

# Propel Savannah

Strategic Economic Development Action Plan  
Spring 2019



# Acknowledgments

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AngelouEconomics wants to express our appreciation to the individuals who provided invaluable input to this strategic planning process. The key issues identified within this report could not be fully identified and explored without their help. We want to give special thanks to the following individuals for their time and assistance:

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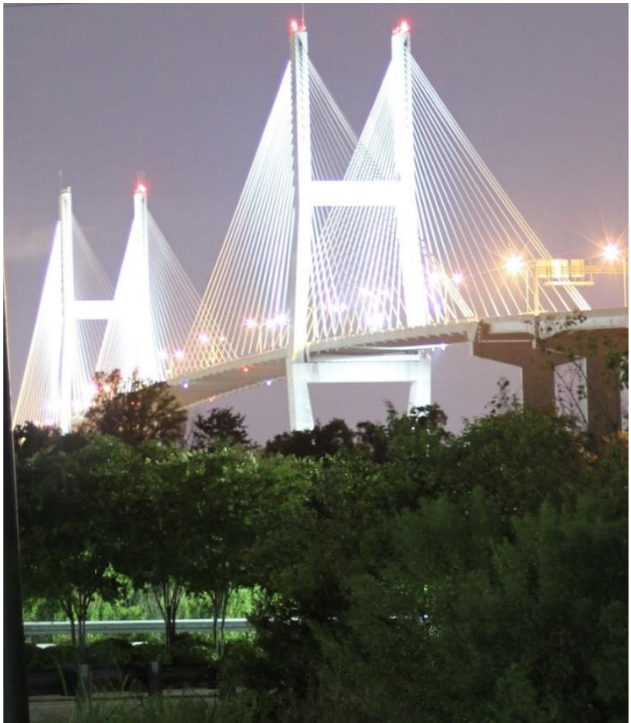
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# Table of Contents

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- Foreword..... 1
- Executive Summary..... 2
- Stakeholder Engagement..... 11
  - Stakeholder Engagement – Introduction..... 12
  - Resident Survey..... 12
  - Business Survey..... 14
  - Managing Expectations: A Caveat..... 15
- Market Assessment..... 16
  - Market Assessment – Introduction..... 17
  - Current Economic Climate..... 17
  - SWOT Analysis..... 20
  - Competitive Positioning Summary..... 28
  - Community Scorecard..... 29
- Target Industry Analysis..... 30
  - Target Industry Analysis – Introduction..... 31
  - Selection Process..... 31
  - Target Industry Chart..... 33
  - Manufacturing & Logistics..... 34
  - Creative & Technical Services..... 37
  - Entertainment Production..... 40
  - Health Care..... 42
  - Target Industry Summary..... 44
- Strategic Action Plan..... 45
  - Economic Development..... 47
  - Entrepreneurship..... 66
  - Education and Workforce..... 83
  - Community Capacity Building..... 114



# Table of Contents

---

Economic Development Metrics.....	134
Implementation Matrix.....	137
Appendices.....	138



# Foreword

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Successful economic development starts with a good plan. But it can only be successful with solid execution and that requires strong, committed leadership, dedicated professional staff, motivated community partners and adequate resources.

This strategic economic development action plan, Propel Savannah, represents a collaborative effort by Savannah’s public and private sector community leaders to develop and promote the community as a world-class economic destination. It is a guide for developing policies and directing day-to-day activities, charting a course for holistic, sustainable economic growth in the future.

In preparing this plan, AngelouEconomics, with oversight from the SEDA Board of Directors, Propel Savannah Steering Committee, and SEDA staff, faithfully adhered to a set of clear and concise project objectives:

- Understand Savannah’s economic and demographic data through research and analysis.
- Build upon existing economic development efforts, community organizations, programs, resources, and assets.
- Create a vision for economic development with stakeholder engagement and commitment.
- Identify target industry clusters for expansion, retention, recruitment, and entrepreneurship.
- Develop an updated analysis and action plan that translates vision into specific goals, strategies, and tactics for the next five to seven years.


Strategic economic development planning must be dynamic and flexible. Leadership may need to adapt the plan to meet the changing economic landscape of the region. But while flexibility is necessary so is consistency. A common challenge for communities across the country and the world is generating and sustaining a commitment to execution. A community must pursue the collective vision with tenacity and willingness to work through inevitable obstacles in order to achieve it.

This plan outlines strategies that fall well outside the scope of SEDA alone, and requires the commitment of other stakeholders for maximum success. It is important to mobilize the resources necessary to execute the plan in collaboration with key local, regional and state partners, and to develop an annual economic development scorecard with performance measures, ensuring that Savannah’s economic growth and the strategic plan continues to align with the economic well-being of the community.

Through an integrated mix of economic development activities, capital investment, and innovative programs, the Savannah region is well-positioned to attract and grow businesses, boost the competitiveness of the region’s established economic drivers, improve job quality and further diversify the economy with new sector development—while maintaining its renowned coastal lifestyle and preserving its core historic district.



Angela Angelou  
Principal Executive Officer  
AngelouEconomics



Hugh “Trip” Tollison  
President and CEO  
Savannah Economic Development Authority

# Executive Summary

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This strategic economic development action plan serves as a roadmap to **Propel Savannah** into the third decade of the 21st century. It assesses how to leverage the region's assets for competitive advantage and identifies target industries upon which to focus its economic development efforts. It also outlines strategies and tactics to best position the Savannah metropolitan area to attract and retain high-wage employers and high-skill workers who are prepared to compete in the global economy. It takes a best practice approach and provides a customized dashboard of key indicators for monitoring economic development performance.

## Strategic Economic Development Planning Process



A four-step process is used to prepare the strategic plan. It started with *stakeholder engagement*, wherein AngelouEconomics (AE) conducted one-on-one interviews and focus group meetings with a diverse cross-section of civic leaders and citizens, while accumulating vital feedback from the **Propel Savannah Steering Committee**, which is made up of academic, business, government, and non-profit representatives. Moreover, nearly 800 residents and businesses participated in our online community survey. The survey responses demonstrate there is broad interest in Savannah's economic future.

Community capacity-building factors that are most important to residents include: quality of public schools, community appearance, and civic infrastructure. The widest gap between rated importance and Savannah's

performance are: quality of public schools, city infrastructure, and affordable housing. The most important factors to business respondents were: ability to attract and retain talent, access to customers, quality of life, branding/image, and quality of public schools. The widest gap between rated importance and performance for business respondents is: ability to attract and retain talent and quality of public schools. Whether perception or reality, the gap in resident and business expectations for the quality of public schools is the largest encountered with AE clients in 23 years of consulting practice.

For the second step in the strategic planning process, AE conducted extensive quantitative and qualitative research to provide a thorough *market assessment* of the community's strengths and weaknesses along with current and future economic trends. The market assessment compared Greater Savannah's quality of life and business climate against three benchmark cities — Charleston, SC (pop. 775,831); Houston, TX (pop. 6,892,427); and Jacksonville, FL (pop. 1,504,980). The benchmark cities were chosen based on the most common cities with which Savannah has competed for projects over the past five years. In fact, it is important to note that all of these communities are significantly larger than Savannah (pop. 387,543).

Based on the market assessment findings a *target industry analysis* identifies four industry clusters that will do the most to advance the region's global competitiveness. The target industry clusters are:

- Manufacturing & Logistics
- Creative & Technical Services
- Entertainment Production
- Healthcare





# Executive Summary

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## Setting the Stage

The region's coastal economy boasts a vibrant lineup of major employers, including Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation, the JCB Americas headquarters, and Mitsubishi-Hitachi Power Systems. The Port of Savannah is the fastest-growing and fourth-busiest port in the nation. Contributing to Savannah's workforce are graduates of the area's 19 colleges and universities, which enroll more than 60,000 students. This includes the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), with locations in Atlanta, Hong Kong, and Lacoste, France. The region has a large military population at Hunter Army Airfield and nearby Fort Stewart, home of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division—more than 4,000 servicemen and women transfer out of the local military annually. Over 14 million visitors are drawn to the Savannah National Landmark Historic District and other nearby attractions each year.

On the other hand, the City of Savannah has a poverty rate of 24.0% (based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey five-year estimates), and this percentage jumps to 34.8% for persons under 18 years. This is consistent with national economic trends, which indicate that the gap between the wealthy and poor has been widening for 30 years. Current economic literature points to technology and education, trade and globalization, and public policy as key contributors to this phenomenon. It is apparent that civic leaders are determined to reverse this trend, but are sailing against strong socioeconomic headwinds. SEDA recognizes the reality of the situation, and has worked with AE to prepare a strategic plan designed to further economic development, while attempting to bridge the economic divide.

## Savannah's Key Economic Assets Include:

- **Business Climate** — Savannah has a pro-business atmosphere with competitive tax and utility rates and high growth in net new business formation, resulting in a high standard of living.
- **Infrastructure** — The Greater Savannah region has a strong logistics infrastructure—Georgia Ports Authority, Center of Innovation for Logistics, World Trade Center Savannah, Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport, rail, two major interstate highways (I-16 and I-95), and a host of distribution facilities.
- **Favorable Cost of Living** — Residents and businesses enjoy a favorable cost of living compared to the national average and other nearby metropolitan areas.
- **Higher Education** — Georgia Southern University, Georgia Tech-Savannah, SCAD, Savannah State University, and Savannah Technical College, among other higher education institutions, provide a steady stream of qualified graduates into the workforce.
- **Military Assets** — Ft. Stewart, located just outside of the Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Hunter Army Airfield generate sufficient economic activity to warrant inclusion of Bulloch, Liberty and Long counties in the larger Savannah-Hinesville-Statesboro, GA Combined Metropolitan Statistical Area (CSMA).
- **Attractive Downtown** — The Savannah National Historic Landmark District is the hub of downtown Savannah, known for its manicured squares,

# Executive Summary

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cobblestone streets, horse-drawn carriages, museums, monuments, architecture, boutiques, and world-class restaurants.

- **Quality of Life** — Savannah’s outstanding, laid-back coastal lifestyle offers mild temperatures, beautiful beaches that offer fishing and boating opportunities, recreational activities, and cultural amenities. Residents have convenient access to the nearby resort areas of Hilton Head Island, SC; St. Simon’s Island, GA; and Amelia Island, FL.
- **Economic Development** — Savannah is successful at attracting companies and expanding targeted industries due to the work of SEDA’s economic development team. Their efforts led, in part, to strong clusters in advanced manufacturing, logistics & distribution, a growing entertainment production industry and a renewed focus on creative design & technology, among other industries (see Appendix A). SEDA has earned a reputation as a leading and widely respected regional economic development organization.

## Key Challenges Are:

- **Education** — Resident and business respondents to the community survey identified the quality of public schools as a significant challenge. Much of this is a matter of perception, but perception is reality. At the same time, the SCCPSS graduation rate outperforms the benchmark communities.
- **Workforce Attraction and Retention** — To truly compete in the global, knowledge economy, Savannah needs to improve the quality of its workforce, especially in terms of attracting and retaining employees who possess a combination of hard and soft skills. Improved workforce skills will have a positive effect on innovation and productivity.

- **Diversification of Advanced Manufacturing Base** — There is a need to strengthen and enhance diversification of the region’s manufacturing base, thus helping to reduce the risk of economic volatility and increase its real activity performance. In general, Savannah should target small to medium sized manufacturing and assembly, those with 50-100 employees, in a diverse range of industries. This creates a more recession-proof economy and is where SEDA could be most successful. To be clear, there will be large projects of 500+ employees that consider the area, and SEDA should make an effort to attract them when the opportunity arises, but success will more likely come from attracting smaller operations.
- **Land** — The City of Savannah/Chatham County has a limited amount of land assets that is not being developed for maximum employment potential. Due to the current existing availability of land in Chatham County, the larger economic development projects are usually more regional in nature. While large projects will enter the pipeline, attraction efforts for Chatham County would be most effective when targeting small to medium-sized manufacturers.
- **Lack of Capital** — Lack of funding or working capital is a challenge for entrepreneurs and small businesses, making it harder for them to attract investors, finance day-to-day operations, and grow in the future.
- **Social Issues** — Many of the issues facing Savannah are social in nature (e.g., persistently high poverty rate and perception of crime), which works against human capital development by limiting residents’ ability to contribute their talents and labor to the economy.

# Executive Summary

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- **Transportation** — Traffic congestion—most notably difficulties getting from downtown to the West side of Chatham County, and delivery/freight trucks along Bay Street—confronts local drivers and pedestrians. Being stuck in traffic at these locations has a negative impact on businesses, regional commute patterns, fuel consumption, quality of services, and emission of pollutants. Transportation issues also exist for employees and employers in the western portion of Chatham County due to the lack of public transportation options.
- **Vision** — There is lack of a clear, unified vision for economic development among all players in the Greater Savannah area, though great progress has been made in recent years and this strategic plan is intended to help delineate such a vision.

***“Expand public transportation...”***

— Local Stakeholder



Source: flickr

# Executive Summary

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## Strategic Goals

To ensure the economic prosperity and global competitiveness of Greater Savannah, the community should focus on four aspirational, broad, and overarching goals:

- ❖ **Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision (SEDA)
- ❖ **Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship (Partners)
- ❖ **Education and Workforce:**  
Maximize Savannah's Human Capital (Partners)
- ❖ **Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians (Partners)

These four goals, which provide a framework for strategic recommendations, are supported by specific strategies and action items to facilitate their implementation.

Selected examples include:

- (1) Develop a World-Class Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Program
- (2) Catalyze a Complete Funding Continuum for Entrepreneurial Endeavors



# Executive Summary

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- (3) Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator
- (4) Empower Savannah's Business and Education Leaders to Become More Engaged Partners, Make a Difference, and Implement Education and Workforce Initiatives that Stimulate Economic Prosperity and Talent Development
- (5) Adapt to Millennial/Non-Traditional Adult Learners
- (6) Widen the Workforce Pipeline
- (7) Provide Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care
- (8) Increase the Amount of Affordable Workforce Housing Available in Greater Savannah
- (9) Establish Community Scholarships for Impoverished Children
- (10) Invest in Infrastructure
- (11) Pursue University Economic Development

Working toward these goals is an investment in the success of the entire region, will stimulate economic growth, and create a better quality of life in the Savannah metropolitan area.



# Executive Summary

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## Best Practices

Best practice examples highlighting strategies effectively undertaken by other communities, important trends, and tools that can be used in the community are incorporated throughout this report.

## Implementation Matrix

An implementation matrix supplements this report. The matrix prioritizes actions, assigns responsibility to economic development partners, and sets the action items on a timeline, allowing SEDA and its economic development allies to review the progress and levels of success in the strategic action plan.

**Competition and Cooperation.** As with anything worth doing, implementation of this strategic economic development action plan requires time and effort. Savannah’s civic leaders, businesses, and residents can’t just wish for orderly, desirable economic growth and expect it to happen.

The competition for new business investment is fierce. Greater Savannah is not the only region that is approaching business prospects and site location consultants, helping with business expansion projects, and striving to nurture early-stage startups. SEDA and its partners are literally competing with thousands of dedicated local, regional, and state economic development organizations across the United States, and all over the world (see Appendix A).

To be specific, approximately 19,000 U.S.-based communities and economic development organizations compete for 5,500 corporate location projects each year. Of this amount, roughly 3,500 of these projects are new corporate

locations, and 2,000 are local expansion and retention projects. This is the competitive environment in which SEDA operates. And this means Savannah is most often “competing up,” as evidenced by three benchmark communities identified in the strategic plan—Charleston, SC; Houston, TX; and Jacksonville, FL.

Many of these competing organizations are well organized, well financed, sophisticated, and aggressive. They have a lot to offer prospective businesses and they are doing a good job of marketing their community — possibly even courting existing businesses in the Savannah region. That’s Savannah’s competition, and they’re not going away.

From investment in public education to advocacy for solutions to homelessness, from mentoring start-ups or at-risk youth to political action on issues of importance, the most valuable things Savannahians can do to support the economic development process is to positively engage with organizations on the front lines of community development—those working to shape and improve the economic development product that is Savannah and the surrounding region. Ultimately, it is your product that successfully attracts investment and jobs, with the development authority’s professional assistance and not the other way around.

**High-Performing EDOs.** The role of economic development organizations is more complex and challenging than ever before. This places a premium on operating as a high-performing EDO from a leadership and organizational perspective.

Not only do high-performing economic development organizations operate with a strong strategic plan, their leaders are strategic thinkers who embrace

# Executive Summary

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change, rather than fear it. They build strong alliances and networks, and earn the trust and respect of their communities. They are efficient with funding and resources, monitor and evaluate results, and make adjustments accordingly. They are motivated, innovative, and passionate about their work, and never lose sight of their responsibilities as stewards of the community.

***“Not only do high-performing economic development organizations operate with a strong strategic plan, their leaders are strategic thinkers who embrace change, rather than fear it.”***



Source: TripAdvisor, LLC

# Stakeholder Engagement



# Stakeholder Engagement

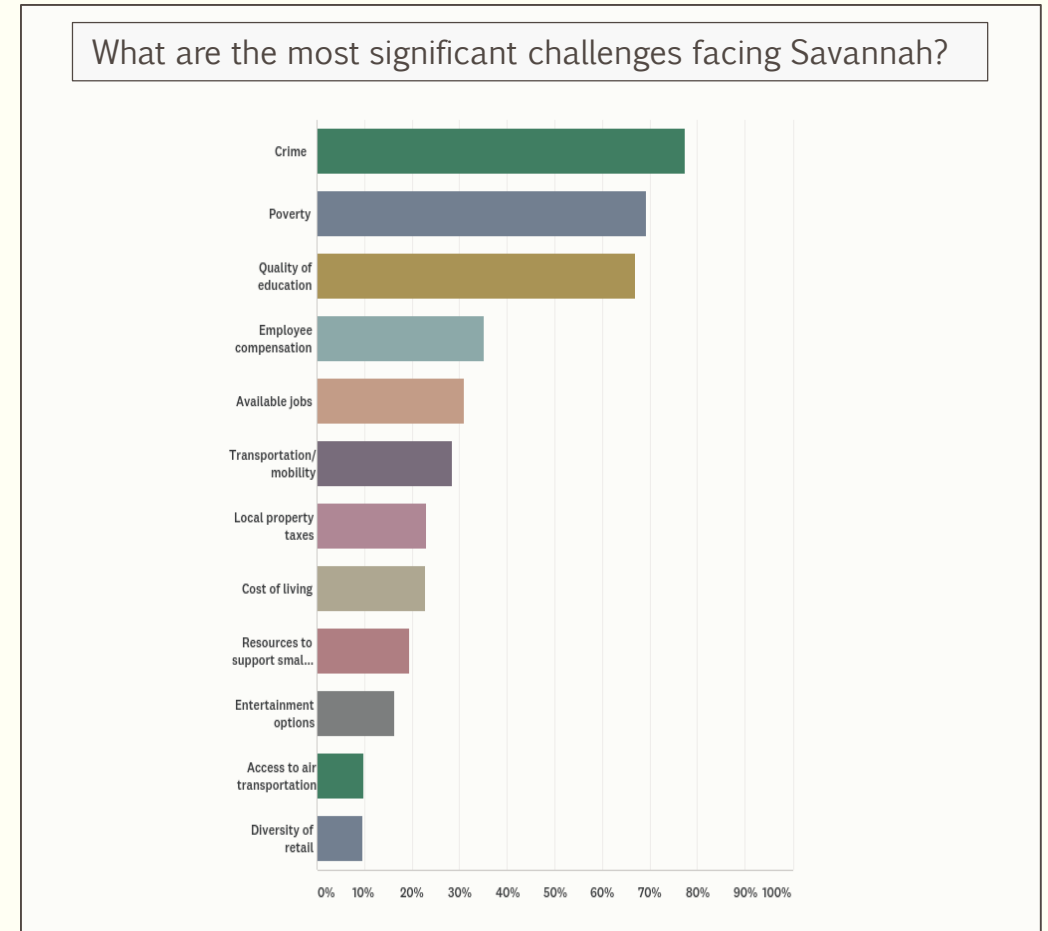
## Introduction

The stakeholder engagement phase involved one-on-one interviews and focus group meetings centered on business climate and quality of life issues. Over 160 individuals participated in this phase of the strategic planning process. Additionally, an online community survey was conducted to gather feedback from residents and business owners, which generated nearly 800 responses.

When asked what are the most significant challenges facing Savannah, community stakeholders indicated that crime, poverty, and quality of education are the most significant areas of concern. Their feedback serves as an important building block for the remaining phases of the strategic planning process. Strategic economic development planning is most effective when diverse stakeholder groups become engaged early in the planning process, rather than learn about decisions after they have already been made. Those who make decisions, and will be affected by them, can impact economic growth in Savannah. They have a stake in the community and play an important role in economic development. That's why a conscious effort was made to ensure that the strategic plan aligns with SEDA's mission, community values, and stakeholder needs.

## Resident Survey

Overlapping the interviews and focus group meetings was the online community survey. Residents were asked to compare a variety of factors based on their perceived importance and their satisfaction with those factors. Quality of public schools, community appearance, and city were the factors most often selected for their importance. Several factors did not score as high in terms of resident satisfaction. Most telling is the



Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Residential Survey/SurveyMonkey

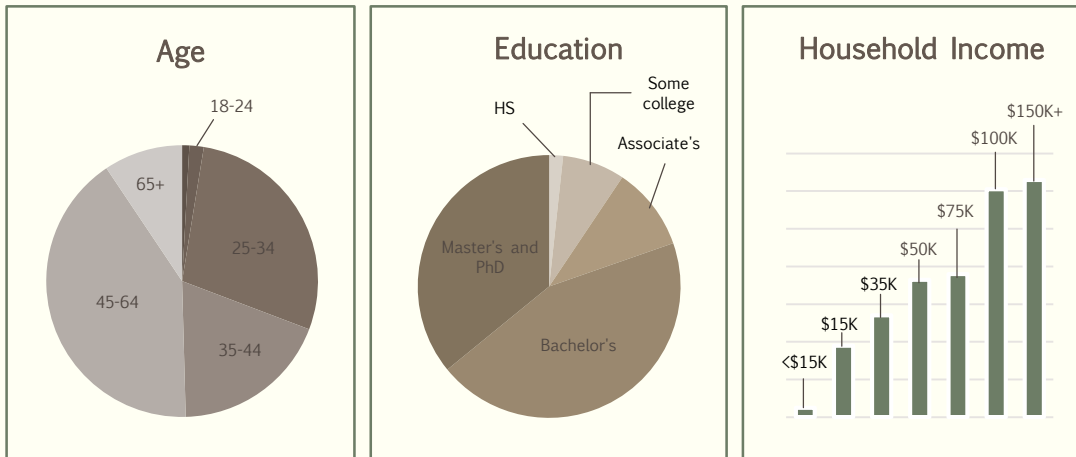
# Stakeholder Engagement

difference in scores for quality of public schools, city infrastructure, and affordable housing. Alternatively, Branding and Image, Ability to Walk to Shops and Restaurants, Population Diversity, and Ability to Take Active Role in the Community have more compatible scores. The chart to the right displays the comparison between importance and satisfaction for each factor.

*“We need to paint a picture of what Savannah can become; and identify the steps needed to get there.”*

— Local Stakeholder

Savannah Region Residential Survey Demographics



Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Residential Survey/SurveyMonkey

Resident Comparison of Importance vs. Satisfaction

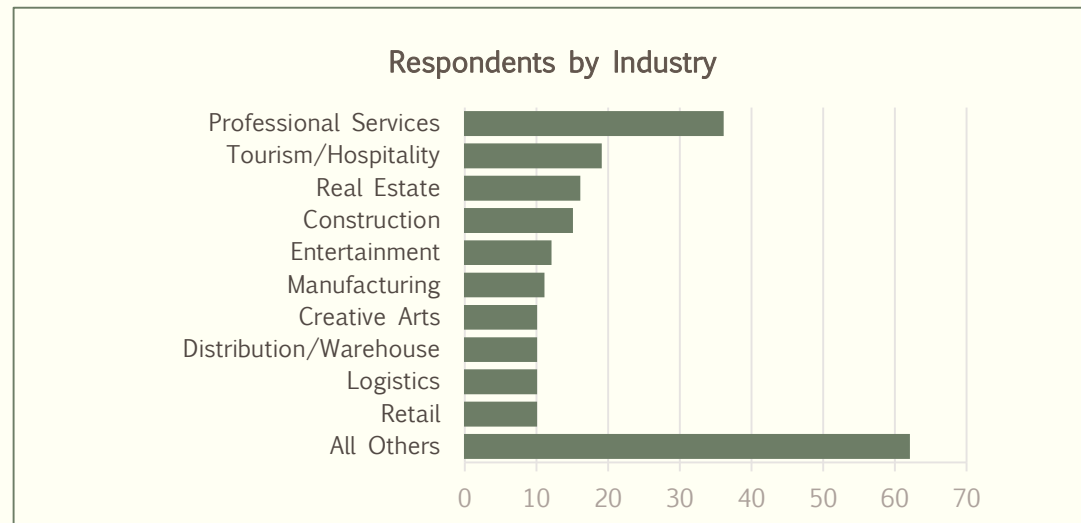
	Importance (1-5)	Satisfaction (1-5)	Difference
Quality of Public Schools	4.56	1.84	2.72
City Infrastructure	4.49	2.50	1.99
Affordable Housing	4.37	2.65	1.72
Affordable Healthcare	4.47	2.81	1.66
Available Jobs	4.40	2.75	1.65
Employee Compensation	4.21	2.56	1.65
Community Appearance	4.53	3.09	1.44
Cost of Living	4.40	2.98	1.42
Local Property Taxes	4.04	2.69	1.35
Parking Availability	3.84	2.50	1.34
Parks and Resources for Recreation	4.41	3.42	0.99
Ability to Take Active Role in the Community	4.08	3.37	0.71
Population Diversity	3.86	3.35	0.51
Ability to Walk to Shops and Restaurants	4.08	3.60	0.48
Creative and Cultural Arts Scene	4.18	3.78	0.40
Branding and Image	3.31	3.51	0.20

Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Residential Survey/SurveyMonkey

# Stakeholder Engagement

## Business Survey

Business owners, managers, and employees identified a different mix of challenges for the community. Foremost in importance was the ability to attract/retain skilled employees, and quality of public schools. Second-tier priorities included the regulatory environment, development and permitting process, and utilities/infrastructure. Each of these factors registered the largest gaps between importance and satisfaction. For all other community capacity-building factors, there was a smaller gap between importance and satisfaction, as shown on the chart to the right. Business respondents rated quality of life, aesthetics/appearance, presence of colleges and



Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Residential Survey/SurveyMonkey

## Business Comparison of Importance vs. Satisfaction

	Importance (1-5)	Satisfaction (1-5)	Difference
Ability to Attract/Retain Skilled Employees	4.30	2.31	1.99
Quality of Public Schools	3.87	1.89	1.98
Regulatory Environment	3.75	2.55	1.20
Development and Permitting Process	3.70	2.52	1.18
Tax Climate	3.75	2.75	1.00
Utilities/Infrastructure	3.77	2.77	1.00
Entrepreneurial Environment	3.81	2.98	0.83
Access to Customers	4.19	3.37	0.82
Parking Availability	3.29	2.50	0.79
Cost of Permits and Other Fees	3.51	2.73	0.78
Operating Costs	3.76	3.09	0.67
Ability to Take Active Role in the Community	3.82	3.24	0.58
Labor Costs	3.64	3.06	0.58
Quality of Life	4.14	3.59	0.55
Cost of Living	3.67	3.13	0.54
Cost of Utilities	3.42	2.88	0.54

Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Business Survey/SurveyMonkey

# Stakeholder Engagement

universities, branding/image, creative and cultural arts scene, and access to customers with a relatively high level of satisfaction.

## Managing Community Expectations: A Caveat

Managing community expectations is an important part of economic development leadership. While SEDA should be commended for deciding to move forward with this strategic planning initiative, it should also be understood that the organization cannot and should not take sole responsibility for addressing the complex issues encountered during the stakeholder engagement process. At the same time, these issues cannot be ignored, swept under the rug, or wished away. Failure to confront them is the antithesis of what it means to create a balanced, diverse, and sustainable economy. Rather, it is incumbent upon SEDA and its economic development allies to work together, with the community’s anchor institutions taking the lead for cross-setting implementation of key strategies that fall within their respective domains.

As the adage goes, economic development is a team sport. Influencing Greater Savannah’s \$18.5 billion economy requires effective collaboration, cooperation, and coordination between businesses, the chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau, economic development corporation, educational institutions, entrepreneurs, governments, major employers, neighborhood associations, non-profits, and workforce development agencies. Civic leaders must learn to rely on one another if they are to survive and thrive in a knowledge economy that has become increasingly competitive and interdependent.

## Business Comparison of Importance vs. Satisfaction (continued)

	Importance (1-5)	Satisfaction (1-5)	Difference
Branding and Image	3.95	3.50	0.45
Creative and Cultural Arts Scene	3.25	3.48	0.23
Presence of Suppliers	2.91	3.14	0.23
Aesthetics/Appearance	3.78	3.56	0.22
Available Financial Incentives	3.06	2.85	0.21
Availability of Financing/Capital	3.19	3.00	0.19
Presence of Colleges/Universities	3.44	3.52	0.08
Logistics/Transportation	3.36	3.33	0.03
Population Diversity	3.09	3.07	0.02

Source: AngelouEconomics Savannah Region Business Survey/SurveyMonkey

***“Savannah’s greatest asset is potential.”***

— Local Stakeholder

# Market Assessment

# Market Assessment

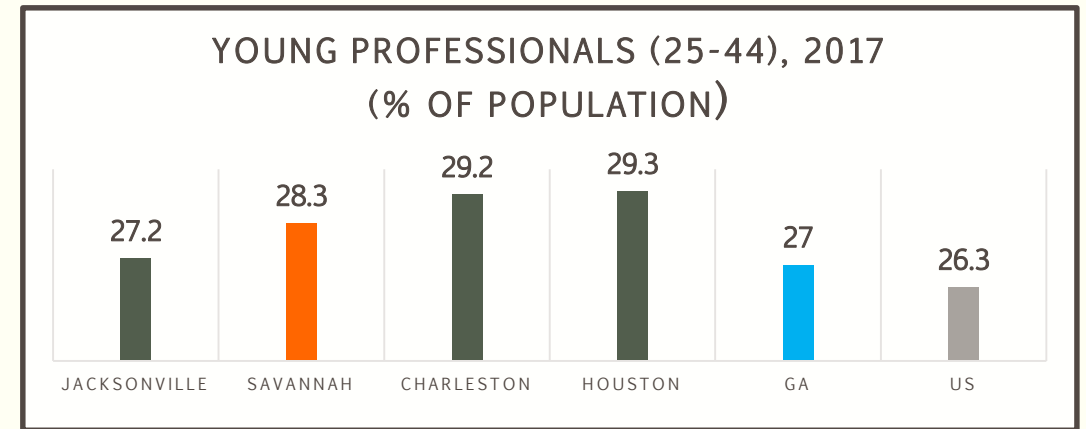
## Market Assessment - Introduction

The purpose of the market assessment is to gain a better understanding of the strengths, assets, and challenges important to economic development and the community's potential for growth. Relevant information on local demographics, competitive position, and economic performance guides the consultant's analysis and provides a foundation for developing strategic recommendations. Throughout the market assessment, the Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is benchmarked against three competitor community MSAs (see Appendix B for MSA definitions).

