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OVERVIEW

Since its inception more than eight years ago, Opportunity Austin has been a driving force for regional growth and development in Greater Austin. Launched in response to unprecedented downward trends in the Austin region after the bursting of the technology “bubble” in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Opportunity Austin reversed years of neglect to the region’s economic development infrastructure, programming, and personnel capacity. Urgency for change resulted in the resourcing of the first Opportunity Austin program at roughly $14 million, $2 million above projections. The second Opportunity Austin process raised the bar even higher, with an increased programmatic budget and more aggressive actions to expand and enhance the region’s talent base, diversify the economy, address traffic congestion, and maintain Greater Austin’s dynamic quality of life.

In 2012, the impact of Opportunity Austin is measurable and dramatic; Greater Austin has been the nation’s top economy since the program’s launch in 2004. However, once again a dangerous complacency has seemingly entered the regional mindset, as elected officials and local constituencies feel that the Austin area’s growth is self-sustaining and – indeed – even detrimental to the region’s quality of life. History has shown that this attitude is short-sighted and fails to acknowledge the challenging competitive climate of a truly global economy. Communities across the U.S. have Greater Austin squarely in their sights as they try to recapture the mantle of the country’s top economy.

Market Street is excited to again help the Austin Chamber develop the next iteration of Opportunity Austin. This new process reflects the gains that have been made since 2004, new post-Great Recession economic realities, and the maturation of the Opportunity Austin program itself. It is a five-phase process:
PHASE I – THE STARTING LINE: AUSTIN’S COMPETITIVE POSITION: Greater Austin was benchmarked against nine high performing metro areas against which the metro competes for talent, job creation, and investment. The analysis of Austin’s competitive position also included comparison to the United States along a number of key economic, demographic, and socioeconomic variables.

PHASE II – THE ROAD TRAVELLED: OPPORTUNITY AUSTIN COMPETITIVE THEMES: the full suite of Opportunity Austin’s programming was evaluated with analysis focusing on recurring issues, opportunities, and ongoing implementation challenges. This analysis helped frame prospects of leveraging new strategies and determining competitive priorities.

PHASE III: FUEL FOR THE AUSTIN ECONOMIC ENGINE: TARGET REFRESH: rather than recreating past efforts, this phase focused on the competitive position of the current roster of business sector targets. The analysis incorporated benchmarking Austin against top metros for each target area and accessing site selector and corporate input. A refreshed roster of targets informed attraction, expansion, and business retention activities included in this strategic plan.

PHASE IV: THE ROAD AHEAD: AUSTIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: representing the culmination of the work to date, this phase incorporates innovative strategies and fresh approaches to redefine Austin’s competitiveness for the next five years.

PHASE V: THE ROAD MAP: IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES: the final phase of the process will focus on situating resources, staff capacity, funding, and priority action items for timely and effective implementation.

The overall process leverages eight years of perspective on the Opportunity Austin program and positions the region to remain as the nation’s most successful economy for years to come.
INTRODUCTION

In the eight-year history of the Opportunity Austin initiative, the Greater Austin region has led the nation in economic performance and become a best practice for many communities seeking to equal Austin’s success. As many areas of the nation have struggled, Greater Austin has become a major relocation destination, with thousands of new residents streaming into the region every year. This has bolstered Greater Austin’s labor availability for many sectors, but economic growth has nevertheless limited the pool of skilled professionals in occupations such as software engineering and other highly specialized categories. Population growth has also added further strain to the region’s transportation grid, natural resources, home prices, and other dynamics. A still small but vocal group of anti-growth activists has begun to influence the Austin City Council and pressured elected officials to reexamine incentivization practices for relocating and expanding businesses. A sentiment similar to the late 1990s appears to be developing in Greater Austin in which stakeholders take success for granted and feel it will go on indefinitely, even without efforts to stimulate the regional economy. This complacency risks a downturn similar to the early 2000s in which economic trends conspired to send the Greater Austin economy into one of the worst declines in its history.

The Opportunity Austin 3.0 strategic plan seeks to prevent against any future downturns by capitalizing on Greater Austin’s most dynamic growth opportunities while also seeking to address competitive challenges that risk derailing the region’s strong growth trajectory. As opposed to the previous two Opportunity Austin strategies, the 2012 plan does not include dozens of actions focused on multiple goal areas and objectives. Rather, it presents a “checklist” of high impact strategies that provide the Austin Chamber with a core set of activities to continue fueling the ascent of the Austin region. The checklist is still reflective of a holistic approach to quality development in the region, but narrows the strategic focus down to elements that have the greatest potential to advance Greater Austin’s prospects.

The components of the Strategic Checklist emerged from the extensive qualitative and quantitative research conducted for the Opportunity Austin 3.0 process. The following are the KEY FINDINGS of the first two phases of Opportunity Austin 3.0:

Phase I: Benchmark Austin

- Resilient housing market provides foundation for sustained recovery.
- Robust population growth is fueled by arrival of young and educated persons, adding to an already strong talent pool.
- Minority and foreign population growth is strong, but socioeconomic parity eludes many of these residents.
- Strong overall employment growth supports increasing wages and income growth, but not all business sectors shared equally.
☑ Despite a decrease in commuter delay, continued dominance of driving alone to work exacerbates congestion.

☑ Public and private sources of innovation and research are nationally competitive despite downward trending venture capital activity.

**Phase II: Austin’s Competitive Themes**

☑ Traffic congestion is adversely impacting Austin’s competitive position.
  o Progress has been made, but traffic will never be “solved” in Greater Austin. Stakeholders must appreciate congestion-reduction efforts. Transit development as part of a multi-modal regional network will be critical.

☑ The Chamber must better leverage existing Greater Austin businesses.
  o Chamber has essentially gone from having no existing-business program to one that best-in-class. GATP is a potential game-changer. Challenge will be to manage both emerging and established regional companies.

☑ The City of Austin’s regulatory and permitting processes are anti-competitive.
  o Recent improvements have regressed; system is a major deterrent to investment in Austin.

☑ Greater Austin’s economy must become more diversified.
  o Great strides have been made to better diversify employment in Greater Austin. Target-driven strategies are aggressive and ongoing. Are investors again becoming complacent?

☑ Talent development and availability must continue to be a Greater Austin strength.
  o Greater Austin shows no signs of diminishing its status as a magnet for top imported talent. However, shortages in key occupations must be addressed through multi-pronged strategies.

☑ Start-up development, entrepreneurship, and tech commercialization must be maximized.
  o GATP provides a foothold in this world and can help advance Greater Austin’s technology economy. Austin Live will be important, as well as continuing improvement of UT-Austin tech commercialization.

The third research phase of the Opportunity Austin 3.0 process was the Target Refresh report. Three sets of current target sectors informed the report: 1) the roster of Opportunity Austin Industry Segments as promoted on the Chamber’s website; 2) Market Street’s target recommendations from OA 2.0 and the 2011 Midcourse Update; and 3) the Greater Austin Technology Partnership’s roster of Technology Industry Groups (also called SIGs).
Austin Chamber staff and Market Street’s project team discussed data profiles and their relationship to the three existing target lists to focus research and analysis on a template of potential employment sectors that will serve as the basis for Opportunity Austin 3.0 target determinations. Integration of these rosters into a unified framework provides clarity to both outside markets and internal stakeholders. The result of research, analysis, and stakeholder feedback was the identification and emergence of six target sectors and component niches to inform Opportunity Austin 3.0 and the Strategic Checklist. These are:

- **Advanced Manufacturing**: this target sector combines technology manufacturing from the GATP’s Technology Industry Groups with Semiconductor Industry Segment and adds a more general aspect of manufacturing.

- **Multi-Media Technology**: this target sector combines Creative Media & Consumer Technology and Wireless Industry segments with the OA 2.0 Recommendations of Convergence Technologies, and Creative Media. Further, this potential targets also includes GATP’s Technology Industry Groups of Mobile, Gaming, Advertising Technology, and Software.

- **Clean Energy and Power Technology**: this target sector is inclusive of the Clean Energy Technologies Industry Segment, the Green Industries recommendation from OA 2.0 and the GATP Clean Technology Industry Group.

- **Life Science and Bio Tech**: this target sector combines the Life Sciences Industry Segment with the Health Care and Life Sciences OA 2.0 recommendation and the Life Science/Healthcare Technology Industry Group.
✓ **Data Management**: this target sector includes the Data Center Industry Segment and the analytics component of the Advertising Technology Industry Group.

✓ **Corporate Headquarters and Regional Offices**: this target is reflective of the OA 2.0 recommendation for Corporate and Professional Operations.

The following graphic reflects the targets structure. Also included are specific sector niches. Niches represent high-value activities that are contained within the broader target. The niches share characteristics under the broader target that enable the Chamber to develop them with similar – though slightly differentiated – development strategies.
With the incorporation of actions focused on the key issues and opportunities emerging from project research, this Strategic Checklist provides a succinct blueprint for the next five years of the Opportunity Austin program. Different than the first two strategies, Opportunity Austin 3.0 is more streamlined and focused on the Austin Chamber’s core competencies and most impactful program areas. Action items have been informed by the full breadth of quantitative and qualitative research in the first three Opportunity Austin 3.0 phases and are divided into three principal Action Areas – Talent, Economy, and Place – which correspond to the most important strategic categories in the Austin community.

Though certain actions are focused on assets in the City of Austin, there are numerous opportunities for Central Texas communities to benefit from strategies focused on growth in priority target sectors and efforts to accommodate the region’s growth through integration of new businesses and residents outside of Austin-Travis County.
STEERING COMMITTEE

The Opportunity Austin 3.0 Steering Committee has been critical to the success of this initiative, shaping the strategy through various feedback channels and meeting sessions. Representing a broad group of community leaders from the public and private sectors, the Committee was responsible for reviewing project deliverables, providing feedback, and participating in discussions about the future direction of Greater Austin. The following individuals served on the Steering Committee:

Gene Austin, Convio
Isaac Barchas, Austin Technology Incubator
Charles Barnett, Seton Healthcare Family
Jim Boles, Summit Commercial
Paul Bury, Bury+Partners
Bryan Campbell, DuBois Bryant & Campbell
Volney Campbell, HPI Corporate Services
Tim Crowley, Frost Bank
Mark Curry, Wells Fargo
Casey Dobson, Scott, Douglass & McConnico
Gary Farmer, Heritage Title
Rob Golding, Live Oak
Laura Gottesman, Gottesman Residential Real Estate
Brad Hawley, Locke Lord
Clarke Heidrick, Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody
Tim Hendricks, Cousins Properties
John Holmes, Freescale Semiconductor
Joe Holt, JPMorgan Chase Bank
Jeff Howard, McLean & Howard

David Huffstutler, St. David's Healthcare Partnership
Bobby Jenkins, ABC Home & Commercial Services
Bryan Jones, Collider Media
Laura Kilcrease, Triton Ventures
Steve Knebel, Maxwell Locke & Ritter
Derek Land, Stream Realty
Steve Leslie, University of Texas at Austin
Eric Loeffel, Compass Learning
Chad Marsh, Endeavor Real Estate Group
Dave Martin, Dimensional Fund Advisors
Bart Matheney, Aquila Commercial
Barry Mayer, Tokyo Electronic US Holdings
Jack McDonald, Silverback Acquisitions
Catherine Morse, Samsung Austin
Pike Powers
Don Reese, Riverside Resources
Bob Reetz, Haynes & Boone
Andy Smith, Thomas Properties Group
Terence Spielman, eBay/PayPal
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OPPORTUNITY AUSTIN 3.0

Similar to the Opportunity Austin 2.0 strategy, the principal goal areas of the 2012 plan have been divided into three key competitiveness areas that will be critical to Greater Austin's future success. These are:

**Economy** – Creating high-value jobs for workers at all skill levels in sectors that will further diversify the Greater Austin economy is the program’s principal mission. Strategies focus on the “three legs” of the economic development stool: existing business retention and expansion, marketing and business attraction, and small business and entrepreneurial development. The region’s business climate must also be supportive of growth and investment.

