Centennial Hub, on 60 acres in the Renaissance South Business Park, which houses 1,100 employees and approximately 180 delivery vehicles and trucks. In 2012, Ford Motor Company leased approximately 15 acres in the park to support its Louisville Assembly Plant. A 1,400 vehicle storage-and-staging lot and a new thoroughfare to the lot's entrance have been constructed.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.flylouisville.com/renaissance-zone-corporation/louisville-renaissance-zone-corporation-2/>

QUALITY OF PLACE: Improve Infrastructure & Aesthetics

ACTION 2: KEY STEPS DETAILED

3) Consider different options for long-term transportation financing: While CIDs, TADs and other methods of funding can be crucial for funding specific projects, the county needs to consider new ways of funding the maintenance of existing roadways and investment in new infrastructure. Currently only 20% of the HOST tax goes to fund infrastructure, with the majority of that money being directed towards the incorporated cities. This leaves the county with only about \$5 million per year to fund transportation projects, an insufficient quantity for maintenance and new development.

Under the current funding scheme, DeKalb will only have \$50 million to fund infrastructure for the next 30 years, \$15 million for new projects and \$35 million for maintenance of existing roadway systems.

As addressed in the county's transportation plan, there are several options to increase funding:

- 1) The first would be to increase the proportion of the HOST tax dedicated to infrastructure to 50%.
- 2) Another option would be to create an additional .5% to 1% LOST like Cobb and Gwinnett counties, although this would be contingent upon getting an exemption from the state government.
- 3) A third possibility would be a one mil increase to the property tax, although this is less practical as DeKalb already has high property taxes compared to the region.
- 4) Alternatively, a transportation fee could be adopted to provide funding. A transportation fee could be assessed through a Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST), pending an exemption from the state government. The fee could also be assessed using a Transportation Utility Fee, as outlined in the 2014 Transportation Plan.



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 3: PROVIDE SUPPORT TO SCHOOL SYSTEM TO FACILITATE IMPROVEMENT

A strong school system is important for economic development, both for attracting and retaining family-oriented young professionals and for ensuring the next generation of DeKalb’s workforce has the skills and training needed to succeed and advance.

DeKalb’s public school system, as well as many city schools, are doing well and are viewed favorably. Countywide, the public school system has made significant progress toward accreditation, but challenges remain. High school graduation rates, despite recent improvements, are still less than ideal, especially when considering new Federal reporting standards. Providing support to the school system as it continues to improve is fundamental for an economic development strategy to have countywide results.

Sustained economic growth in DeKalb would by itself be a major catalyst for improvements in the county’s schools.

Key Steps

- 1) Expand educational partnerships and internships with private sector (Adopt a School programs)**
- 2) Better leverage specialized academic programs**
- 3) Consider funding tuition for low income students to attend local Universities /colleges**
- 4) Incorporate and market local school information into DADC website**
- 5) Organize stakeholder visits to communities that have successfully improved education outcomes**

BEST PRACTICE

Center for Advanced Research and Technology

CART was created in 2000 to collaborate with businesses and community agencies to educate high school students in an atmosphere using a variety of curricular disciplines. The program is organized to prepare students to work in four career clusters: Professional Sciences, Engineering, Advanced Communications, and Global Economics. Students work in career-specific laboratories to complete industry-based projects and receive advanced academic credit for English, science, math, and technology. All classes at CART are college preparatory and satisfy all academic requirements of the California State University and University of California systems.

For more information, visit:
<http://www.cart.org/>

QUALITY OF PLACE: Improve Schools

ACTION 3: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Expand educational partnerships with private sector (Adopt a School programs): A key step easily undertaken is the establishment of a mentorship / partnership program similar to the Austin Partners in Education project. DeKalb County has an abundance of highly-skilled and educated workers. If given the opportunity, these workers can greatly benefit the community by volunteering to mentor students in economically disadvantaged communities and by helping them succeed at critical junctures of their education. These partnerships can be expounded upon to form internship programs, which provide specific job training for students and allow them to build relationships with area businesses. Multiple businesses can also adopt schools to help them with both infrastructure improvement as well as academic support.

2) Better leverage specialized academic programs: While the school system currently has specialized education programs for skills such as nursing and manufacturing, these programs are not sufficiently leveraged. Like internship programs, the schools need to work closely with private employers to ensure the programs are relevant and provide skills needed to succeed in the workplace and to provide alignment with skills needed for target industries. If the programs do prove successful in providing workers with needed skills, private funding could be secured to improve and expand the programs. These programs and their successes should also be better marketed to increase both student and employer awareness and interest.

Programs that engage students and provide them with marketable skills are the most likely to improve DeKalb's education system, as well as the economic and social environment of the county as a whole.

3) Consider Higher Education Funding Programs: Another educational tool that should be considered by DeKalb County is the adoption of a program that guarantees funding for higher education to qualifying students. There are proven approaches that could be used to determine which students qualify for such a program. For example, students could be required to maintain a certain GPA (3.0 or higher), have lived in DeKalb County for a certain length of time, or attend a DeKalb County college or university. Such programs not only reward high performing students, but also give younger students the incentive and hope to complete high school education. While the county can provide some funds, partnerships with local corporations and businesses should be pursued for the majority of the funding.

BEST PRACTICE

Austin Partners in Education

Austin Partners in Education is a volunteer driven organization designed to benefit students through the Austin School District's partnership with over 200 Austin area government agencies, businesses, and community organizations.

The programs target historically under-resourced or economically disadvantaged communities with small group instruction to support students at critical junctions in their education. In addition to general mentoring, Austin Partners in Education provides for specific programs to help students at certain grade levels.

The program serves approximately 3,300 students and utilizes over 1,800 volunteers.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.austinpartners.org/aboutus>

QUALITY OF PLACE: Improve Schools

ACTION 3: KEY STEPS DETAILED

4) Incorporate school information into DADC website: The successful education of DeKalb's next generation of workers is important for the county's future, and the DADC should accordingly facilitate programs to improve learning. In addition to working with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to facilitate internship programs and other private sector partnerships, the DADC can promote and market these and other education support programs on its website. By providing a one-stop resource for the partnerships and initiatives, the DADC will not only raise awareness, but also show that the community is actively invested in DeKalb's youth.

Establishing an active collaboration between the school system and the County's Division of Youth Services and Parks and Recreation after-school programs can enhance opportunities for children.

5) Organize stakeholder visits to communities that have successfully improved education outcomes: Many communities in Georgia and in the Southeast U.S. have had great success in improving education in recent years. DeKalb County should organize key educational stakeholders (school administrators, county commissioners, business leaders, etc.) to visit these communities and meet with the leaders who implemented change. By seeing first hand the education programs, public-private partnerships, and other initiatives that improved educational outcomes, vital knowledge can be gained in finding solutions for DeKalb County.