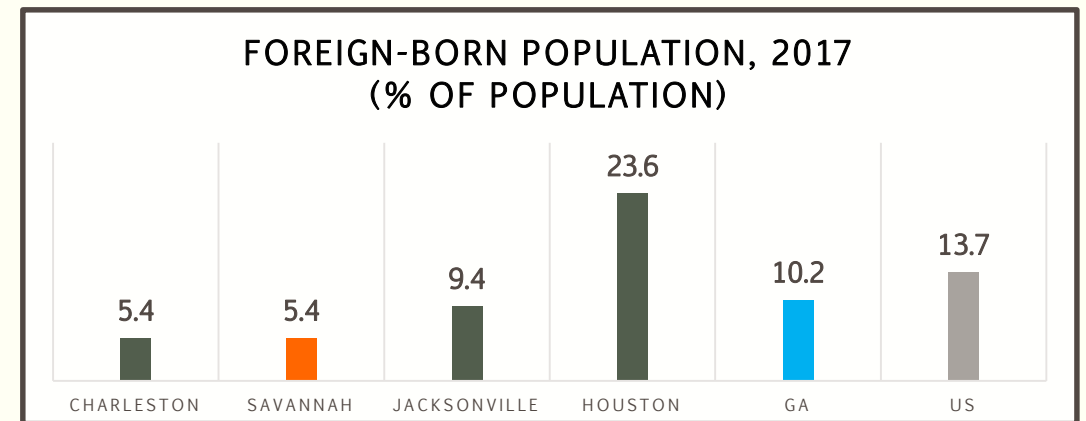
## Current Economic Climate

**Population.** Savannah (387,543) has the smallest population in comparison to Charleston, SC (775,831); Jacksonville, FL (1,504,980); and Houston, TX (6,892,427). Its population is also the least dense, although slightly more concentrated than Georgia's statewide average. In terms of young professionals, Savannah outpaces Jacksonville, as well as state and national averages. Savannah has a median age that is younger than the other benchmark communities, with the exception of Houston. This constitutes a significant strength for Savannah's workforce.

Savannah's foreign-born population is significantly less than all other benchmark communities. While Savannah is ethnically-diverse, foreign-born individuals offer entrepreneurial opportunities that are two times greater than that of native-born individuals (Vandor & Franke, 2016). This measure serves as an indicator of potential for entrepreneurial and small business development. Having said that, persons moving to Chatham County as in-migrants from other states have the highest average income.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Market Assessment

**Education.** Nearly a third of Savannah's population over 25 years or older has a Bachelor's degree or greater. However, Savannah has the lowest proportion of college educated persons relative to the benchmarks, including Georgia and the U.S. Savannah also has the lowest composite ACT scores among all benchmarks.

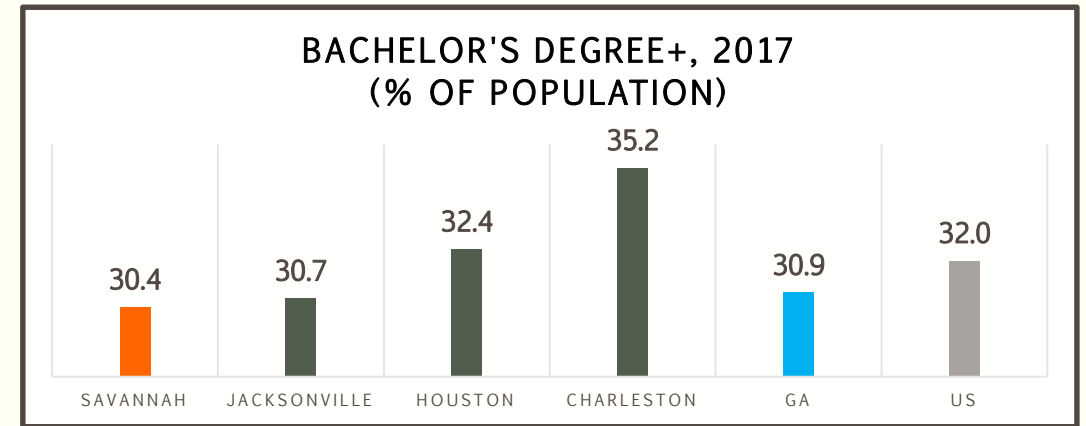
While Savannah's college educated population lags the other studied regions, it has the second lowest percent of persons with no high school diploma. This speaks to the success of Savannah's K-12 school system, including public, private, charter, and academies.

Savannah has the lowest amount of Federal R&D expenditures of the three metropolitan regions. With that said, growth in Savannah's R&D was high, at 26 percent. Houston is perhaps an unfair comparison. However, Savannah can improve its competitive position by creating endowment chairs within fields of expertise (see pages 124-126).

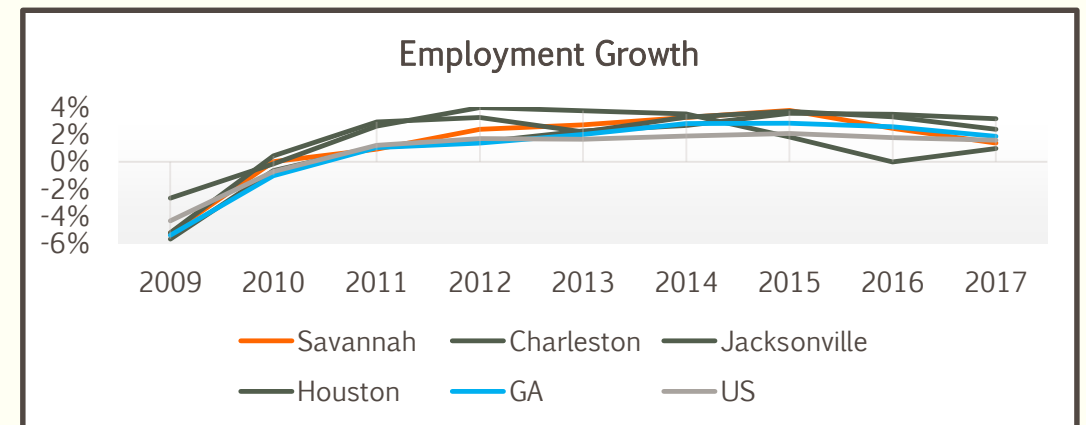
**Workforce.** Traditionally, Savannah has had employment growth that outpaced all benchmark regions except for Houston. However, during the past two years, both Savannah and Houston have seen slower rates of growth. Savannah has also seen higher unemployment rates, but in recent years has closed the gap with the benchmarks.

**Housing.** On average, Savannah's housing stock is older than all other benchmark regions, except for the U.S. Given that this is due to Savannah's highly valued historical homes, this represents a source of strength.

On average, Savannah has fewer units per structure. This also contributes to Savannah's affordability challenges.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Market Assessment

A wider availability of apartment units with lower price points can help alleviate issues of affordability.

Compared to other major metros, Savannah has more houses in lower value distributions. Charleston has the most number of homes in high value distributions. While Savannah's issues with affordability are real, Savannah has not yet reached housing values seen in other major metros. In particular, Savannah has few homes in the \$300K+ range.

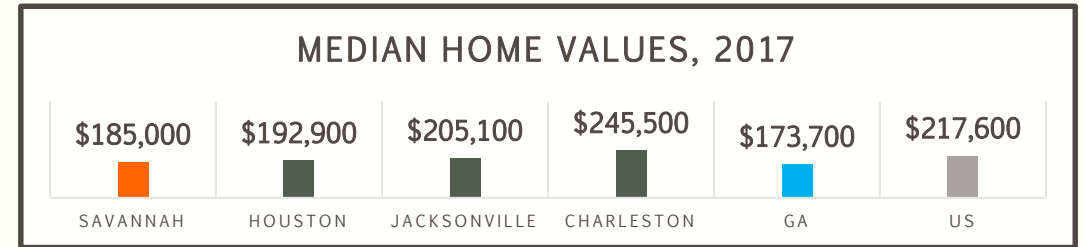
Expectedly, Savannah has a median housing value that is lower than metro benchmarks. However, Savannah's rental markets tell a different story. Given that Savannah has fewer units per structure, this implies fewer multi-family units. This limited supply has created rents that are comparable to other major metros.

Affordability affects Savannah's rental market to a greater degree than the single-family market.

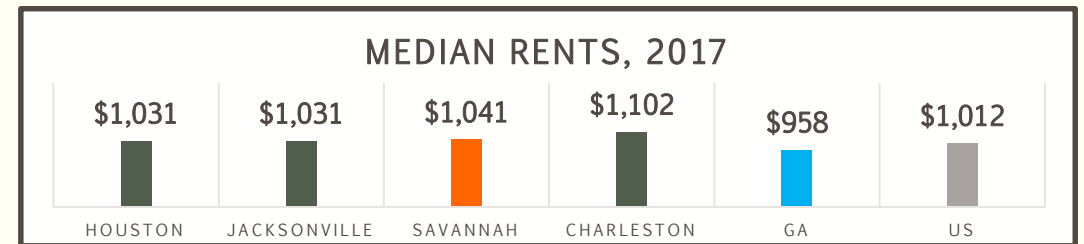
**Commute Patterns.** While every major metro will have issues related to traffic and congestion, Savannah does have the shortest commute time of all benchmarks on average. Most commute methods in Savannah look similar to the benchmarks. However, Savannah has higher rates of people who walk and bike (other) to work.

The Savannah MSA is a hub for greater regional employment.

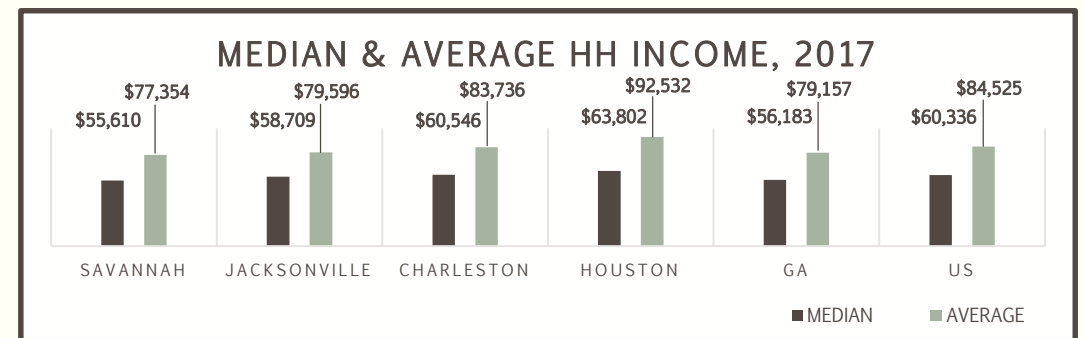
- There are 119,999 people that live and work in Savannah.
- There are 38,639 people that live outside but work within Savannah.
- There are 31,663 people that live within but work outside of Savannah.



Source: US Census Bureau



Source: US Census Bureau



Source: US Census Bureau





# Market Assessment: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Logistics infrastructure: Port of Savannah, rail, interstates	Persistently high poverty rates
Diverse economic drivers (manufacturing, logistics, tourism, healthcare, edu/gov/military)	Underperforming K-12 schools
Higher education institutions	Crime
Military assets	Inadequate skilled workforce / lack of soft skills
Favorable cost of living compared to other national MSAs	Capital is limited for small business community / entrepreneurs
Historical preservation and cultural richness	Small number of headquarters leading to few corporate leaders active in community and economic development
Strong tourism market	Lack of advancement for new leadership and lack of openness to new ideas
Ability to draw people back after years away	Limited opportunities for young professional's career advancement
Quality of life	Limited public owned land available to attract high wage projects
Opportunities	Threats
Retain and attract more talent	Lack of coordination between governmental entities
Further diversify economic base	Perception of crime and public education limits progress
Continue efforts to attract affluent visitors, lengthen visitor stays and increase spend	Limited public transportation for workforce
Grow entrepreneurial resources and support entrepreneurship	Companies unable to scale in Savannah
Increase air service and lower costs, i.e., LA	Environmental threats
Invest in GSU as the regional university with the greatest potential to achieve a high level of research talent	Status quo bias
Develop infrastructure and ecosystem as well as local and regional support for the entertainment production industry	Land assets not always developed for highest and best use from an employment perspective (i.e. high wage companies)
Leverage WTC Savannah and other assets to increase int'l trade and investment	Shortage of teachers and principals
Continue to partner with SCAD to advance creative technology industries and entrepreneurship	Trade wars and other temporary global economic challenges that arise

# Market Assessment

The Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) will enable the port to more efficiently serve the larger vessels expected to call in greater numbers after expansion of the Panama Canal. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the Port will prove an even stronger asset.

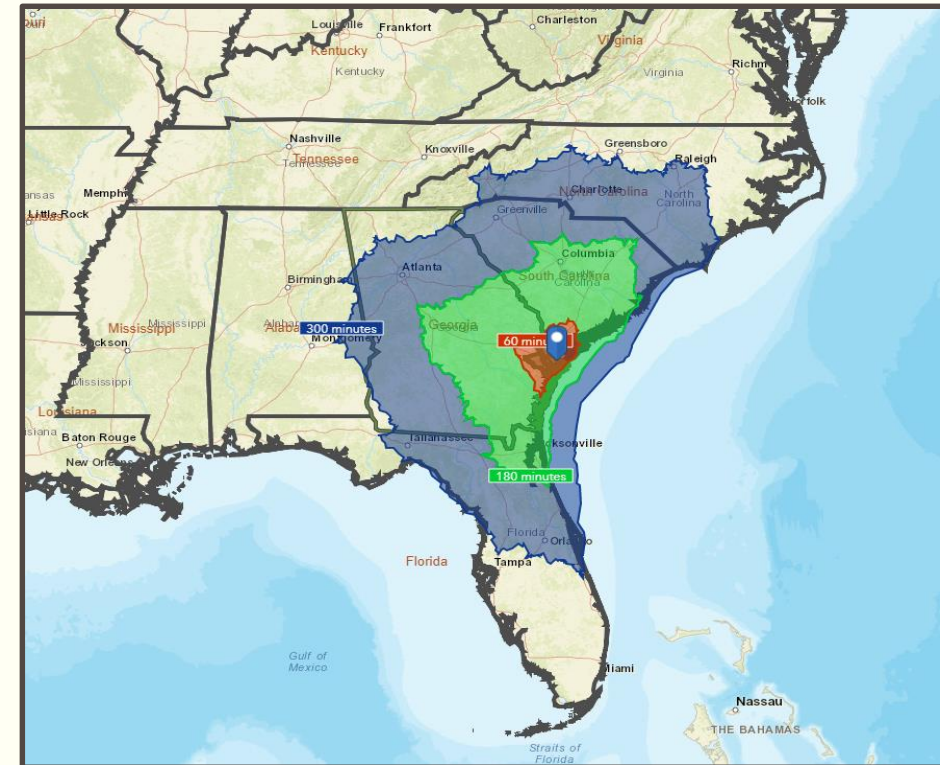
**World Trade Center Savannah.** World Trade Center Savannah (WTCSav), the international division of the Savannah Economic Development Authority, stimulates foreign-direct investment opportunities in the region. The many delegations hosted by the WTCSav, along with their outbound missions to target countries, help to build a long-term pipeline of capital investment projects for the Savannah region.

WTC Savannah is also the administrator of Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) #104 and an EB-5 Regional Center. FTZ allows activated businesses to reduce or eliminate duty in imports and take advantage of other benefits to encourage foreign commerce within Greater Savannah.

**Strategic Location and Proximity to Markets.** Savannah is in close proximity to all major cities along the eastern seaboard, placing it within a 5-hour drive time of most major markets in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

**World-Class Higher Education and Technical Learning Institutions.** Georgia Southern University, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah State University, Savannah Technical College and Georgia Tech-Savannah provide a variety of higher education opportunities and create a regional draw for students. The newly-created Georgia Advanced Manufacturing Training Center QuickStart facility in Pooler offers customized workforce training to new and existing advanced manufacturing industries in the region. The spaces are designed to be adaptable to new, emerging technologies that are rapidly transforming the world of advanced manufacturing.

Drive Time Analysis (1, 3, and 5 Hours)



Source: ESRI

# Market Assessment

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**Military Installations.** Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah is subordinate to Fort Stewart in Hinesville. Combined, these military facilities are one of Coastal Georgia's largest employers (22,500 positions) with an estimated \$4.9 billion in economic impact. Approximately 18,000 military retirees live throughout the Savannah region.

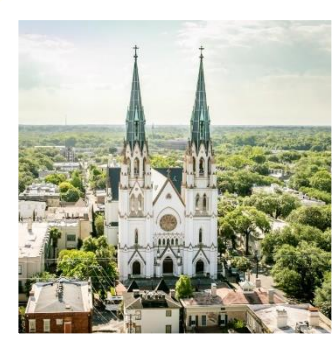
**Historic Downtown District.** The Historic Landmark District, the hub of Downtown Savannah, offers a unique quality of life amenity. It creates a sense of place connected to history and culture of the city and its people. Enjoyed by residents and tourists alike, it is a successful recruiting tool for drawing skilled labor to Savannah.

**Building and Land Inventory.** Numerous business, industrial, and manufacturing sites are available throughout the Savannah metropolitan area, including the Chatham County ED Site (1,560 acres), Crossgate Road (256 acres), Deep-Water Industrial Site (14.49 acres), Pooler Industrial Land (7.21 acres), Savannah Manufacturing Center (614.33 acres), and SeaPoint Industrial Terminal Complex (750 acres). Details about these and other sites are listed in SEDA's property database.

## Strengths to Promote

Savannah has many strengths that serve to enhance the region's global competitiveness for economic development:

**Tourism, Film, Culture, History.** Savannah is a mecca for southern hospitality, hosting 14 million visitors that generate \$3 billion in visitor spending. The community is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> on *Travel + Leisure's* Top 15 Cities in the United States.



# Market Assessment

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The entertainment and production industry is an important facet of the regional economy, producing an estimated \$120.1 million in direct spending with \$254.6 million in total economic impact. This sector has experienced 1,364% growth in impact since 2011. Feature films such as *Galveston*, *Peanut Butter Falcon*, *Killerman*, Hallmark's *Love at the Shore*, and Marvel's *Ant-Man and the Wasp* chose Savannah in 2017.

Savannah's 45+ nonprofit arts and cultural organizations employ 4,550 full-time workers that produce an economic impact of \$136 million. There are 22 historical park squares, museums, forts, churches, and cemeteries that offer testimony to the 85-year-old city's rich heritage.

**High Standard of Living.** Housing, a competitive tax environment, and utilities are Savannah's greatest cost of living advantages. Health is the community's least competitive cost category. Savannah has the greatest purchasing power of all metro benchmarks.

**Veteran Presence.** Savannah's numerous military assets bestows the region with another strength, access to veteran populations. Ranking well above state and national averages, Savannah has a veteran population that is greater than 10%. In Savannah, veterans earn significantly more than non-veterans. Savannah's military assets increase the spending power of the region.

**Access to Talent From Higher Education Institutions.** From four higher education institutions, Savannah graduates nearly 10,000 students with Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral, and technical degrees. Currently, a majority of students leave the region to find employment. Savannah has a substantial opportunity to retain more of these skilled and talented students.



Enrollment: 27,459  
Degree Programs: 141  
2017 Graduates: 5,722



Enrollment: 13,842  
Degree Programs: 44  
2017 Graduates: 2,691



Enrollment: 4,429  
Degree Programs: 36  
2017 Graduates: 666



Enrollment: 3,935  
Degree Programs: 71  
2017 Graduates: 2,457

Source: Georgia Southern University, National Center for Education Statistics, Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Savannah State University, Savannah Technical College

# Market Assessment

**Great Place to Do Business.** Savannah is seen as a great place to do business. In terms of net new business formations, Savannah's volume of businesses are lower than the benchmarks due to population. However, Savannah has the lowest population per business entry, meaning more entries per capita (second to Jacksonville). This suggests that Savannah residents have a greater propensity for entrepreneurship and Savannah offers a better climate generally for entrepreneurship.

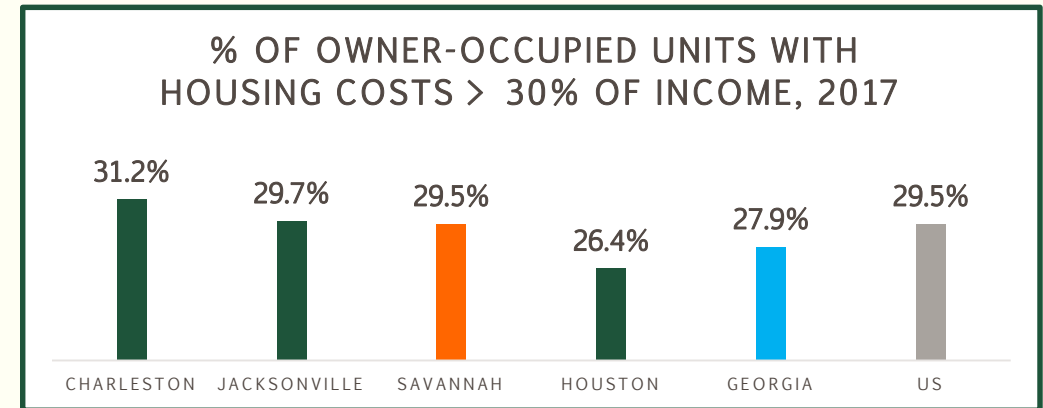
## Challenges to Overcome

Despite the many assets and strengths of Savannah, there are still challenges that need to be overcome. These issues limit Savannah's ability to attract and retain employers.

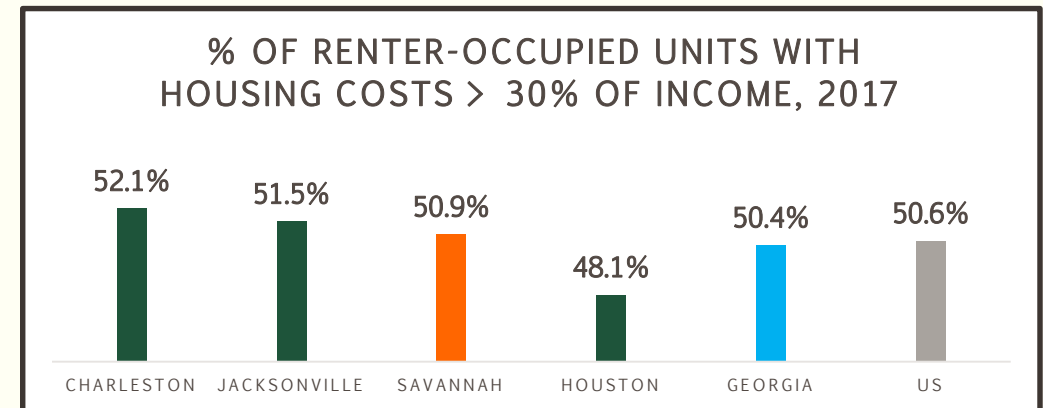
**Social Issues.** Many of the challenges facing Savannah are social issues (e.g., poverty and crime). The third most significant challenge identified by residents is the quality of education. SEDA's role in alleviating these issues is not direct, but rather through strong, sustainable economic development efforts.

**Status Quo Bias Inhibits Change.** Savannah has a significant strength in its rich quality and pace of life, but that pace of life comes with its own challenges. Change comes slowly in Savannah, even when the political will exists to affect positive change. This inhibits – and in some cases prevents – good ideas from being implemented.

**Housing Affordability.** The rule of thumb is that housing costs should be approximately 30% of gross income. In Savannah, 29.5% of owner-occupied units exceed the rule of thumb, which puts it near the middle of the pack. In



Source: US Census Bureau



Source: US Census Bureau

# Market Assessment

Savannah's rental market, 50.9% of renters exceed the rule of thumb. As before with median prices, this is further evidence that Savannah's rental market is leading affordability concerns.

**Poor Perception of K-12 Schools.** In the community survey, residents and businesses cited the "quality of public schools" as a nearly unanimous challenge. The good news is that the primary issue is perception; the bad news is that perception is reality. Savannah strongly outperforms the benchmark communities when comparing graduation rates.

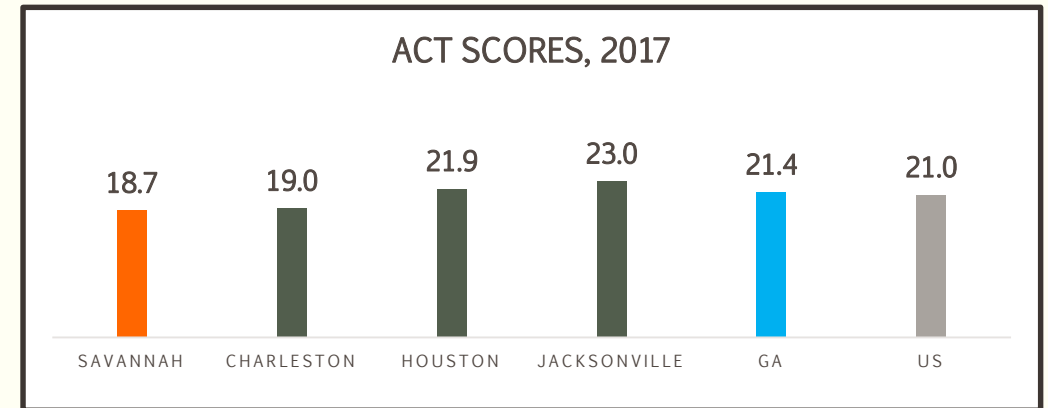
**Workforce Skill Shortages.** Again, in reference to community survey responses, the top two challenges that business owners cited were available talent pool and skills shortages. Moreover, many business owners identified basic soft skills as particular problem areas.

## Competitive Positioning Analysis

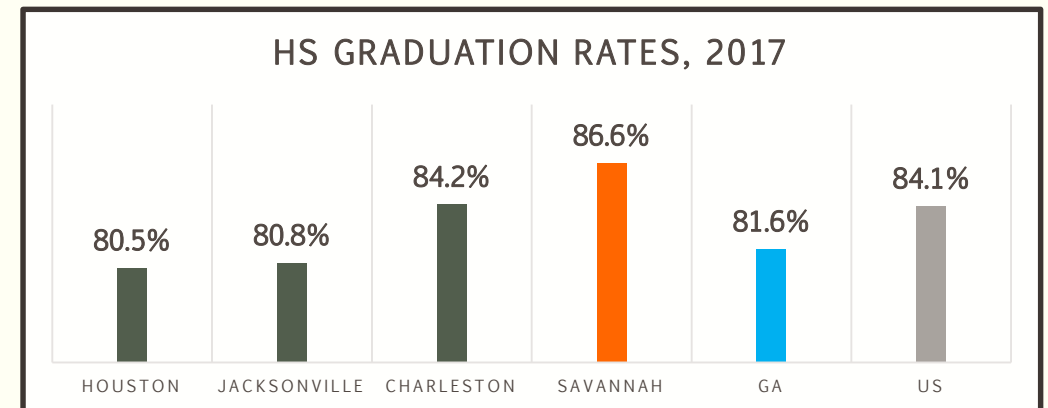
The Competitive Positioning Analysis takes into account freight costs, average airfare and hotel cost, construction costs, utilities, costs of living, commercial real estate (office/industrial), hourly wages, entrepreneurship, and compares these factors with the benchmark communities. A final determination is then made about the Savannah's competitive position. The region is deemed to be competitive in all categories, with the exception of hourly wages and entrepreneurship (see page 28).

## Community Scorecard

A Community Scorecard has been prepared that provides an assessment rationale that aligns with seven community factors and indicates



Source: Charleston ISD, Houston ISD, Jacksonville ISD, Savannah ISD, US Census Bureau



Source: Charleston ISD, Houston ISD, Jacksonville ISD, Savannah ISD, US Census Bureau

# Market Assessment

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whether Savannah's ranked performance is leading, strong, average, or lacking. Based on the market assessment data, Savannah is depicted as leading in business climate, quality of life, and economic development; strong in infrastructure and marketing; and average for education and workforce (see page 29).

***"I think Propel Savannah is a brilliant idea!  
I like the very creative and assertive  
approach SEDA takes to ensuring they are  
current and aggressively dealing with how  
to ensure the very best future for all!"***

— Local Stakeholder







# Competitive Positioning Summary

Competitive Positioning Analysis Components	
Components	Competitive?
Freight Costs	↑
Average Airfare & Hotel Cost	↑
Construction Costs	↑
Utilities	↑
Cost of Living	↑
Commercial Real Estate: Office	↑
Commercial Real Estate: Industrial	↑
Manufacturing Wages	↓
Non-manufacturing Wages	↑
Entrepreneurship	↓

Sources: BLS, Budget Your Trip, Building Journal, C2ER, CBRE, Expedia, Various City Websites

Key:  Competitive  Not Competitive

# Community Scorecard

SCORECARD RANKING AND PERFORMANCE					
Assessment Rationale	Community Factor	Leading	Strong	Average	Lacking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High growth in net new business formation</li> <li>Competitive tax and utility rates</li> </ul>	Business Climate	●			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low ability to attract/retain skilled workers</li> <li>Workers struggle with basic soft skills</li> </ul>	Workforce			●	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World-class colleges and technical schools</li> <li>Limited R&amp;D expenditures</li> <li>Poor perception of K-12 schools</li> </ul>	Education			●	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to historical/cultural/beach assets</li> <li>Highly sought-after pace of life</li> <li>Affordable housing challenges</li> </ul>	Quality of Life	●			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Port of Savannah &amp; military installations</li> <li>Diverse business/industrial/mfg. parks</li> </ul>	Infrastructure		●		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEDA produces/promotes quality materials</li> <li>World Trade Center captures int'l markets</li> </ul>	Marketing		●		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skilled and sophisticated staff</li> <li>Proactive and aggressive mindset</li> </ul>	Economic Development	●			

# Target Industry Analysis

# Target Industry Analysis

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## Target Industry Analysis - Introduction

Target industry analysis is a diagnostic tool used to identify Savannah's best fit with the universe of industry sectors comparing their growth potential with the region's competitive position. The methodology is used to focus SEDA's business marketing and attraction, expansion and retention, and entrepreneurial and small business development activities. Emphasizing specific target industries is an effective method of marketing to prospective companies and site selection consultants, makes it easier to identify industry sector requirements, and helps calibrate how incentives are used to encourage new business investment.

## Selection Process

### Step 1: Cluster Concentration

The first step is to determine which industries are concentrated locally. Location quotients are calculated to determine how concentrated specific industries are in the Savannah region, in comparison to the national average which is 1. A location quotient (LQ) of greater than 1.0 denotes a stronger cluster than is expected to be found in the US; and an LQ less than 1 is considered a weak cluster compared to the US. Savannah has "five pillars" that serve as economic drivers: Manufacturing, Port/Logistics, Tourism, Education/Government/Military; and Healthcare (see Appendix C).

### Step 2: Industry Trends

AE's target industry analysis serves to build upon the five "pillars," providing: core target identification, supplemental diversification targets, and



# Target Industry Analysis

entrepreneurial and emerging industry recommendations that reflect national growth trends.

*Core targets* represent industries already established within Savannah and have been selected based on existing institutional capital, employment, payroll, past growth, or economic outlook. Future efforts within these industries should focus on retention and expansion.

*Diversification targets* are complimentary industries that have exhibited growth at the state or national level. Future efforts within these industries should focus on attraction, retention, and expansion.

*Entrepreneurial and emerging targets* represent niche industries that are expected to grow in the future. Future efforts within these industries should focus on attraction and support activities for entrepreneurs (see Appendix C).