**Talent** – Preparing students effectively for college and careers while providing regional employers with the talent they need to grow and succeed are vital to Greater Austin’s future success. With shortages in key occupational categories, a growing segment of under-skilled and under-employed workers, and greater numbers of economically disadvantaged students, much work must continue to be done to maintain Greater Austin's standing as the “human capital.”

**Place** – Addressing challenges related to Greater Austin’s strong and sustained population growth is critical to ensuring that the region’s quality of life continues to attract top talent and its infrastructure supports economic development goals. Traffic congestion regularly tops both business and resident surveys of Greater Austin's most important competitive deficit. In addition to rising housing and living costs, this trend has led to a growing backlash against aggressive economic development in the Austin area that threatens future vitality if any of the region’s primary employment sectors suffers a protracted decline.

Key Initiatives

The Opportunity Austin 3.0 Strategic Checklist focuses on “**what**” the region must do to be most competitive for future jobs, investment, and talent. “**How**” that will be accomplished will be the focus of the forthcoming Implementation Plan, including prioritization of strategies and action steps based on their regional impact and viability, identification of lead and support entities, cost projections, and identification of whether the proposed action is ongoing, enhanced, or new. In essence, the implementation document becomes the Opportunity Austin 3.0 Action Plan to direct the Austin Chamber and key partners over their next five years of work. That said, it is clear that certain Strategic Checklist activities are deemed to be higher priorities by regional leadership. As such, the following Key Initiatives will preview the Implementation Plan by reporting the programmatic priorities as determined by Steering Committee discussions and responses to an online survey. The **Key Initiatives** for Opportunity Austin 3.0 are:
✓ Leverage Greater Austin’s future medical school and teaching hospital as catalysts for development of a regional life sciences and biomedical cluster. (Action 3.2) – The Opportunity Austin Steering Committee feels the development of a medical school and affiliated capacity in Greater Austin has transformative capacity to impact the region’s economy, talent base, and competitiveness as a destination for workers and families.

✓ Create a non-partisan Central Texas Transportation Alliance as a business partnership to advance mobility improvements in the region. (Action 8.1) – As the region’s top identified competitive challenge by Opportunity Austin public input stakeholders and existing businesses, traffic congestion and strategies to manage it are critical issues to address in the next five-year Opportunity Austin cycle. Moving forward with a vision for regional mobility and charging an entity with implementing this vision are key components of these efforts.

✓ Develop tools to formalize career-preparation pipelines in Greater Austin. (Action 6.3) – Recent shortages in key occupational categories and a sense among stakeholders that there is a general mismatch between worker skills and growing, in-demand careers has created an urgency in Greater Austin to formalize more effective systems for preparing talent for the jobs being created by regional businesses.

✓ Reorient Portfolio Austin based on Opportunity Austin 2013 target sectors. / Continue the evolution of the Greater Austin Technology Partnership. (Actions 1.1 and 1.2) – The retention and expansion of existing Austin area businesses is the highest priority economic development strategy according to the Opportunity Austin Steering Committee. Continuing to enhance the support and leveraging of incumbent businesses is a major priority for the next five-year program.

✓ Focus targeted attraction efforts on Greater Austin’s highest-value domestic markets. (Action 2.1) – The Steering Committee also feels that attention should not waver on attracting high-value firms to Greater Austin. Some of Opportunity Austin’s highest profile and most lucrative wins have come from compelling companies to move to the region, most often from the high-cost California market.

✓ Continue efforts to maximize the benefit of technology commercialization at the University of Texas-Austin and its partners. (Action 4.2) – The University of Texas-Austin is home to billions of dollars in sponsored and affiliated research. Especially with the development and launch of a new medical school, ensuring that high-value jobs are created from this research must continue to be a regional priority.

✓ Ensure that Greater Austin’s business costs are supportive of continued regional growth and investment. (Action 5.2) – The cost of developing projects in the City of Austin is the
primary concern of many Opportunity Austin investors and input participants. This challenge, as well as the cost of utilities, housing, and other categories, is high on the list of strategic priorities for the Steering Committee.

✓ **Design a branded campaign to focus public attention on Greater Austin’s development dynamics and their positive effect on economic and quality of life issues. (Action 9.1)** – Elected official and public sentiment in Greater Austin is returning to the anti-growth and development themes of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Retrenching economic development investment and weakening aggressive Opportunity Austin strategies risks another damaging economic downturn if one or more of the region’s top sectors again suffer a decline. Presenting the realities of global competitive dynamics and the true benefits of sustained growth should become the basis of regional dialogues on Greater Austin’s future.

These Key Initiatives will also be reflected in the First Year Action Plan for Opportunity Austin 3.0 that will be included in the forthcoming Implementation Plan.

For many of the Opportunity Austin 3.0 action steps, Market Street has identified **BEST PRACTICES** that can help inform the Austin Chamber’s implementation activities. Recommendations with associated best practices are noted by the letters **BP** included parenthetically after the action title.
Economy

As has been noted previously, no U.S. region matched the economic performance of Greater Austin from 2004 to the present. The Greater Austin Chamber has implemented the Opportunity Austin program through a balanced, targeted focus on existing businesses and attraction of high-value firms. Only recently has the Chamber begun to successfully make inroads into Greater Austin’s technology economy through the launch of the Greater Austin Technology Partnership (GATP) and aggressive leveraging of the South-by-Southwest (SXSW) festival. The potential exists to further stimulate the region’s technology and startup economies through efforts like Austin TechLive and Startup America. With “game-changing” developments on the horizon in the form of a Greater Austin medical school and teaching hospital and the fall debut of the region’s Circuit of the Americas Formula One racing complex, metro Austin has the opportunity to further diversify its economy and ramp up programming in previously underperforming (or untargeted) economic sectors.

Important to Greater Austin’s future economic growth is the creation of jobs for people of all skill levels and in all regional communities. In fact, the metro Austin economy has been creating thousands of jobs in non-technology service sectors over the previous years; these sectors have actually surpassed so-called “technology jobs” in percentage-rate increases. So it is a misnomer to say that Greater Austin does not offer employment for workers with entry-level skill sets.

Recent research also shows that one of the best ways to create jobs at multiple skill-points is to spur employment in the technology and innovation sectors. UC-Berkeley-based economist and author Enrico Moretti recently published an influential book titled The New Geography of Jobs in which he argues that, “A high tech job is more than a job... For each new high-tech job in a city, five additional jobs are created outside the high-tech sector in that city, both in skilled occupations (lawyers, teachers, nurses) and in unskilled ones (waiters, hairdressers, carpenters).” He goes on to write that, “Most sectors have a multiplier effect, but the innovation sector has the largest multiplier of all: about three times larger than that of manufacturing... The multiplier effect has important and surprising implications for local development strategies. One is that the best way for a city or state to generate jobs for less skilled workers is to attract high-tech companies that hire highly skilled ones.”

Thus, Opportunity Austin’s focus on making inroads into the region’s high-tech sectors through the Greater Austin Technology Partnership has – and will – stimulate dynamic “multiplier” jobs across varied business categories. There was also careful consideration given to including the development of Opportunity Austin 3.0 target sectors where communities outside of the City of Austin are competitive. These include General Manufacturing, Life Sciences and Bio Tech, Clean Energy and Power Technology, Data Management and Corporate Headquarters and Regional Offices. Strategies to assist regional economic development partners and governments with optimizing their competitive positions for these sectors are important components of the Opportunity Austin 3.0 Strategic Plan.
STRATEGY 1: SUPPORT HIGH-VALUE GROWTH IN THE AUSTIN REGION’S EXISTING BUSINESSES.

Action 1.1: Reorient Portfolio Austin based on Opportunity Austin 2013 target sectors.

✓ Continue to visit Greater Austin’s largest employers in all sectors.
✓ Reassess visitation destinations, protocols, and frequencies of medium-sized firms based on identified target categories.
  o Formalize employment thresholds determining companies selected for visitation.
  o Identify fast-growing firms below the Portfolio Austin threshold that can be directed to other existing-business programs such as the GATP, Austin TechLive, Executive Roundtables, CEO Lunches and Receptions, and BioAustin.
✓ Work with Portfolio Austin businesses to develop graphical “maps” of their key supply-chain partners to inform target-sector development and attraction.
  o Assess ways to enhance insourcing of products and services to Greater Austin companies.
  o Improve the identification of potential recruitment prospects from non-local buyers and suppliers through the supply-chain mapping process.

Action 1.2: Continue the evolution of the Greater Austin Technology Partnership.

✓ Work with Special Interest Group (SIG) members to develop actionable strategies to stimulate growth in their sectors (see also Strategy 3).
  o Combine these strategies with those developed to market and attract firms in Opportunity Austin targeted categories.
    ▪ Ensure seamless integration of existing-business and marketing/attraction strategic agendas.
  o Include talent development, entrepreneurial, international development, and policy components in the target strategies to foster coordinated action scenarios across all components of the economic development spectrum.
✓ Develop a more robust, differentiated, and multi-media online presence for the GATP complete with microsites, blogs, video features, social media elements, and electronic collateral available for download.
  o Evolve the SIGs into sub-branded campaigns that can eventually serve as stand-alone marketing initiatives for Greater Austin’s most competitive employment clusters.
  o Ensure the individually branded target campaigns maintain visual, graphical, and thematic consistency with regional marketing efforts.
  o Seek to combine the SIG campaigns as needed with existing target-specific marketing programs such as BioAustin.
✓ Continue to actively engage GATP members to inform and participate in SXSW programming.
**Action 1.3: Develop an Export Austin program to support existing businesses’ international growth opportunities. (BP)**

- Formalize a strategy to most effectively assist Portfolio Austin companies (including GATP members) with exporting their products and services.
  - Fully leverage the Texas Camino Real Export Council (TCREC) to advise economic developers, government officials, entrepreneurs, and corporate executives on foreign-trade dynamics and inform export strategies and policy-development priorities.
    - Promote the Council’s DEC 100, Export Fellows, Export Leaders, and Scholarship Program through Portfolio Austin visits and electronic and online communications.
  - Host regular meetings in partnership with state and federal export agencies to provide information to regional businesses on best-practice export strategies.
    - Enable companies to meet with international business advisors, financing experts, and specialists in compliance and regulatory concerns.
  - Utilize the Export Austin program as a tool for marketing investment opportunities in Opportunity Austin and Austin Chamber membership.