BEST PRACTICE

Kalamazoo, MI

The Kalamazoo Promise is a program established by the city of Kalamazoo, Michigan in 2005. The program, funded through anonymous business donors, provides for a proportion of funding based on the amount of grades the child attended within the city's public school district.

The program allows for businesses in Kalamazoo to take part in supporting the public sector and is considered a tool for economic development by the city. Enrollment in the city's school district has gone up 16 percent since the beginning of the program. Currently nine out of 10 high school graduates go on to pursue a college degree. A PromiseNet conference was started in 2013 to promote such a program to other cities. El Dorado, Denver, Detroit, New Haven, and Michigan all have similar programs.

For more information, visit:

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



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 4: ADDRESS CRIME

While some areas of the County enjoy significant safety, others remain as a challenge. Both violent crime and property crime rates are substantially higher than those of neighboring counties and of the Atlanta MSA as a whole. Moreover, while nearby counties have been fairly successful in reducing crime in recent years, DeKalb's crime rates remain very similar to their 2005 levels.

Crime is a hindrance to economic development, and lack of economic opportunity draws more people to crime, thus reinforcing a negative cycle. The county has increased its police force and is working to implement crime reduction strategies which will allow for the roots of economic development to take hold.

Key Steps

- 1) Adopt targeted neighborhood policing strategy**
- 2) Support redevelopment through NCPD's environmental design principles**
- 3) Engage in business partnerships targeted to reduce crime**
- 4) Organize stakeholder visits to communities that have successfully reduced crime**

BEST PRACTICES

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, National Crime Prevention Council (NCPD)

Between 2007 and 2009, members of the National Crime Prevention Council, on behalf of the US Department of Justice's Community Capacity Development Office, worked with ten communities to reduce crime through environmental design. These ten communities faced severe problems with drug dealing, substance abuse, prostitution, and violent assaults.

Using the four principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, these communities were able to reduce the perceived threat of crime, the actual number of crimes, increase perceived safety, and improve overall quality of life.

The four principles are Access Control, Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement and Maintenance.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.ncpc.org/resources/files/pdf/training/Best%20Practices%20in%20CPTED%20-2.pdf>



QUALITY OF PLACE: Address Crime

ACTION 4: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Adopt targeted neighborhood policing strategy: Increased law enforcement is usually one of the first, and most obvious, solutions presented to reduce crime. The County has a plan to increase police officers and increase its efficiency. In addition to these efforts, we recommend that targeted neighborhood policing programs, such as the one adopted by Seattle, be considered. These programs are effective for balancing police forces and reducing response times.

2) Support redevelopment through NCPC's environmental design principles: Another method DeKalb County can use to reduce crime is by denying criminals opportunities through designed redevelopment. CIDs and other redevelopment programs should follow the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design study published by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCP). Following the principles outlined will reduce the opportunity for crime and change the appearance that crime is acceptable.

3) Engage in business partnerships targeted to reduce crime: DeKalb County should also explore corporate partnership programs to provide mentorship to at risk youth and reduce violent crime. The NCPC sponsors such programs, which aim to reduce crime through support to troubled communities and by publicizing and marketing anti-violence efforts.

4) Organize stakeholder visits to communities that have successfully reduced crime: As with education, seeing success elsewhere can inspire success at home. The county should arrange for key stakeholders to visit nearby communities that have successfully reduced crime to see what solutions were implemented and meet with the local leaders who brought about the change.

BEST PRACTICES

Seattle Neighborhood Policing Plan

As part of its 2007 strategic plan, the Seattle Police Department developed a comprehensive neighborhood policing plan. The plan had three major goals: to reduce response times, provide better back up, and allow more time for proactive police work. To accomplish this plan, the Department restructured itself to a more balanced distribution of officers and hired 60 additional officers to force. As a result, police response times have been reduced to about 6 minutes on average and the Department is better organized to meet the law enforcement needs of the city.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/programs/NPP.htm>

List of Cities to Potentially Visit*

New Orleans, LA

Tampa, FL

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC

Greensboro, NC

Laredo, TX

*List was determined by using FBI crime statistics for U.S. cities with a population between 200,000 and 1,000,000. Each city listed has seen at least a 30% reduction in its crime rate between 2007 and 2012.



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 5: DEVELOP CULTURAL IDENTITY

Though the entire Atlanta Metro area has a vibrant culture, DeKalb County has not established a clear identity separate from the region as a whole. By and large, DeKalb fails to stand out amongst the neighboring counties and is hardly recognized outside the Atlanta area. Creating a strong, unified cultural identity for DeKalb County can dramatically change perceptions of the county and improve its overall quality of place.

Such an identity can be important economically through expanding services provided and attracting tourism, and socially in developing the unified voice and sense of community the county needs.

DeKalb has assets in the Buford Highway Corridor, which offers a plethora of international and ethnic restaurants, and hosts ethnical cultural events.

While creating economic opportunities is paramount in solving social issues, embracing a unique identity for all of DeKalb can be an important step in bridging the North-South polarization.

Key Steps

- 1) Promote DeKalb Farmer's Market as a cultural attraction
- 2) Encourage the arts through incentivized art districts
- 3) Develop a for-profit arts incubator
- 4) Encourage festivals which celebrate ethnic heritage

BEST PRACTICE

The Atlanta Goat Farm

Created in 2008, The Goat Farm has quickly become one of the largest and most successful artist environments in the United States. With a profit-oriented structure that stresses return on investment in artists, the Farm provides live / work spaces and, to the few artists who pass the rigorous review, over \$150,000 in funding annually. The unique model has been largely successful in promoting the arts in a state that where they have historically been a low priority.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.businessinsider.com/goat-farm-leads-atlantas-arts-scene-2013-6>



QUALITY OF PLACE: Develop Cultural Identity

ACTION 5: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Promote DeKalb Farmer’s Market as a cultural attraction: The DeKalb Farmer’s Market in the City of Decatur is an excellent existing asset. Widely considered the best farmer’s market in the Atlanta area and already a local cultural icon, the DFM should be promoted both regionally and nationally by the DADC as a must see for visitors to Atlanta. As Americans grow more healthy and quality conscious, the appeal of the DFM will continue to grow and the county should leverage its success accordingly.

2) Encourage the arts through incentivized art districts: A thriving art scene is another necessity for fresh, modern cultural identity. One way to encourage artists and draw them to DeKalb county is to make their work a financially viable employment option. This can be accomplished through sales and income tax exemptions in select communities to encourage artists to live and work together. Consideration should be given to expanding already incipient arts initiatives such as those in nearby Stone Mountain, Avondale Estates, and the City of Decatur.