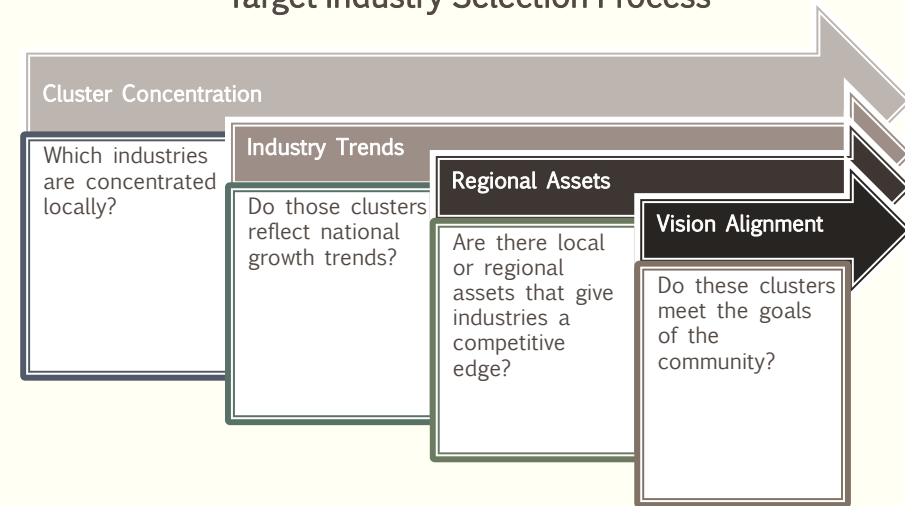
## Step 3: Regional Assets

Regional assets give industries a competitive edge through their ability to lower costs for businesses, develop and attract skilled workers, offer profitable markets for companies to participate in, or connect businesses to a broader range of ideas, suppliers, or other resources.

## Step 4: Vision Alignment

Lastly, the goals expressed by community members throughout the stakeholder engagement process, along with the overarching goals developed for this economic development plan also factor into the target industry selection process.

## Target Industry Selection Process



The recommended target industries identified through this process are presented on the following page. Underneath each major industry cluster are the core, diversification, and entrepreneurial/emerging targets that will be the primary focus for SEDA and its strategic partners. These selected target industry will drive promotion efforts and use of business incentives, which are addressed later in the strategic action plan.

It is important to understand that the selection of target industries should not be viewed as a strategy to ignore all other industries. If Savannah can successfully grow its targeted industries, many other sectors will benefit throughout the local/regional economy.

# Target Industry Analysis, Savannah MSA

Economic Development Activities	Manufacturing & Logistics	Creative & Technical Services	Entertainment Production	Health Care
<p><b>Core Industries:</b> <i>Retention &amp; Expansion</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Warehousing &amp; Distribution</li> <li>Transportation Equipment Manufacturing: Aerospace, Heavy Equipment, &amp; Marine</li> <li>Export Commodity Manufacturing: Machinery, Paper, &amp; Chemicals</li> <li>Specialty Foods and Beverages</li> </ul> <p><i>Employment Target: 50-100 employees</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UI/UX Design</li> <li>Architectural &amp; Engineering Services <i>(promotion in expanding existing companies nationally and internationally)</i></li> <li>Graphic Design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entertainment Production (Film, TV and Commercials)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitals &amp; Outpatient Care Centers</li> <li>Individual &amp; Family Services</li> <li>Nursing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diversification Targets:</b> <i>Attraction, Entrepreneurship, &amp; Small Business Development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OEMs: Automotive and Aerospace</li> <li>OEM Suppliers: Automotive and Aerospace</li> <li>Assembly and Manufacturing related to existing Warehouse and Distribution</li> </ul> <p><i>Employment Target: 50-100 employees</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product Design &amp; Development</li> <li>Game Design &amp; Development</li> <li>Computer Animation</li> <li>VR &amp; AR Technologies</li> <li>Software Design and Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound Stages</li> </ul>	<p>There is an opportunity in the Savannah region to expand the health care and health tech industry. This plan must be driven by existing leaders and experts within the field.</p> <p><b>Suggested Fields:</b> <i>Public Health, Health Analytics, Physical Therapy, Nutrition, Audiology, Occupational Therapy, Physicians Assistants, Medical Lab Sciences, Radiology, and Respiratory Health Services</i></p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurial &amp; Emerging Targets:</b> <i>Expansion, Attraction, Entrepreneurship, &amp; Small Business Development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logistics Technology Focus within Incubators/Accelerators: Advanced Logistics Software and Sensors, component and software development for transportation industry</li> <li>Medical Devices &amp; Equipment Manufacturing</li> <li>Renewable Energy Technologies</li> </ul> <p><i>Employment Target: 50-100 employees</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Media and Creative Technology Focus within Accelerator/Incubator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre and Post Production Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Care Technology Focus within Incubators/Accelerators</li> </ul>

# Target Industry Analysis

## Manufacturing & Logistics

**Core Target Snapshot (2017):**  
 Total Payroll: \$890.7 M  
 Average Wage: \$55,115  
 Establishments: 735

### Why Savannah?

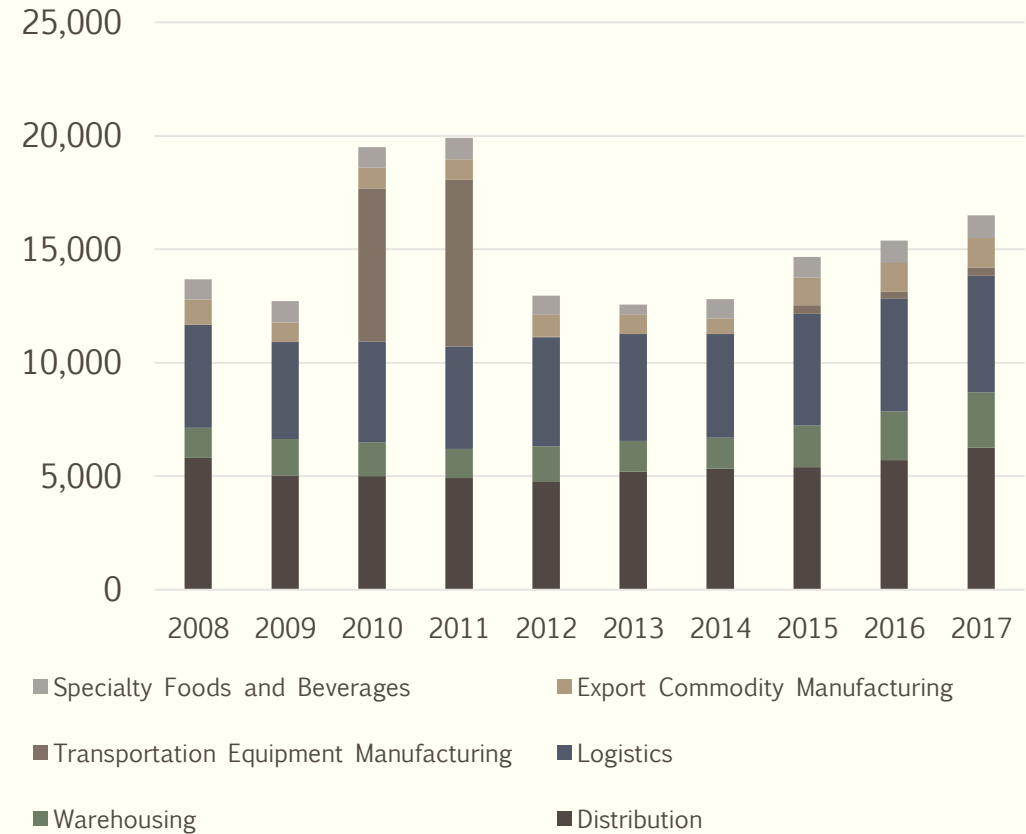
- Great manufacturing & logistics base
- Port of Savannah
- Trained workforce
- Access to eastern US markets

### Core Target Growth 2007 - 2017

2017 Employment	10-Year Growth	10-Year Growth Rate	Compound Annual Growth Rate
6,160	+3,096	24%	2.1%

Source: AngelouEconomics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Deloitte, International Trade Administration, PWC, Specialty Food Association

## Core Target Employment 2008 - 2017



# Target Industry Analysis – Manufacturing & Logistics

## Industry Outlook

- The transportation and logistics industries have become increasingly competitive in recent years, as new firms are finding innovative ways to capture profitable niches within supply chains.
  - Technological advancements include: Data analytics, automation, driverless vehicles, the “Internet of things,” and first/last mile solutions.
- Transportation equipment manufacturing is a key industry in Savannah, as it is home to Gulfstream, an industry leader in producing private jet aircraft.
  - The BLS withholds employment data for aerospace manufacturing in Savannah across all years, except 2010 and 2011. This is done to prevent the disclosure of individually identifiable data.
  - In 2011, aerospace manufacturing employed 7,345 people in Savannah.
- Export commodities (Paper, Chemical, and Machinery) comprised 8% of total manufacturing employment in Savannah in 2017, yet account for 31% of total exports from the MSA.
- Demand for specialty foods and beverages are growing, as 65% of consumers purchase them – an 11% increase since 2015.



Source: Gulfstream



Source: Georgia Ports Authority



# Target Industry Analysis – Manufacturing & Logistics

## OEM Suppliers: Automotive and Aerospace

- Transportation equipment manufacturing is the largest export for the Savannah MSA, representing 42% of total exports (2017).
- Savannah is home to 13% of all Aerospace OEM Suppliers in the state.
  - Statewide Average Wage: \$91,486
- For Automotive OEM Suppliers, Savannah firms make up 3% of the statewide total.
  - Statewide Average Wage: \$49,951
- Automotive and Aerospace OEM Suppliers have been selected as a Diversification Target to capture a greater share of this industries vertical supply chain.
  - Active partnerships with major manufacturers, such as Gulfstream, will aid SEDA in identifying and attracting vertical suppliers to Savannah.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, International Trade Administration

## Assembly and Manufacturing Related to Existing Warehouse and Distribution Industry

- Similar to OEM Suppliers, an opportunity exists for Savannah to capture an additional share of the vertical supply chain related to Machinery and Fabricated Metal Manufacturing.
  - Machinery Manufacturing is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest export industry for the Savannah MSA.
- Suggested Diversification Targets: Computer and Electronic Products, Fabricated Metal Products, and Electrical Equipment and Appliances

## Entrepreneurial Activities to Support Manufacturing & Logistics

- Logistics Technology focus within Incubators/Accelerators: Advanced Logistics Software and Sensors, Component and Software Development for Transportation Industry
  - This is a component of the Savannah Logistics Technology Corridor Task Force
- Medical Devices and Equipment Manufacturing
- Renewable Energy Technologies: Biofuels, Engine
  - This research is occurring at GSU

# Target Industry Analysis

## Creative & Technical Services

**Core Target Snapshot (2017):**  
 Total Payroll: \$130.1 M  
 Average Wage: \$74,427  
 Establishments: 251

### Why Savannah?

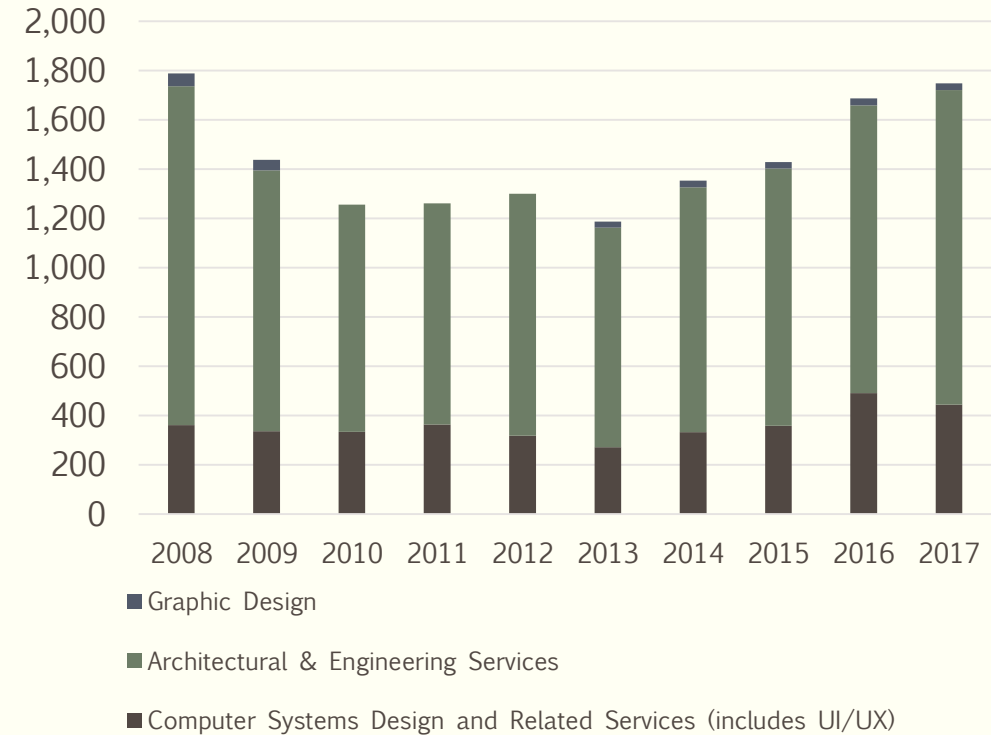
- *SCAD and Georgia Southern graduates*
- *Existing creative talent*
- *High wages & diversification*
- *Fits Savannah's creativity brand & entrepreneurship assets*

### Core Target Growth 2007 - 2017

2017 Employment	10-Year Growth	10-Year Growth Rate	Compound Annual Growth Rate
1,748	-230	-12%	-1.2%

Source: AngelouEconomics, Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Core Target Employment 2008 - 2017



# Target Industry Analysis – Creative & Technical Services

## Industry Outlook

- Savannah is home to SCAD, an international destination for students pursuing a top-tier program in art, architecture, and design
  - The proximity of this world-renowned anchor institution makes these core targets an obvious choice for Savannah.
  - Since 2007, employment among these core targets has increased by 23% nationally, while decreasing by 12% within the Savannah MSA.
  - Keeping SCAD's recent graduates in Savannah has been a challenge for the MSA.
  - SCAD+ is currently working to reverse this trend.
- The average wage within these core targets is 65% greater than the average wage for all employees in the MSA.



Source: SCAD



Source: SCAD

# Target Industry Analysis – Creative & Technical Services

Diversification Targets for Creative & Technical Services <i>2017</i>		
Diversification Target	Statewide Wage	SCAD Programs
Product Design & Development	\$70,506	BFA, MA, MFA
Video Game Design & Development	\$115,734	BA, BFA, MA, MFA
VR & AR Technologies	\$115,734	BFA
Software Design & Development	\$115,734	BFA

- Each diversification target represents a tremendous opportunity for Savannah, as it is home to a pipeline of product, video game, VR/AR, and software design talent.
- Computer Science and Programming is a skill required for success across these fields.
  - It is not a field of study currently provided at SCAD, but undergraduate, graduate, and research opportunities exist at GSU.
- **Entrepreneurial Activities to Support Creative & Technical Services**
  - Digital Media and Creative Technology focus within incubators/accelerators
  - Technology-based Tourism entrepreneurship
  - Partner with SCAD and GSU to actively recruit alumni to Savannah

# Target Industry Analysis

## Entertainment Production

### Core Target Snapshot (2017):

Wage Range: \$27-\$60 per hour  
 2018 YTD Industry Direct Spend: \$120.1 M  
 2018 YTD Industry Total Impact: \$254.6 M  
 Establishments: 23

### Why Savannah?

- *Strong film industry presence & incentives*
- *SCAD resources/assets & talent*
- *High income jobs*
- *Natural vertical industry integration*

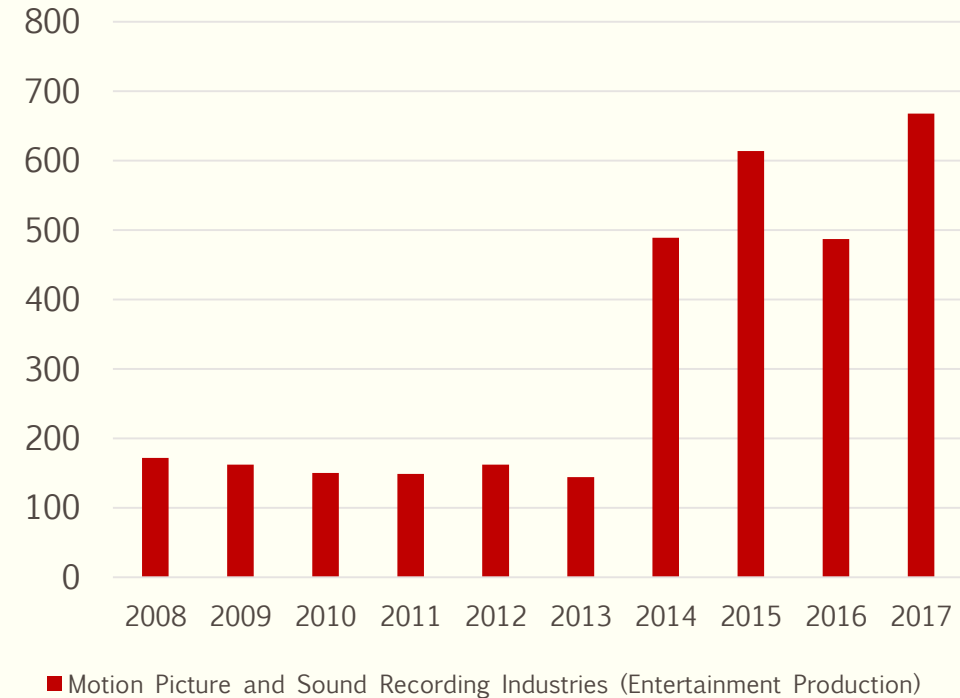
### Core Target Growth 2007 - 2017

2017 Employment	10-Year Growth	10-Year Growth Rate	Compound Annual Growth Rate
668	+490	275%	14.1%

Source: AngelouEconomics, Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Core Target Employment

2008 - 2017



# Target Industry Analysis – Entertainment Production

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## Industry Outlook

- While California continues to be the epicenter of the US film industry, Georgia has emerged as a top five filming location for the top 100 feature films over the last five years.
- In terms of actual production dollars spent, Georgia retained 44% of total production value in 2017, which ranked third behind California (90%) and Canada (66%). Additional production facilities and sound stages may help retain an increasing share of production dollars, however, it is important to keep in mind that most feature films rely on multiple jurisdictions throughout every stage of production.
- Compared to other target industry recommendations, employment levels and establishment levels are considerably lower within entertainment production.
- Over the last 10 years, employment has grown by 275% and establishments have grown by 156%.
- **Diversification Targets for Entertainment Production:** Development of Sound Stages.
- **Entrepreneurial Activities to Support Entertainment Production:** Pre- and Post-Production Services.



Source: Savannah Regional Film Commission

# Target Industry Analysis

## Health Care

**Core Target Snapshot (2017):**  
 Total Payroll: \$485.9 M  
 Average Wage: \$46,057  
 Establishments: 167

### Why Savannah?

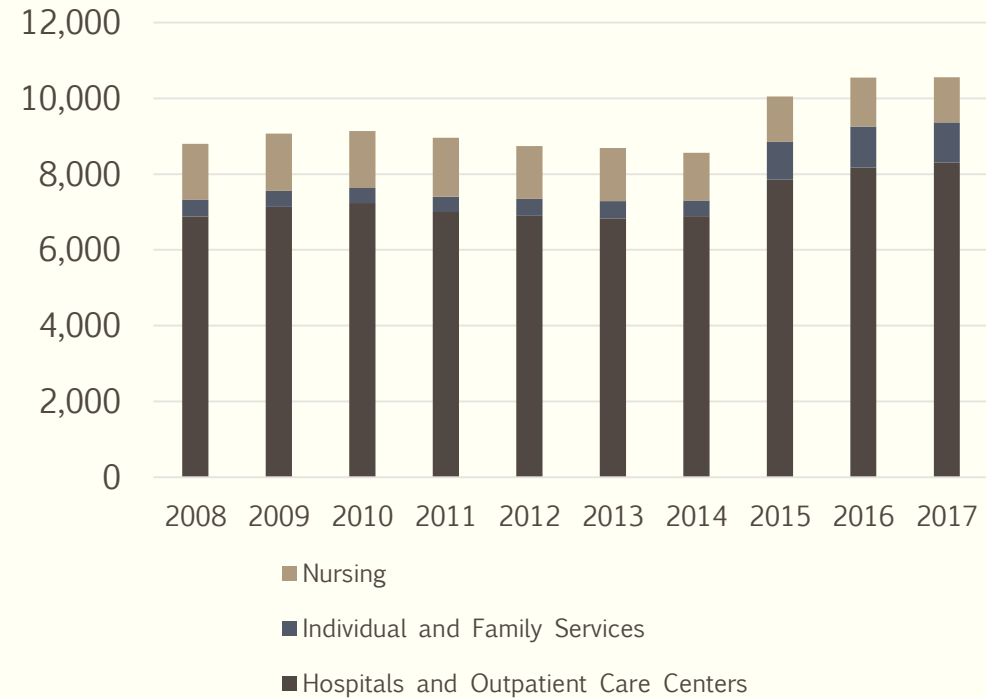
- *Community leaders wish to promote expansion of healthcare industry*
- *Existing programs at Georgia Southern*
- *Great hospital infrastructure & niche markets (related to medical tourism)*

### Core Target Growth 2007 - 2017

2017 Employment	10-Year Growth	10-Year Growth Rate	Compound Annual Growth Rate
10,551	+1,754	20%	1.8%

Source: AngelouEconomics, Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Core Target Employment 2008 - 2017



# Target Industry Analysis – Health Care

## Industry Outlook

- Hospitals and Outpatient Care Centers employ 78% of employees within health care core targets.
- Memorial University Medical Center serves as an anchor employer for the Savannah MSA.
- Georgia Southern University serves as an educational anchor institution for its undergraduate and graduate health care programs. Specifically for nursing, physical therapy, and nutrition.
- **Diversification Targets for Health Care:**
  - There exists an opportunity in the Savannah region to expand the Health Care and Health Tech industry, which must be driven by existing leaders and experts.
  - Georgia Southern University provides a pipeline of health care talent to the Savannah region.
    - Current Program Strengths: Nursing, Physical Therapy, Nutrition.
    - Future Programs Identified for Expansion: Audiology, Occupational Therapy, Physicians Assistants.
  - **Entrepreneurial Activities to Support Health Care:** Health Care and Health Tech focus within Incubators/Accelerators.



Source: St. Joseph's/Candler



Source: GSU

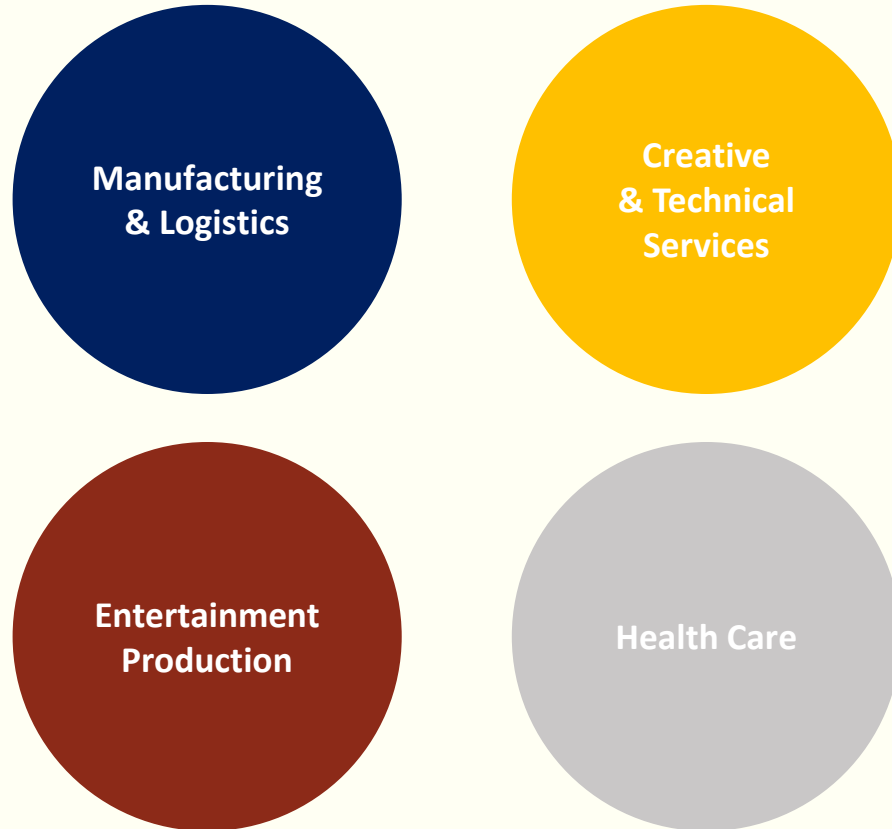


Source: Memorial University Medical Center



# Target Industry Summary

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- These industries are not the only industries that will grow but can give guidance to local economic development policies.
- Their selection considers the local base for their expansion, national industry trends, the assets that can support them, and the progress they can offer toward community goals.

# Strategic Action Plan

# Strategic Action Plan

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The Strategic Action Plan is built around four unifying themes or goals, intended to build up Greater Savannah's capabilities, improve its competitive position, and promote economic prosperity:



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship



**Education and Workforce:**  
Maximize Savannah's Human Capital



**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

Each of these statements stand on a solid foundation of past success and are consistent with the community's aspirations for the future. They encompass a series of strategies and actions that spell out how the goals are to be achieved, with a strong emphasis placed on best practices and performance measures for effective implementation.

Strategic recommendations to support these goals are presented in the following section. SEDA and the broader community all have roles to play

in implementing the strategies and actions to realize the community's economic potential. For each anchor institution involved, it is important to understand these economic development goals can only be achieved when everyone makes an investment in the community's success.



Forsyth Park Fountain

“Savannah is a great place for a great city.”

—Local Stakeholder

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

### Overview

The Savannah Economic Development Authority's (SEDA) mission is to help create, grow, and attract job opportunities in the Savannah region.

As simple as this might sound, let there be no misunderstanding—economic development is complex and challenging. Economic development professionals are charged with building consensus among community leaders, organizations, and other key stakeholders to create a balanced, healthy economy. This can be a most formidable undertaking, when one considers the diversity of stakeholders who represent different values and interests.

Nonetheless, economic development goals are worth pursuing.

### What is Economic Development?

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) defines economic development as “a program, group of policies, or activity that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community, by creating and/or retaining jobs that facilitate growth and provide a stable tax base.”

Related to this formal definition is the notion that economic development involves the allocation of limited resources—land, labor, and capital (with a nod towards state-of-the-art entrepreneurship)—having a combined positive

impact on the level of business activity, employment, income distribution patterns, and fiscal health. It can also be thought of as a deliberate intervention on the part of community stakeholders to influence the direction of private investment toward opportunities that lead to sustained economic growth. Consequently, sustained economic growth can provide sufficient incomes for the region's workforce, profitability for employers, and the tax revenue needed to maintain a supportive infrastructure.

### Economic Development Partners

Economic development is the ultimate team sport. It stands to reason, therefore, that economic development allies and partners are an integral part of carrying out a successful economic development program. SEDA's partners include chambers of commerce, city and county governments, colleges and universities, businesses, electrical and gas utilities, ports, school districts, tourism agencies, workforce training providers, etc., each having a critical role in implementing this strategic plan.

This type of collaboration isn't just for show. Business prospects and site selection consultants are adept at assessing the degree to which communities have been able to break down traditional silos for more collaborative decision-making, creative problem-solving, and strategic thinking. Make no mistake about it—those communities that have the right players singing from the same song sheet enjoy a competitive advantage.

A group of civic leaders committed to a cohesive vision is an indomitable force. They can accomplish things that may have seemed impossible. To realize the region's economic potential, it is time for Savannah's economic development team to take its game to a higher level.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #1: Develop a World-Class Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Program

The role of a world-class economic development marketing and attraction program is to attract new business and industry as part of a comprehensive strategy to create new jobs and grow the region's economy. As a practical matter, this involves a mix of promotional activities—part marketing, part prospecting, and part sales. Each component is designed to differentiate and position Savannah in the global marketplace, improve the community's internal and external image, promote policies and programs, and convince new companies to invest and locate projects in Coastal Georgia.

Economic development (ED) marketing is both proactive and responsive in nature. It is proactive in the sense that Savannah's civic leadership cannot afford to sit by passively and accept the outcomes of changing economic forces. Time and tide wait for no man. Greater Savannah operates in an intensely competitive environment, one dictating the need to organize in new ways to harness these forces for the community's benefit. Hence, the need for strategic economic development planning, which provides a framework and best practices for the community's business marketing and attraction efforts. It is also responsive, because the ability to provide potential prospects with accurate, up-to-date, and credible information is at a premium. Properly orchestrated, ED marketing initiatives can influence corporate site location decisions, diversify the economy, influence public policy, and shape the community's future.

From an ED marketing and attraction perspective, positioning communities revolves around product differentiation, price competitiveness, and the ability to maintain a market focus. The Savannah Economic Development Authority's (SEDA) primary audience is decision-makers and influencers—those people most likely to lead location decisions (Chief Executive Officers, Chief Operating Officers, VP/Directors of Corporate Real Estate, Chief Financial Officers, and corporate site selection consultants). This is where the value of conducting the market assessment and target industry analysis comes into play. SEDA has already taken steps to resolve which industries are the most promising for the Savannah metropolitan region:

- Manufacturing & Logistics
- Creative & Technical Services
- Entertainment Production
- Healthcare

Reaching corporate location decision-makers requires the effective use of marketing tools. In this context, it is important to understand where the decision-makers get their news; craft a well-told story that is relevant, differentiating, and motivating; and deliver the marketing message. Delivery of the marketing message occurs through an artful mix of advertising (print, television, radio, digital); public relations (articles in publications; press releases); promotion (events, sponsorships); social/digital media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Business Blog, YouTube); and personal selling.

Development of a marketing plan to address these activities is paramount for successful execution. SEDA's marketing plan should be tied to established KPIs and goals, and provide for auditing/tracking so the organization has an accurate sense of what's working and what's not working.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

Outlined below are key components of a “best practice” business marketing and attraction program:

**Branding.** A successful branding strategy is reflective of the community’s core values and beliefs. A brand is not just a logo, slogan, or tagline. Nor is it an artificial way to market a place, or a clever way to create something out of nothing. It’s about developing an effective, distinct message that defines and tells Savannah’s unique story—even if a portion of the story is reflective of the community’s potential—and then building a platform and strategy around it that nurtures the brand, makes an emotional connection, and attracts others who share the region’s values and vision.

So how does Savannah invest in creating a sustainable community brand? This can be done through an in-depth process of public engagement, defining the community’s personality traits, storytelling, and consistently fulfilling the region’s brand promise. Done properly, it ties together individual, disparate marketing efforts—economic development, tourism, arts—and serves as a coordinated foundation for all external and internal messaging.

**Experiencing the brand.** There are a variety of target audiences on the receiving end of Savannah’s brand strategy: business prospects, site selection consultants, out-of-state skilled workers thinking about relocating to the region, entrepreneurs, and others. Their personal experience with SEDA and the community-at-large, and how they come to see Savannah for what it is, occurs through a number of outbound/inbound marketing activities.



### — Best Practice—

#### “Smart and Open” Columbus, Ohio

The Columbus “*Smart and Open*” brand was created through a multi-step process involving collaborative leadership, consensus-building (seeking input from the entire community), and development of a shared vision and sense of purpose, culminating in the stakeholder’s decision to proceed with the following brand narrative:

*Columbus is a city with an open-minded approach to life and business. It’s a smart city with a progressive attitude, where people are free to go out on a limb. Where diversity isn’t just a state of being but a state of mind. It’s made by real people, businesses and neighborhoods – everyday. Because we share the philosophy that Columbus is open to all, we are always taking risks, always thinking big and always open to new ideas.*

Afterwards, the Columbus brand was brought to life by choosing to hire a marketing firm to help break through the traditional silo marketing and establish a strategic framework. All segments of the community were able to pull from the “*Smart and Open*” brand to shape messages for their respective audiences during the execution phase. Marketing support was made available through <https://brandcolumbus.com/>, a website providing users with creative content, photos, and other visual material for individual marketing campaigns. Columbus continues to live the brand, and in the process, is now the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the Midwest. For more information, click on <https://align2market.com/how-columbus-broke-through-the-challenges-of-city-branding/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

**Outbound Marketing.** Outbound marketing methods are used to generate leads from, or build a brand with, executives from business firms in target industries from around the world who are not actively looking to locate or invest in Greater Savannah.