- Plan an annual, multi-day Regional Investment Forum for foreign investors, Greater Austin business leaders, government representatives, and economic development officials.
  - Schedule the Forum to coincide with Austin’s Formula One race.
  - Prepare and distribute pre-meeting materials with information on participating international and regional executives, firms, and investment entities.

- Leverage supply-chain mapping activities (Action 1.1) to identify potential international clients for Portfolio Austin firms.

- Determine the potential to co-locate Austin U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC) staff at the Austin Chamber.

- Customize the Texas Exporters Resource Guide for Greater Austin and update the report annually.

- Integrate the Export Austin program into Portfolio Austin executive visits, SIG meetings, and CEO-engagement events.

- Utilize the research and relationship-building from Export Austin to support efforts to attract international flights to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.

**Action 1.4: Develop an intra-regional relocation program. (BP)**

- Initiate communications with regional partners on the dynamics of the proposed program.
  - Clarify the program’s intent and enlist feedback on how it could be seen as a value-add to participating communities.

- Create a system of “triggers” to identify firms that are at risk of moving out of the Greater Austin region and assist them with identifying suitable locations to fit their needs.
  - Leverage BRE visits, discussions at CEO events, and GATP meetings to capture information on firms contemplating relocation out of metro Austin.
o Present program dynamics to incumbent firms to foster open communications channels and ensure that companies provide honest disclosure of future plans to Chamber staff.

✓ Formalize a protocol to direct firms considering leaving the region to other potential locations in Greater Austin.
  o Ensure “leads” are distributed under similar parameters as out-of-market prospects.
  o Compel regional economic development partners to sign a “non-poaching” pledge as a component of participation in the program.

✓ Provide information on the program through internal marketing and existing-business communications channels.

STRATEGY 2: SHOWCASE AUSTIN IN TARGETED DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.

Action 2.1: Focus targeted attraction efforts on Greater Austin’s highest-value domestic markets.

✓ Conduct a data-driven reassessment of the Austin area’s top external prospect markets based on refreshed Opportunity Austin 3.0 target sectors.
  o Incorporate prospect activity and relocation trends in addition to inputs such as target business concentrations, business climate, and public policy dynamics.
  o Quantify external headquarters and regional office concentrations of Greater Austin firms to inform decision-making.
  o Partner with Texas Exes to identify external markets with a high number of businesses with UT-Austin-graduate owners or C-level executives.

✓ Based on the external marketing reassessment, formalize a strategy based on top opportunity markets.
  o Determine whether prospect activity warrants a continued high-level focus on Northern California.
  o Assess opportunities to open a Greater Austin-affiliated marketing office in the region’s top external market.
    ▪ Leverage the potential marketing office as a pilot for other high-value locations.

✓ Program marketing trips to “spot” markets (i.e., Chicago after Illinois’ tax increase) that offer windows of opportunity to market Greater Austin.

✓ Leverage future supply-chain mapping of Portfolio Austin businesses (Action 1.1) to identify potential concentrations of buyers/suppliers for attraction to Greater Austin.
  o Utilize this information to program external marketing trips to high-value prospect geographies.
Action 2.2: Capture relocation opportunities generated by Greater Austin’s technology “ecosystem.”

- Create formal processes to advance prospects identified through aforementioned efforts to map supply chains (Action 1.1) and develop action strategies to grow each SIG sector (Action 1.2) into the external-marketing pipeline.
  - Seek commitments from SIG executives to represent Greater Austin in outreach, discussions, and – potentially – visits to prospect companies.
  - Consistently optimize the prospect-mining component of the GATP through assessment of lead generation and attraction processes.

- Complement talent-marketing materials (Action 7.1) with the development of talking-point narratives, marketing materials stored on flash drives or CD-ROMS, presentations, and other tools for use by SIG executives to promote Greater Austin at external meetings, trade shows, conferences, speeches, and industry-focused events.

- Ensure economic development staff is networked with Austin TechLive-affiliated entrepreneurs to build an ongoing database of potential attraction prospects as resident companies expand.
  - Connect Capital Factory and Austin Technology Incubator (ATI) firms to potential domestic and foreign buyers identified through supply-chain mapping and marketing outreach.

- Work with research professors at UT-Austin and Texas State to leverage their domestic and international relationships with technology firms, institutions, and government centers as potential attraction prospects and/or investors.

- Expand the sponsorship of SXSW programs, panels, and parties targeted to executives and representatives from external technology firms.

Action 2.3: Enhance Greater Austin’s inbound marketing program.

- Continue leveraging the annual Showcase Austin event to market the region to the nation’s most influential site consultants.
  - Survey participating consultants to determine if SXSW would be a more compelling destination event.

- Host a second inbound event (Showcase Austin International) for overseas-based site location contractors planned around Greater Austin’s Formula One U.S. Grand Prix.
  - Conduct research to identify consultants with influence in Greater Austin’s target sectors and most competitive overseas markets.
  - Arrange meetings with consultants and top Portfolio Austin companies.
  - Provide consultants with a comprehensive marketing package on Greater Austin translated into multiple languages.

Action 2.4: Ensure that the Austin Chamber online and electronic resources remain effective marketing tools.

- Continue implementation of strategies to optimize the Austin Chamber website for multiple target audiences.
As per Action 1.2, develop sub-pages on the Chamber website for the GATP and the differentiated Opportunity Austin 3.0 target sectors.

- Research social media campaigns of competitor economic development organizations (EDOs) to identify strategies to enhance the Austin Chamber’s social media program.
- Continue investments in regional, statewide, and national earned-media placements.
- Develop a suite of communications tools (potentially including a stand-alone website) for internal audiences.
  - Continue disseminating e-newsletters and high-profile economic development announcements to Opportunity Austin investors.
  - Create a password-protected online portal with proprietary information for access by Opportunity Austin investors, potentially via collaboration software such as Sharepoint or Basecamp.
    - Use the portal to foster a community of investors and participants in Opportunity Austin.
    - Post new reports, research documents, and other information to the site.
    - Offer investors the choice to sign up for automatic notices when the website is updated.
- Consider development and/or integration of Austin Chamber website features for business-destination marketing.
  - Target the features at Austin-area visitors who might consider the region as a destination for business investment or relocation.
- Ensure a consistency of branding and messaging across all Chamber-affiliated platforms.

**Action 2.5: Launch a “pilot” international program targeting Greater Austin’s top opportunity markets.**

- Initiate a comprehensive research assessment to identify Greater Austin’s top international markets for target-driven exports and foreign-direct investment (FDI).
  - Leverage supply-chain mapping efforts (Action 1.1) to support the research assessment.
  - Incorporate local firms and international customers engaged in the Export Austin program (Action 1.3) into the identification of priority overseas markets for the pilot program.
  - Develop a short list of potential visitation markets for vetting by local international trade experts and major Opportunity Austin investors.
- Outreach to foreign-owned companies in Greater Austin for discussions on how the region can be more competitive for FDI.
  - Host receptions for executives of foreign-owned businesses to meet and network with local professionals, elected officials, institutional representatives, and economic developers.
- Plan and program pilot overseas marketing trips to Greater Austin’s highest priority international trade hubs.
Outreach to corporate, government, and economic development representatives in the selected visitation markets to help develop marketing mission itineraries.

Partner with existing Austin area foreign-owned, multi-national, and domestic firms with strong international portfolios to inform trip planning and potentially accompany Chamber representatives on the marketing missions.

Discuss potential corporate and institutional destinations for pilot trips with site consultants participating in Showcase Austin International (Action 2.3).

Work with state economic development officials to assess the potential to bundle Greater Austin’s trip with a state-funded mission or leverage state dollars to enhance the Austin Chamber-sponsored trip.

Scale the international program to other overseas hubs based on experiences from the pilot visits.

- Fully leverage the EB-5 incentive tool when meeting and negotiating with potential foreign investors.

- Effectively utilize SXSW and the Formula One U.S. Grand Prix to incent overseas investors to visit Greater Austin and meet with local companies.

- Link the international marketing program with efforts of the Air Service Task Force’s International Air Services Organizing Committee working to garner nonstop air service to key overseas hubs.
  - Secure direct flights to Austin from London’s Heathrow Airport and other European technology hubs.

**Action 2.6: Enhance relationships with regional economic development partners. (BP)**

- Work closely with regional partners to ensure they are prepared to accommodate increased economic growth.
  - Confirm scenarios for development of additional Class A office space and industrial sites.
  - Profile growth needs and opportunities and develop action agendas to best prepare Greater Austin communities to compete for targeted prospects.

- Increase the visibility of regional partner communities on the Austin Chamber website.
  - Profile community-specific links and sub-pages more prominently on section homepages.
  - Work with local partners to confirm that their communities’ most impactful information and assets are displayed on the Chamber website.
  - Utilize GIS mapping to profile local partner’s development locations.

- Continue providing professional and technical support to outlying communities.
  - Consider providing regional partners with a customized section of the password-protected Opportunity Austin web portal (Action 2.4).
  - Research best practice comparison economic development programs, projects, and assets and present findings to inform local partners’ efforts to optimize their development products and processes.
Determine how regional partner governments can be more active participants on domestic marketing trips.
  - Host a discussion session with local economic developers and trip attendees to confirm that key information on the localities will be communicated to out-of-market prospects.
  - Identify one to two marketing trips reserved for participation from community partners.

Improve communications related to prospect management.
  - Follow up more directly with regional partners with information on prospect activity and recommendations to remediate competitive deficits that may have caused the prospect to rule out the community.
  - Leverage the password-protected Opportunity Austin portal (Action 2.4) to provide updated statistics and project information during and after relocation and expansion inquiries.
    - Maintain ongoing spreadsheets on each project to record activity by Greater Austin communities to address competitive issues that may have led to the loss of a prospect.
    - Provide information, if available, on the community the prospect chose for investment, including details on the negotiated incentive and project parameters.

STRATEGY 3: CAPTURE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD CLUSTERS IN EMERGING TARGET BUSINESS SECTORS.