3) Develop a for-profit arts incubator: Another way to promote the arts and encourage artist interaction would be the creation of a for-profit arts incubator similar to “The Goat Farm” nearby in Atlanta. By providing profit-oriented funding, lodging, networking and other resources, creating a competing accelerator would be an exciting way to revitalize the county’s art scene and enable DeKalb to rival Atlanta as a cultural destination (5-7 year goal).

4) Encourage festivals which celebrate ethnic heritage: DeKalb County, and the Atlanta MSA in general, is an area rich with cultural diversity. This represents a major opportunity for the county in that ethnic heritage celebrations can be woven into the county’s unique voice. Not only can these festivals be a huge draw for tourists, but they also promote the county as a tolerant, diverse to live and visit.

BEST PRACTICE

Salt Lake City Greek Festival

The largest ethnic festival in Utah, the Salt Lake City Greek Festival draws over 50,000 visitors every September. The festival celebrates all aspects of Greek culture, heritage, and faith and appeals to all ages. Festival goers enjoy “...live music and dancing performances, authentic Greek cuisine, an outdoor marketplace and "kafeneio", and plenty of family-friendly activities.”

For more information, visit:
<http://www.saltlakegreekfestival.com/>



QUALITY OF PLACE

ACTION 6: CONSIDER GAME CHANGING PROJECTS

Strategic, methodical planning and development is essential for DeKalb County's coming economic revitalization. That does not mean that the county should completely discount dramatic, large-scale developments such as a convention center. Such "game changing" projects, when incorporated into the broader economic development strategy, can diversify the economy, contribute to the regional identity, and add character.

The county government and DADC can be very influential in shaping these projects and selling DeKalb as an excellent site for such projects. That said, it must be private investment which drives these projects. Towards this end, the county has a variety of tools to attract private investors to play a key role in the county's resurgence.

Key Steps

- 1) Consider a multi-purpose Convention Center facility
- 2) Consider a multi-purpose sportsplex facility
- 3) Leverage EB-5 Visa program to fund needed infrastructure

BEST PRACTICE

Blaine, MN

The National Sports Center (NSC) in Blaine, MN is the largest amateur sports and meeting facility in the world. In addition to providing facilities for a variety of indoor and outdoor sports, the NSC also has an expo center, resident lodging, as well as hosts numerous fitness classes and camps. Although DeKalb County likely can't support as sprawling a complex, the NSC provides an excellent example of developing infrastructure to promote amateur athletics.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.nscsports.org/page/show/464698-home>



QUALITY OF PLACE: Implement Game Changing Projects

ACTION 6: KEY STEPS DETAILED

1) Consider a multi-purpose Convention Center facility: Trade and entertainment conventions attracts thousands of visitors who often spend several days patronizing local restaurants, hotels, and other establishments. DeKalb County is large enough to support a multipurpose convention center, and can act a competitive, low cost alternative to the City of Atlanta.

Moreover, such a facility should accommodate local community needs such high school graduations, wedding events and other local events. The county's proximity to he Jackson-Hartsfield Airport provides easy access from anywhere in the world, making DeKalb a viable candidate for major conventions. Implementation of this project could be greatly supported by a tourism mega site designation currently sought by the Development Authority and the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

2) Consider a multi-purpose sportsplex facility: Youth and amateur sports are quickly growing sectors of the American Tourism industry. As with the convention center, the international airport and multiple interstate highways make DeKalb a viable candidate to attract sports related events from across the region and the nation. By building a large, dedicated sports complex, DeKalb can capitalize on these advantages to become Georgia's top destination for sports tournaments, training camps, and other events. Although such a project was considered not feasible in the past, another look into it is recommended as conditions for the such project may have changed.

3) Leverage EB-5 Visa program to fund needed infrastructure: One method for funding these game changing projects, as well as employment center redevelopment and other major investment undertakings, could be through the EB-5 Visa program. This program, created in 1990, allows foreign investors to attain a Visa by making a job creating investment of at least \$1 million dollars in the United States (\$500,000 for areas with high unemployment). As detailed throughout this report, the county currently has many redevelopment and investment opportunities. The county should consider a joint venture with a local private sector interests to create a Regional Center of investment opportunities in DeKalb.

BEST PRACTICE

Pflugerville EB-5 Visa Initiative

Texas Lonestar Enterprises and the Pflugerville Community Development Corporation (PCDC) have taken advantage of the EB-5 program in Pflugerville, TX for the creation of a three phase commercial business park known as 130 Commerce Center. Each phase of the project includes two 120,000 square feet flex space buildings that will be built on 15 acres of land.

The 130 Commerce Center business park is being constructed in a "Targeted Employment Area." There are a total of 90 foreign investors involved with the project, thus, \$45,000,000 and 900 jobs are required under EB-5 visa requirements. An economic impact study conducted by AngelouEconomics determined the capital investment will actually garner between 1,321 and 3,600 job creations including construction jobs.

For more information visit: <http://www.uscis.gov>

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Continued performance evaluation is a critical component to the success of DeKalb County's economic development efforts. The DADC should include progress updates toward implementation in their quarterly reports to the Board of Commissioners. The performance measurements proposed on the following pages will assist the county's economic development department in effectively measuring the implementation of the strategies within this plan.

Transparency and accountability will greatly contribute to increasing private sector support.

Economic developers and program managers will have an opportunity to demonstrate the positive results of their efforts and for the public to determine whether resources are well spent and whether the community's assets are being properly applied. Project partners must agree upon a concise set of the most appropriate performance measures and a schedule for the periodic reporting of results.

DeKalb and its project partners should hold an annual "scorecard" meeting to review progress. Additionally, the county should consider creating a website to track performance metrics and maintain accountability to its citizens for the effectiveness of the region's programs and initiatives.