**Earned Media.** AE recommends SEDA hire 10-15 freelance writers (or alternatively, a public relations consultant who knows the media, knows economic development, and knows the community) to prepare and disseminate economic development marketing content. The idea is to leverage their public relations skills to have favorable articles placed in top-tier media publications, such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Forbes*, *The Economist*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *National Public Radio*, and *Bloomberg*. Be patient and manage expectations. Good publicity requires a lot of persistence and a long lead time.

**Marketing Missions.** The AE team recommends SEDA compile a list of 100 companies it wants to see locate in Coastal Georgia. In preparing this list, it will be helpful for SEDA to understand who is looking at the organization's website (viewing pages that might indicate their interest in site location assistance), competitor regions, and leverage the supply chain of major employers and military bases. After preparing the list make arrangements with the prospective companies for a small delegation to come for a visit. Savannah's delegation should include elected officials, local business executives who are familiar with the target industry (dialogue with industry peers is powerful), and SEDA staff.

### — Best Practice—



#### “Keeping Chattanooga in the News” Chattanooga VB & Area Chamber of Commerce Chattanooga, Tennessee

Development Counsellors International (DCI) diligently works to keep Chattanooga in the news. In partnership with the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and Chattanooga Visitors Bureau since 2003 and 2010, respectively, they've earned media with impressions of more than 1.2 billion worldwide.

DCI was tasked with making sure that national and industry media outlets publicized stories about Chattanooga, reinforcing the idea that Chattanooga is a vibrant place for businesses, entrepreneurs, residents, and visitors. DCI worked with their clients to develop compelling storylines about the community and pitched them to select media. As a result of their efforts, DCI was successful in placing hundreds of articles in a wide range of national, regional, and online media outlets, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Fox Business News*, and *The Huffington Post*.

More recently, Chattanooga has gained national attention for development of its entrepreneurial ecosystem, which features America's first city-wide gigabit fiber network (also the nation's first community to offer a 10-gigabit network to all residents). When Chattanooga's Electric Power Board (EPB) rolled out the 10-gigabit network, DCI helped get the word out, obtaining earned media placements in nearly 80 outlets, including *WIRED*, *The Washington Post*, *The Associated Press*, and *The Hill*. For more information, click on: <https://aboutdci.com/case-studies/chattanooga-area-chamber-of-commerce/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

Organize international marketing missions to countries related to the port's import activity. During these missions, the decision-makers and influencers from prospective companies can receive an informal business briefing and be presented with collateral materials depicting Savannah's economic assets, preferably organized into corridors/districts. The intent is to build close and enduring relationships with these executives, earn their attention, and make Savannah familiar to them. When the opportunity for making an investment or site location decision arises, they won't hesitate to reach out for assistance. Because of Savannah's pro-active marketing efforts, they will be drawn to SEDA's website—which will have content they value—and know who to call.

**National Advertising.** A national advertising campaign in competing major markets offers opportunities to accelerate the process of business attraction. One of the keys to success is producing advertising that is content-rich, persuasive, and uses clear messaging to promote Greater Savannah's brand.

**Trade Shows./Industry Conferences.** Trade shows and industry conferences provide an opportunity to connect with representatives from prospective companies in target industries. They allow SEDA staff to gain insights into the industry, identify lead companies, and meet executives. For example, the Industrial Asset Management Council (IAMC) Forums and SelectUSA Investment Summit provide high-caliber attendees an opportunity to network and share business location intelligence. Effective marketing at trade shows requires a great deal of advanced planning, hard work once on site, and careful follow-up, but generates results.



### — Best Practice—

#### “The Power of Ideas” Fairfax County Economic Development Authority Fairfax County, Virginia

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA)—the largest non-state economic development authority in the nation—pioneered the use of economic development advertising. Beginning in the late 1970s, the FCEDA has promoted Fairfax County's attributes as a premier location for business, first because of its proximity to Washington, D.C., then as a technology powerhouse, and later as a creative community.

FCEDA's national advertising campaign includes advertisements on National Public Radio (NPR), ads on mobile devices, Google, online social media outlets like LinkedIn, and print advertising in major publications. Their advertising goes beyond the traditional business location messaging and promotes Fairfax County for its ability to offer residents an enviable quality of life.

The focus of FCEDA's advertising has evolved over time. Initial advertising sought to establish credibility for Fairfax County as a business location. After Exxon Mobile, TRW, and AT&T located there, their messaging shifted to creating an identity separate from the nation's capitol. With economic success came a shift from attracting business and residents to retaining the same. Later advertising promoted Fairfax County as a technology business center, then shifted once more to promoting the importance of achieving a balanced life. The “Power of Ideas” is the focus of their most recent campaign. For more information, click on: <https://www.fairfaxcountyeda.org/fairfax-county-edas-advertising-campaigns>.



# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

**Inbound Marketing.** Inbound marketing refers to methods where prospective companies, decision-makers, and influencers are already interested in Greater Savannah, making them want to find out more about the region.

**Familiarization “FAM” Tours.** A familiarization, or “FAM” tour is when a community, region, or state hosts journalists and site selection consultants at their location for one to three days. Organizing a successful FAM Tour of Greater Savannah is an effective tool for helping them become “familiar” with what the region has to offer. It’s a great way to expand SEDA’s marketing reach and boost awareness with credible third-parties.

Agendas for FAM Tour events usually combine social events, business roundtable discussions, tours of available buildings and sites, a presentation that showcases economic development programs, and meetings with local business and civic leaders. The idea is to build relationships with site selectors and business decision-makers, allowing them to meet face-to-face with local civic leaders and gain first-hand knowledge about Savannah’s investment opportunities.

**Network with Real Estate Brokers and Developers.** Whether they’re representing a client or developing a business park, it’s always a good idea to network with commercial/industrial real estate brokers and developers. To expand and nurture SEDA’s pipeline for quality business prospects, AE recommends hosting (or co-host with the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce) a Real Estate Trends Luncheon to help strengthen relationships with these strategic

### — Best Practice—



#### “Shenandoah Valley Food & Beverage Familiarization Tour” Shenandoah Valley Partnership Harrisonburg, Virginia

The Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP) plays host to site selection consultants as part of the SVP Food & Beverage Familiarization Tour. Participants experience the region’s food and beverage industry and learn more about the advantages and opportunities of doing business in the Shenandoah Valley.

Cross marketing for the FAM Tour is integrated with the SVP website. Attendees were able to click on a Welcome Message (includes a photo of branded marketing materials included in a special “Harvest Box” of local products that was sent to site selectors for the event; followed by a second complimentary invitation box, complete with Valley itinerary, local snacks, games, and a local music playlist); and Interactive Tour Map allowing them to electronically follow along and learn more about the tour. Highlights include a farm-to-table dinner, executive roundtables, tours of 11 businesses in 6 localities, commerce parks, manufacturing plants, and packaging facilities, and rooftop reception at a local hotel. Seven site selection consultants from around the country participated in the three-day event.

For their stellar marketing efforts, SVP received the Gold Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in the category of General Purpose Print Promotion for the 200,000 – 500,000 population classification (2016). For more information, click on: <https://theshenandoahvalley.com/famtour/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

partners. Luncheon presentations should provide an outlook on the state of real estate development, the business cycle, competitor markets, and prospects for the foreseeable future. The luncheon program could also feature a panel of prominent experts in retail, office, industrial, and residential development who can share their perspectives and observations.

**Hot Teams.** The AE team recommends that SEDA organize “hot teams” made up of academics, industry experts, and internal staff—specific to each target industry. The role of “hot team” members is to help sell the Savannah region to business prospects. Their activities could range from providing testimonials for use in earned media placements to personal participation in market missions and familiarization tours, to helping close deals during the final stage of the site location process.

Outlined above is what the AE team believes to be the cornerstones for developing a world-class economic development marketing and business attraction program. Crafting the economic development strategies and action items is the most creative part of the strategic planning process. Execution is the most demanding part, and will require time, commitment, and resources. Skillful implementation by SEDA leadership and staff, in combination with an expanded business retention and expansion program, will connect the dots between Savannah’s marketing, telling the region’s distinct and unique story, building a better community, and competing on a state, national, and international stage—while allowing the organization to remain nimble and adjust to inevitable changes in the local economic base.



### — Best Practice—

#### “Trends in Real Estate Luncheon” Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and Indiana Economic Development Corporation Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) co-hosted a “Trends in Real Estate Luncheon,” as part of an effort to increase collaboration between commercial real estate brokers and economic developers.

This past year, attendees heard a keynote presentation by IEDC’s Site Search Manager Sarah Salisbury and were provided with information about the type of properties that are in high demand in Northeast Indiana. Commercial real estate brokers and economic developers were invited to this free event.

Mention was also made about the Indiana Commercial Real Estate Conference that was hosted by the Indiana Commercial Board of Realtors in Indianapolis; and Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) Spring World Conference in Austin. Common topics for all three events were economic development trends, site certifications, market trends, economic drivers, ethics training, real estate transactions in an uncertain environment, and a desire to convey a consistent message that commercial real estate brokers and economic developers can collaborate more.

For more information, click on: <https://neindiana.com/blog/increasing-collaboration-between-commercial-real-estate-brokers-economic-de/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #1: Develop a World-Class Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Program

### Action Items:

- Explore creating an effective, united brand strategy for the Savannah region.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to promote Savannah's brand.
  - Expand participation in lead generating conferences such as: SSG, IAMC, SelectUSA, TBIC, CES Conferences and State of Georgia-led international missions, etc.
  - Analyze existing companies for corporate expansion/other division location opportunities, call on them to thank them for existing business and ask for new business opportunities.
  - Develop target list of site location consultants, sort by geographic regions and plan trips to meet consultants; pair with strategic industry calls in the same area.
  - Explore ways to effectively package industry and economic assets into corridors/districts.
  - Evaluate major importers for potential to assemble or manufacture more cost-effectively in FTZ 104 then organize marketing missions to call on those companies for location.



# Strategic Action Plan

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**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #1: Develop a World-Class Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Program

### Action Items:

- Work with major employers to attract their supply chains.
- Generate content to promote the Savannah brand to include videos, articles, social media posts, business profiles, etc.
- Consistently host Familiarization “FAM” Tours for select media, site selection consultants and project managers.
- Continue to network with commercial/industrial real estate brokers and developers.
- Explore the potential for organizing “hot teams” outside of SEDA staff to include experts within specific target industries and target countries.
- Utilize relationship with SCAD:
  - SCAD Pro: Target creative tech prospects that already enjoy a deep relationship with SCAD.
  - Develop a program to attract experienced alumni talent back to Savannah.



# Strategic Action Plan

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**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #1: Develop a World-Class Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Program

### Action Items:

- Continue the quality development of the Savannah Manufacturing Center while executing the comprehensive marketing plan for the site to include website, press, direct correspondence, etc.
- Elevate high-level advocacy at the state level for advanced manufacturing projects.
- Continue to leverage WTC Savannah's network and services to generate Foreign Direct Investment leads for the region:
  - Assign an internal project lead to own and advance relationships and opportunities for each target country.
- Support Visit Savannah's ongoing efforts to attract affluent visitors, lengthen visitor stays and increase spending.
- Strategically partner with neighboring counties like the Savannah Harbor-Interstate 16 Corridor Joint Development Authority for the location of projects that best match the company requirements and needs.
- Actively promote the Savannah World Trade Center for Investment, SEDA/WTCsav's EB-5 regional center, to attract foreign capital and create jobs in the area.



# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #2: Implement an Expanded Retention & Expansion Program

Business retention/expansion activities play a fundamental, but often underappreciated function in a comprehensive economic development program. Nonetheless, existing businesses are essential and play a crucial role in Savannah's economy in terms of employment, income, and tax base. More jobs, typically, are created by the expansion of existing firms than by attracting new businesses. Therefore, maintaining and expanding the current commercial and industrial base is an important goal to pursue. Program activities designed to meet this goal should include actions for:

- Monitoring current needs and anticipating the future needs of local businesses.
- Responding to the needs of local businesses.
- Encouraging community support of Savannah's commerce and industry.

**Continue the BR&E Visitation Program.** Business visitations are designed to assist businesses in becoming more efficient and competitive, so that they remain in the community; and to improve relations with business and the community. They are a rich resource of competitive intelligence and provide a solid foundation for SEDA's marketing and business attraction efforts.

The primary purpose of traditional business visitation surveys is to gather company information about local conditions and services, evaluate

— Best Practices —



### **“Business Concierge Program”** Charleston County Economic Development North Charleston, South Carolina

Starting in 2013, Charleston County Economic Development organized a dedicated business expansion/retention team that focuses on the care and feeding of existing industry. Known as “Business Concierge,” the team acts on behalf of individual companies, performing as a primary facilitator between industry, government, education, and workforce development. The group engages with 200+ companies annually, making key connections and helping businesses grow. Since the program's inception, 26 companies have announced expansions, resulting in the creation of 3,216 jobs and \$674 million in capital investment.

As part of their business retention/expansion efforts, Charleston County Economic Development publishes a Business Resource Guide that promotes location, talent, innovation, and support. Topics covered in the 24-page guide include financing options, state and local taxes, income tax incentives, property tax incentives, workforce development resources, technical services, international trade services, community connections, and Charleston County departments.

The CCED Business Concierge Program is an IEDC Excellence in Economic Development Award – Gold Winner (2018). For more information, click on: <http://www.charlestoncountydevelopment.org/for-existing-business/> and <http://www.charlestoncountydevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/BRE-Guide-2017-2018-for-web.pdf>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Economic Development: Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

satisfaction with the community, explore growth plans, and provide offers of assistance. All too often, they are accompanied by a polite expression of interest and a casual offer of help. As a result, many economic developers write them off as a goodwill gesture.

AE recommends carrying on with a market intelligence approach, where the business visitation survey is purposefully designed to gather and organize information on customer satisfaction, predictive data (identify companies at-risk, explore growth plans), and marketing research (document or quantify competitive advantages). This requires that SEDA collect employer information, conduct CEO interviews, analyze the survey results, and blend findings into SEDA's marketing plan.

Information is power. To harness this power, customer relationship management (CRM) software helps to maintain a record of existing companies and expansion prospects (e.g., ExecutivePulse, Gazelle.ai, Synchronist Suite). The software database contains company and personal information, records contacts, prospect ranking, and communications. Over time, a substantial amount of analytic data is built that provide insights for the organization's marketing initiatives.

Implementing an expanded business retention/expansion program will help SEDA and its strategic partners to understand which firms are growing and which are declining, improve Savannah's competitive position, organize resources, and promote economic growth in the region.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program” Northern Kentucky Tri-County ED Corporation Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky

The Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program of the Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-ED) is a free resource that helps identify opportunities to provide assistance to local businesses, sustain their current operations and accelerate their growth, while growing jobs in the region.

A key feature is the provision of a single point of contact for a variety of resources, partnerships, and tools. The Tri-ED BR&E Program identifies potential tax incentives and workforce grants, provides assistance with infrastructure, permitting, real estate, workforce recruitment, and strives to make connections with regional partners.

Numerous business and community allies have endorsed an official program that is staff-led, coordinated with local cities, involves numerous business visits that are monitored and tracked on a customer relationship management system, and provides transparent reporting to Northern Kentucky stakeholders.

Tri-ED BR&E is a two-time recipient of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Excellence in Economic Development Award, having won the Bronze Award in 2013 and Gold Award in 2015, in the category of Business Retention & Expansion Program (pop. 200,000-500,000). For more information, click on: <http://www.northernkentuckyusa.com/business-support/business-retention-and-expansion-program/>

# Strategic Action Plan

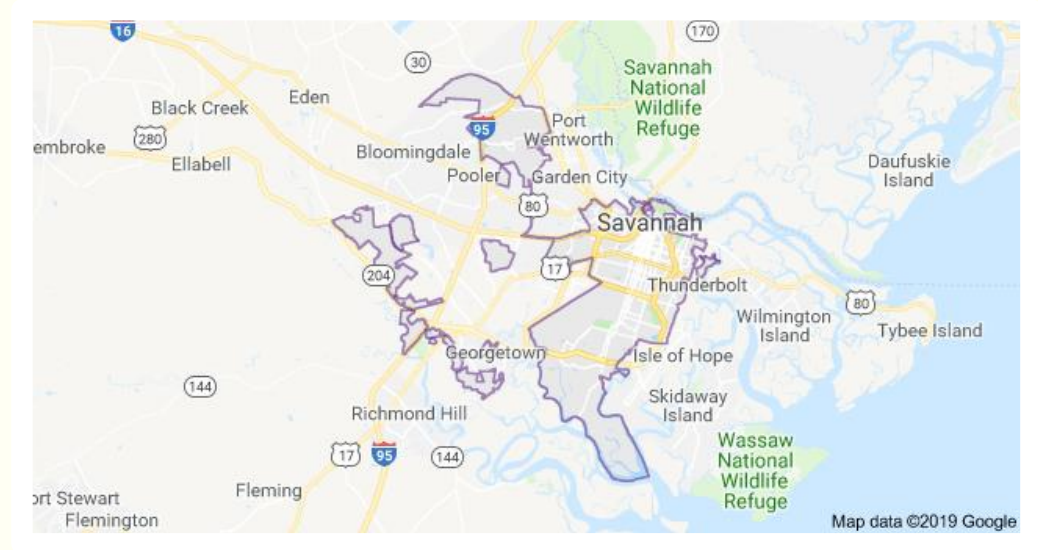


**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #2: Expand the Business Retention & Expansion Program

### Action Items:

- Continue the existing industry visitation program.
  - Expand the targeted list of companies by diversifying those with which we are engaging.
  - Capture and utilize data to identify common challenges and collective solutions potentially using business retention/expansion software (e.g., ExecutivePulse, Gazelle.ai, Synchronist Suite, Salesforce).
  - Continue to identify the needs of local businesses and address them.
  - Continue to identify and pursue opportunities to help businesses grow and expand.
  - Utilize early warning system to protect jobs in the region.
  - Gather competitive intelligence that contributes to business marketing and attraction efforts.
  - Encourage partnerships with existing employers and all educational/training assets.
- Better promote the BRE program and celebrate successes.
  - Report on company visits and results of those visits to the SEDA Board annually.





# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #2: Expand the Business Retention & Expansion Program

### Action Items:

- Create more content celebrating the success of existing industries (videos, company profiles, media pitches, etc.) in an effort to entice more companies to proactively reach out to SEDA and help those companies grow.
- Strengthen their presence on the SEDA website, social media, press releases, and other marketing avenues.
- Expand tools in the BRE “toolbox.”
  - Explore the development of a strategic BRE incentive.
  - Create marketing materials to easily share the resources available to existing industries.
  - Continue to leverage WTC Savannah’s services to help regional businesses grow internationally, generating more revenue and creating more jobs.



# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #3: Celebrate Economic Success

Celebrating economic development is key to success.

SEDA has enjoyed a lot of success, and a lot of this is attributable to community leaders having set their sights on economic development goals and attaining them through persistent thinking and positive action. Celebrating not only feels good—emotionally, mentally, and physically—but it reinforces the positive attitudes and outcomes that the Savannah region wants to draw upon when faced with new challenges and opportunities.

The true impact of celebrating is learning. To learn, it's important to reflect on how the community has grown, what it has accomplished, and what allowed it to achieve those successes. It's also important to be cognizant of things that may have led to false starts, incomplete accomplishments, or unmet objectives.

Our society has a pre-programmed negative bias, and all too often focuses on where institutions and individual leaders have fallen short or failed. While it's important not to overlook situations where there is a need for improvement, everyone needs to understand and appreciate what has worked well, where economic development has been impactful, and where the Savannah metropolitan area has achieved economic growth. Best of all, celebrating, optimism, and positive thinking helps communities in the region reach their goals faster.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Lincoln Economic Dashboard” Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development Lincoln, Nebraska

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) is a public-private collaboration charged with fulfilling Lincoln's economic development goals. Their primary areas of focus are business development, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurship and innovation, and talent strategy.

The Lincoln Economic Dashboard was created to illustrate Lincoln's economic status and progress against comparable regions. Quantifiable measures of economic competitiveness and quality of life were chosen to benchmark Lincoln's performance against several peer and aspirational communities throughout the nation. The comparable cities were chosen as either peers—those with similar populations, major universities/state capitols—or aspirational communities that are somewhat larger and have population growth, business activity, and successes that Lincoln aspires to emulate.

The first Dashboard was completed in 2014 and the 2017 version is a comparable look at progress, utilizing the same comparable cities and measurables. The Dashboard is used as a resource to primary companies considering expanding or relocating operations in the area, and as a reference, for planning purposes, for the economic development program and city operations. LPED received a Gold Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council in 2018 (Annual Report in the 200,000 – 500,000 population category). For more information, click on: <https://www.selectlincoln.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #3: Celebrate Economic Success

### Action Items:

- Strengthen the promotion of new corporate announcements locations and expansions.
  - Governor, national press release, social media, videos, maximize editorial return-on-investment, live stream, events, etc.
  - Continue to host the SEDA Annual Meeting.
- Employer Awards
  - Continue to recognize local companies through Savannah Manufacturing Anniversary Awards.
  - Continue to recognize WTCSav's International Business of the Year.
  - Consider other ways to recognize local employers growth and/or accomplishments, i.e., high wages, healthcare benefits, exemplary community service, etc.
- Promote and elevate the successes of existing companies (big and small), the local school system and public safety entities.
- Continue to publish the SEDA Annual Report for required release of financials and to document the SEDA story and accomplishments for the year.



Source: Savannah Economic Development Authority

# Strategic Action Plan




**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #3: Celebrate Economic Success

### Action Items:

- Explore a consistent communication from high-level SEDA staff to local organizations about, relevant news, progress and accomplishments.
- Set up a consistent rotation of editorials from SEDA/WTC/Film staff regarding their expertise and/or relevant issues.
- Continue to consistently send a newsletter.

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# Strategic Action Plan

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**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #4: Leadership

Leadership and talent development programs are sponsored by chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, foundations, universities, and other organizations all across the United States. Their intent is to build local leadership capacity—helping program participants become familiar with their community, how it works, and how organizations and individuals can work together to make a better community.

Citizens and potential community decision-makers develop a social network of individuals who share common interests and experiences, are willing to collaborate for change, and look for opportunities to address community issues. In fact, studies show that a significant percentage of program participants will assume leadership roles in community organizations, sooner rather than later. The result is creation of a “leadership pool” of qualified individuals who can assist with getting things done. This allows them to gain valuable experience and puts them in a better position to replace senior leadership at the appointed time.

When reviewing this strategic plan, it becomes obvious there is no lack of action items that need to be implemented. The AE team recommends drawing on Savannah’s existing and next-generation leadership, encouraging them to act in their own interest, their employer’s interest, and the long-term interest of the community, helping to steer a course for economic growth and prosperity.



Source: Savannah Area Chamber

# Strategic Action Plan

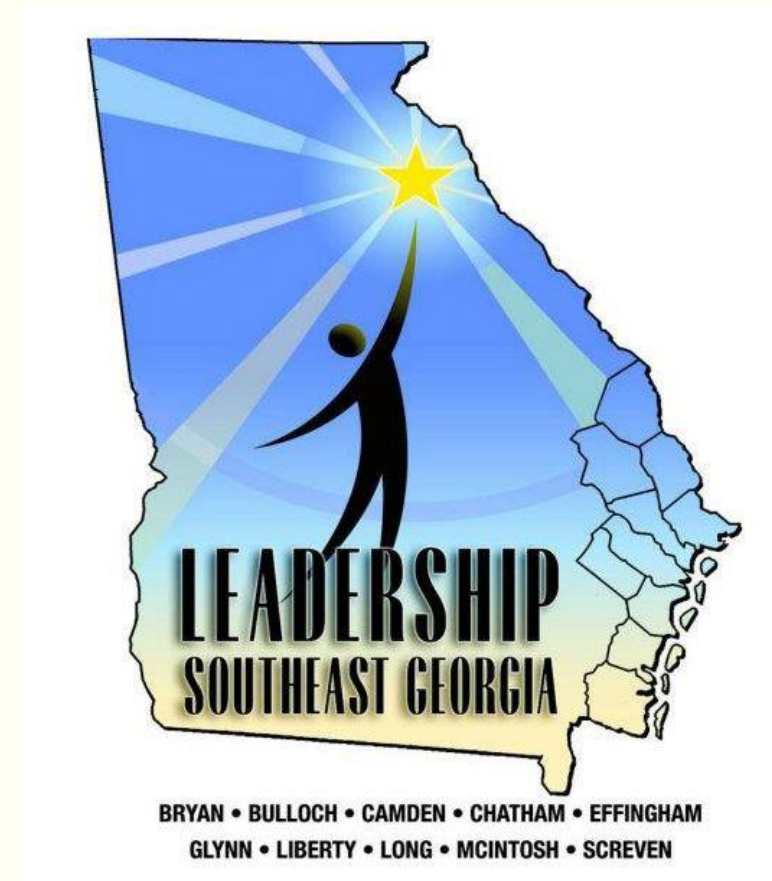


**Economic Development:**  
Unite Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision

## Strategy #4: Leadership

### Action Items:

- Energize, strengthen and invest in leadership programs (e.g., Leadership Savannah, Leadership Southeast Georgia) and ensure that participants are connected to opportunities for leadership i.e. board positions, political office, etc.
- Assemble the area leadership to strategically address the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of our area, in particular the coordination of the local government entities.
  - Awareness of a status quo bias and a specified intention to change it.
  - Transfer leadership roles while keeping resources and reputation strong.



Source: Leadership Southeast Georgia

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Entrepreneurship: Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Overview

The global economy has transformed to the point where entrepreneurship is playing an increasingly important role. Big business and mass-produced goods aren't going to disappear, but astute economic development organizations are keenly aware that the old-school industrial economy has given way to a knowledge-driven economy where goods and services are being provided by smaller firms that are nimbler, innovative, and operate closer to the customer. This economic shift has been accompanied by the emerging creative class and changing social norms that require a less stifling, more entrepreneurially-friendly work environment.

### Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Economic Growth

Entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic growth are closely intertwined. Most people understand that entrepreneurs create businesses and new businesses create jobs, strengthen market competition, and increase productivity. From this perspective, entrepreneurial startups are viewed as a source of innovation and growth. They also provide a pathway for upward mobility—a way for average people to build wealth.

One can measure entrepreneurial innovation in terms of new products invented, patents approved, job creation, cash flow, sales growth, survival rates, and return on investment. Equally important is the impact of entrepreneurship on productivity growth through the development of new

service offerings, business models, pricing plans, and routes to market. Improved business practices, often taking the form of new technologies and their creative applications, promotes efficiency and helps to conserve resources.

Furthermore, competition is a catalyst for innovation. If there is no competition, there isn't much need to innovate. It's also important to ensure that entrepreneurs have a level playing field on which to compete from a socioeconomic demographic, and geographic perspective. Otherwise, economic growth suffers. Given the right conditions, entrepreneurs have the power to make a positive impact on the economy, make lives better, create job growth, and serve society by helping to solve problems.

### The Kauffman Index of Entrepreneurship

The Kauffman Index of Entrepreneurship is a series of reports offering in-depth measures of the individuals and businesses that contribute to U.S. entrepreneurial growth. Each report is accompanied by interactive data graphics depicting entrepreneurial trends nationally, at the state level, and for the 40 largest metropolitan areas. The 2017 report shows that, in terms of large state rankings for growth entrepreneurship, Georgia is ranked #2. For the metropolitan areas (entrepreneurial data is not provided for Charleston and Savannah), two of the benchmark communities—Houston and Jacksonville—are ranked #19 and #40, respectively.

Each strategic recommendation is designed to build on assets like SCAD, The Creative Coast, Georgia Center for Innovation for Logistics, the Technology Association of Georgia, among others, to secure Greater Savannah's entrepreneurial future.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #1: Foster a Collaborative Entrepreneurial Ecosystem— Document and Measure It

An ecosystem is a complex network or interconnected systems. An entrepreneurial ecosystem refers to the social and economic environment impacting local/regional entrepreneurship. It is made up of the organizations that support entrepreneurship within the region. These organizations may be for-profit entities, non-profit entities, chambers of commerce, universities, incubators, accelerators, funding sources, co-working spaces, maker spaces and more. What these entities have in common, is that they are working for the betterment of local entrepreneurs.

A region must be defined by the distance an entrepreneur is willing to travel for the services of these entities. And therefore, entrepreneurs often cross city, county and even state lines. The ecosystem must be inclusive and support entrepreneurs regardless of stage, industry, gender, age, race, etc.

While it is generally accepted that young firms drive job growth and economic dynamism, it does beg a few questions: How does the Savannah region know its entrepreneurial ecosystem is moving in the right direction? What defines success—and how can it be measured? To arrive at an answer, it becomes necessary to document and create a performance metric system. After the performance metrics are established, SEDA's leadership will find it easier to ask the right questions, perhaps redefine or diagnose problems, and think about entrepreneurial development goals.



— Best Practices —

**“We Create Jobs”**  
SourceLink at the UMKC Innovation Center  
Kansas City, Missouri

SourceLink has taken a leading role to help further Kansas City's entrepreneurial aspirations. This is accomplished by coordinating events for startup owners, such as Global Entrepreneurship Week. The organization also assists with obtaining community resources through grant writing and conducts research. Over time, they have built a strong connection with 240+ business-building organizations across an 18-county bi-state region.

As part of their entrepreneurial research, SourceLink compiled “We Create Jobs,” a new and nationally unprecedented statistical analysis that measures the impact of entrepreneurs. National research on entrepreneurs confirms that new and young firms are the primary source of job creation in the U.S. economy. However, the research doesn't reveal the impact of entrepreneurs on local economies. To overcome this issue, SourceLink tracked net new job creation by startups at the metro level. In partnership with its Kansas City network, SourceLink tracked first-time employers with fewer than 20 employees and calculated the number of jobs created by looking at employers who paid for unemployment insurance for the first time—a registration required by law. The report indicates that startups added an average of 16,376 new jobs to the Kansas City metro area each year for the past five years. Their report was recognized with a Bronze Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council (2018).

For more information, click on: <https://www.joinsourcelink.com/jobs>.