Action 3.1: Leverage and integrate multiple regional assets into a consolidated strategy to establish Greater Austin as a world leader in clean, renewable, and efficient energy. (BP)

- Battery technology and energy storage
  - Capitalize on the transformative development opportunities of Greater Austin’s status as a national Energy Innovation Hub.
  - Advocate for full build-out of proposed research and development capacity at the Circuit of the Americas.
    - Leverage this research to position Greater Austin as a center for automotive research and development, including innovation in safety technologies, in-car entertainment systems, driverless systems, and other processes, and attraction and expansion of automotive-components manufacturers and suppliers.
      - Consider taking inter-community visits to Detroit, Upstate South Carolina, Southern California, and other automotive innovation hubs to determine the additional assets needed by Greater Austin to become competitive in this market.
  - Support the companies developed through UT-Austin’s Clean Energy Incubator (CEI).
    - Work with companies to connect them to opportunities at the Circuit of the Americas.
• Identify competitive locations to site companies graduating from the Incubator.
  o Leverage the capacity of the Texas Advanced Computing Center (TACC) to process data related to battery technology and storage theories and algorithms.
  o Fully support the funding and construction of the Engineering Education and Research Center (EERC) at UT-Austin.
  o Formalize a process to work with research partners to scale and resource battery technology discoveries to production in Greater Austin.

✓ Smart grid and energy management.
  o Launch a campaign to create an Energy Management and Innovation Center and development park anchored by the Pecan Street Demonstration at Mueller.
    ▪ Develop a master plan for the Center and research park and identify public and private funding sources.
    ▪ Attract companies, research institutions, and government-affiliated centers to co-locate at the energy park.
    ▪ Effectively connect and coordinate work at the energy park with efforts at the Circuit of the Americas, CEI, UT-Austin, and Texas State.
    ▪ Consider relocating UT-Austin’s Energy Management and Innovation Center to Pecan Street and coordinating programs to promote energy-related research and instruction and train local business leaders to understand the energy management sector and its growth possibilities.
  o Partner with TACC to process data-intensive research and experimental hypotheses.

✓ Solar energy
  o Attract solar energy startups, headquarters, and production projects to Greater Austin.
    ▪ Fully leverage linkages with Pecan Street, CEI, Circuit of the America’s entities, Austin Energy, and other partners to support and enhance attraction strategies.
    ▪ Work with regional partners to identify and prepare competitive development sites for these firms.
  o Work with the Local Solar Advisory Committee to leverage rebate programs and policies to grow the regional solar energy sector.

✓ Traditional energy
  o Conduct research and outreach to identify and quantify Austin area employment and wages tied to traditional energy companies.
    ▪ Work with industry leaders to determine Greater Austin’s strategic opportunities and priority efforts needed to expand this sector.
  o Support research, commercialization, and expansion of regional firms working to apply technologies that enhance the sustainability of traditional energy sources.
    ▪ Leverage the world-class facilities and capacities at UT-Austin in traditional energy sources to advance this mission.
  o Connect traditional energy executives and entrepreneurs with opportunities in angel and venture capital investing.
o Develop an internal marketing campaign to promote Greater Austin as a research center for mitigating the environmental externalities of traditional energy development and consumption.
  ▪ Engage and educate stakeholders about Greater Austin’s capacity in traditional energy in the context of the region’s focus on green and renewable energy.

**Action 3.2: Leverage Greater Austin’s future medical school and teaching hospital as catalysts for development of a regional life sciences and biomedical cluster. (BP)**

- Optimize Central Health to lead the initiative with critical, aggressive, and ongoing support from the regional business community.
  o Build public and private coalitions to advance strategies focused on development of life-sciences infrastructure such as wet labs, research facilities, training centers, medical office buildings, and the attraction of life science companies, researchers, and technology groups.

- Consistently research best practice programs and models to inform development of Greater Austin’s life sciences, biomedical, and health care cluster.

- Fully leverage and support the Texas Life-Sciences Collaboration Center (TLCC) as a critical link in the development of viable biotechnology employers.
  o Position TLCC as a landing pad for certain post-incubation biotechnology and life sciences companies launched in the region or attracted from external markets.

- Formalize a public-private partnership model to develop an integrated healthcare delivery system, including behavioral, preventive, and specialty clinics, and wellness education and programs.
  o Integrate components of medical education – including the attraction, support, and retention of medical residents – into the system.
    ▪ Fully leverage the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine by supporting the placement of third- and fourth-year medical students at key internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry and surgery clinical sites in Williamson County.

- Support efforts in Round Rock to transform the area around Avery Centre into a medical district.
  o Leverage a coalition of Scott & White Hospital-Round Rock, Seton Medical Center Williamson the Texas A&M Health Science Center, Austin Community College and Texas State University to positively influence planning and development of the medical district.
  o Work with city officials to ensure zoning and development controls are consistent with the vision of a medical district.
  o Consider the potential to offer targeted incentives for medially-focused development in the district.

- Integrate a comprehensive research and development component into the cluster strategy by creating a Central Texas research consortium of institutions and facilities.
o Assess the core competencies and capacities of Seton/UT-Southwestern, the UT-Austin medical school, the Texas A&M Health Science Center, Dell Children’s Medical Center, and other partners to formalize an integrated strategy for expansion of facilities and programs.

o Create a “bench to bedside” translational medicine strategy to vet area research in Greater Austin facilities and manufacture products locally.

o Continue working with the Austin Technology Incubator (ATI) to fund and develop one or more wet lab facilities in Greater Austin.

✓ Institute a formal partnership of colleges, universities, hospitals, school districts, community organizations, workforce-development entities, and other stakeholder groups to develop a coordinated training system for health care occupations in demand at all skill levels.

  o Create a talent-attraction program focused on recruiting physician specialists and researchers to Greater Austin.

Action 3.3: Leverage the software convergence of game development, digital media, mobile application, and education technology to build a dominant multi-media technology cluster in Greater Austin. (BP)

✓ Integrate cross-platform efforts in software and hardware design, innovation, regulation, content development, production, transmission, and distribution to structure cluster development strategies.

  o Aggressive market Greater Austin assets across all niche categories.
  o Thoughtfully and aggressively leverage and enhance SXSW programming.
  o Develop specific degree categories and talent “pipelines” for multi-media occupations in demand.
  o Position startups for residence in Capital Factory while supporting their follow-on stages of funding and development.
  o Fully leverage GATP members across multiple sub-sectors.
  o Consider the potential recruitment of a branch campus of a top arts and design school to Greater Austin.

✓ Game development.

  o Create a Texas Game Incubator to house startup enterprises, support their growth, and facilitate expansion to market-rate office space.
  o Increase efforts to attract game publishers to address a gap in Greater Austin’s game development ecosystem.
  o Capitalize on opportunities to grow employment in “serious”/simulation gaming.
    ▪ Develop a software consortium focused on serious/simulation gaming.
    ▪ Seek to attract or develop the headquarters of a serious games/simulation industry association.
    ▪ Outreach to military installations in Central Texas and adjacent regions as partners in developing simulation capacity and products.
  o Develop a four-year degree at UT-Austin in video game development (GAMUT).
    ▪ Look to comparable programs at benchmark universities to inform the development of UT’s degree.
  o Fully leverage TACC’s capacity in simulation environments.
- Support the growth and promotion of the universe of Austin area game development events and associations such as Game On! Texas, GDC Online, Austin 3D Users Group, the Austin chapter of SIGGRAPH, etc.

- **Mobile applications and infrastructure.**
  - Leverage the Austin-area presence of social media companies to inform strategies to grow the mobile applications and infrastructure niche.
  - Partner effectively with Central Texas research universities.
    - As noted previously, aggressively support the funding and construction of the Engineering Education and Research Center (EERC) at UT-Austin.
    - Partner effectively with the Texas State University Ingram School of Engineering to integrate research and curricula with development of Greater Austin’s mobile technology sector.
  - Continue to actively support the Austin Wireless Alliance, Texas Wireless Summit, and other industry-specific events and associations.
    - Foster cross-pollination between these groups and networks engaged in game development, media production, education technology, and other multi-media niches.
  - Ensure that the proposed GAMUT degree at UT-Austin incorporates technologies supportive of mobile applications and environments.

- **Education technology**
  - Make Greater Austin the “test bed” for education technology through the creation of an Education Technology Innovation Center as a partnership of government, business, and academia.
    - Position the Austin region as the national center of education technology research, development, and application.
  - Formalize the Austin Chamber’s Ed Tech Working Group into a SIG or independent sector council.
    - Leverage the Group to formalize development strategies in the Ed Tech sector.
  - Continue to capitalize on the growing presence of Ed Tech at SXSW.edu to promote Greater Austin’s capacity in this niche and ambitions to become a global hub of these technologies.
  - Partner with Greater Austin independent school districts and higher education instructions as test markets and consumers of locally developed technology.

- **Digital media production.**
  - Continue efforts to recruit Austin-based offices of major film and television production and distribution companies.
  - Work with companies and talent in the game development, education technology, and mobile application niches to identify opportunities for Greater Austin to attract and develop animated television, video, and film productions.
    - Outreach to Austin Studios to inform discussions of the region’s competitive assets and challenges in the animation medium.
  - Advocate for the Austin Film Society’s efforts to redevelop the National Guard Armory into a creative media “hub.”
- Connect on-site artists, filmmakers, and organizations with complementary networks in other multi-media sub-sectors.
- Leverage relationships with Austin area investors to identify capital for potential film productions.
  - Continue to leverage the Austin Film Festival, Fantastic Fest, SXSW, and other events to promote and differentiate Greater Austin’s multi-media economy.

**Action 3.4: Enhance Greater Austin’s competitive position for general manufacturing employment. (BP)**

- Contract for a Central Texas manufacturing assessment report.
  - Leverage the report to formalize a strategy for developing a general manufacturing cluster in Greater Austin.
  - Assess the potential to develop – or improve linkages to – multi-modal distribution facilities as a component of the general manufacturing strategy.

- Work with partner governments and economic development entities to leverage the 4A/4B funding tool and other mechanisms to develop spec buildings to market to manufacturing prospects.
  - Continue to provide detailed information on sites and buildings on the Austin Chamber website.

- Participate in regional efforts to create a manufacturing association in Central Texas.
  - Ensure that association members inform strategies to optimize local competitiveness for manufacturing and retain, expand, and attract employment to Greater Austin.

- Ensure manufacturing-supportive training programs are funded and active.
  - Communicate the results of the manufacturing assessment to regional education and training partners to ensure that curricula are aligned with Greater Austin's top employment opportunities.

- Support ongoing efforts to seed and develop an Additive Manufacturing consortium at UT-Austin.
  - Assess the viability of developing a “fab lab” (fabrication laboratory) in Greater Austin to provide a workshop for digital fabrication to aspiring local entrepreneurs.

- Work with the Texas-Mexico Automotive SuperCluster to capitalize on opportunities identified in its 2012 market study.
  - Leverage activities at the Circuit of the America’s to introduce Greater Austin as a burgeoning market for automotive technology and production.