Business Climate

Permitting

- Number of commercial/residential permits issued annually
- Average duration of commercial/residential permitting process
- Percentage of permitting completed online
- Ratings of permitting process through post-permitting survey

EDO

- Deal conversion rate (rate of prospects into projects)
- Number of prospect inquiries
- Number of prospect visits
- Number of annual BR&E visits
- Percentage of businesses surveyed and profiled
- Ratings of overall business climate through BR&E survey

Marketing and Branding

- Website visitor engagements
 - Average number of clickthroughs on website
 - Average number of page views by visitors
 - Average time spent on website
- Number of social media followers (twitter, linkedin, facebook, etc.)
- Number of social media shares (re-tweets, likes, etc.)
- Number of subscribers to content (newsletter)
- R&E survey



Economy

- Average wage
- Total wages and percent change
- Per capita income
- Public vs. private sector income
- Total new jobs
- Average wages for new jobs
- GDP growth
- Population/ demographic changes
- Higher degree attainment of 25-44 demographic
- Local new job listings
- Unemployment rate

Infrastructure

Residential

- Average price of multi family rent
- Average price of housing sales
- Average price of new homes
- No. of months in single family inventory

Commercial

- Office, industrial absorption/vacancy
- Office, industrial price/square feet
- Average no. of days to issue development permits

Transportation

- Average commute time
- Average speed on major roadways, including highway

Target Industry

Growth

- Jobs created/lost related to target industries
- Number of total firm expansions/relocations
- Total capital investment
- Tax revenues generated
- ROI of ED budget to total new jobs and income (annual)

Target Industry Talent Pool

- Total number of annual higher degree graduates
- Percentage of annual STEM related graduates vs. non-STEM graduates
- Number of high school graduates
- Percent of high school graduates enrolling in college/technical school
- Number awarded certificates via workforce development programs

Employment Centers

- Employment center business growth
- Employment center job creation
- Employment center gross revenues
- Number of new development projects
- Changes in property values

Entrepreneurial Metrics

Business Creation

- New business starts (incorporations)
- Number of incubated businesses
- Percentage of minority / women owned businesses

Capital and R&D Activity

- Angel and venture funding
- R&D spending
- ROI of private investment to public investment (annual)

International

- Value of exports
- Foreign direct investment
- Number of international inquiries
- Number of qualified leads

SUMMARY OF INCENTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below summarizes the financial incentive policy recommendations found throughout this report:

Name	Description	Currently Implemented	Recommendations
Homestead-Option Sales Tax (HOST)	The HOST is an optional sales tax in the State of Georgia. Currently 80% of HOST revenues go to property tax relief and 20% go to infrastructure improvements.	Yes	Revise HOST to increase the share of revenue going to infrastructure development and / or divert some revenue to support commercial real estate
Local Option Sales Tax (LOST)	An alternative to HOST, the LOST provides more flexibility in the application of revenue streams.	No	Adopt TSPLOST to fund transportation infrastructure improvements. Can also be used to support commercial development.
Permit Incentives	Permitting fees can be waived or discounted for capital investments or for small business / entrepreneurs	No	Implement 50% discount in development and permitting fees for capital investments < \$25m; 75% for <\$50m and 100% for >\$100m. For small businesses (<50 employees) 100% discount for <15 employees; 70% discount for >15-50 employees. Both new and existing businesses should qualify for these incentives.
Property Tax Incentives	Property taxes on business property can be reduced or waived in a manner similar to permitting fees. Additionally, tax increases that result from the increased property values of private redevelopment can be waived.	Yes	Adopt property tax abatements in a structure similar to permit fee waivers. Place a five year hold on property assessments for qualifying redevelopment projects (i.e. manufacturing / logistics)
Sales Tax incentives	Reduction or elimination of local sales tax on utilities is an excellent way to support small businesses and entrepreneurship.	No	Waive utility sales tax for qualifying entrepreneurs / tech companies. Waive all sales taxes for special businesses, such as self-employed artists

The table below summarizes the financial incentive policy recommendations found throughout this report:

Name	Description	Currently Implemented	Recommendations
Capital Recovery Fee Incentives	These fees, used to recoup the cost of utility expansion and connection, can be costly to businesses looking to expand or relocate into a new development	No	Provide a 50-70% discount on capital recovery fees to qualifying businesses
R&D Grants	The costs of developing a working product / prototype are often the greatest challenge faced by many tech and life sciences businesses	No	Develop a grant program to support promising life sciences endeavors to help offset the costs of R&D
CIDs	Community Improvement Districts are a voluntary tax on businesses within a specific jurisdiction, with the revenues generated to support infrastructure and beautification projects.	Yes	Utilize CIDs to promote redevelopment along key commercial corridors (Moreland, Memorial Drive)
TADs	Tax Allocation Districts utilize loans backed by anticipated tax increases that result from redevelopment to fund infrastructure, beautification, and similar projects.	Yes	Utilize TADs to promote redevelopment along key commercial corridors (Moreland, Memorial Drive)
New Market Tax Credits	The NMTC program uses federal funds to support local economic development organizations secure private investors to support local businesses. Investors receive a 39% tax credit on their investment over the course of 7 years.	No	Leverage the NMTC program to support local businesses, particularly in the highly distressed areas of south and central DeKalb.



DESIGN & USE OF INCENTIVES

The following 10 guidelines are basic principles that should be incorporated into the use of incentives at the county level.

INCENTIVE CREATION GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICES

- 1. Define Specific Goals, Objectives, and Limitations:** Economic development incentives should be guided by the use of specific goals and quantifiable objectives. This includes determining who the policy will be targeting, how the targeted sectors will be subsidized, the length of received benefits, the desired impact the incentive policy will achieve, and any funding limitations of a particular policy. Market research should be conducted to support and determine the optimal tax incentive that will achieve each policy's defined goals.

Best Practice: UTAH- Economic Development Tax Increment Financing Credit (EDTIF)

The state of Utah implemented the EDTIF tax credit as a means to incentivize new renewable energy resource projects. This incentive policy is available to firms who relocate or expand their operations to the state of Utah with clear requirements on who qualifies for the subsidies, how they will be subsidized, the length of the subsidy along with a clear outline of policy limitations and quantifiable objectives for easy evaluation of the policy.

- 2. Ensure an Appropriate Incentive Policy Duration:** In order for an incentive to be effective, it must create certainty in the marketplace. Stable and reliable incentives will encourage sustained growth. The appropriate term of an incentive policy will vary by project.

Best Practice: FLORIDA- Photovoltaic Rebate Program

The cost of self financing a solar energy project has proven to be too high for the vast majority of Floridians. The Photovoltaic (PV) Rebate Program in Florida has created the model for PV infrastructure with more than 70% of installations in the last three years attributed to the state's tax credit program. Despite major success, the program's quickly depleting funds created uncertainty within the market. In response, the state began a waiting list to elicit anticipation in the PV program. The previous success of the program created high public awareness, which generated some interest in the waiting list. However, this action only stifled the market because consumers were simply stalling their purchases in hopes of a reliable incentive. Progress in the Florida solar energy market has since been retained with the security of funding.



DESIGN & USE OF INCENTIVES

INCENTIVE CREATION GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICES

- 3. Determine the Optimal Amount for the Incentive:** Equilibrium must be found with regard to incentive amounts. The benefit of the subsidy must be high enough to attract the targeted projects but low enough to avoid market distortions. Incentive benefits should diminish over time allowing for a consistent, sustainable transition once incentivized markets become established and demand strengthens.