# Strategic Action Plan

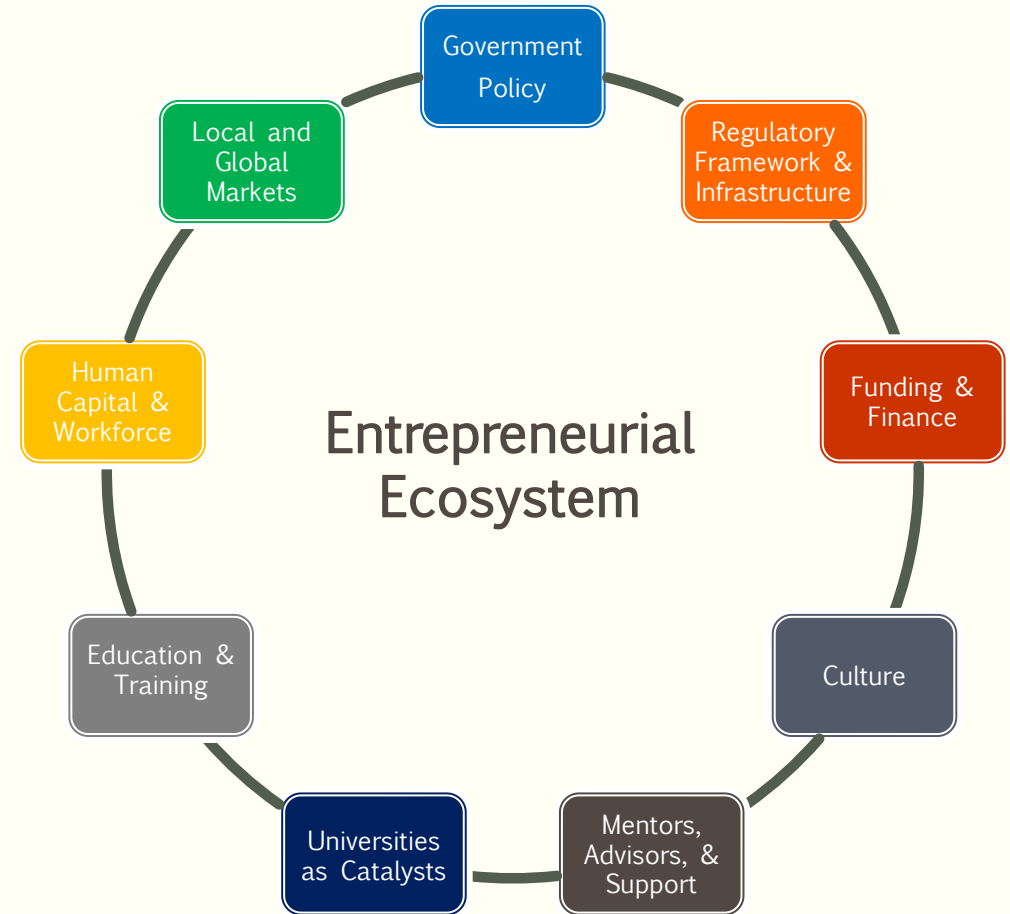


**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #1: Foster a Collaborative Entrepreneurial Ecosystem— Document and Measure It

### Action Items:

- Leverage SEDA relationships to re-engage the Universities (Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University, SCAD, Savannah Technical College), Chambers of Commerce and for-profit entities in the Creative Coast Quarterly Ecosystem Meetings.
- Leverage SEDA relationships to lobby for stronger support from ATDC Savannah at Georgia Tech—Georgia’s Technology Incubator. They have not had an EIR/Catalyst in the region for 8 months.
- The Technology Association of Georgia should be a key ally in this endeavor; but, they have been unable to fund a staff person in Savannah in recent years. It would be in Savannah’s best interest to create a funding mechanism for this position.
- Leverage SEDA relationships to develop/fund an organization that supports growth stage entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs tend to be very heads down in business and don’t gain value from existing entities. Entity needs to provide value to these entrepreneurs such that they are willing to contribute to the ecosystem through mentoring, angel investment, story-telling (Strategy #4) and inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs.



# Strategic Action Plan



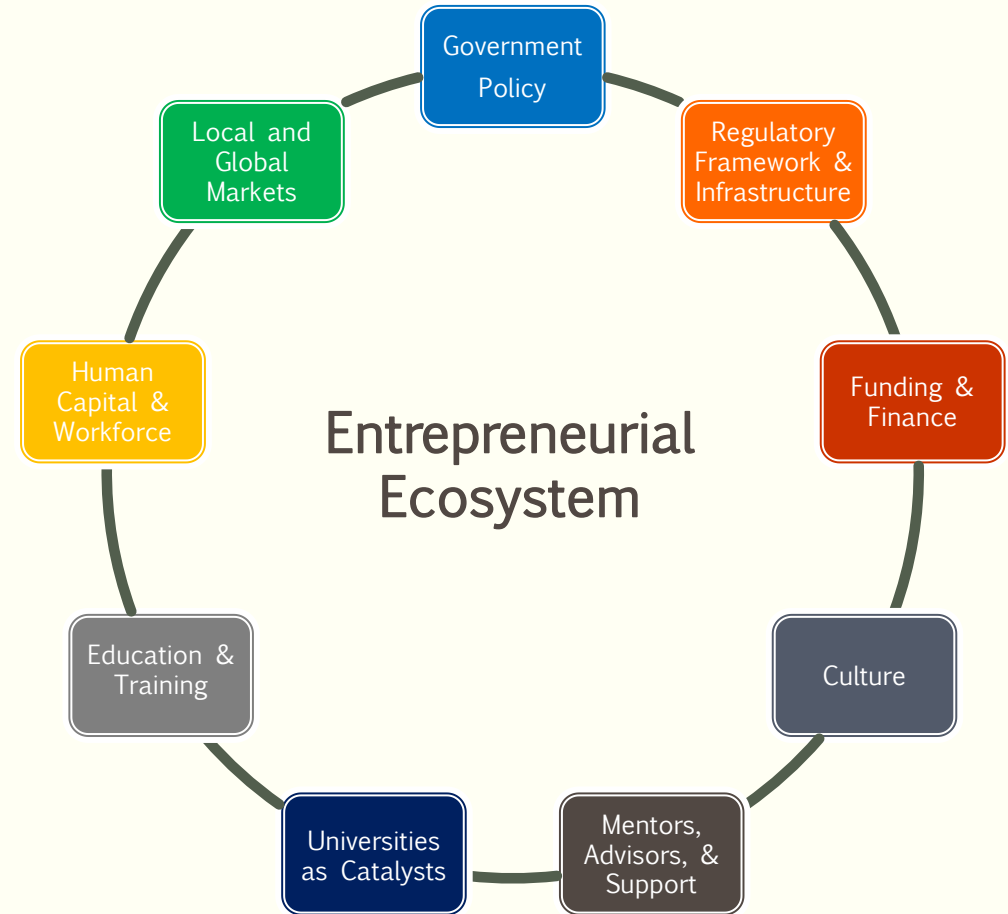
## Entrepreneurship:

Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Strategy #1: Foster a Collaborative Entrepreneurial Ecosystem— Document and Measure It.

#### Action Items:

- Fund the development and maintenance of a living document/database of Entrepreneurial Resources in the region. The Starter Kit, at <https://www.thecreativecoast.org/savannah-starter-kit/>, is a good start, but needs to be searchable, inclusive and maintained.
- Identify a set of key metrics that can be used to measure the growth of the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and the companies it serves. These might include number of companies, jobs created, investment dollars raised. But, should also include metrics that show the vibrancy of the organizations supporting the entrepreneurs, which might be event and attendance driven. These metrics could be displayed on a dashboard available to all, as part of the previous action item.
- Lobby and support the development of a single innovation hub in Savannah, located within the expanded Logistics Technology Corridor and encourage all entities in the ecosystem to locate there.



# Strategic Action Plan



## Entrepreneurship:

Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Strategy #2: Catalyze a Complete Funding Continuum for Entrepreneurial Endeavors

All companies need capital. Capital comes from two sources: investment or customers. Savannah currently lacks the funding infrastructure to support both startups and growth stage companies, which causes companies to fail and/or stall and not grow into the high job creation entities they have the potential to be.

It's important to note that entrepreneurs draw upon different sources of capital as their startups mature. In the earlier stages, they will need to contribute some of their personal funds, or capital secured from family and friends. This helps fill the financing gap between the time their startup is first established and the time other financing can be secured.

Angel investors, who provide advice, counsel, money, and networking resources to new startups is another early-stage financing source. Seed funds, often supported by state governments, can be combined with angel funding. Technology-oriented startups may also apply for Federal R&D grants and Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/SBTT) grants.

Early-stage venture capitalists are a financing source for companies that have started generating revenue. Expansion-stage, and later-stage venture capitalists serve firms looking to expand or when they have matured.



### — Best Practices —

#### “SEED Tampa Bay” Tampa Bay, Florida

SEED Tampa Bay Early Stage Investment Fund, LLC is administered by the University of South Florida (USF) in partnership with Florida Funders, a hybrid of venture capital and crowd funding that helps to retain and grow early-stage technology startups in Florida. Prime targets are startups in a broad range of areas, including engineering, information technology, and the life sciences.

The genesis for SEED Tampa Bay was a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Early-stage funding that was created to provide broad regional impact is aligned with other small and focused funds that exist, or will be formed, to serve entrepreneurial firms throughout the Tampa Bay community.

SEED Tampa Bay's initial focus is to identify potential startups with strong management that are looking for early-stage funding, but missing one or more critical components, like advisors or key employees. The idea is for other small and focused funds to refer startups that could be funded if they were able to acquire those missing components. To make those acquisitions, SEED Tampa Bay taps into its extensive network of incubators, accelerators, mentors, and other partners (Florida Funders, USF Connect, The High Tech Corridor of Florida, and Synapse), bringing the identified missing components to the high potential high tech startups and address their development needs within the region.

For more information, click on: <http://www.seedtampabay.com/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



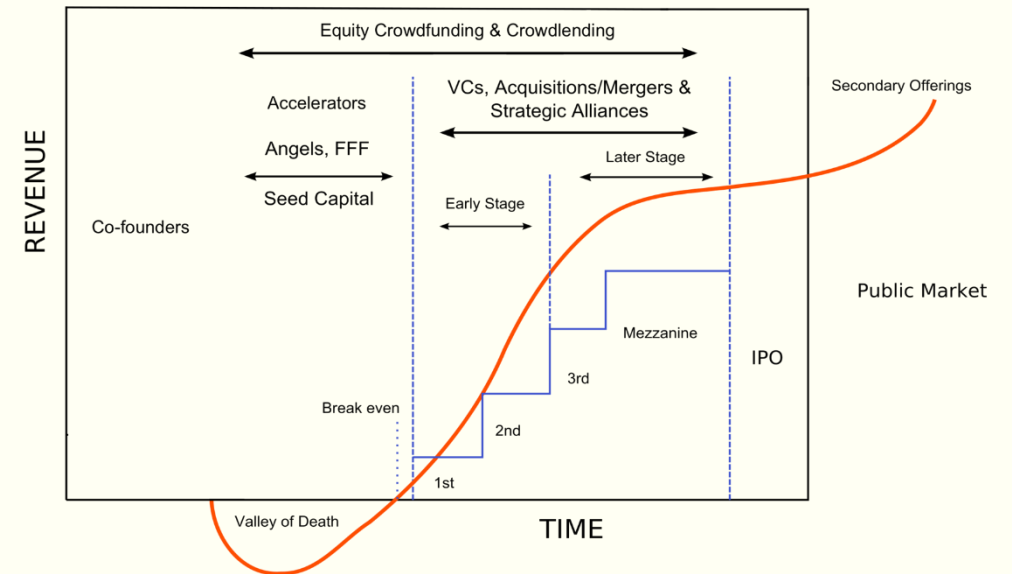
**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #2: Catalyze a Complete Funding Continuum for Entrepreneurial Endeavors

### Action Items:

- Re-institute the Georgia Angel Investor Tax Credit for the Logistics Technology Corridor, with language that simplifies the startup registration process (Angel Tax Credit expired in December of 2018).
  - Develop a plan to educate high net worth individuals about the credit.
- Promote Georgia's Entrepreneur and Small Business Loan Guarantee Program.
  - Guarantee amounts can range from \$35,000 to \$250,000 and can be used for hard assets or for start-up and working capital, and require a 10 percent cash equity injection by the borrower.
- Establish an angel fund. This fund will be led by an experience investment manager, funded by high net worth local individuals.
  - Apply for/leverage the EDA RIS Seed Fund grant to fund the development of an angel fund.
  - Provide access to funding for activities oriented toward securing first customers and mature startups that require options to scale.

### Startup Financing Cycle



Source: EBAN

# Strategic Action Plan



## Entrepreneurship:

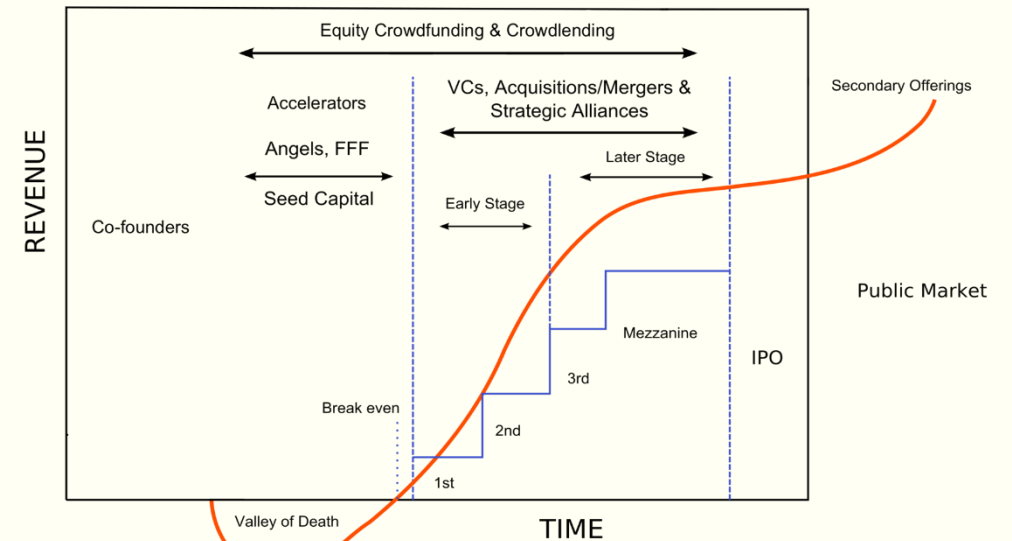
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Strategy #2: Catalyze a Complete Funding Continuum for Entrepreneurial Endeavors

#### Action Items:

- \$2.5-5 million to provide seed capital for early-stage startups. Funding to be given in two tranches: \$25-50k for seed capital with a follow on of \$150k investment to companies meeting milestones. (For example, a \$2.7 million fund could fund 30 companies \$50,000 seed round, and make 8 follow-on investments of \$150,000).
- Use the fund, as an opportunity to re-activate angel networks by having quarterly pitch events open to members of local angel networks.
- Document all funding sources including SBAC and banks that do a high volume of SBA loans on the repository identified in Strategy #1.
- Leverage SEDA, Visit Savannah, Chamber of Commerce relationships to identify individuals from other locations that have an affinity for Savannah and happen to be employed in Venture and/or Private Equity. Build relationships with these individuals and leverage them for all later strategies (#3-#5).
- Leverage SEDAs relationship with larger companies in the region to encourage them to be early adopter customers of local vetted startups.

### Startup Financing Cycle



Source: EBAN

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

Startup accelerators and incubators seek to help entrepreneur-owned firms achieve success. They offer a platform that provides startups with a variety of support services—coaching, educational programming, mentoring, networking, seed funding, and access to new business opportunities.

Accelerator programs tend to be short intense programs (4-8 months) focused on a certain stage and/or industry of business and are meant to accelerate the company through that phase: i.e. idea stage, build stage, early customer stage. Incubators programs tend to be longer running metrics driven programs (years versus months). Accelerators typically provide some seed funding and take equity.

Accelerators/incubators can open doors for entrepreneurs looking to climb the economic ladder. Consider the diverse pool of potential owner-led startups:

**Minority-Owned Startups.** The Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) report, “The Tapestry of Black Business Ownership in America: Untapped Opportunities for Success” explores the challenges and opportunities facing the nation’s 2.6 million African-American-owned businesses. Their report considers business ownership to be one of the great equalizers in wealth disparity. This is because the gap in average wealth between Black and White adults decreases from a multiplier of 13 to 3 when comparing the wealth of



— Best Practices —

**“Minority Business Accelerator”**  
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber  
Cincinnati, Ohio

In 2003, the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber created the Minority Business Accelerator (MBA) to address disparity in the region’s business community, as part of their response to recommendations of the Cincinnati Community Action Now Commission. The intent is to boost economic activity in the Cincinnati region’s minority entrepreneurial community.

Although the MBA caters specifically to sizeable, high-growth potential African-American-owned and Hispanic-owned startups, there are no restrictions on location, size, industry, or customers. From a supply perspective, MBA provides management and financial consulting to accelerate growth and achieve long-term sustainability. From a demand standpoint, MBA identifies and facilitates access to contracts for the products and services of the minority-owned startups. MBA also leads a spend goal program, in which companies commit to spend an annual amount on local minority firms. Participants in the campaign include not only local corporations and non-profit organizations, but also firms in the MBA portfolio. Currently, minority-owned startups in the portfolio employ over 3,500 workers, 50% of which are minority-owned, and 40% women-owned.

The MBA operates as part of a broader entrepreneurial effort known as the Cincinnati Minority Business Collaborative (CMBC). For more information, click on: <http://www.cincinnati-chamber.com/the-inclusive-chamber/minority-business-accelerator>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Entrepreneurship:

Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

business owners by race. The report's findings also show that most Black-owned businesses are small startup firms that employ fewer than five employees.

The accelerator/incubator platform addresses some of the biggest obstacles facing minority-owner startups—a wealth gap, due to family and friends having fewer assets and less disposable income; a credit gap, stemming from a lack of collateral and business experience; and a trust gap, which can be attributed to the stress and frustration that comes from dealing with credit-worthiness issues, financial institution biases, and racial discrimination.

**Veteran-Owned Startups.** Veteran-owned startups represent a market with significant potential for accelerators and incubators. The U.S. Small Business Administration tells us that one in seven veterans are self-employed or small business owners, and while approximately 25% of Post-9/11 veterans say they are interested in starting or buying their own business, only 6% choose to make the jump from employee to entrepreneur.

The military culture creates leaders who are well-suited to the role of entrepreneur. Military veterans often possess the traits that make for a successful business owner—strong work ethic, persistence, self-discipline, and focus. Although most veterans are capable of readjusting to civilian life, there are those who have difficulty making the transition. In either case,



### — Best Practices —

#### “Bunker Labs” Chicago, Illinois

Bunker Labs is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing the tools and resources that veterans need to start and grow their own business.

Key programs for veteran-owned startups include Launch Lab Online, WeWork Veterans in Residence, and CEOCircle. Launch Lab Online is 10-course, online learning platform that provides a gamified, interactive user experience for those interested in obtaining an entrepreneurial education. WeWork Veterans in Residence powered by Bunker Labs provides services, business mentorship, and community to veteran-owned startups. Veterans and their families have access to complimentary workspace for six months. CEOCircle is a monthly meeting of validated, post-revenue growth companies that are provided with mentors, networks, and resources to further their business success. Topics include talent acquisition, accessing new markets, and raising capital. CEOCircle is open to veteran-owned startups on an invitation-only basis.

Bunker Labs is a national network that operates 14 local chapters in Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Boston, MA; Bozeman, MT; Chicago, IL; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Detroit, MI; Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; Madison, WI; Minneapolis, MN; Nashville, TN; New York City, NY; Omaha, NE; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh-Durham, NC; San Antonio, TX; Seattle, WA; and Washington, D.C. Partners include: Boeing, Comcast, FedEx Freight, JPMorgan Chase & Co., USAA, and others.

For more information, click on: <https://bunkerlabs.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

entrepreneurship provides a pathway toward transformational change, with more than a few veterans willing to embrace it as an intentional life-changing strategy.

With Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield, and the region's large number of retired military personnel, the Savannah metropolitan area has an opportunity to make the most of this experienced, highly-skilled economic development resource.

**Women-Owned Startups.** The National Women's Business Council report, entitled "Women's Participation in Business Incubators and Accelerators," provides insight into the interaction between startup accelerators, incubators, and women. Their report talks about the unprecedented growth in female entrepreneurs, and the broader role of women in business. Women now own 36% of all privately-held firms, and the rate of ownership has increased 27% since 2007. With more than 10 million women-owned businesses, the interest in female entrepreneurs has risen exponentially.

One of the challenges for women-owned startups is that female entrepreneurs exhibit more of a "risk-averse" mentality. Many potential female entrepreneurs end up doing more contract work as consultants because it is more financially secure. The problem with that career path is that consulting work isn't fundable by venture capitalists. An effective counter-strategy is to have



— Best Practices —

**"Aviatria Accelerators"**  
Covington, Kentucky

Aviatria Accelerators (formerly known as Bad Girl Ventures) is an educational and micro-finance non-profit organization focused on enabling and empowering women to start and sustain businesses. Their target markets are Northeast Ohio and Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky.

Aviatria's educational programming takes a three-phase approach: Explore, Launch, and Grow. Each phase focuses on essential educational components, best practices, and guidance from mentors and coaches as the startup business progresses from the idea phase to the launch phase to the growth stage. Explore is open to first-time entrepreneurs, or early-stage business owners. Launch is designed for women-owned startups that have a stable, well-vetted business with revenue and a client/customer base. Grow is intended for established entrepreneurs and business owners who are planning for growth, expansion, and financing. For each phase, the accelerator addresses challenges that women face when starting a business, and at the same time, acknowledge and leverage the gifts and strengths that female entrepreneurs bring to the business table.

After a women-led startup firm any or all phases of the accelerator program, the owner is invited to join Aviatria's alumni network. This allows them to stay connected to an entrepreneurial network of female business owners that provides on-going support.

For more information, click on <https://aviatraccelerators.org/about/>.



# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

them work with female mentors and women who are in a position to provide financing and support services to reinforce their entrepreneurial spirit.

The Savannah region doesn't appear to have the critical mass of female and underrepresented entrepreneurs needed to support a vertical startup accelerator/incubator (specializing in a specific industry or business model). Instead, it seems more pragmatic to create an accelerator/incubator that admits all types of startups in qualified cohorts on an annual basis. This will position the startup accelerator/incubator to attract higher quality applicants, and allow for programming that maximizes the bandwidth of expertise and talent that is needed to facilitate their growth and development.

***“Invest in business startup and formation.”***

— Local Stakeholder



— Best Practices —

**“International Accelerator”  
Austin, Texas**

International Accelerator (IA) is designed to help non-U.S. founders to raise funds and expand their startups in the United States.

Prerequisites: Prior to locating in the U.S., IA works with foreign-born entrepreneurs to answer questions about legal paperwork, understanding U.S. visa requirements, residency, transportation, accounting, taxes, banking, etc.

Onboarding: During the onboarding phase (months 1-2), IA issues the first half of a \$50,000 investment. Additionally, they put forth an all-day meeting with a multitude of industry experts to develop a strategic plan to help boost, tweak, and accelerate the company's growth in the U.S. market.

Go-to-Market: One the strategic plan is in place, IA works with the founder to construct a solid go-to-market plan (months 3-12). IA identifies additional revenue channels and sales verticals specific to the U.S. market. Afterwards, IA pursues meetings with prospective clients.

Investors: IA issues the second half of the \$50,000 investment (months 4-12). Founders make their pitches to investors and venture capitalists., being careful to clearly articulate their company. IA provides additional guidance needed to improve the startup's pitch deck and tailor their presentation to various investors.

For more information, click on <https://iaccelerator.com/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

### Action Items:

- Establish a Startup Accelerator/Incubator for Creative and Innovative Startups.
  - Help startups and early-stage companies launch and scale.
  - Focus on Digital Media/Creative Technology (inclusive of Entertainment, Gaming and digital tourism related companies), Health Care/Health Tech (inclusive of Medical Device), and Logistics Technology.
- Leverage the Angel Fund and funding mechanisms from Strategy #2 to fund the startups.
- Partner with ATDC at Georgia Tech—Georgia’s Technology Incubator, Business Innovation Group (BIG) at the Georgia Southern University Parker School of Business, Savannah State University, Savannah Technical College, SCAD+ companies, Technology Association of Georgia (TAG) Savannah, and The Creative Coast.
- Ensure minority-led, retiree-owned, veteran-owned, women-owned, and youth startups feel welcome in the program and/or offer specialized programs for each.



# Strategic Action Plan

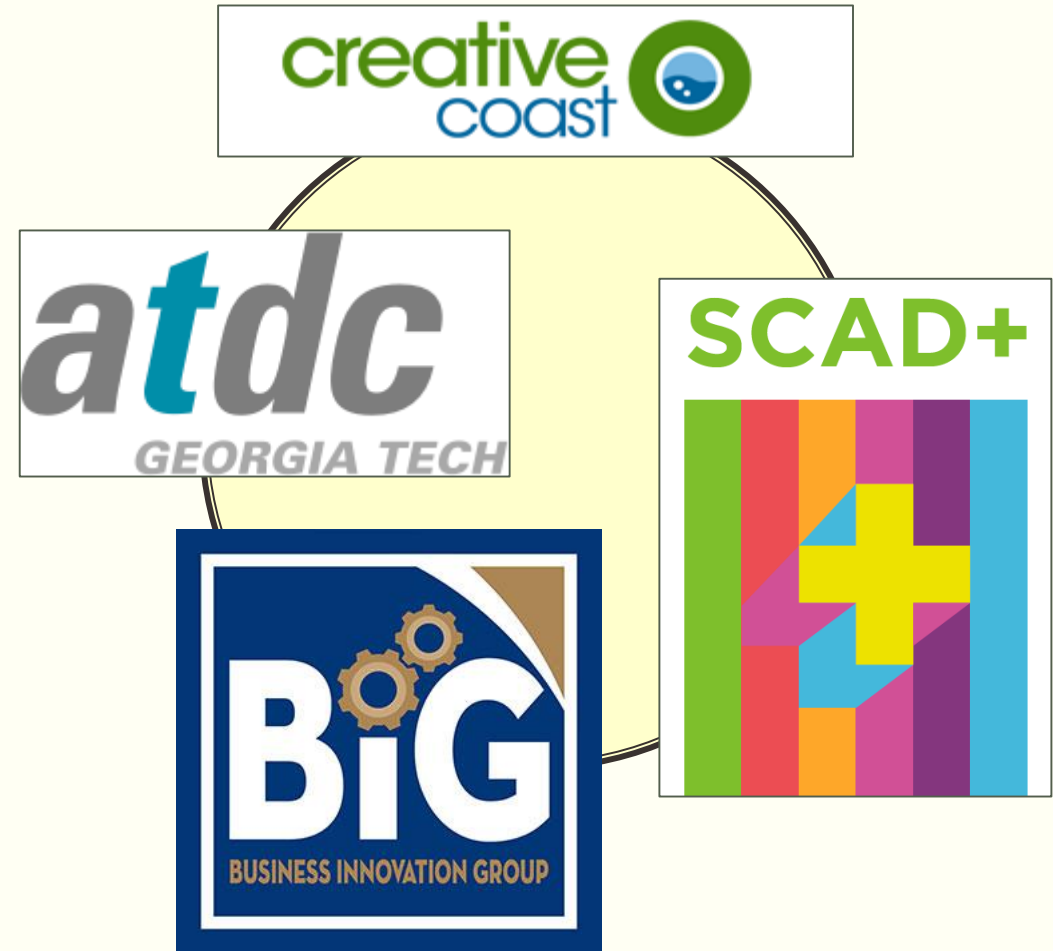


**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #3: Create a Startup Accelerator/Incubator

### Action Items:

- Provide space, shared services, on-site management with a business support function, and a supportive environment for entrepreneurial activities located at the innovation hub with in the Logistics Tech Corridor (from Strategy #1).
- Leverage SEDAs relationships with the major logistics and advanced manufacturing companies in the region to launch and fund an accelerator program focused on startups seeking early customer relationships with these large corporate partners. Locate the accelerator program within the incubator.



# Strategic Action Plan



## Entrepreneurship:

Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

### Strategy #4: Create a narrative around Savannah as an Innovation & Entrepreneurial Mecca

In order for Savannah to be an Innovation and Entrepreneurial Mecca, first and foremost the community must believe it can be an innovation and entrepreneurial mecca. This is a storytelling exercise first to Savannah, and then, to the world. AE recommends leveraging all mediums – video, podcast, blogging, social media and traditional forms of media (local radio, television and newspaper) to share stories of the ecosystem and success stories around entrepreneurs, innovative companies, and innovation in the schools.

It will be important to become familiar with Savannah’s innovation and entrepreneurial stories and with the type of content that is most interesting to entrepreneurs. These stories will need to be positioned in startup industry outlets and other top-tier publications, such as Accelerator’s Blog | Wall Street Journal, *Entrepreneur*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *Fortune*, *Hacker News*, *Money*, *Inc.*, *New York Times*, *Reddit Entrepreneur*, *Slashdot*, *TechCrunch*, *VentureBeat*, *Wall Street Journal Accelerator’s Blog*, and *Wired*.

Building positive working relationships with media representatives is another key to marketing and public relations success. Relationships are a two-way street, so you will want to feed them with your stories, and be a “go-to” source for information when the reporters are looking for a quote or story idea. Nurturing these relationships will help Savannah place those coveted frame-worthy articles.

## — Best Practices —



### Development Counsellors International New York City, Denver, Los Angeles, and Toronto

Development Counsellors International (DCI) is a leading place marketing firm headquartered in New York City, with offices in Denver, Los Angeles, and Toronto. Founded in 1960 by Ted Levine, the firm specializes in economic development and travel marketing, providing assistance to more than 450 cities, regions, states, and countries, helping them attract investors and visitors.

DCI is adept at telling client stories in the national/international media as part of their place marketing campaigns. In their media relations work, DCI has conveyed the entrepreneurial opportunity in the market for a number of clients, including Orlando, FL (“The New Silicon Valley of Gaming”); Salinas, CA (“Why the World’s Salad Bowl Wants to Go High Tech”); Charleston, SC (“Silicon Harbor”); Amsterdam, Netherlands (“Amsterdam Innovates”); Cincinnati, OH (“Tech Startup Funding in Midwest? Cincinnati Says No Problem”); and Denver, CO (“Denver Job Market Lures Millennials”).

Their advice for elevating startup communities in the national press?

- Stand out for something, not everything.
- Convey the lifestyle your community offers. Then the entrepreneurs will flock.
- Show them the money.
- Pick a targeted demographic, and don’t let up.

For more information, click on: <https://aboutdci.com/2015/09/elevating-your-startup-community-in-the-national-press/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #4: Create a narrative around Savannah as an Innovation & Entrepreneurial Mecca

### Action Items:

- Leverage organizations such as the Creative Coast, SCORE, SBDC, TechSAV, Maven Makers and others to find/tell stories.
- Support Business Pitch Competitions such as SCORE BizPitch, Geekend Pitch Circus and the Georgia Chamber's Inventure Prize to highlight entrepreneurial talent.
- Fund the development of turning Creative Coast blog into a local "Hypepotamus" or American Inno – an online resource for storytelling for Savannah entrepreneurs and innovation.
- Launch a nationwide media campaign, once enough stories have been created.

## The Creative Coast Blog

The screenshot displays the Creative Coast Blog interface. It features a grid of article cards with images and headlines. On the right side, there are two vertical sections: 'CREATIVE COAST MEMBERS' with a 'Login or Join' link, and 'UPCOMING EVENTS' listing various community events with dates and times. The main content area includes articles such as 'Micro C Imaging is Revolutionizing Medical Imaging at Orthopaedic Surgeons Global Meeting', 'The University of Georgia Small Business Development Center Hosts Understanding Business Financials', 'Your VIP Geekend ticket makes a difference', 'Geekend Indie Game Arcade accepting submissions', and 'Geekend announces diversity and inclusion scholarship program'. There is also a 'Savannah Women Entrepreneurs & Leaders' event announcement for Thursday, February 28.

Source: The Creative Coast

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #5: Create an Entrepreneurial/Innovation Destination Event

Strong startup ecosystems tend to have some sort of marquee event that brings outsiders to their city and eventually may drive corporate relocations. Austin has SXSW, Charleston has DIG South, Toronto has Collision, and Savannah has Geekend.