**STRATEGY 4: FOSTER A WORLD-CLASS SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR TECHNOLOGY STARTUP AND COMMERCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES.**

**Action 4.1: Support, market, and connect Greater Austin startup incubators, accelerators, and co-working spaces.**

- Assess the potential to create one or more “startup districts” in Greater Austin.
Partner with existing local incubators, accelerators, and technology leaders to determine the optimal location(s) and strategies necessary to increase the density of startup activity in the region.

Consider ways to better connect assets in the “capital corridor” linking UT-Austin to existing and future Downtown Austin startup hubs.

Create a unique web portal as a marketing and communications tool for Greater Austin’s startup spaces.

- List all local coworking, accelerator, and incubation spaces, their principal focus areas, on-site businesses, entry and contractual requirements, links to graduated firms, and contact information.
  - Update the portal as needed to ensure it is current.
- Seek to most effectively guide interested entrepreneurs to the space (or spaces) that best meet their needs and ambitions.
- Promote the portal on partner websites and through external marketing efforts as an information clearinghouse for entrepreneurs and startups interested in entering the Austin market.

Leverage and market Capital Factory and Austin Technology Incubator as top destinations for entrepreneurs and high-value startups.

- Promote Capital Factory through the Austin TechLive initiative as a central hub of entrepreneurial and startup activity in Greater Austin’s creative core.
  - Connect prospective startup companies and venture investors with Capital Factory representatives.
  - Coordinate with Austin TechLive partners UT-Austin and Texas State to connect student entrepreneurs with Capital Factory companies and administrators.
  - Position the facility as a key networking site for Austin area tech entrepreneurs through on-site classes, networking events, seminars, and “meet-ups.”
    - Leverage UT-Austin’s Professor of Innovation and Murchison Fellow of Free Enterprise and other faculty as potential lecturers.
  - Position Capital Factory as a key resource for attracting and retaining skilled engineering talent.
  - Ensure there is a formalized process for siting companies in Greater Austin after emerging from Capital Factory.
- Consider integrating ATI into the Austin TechLive framework.
  - Position ATI as a complement to Capital Factory for entrepreneurs and early-stage companies, including student enterprises that do not fit the Web 2.0 profile or are in ATI’s targeted sectors and niches.
  - Integrate ATI into Austin TechLive marketing outreach and promotional materials.
- Formalize a process and campaign to position Capital Factory and Austin Technology Incubator as “landing pads” for early-stage domestic and international firms seeking to locate in Greater Austin
  - Feature the landing pad program on the Austin Chamber and partner websites.
- Work to secure earned-media placements for Capital Factory and ATI companies in national and out-of-market media.
- Actively promote the landing pad program through Startup America, SXSW events, and other venues.
- Leverage GATP members to promote the landing pad program to their customers and networks through their enhanced role in external marketing activities (Action 2.2).

✔ Facilitate virtual and networked connections in Greater Austin’s startup and entrepreneurial ecosystem.
  - Continue to leverage established firms and serial entrepreneurs as mentors for early-stage firms at Capital Factory, ATI and other facilities.
  - Leverage entities like Entrepreneurs Network Austin and ATX Hackerspace as collaboration and networking tools.
  - Connect Austin startup companies with UT-Austin’s Texas Venture Labs program and Texas State’s RampCorp initiative.

**Action 4.2: Continue efforts to maximize the benefit of technology commercialization at the University of Texas-Austin and its partners. (BP)**

✔ Support ongoing efforts of key UT-Austin leaders to improve the UT System’s culture of commercialization through activities of the Chancellor’s Technology Commercialization Advisory Cabinet.
  - Work with Cabinet members to realize the UT System’s mission of translating discoveries from System institutions for high-value job creation, wealth-building, and community revitalization.
  - Provide information and case studies for the Cabinet’s twice-yearly meetings where members will review current System technology transfer opportunities, identify obstacles to successful commercialization, advise on planning strategies, and recommend strategies to capture job-creation opportunities from System-generated research.
  - Proactively assess and develop commercialization processes and strategies necessary to best capitalize on opportunities from a proposed UT-Austin medical school.

✔ Leverage regional businesses and investors to advocate for improvements to the commercialization system.
  - Continue to provide research-supported evidence of commercialization activities’ impact on the regional economy.
    - Investigate best practice technology transfer programs across the country to inform advancements in Greater Austin.

✔ Work with UT-Austin to advocate for more industry-friendly investment practices and policies.
  - Ensure that UT-Austin investment partners are integrated into the commercialization ecosystem and inform its processes.
Action 4.3: Partner with UT-Austin to develop a program to identify potential business opportunities derived from Austin corporations’ idled intellectual property (IP).

- Outreach to the McCombs School of Business, Cockrell School of Engineering, College of Natural Sciences, and College of Communication to leverage students and faculty to assess the profitability of dormant corporate IP.
  - Determine if one or more schools/colleges can house and coordinate the program in partnership with other UT entities.

- Empower the UT team to review, vet, and promote “gross IP” to identify business opportunities.
  - Utilize the program as a teaching-tool for students and a low-risk opportunity for Austin area businesses to potentially profit from previous research.

- Ensure transparency in the benefits of the program for participating corporations.

Action 4.4: Partner with Texas State-San Marcos to formalize a strategy to most effectively accelerate its research and commercialization goals.

- Determine the steps necessary for Texas State to achieve Tier One research status within the decade.
  - Empanel a council of regional experts, including UT-Austin representatives, to inform and prioritize actions necessary to secure timely Tier One status.
  - Identify national best practices for examples of accelerated research-capacity enhancement.

- Leverage policy outreach and advocacy efforts to direct specially designated state funds for higher education research to Texas State programs.
  - Determine additional strategies to direct startup capital to Texas State faculty and affiliated researchers.

- Connect applicable Texas State research with Portfolio Austin and Greater Austin Technology Partnership companies and Austin area investors to advance and expand the university’s funded research capacity.

- Position the Science, Technology and Advanced Research (STAR) Park as a major regional research, incubation, and technology-acceleration asset.
  - Ensure that the STAR Park is fulfilling its mission of creating companies and jobs from university-housed research.
  - Promote the STAR One building’s office space, wet labs, and clean rooms for startups and established firms in the nanomaterials and biotechnology sectors.
  - Support efforts to recruit innovators from outside Greater Austin to locate at STAR Park by referencing the facility in Opportunity Austin outreach.

- Identify opportunities to direct the proposed four-year Round Rock campus (Action 7.4) towards a future research and commercialization role.
Action 4.5: Support efforts to identify and secure development capital for Central Texas startup companies and emerging technologies.

- Fully leverage existing capital formation sources and opportunities, including the potential to create a branded Greater Austin capital fund.
  - Effectively leverage the GATP’s Austin A-List program.
  - Better integrate Austin Ventures and other capital providers into the GATP and Austin TechLive initiatives.
  - Improve linkages between the Central Texas Angel Network (CTAN), GATP companies, and Austin TechLive-affiliated startups.
  - Determine the potential to leverage the above-referenced and other public, private, and institutional capital resources for an omnibus fund to support regional enterprise creation and growth.

- Facilitate the Startup Texas program in Greater Austin to advance regional entrepreneurial development and technology enterprise-creation.
  - Leverage the Startup Texas/Startup America platforms to provide messaging, outreach and coordination among Greater Austin’s technology base.
  - Connect entrepreneurs with the resources needed to build their businesses.
  - Link the program to efforts at UT-Austin, Texas State, and other technology-focused entities.

- Develop a network of out-of-region investors through headquarters and marketing outreach trips for ongoing promotion of regional deal flow.
  - Develop portfolios of potential investment opportunities for presentation and discussion with potential investors.

Action 4.6: Continue to actively leverage the SXSW conference and festival to stimulate Greater Austin’s technology and startup environments.

- Increase the number of Austin Chamber sponsored events and sessions.
  - Fully leverage GATP members to inform programming and sponsorship opportunities.
  - Engage GATP and Austin TechLive member networks to drive attendance to sponsored events.
  - Develop strategies to most effectively present investment and relocation opportunities to attendees.

- Invest in a more visible presence for the Austin Chamber brand at SXSW events.
  - Determine the capital viability of investing in Austin Chamber title sponsorship for a future festival.

- Work with festival officials to consider development of “virtual” incubation or accelerator programs in connection with SXSW.
  - Pursue the effort as a potential partnership between Austin Technology Incubator, Capital Factory, Texas State RampCorp, and other regional incubation and acceleration entities.
STRATEGY 5: BECOME A LEADING VOICE FOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE GREATER AUSTIN’S COMPETITIVE POSITION.

Action 5.1: Leverage Greater Austin’s existing advocacy on state and federal educational policy to inform policy strategies for additional categories of regional competitiveness. (BP)

- Continue to develop policy positions and expertise on state and federal issues to inform advocacy efforts.
- Enhance relationships with impactful Central Texas legislators.
  - Leverage these relationships to gain access to state and federal policymakers, staff, and fundraisers.
  - Encourage elected officials to pursue committee assignments that would advance the region’s competitive prospects, including support for policies and funding allocations beneficial to Greater Austin’s target sectors, infrastructure priorities, water policies, technology and innovation policy, and other issues.
- Consider expanding the business community’s engagement in elections for open or contested legislative positions.
  - Vet candidates for potential representation of Central Texas.
  - Host candidate debates and discussion forums.
- Build upon foundational advocacy assets such as the Chamber’s February Lunch Group, Federal Issues Committee (the Brain Trust), and the Power Group of Central Texas delegation staff.
  - Expand the Lunch Group meetings to twice annually.
  - Expand the Brain Trust to include business leaders in the transportation and entrepreneurial spaces.
- Deepen relationships with new sources of influence such as national technology-related organizations (NSF, NIH, US Patent and Trade Office, SBIR/STTR, etc.), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, national metro chambers, and the UT Texas Exes group.
- Retool the annual Washington, D.C. lobbying trip.
  - Identify the most influential business, government, institutional, and civic leaders to take on the trip.
  - Prepare attendees through development of talking points and learning sessions.
  - Schedule meetings with key elected officials, congressional staff, technology organization executives, think tank leaders, and influential Texas expatriates in all levels of government.
  - Consider whether to take a smaller group of key Austin leaders on regular “mini-trips” to Washington, D.C. focused on particularly timely issues.
- Build public awareness of the Greater Austin business community’s state and federal advocacy efforts.
  - Leverage public-relations programs to communicate stories about advocacy successes.
Enhance relationships with local and statewide bureau reporters.

Develop email distribution lists of reporters, campaign donors, elected officials and their staff, national and regional chambers, Texas Exes, etc., to leverage for dissemination of policy positions and perspectives on key issues.

**Action 5.2: Ensure that Greater Austin’s business costs are supportive of continued regional growth and investment.**

- Advocate for utility rates that enable Greater Austin to effectively retain and attract high-volume energy users.
  - Actively participate in all future discussions related to establishment of electricity rate structures and potential issues such as utility market deregulation.
  - Ensure that the perspective of the region’s business community continues to inform the public debate over equity in energy usage and billing.