Best Practice: OREGON- Residential Energy Tax Credit

Oregon's large environmentally conscience population has proven that enhanced awareness is not enough to ensure the successful adoption of renewable energy. More specifically the state's Residential Energy Tax Credit maximum credit amount of \$1500 has discouraged some residents from adopting clean energy alternatives given that the credit does not provide an incentive amount large enough to cover the high costs associated with installing technologies within the renewable energy sector.

- 4. Monitor Performance Standards and Compliance:** All economic development policies should be held accountable to performance standards and monitored regularly. By doing so, the efficacy of the economic development program can be monitored and maintained. Economic development programs should routinely meet or exceed performance standards defined by the policy.

Best Practice: ARIZONA- Incentive Performance Standards

Arizona has created a focused strategy that sets specific performance standards and ensures compliance on a regularly scheduled basis. Arizona's Joint Legislative Income Tax Credit Review Committee meets annually to consider personal and corporate income tax credits. Also, per state law, all new and existing tax credits must come under review every five years. When a tax credit policy comes under review it must prove that it is meeting its defined performance criteria. The legislative staff must also be prepared to answer certain questions regarding the tax credit policy. Those questions may include general information regarding the policy, its purpose, financial impact, and results, which will determine the program's overall viability. Once the analysis is complete, it is presented to a public panel that can make formal recommendations.



DESIGN & USE OF INCENTIVES

INCENTIVE CREATION GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICES

- 5. Implement an Evaluation Process:** The evaluation process should measure the performance and effectiveness of an economic development incentive based on the proposal, cost/benefit analysis, impact on tax base and businesses, and the overall success of the program. Key performance measures should be quantifiable in nature. Clear and concise evaluation procedures will ensure a high level of consistency and transparency in a economic development policy.

Best Practice: WASHINGTON - Incentive Evaluation Procedure

The state of Washington has had a comprehensive evaluation process in place since 2006. The evaluation process is headed by the nonpartisan Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC), which combines input from citizens, analyses from the legislative auditor, and annual hearings from legislative leaders. The evaluation process reviews incentive program at least once every 10 years with JLARC responsible for determining the efficiency and appropriate recommendations to continue, amend, or cancel any incentive programs. The nonpartisan structure of JLARC, staffed by an equal amount of Republican and Democratic congressional leaders, allows for unbiased review and audit of the state's incentive programs.

- 6. Choose the Correct Incentive:** Every industry is different and must be incentivized as such. Choosing the correct incentive program by understanding the needs and major obstacles within the targeted industry will increase the chances of success.

Best Practice: VIRGINIA- Space Liability and Immunity Act

The Virginia legislature passed the Virginia Space Liability and Immunity Act in an effort to combat certain challenges related to companies participating in human commercial spaceflight industry. The state recognized that in order to grow the commercial aerospace industry protecting companies from certain risks would encourage growth within Virginia. By understanding and addressing the major obstacles and development needs of commercial aerospace companies, the legislature passed a law that limited liabilities in an event of an accident. The policy has since enjoyed enormous success, encouraging companies to expand or relocate to the state. The success of the act has also led the Virginia legislature to pass the Zero G Zero Tax Act, another policy incentivizing with tax exemptions on certain services within the industry. The success of the both programs has led other states to mirror Virginia's aerospace incentive programs.



DESIGN & USE OF INCENTIVES

INCENTIVE CREATION GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICES

- 7. Understand the Interactions between Incentive Programs:** Policies are not independent and therefore rely on each other in either a positive or negative capacity. Ideally, incentives should be designed to complement or enhance existing incentive policies at the local, regional, state and federal level. Therefore, as policymakers consider policies, they should determine whether a proposed policy will supplement or compete against existing policies.

Best Practice: OREGON- State Renewable Tax Credits and Rebate Program

Oregon's existing tax credits can be combined with renewable rebate programs to enhance the overall impact of the tax incentive program. As a result, a resident or company does not have to minus the amount of the rebate from any pursued tax credit's eligibility requirements. This allows for a complementary relationship between tax credits and rebates within the state

- 8. Simplify the Application Process:** The application process for an incentive program should be clear, succinct, and have all information easily accessible. However, the application process should not compromise the integrity of the determination process for a project's feasibility. Assistance should be readily available for those who are interested in applying for the incentive program and for those already engaged in the application process.

Best Practice: OREGON -Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC)

The BETC has been a highly successful program for Oregon, creating a level of awareness that has encouraged a large influx of applications for the Oregon's Office of Energy (OOE). The number of applications spread the departmental staff thin, making it difficult for an efficient and timely processing of applications. To overcome this problem, the department has streamlined and simplified the procedure by incorporating contractors into the application process through biannual workshops. Contractors who attend these workshops become certified to hand out and assist in completing tax-credit paperwork. The benefits to this are two-fold; contractors distributing the necessary tax credit form, save the OOE approximately \$18,000/year in postage; wait time to receive the certified paperwork has decreased from 4-6 weeks to customers receiving all necessary paperwork at the time of installation. The paperwork can then be certified by the contractor the same day. The changes in application process has enjoyed a positive response for program participants and shareholders.



DESIGN & USE OF INCENTIVES

INCENTIVE CREATION GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICES

9. **Approve a Marketing Budget to Facilitate Consumer Education and Awareness:** Creating consumer awareness about the available incentive options is crucial to the success of any given incentive program. Campaigns should aim to inform the targeted markets about benefits, program applications, application process, and the general availability of existing programs.

Best Practice: NEW YORK -Renewable Energy Resources: Solar Electric-Generating Equipment Tax Credit

New York has several key policies in place that incentivize residential solar-electric systems. The success of solar electric producers and other incentive policy programs relied on a collaborative marketing effort. Marketing materials were created that detailed the products available and all the incentives available. Installers became part of the process by distributing the marketing materials to end users. This high degree of collaboration has resulted in a strong list of subsidies that consumers are not only aware of but feel comfortable in obtaining. The marketing materials that were created as a result of the partnerships and alliances established have been mutually beneficial of all involved parties.

10. **Overcome Institutional Barriers:** Address institutional and structural issues by collaborating with local and regional firms, governments, or agencies. Work to establish strong, mutually beneficial relationships with these different entities to facilitate robust economic growth.

Best Practice: OREGON- Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC)

Close to 6,000 firms have received subsidies from the BETC in the past twenty years. The majority of the beneficiaries are renewable energy projects. Due to the program's long life and coordination with other energy initiatives, public awareness for available incentive programs is very high. The state energy administration has created a core competency of organizing and leveraging different energy programs. They are able to establish and maintain strategic partnerships for the mutual benefit of the state and key industries. By limiting the bureaucratic barriers in place, Oregon has been able to experience heightened efficiency in other best practices areas. Those areas include better marketing, sharply focused goals and objectives, increased compliance standards, comprehensive evaluation methods, industry specialized incentives, and more complementary incentive programs.