Geekend, a two-day conference in its 10th year, falls under the purview of the Creative Coast. It is currently being led by a volunteer executive team due to lack of appropriate funding. As a brand, Geekend is challenging, because “Geek” does not necessarily resonate with its core audience: designers, gamers, entrepreneurs, makers and some coders.

Perhaps more appropriate is “Grit,” that elusive, but essential entrepreneurial trait. This refers to the courage and resolve, or strength of character it takes to enter into a risk-taking venture. Being successful with an innovation-driven startup requires passion and perseverance—something that entrepreneurs can easily relate to.

During the past couple of years, Geekend has grown in both number and quality. Now is the time to capitalize on this hard-won momentum and rebrand this event. This will give new life to a conference that has evolved and has the potential to scale internationally. Doing so will help cement Savannah’s entrepreneurial reputation, while differentiating the event from other competitors. 2019 will be a pivotal year.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Startup Weekend” Boulder, Colorado

TechStar’s Startup Weekend is a 54-hour weekend event that attracts 60-120 entrepreneurs, startup enthusiasts, speakers, coaches, panelists, sponsors, and company representatives. Over the course of the weekend, teams are formed around startup pitch ideas and strive to develop a working prototype, demo, or presentation by Sunday evening. It’s not unusual for a number of teams to work together beyond the Startup Weekend to create a fully-operating startup business. Others build on their bootcamp experience and continue to network with like-minded supporters of entrepreneurship.

The first Startup Weekend was held in 2010 and has grown exponentially since that time. Startup Weekend now has a global presence in 135 countries, involving over 210,000 entrepreneurs. Startup Weekend operates as a nonprofit organization and has received grant funds from the Kauffman Foundation.

In 2011, Startup Weekend launched the Global Startup Battle during Global Entrepreneurship Week. Global Startup Battle was implemented in three phases: Qualifying teams had to win the local Startup Weekend; the team had to win a Facebook popularity contest by receiving votes; then the top 15 teams competed in front of a judging panel. In 2016, Global Startup Battle shifted to become Global Startup Weekend, a world-wide celebration of Startup Weekends. Startup Weekend is one of three TechStar Startup Programs, the others being Startup Week and Startup Digest.

For more information, click on: <https://startupweekend.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Entrepreneurship:**  
Develop a World-Class, Holistic Approach to Entrepreneurship

## Strategy #5: Create an Entrepreneurial/Innovation Destination Event

### Action Items:

- Rename Geekend to GRIT for a broader appeal.
- Scale GRIT from Regional to International Prominence by 2025.
  - Focus on UX/Designers, Gamers, Entrepreneurs, and Makers.
  - Full time Conference Director and part-time event driven staff.
  - Funding to pay high quality key note speakers.
  - Global marketing campaign.



Source: The Creative Coast



Source: techSAV

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Overview

Greater Savannah's ability to align education and workforce training to economic development is integrally linked to the region's job growth, unemployment rate, and quality of life.

Proper alignment is required to create a robust and talented workforce, one where the spectrum of providers—K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions, corporate educators, and non-profit agencies—all play a critical role in meeting a variety of employer and target industry needs.

### Competitive Positioning

To remain competitive, businesses need to invest in their employees' education and training. The availability of skilled labor is a top-ranked priority for companies and site selectors looking at an area. "Will you be able to provide a sufficient number of employees?" is their most oft-asked question. Strip away all of the state/local financial incentives, tax abatements, and assistance programs, and you will find that a pool of highly skilled workers is the most effective tool for attracting and retaining business to the Savannah region. At the same time, a lack of skilled labor is a perpetual challenge for economic developers. When the economy gains strength, the pool of available talent diminishes. And, as the region's workforce ages into retirement, there simply aren't enough young people to take over the jobs of retiring Baby Boomers.

This is a nationwide problem, so how are economic developers and their partners in Greater Savannah supposed to address this crucial need? The answer lies in the ability of community leaders to coordinate economic development, education, and workforce development programs.

### Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Workforce Development

A key element for developing the talent capacity necessary to influence economic growth is the ability to stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation. AngelouEconomics recognizes that current and future businesses are adopting new workplace cultures with unique characteristics that might be considered entrepreneurial in nature. Therefore, woven into the tapestry of education and workforce development is the need to link educational achievement with career success. This can be accomplished through creation of a more "entrepreneurial workforce" that is adept at combining the hard skills of academic learning with the soft skills of practical workplace experience and can connect those skills to high performance endeavors.

### Public-Private Partnerships

Essential to local/regional economic development and workforce readiness are public-private partnerships with schools. Business professionals from small, medium, and large-sized businesses can help students obtain a quality education and transition into a fulfilling career. They are an important resource for combatting workforce disparities and upgrading skills. High-skill advanced manufacturing, coding/software development, customer service, and nursing skills are in strong demand. Non-traditional, alternative credentialing, such as online certification, is becoming more prominent due to existing partnerships between education institutions, business and industry.



# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #1: Empower Savannah's Business and Education Leaders to Become More Engaged Partners, Make a Difference, and Implement Education and Workforce Initiatives that Stimulate Economic Prosperity and Talent Development

Networks for School Improvement (NSI), with support from intermediary organizations, are in a strong position to identify complex issues, select strategies to address those issues, take action, then reflect and refine their approach, all the while adhering to continuous process improvement methods to achieve a common goal.

For the Savannah region, the objective is to increase the number of low-income and minority students who graduate from high school, make the transition to post-secondary education (apprenticeship, coding bootcamp, technical/trade school, college, or university), earn a credential with labor market value, and enjoy a long, healthy, and productive career, either as employee or entrepreneur.

Several recommendations for maximizing Savannah's human capital are outlined below:

**Explore "A+ Savannah."** The AE team is recommending that Savannah's top echelon of education leaders—CEOs, Chancellors, Presidents, Superintendents from public and private secondary and post-secondary institutions—coalesce



#### — Best Practices —

### "Achieve Atlanta" Atlanta, Georgia

When it was formed two years ago, Achieve Atlanta, a school support organization, focused like a laser on efforts to increase the number of Atlanta Public School (APS) graduates who earn a post-secondary degree. But their vision has expanded, and now seeks to close the achievement and education gaps that separate low-income and high-income students.

Baseline data showed that just over half of APS students graduated from high school, with a mere 22% of those graduates going on to earn a college degree (technical, associate, bachelor). They correctly made the correlation between educational attainment levels and statistics showing that Atlanta was leading the nation in income inequality, and had one of the lowest rates of social mobility in the country. A Stanford economist estimated that a child living in poverty in Atlanta had a scant 4% chance of escaping poverty into a higher income bracket.

Achieve Atlanta's efforts have started to pay off. APS has registered higher graduation rates, increased student college enrollment, provided better access to financial aid/scholarships, and worked closely with colleges and universities to graduate their students at higher rates. The bottom line: 600 Achieve Atlanta Scholars attending 100 colleges and universities; a 10% increase in APS FAFSA applications; 13 formal education partnerships; and more than 1100 APS Seniors (2017) qualifying for Achieve Atlanta Scholarships.

For more information, click on: <http://achieveatlanta.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

around a supporting educational organization (part think tank, part action agency) that strives to break down silos and find new and better ways to improve educational outcomes in the region.

Educators and school leaders often participate in professional learning communities to develop school improvement strategies. This brings them together to focus on areas of common interest, and joint problem-solving. However, that alone is not enough. To be effective, the group needs to develop shared leadership, trust, professional curiosity, and focus on results. The idea is to foster innovation through action research, structured investigation, and on-going refinements with their initiatives.

“A+ Savannah” participants must also guard against complacency. This is no time to simply go through the motions of continuous improvement, or attempt to implement strategies that don't align properly with the needs of the respective educational institutions. Otherwise, it's likely to be perceived as nothing more than another external organization attempting to dictate educational reforms to schools, with little concern for whether the improvement strategies actually work.

In “Networks for School Improvement: A Review of the Literature,” the Columbia University Center for Public Research and Leadership (2018) states that NSI success is predicated on secure and stable sources of funding, early engagement with network participants, co-creating with school leaders or obtaining their consensus on common problems and root causes.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Networks for School Improvement” Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Seattle, Washington

In 2017, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation committed \$90 million in grants for 19 projects involving school districts and educational organizations in 13 states as part of its Networks for School Improvement initiative. This represents a down-payment towards the \$1.7 billion earmarked by the foundation for U.S. public education over the next five years.

The purpose of their philanthropic investment is to encourage groups of middle and high schools to collaborate with school support organizations on solving common problems, utilizing continuing process improvement techniques to identify strategies that make a positive impact on educational outcomes for lower-income and minority students.

Examples of grantees include: Achieve Atlanta/Atlanta Public Schools (\$532,000) to develop a tool that matches students to “good fit colleges” and support them in selecting, applying to, and enrolling in the postsecondary institution where they'll best succeed; and High Tech High Graduate School of Education (\$10.3 million), an organization that will work with up to 30 high schools in Southern California to increase the number of underrepresented students who enroll in undergraduate degree programs at colleges and universities.

For more information, click on: <https://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/what-we-do/networks-for-school-improvement/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

Networks engage in continuous improvement that relies on testing and adaptation techniques, which requires a strong data infrastructure. Diversity within the group is viewed as a strength because of the varied set of skills and experience (facilitation, collaboration, peer-to-peer learning) that are brought to the table.

As a starting point, “A+ Savannah” could be tasked with designing, implementing, and measuring performance for the strategies and action items outlined in the strategic action plan. When ready to proceed, the network can prepare a grant application seeking funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**Career Academies.** Career academies are looked upon as one of the most attractive, durable, and widely-used high school reforms throughout the nation. They have existed for more than 30 years and have been implemented in more than 1,500 high schools across the country. Their popularity can be attributed, in no small part, to their effectiveness in improving student engagement and performance, as compared to large, comprehensive high schools.

The high school academy concept can be characterized as “schools within schools,” where students and faculty are organized into small learning communities, follow a college preparatory curriculum based on the student’s career plans, and operate in partnership with local employers, community organizations, and higher education institutions. Smaller learning communities



### — Best Practices —

#### “Academy for Developing Entrepreneurs” Meadowbrook High School – Chesterfield County, VA

The Academy for Developing Entrepreneurs at Meadowbrook High School gives students the chance to become entrepreneurs and launch start-ups designed around their dreams, passions, and interests. Meadowbrook has developed a unique curriculum, one that has been influenced by best practices in high education, startup accelerators and entrepreneurial experts. The academy curriculum provides students with engaging student-centered courses and authentic experiences that provide students with the tool set to become entrepreneurs in their own right, as well as leaders in the community.

Learning pathways are focused on Honors Idea Generation (9<sup>th</sup> grade), which seeks to have students answer the question: What does it mean to be an entrepreneur?. To answer this question, students participate in the Junior Achievement Be Entrepreneurial® program and a Mentorship program. Honors Economics and Personal Finance (10<sup>th</sup> grade) explores how economics and finance impact startups, and has students participating in the Junior Achievement Finance Park program. Honors Idea Acceleration (11<sup>th</sup> grade) asks students to identify a potential idea for a business and helps them progress through the process of actually launching a business. Honors Idea Execution (12<sup>th</sup> grade) teaches students how to sustain and grow a startup. Students also take other courses as members of the Meadowbrook Academy for Digital Entrepreneurship and complete 120 hours of community service (30 hours per year).

For more information, click on <https://mademeadowbrook.wixsite.com/website>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

create a more supportive and personalized learning environment. The academy curriculum combines academic and vocational coursework and is designed to meet college entrance requirements. Employer involvement helps to build career awareness and provides work-based learning opportunities.

Originally intended to prepare at-risk students and potential high school drop-outs for the changing world of work, there is now widespread agreement that high school academies should prepare students for both work and college, and their student population should include a broad cross-section of students, including those who are highly engaged in school.

***Savannah Arts Academy.*** Savannah Arts Academy (SAA) was the first dedicated performing and visual arts school in the community when it opened in 1998. Eight years later, SAA received the Blue Ribbon School Award of Excellence from the U.S. Department of Education, an honor bestowed on schools that reach the top 10 percent of their state's testing scores over several years, or for those who achieve significant improvements in student achievement. Twenty years after opening its doors, SAA is now ranked #5 on the list of best high schools in Georgia, and #156 in the national rankings, earning a gold medal from *U.S. News & World Report* (2018).

***Woodville-Tompkins Technical & Career High School.*** Woodville-Tompkins Technical & Career High School is a magnet school where students have the opportunity to take Advancement Placement® coursework or choose to specialize in one of several career pathways: Agriculture, architecture,



### — Best Practices —

#### “Academy of Hospitality and Tourism” Emmett J. Conrad High School Dallas, Texas

Emmett J. Conrad High School hosts five National Foundation Academies, including Engineering, Finance, Hospitality & Tourism, Health Science, and Information Technology. One of these, the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism, utilizes their advisory board members to teach students about the hospitality and tourism industry through blended learning activities. Lessons are delivered through direct instruction, online learning, and group activities. In the practicum experience, students rotate through various jobs at advisory board member hotels such as Magnolia Hotels, and hospitality facilities like Dave & Busters, gaining experience in real world hospitality situations and learning the fundamentals about providing great customer service.

The NAF (formerly known as National Academy Foundation) has recognized Conrad High School's Academy of Hospitality and Tourism for reaching the NAF Distinguished Level—NAF's highest level of achievement (2018).

NAF is a nonprofit organization that works toward solving some of the biggest problems facing education and the economy. This is accomplished by bringing together a national network of education, business, and community leaders to make sure that high school students are college, career, and future ready. The organization has been partnering with existing high schools in high-need communities to improve student outcomes for nearly 40 years.

For more information, click on: <https://www.dallasisd.org/domain/7545>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

construction communication & transportation, business & computer science, culinary arts, education, engineering & technology, family & consumer science, government & public service, healthcare science, and marketing, sales & service. Woodville-Tompkins is nationally recognized and earned a bronze medal from *U.S. News & World Report* (2018).

**Jenkins High School.** Jenkins High School is the engineering-related school for Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools (SCCPS). Advanced students can choose to participate in the Honors Academy for Academic Excellence and Engineering Academy. Students can also attend Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses to develop technical knowledge and skills as part of the school's STEM curricula. During the 2019-2020 school year, the campus will be demolished in phases and rebuilt. The new campus will be built in 2021.

None of the remaining SCCPS high schools seem to fit the classic definition of "career academy," though it should be understood that several offer advanced placement, honors, and similar programs of study. The AE team is recommending that "A+ Savannah" explore how the career academy concept might be expanded to other high schools, while placing a strong emphasis on career pathways that align with Greater Savannah's target industries.

**Early College High Schools.** Early College High Schools (ECHS) embrace dual enrollment programs to accelerate learning and help foster career transitions after graduation. They develop partnerships, curricula, and class schedules that allow students to earn college credits while in high school.

## — Best Practices —



### "Center for Advanced Research & Technology" Clovis, California

The Center for Advanced Research & Technology (CART) is a comprehensive state-of-the-art "high tech" high school that combines rigorous academics with technical, design, process, entrepreneurial, and critical thinking skills. Designed as a high-performance atmosphere, the facility is organized around four career clusters—Professional Sciences, Engineering, Advanced Communications, and Global Economics. Each cluster offers career-specific laboratories in which students complete industry-based projects and receive academic credit for advanced English, science, math, and technology.

Selected through an application process, eligible eleventh- and twelfth-grade students from the Clovis and Fresno Unified School Districts are bused to CART, where they attend three-hour classes in one of the multitude of classroom laboratories taught by teams of instructors. The instructors cover a variety of educational materials that provide real-life career insight and personal expertise. Unlike most other public high schools where students walk from one class to another for different subjects, the CART program assigns a minimum of three teachers to each lab. Each teacher in the lab has a specialty, and covers a branch-off subject that relates to the main subject. Over the entirety of the course, the required high school education is more than covered by each teacher, in a manner that encompasses the main topic of the lab with the same lesson. Course topics range from forensic research to game design and robotics, to hospitality and event management.

For more information, click on <http://cart.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

Examples of ECHS date back to 1966, but one of the more popular approaches is the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI), a dual enrollment program that is the 21<sup>st</sup> century brainchild of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (B&MGF). What prompted them to develop this concept is the rising number of high school students—particularly low-income, minority, and other underrepresented students—who are ill-prepared for the academic rigor of college, and their desire to lower the amount of remediation services that need to be offered to incoming college freshmen.

Through B&MGF and other philanthropic organizations, the idea to provide a rigorous academic experience by blending high school and college coursework began to gain strength. This is the essence of Savannah's Early College High School Program, which allows students to earn a high school diploma, and at the same time, earn credits toward a postsecondary degree, such as an Associate's degree, or up to two years of credits toward a Bachelor's degree, without having to pay tuition. The college credits are made available by partnering with local higher education institutions, such as Georgia Southern University, Georgia Tech-Savannah, Savannah State University, and Savannah Technical College.

**Savannah Early College High School.** Savannah Early College High School (SECHS) is recognized in the national rankings and earned a bronze medal, per *U.S. News & World Report's* High School Rankings. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement/Georgia School Grade Reports states that SECHS's overall performance is higher than 96 percent of schools in the state, student



### — Best Practices —

#### “Dr. T.J. Owens Gilroy Early College Academy” Gilroy, California

The Dr. T.J. Owens Gilroy Early College Academy (GECA) is an educational partnership between Gilroy Unified School District and Gavilan Community College. Traditionally underserved, but highly motivated students who apply for this innovative, highly supportive, and academically challenging program spend their four years of high school on the Gavilan Community College campus. Participating students experience a rigorous, college preparatory high school education, as well as take college classes (up to 11 units a semester), for which they receive both college and high school credit. Most students graduate high school with an associate's degree, and can enter the University of California, California State University, or private four-year university of their choice with the first two years of college fully or nearly completed. Students targeted for GECA typically are the first in their family to attend college, have demonstrated a high level of academic ability but still need targeted academic support, and have family support throughout their four years.

Established in 2007, GECA is one of the cutting-edge early-college high schools that were designed, implemented, and funded nationwide through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The school is now funded by the California Department of Education. GECA is ranked #23 in California and #172 in the national rankings, earning a gold medal from *U.S. News & World Report* (2018). GECA students have regularly been selected as National Merit Scholars and U.S. Presidential Scholars.

For more information, click on: <https://geca.gilroyunified.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

academic growth is higher than 98 percent of schools in the state, and its 4-year graduation rate is 100 percent, higher than 99 percent of high schools in the state.

**Dual Enrollment.** It is the consulting firm's understanding that dual enrollment programs exist at other high schools. For example, senior students at Jenkins High School are eligible to participate in their Joint Enrollment Program in partnership with Georgia Southern University, Savannah State University, and Savannah Technical College. Woodville Tompkins offers similar options, including dual enrollment at Point University (on campus at Woodville).

With this educational programming in mind, AE is recommending that "A+ Savannah" explore how the ECHS concept might become better aligned with Greater Savannah's target industries.

**Partners in Education.** Partners in Education is a moniker assigned to a large number of business-education partnerships between academic, business, government, and nonprofit organizations. Partnership initiatives come in many forms—they might involve school boards and hundreds of students, or pair private partners with a single class or individual students. Business-education partnership contributions include in-service training for employees, use of facilities, experiential learning projects, software development, or tutoring. They serve to strengthen instruction in academic skills and enrich the educational process through the talent of volunteers from participating businesses. The key to success is providing sustained adult contact with students.



### — Best Practices —

#### "Austin Partners in Education" Austin, Texas

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the dropout rate for 15-24-year olds from low-income families (7.2%) is significantly higher than the rate of their peers from high-income families (3.9%). The Austin Partners in Education (APIE) program seeks to close that gap by delivering innovative, volunteer-driven academic and mentoring programs, targeting under-resourced communities and economically disadvantaged students in the Austin Independent School District.

Approximately 1,550 volunteers work with students at critical moments in their education, providing much-needed academic and social/emotional support. Through their flagship program—Classroom Coaching—students benefit from small group (3:1 or below) instruction from volunteers drawn from more than 200 Austin business, government, and nonprofit organizations.

During the past year, APIE focused on three key programs: Middle School Math Classroom Coaching (weekly sessions to work on high school algebra); College Readiness (3.5 – 4 hours of tutoring and mentoring to prepare students for college-level coursework); and Mentoring (one-on-one instruction for at-risk students improve their social and study skills, strengthen their communication skills, and build self-confidence. APIE also has programming for career conversations, which provides an opportunity to present STEM careers to middle school students.

For more information, click on: <https://www.austinpartners.org/front>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Develop Youth Entrepreneurship.** According to a survey of 1,000 teens conducted by Junior Achievement USA® and Ernst & Young LLP, 41 percent of teens are thinking about starting their own business, rather than work in a traditional job. Similarly, 61 percent of teen girls have thought about starting a business, compared to 54 percent of boys. Moreover, 6 percent of teen boys have already started their own firm, and 4 percent of girls have done the same (2018).

A related survey of 500 adult entrepreneurs found that 13 percent started their first business at the age of 18 or younger, though the average age that entrepreneurs tend to start their first business is 28. "Fear of Failure" was a primary concern of 67 percent of teens, who say it might stop them from starting a business. Interestingly enough, it was also a top concern of 65 percent of the entrepreneurs surveyed, 92 percent of whom say their businesses have turned a profit. To help guide them through their startup journeys, 36 percent of entrepreneurs have sought advice from current or former colleagues, while 32 percent have had an entrepreneurial mentor.

Part of developing a world-class, holistic approach to entrepreneurship is tapping into the economic potential of Savannah's youth. This can be accomplished by implementing Junior Achievement USA® volunteer-delivered programs on workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy in every school. Kauffman Foundation Entrepreneurship resources, (1 Million Cups, Kauffman FastTrac, Kauffman Entrepreneurs) can augment these educational initiatives.



### — Best Practices —

#### "JA Be Entrepreneurial®" Washington, D.C.

JA Be Entrepreneurial® introduces students to the basic elements of a business plan and then challenges them to create a startup business while still in high school. Throughout the program, students learn about advertising, financing, marketing, and product development.

The interdisciplinary coursework is organized into seven sessions, each 45 minutes in length. Students participating in the program learn how to recognize the characteristics and practices of successful entrepreneurs; evaluate an entrepreneurial idea based on product, customer, and competitive advantage criteria; and demonstrate business planning skills for venture startup, marketing, financing, management, and ethical decision-making. They are also afforded the opportunity to launch a real and viable business at the national or international level.

JA Be Entrepreneurial® is designed to support the skills and competencies identified by the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. The program also correlates to state standards in social studies, English, and mathematics, and to Common Core State Standards.

Members of the JA USA Education Group who contributed to the development of JA Be Entrepreneurial® possess post-graduate degrees in education, and are experienced in the classroom and in curriculum development and design.

For more information, click on: <https://www.juniorachievement.org>.



# Strategic Action Plan



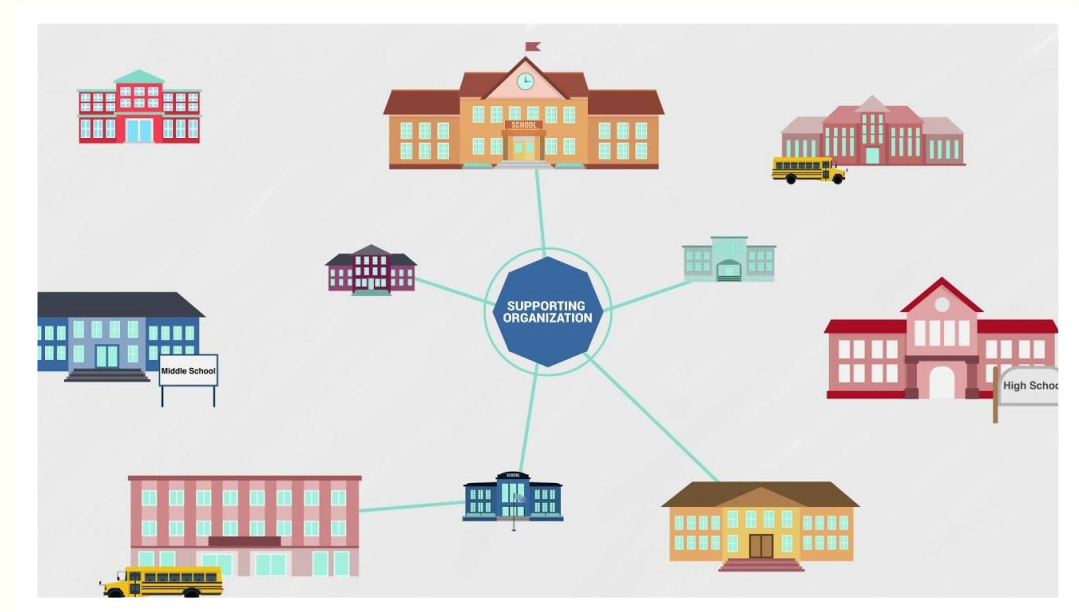
## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Strategy #1:** Empower Savannah's Business and Education Leaders to Become More Engaged Partners, Make a Difference, and Implement Education and Workforce Initiatives that Stimulate Economic Prosperity and Talent Development

### Action Items:

#### Community Action Items.

- Explore creating an initiative ("A+ Savannah"?) that creates and empowers a committed group of senior business and community leaders to identify and implement solutions tailored to the Savannah region; increase student outcomes, especially for at-risk students.
- Identify partners to solicit funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina, etc.
- Evaluate other best practices and adopt/customize to fit Savannah's needs.
- Add a Career Academy and expand dual enrollment opportunities in Savannah.
  - Align curriculum/programs with Manufacturing & Logistics, Creative & Technical Services, Entertainment Production, and Health Care target industry sectors.



Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

# Strategic Action Plan

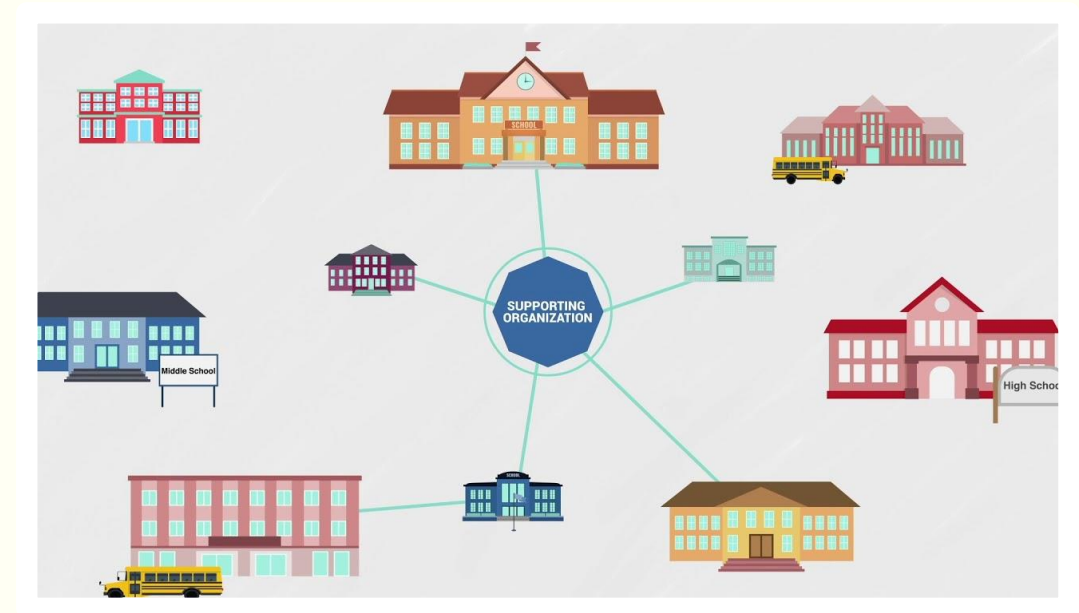


## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Strategy #1:** Empower Savannah's Business and Education Leaders to Become More Engaged Partners, Make a Difference, and Implement Education and Workforce Initiatives that Stimulate Economic Prosperity and Talent Development

### Action Items:

- Expand and improve early childhood education options.
- Expand soft skills programs and improve the efficacy of the existing programs.
- Study the status of and process for recruiting teachers and principals and assigning programs to attract high quality teachers and principals.
- Expand Partners in Education Initiatives.
  - Encourage companies to provide case studies and host field trips to provide exposure to students to different industries.
- Develop Youth Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy.
  - Support Junior Achievement USA® volunteer-delivered programs that foster workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy at every school.



Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

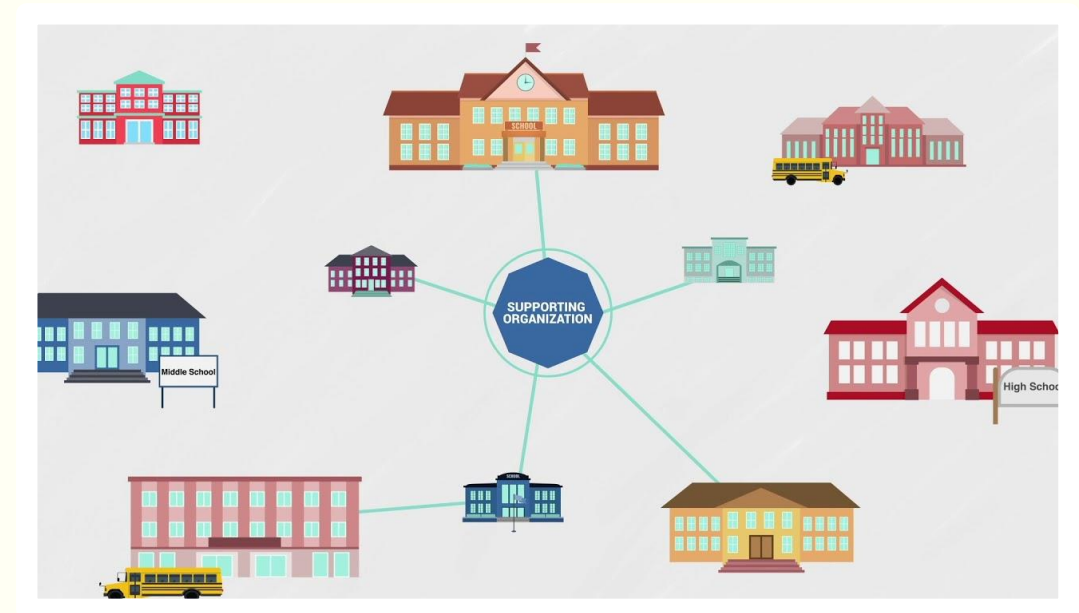
**Strategy #1:** Empower Savannah's Business and Education Leaders to Become More Engaged Partners, Make a Difference, and Implement Education and Workforce Initiatives that Stimulate Economic Prosperity and Talent Development

### Action Items:

- Increase involvement in Kauffman Foundation Entrepreneurship resources (e.g., 1 Million Cups, Kauffman FastTrac, Kauffman Entrepreneurship).

### SEDA Action Items

- Evaluate how SEDA can make a meaningful impact in education and workforce development.
- Consider hiring a workforce development professional to create and execute a comprehensive workforce development plan.
- Utilize the existing workforce/education assets.
- Meet with employers to address workforce development needs.
- Serve as the internal expert for workforce development issues in attraction efforts.



Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

# Strategic Action Plan



**Education and Workforce:**  
Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

## Strategy #2: Adapt to Millennial/Non-Traditional Adult Learners

Today's college students include students of differing ages with distinct learning preferences and classroom needs. This shift in student demographics has given higher education institutions pause to develop a better understanding of their learning preferences. Studies indicate that millennials desire classes where instructors use active approaches to learning, whereas non-traditional adult students prefer teachers who meet the needs of their personal learning style.