- Leverage the Imagine Austin plan to simplify, streamline, and improve the predictability of regulatory and development controls in the City of Austin.
  - Move forward with efforts associated with Imagine Austin to completely reconfigure, rewrite, streamline, and optimize the City of Austin’s zoning regulations.
    - Ensure the Greater Austin business community has a voice in the development and enforcement of the new code.
  - Position Imagine Austin as the foundational document to inform creation of a best-in-class permitting and development code system in the city.
  - Launch corollary efforts to instill a “culture of customer service” in City of Austin permitting and development staff.
  - Ensure robust and ongoing participation of Austin’s development community in the optimization of permitting processes and services.

- Work with Portfolio Austin businesses and local economic development partners to consistently identify, assess, and address anti-competitive business cost issues.
  - Focus policy development and state/federal lobbying efforts on priority challenges limiting Greater Austin’s competitive position.

- Continue to secure passage of critical pro-business elements of the Texas Economic Development Act in future legislative sessions.

**Action 5.3: Advance advocacy and outreach efforts to increase the number and frequency of direct flights at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.**

- Continue to work with Air Service Task Force members to improve Austin connections to U.S. technology hubs.
  - Assess and report passenger counts for expanded-service routes to incent carriers to increase daily frequencies, designate larger aircraft, and add new non-stop destinations.
  - Report successful Task Force efforts and new/expanded direct air services as part of the regional growth dialogues initiative (Action 9.1).

- Proceed with leveraging the Formula One U.S. Grand Prix to further enhance efforts to procure international non-stop service from Austin-Bergstrom (Action 2.5).
Talent

The quality of Greater Austin’s workforce is its most important competitive advantage; recognition of this capacity has even defined the region’s moniker as “The Human Capital.” However, the regional workforce is impacted for a number of key occupations; the majority of existing businesses across multiple sectors list “workforce availability” as their number one competitive concern. Workforce development efforts coordinated by the Austin Chamber in partnership with multiple regional school districts and support organizations have been identified as a national best-practice. The region’s talent-development programming must continue to evolve to meet employer needs in the nation’s most vibrant economy.

STRATEGY 6: EFFECTIVELY PREPARE GREATER AUSTIN STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS.

Action 6.1: Support a goal of achieving a 70 percent regional direct-to-college matriculation rate by 2015.

- Leverage ongoing public, private, institutional, and non-profit partnerships to advance college-readiness programs and processes in Central Texas independent school districts (ISDs).
  - Ensure all partner districts take advantage of software enabling college counselors to track student progress on college readiness performance, application filing, and financial-aid requests.
  - Work with Austin Partners in Education (APIE) to ensure its College Readiness team is partnering effectively with ISPs to inform, advise, and tutor struggling students while also preparing students to successfully complete the COMPASS exam.
  - Support the efforts of Round Rock Partners in Education (RRPIE) to optimize college readiness in schools in their jurisdiction.
  - Leverage Breakthrough Austin to support first-generation college students’ matriculation into higher education.
  - Utilize incentive-pay awards to better focus enrollment managers’ and counselors’ efforts on increasing direct-to-college results.
  - Implement a summer-support system to best focus students on college-preparation and matriculation goals.

- Continue enhancing tools to enable students to secure financial aid.
  - Leverage Financial Aid Saturdays in all Central Texas school districts to consistently increase FAFSA submissions.
  - Work to optimize the real-time FAFSA system with all 15 ISD partners.
  - Ensure students and families are aware of and utilize FAFSA forms translated into their primary languages.

- Advocate for policies, programs, and candidates that support Central Texas’ matriculation goals.
- Continue to optimize the Apply Texas system.
- Work with partners to develop and advance statewide legislative priorities focused on college readiness, accountability and assessment, and financial aid policy.
- Inform local trustee elections based on preferred candidates.
- Assess the potential to design and launch children’s development accounts (CDAs) to advance regional matriculation goals.

✓ Ensure support systems are in place to direct non-college-going graduates to school-to-work and certificate programs aligned with occupations-in-demand.

**Action 6.2: Participate in efforts to provide quality early-childhood education in Greater Austin.**

✓ Leverage local campuses that have successfully implemented the Success by 6 program to inform application to additional Greater Austin schools.
  - Determine the optimal means to measure and assess program goals and performance.

✓ Continue participation with the Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition on issues related to early childhood programming in Greater Austin.

✓ Support the Texas Coalition for Pre-K Quality and Accountability’s policy priorities to provide adequate resources for pre-K education in Texas communities, including tuition-supported pre-K for students who do not qualify for the State Mandated Pre-Kindergarten Program.

**Action 6.3: Develop tools to formalize career-preparation pipelines in Greater Austin (BP).**

✓ Work with regional employers to identify additional target-sector-specific campuses for development in Central Texas ISDs.
  - Ensure that career academies are focused on employment sectors with sustainable projected growth.
  - Leverage the model of the Health Sciences Institute of Austin to pursue potential industry-specific campuses in information technology, new media, engineering, and other categories.

✓ Complement career-specific campuses with development of a vehicle for delivering advanced career and technical education programming to high school students across the region.
  - Identify institutions and facilities to serve as “host” sites for district-wide programs in career-specific skills categories such as health science; gaming; information technology; green engineering; travel and tourism; advanced manufacturing; mobile applications; etc.
  - Make courses at the sites accessible to any Central Texas high school student for elective credit based on state-approved curricula.

✓ Encourage partnerships between Greater Austin schools, community colleges, universities, and policy entities to formalize training pipelines for high-value careers.
  - Capitalize on developments such as an Austin-based medical school, Formula One track and automotive technology park, and proposed research centers in energy management and education technology to build comprehensive training coalitions.
Leverage the coalitions to develop career-development strategies for the continuum of Greater Austin education.

Ensure that ACC master planning is aligned with Greater Austin’s workforce needs.

**Action 6.4: Enhance data assessment and management of regional higher education institutions.**

- Partner with higher education institutions to optimize data collection and assessment protocols to inform curricula and program development.
  - Outreach to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to ensure it informs and supports program assessment and development protocols.
  - Review E3 Alliance data as necessary to help inform the needs and expectations for college and career success.
  - Leverage data collected from existing business visits, Greater Austin Technology Partnership members, tools such as Austin Tech Source, and other sources to inform programmatic needs.

- Ensure that protocols developed by career-focused training coalitions (Action 6.3) are integrated into higher education curricula.

- Leverage business-community preferences, perspectives, and priorities to inform decision-making by regents and trustees.

**Action 6.5: Partner to improve regional college-completion rates.**

- Research best practice programs from U.S. regions with high college completion percentages to identify strategies for development in Central Texas higher education institutions.
  - Review the E3 Alliance’s database of innovative and best-practice programs to inform efforts.

- Expand the Chamber’s ACC Task Force relationship with ACC leadership and trustees to implement programs designed to improve college completion success rates.

- Determine the potential to develop data-driven “intervention” programs to flag and assist under-performing students with advancing their studies towards graduation.

**Strategy 7: Optimize Greater Austin’s Workforce Capacity.**

**Action 7.1: Better leverage existing employers to retain and attract talent.**

- Increase regional employers’ awareness and utilization of internship programs and online resources.
  - Partner with regional colleges and universities to promote the InternInAustin portal to their students and integrate the site into career-placement materials and websites.
  - Leverage relationships with local chambers, business organizations, and professional associations to regularly disseminate information on InternInAustin to member businesses and individuals.
Development of marketing presentations for employers' use in "selling" Austin to networked in- and out-of-market talent.

- Create customizable electronic presentation and document templates for use by local companies and professionals promoting Greater Austin to their personal networks.
- Develop narratives on the benefits of locating in Austin and direct interested talent to Austin TechSource to identify potential employment opportunities.
- Provide Austin representatives at SXSW with unique "giveaway" items that invite the recipient to learn more about living and working in Austin.

Leverage Greater Austin Technology Partnership members for strategies such as job sharing, resume swaps, and others.

Partner with regional technology companies to advocate for removing foreign-born talent residency restrictions that limit the number of international workers available to local firms.

- Leverage enhanced federal advocacy efforts (Action 5.1) to lobby for increased H1B visa allotments for U.S. firms.

Work with Austin-area young professional (YP) organizations such as the Austin Young Chamber of Commerce, Young Hispanic Professionals Association of Austin, and Texas Young Professionals Austin to leverage their personal networks as talent-attraction resources.

- Encourage access to InternInAustin, Austin TechSource, and other tools to connect YP networks to regional opportunities.
- Support the development of contractual relationships between YP organizations and local employers to meet and socialize with targeted talent prospects in Greater Austin by company invitation.

**Action 7.2: Position Austin TechSource as the principal tool connecting local and external talent to career opportunities.**

Aggressively promote Austin TechSource via multiple platforms and media.

- Regularly integrate information on the website into e-newsletters, email updates, social media postings, and other electronic outreach of the Austin Chamber, all local partner chambers, trade associations, professional organizations, governments, colleges and universities, and other partners.
- Provide local media with periodic updates on success stories resulting from Austin TechSource postings and hireings.
- Leverage key SXSW events such as the Career Expo for targeted promotion of Austin TechSource.

Continue optimizing the site’s user interface and functionality through ongoing communications with corporate clients and job seekers.

Consider placing out-of-market advertising of the website in key talent-rich regions such as Northern California, the Pacific Northwest, the Research Triangle, Greater New York, and Boston.
**Action 7.3: Develop a Rapid Response Training Coalition in Greater Austin focused on time-sensitive re-training and up-skilling of workers for occupations in demand.** (BP)

- Outreach to all necessary regional partners (including institutions, training providers, and policy organizations) to design and program the Coalition.
  - Empanel a working committee to guide Coalition-development efforts.
  - Assess the efficacy and results of existing programs to determine if there are opportunities to redirect funding to higher-impact initiatives.

- Develop new and leverage existing data-driven tools to identify key skills gaps and formalize “just-in-time” training protocols to transition displaced or under-employed workers into higher value occupations.
  - Integrate efforts from existing agencies to create six-month job-specific certificate programs and other rapid employment training models into the Coalition’s suite of services.
  - Assess the viability of re-skilling non-technical graduates of regional four-year universities to enter technical fields in demand.

- Actively engage potential corporate clients and prospective talent into the program.
- Create partnerships with local social services and community development organizations to identify and access potential re-training candidates.
- Consider capitalizing a scholarship fund to provide tuition reimbursement to qualified candidates.

**Action 7.4: Transition Texas State University’s Round Rock campus into a four-year branch institution.** (BP)

- Work with the Texas State University System Board of Regents to initiate a strategic process to provide four-year degree programs at Texas State-Round Rock.
  - Partner with regional training affiliates, economic development entities, health care providers, and private sector representatives to tailor the campus’ degree areas and curricula to meet critical regional employment demands.