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS

OVERVIEW

A vibrant business community depends on the attraction of new companies and the retention and expansion of existing companies. An active business retention and attraction program is the best way to improve the economic health and vitality of the entire community. It can create or expand economic development activity, enhance the tax base, attract or retain jobs, and spur redevelopment in established communities. A successful business retention and attraction program also assists in addressing blight by creating an environment that encourages reinvestment by the private sector.

Collaboration and coordination among existing organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Development Authority, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau will strengthen business cultivation and attraction. In addition, collaboration with existing cities on implementation of incentives can enhance the support for business and make opportunities more attractive.

Business attraction, retention, and expansion efforts can be done through a variety of programs and tools, with a critical component being financial tools. The following tables outline a variety of the types of financial tools that can be utilized to support business attraction, retention, and expansion efforts for DeKalb County. The relevant financial tools are categorized within: Districts; Loan Programs; Commercial Real Estate; and Tax Credits. The financial tools outlined range from traditional to creative in order to review a variety of options for DeKalb County to utilize in their business attraction, retention, and expansion efforts.



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: DISTRICTS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
Community Improvement District (CID)	<p>Funding derived from a business-only tax levy for a defined geographic area</p> <p>All residential uses in the District are excluded from the tax levy</p> <p>Majority of commercial property owners, who represent at least 75% of total property value in the District, must consent to creation</p>	<p>Public Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water ▪ Public Transportation ▪ Street and Road Construction ▪ Parks & Recreation Facilities ▪ Storm Water & Sewage ▪ Parking ▪ Other uses
Tax Allocation District (TAD)	<p>Low-cost financing of infrastructure improvements</p> <p>More favorable financing based on projected TAD revenues</p> <p>Infrastructure improvements drive long-term economic development</p> <p>Early project start with swift closing and interim financing</p> <p>No sales tax on hard construction costs</p>	<p>Public Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Streets ▪ Parking ▪ Water ▪ Sewer ▪ Land Acquisition ▪ Lighting ▪ Utilities
Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)	<p>Based on 2004 Pennsylvania law, and similar to Tax Allocation District Bonds, but does not require evidence of blight/deterioration as in TAD</p> <p>Redevelopment properties must be located within ¼ to ½ mile of transit station access</p> <p>Must be used to encourage Transit Oriented Development</p>	<p>Public Infrastructure Investments similar to TADs</p>



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: DISTRICTS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) Program	<p>Created to spur new or increased investments into businesses and real estate projects located in low-income communities. Individual and corporate investors receive a tax credit against their Federal income tax return for 39 percent of their investment into Community Development Entities (CDEs). The credits are issued over a seven-year period. Submission deadline for 2014 applications is Oct. 1. For information: cdfifund.gov</p>	<p>To qualify as a CDE, an organization must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be a domestic corporation or partnership ▪ Provide capital investment for a low-income community ▪ Maintain accountability to the community through a governing or advisory board
Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ)	<p>Reduces importing costs and lead times associated with international sourcing. Companies can reduce, defer and sometimes eliminate U.S. Customs duties and fees.</p> <p>Such companies include importers, manufacturers, distributors, assemblers of products, and exporters of imported merchandise and/or products containing imported merchandise.</p> <p>A company that does not buy or receive imported products from foreign or domestic vendors, and does not plan to do so, will not benefit from the use of a Foreign-Trade Zone.</p> <p>Typical zone users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most automotive assembly plants and OEM suppliers ▪ Oil refineries ▪ Distribution companies ▪ PL public warehouse operators ▪ Textiles ▪ Pharmaceutical companies ▪ Instruments, electronics, computer manufacturers 	<p>Once a zone location has been established by the FTZ Board, companies are required to "activate" the zone with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) prior to beginning FTZ operations</p> <p>Zone activity occurs under the supervision of CBP and FTZs remain within the jurisdiction of all other local, state and federal governments or agencies</p> <p>Retail sales are prohibited within a zone</p> <p>The FTZ Act prohibits residence within a zone</p>



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: LOAN PROGRAMS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
SBA (504)	<p>Targeted towards the more established business that is seeking to purchase owner-occupied commercial real estate, typically to transition from leasing or to improve cash flow</p> <p>Typical financing structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial Bank 50% / SBA 504 40% / Borrower 10% <p>Loan term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 years on real estate / 10 years on equipment 	<p>Purchase new or existing land and buildings, including additions</p> <p>Machinery & Equipment</p> <p>Fixed assets associated with purchase of an existing business</p>
SBA 7(a) Program/Loan Guaranty	<p>Working capital, fixed assets and/or real estate</p> <p>SBA eligible for-profit businesses</p>	<p>Eligible uses are establishing a new business or assisting in the acquisition, operation, or expansion of an existing business</p>
Small Business Growth Fund/ SBA Community Advantage Loan (SBGF/CA)	<p>Targeted towards smaller, established businesses (3 - 5 years of operating history)</p> <p>For the purpose of expanding established businesses</p>	<p>Eligible uses are real estate acquisition, leasehold improvements, equipment (not rolling stock) purchases, working capital expenditures, inventory and human capital increases</p>
Fixed-Rate Bond Funding	<p>Long-term, fixed-interest-rate financing for qualified industrial, commercial and public projects</p> <p>Interest rate for 20 to 30 years based on bond rate at time of sale</p> <p>Financing for small- and medium-sized companies, non-profits</p> <p>Up to 100% financing</p> <p>Possible additional funding from public & private partners</p> <p>Sales tax exemption on construction and building materials</p>	<p>Renovation and acquisition of existing structures</p> <p>New construction</p> <p>Land acquisition</p> <p>Non-specialized equipment</p> <p>Soft costs</p>



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: LOAN PROGRAMS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
<p>Conduit Non-Bond Financing</p>	<p>Tax-exempt industrial revenue bonds underwritten by a commercial lender's letter of credit</p> <p>The borrower is responsible for service on the incurred debt</p> <p>Tax-exempt bonds provide lower interest rates</p> <p>Up to 100% financing</p> <p>Sales tax exemption on construction and building materials</p> <p>Closing within 60 to 90 days</p>	<p>Renovation and acquisition of existing structures</p> <p>New construction</p> <p>Land acquisition</p> <p>Equipment purchase</p>
<p>Contractor Cash Flow Fund (CCFF)</p>	<p>Targeted towards local contractors who need to capitalize the first 90 days of labor and materials</p> <p>Assist local, small and minority-owned emerging businesses with cash flow funds required to either qualify for a government-issued contract or to commence or maintain performance on a contract</p> <p>Qualify through being awarded a new contract by a municipal department or agency</p>	<p>Eligible uses are working capital, labor, supplies and materials, and the purchase of equipment</p>
<p>Microenterprise Loan Fund</p>	<p>Designed to expand opportunities for microenterprise development, create new opportunities for small business development and sustain local economies in communities</p> <p>For the purpose of expanding their established business and feasible start-ups</p>	<p>Eligible uses are leasehold improvements, equipment purchases, working capital expenditures, and human capital increases</p>