Beyond the student demographics, there are other prospective students for whom a traditional, four-year degree isn't cutting it anymore. They find the college-education track is short on real-world experience and often creates a mountain of debt. In fact, debt has become a dream killer. State public university tuition can easily reach \$25,000 - \$30,000. A moderate private university is even more pricier and hovers around \$50,000. An unfortunate truth is that student-loan debt now outpaces mortgage and credit-card debt combined in the United States.

As a result, many students hunger for an alternative to the current higher education model. They're seeking a career-focused education—one that doesn't come with a large amount of student debt and can be completed in a fraction of the time a traditional degree takes. However, bringing change to postsecondary education doesn't come easy. This serves as the backdrop for strategic recommendations, as outlined herein.



— Best Practices —

**“A Multichannel Approach”**  
ASU Online  
Tempe, Arizona

Arizona State University (ASU), a pioneer in digital education, offers a mix of options for online learning to assist different student populations. ASU Online offers a wide range of online degree programs to students across the nation. Traditional students who want greater flexibility take i-Courses—online courses designed for on-campus students. Students seeking to earn college credits or find an alternative entry into ASU can participate in the Earned Admission Program, which is offered through the Global Freshman Academy on the edX platform. Lastly, instructional software is deeply embedded in both online and face-to-face courses, where adaptive learning helps students complete gateway courses in math, science, history, psychology, and economics.

ASU's online students have access to a 24/7 tech support desk, tutoring (including Pearson's Smarthinking online tutoring service), and retention coaches who provide personalized, holistic support. Another external partner, Starbucks, offers its benefits-eligible employees full tuition reimbursement for taking ASU Online classes. ASU faculty is also equipped to teach rigorous adaptive learning courses. These initiatives have enabled ASU to increase student enrollment and enter new markets without undertaking a major expansion of campus facilities, and with minimal investments to upgrade technology or modify existing classrooms.

For more information, click on: <http://edplus.asu.edu/sites/default/files/BCG-Making-Digital-Learning-Work-Apr-2018%20.pdf>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Expand Digital Learning.** According to the Online Learning Consortium, online education is on the rise, even as overall higher education enrollments decline. This is because online education offerings are helping to make education more affordable, flexible, and of higher quality for students, as well as cheaper for educational institutions.

These attributes help to explain why so many Millennials and non-traditional adult learners have turned to the Internet for education (laptop computer, mobile app, social networking). Millennials thrive in a learning environment that offers collaboration, feedback, technology, and mentorship. Courses can be taken at will through providers like Coursera, edX, Khan Academy, and Udemy. Many online courses are self-paced; students can take as many as they want at a given time; and their price ranges from free to a few dollars.

Non-traditional adults like the flexibility of online scheduling, but may face a learning curve with some of the technology used in these courses. They may not have grown up with immediate access to the Internet or fully grasp how to use online platforms as quickly as younger students. Equally challenging is the isolation that comes with distance education; and the need to accommodate multiple learning styles.

In order to remain competitive, colleges and universities need to accommodate both millennials and adult learners. For this reason, the AE team recommends that Savannah's higher education institutions offer digital coursework—fully online and through hybrid courses—whenever possible.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Solving the Digital Learning Paradox” Houston Community College Houston, Texas

Houston Community College (HCC) has invested in several strategies to solve a digital learning paradox: students who take a combination of online and face-to-face classes have higher graduation rates than those who attend all of their classes face-to-face, but academic performance is lower in online and mixed-modality courses than face-to-face classes. To improve outcomes, HCC Online is providing free tutoring, requires students with less than 12 credits to take a “student success” course to prepare them for online learning, hired a central team of instructional designers to help faculty design digital courses, established Centers of Excellence to develop student learning skills, and is moving to offer high-value credentials entirely online.

Additionally, HCC is exploring the possibility of adding online degrees and open educational resources (OER) to its digital portfolio. The community college offers 25 credentials that students can earn by taking all of their courses online, but hasn't reached the point where it markets specific online degrees. That is now changing, after HCC identifies and implements high-value degrees and certificates that can be offered online on a regular basis. The school is also increasing its use of OER that help reduce the cost of course materials, and is now offering a Z-degree program (a degree with zero textbook and instructional material costs) with several associate programs.

For more information, click on: <http://edplus.asu.edu/sites/default/files/BCG-Making-Digital-Learning-Work-Apr-2018%20.pdf>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Coding Bootcamps.** Greater Savannah should be at the forefront of proliferating the coding bootcamp paradigm—with a twist. Educators are already familiar with coding bootcamps that offer accelerated, immersive training in software engineering that typically last 12-40 weeks, helping students obtain the skills necessary to transition into a technology career. These education programs are built around two core pillars: speed and high impact learning. They also fill a niche—only 40 percent of schools teach computer programming.

The allure of coding bootcamps is pretty straightforward—students can obtain more employable skills in three months than those who choose to earn a four-year degree in computer science. Their curriculum responds quickly to market conditions, changing after each session, unlike computer science programs that are slow to change. They are also more affordable at an average cost of \$11,900 per student (per Course Report's "2018 Coding Bootcamp Market Size Study").

Here's where the twist comes in. The AE team is suggesting that higher education institutions in the Savannah region adopt the coding bootcamp model and customize this learning concept to satisfy labor shortages in the target industries (not necessarily software engineering). This means offering a year-long, or less, blended educational experience that is designed to prepare students for a good-paying job, in industries that need more workers. Meanwhile, integrate the coding curriculum into public/private schools, and promote Georgia Tech-Savannah's Coding Bootcamp.

### — Best Practices —



#### "App Academy" San Francisco, New York City, Online

App Academy is a software development school that is causing quite a stir within the higher education industry. The school offers a variety of programs, not the least of which is a 12-week immersive coding and job placement program, where 100 percent of their graduates have been placed in software development roles at an average salary of \$105,000 in San Francisco and \$89,000 in New York City. The school has trained over 2,000 students and more than 65,000 people have applied for the course.

They consider their tuition model to be a game-changer that reverses the traditional incentive structure for higher education. Students only pay if they find a job within 12 months of completing the course. No job, no tuition. Each course bootstraps dozens of students out of financial hardship. Graduates have been placed at some of the top tech companies in the world, such as Amazon, Cisco, Facebook, Google, Intuit, Oracle, Pinterest, and Uber, among others.

For prospective students who could use some foundational work before getting accepted into a top bootcamp, App Academy offers Bootcamp Prep, a 40-hour online course designed to prepare students to work in JavaScript, and how to solve problems using code. Successful completion of Bootcamp Prep positions students to be accepted into some of the most selective coding schools available (including, but not limited to, App Academy).

For more information, click on <https://www.appacademy.io/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



**Education and Workforce:**  
Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

## Strategy #2: Adapt to Millennial/Non-Traditional Adult Learners

### Action Items:

- Expand digital learning.
  - Offer a full complement of online and/or hybrid online courses at Savannah's high schools, colleges, and universities.
- Increase coding curriculum offerings in the Savannah Region.
  - Encourage increased offerings of the coding bootcamp model and customize this learning concept to satisfy skilled labor shortages in target industries and consider offering scholarships for students with demonstrated need.
  - Integrate a coding curriculum into public/private schools throughout the Savannah Region.
  - Promote Georgia Tech-Savannah's Coding Boot Camp.



Source: Online Learning Consortium/Quality Scorecard Suite

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #3: Widen the Workforce Pipeline

Widening Savannah's workforce pipeline—particularly for the target industry sectors—creates competitive advantage for the region and helps solve the skills gap. This involves the creation of accessible career pathways, often in a non-conventional manner. It's all part and parcel of putting education and workforce initiatives at the forefront of the economic development agenda.

**AIESEC International.** Recognized as the world's largest non-governmental, nonprofit, student-run organization, AIESEC International provides 30K+ young people with leadership development, cross-cultural global internships, and volunteer exchange experiences in 126-member countries and territories.

One of AIESEC's unique features is their Global Talent initiative, wherein Greater Savannah business firms, non-governmental organizations, and start-ups can sign up, fill out a job questionnaire and contract, screen and interview candidates, and have an international intern show up on their doorstep within two months. It's a cost-effective way to find talent from around the world that contributes to economic growth.

Hiring AIESEC candidates brings an international perspective to the workforce, allowing participating firms to source talent specific to the work profile required by the organization, while altruistically helping to develop young leaders seeking a meaningful learning experience. Candidates come from all over the world, but a majority are native to Egypt, Brazil, Morocco, and China.



#### — Best Practices —

#### “AIESEC International” Montreal, Canada

AIESEC International provides a platform for developing the next generation of leaders through impactful professional and volunteer experiences that activate their leadership potential. Part of their mission is to develop soft skills that are requisite for youth members to become positive change agents in today's society. These skills are acquired through:

- “Global Volunteer,” a cross-cultural, voluntary internship experience that is often short-term in nature, and has participants working on a diverse mix of community projects for different organizations. Projects include teaching, promoting HIV/AIDS awareness, working in human rights, environmental sustainability, and more. Exchange participants are expected to bear the expense of airfare, traveling, shopping, and visa fees. Every effort is made to place interns in the country of their choice.
- “Global Talent” is a sister internship opportunity that helps companies fulfill their workforce needs with skilled, young talent. Millennials and Gen Z are projected to dominate half the global workforce by 2020, and this program provides employers with a mechanism for adapting to new trends and becoming millennial-friendly.
- “Global Entrepreneur” is a third programmatic internship opportunity that is most-often short, intense, and allows young people to work with entrepreneurs in start-ups, accelerators, or incubators.

For more information, click on <https://aiesec.org/>.



# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

AIIESEC is working with an impressive array of participating companies (Apple, Eaton, Electrolux, Mindvalley, Nokia, UPS, and others) to create a global network of talent.

**Apprenticeships.** Apprenticeships draw on the concept of “dual training.” Trainees split time between classroom instruction at a vocational school and on-the-job training at a company. Theoretical concepts learned in class are reinforced by practice at work. They also learn about work habits and responsibility and, if all goes well, absorb the culture of the company. Trainees are paid for their time, including the time spent in class. The arrangement lasts for two to four years, depending on the sector. Both employer and employee generally hope it will lead to a permanent job—for employers, apprentices are a crucial talent pool.

In Germany, close to 60 percent of young people train as apprentices, in fields as diverse as advanced manufacturing, IT, banking, and hospitality. Here in the U.S., that number is fewer than 5 percent and largely concentrated in the construction trades. Greater Savannah's competitive position would be enhanced if it adapted to the German apprenticeship model, perhaps with assistance from BASF Corporation.

An example is the Jockey Truck Operating Safety Training offered through a partnership with Savannah Technical College's Professional Continuing Education Department and Step-Up Savannah's Chatham Apprenticeship Program.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Skills Initiative – German Missions in the United States” Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Washington, D.C.

The German Embassy, through the Skills Initiative, seeks to identify and share information about best practices in sustainable workforce development, in cooperation with German companies investing in the U.S. German companies are in a strong position to undertake this effort because of their familiarity with Germany's first-class vocational education and training system. It is called the dual system of vocational training and is a major reason for Germany's economic success. It provides sound qualifications through its unique combination of theory and practice, learning and working, thereby offering a highly attractive and recognized training and career path after high school, as both an alternative and a complimentary option to university education.

Foreign-direct investment from Germany is significant—more than 3,400 German companies, ranging from large multinationals to small and medium-sized businesses—have invested in the American market. Their investments exceed \$310 billion and created approximately 692,000 jobs. German companies have identified jobs skills as a key challenge to their success in the U.S. The German dual system of vocational training offers benefits for companies, employees, promotes manufacturing as a powerful driver of growth, effectively lowers the youth unemployment rate, and eases the burden on public sector budgets.

For more information, click on: <https://www.germany.info/us-en/welcome/wirtschaft/03-Wirtschaft>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

Another exemplary initiative is the Georgia Ports Authority Y.E.S. (Youth learning Equipment and Safety) Student Operator Training Program. The Georgia Ports Authority selects 20 students from Savannah-area public and private schools and provides on-the-job training that gives them the experience needed to meet GPA's workforce needs.

**Corporate and Customized Training.** Corporate and customized training is a competitive advantage in the Savannah region. Professional development training in STEM, business, and leadership is offered through Georgia Southern University and Georgia Tech-Savannah. Additionally, Savannah Technical College provides customized training for employers seeking to train new hires for specialized occupational skills. Foundational programs to build from include Aerospace, Facility and Property Management, Healthcare/Medical, IT, Manufacturing, and Supply Chain & Logistics.

Last, but not least, Georgia Quick Start®, a division of the Technical College System of Georgia, provides customized, job-specific training, and related training, such as continuous process improvement. Georgia QuickStart® has frequently been voted the number one workforce training program in the U.S., according to surveys conducted by *Area Development* magazine, a trade publication for professional site locators.

The perpetual challenge with all of these is continuing to align their corporate and customized instructional models with Savannah employers, particularly those in the region's target industry sectors.



### — Best Practices —

#### “Georgia Quick Start®” Atlanta, Georgia

Workforce training in Georgia is provided by several different agencies, but the state's signature program is Georgia Quick Start®, a free program that offers customized training for companies in various industries. The oldest program of its kind in the U.S., Quick Start has updated the skill sets of more than 1 million employees in 6,500 projects.

Quick Start helps companies maintain a competitive advantage by preparing workers for contemporary and future skill sets. Outlined below are the services that Quick Start delivers:

- Strategic Workforce Consultation: A Quick Start training regimen is developed based on the company's exact workforce needs
- Pre-Employment Assessment: Customized assessments are conducted to evaluate candidates according to company-defined criteria
- Customized Post-Hire and Job-Specific Training: Training is developed that targets the company's exact technology and workforce requirements
- Leadership and Professional Development: Continuous improvement develops leadership teams, improves communication, and supports the company's mission and vision

For more information, click on: <http://www.georgiaquickstart.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

**Reincorporate Convicted Felons Into The Workforce.** In Fall, 2018, President Trump announced support for the “First Step Act,” a bipartisan criminal justice reform bill. “We’re all better off when former inmates can re-enter society as law-abiding, productive citizens,” Trump said while speaking at the White House. “Americans from across the political spectrum can unite around prison reform legislation that will reduce crime while giving our fellow citizens a chance at redemption.”

The rare bipartisan legislation was endorsed in a letter to senators from over 50 actors, musicians, and sports figures, including Van Jones, Mark Cuban, Courtney Cox, Kim Kardashian, and Benjamin Watson. In their letter, the supporters called on Congress to “recognize the humanity” of those who are incarcerated, and declared that “186,000 people in federal prison and their family members” were counting on elected representatives to act. On December 21, 2018, President Trump signed the bill into law.

This is consistent with the “ban the box” or “fair chance hiring” movement, which has been gaining momentum across the country. Seven states have chosen to adopt new laws that require employers to delay inquiries into job applicants’ conviction or arrest histories until later in the hiring process. A key motivation? Nearly one-third of the adult working population has a criminal record—roughly the same number of people with a four-year college degree. By practicing Fair Chance Hiring, companies can find a pool of qualified, diverse talent with a wide range of experiences, while reaching stronger business outcomes.



### — Best Practices —

#### “Dave’s Killer Bread” Milwaukie, Oregon

Dave Dahl, a high school dropout and self-described “ex-con” co-founded a bakery in 2005. He took the entrepreneurial plunge with his brother, Glenn Dahl, after spending 15 years in prison for dealing drugs, armed robbery, and other drug-related offenses. A subsidiary of Thomasville, GA-based Flowers Foods Inc. (maker of Wonder Bread), Dave’s Killer Bread employs a workforce of 300+ individuals. Of those employees, 30 percent, or one-third, have criminal backgrounds of some sort. Their “second chance employees” have access to resources that help develop and enhance their hard and soft skills, from customized personal finance to conflict resolution, and more. They also receive support from co-workers who have walked similar paths. The firm has witnessed first-hand how stable employment sparks transformation in people with criminal backgrounds.

Dave’s Killer Bread is a witness to the power of Second Chance Employment. The firm believes in hiring those who have a criminal background, and who are ready to change their lives for the better. Their mission is to give people a second chance not only to make a living, but make a life. Without employment opportunities, those with criminal backgrounds are likely to revert back to the only life they know—a life of crime. To change that, Dave’s Killer Bread Foundation was created to help get other businesses involved in reducing the negative impact of recidivism, and reduce the stigma around those with a criminal history through the Second Chance Project.

For more information, click on: <http://www.daveskillerbread.com/>.

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #3: Widen the Workforce Pipeline

#### Action Items:

- Access globally-mobile talent through AIESEC International
  - Greater Savannah business firms, non-governmental organizations, and startups can sign up, fill out a job questionnaire and contract, screen and interview candidates, and have international full-time interns show up on their doorstep within two months.
  - AIESEC sponsored interns already have their visas to work in the U.S. and are prepared for the intercultural experience. The program also takes care of all needed logistics before interns' arrival to their employer.
- Broaden apprenticeship/customized training programs.
  - Georgia Ports Authority Y.E.S. (Youth learning Equipment and Safety) Student Operator Training Program.
  - Maritime Logistics Education Taskforce (MLET).
  - The Skills Initiative (Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany).
- Evaluate and improve the pathway from military service to private sector employment.



Source: Georgia Department of Economic Development

# Strategic Action Plan

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Education and Workforce:  
Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

## Strategy #3: Widen the Workforce Pipeline

### Action Items:

- Create a focus around reincorporating convicted felons into the workforce.
  - Adopt Fair Chance Hiring practices.
- Incorporate marketing that reflects a more diverse and younger population.

***“Any type of educated, professional employee workforce should be on the list of who to attract to Savannah.”***

— Local Stakeholder



Source: Georgia Department of Economic Development

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #4: Provide Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care

Greater Savannah's business climate is closely tied to its employers and their ability to attract a stable and focused workforce. It is essential that local companies attract young people and their families. Ensuring that working families have access to affordable, quality child care, is important part of this strategic plan.

Working families require a high-functioning child care system that allows them to arrive at work ready to be productive. When working parents are able to depend on child care, their productivity increases, absenteeism is reduced, and turnover is minimized.

Outlined below are recommendations that are intended to improve Savannah's early child care and learning system:

**Boost: Making College Possible.** Decades of data and ongoing research have shown that at-risk children who don't receive high-quality learning experiences and healthy relationships are 25% more likely to drop out of school; 40% more likely to become a teen parent; 50% more likely to be placed in special education; 60% more likely to never attend college; and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime. At the same time, lack of affordable care has become a major barrier to college completion for student parents, as evidenced by the fact that 53% of college student parents leave school without earning a degree.

### — Best Practices —



#### Child Care Executive Partnership State of Florida

The Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program is an innovative, public-private partnership that helps employers meet the needs of working parents. Through this program, federal and state funds are “matched” with financial contributions from local governments, charitable foundations, and participating businesses on a dollar-for-dollar basis to provide child care services to participating families. The program helps communities expand child care funding for lower-income working families and helps employers increase profits by providing valuable work-life benefits for employees.

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) partners with 30 local early learning coalitions to deliver comprehensive early learning services statewide. The office oversees three programs—School Readiness Program, Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and Child Care Resource and Referral services.

The state Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) board determines the program's annual budget, distributes funds to local early learning coalitions and makes policy decisions about administering the program. OEL provides board staff support, marketing and technical assistance. At the local level, early learning coalitions make funding decisions, administer the program, manage contributions and determine eligibility for families who want to participate.

For more information, click on:

<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/coalitions/ccep-program>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

In response, the AE team recommends expanding the Quality Care of Children's "Boost: Making College Possible" initiative, moving it beyond Savannah State University to other educational institutions in the region. This program responds to challenges faced by low-income families, offering child care tuition assistance to college student parents so they can graduate and their children can enter school ready to learn.

**Maximize Georgia's Pre-K.** Ensure that children on Georgia's Pre-K waiting list from the Savannah metropolitan area receive classroom instruction. Of particular importance are candidates for Georgia's Early Head Start and Head Start programs, which serve low-income children and children with disabilities, who make up 10% of total enrollment.

**Establish a Public-Private Child Care Collaborative.** Launch a public-private collaborative responsible for incentivizing the creation of new child care learning centers (and upgrade existing facilities), with emphasis on Census tracts that have poverty above a certain threshold. The child care learning centers should provide healthy, safe environments for children with trained teachers, providers, and staff who nurture children, while focusing on creative, varied age-appropriate learning activities.

As part of this public-private collaboration, the group should advocate for voluntary, local/regional participation in Georgia's Quality Rated Child Care System, to ensure that child care learning centers and family child care learning homes are independently assessed and follow best practices.



### — Best Practices —

#### Early Education Partnership Ithaca, New York

The Early Education Partnership is a joint venture between the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, Day Care and Child Development Council, Department of Social Services, area businesses and banks, philanthropic interests, Ithaca College, and Cornell University. The partnership is working to build a community fund that will provide a single point of entry that makes financial assistance universally accessible to all families in Tompkins County. By creating a system which combines public, private, and charitable funds, the Partnership seeks to improve access to quality child care for all children, strengthen the economic vitality of the child care sector, and secure a critical infrastructure for economic development in the county as a whole.

Cornell University recently sponsored "The Linking Economic Development and Child Care Research Project," which aims to better identify the economic linkages of child care from a regional economy perspective. This is part of an effort to support states and localities interested in using an economic development framework to build coalitions with the economic development community, business interests, and policy makers to help craft new approaches to child care finance. To determine the economic importance of the child care sector in individual communities, research was conducted to calculate the size of the sector, determine linkage effects, and craft economic development strategies to strengthen the child care sector.

For more information, click on: <http://www.mildredwarner.org/econdev/child-care/Tompkins-county>.

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #4: Provide Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care

#### Action Items:

- Boost: Making College Possible.
  - Expand Quality Care of Children's "Boost: Making College Possible" initiative beyond Savannah State University to other educational institutions in the region.
  - Maximize Georgia's Pre-K/Early childhood education Program.
  - Provide space in Savannah's public schools and private child development centers for every four-year-old who wishes to participate.
- Establish a Public-Private Child Care Collaborative.
  - Provide Incentives for childcare service providers in Census tracts with poverty above a certain threshold.
  - Explore incentivizing subsidized child care.



Source: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning



# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #5: Increase the Amount of Affordable Workforce Housing Available in Greater Savannah

A holistic approach to affordable workforce housing revolves around preservation and production. Preservation efforts are focused on the acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable homes at-risk, the advancement of new homeownership models, and the creation of a supportive financing environment. Production can be incentivized through the simplification of regulations, using public land for affordable workforce housing, expanding funding at all levels, and adoption of proven policies.

**Develop a Comprehensive Affordable Workforce Housing Strategy.** Per the City of Savannah Assessment of Fair Housing (May, 2017), Greater Savannah workers should be able to live in housing that is affordable and close to their jobs. This allows critical workers—civil servants, nurses, police and firefighters, retail clerks, teachers, and others who are essential to the local economy—to live in the communities in which they work. Affordable workforce housing is immensely important to employees who commute great distances and would not be available in emergency situations. Having employees live in the community where they work helps strengthen the fabric of the community, and in many instances, helps to revitalize and stabilize neighborhoods. Commute times and traffic congestion ease, neighborhoods are more diverse, and economies are strengthened by helping employers attract and retain essential workers. This also raises the prospect of increased community involvement if workers are able to live in close proximity to their place of employment.

### — Best Practices —



#### “Avenue Place/Avenue Terrace” Houston, Texas

Avenue Community Development Corp. has taken strides to address the shortage of affordable workforce housing in Houston by pioneering the development of mixed-use apartments (Avenue Terrace) and affordable homes (Avenue Place) in Houston's Near Northside neighborhood, a predominantly Hispanic, working-class neighborhood just north of Downtown Houston.

Their affordable workforce housing development is located on 20 acres of former industrial wasteland, which now features a 192-unit apartment complex (\$954 - \$1,114/mo.) and 95 residential homes (low 200s - mid-300s). The project has access to Houston's METRORail North Corridor that connects to Downtown Houston, light rail, bus routes, a walking trail, and a park. Residents are also connected to an elementary school with a playground, YMCA, public library, and recreation center. The project's design and materials incorporate economically-feasible green building practices that promote health and sustainability, and waste reduction.

There is high demand for these kind of affordable apartments and homes. Avenue Terrace is currently 100 percent occupied and has a waiting list between three and six months long, depending on the unit size. The vast majority of apartments (85 percent) are subsidized and set aside for low-income renters. Avenue Place homes are priced well below Houston's average home price.

For more information, click on: <https://www.avenuecdc.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

The AE team concurs with the report's recommendation to prepare a comprehensive regional affordable housing strategy in a partnership with the City of Savannah, Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition, Housing Authority of Savannah, Chatham County, and neighboring municipalities.

Many cities such as Austin, Minneapolis, and Nashville have introduced leveraged equity funds (30% equity, 70% debt) to acquire multi-family properties and maintain affordability through property tax credits and lower, guaranteed returns of 4-6% ROI to investors.

**Adopt Inclusionary Zoning.** Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) is an affordable housing tool that links the production of below-market-rate housing to the production of market-rate housing. IZ is considered a response to exclusionary zoning practices, which many feel have contributed to the maintenance of inner-city ghettos. IZ policies either require or encourage new residential developments to make a certain percentage of the housing units affordable to low- or moderate-income residents. In exchange, many IZ programs award developers with incentives, such as density bonuses, expedited approval, and fee waivers.

There is tremendous diversity in the structure and goals of inclusionary zoning programs throughout the country. Some IZ programs are voluntary while others are mandatory. They are triggered by different sizes and types of market-rate developments; and they target the affordable units to different income levels. They have different rules about whether the affordable units must be located



### — Best Practices —

#### “Adaptive Reuse for Housing and Workspace” Florida Housing Coalition Tallahassee, Florida

The Florida Housing Coalition, Inc. is a nonprofit, statewide membership organization whose mission is to bring together housing advocates and resources so that all residents have a quality affordable home and suitable living environment. Their mission is focused on supporting the expansion of affordable housing in high-need, housing insecure communities across the state, bolstered by efforts around supporting sustainable building practices.

Selected by Fannie Mae as one of three organizations receiving a contract award under the Sustainable Communities Innovation Initiative, the coalition is exploring the feasibility of adapting vacant commercial spaces into attractive and functional mixed-use apartments and co-working offices for low-income entrepreneurs. The goal is to design a replicable and scalable model that can be deployed in communities across Florida and around the country.

The adaptive reuse concept solves two problems: the need for affordable housing near job opportunities, and problems associated with vacant commercial space. At the same time, the affordable workspace housing will allow business owners to focus on establishing and growing their businesses, ultimately boosting employment opportunities within the communities they are located.

For more information, click on: <https://www.flhousing.org/programs/adaptive-re-use/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

within the market-rate development or may be located off-site; and they impose the affordability restriction for different lengths of time.

Since the first program was established in 1971, the number of governmental jurisdictions that have adopted inclusionary zoning policies have grown steadily, with a significant number of jurisdictions adopting programs in the last decade. While it is difficult to identify an exact number, well over 500 jurisdictions—cities, towns, and counties—have an inclusionary zoning ordinance on the books.

Inclusionary Zoning has the potential to be another arrow in the quiver when taking aim at affordable workforce housing, and should be given serious consideration when formulating recommendations, strategies, and action items to be included in the Comprehensive Affordable Workforce Housing Strategy.

***“I just wish there was more affordable housing in the market. It is hard for a working mom.”***

— Local Stakeholder



### — Best Practices —

#### Foundation Communities Austin, Texas

Foundation Communities is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing affordable, attractive homes and free on-site support services for thousands of families with kids, as well as veterans, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. Their communities offer a wide range of opportunities for residents and neighbors to transform their lives through on-site support services in the areas of education, financial stability, and health.

Educational programs include after-school and summer learning at 12 on-site learning centers (1,000+ students); free English as a second language classes in North and South Austin; and College Hub, where prospective and current college students received help towards earning a degree.

At two Community Financial Centers, anyone who make less than \$55,000 are provided with comprehensive financial assistance, such as free tax preparation, health insurance enrollment, college support services, financial coaching, money management, and special savings programs. Their staff and volunteers helped more than 25,000 people and generated more than \$72 million for the community (2017 Annual Report).

Vital health care services are provided on-site, including primary/mental health care and substance abuse counseling, along with opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activity, nutrition, and community health programs.

For more information, click on <https://foundcom.org/about/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #5: Increase the Amount of Affordable Workforce Housing Available in Greater Savannah

#### Action Items:

- Continue to develop a comprehensive affordable and workforce housing strategy.
  - City of Savannah, Housing Authority of Savannah, Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition, Chatham County, neighboring communities, and others (per City of Savannah Assessment of Fair Housing, 2017).
- Adopt Inclusionary Zoning.
  - Link the production of below-market-rate housing to the production of market-rate housing, preferably with projects that offer on-site services (financial literacy, youth education, digital access, energy efficient).



Source: Savannah Morning News/The Preserve at Chatham Parkway

# Strategic Action Plan



## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #6: Establish Community Scholarships for Impoverished Children

Educational philanthropy has played a storied role in American history, from the Puritans of early Massachusetts who founded Harvard College to train clergy, to Andrew Carnegie and the establishment of public libraries across the United States and Britain, to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative that focuses on health and education.

This strategic recommendation contemplates the creation of a community scholarship program for at-risk youth on a scale not heretofore seen in Greater Savannah. The mission is to give high potential, low-income students the resources they need to graduate from high school with the skills needed to earn a college degree, enter the workforce, and set them on a clear path toward success.

Central to this concept is identifying the skills sets of those living in the lower end of the community's socioeconomic spectrum. Scholarships could be related to specific areas of interest (e.g., fashion, music, sports), and perhaps complemented by Georgia's HOPE and Zell Miller Grants and Scholarships, with the intent of lifting up *hundreds* of Savannah students, not just tens of students.

A related issue that needs to be addressed with community scholarships is computers and Internet access/connectivity for the poorest pupils.

### — Best Practices —



#### Take Stock in Children Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Take Stock in Children, Inc., is a non-profit organization in Florida that provides a unique opportunity for deserving low-income youth/students (65% minority children) to escape from poverty through post-secondary education. The organization has affiliates in every county throughout Florida, offering scholarships to students, providing adult volunteer mentors, monitoring students' progress, and instilling hope for a better life.

Take Stock in Children is active in 800 schools throughout the State of Florida. Students are selected between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades, many from minority families, and must meet their low-income and at-risk guidelines. Students are selected in their local communities by highly engaged committees that are comprised of education and civic leaders, as well as corporate sponsors. Take Stock in Children partners with community education foundations, community colleges, and school districts throughout the State of Florida to deliver program services to students.

Established in 1995, the organization has served over 24,000 students throughout 67 counties, contributed \$149 million in scholarships, and 2 million volunteer hours from 8,200 mentors. Funding comes from both the public and private sectors, and is used to underwrite a Florida Prepaid Scholarship that provides an incentive to students who work hard to improve their grade and take the time needed to prepare themselves for college.

For more information, click on <https://takestockinchildren.org/>.

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Education and Workforce: Maximize Savannah's Human Capital

### Strategy #6: Establish Community Scholarships for Impoverished Children

#### Action Items:

- Create a community scholarship program for at-risk youth on a scale not heretofore seen in Savannah.
  - Give high potential, low-income students the resources they need to graduate from high school with the skills needed to earn a college degree, enter the workforce, and set them on a clear path to success.



Source: Take Stock in Children, Inc.

# Strategic Action Plan

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## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

### Overview

Community capacity building has multiple definitions. One of the most appropriate definitions for the economic development realm comes from the Western Australian Department for Community Development (2006):

*“Community capacity building is about promoting the ‘capacity’ of local communities to develop, implement, and sustain their own solutions to problems in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic, and cultural environments.”*

For the Savannah Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, the focus for community capacity building is on physical infrastructure, university economic development, and economic development incentives.