- Revisit the Round Rock campus’ master plan to accommodate thousands of additional students phased in over a multi-year period.
- Integrate the Round Rock campus’ transition into the Round Rock Master Plan for Advancing Higher Education.
- Ensure strong and lasting partnerships with the University of Texas-Austin, ACC, Concordia, St. Edwards, and Southwestern to build a coalition of regional two- and four-year institutions.
  - Seek to develop cross-enrollment agreements that allow regional students to take courses at coalition-member campuses and transfer credits to their home schools.

- Actively promote Texas State-Round Rock to high schools in Texas and adjoining states.
Place

As one of the fastest-growing regions in America, Greater Austin is faced with the challenge of absorbing tens of thousands of new residents every year and managing the impacts of these migrants on the region’s transportation systems, resource capacity, and regional planning dynamics. Traffic congestion is an especially contentious topic for Greater Austin residents and businesses, with the issue topping most surveys of the region’s most important competitive liability. While the Greater Austin Chamber has been active in advancing congestion-relief and capacity-building projects, the decades-long development process for new roads and highways and the strain of ever-increasing population growth on the region’s transportation networks limits the perception that proactive measures are being taken to improve mobility in Greater Austin. Thus, congestion-relief is an issue of both progress and perception; both must be addressed to ensure that local stakeholders remain bullish on Greater Austin’s future prospects. The Austin region is also at a critical juncture in terms of its perception of the benefits of growth. Many stakeholders—public, private and ordinary citizens—are vocally opposed to the continued use of incentives and other development programs to stimulate job growth, fearing that more jobs will lead to more in-migration and exacerbated issues of traffic congestion and natural resources decline. As the late 1990s and early 2000s showed, however, taking the foot off the growth pedal can have dire consequences for Greater Austin if its development engine ever falters. The business community must lead the charge to present objective scenarios on the region’s future prospects and the realities of today’s globally competitive economy.

STRATEGY 8: CONTINUE TO AGGRESSIVELY PURSUE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT TO MITIGATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN GREATER AUSTIN.

Action 8.1: Create a non-partisan Central Texas Transportation Alliance as a business partnership to advance mobility improvements in the region. (BP)

- Program the Alliance to engage in policy research and development.
  - Charge the Alliance with creating and advocating for a specific regional vision for transportation to be incorporated in the CAMPO 2040 plan, including high capacity transit with implementation and funding priorities.

- Provide the Alliance with the capacity to outreach to regional constituencies on the dynamics of regional mobility issues and solutions.
  - Utilize the Alliance’s marketing capacity to communicate the benefits of multimodal regional transportation planning, funding, and implementation.
  - Produce and distribute regular email bulletins and fact sheets on mobility issues, developments, and successes.

- Leverage the Alliance to engage in government-relations advocacy and to ensure accountability for project and programmatic results.
o Sustain continued support for funding and constructing projects with the greatest congestion-mitigation potential.
o Partner with Texas Department of Transportation leadership to create innovative solutions in Central Texas.
o Position the Alliance as an influential voice to lobby elected officials for priority transportation investments and hold them accountable for results.

**Action 8.2: Leverage data-driven assessments to prioritize regional multimodal mobility solutions as advocated by the Central Texas Transportation Alliance.**

✓ Underwrite the development of critical planning and mobility studies as a means to use data to prioritize transportation advocacy.
✓ Report on the funding dynamics and viability of potential mobility projects.
✓ Conduct comprehensive cost-benefit analyses to assess the inclusion and mix of road, light rail, commuter rail, rapid bus, local bus, and non-motorized modes in Greater Austin's regional transportation planning.

**Action 8.3: Evaluate the benefits and consequences of empowering a single regional transportation authority to implement Greater Austin's mobility strategies.**

✓ Ensure that the evaluation includes assessment of a representative breadth of comparative organizational models.
o Compel the adoption of national best practices consistent with advancing the implementation of the Central Texas Transportation Alliance's regional transportation vision.
✓ Leverage the evaluation of best-practice models to inform Greater Austin transportation advocacy and prioritization.
o Advocate for leading practices to achieve a best in class metropolitan planning organization.
o Prioritize advocacy for dedicated funding streams to implement multimodal transportation improvements.

**STRATEGY 9: FOSTER REGIONAL DIALOGUES ON THE BENEFITS AND POSITIVE IMPACTS OF GREATER AUSTIN'S DEVELOPMENT.**

**Action 9.1: Design a branded campaign to focus public attention on Greater Austin’s development dynamics and their positive effect on economic and quality of life issues.**

✓ Customize a multi-platform initiative to present objective information on the realities of the Austin region's economic performance and competitive position.
o Articulate the benefits of quality growth and economic vitality in the context of public services and amenities, government funding dynamics, retail diversity, housing development, arts and culture capacity, etc.
Seek to reorient public debate on the merit of incentives to focus on what Greater Austin is receiving in direct and indirect jobs and investment as opposed to the public cost of subsidies.

- Educate the public through the use of expert studies, well-articulated reports, paid and earned media.
- Focus on relocation losses in addition to wins to highlight the competitive dynamics of domestic and international economic development.
- Present narratives on past Austin area downturns and the region’s response to them.
- Integrate national perspectives on Greater Austin, including news articles and rankings.
- Build awareness of regional efforts to address and prepare for growth-related impacts.
  - Highlight planning efforts bringing regional partners together to manage future growth.
  - Research and discuss strategies in other regions to provide affordable housing, promote community wellness, address issues of rising poverty, and other externalities of sustained economic growth.
- Involve numerous Austin area voices from across public and private sector constituencies.

Consider platforms for the initiative including:

- A MindMixer website
- Lecture series
- Discussion panels
- Locally developed radio or television programs.
- Affiliated social media presence.
- And others.

Support the campaign through ongoing data and research analysis.

**Action 9.2: Ensure that the Greater Austin business community is actively engaged in discussions involving the Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Area’s fourth Regional Water Planning Program (2011-2016).**

- Provide feedback and perspective on the water-resource needs of existing regional businesses and the demands of prospects in water-intensive sectors like semiconductor manufacturing, food processing, data centers, and other high-volume users.
- Advocate for sustainable policies that provide sufficient water supplies for residents and businesses of all types.
- Support regional water planning through the development of research papers focused on policies and planning in best-practice U.S. communities.
CONCLUSION

The challenge in a region as successful as Greater Austin is to retain a sense of economic urgency in the midst of near-universal optimism about the community’s future. While multiple economic, demographic, and quality of life advantages position Austin to continue as one of the nation’s top performing metropolitan areas, nothing is guaranteed in today’s economy; the recent Great Recession is proof of that. While Greater Austin must continue to capitalize on its assets and take advantage of emerging business opportunities, constant attention must be paid not only to the impacts of growth on the region’s desirability as a place of business and residence, but also people’s perceptions of the value of economic development investments and the role of a program like Opportunity Austin in the community’s past, current, and future success.

This Strategic Checklist provides an actionable framework for the Opportunity Austin 3.0 program. Less comprehensive than previous strategic plans, it is nevertheless intended to have the same transformative impact on the Greater Austin economy and workforce, albeit with more concentrated and directed strategic investments and activities.

Even in a more streamlined program, however, there will be strategic priorities that will take precedence over other activities during implementation. In addition to the Key Initiatives identified in this document, the Implementation Plan includes clear and focused priorities for activating the Opportunity Austin 3.0 strategy. These are informed by discussions and feedback from the project’s Steering Committee.
APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

Market Street maintains an extensive library of best practice programs, processes, organizations, and efforts for application to key competitive opportunities and challenges identified through our comprehensive research process. Best practices recommended to inform the Opportunity Austin 3.0 strategic plan were selected based on their specific relevance to actions and efforts the region can pursue. Ultimately, local leadership should utilize these best practices as guidelines and potential programmatic models to inform strategic efforts custom-tailored Greater Austin strategic programs. Some of the best practices detailed in the following pages are applied to components (sub-actions) of a strategic recommendation, as opposed to the full strategy itself.

ACTION 1.3 EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION

The goal of the Export Development Program is to provide assistance and create opportunities for Southwestern Pennsylvania companies to expand their business internationally. Commission staff offers consultative services to regional businesses, which can also take advantage of Commission-sponsored and co-sponsored educational seminars and training programs designed for exporters and potential exporters in the region. The Commission’s services include:

- Export-readiness assessment
- Market identification and access strategies
- International market and industry research
- Trade show and event preparation
- Market Access Grant (MAG)
- Business etiquette and negotiation tactics
- Export documentation and other technical assistance
- Virtual trade advisement

The Commission leverages state dollars to provide market-access grants of up to $3,000 to export ready companies who seek financial assistance for foreign market entry. The SPC partners with Duquesne University’s Small Business Development Center, Saint Vincent College’s Small Business Development Center’s Center for Global Competitiveness, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Appalachian Regional Commission, and a network of authorized trade representatives.

In addition to their consulting services, SPC also organizes a yearly, free event in Pittsburgh that allows regional businesses the opportunity to have a one-on-one meetings with authorized trade representatives from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, South
Korea, Mexico, Holland, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

http://www.spcregion.org/plan_export.shtml

ACTION 1.4: ONE SOUTHERN INDIANA (CLARK AND FLOYD COUNTIES, IN)

While not the result of a formal intra-regional relocation program, in 2010 the One Southern Indiana (1si) joint chamber and economic development organization leveraged its BRE program to identify two firms who were thinking of leaving the region and helped them find suitable space in Southern Indiana. Accent Marketing Services, one of the region’s largest employers, and Kemper Foods International, a company with high growth potential, were considering opportunities to leave the region. 1si worked with both companies, local developers, and three regional communities to broker a deal that enabled both companies to relocate within Southern Indiana. In addition to retaining two top employers, 1si was able to secure $10 million in new investment for the region and secure pledges for 350 additional jobs at the two companies. 1si has won Excellence in Economic Development awards from IEDC the past three years for its BRE program’s accomplishments.

http://www.1si.org/

ACTION 2.6: SHELL/SPEC BUILDING PROGRAM – NORTH CAROLINA’S NORTHEAST COMMISSION

North Carolina’s Northeast Commission implemented a regional shell/spec building program that leveraged Commission, partner, and government revenues to assist local efforts to construct new manufacturing space to spur economic activity. The Commission provides loan funds equal to three years of interest payments when a regional community commits its funds to the construction of a shell/spec building. The Commission is repaid by the community through accrued property taxes beginning the first year after building is sold or leased. If the community retains ownership of the building and leases the facility where no property taxes are paid, the community must incorporate a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) or Triple Net Lease clause into any lease or purchase agreement. The program is contingent on minimum job and investment goals agreed to by the local community.

http://www.ncnortheast.info/business_environment/NE%20Shell_SpecBldg.htm

ACTION 3.1: CU-ICAR (GREENVILLE, SC)

The Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR) is an advanced technology research campus developed from a public/private partnership and over $200 million in public and private funding commitments. The CU-ICAR site has approximately 20 on-campus partners
including BMW R&D, a simulation software developer, an engineering consulting company, a roller bearings manufacturer, an engineering software developer, a zero-emissions commercial vehicles manufacturer, and an automotive interiors manufacturer, among others. A variety of other partners provide equipment, fellowships, and scholarships for the program’s Master’s and PhD students.