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: LOAN PROGRAMS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
<p>Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) Loan</p>	<p>Assists entrepreneurs in starting or expanding their businesses in targeted neighborhoods.</p> <p>Stimulates the revitalization of older neighborhood commercial districts designated as target areas.</p> <p>Provides economic opportunities for new and expanding neighborhood serving businesses, including minority and women owned businesses.</p> <p>Enhances the quality and level of goods and services available in low and moderate income residential neighborhoods.</p> <p>To create permanent jobs for low- and moderate-income residents.</p>	<p>Located in one of targeted commercial districts</p> <p>Must provide goods or services to adjacent residential neighborhoods</p> <p>Must create permanent jobs for low- and moderate-income residents</p> <p>Must assist in the elimination of slum and blight conditions in a targeted commercial district</p> <p>Loan proceeds can be used for a variety of project costs, including real estate acquisition, new construction, rehabilitation, equipment purchases, and working capital.</p> <p>Funds cannot, however, be used for refinancing of existing debt</p>
<p>Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)</p>	<p>Enhances the ability of business owners to secure the necessary capital to finance start-up ventures or business expansion projects.</p> <p>Gap financing program works by lending up to 25% of project costs, thereby inducing banks to provide the bulk of the financing for small businesses.</p> <p>Helps to stimulate job creation and revitalize under-utilized or deteriorated commercial and industrial properties.</p> <p>To create permanent jobs and retain existing jobs for low- and moderate-income residents.</p> <p>To provide economic opportunities in targeted industrial and commercial areas for new and expanding job intensive industries, including industries owned by minorities and women.</p> <p>To stimulate the redevelopment of under-utilized and deteriorated commercial and industrial property in target areas.</p>	<p>Flexible eligibility requirements, determined based on goals of RLF</p>

BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: LOAN PROGRAMS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
<p>Creative Revolving Loan Fund</p>	<p>The Creative Revolving Loan Fund offers creative enterprises access to affordable and flexible business capital to increase income and build assets.</p> <p>Creative enterprises are defined as non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses producing or selling fine art, photographic and graphic art, performance art, handcraft and design and media.</p> <p>Creative enterprises may apply for loans ranging from \$15,000 - \$30,000.</p> <p>Funds may be used for depreciable assets, working capital, and some space refurbishment/remodeling.</p> <p><i>[based on City of Denver model]</i></p>	<p>Eligible uses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound equipment Sewing machine Instruments Light/sound board Software to design brochures Computer Color printer Film equipment Recording equipment LP production Art supplies Shipping work to a festival/fair Dark room equipment Ticketing software Printing press Tools Website design Technology upgrades Marketing materials Pre-event capital Some art/production space improvements



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Tool	Key Features
Capital Leases	<p>Some projects may benefit from leasing rather than buying property or equipment. Municipality can take ownership of the property and structure a capital lease for the borrower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full authority to develop the property ▪ Option to take ownership at the end of the lease ▪ Ability to take depreciation on the property ▪ Flexibility to adapt to changing needs
Operating Leases	<p>Some projects may benefit from leasing rather than buying property or equipment. Municipality can take ownership of the property and structure an operating lease for the borrower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flexibility to adapt to changing needs ▪ Off-balance-sheet accounting ▪ Small upfront costs
Synthetic Leases	<p>Some projects may benefit from leasing rather than buying property or equipment. Municipality can take ownership of the property and structure a synthetic lease for the borrower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interest only payments ▪ Flexibility to adapt to changing needs ▪ Up to 100% financing ▪ Ability to take depreciation on the property ▪ Sales tax exemption on construction-related hard costs ▪ Share in project appreciation at end of lease ▪ Enhanced cash flow with rent comprising only interest payments ▪ Capital and debt management flexibility with fixed or floating rates



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: TAX CREDITS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
New Jobs Tax Credit	<p>A tax credit of \$3,000 for each additional full-time employee hired is available to small businesses with 20 or less employees</p> <p>Each qualified full-time hourly employee is paid wages for a minimum of 35 hours per week.</p> <p>On the last day of the preceding taxable year, they employed a total of 20 or fewer employees.</p>	State of California
Relocated Business Tax Credit	<p>Businesses that relocate are eligible for an income tax holiday if they have not done business in the state during the two previous taxable years.</p> <p>They do not have to pay any corporate or pass-through income taxes for a two-year period.</p> <p>A company must locate to the state from another state or country and begin doing business in the state during the taxable year.</p> <p>The company must also move at least 51 percent of the business workforce payroll or at least \$200,000 of the workforce wages to the state during the year the credit is claimed.</p> <p>The credit is equal to the amount of income or franchise tax liability for two consecutive taxable years beginning with the year in which the taxpayer's business relocates to the state from another state and begins doing business in the state.</p>	State of Wisconsin
Biotechnology Investment Incentive Tax Credit	<p>An individual or business may be allowed a tax credit of up to 50% of an eligible investment in a qualified biotechnology company, up to \$250,000.</p> <p>The investor, after making the proposed investment, cannot own or control more than 25% of the biotechnology company.</p> <p>The credit may be taken against corporate income tax or personal income tax.</p>	Prince George's County, Maryland



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: TAX CREDITS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
Research and Development Tax Credit	<p>There are two types of research and development tax credits available to businesses:</p> <p>Basic Research and Development Credit: 3% of the lesser of its qualified research and development expenses incurred during the tax year or the base amount.</p> <p>Growth Research and Development Credit: 10% of the qualified research and development expenses incurred during the year that exceeds the base amount.</p> <p>The total credits for all businesses may not exceed \$8 million a year.</p>	Prince George’s County, Maryland
Biotechnology Payroll Tax Exclusion	<p>Allows qualified biotechnology companies to be excluded from the City’s payroll expense tax – San Francisco’s local business tax – on qualified employees.</p> <p>Exclusion from 1.5% tax on payroll for 7 ½ years from the commencement of the biotechnology business in the City.</p> <p>Biotechnology business means conducting biotechnology research and experimental development, and operating laboratories in the City of San Francisco for biotechnology research and experimental development, using DNA, cells, and/or bioprocessing techniques, as well as the application thereof to the development of therapeutics, diagnostic products and/or devices to improve human health, animal health, and agriculture.</p>	San Francisco, California
Clean Technology Payroll Expense Tax Exclusion	<p>A payroll expense tax exclusion for up to 10 years to clean technology companies located in the City.</p> <p>Any business recognized by the San Francisco Green Business Program, employing a full-time staff of not more than one hundred employees and engages in the development, manufacturing, or application of scientific advances that produce or contribute to the production of clean energy.</p>	San Francisco, California



BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: TAX CREDITS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
Community-Based Seed Capital Funds (Angel Investor) Tax Credits	<p>Designed to encourage venture capital investment at the seed capital stage.</p> <p>The total amount of tax credits available to be issued for investments in Qualifying Businesses and Community-Based Seed Capital Funds is \$2 million per fiscal year.</p> <p>Investors receive tax credits equal to 20 percent of the investor’s equity investment in a Community-Based Seed Capital Fund.</p> <p>Investors must invest in the form of cash to purchase equity or near-equity in a Community-Based Seed Capital Fund.</p> <p>Qualifying fund has a total of capital commitments from both investors and investments in Qualifying Businesses of at least \$125,000, but not more than \$3 million</p>	State of Iowa
Qualifying Business Tax Credit	<p>Designed to encourage venture capital investment at the seed capital stage.</p> <p>The total amount of tax credits available to be issued for investments in Qualifying Businesses and Community-Based Seed Capital Funds is \$2 million per fiscal year.</p> <p>Investors receive tax credits equal to 20 percent of the investor’s equity investment in a Qualifying Business.</p> <p>Investors must invest in the form of cash to purchase equity or near-equity in a Qualifying Business.</p> <p>The maximum amount of a tax credit per investment by an investor in any one Qualifying Business is \$50,000. The maximum amount of tax credits per investor equals \$250,000 (5 investments in separate Qualifying Businesses x \$50,000 per investment).</p> <p>The business must have an owner who has successfully completed one of the following: an entrepreneurial venture development curriculum; three years of relevant business experience; a four-year college degree in business management, business administration or a related field; other training or experience sufficient to increase the probability of success of the qualifying business.</p> <p>The business cannot be a business engaged primarily in retail sales, real estate, the provision of health care services or other services requiring a professional license.</p> <p>The business must have a net worth of \$5 million or less as of the date of the investment for which the credit is claimed.</p> <p>Within 24 months from the first date on which the equity investments qualifying for investment tax credits have been made, the business shall have secured total equity or near equity financing equal to at least \$250,000.</p>	State of Iowa

BUSINESS SUPPORT & FINANCIAL TOOLS: TAX CREDITS

Tool	Key Features	Eligible Users
Innovation Fund Tax Credit	<p>Individual investors can receive tax credits equal to 25 percent of an equity investment in a certified Innovation Fund. In turn, those certified Innovation Funds make investments in promising early-stage companies that have a principal place of business in the state.</p> <p>Innovative businesses can include, but are not limited to, businesses engaged in advanced manufacturing, biosciences and information technology.</p> <p>The total amount of tax credits available for investment in Innovation Funds is \$8 million per fiscal year.</p> <p>Investors receive tax credits equal to 25% of the investor’s equity investment in an Innovation Fund.</p> <p>Investors must invest in the form of cash to purchase equity or near-equity in an Innovation Fund.</p> <p>The fund is organized for the purposes of making investments in promising early-stage companies which have a principal place of business in the state.</p> <p>The fund proposes to provide multiple rounds of funding and early-stage private sector funding to innovative businesses with a high growth potential, and proposes to focus such funding on innovative businesses that show a potential to produce commercially viable products or services within a reasonable period of time.</p> <p>The fund proposes to obtain at least \$15 million in binding investment commitments and to invest a minimum of \$15 million in companies that have a principal place of business in the state.</p>	State of Iowa
21st Century Quality Jobs Tax Credit	<p>Incentive to businesses with a highly skilled, knowledge-based workforce.</p> <p>Pays businesses cash back, up to 10 percent of payroll, for up to ten years for the creation of 10 jobs with high average wage of \$94,000 annually or higher, depending on county.</p> <p>New industries that will qualify include Specialty Hospitals (Health Care), Performing Arts, Heavy & Civil Engineering, Motion Picture & Video Industries, Sound Recording Industries, Financial Investment Activities, and Professional Services such as Accounting, Architectural, and Legal Services.</p> <p>Reduces out-of-state sales requirements from 75% to 50% for industries that are required to have out-of-state sales.</p> <p>Requires at least ten full-time jobs at an annual wage of the lesser of \$94,000 or 300% of the county's average wage.</p>	State of Oklahoma

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The implementation matrix offers recommendations on how DeKalb County and its economic development stakeholders and partners can implement this action plan. It is organized by the actions plans outlined in this strategy and includes the action items, timeframe, parties to be involved in implementation, as well as scores for the cost and difficulty of implementation.

This matrix, paired with the annual scorecard event, will assist the County and the DADC with tracking the progress of the implementation of this plan.

A sample of the implementation matrix is provided below with the expanded version provided as a editable excel document separate from the body of this report. The DADC should be the organization responsible for this document.

Improve Business Climate	Implementation Timeline			Implementation Partners								Implementation Scores	
	Short Term (1 Year)	Mid Term (2-3 Years)	Long Term (3 years+)	DADC	DeKalb County	Chamber of Commerce	Local Universities	DeKalb County Workforce Development	DeKalb County Public Schools	Georgia EDC	ARC	Cost Score	Difficulty Score
Improve Permitting													
Implement Matrix report recommendations to achieve rapid permitting	X			X	1							3	3
Consider customized incentives for permitting	X			X	1							2	4
Integrate DADC as liason in the permitting process	X			1	X	X						1	2
Market changes in the permitting process		X		1	X	X						2	3
Support Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses													
Consider a technology incubator in partnership with higher education assets		X		1	X		X			X	X	3	2
Create a women / minority owned business accelerator		X		1	X					X	X	3	1
Explore the development of Coworking Spaces		X		1	X	X						2	2
Implement new financial incentives to support entrepreneurship	X			X	1	X						3	3
Engage in angel investing network and crowd funding for entrepreneurs	X			1		X				X	X	1	3
Support Existing Businesses and Foster Expansion													
Organize robust visitation and outreach program with existing businesses	X			1		X						1	1
Use online platforms to survey all businesses	X			1		X						1	3
Match workforce training programs to existing business needs		X		1		X		X	X			3	3

ABOUT ANGELOUECONOMICS



ANGELOUECONOMICS

AngelouEconomics partners with client communities and regions across the United States and abroad to candidly assess current economic development realities and identify opportunities.

*Our goal is to leverage the unique strengths
of each region to provide new, strategic
direction for economic development*

As a result, AngelouEconomics' clients are able to diversify their economies, expand job opportunities and investment, foster entrepreneurial growth, better prepare their workforce, and attract 'new economy' companies.

To learn more, visit www.angeloueconomics.com

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