CU-ICAR faculty, staff, and students do research in four major areas: Advanced Powertrain Systems, Manufacturing, Automotive Systems Integration, and Vehicle Electronic Systems Integration. In addition, CU-ICAR offers engineering services to the automotive industry at its on-site facilities. Services include: driveline noise studies, mileage assessments, sound measurements, and other chassis dynamometer and sound room-related tests; tests for squeaks, rattles, vibration, structural durability, suspension characterization and fastener integrity; full-vehicle, body-in-white, and other large-item coordinate measurements; tests for performance, engine durability and components, emissions, fuel, catalysts, and engine mapping and calibration; FCC and CISPR radiated emissions tests, electromagnetic immunity testing up to 100V/m; turning, milling, drilling, sawing, welding, and plasma cutting at their in-house machine shop; and component testing for life-cycle durability. CU-ICAR has been recognized as one of the top ten automotive-focused university programs in the country.

http://www.clemson.edu/centers-institutes/cu-icar/

ACTION 3.2: CHARLES E. SCHMIDT COLLEGE OF MEDICINE – FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY (BOCA RATON, FL)

The Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine received preliminary accreditation in the spring of 2011 and admitted its first class in 2012. The University is a charter member of the Life Tech Corridor, a regional consortium working to establish a life sciences industry cluster in South Florida. It is also a charter member of MedUTech, a local initiative to build the technology and healthcare sectors in Boca Raton. MedUTech is the brainchild of two Boca Raton executives who hoped to spur economic growth in Boca Raton by connecting the clusters of healthcare, education, and technology. Local technology and healthcare companies, including MDVIP, an innovative healthcare delivery business, have pledged to collaborate on projects with the new medical school.

The medical school will also have a symbiotic relationship with the University’s Boca Raton Research Park. The research park has 22 technology and development companies, including engineering, medical imaging technologies, software design and development firms.

http://med.fau.edu/medicine
ACTION 3.3: MONTREAL GAMES INCUBATOR (MONTREAL, QC, CANADA)

The mission of the Montreal Games Incubator is to recognize and assist the next generation of video game developers, designers, visionaries and entrepreneurs in the realization and their games and the commercial launch of their companies. A collaboration between Concordia University and Dawson College, the Montreal Games Incubator provides independent game creators, designers, artists, programmers, and theorists the opportunity to:

- Work in a gaming-specific creative environment;
- Complete innovative or experimental game projects;
- Organize and form independent game studios;
- Develop soft and hard skills related to game and business; and
- Advance their careers

The Incubator hopes to provide an environment for innovative game development and entrepreneurship, team-building and networking, mentorship and expert feedback, skills development and training, as well as business opportunities and advice.

http://tag.hexagram.ca/incubator/about.php

ACTION 3.4: FAB LAB TULSA (TULSA, OK)

Capitalizing on the growing potential for additive manufacturing, the Hardesty Center for Fab Lab Tulsa is a non-profit entity that has collaborated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to assemble a suite of state-of-the-art equipment and computers into one workspace as a community center for innovation, entrepreneurship, and STEM education. Fab Lab Tulsa provides users with the latest computer-controlled fabrication technology, including 3D printers, laser cutters, a CNC mill, a vinyl cutter, and a MakerBot Thing-O-Matic that community participants can use to fabricate a prototype of their product.

The Fab Lab concept, developed by MIT, has been deployed to over 100 locations on five continents. The Fab Lab in Tulsa is one of the first in the Midwest. The lab provides computers with design software, equipment workstations, project tables, a conference room with video conferencing capabilities, a lounge area for collaboration, electronics stations equipped with soldering irons, hand tools, power supplies, oscilloscopes, and function generators. Users can make reservations to use specific machines at a predetermined time.

http://www.fablabtulsa.com/
ACTION 4.2: THE DESHPANDE CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION – MIT (BOSTON, MA)

Through an initial gift from Jaishree and Desh Deshpande, the Deshpande Center was established at MIT’s School of Engineering to increase the influence of innovative MIT technologies in the marketplace through guidance and a sustainable source of funding. The Center is funded through financial and professional support of MIT alumni, entrepreneurs, corporations, and investors. The Deshpande Center funds and supports a diverse breadth of emerging technologies that includes biotechnology, biomedical devices, energy innovations, information technology, new materials, and tiny tech.

Since its founding in 2002, the Deshpande Center has funded more than 80 projects with over $10 million through several funding and programmatic approaches. Ignition Grants offer as much as $50,000 for projects that target new and beneficial ideas in all technology-related areas. Innovation Grants for up to $25,000 aim to overcome the obstacles that may hinder innovation from advancing in technologies that have already progressed past the earliest development stages.

The Deshpande Center offers a number of hands-on programs for student entrepreneurs to interact with established innovators and commercialization strategies. The Catalyst Program brings together a group of experienced, proactive, and committed individuals from the entrepreneur and technology commercialization communities who mentor and guide innovators in making an impact in the marketplace. Innovation Teams (i-Teams) are student groups who, through collaboration with faculty and mentors, develop effective commercialization strategies through the assessment of technical and market risks and economic and social prospects for scientific and engineering breakthroughs in an array of disciplines.

Twelve companies have been created through the Deshpande Center’s efforts, collectively raising more than $180 million in outside financing and hiring over 200 employees. Thirteen venture capital firms have invested in these ventures. Additionally, activities led by the Center have engaged over 100 volunteers from the venture and entrepreneur community, supporting more than 200 MIT faculty and students in a number of departments and disciplines.

ACTION 5.1: PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY – CHICAGOLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (CHICAGO, IL)

Identified by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as a national best practice, the Chicagoland Chamber maintains an active and aggressive advocacy and policy agenda. The Chamber’s list of legislative priorities encompasses multiple categories and projects and is advanced through consistent lobbying to state and federal officials. In addition, the Chamber maintains a Political Action Committee (PAC) with a goal of electing candidates who support the Chamber’s mission and legislative program, initiatives and philosophy. Regular legislative updates are provided to stakeholders through
consistently updated online content. Also impacting the Chamber’s legislative priorities are the ProChicago visioning program and the Jobs One! initiative to optimize the region’s business climate.

http://chicagolandchamber.org/wdk_cc/programs_and_advocacy/public_policy.jsp

**ACTION 6.3: SKILLS CENTER – SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (SEATTLE, WA)**

The Skills Center program is actually a collection of training sites for Seattle Public School students, usually juniors and seniors, to receive advanced career and technical education. Programs are distributed throughout the city, including at community colleges, community-based sites, and public schools themselves. The Skills Center programs are accessible to high school students from any Seattle Public School. All Skills Center programs are developed to adhere to state-approved preparatory standards and are keyed to industry forecasts for high wage careers. The courses are driven by market demand, so Skills Center courses can be marketed to students as tools to enter the workforce at a high level, plus get a jumpstart on college and careers. Currently the Skills Centers offer courses in aviation, information technology, game design and animation, and medical careers. Each program of coursework consists of a four-course sequence that provides students with high school credits.

There are plans to add more courses in the future, including programs in green energy; green engineering; marketing and retail; sustainable construction; business and entrepreneurship; fire science; criminal justice and public safety; culinary arts; hospitality, travel, and tourism; green manufacturing; and low impact transportation.

http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?sessionid=3f74f3cad1a348eb9b34ecd74ef60468&pageid=252732

**ACTION 7.3: RAPID-RESPONSE TRAINING (MULTIPLE EXAMPLES)**

The best models for how to program a rapid-response training coalition are the state and local departments, organizations, and colleges that leverage federal money to mobilize rapid-response training programs after mass layoff events. The federal Trade Adjustment Act provides millions of dollars for retraining of displaced workers with the hope that they will be schooled for careers in demand.

Every state has some type of rapid-response training protocol. Iowa describes its rapid-response program as a “pro-active, customer-focused, and flexible strategy designed for two major purposes. First, to help growing companies access an available pool of skilled workers from other companies that are downsizing or who have been trained in the skills your company needs to be competitive.
Second, to respond to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers."

At the local level, the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OWED) offers a Rapid Response program that assists employers in easing the transition of their workforces when a downsizing event is imminent. OWED and its partners conduct on-site orientations to inform employees about services to assist them with retraining and job-placement.

Greater Austin would be able to leverage existing models and partners to customize a rapid-response protocol for high-demand occupations. Of course, a funding source other than TAA assistance would need to be identified.

ACTION 7.4: GEORGIA GWINNETT COLLEGE (LAWRENCEVILLE, GA)

What began as a higher-education center where local students could take satellite courses from Georgia colleges and universities eventually evolved into the first new college to be chartered by the state of Georgia in decades. Leaders in Gwinnett County, one of Georgia’s largest and the most populous county east of the Mississippi River without a four-year college, had long wanted to site a public university in the county. In 1994, the county purchased 160 acres of land and designated it specifically for the development of a college campus. Donated land and state money eventually led to the development of the Gwinnett University Center (GUC), a partnership among four University System of Georgia institutions. Based on growth at the Center and continuing need for a four-year college in the area, in 2004 the University System Board of Regents voted to create a new four-year college in Gwinnett County. The new college would inhabit the GUC campus and replace the four existing institutions. Named Georgia Gwinnett College, the campus opened its doors to 118 juniors in August 2006. As of 2011-12 academic year, GGC has over 8,000 students, with an ultimate goal of raising enrollment to roughly 15,000 students.

http://www.ggc.edu/

ACTION 8.1: NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE (NORTHERN VIRGINIA)

Founded in 1987 by a group of regional businessmen and citizens, the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance is a non-partisan, private sector organization focused on improving transportation for citizens and businesses in the Northern Virginia region. The Alliance has grown to represent more than 20 major business organizations in the region who are dedicated to making
transportation a critical policy objective. The metro Washington D.C. area and Northern Virginia has some of the nation’s most congested traffic corridors. The Alliance draws attention to and lobbies for the projects it believes will do the most to relieve traffic congestion and move people throughout the region cost effectively within a regional framework of smart land use decisions. The Alliance’s website has a list of the highest priority mobility initiatives with maps and project descriptions. Since its inception, the Alliance has been successful in advancing projects it deemed important, including commuter rail service, limited access parkway projects, highway widenings, bridge replacements, a rail line to the Dulles airport, and a comprehensive regional land use and transportation plan.

http://www.nvta.org/