### Infrastructure

Capital investment in public infrastructure improvements provides a solid platform for economic development and growth in Greater Savannah. Building, maintaining, and expanding roads and highways, bridges, rail, utilities, and fiber-optic networks paves the way for job growth. When new construction is complete, or existing infrastructure is improved and modernized, infrastructure projects benefit communities in the region by increasing their wealth and raises citizens’ standard of living.

### University Economic Development

Higher education institutions are facing the expectation of playing a greater role in economic development. They are being asked to move beyond their traditional role of teaching and research and become engaged in promoting the economic well-being of their respective communities. In fulfilling this third role, or “mission,” they have become “entrepreneurial universities”—key players in local, regional, and state economic development and knowledge transfer.

In Coastal Georgia, the key players include Georgia Southern University, Georgia-Tech Savannah, Savannah State University, and Savannah Technical College, among others.

### Economic Development Incentives

Incentives are an essential component of economic development. Their use is often guided by economic development incentive guidelines, which take into account the communities strengths and weaknesses, and targets their use toward firms that would benefit the most from locating or expanding in the Savannah region. In this instance, the AE team is referring to firms in the target industry sectors—Manufacturing & Logistics, Creative & Technical Services, Entertainment Production, and Health Care.

Factors that influence incentive decision-making include employment impact (number and type of jobs; average wage; annual payroll); fiscal impact (real and personal property tax value added to the tax rolls; infrastructure construction required; impact on existing businesses); and community impact (what effect will the project have on the community—environmental, housing, schools, transportation, etc.).

# Strategic Action Plan



**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #1: Invest in Infrastructure

In September, 2018, Griff Lynch, Executive Director, Georgia Ports Authority (GPA), announced that Talmadge Memorial Bridge will need to be replaced in order to accommodate “next generation” container ships and maximize the economic impact of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project.

Lynch’s announcement was made while laying out GPA’s \$2.5 billion, 10-year plan to expand the capacity of the nation’s fastest-growing and single largest container terminal from 5.5 million 20-foot equivalent unit containers (TEUs) to 8 million, as part of the annual “State of the Ports” address. The expansion plans would grow Savannah’s capacity to handle containerized cargo 45 percent by the year 2028.

Included in the expansion plans is the Port of Savannah Mason Mega Rail Terminal, which promises to double rail capacity to 1 million container lifts per year. The project will add 97,000 feet of new rail at the Garden City Terminal, for a total of 179,000 feet. It will increase the number of working tracks from 8 to 18. Specifically, the Mason Mega Rail will combine the current on-dock CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern rail terminals into one facility, providing each railroad with at least nine 2,700-foot working tracks. The expanded rail yard will be served by eight rail-mounted gantry cranes. The RMGs will each span nine tracks for improved efficiency moving containers to and from trains. Transitioning more cargo from trucks to trains helps prevent highway congestion, and improve vehicle traffic flow.



-- Best Practice --

## “Houston Ship Channel Bridge” Houston, Texas

In June, 2018, the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) began a \$962 million project to replace the bridge across the ship channel on the Sam Houston Tollway from SH 225 to I-10 in Houston. The bridge is being replaced so it can handle growing traffic. Currently, the bridge carries about 55,000 cars per day, but the traffic count is expected to grow to almost 158,000 vehicles per day by 2035.

The Houston Ship Channel Bridge is the largest public works project in Harris County history. When completed in 2024, the bridge will have two bridges with four lanes of traffic, plus shoulders. The current single bridge has only two lanes of traffic in each direction with no shoulder. There will be twin spans side-by-side that will be connected at key points, such as the two massive towers that hold all the cables related to the cable-stay design. The cable-stay design allows for deep foundations to accommodate soil conditions. Since there won’t be pylons in the middle of the water, the Ship Channel will be easier to dredge.

Meanwhile, another almost \$1 billion bridge is being constructed in Corpus Christi. Scheduled to be completed in 2021, the U.S. 181 Harbor Bridge Replacement Project will be the longest precast concrete cable-stayed span in the United States and the third largest of its kind in the world.

For more information, click on:  
[https://www.intelligentcommunity.org/dublin\\_ohio](https://www.intelligentcommunity.org/dublin_ohio).



# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

Now is the time for SEDA and its strategic partners to work with the Georgia Ports Authority, Georgia Department of Transportation, and state legislators to explore how best to replace Savannah's Talmadge Bridge. This goes hand-in-glove with continuing to advocate for the Mason Mega Rail Terminal Project and Savannah Harbor Expansion Project.

The GPA infrastructure improvements (existing and proposed) will position the Port of Savannah to efficiently serve the larger vessels expected to call in greater numbers after expansion of the Panama Canal. At the same time, the Mason Mega Rail Terminal will extend the Port's reach to the Midwest and Upper South, with connections to Atlanta, Chicago, Columbus, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Huntsville, Memphis, and St. Louis. Rail transit times will be cut by 24 hours.

Present and future infrastructure projects are a near-perfect complement to the \$10 billion statewide transportation improvement plan that was adopted by the Georgia State Legislature in 2015. The transportation plan includes several large-scale projects near Savannah aimed at freeing up the flow of freight trucks hauling goods to and from the port, including reconstruction of the I-95 and I-16 interchanges and widening of I-16 in 2019.

**Invest in Savannah's Smart Grid.** In 2017, the City of Savannah and Chatham County reviewed recommendations on the feasibility of installing fiber optic cable throughout the community. In separately researched and modeled feasibility studies, Magellan Advisors suggested that the city and county

## Mason Mega Rail Project



Source: Georgia Ports Authority

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

partner with a private firm, adopting a multi-year planned phase approach to install fiber-optic cables that provide high-speed Internet to users in Chatham County and all its municipalities. Other recommendations include:

- Formalize a Broadband Infrastructure Program
- Develop and promote Broadband-Friendly Public Policies
- Explore state and local strategic partnerships

Outlined in the Fiber-Optic Feasibility Study prepared for Chatham County is the following statement:

### 3.3.1 Enhanced Community and Economic Development

Increasing the availability of fiber-based services will allow Chatham County to enhance its economic development message regarding broadband capabilities. Through the deployment of fiber, communities and business parks in the county can promote themselves as being a "Gigabit Community." Any business evaluating a move to Chatham County would recognize that fiber services are readily available and prevalent at very competitive rates. This fiber community network concept, partnered with data center facilities, would provide the message that a business can locate anywhere in Chatham County and have next-generation broadband availability as good as anywhere in the world.

Advances in technology have elevated the importance of the Internet in economic development and site selection. The availability, quality, and



Source: Chatham County

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

competitiveness of fiber-optic broadband service has become and will continue to be a key issue for Greater Savannah, as it is for competitor communities. In fact, site selectors *expect* broadband. It is not a perk or special benefit. For the Savannah region, it is a critical piece of infrastructure for attracting new capital investment.

Moreover, people want to live where there is broadband service. It improves the manner in which health care and many public services are delivered. It has become an essential quality-of-life amenity for many as it opens new doors for entertainment and communication options like downloading or streaming movies and televisions shows directly to a computer or TV, accessing music through applications like iTunes, and video-conferencing through applications like Skype or Facetime. Broadband allows for a more flexible lifestyle by providing greater access to education through distance learning programs or remote employment.

**Implement “Smart City” Projects.** Last year, Georgia Tech and the Institute for People and Technology announced the 2018 Georgia Smart Communities, chosen from a pool of applicants from around the state who received a \$50,000 grant and participation in a year-long Smart planning study. One of four winners was Chatham County’s “Smart Sea Level Tools for Emergency Planning and Response,” a pilot sensor network for measuring sea level flood risk in order to inform government officials and other key stakeholders in real-time during natural disasters and storms. The pilot network will help to improve flood warnings, emergency response action plans, and flood



## -- Best Practice -- “Intelligent Communities” Dublin, Ohio

Following passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Dublin began installing a network of underground conduit to encourage deployment of broadband by private carriers. A public-private partnership with the Fishel Company followed, and by 2003, Dublin had built and activated the DubLink fiber network that connected city facilities and replaced analog service. Dublin’s financial contribution came through the use of tax increment financing.

In managing the network, the city made a clear distinction between public and private use. The city delivers no services except for governmental use, and leases either conduit space or its own dark fiber to carriers serving the local market. The result is an “open access” strategy that has been proven successful in Stockholm, Sweden (2009 Intelligent Community of the Year) and Loma Linda, California (007 Smart21 Community).

As Dublin installed more and more fiber in its conduits, it entered into capacity-sharing deals with other public and public-private entities, including Columbus FiberNet and the Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC). In return, OSC and Dublin joined forces to create the Central Ohio Research Network (CORN), a fiber infrastructure connecting governments, schools, and businesses to Ohio colleges and universities, research institutes, and Federal labs.

For more information, click on:  
[https://www.intelligentcommunity.org/dublin\\_ohio](https://www.intelligentcommunity.org/dublin_ohio).

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

Predictions for future flood events, as well as serve as the basis for additional sea management tool development, environmental monitoring platform development, and data sharing. The proposal was prepared in collaboration with the City of Savannah and The Creative Coast.

Chatham County's project leverages the ongoing, Google-funded "Climate Stories" research led by Georgia Tech, UGA, and Emory, which uses virtual reality to visualize and shape the narratives of climate impacts and climate solutions in communities throughout Georgia. Leveraging this work, the team will develop the pilot sensor and communications infrastructure, test system capacity and ability to supply data in real-time, design an online aggregation and visualization platform, and perform preliminary flood risk assessments under various environmental scenarios. The team will also continue to engage coastal residents and stakeholders to explore how the community could utilize the data for additional uses.

**Build Production Facilities and Sound Stages.** Georgia has been the location for hundreds of feature films, commercials, music videos and television movies, series, and specials since the 1970s. *Deliverance* (1972), which starred Ned Beatty, Ronny Cox, Burt Reynolds, Jon Voight, earned critical acclaim and commercial success, and is credit with raising the state's profile in Hollywood. Other movies and television series followed, including *Smokey and the Bandit* (1977), *Smokey and the Bandit II* (1980), *The Dukes of Hazzard* (1979-1985), *Driving Miss Daisy* (1989), *In the Heat of the Night* (1988-1994), *My Cousin Vinny* (1992), *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002), and others.



Source: Georgia Institute of Technology

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

Savannah broke into the entertainment scene when filmmakers discovered its historic charm, shooting *Glory* (1990), *Forrest Gump* (1994), *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997), *The Gingerbread Man* (1998), and *The Legend of Bagger Vance* (2000) on local streets, surrounding country clubs, and coastal/rural settings.

In 1994, the City of Savannah created a Film Commission to serve as the advisory body on filming activities in the community. In 2016, to create a more regional approach and focus more efforts on the attraction of productions and qualified crew, SEDA established the Savannah Regional Film Commission (previously the Savannah Area Film Office) which serves as the central point-of-contact for entertainment production in the region. Expansion of the production industry advanced, registering \$120.1 million in direct economic spending in 2018 alone.

Over the decades, Georgia assumed the mantle of being the #1 filming location in the world. Canada has now earned that title, having pioneered the creation of modern film tax credits starting in the late 1990s. Savannah still contends for a large share of business, effectively utilizing Georgia's tax incentives and a local entertainment production rebate made available for qualified productions. The SCAD Savannah Film Festival has gained a reputation as one of the best festivals of the fall season. But the competitive landscape is changing, and Savannah's lack of a full crew base and key infrastructure are challenges that must be overcome to realize the region's full potential for cinematic, televised, and entertainment excellence. For this reason, AE recommends developing sound stages and a stronger mix of pre- and post-production services to enhance its competitive position in the entertainment business.



## -- Best Practice -- “Film & Television Tax Credits” Toronto, Canada

Toronto is one of the world's most tax competitive major cities in the world. Many of the incentives and tax credits being offered are directed toward the film, television, and digital media. Included are:

- Stackable, domestic, and treaty co-production tax credits
- Combining tax credits to save up to 45% on labor costs and up to 35.2% on production costs
- A 33% long-term tax incentive security with the Ontario Premier and other levels of government
- No individual cap on the eligible credit per production or number of productions that can access the credits
- Credits are permanent and fully refundable

Complementing the Toronto Film & Television Tax Credits are those administered by the Ontario Media Development Corporation (Film & Television, Production Services, Computer Animation & Special Effects, and Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credits) and Canada Revenue Agency (Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, and Film or Video Production Services Tax Credit Program).

For more information, click on: <https://www.toronto.ca/business-economy/industry-sector-support/film/why-film-in-toronto/>.

# Strategic Action Plan



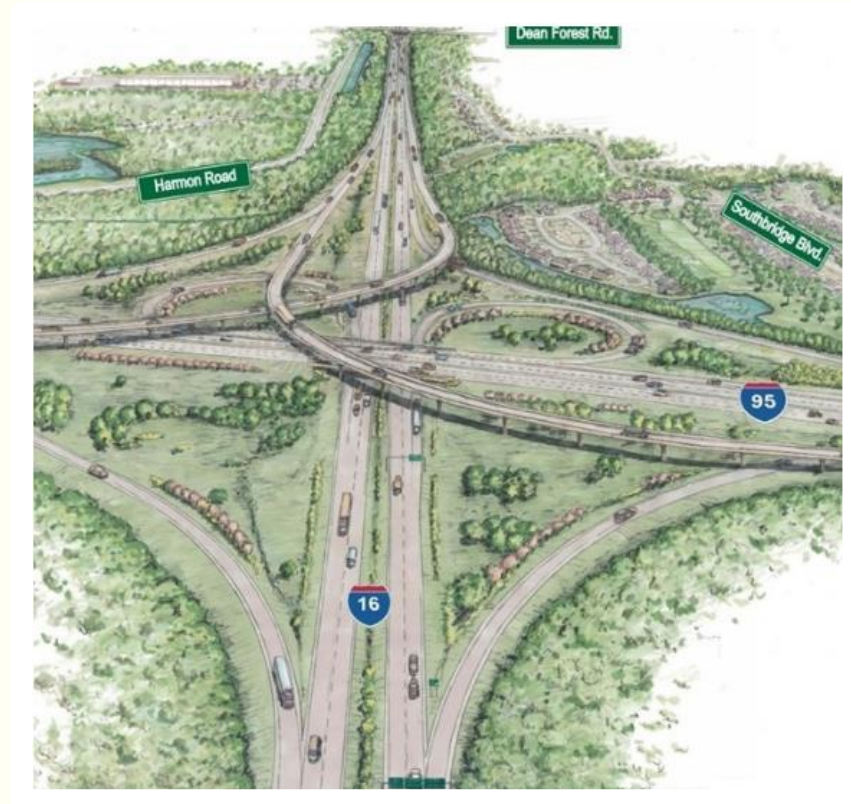
**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #1: Invest in Infrastructure

### Action Items:

- Continue to support Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP), Mason Mega Rail Terminal Project, and \$10 billion statewide transportation improvement plan.
- Continue to support the positioning of the Port of Savannah to most efficiently serve the larger vessels expected to call in greater numbers after expansion of the Panama Canal.
- Continue to support the Georgia Ports Authority, Georgia Department of Transportation, and state legislators as they work to explore how best to replace Savannah's Talmadge Memorial Bridge.
- Invest in Savannah's Smart Grid.
  - Provide fiber optic broadband service for every business and residence in the Savannah Metropolitan Area.
- Implement "Smart City" Projects.
  - Develop approaches to shape Savannah's reputation for state-of-the-art technology and innovation.
  - Build and expand on the "Smart Sea Level Tools for Emergency Planning and Response" project, which is part of Georgia Tech's initiative on Smart Cities and Inclusive Innovation.

## I-16/I-95 Interchange Project



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation

# Strategic Action Plan



**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #1: Invest in Infrastructure

### Action Items:

- Build Production Facilities and Sound Stages.
  - Develop sound stages and provide pre-production, production and post-production services.
- Increase air service and lower costs.
- Increase transportation options for workforce.
- Explore Acquisition of New Technology Platforms and Design a Process to Speed Up and improve customer service for Development and Permitting.
  - Build a “one-stop shop” at City of Savannah Development Services Department.
  - Promote quarterly collaboration meetings between City of Savannah Development Services and local real estate community.
  - Acquire new technology platforms such as Zonability to facilitate real estate investment (click on: <https://zonability.com>).

## I-16/I-95 Interchange Project



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation

# Strategic Action Plan



**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #2: Pursue University Economic Development

In the modern, global knowledge economy, higher education institutions are expected to assume a critical role in state, regional, and local economic development. To meet these expectations, colleges, universities, and high education systems have moved beyond their traditional roles of teaching and research to assume a more prominent role in promoting the economic well-being of their respective communities. This third role, or “mission,” now encompasses a wide range of programs, services, and activities that are performed in collaboration with business, government, non-profit, and other strategic partners.

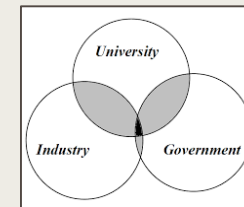
While conducting these activities, colleges and universities have been shifting from a singular focus on basic education and academic research programs to a broader agenda that embraces “cradle-to-grave human capital and talent development” through adult education and training, internships, and life-long learning programs. They are realigning basic research functions to leverage returns on investment through business accelerators/incubators, entrepreneurship/innovation centers, research institutes, university-oriented technology transfer (including extension programs), and university research parks. They are providing objective policy analyses and expertise to inform public policy. They are facilitating community capacity-building efforts that focus on leadership and economic development preparedness. For these reasons, high education institutions are looked upon as powerful “engines of economic growth.”



-- Best Practice --

### “The Triple Helix” The Triple Helix Research Group

The triple helix of academic-industry-government relations provides a best practices model for examining the role of higher education institutions in economic development. This concept is used to describe a shift from the dominant industry-government alliance that has been prevalent in industrial



society, to the academic-industry-government network that characterizes the knowledge economy. In this model, colleges and universities draw upon their strength as generators of knowledge, human capital, and technology, taking their place alongside and integrated with their industry-government partners, in a collaborative effort to stimulate economic development through innovation and policymaking. The intersection of separate and autonomous academic-industry-government spheres reflects the dynamics of communication between their respective realms; the importance of knowledge production, transfer, and application for the creation of wealth; and signals the emergence of the “entrepreneurial university.” Entrepreneurial universities are adept at aligning economic development with their core mission of teaching and research.

For more information, click on: [https://triplehelix.stanford.edu/3helix\\_concept](https://triplehelix.stanford.edu/3helix_concept).



# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

**Create Endowed Chairs at Savannah Area Universities.** Another important part of the university economic development agenda is the creation of endowed chairs. An endowed chair (or endowed professorship) is a position permanently paid for with the interest on principal from a private donation made to the school's overall endowment fund, specifically set up for that purpose. It is the highest academic award that an educational institution can bestow on a faculty member, often designated to reside in a certain department.

The creation of an endowed chair is significantly important to their departmental programs. They're an excellent way to attract world-class faculty, and at the same time, publicly endorse and honor individual/team research accomplishments. In addition to their salaries, endowed chair funding is frequently used for travel and other aspects of their research. It also reinforces the legitimacy of their work, makes it easier to secure grants from government and industry partners, and ensures that the chair's research findings are published in peer-reviewed academic journals.

The AE team recommends creating one endowed chair for each target industry at colleges and universities in the Savannah region, as part of a well-coordinated effort to recruit some of the best and brightest academic minds in those industry sectors. For the endowed chairs, it is further recommended that SEDA and its stakeholders lobby to modify the Georgia Endowment Trust Fund (GETF) formula for state contributions from a 3:1 to 1:1 state match (total sum of not less than \$1 million per endowed chair).

-- Best Practice --



## "SmartState® Endowed Chairs" SC Centers of Economic Excellence State of South Carolina

Established in 2005, the SmartState Program, which partners with Clemson University, Medical University of South Carolina, and University of South Carolina, has attracted the knowledge and expertise of 43 world-class scientists and engineers to South Carolina. South Carolina Education Lottery funds and legislatively-mandated matching non-state funds are used to provide support for these world-class researchers, who head up SmartState Centers of Economic Excellence in a variety of research areas. SmartState Centers are grouped in six industry-focused Smart Clusters to make it easier for business, students, potential faculty, and the public to engage with the SmartState Program.

SmartState Centers have single or multiple partners that are invested in the Center. For example, if the state approves an award of \$5 million in South Carolina Education Lottery Funds, the university must have a non-state partner willing to invest \$5 million. Each SmartState Center includes one or more endowed chairs, research infrastructure, technical staff, and sustainable funding sources.

Research universities involved in the SmartState Program have successfully recruited Endowed Chairs from Harvard, Georgetown, New York University, the University of Pennsylvania, Duke, and others.

For more information, click on: <https://smartstatesc.org/chairs>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

**Capture University Research Dollars.** While evaluating the current economic climate, the AE Market Assessment/Target Industry Analysis compared Savannah’s University R&D expenditures to three benchmark communities—Charleston, SC; Jacksonville, FL; and Houston, TX. Our findings indicated that Savannah had the second lowest amount of Federal R&D expenditures in comparison to the other three metropolitan areas:

University R&D Expenditures		
	Total 2017 Expenditures	Expenditures Per Capita
Savannah	\$17,491,000	\$45.13
Charleston	\$271,194,000	\$349.55
Jacksonville	\$6,476,000	\$4.30
Houston	\$2,080,471,000	\$301.85

It was further noted that growth in Savannah’s University R&D expenditures was high at 26%. The Houston data was informative, but is somewhat of an unfair comparison, given the large difference in population size and number of college and universities. However, Savannah can strengthen its competitive position through the creation of endowment chairs within fields of expertise. This will bolster Georgia Southern University’s ranking as an “R2: Doctoral Universities—Higher Research Activity” institution, placing it in the top 6% of all institutions ranked by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education®.

-- Best Practice --



## “Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education®” Indiana University School of Education Bloomington, Indiana

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education is the framework used to classify colleges and universities in the United States. Developed in 1971 under the leadership of Clark Kerr by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the Classification was designed to support research in higher education by identifying groups of roughly comparable institutions.

Originally published in 1973, and subsequently updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2018, the Classification groups U.S. colleges and universities according to their missions as revealed in the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, and National Science Foundation databases. To maintain consistency with the classification framework and allow for comparison and trend analyses over time, the 2018 Classification update retains the same structure of six parallel classifications, initially adopted in 2005. The 2005 report substantially reworked the classification system, and those revisions have been carried forward ever since. Since its inception, the Carnegie Classifications have been a useful tool for researchers interested in analyzing individual institutions, students and faculty, and the overall higher education system.

Relatedly, *U.S. News & World Report* now uses the Classifications to organize its influential college rankings.

For more information, click on: <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>.

# Strategic Action Plan

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**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #2: Pursue University Economic Development

### Action Items:

- Create Endowed Chairs at Savannah Area Universities.
  - One Endowed Chair for each target industry (Manufacturing & Logistics, Creative & Technical Services, Entertainment Production, and Health Care).
  - Work to revise the Georgia Endowment Trust Fund (GETF) formula for state contributions from a 3:1 to 1:1 state match.
- Capture University Research Dollars.
  - Bolster Georgia Southern University's ranking as an R-2 (Research 2) University, keeping it in the top 6% of all institutions ranked by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.
  - Identify and pursue strategic ways to increase Savannah State University R&D activities.
  - Work community-wide to promote Savannah Technical College and increase the enrollment.

Endowed Chairs



Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education

# Strategic Action Plan



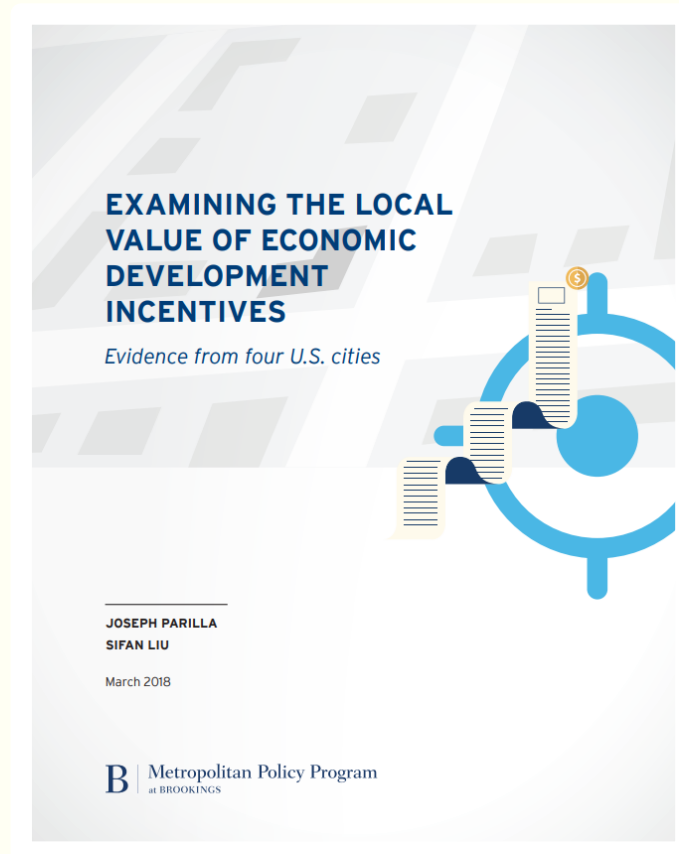
**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #3: Rethink Economic Development Incentives

In a recent report, The Brookings Institution examined the local value of economic development incentives (2018). The authors determined that economic development incentives are a critical component of state and local economic development policy, noting that tens of billions of dollars are spent on incentives each year. They observed that state and local tax incentives for small and medium-sized businesses had tripled since the 1990s, and received widespread attention when applied to mega projects like GlobalFoundries in New York; the Boeing Corporation in Washington and South Carolina; Foxconn Technology Group in Wisconsin; and Amazon in New York City, Crystal City, Virginia, and Nashville.

It's no secret that elected officials and economic developers are under intense pressure to deliver economic opportunity, so direct financial benefits are used to incentivize new corporate locates, and local business expansion and retention projects. Some incentives are mandatory or go into effect automatically, others are discretionary.

Using economic development incentives is part art form, part science. As a rule, their use should be guided by specific goals and quantifiable objectives. This includes determining who the policy will be targeting, how the targeted sectors will be subsidized, the length of received benefits, the desired impact the incentive policy will achieve, and any funding limitations of a particular policy.



Source: The Brookings Institution

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

**Design and Use of Incentives.** The AE team recommends evaluating SEDA’s current economic development incentive guidelines based on the following parameters:

- 1. Define Specific Goals, Objectives, and Limitations.** Economic development incentive policies should reflect the broader objectives outlined in this strategic economic development plan. This includes determining who the incentive policy will be targeting, how the target industry sectors will be subsidized, the length of received benefits, the desired impact the economic incentive policy will achieve, and any funding limitations of a particular policy. Market research should be conducted to support and determine the optimal tax incentive that will achieve each policy’s defined goals.
- 2. Ensure an Appropriate Incentive Policy Duration.** In order for an incentive to be effective, it must create certainty in the marketplace. Stable and reliable incentives will encourage sustained growth. The appropriate term of an incentive policy will vary by project.
- 3. Determine the Optimal Amount for the Incentive:** Equilibrium must be found with regard to incentive amounts. The benefit of the subsidy must be high enough to attract the targeted projects but low enough to avoid market distortions. Incentive benefits should diminish over time allowing for a consistent, sustainable transition once incentivized markets become established and demand strengthens.

-- Best Practice --



### “Economic Development Tax Increment Finance” State of Utah

The state of Utah implemented the EDTIF tax credit as a means to incentivize new renewable energy resource projects. This incentive policy is available to firms who relocate or expand their operations to the state of Utah with clear requirements on who qualifies for the subsidies, how they will be subsidized, the length of the subsidy along with a clear outline of policy limitations and quantifiable objectives for easy evaluation of the policy. For more information, click on: <https://business.utah.gov/programs/corporate-recruitment/>.



### “Incentive Performance Standards” State of Arizona

Arizona has created a focused strategy that sets specific performance standards and ensures compliance on a regularly scheduled basis. Arizona’s Joint Legislative Income Tax Credit Review Committee meets annually to consider personal and corporate income tax credits. Also, per state law, all new and existing tax credits must come under review every five years. When a tax credit policy comes under review it must prove that it is meeting its defined performance criteria. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee staff must also be prepared to answer certain questions regarding the tax credit policy. Those questions may include general information regarding the policy, its purpose, financial impact, and results, which will determine the program’s overall viability. Once the JLBC staff analysis is complete, it is presented to a public panel that can make formal recommendations. For more information, click on: <https://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/jlitrcrpt112417.pdf>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

- 4. Monitor Performance Standards and Compliance:** All economic development policies should be held accountable to performance standards and monitored regularly. By doing so, the efficacy of the economic development program can be monitored and maintained. Economic development programs should routinely meet or exceed performance standards defined by the policy.
- 5. Implement an Evaluation Process:** The evaluation process should measure the performance and effectiveness of an economic development incentive based on the proposal, cost/benefit analysis, impact on tax base and businesses, and the overall success of the program. Key performance measures should be quantifiable in nature. Clear and concise evaluation procedures will ensure a high level of consistency and transparency in a economic development policy.
- 6. Choose the Correct Incentive:** Every industry is different and must be incentivized as such. Choosing the correct incentive program by understanding the needs and major obstacles within the targeted industry will increase the chances of success.
- 7. Understand the Interactions between Incentive Programs:** Policies are not independent and therefore rely on each other in either a positive or negative capacity. Ideally, incentives should be designed to complement or enhance existing incentive policies at the local, regional, state and federal level. Therefore, as policymakers consider policies, they should



-- Best Practice --

### “Data Center Tax Abatement” State of Nevada

A partial abatement from personal property tax and sales and use tax are available to data center companies that locate or expand their business in Nevada. The personal property tax abatement can be up to 75% of the taxes due for 10 or 20 year abatement periods. Abatements for sales and use tax are for taxes imposed on the purchase of eligible machinery or equipment. The abatement reduces the applicable tax rate to 2% for a period of 10 or 20 years, a near 75% reduction. Abatements apply to co-located businesses of the data center. For more information, click on: <http://diversifynevada.com/>.



### “Sustainable Alternative Green Energy” Ponca City, Oklahoma

The Sustainable Alternative Green Energy (SAGE) program accelerates the opportunities for renewable energy in north central Oklahoma. Visionary community leaders created a blend of SAGE initiatives to promote energy-efficiency management, reduce energy consumption and costs for local industry, and significantly expand the residential and commercial use of geothermal, solar, and wind power energy. The latter initiative involves the replacement of natural gas heating and cooling in residential and commercial structures with ground source heat pumps, resulting in energy savings in the range of 35%, providing consumers with significant cost savings. For more information, click on: <https://www.tradeandindustrydev.com/industry/alternative-energy-fuels/clean-gold-clean-industry-initiatives-are-huge-eco-14386>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

determine whether a proposed policy will supplement or compete against existing policies.

8. **Simplify the Application Process:** The application process for an incentive program should be clear, succinct, and have all information easily accessible. However, the application process should not compromise the integrity of the determination process for a project's feasibility. Assistance should be readily available for those who are interested in applying for the incentive program and for those already engaged in the application process.
9. **Approve a Marketing Budget to Facilitate Consumer Education and Awareness:** Creating consumer awareness about the available incentive options is crucial to the success of any given incentive program. Campaigns should aim to inform the targeted markets about benefits, program applications, application process, and the general availability of existing programs.
10. **Overcome Institutional Barriers:** Address institutional and structural issues by collaborating with local and regional firms, governments, or agencies. Work to establish strong, mutually beneficial relationships with these different entities to facilitate robust economic growth.

As part of an effort to rethink economic development incentives, the AE team offers the following suggestions:

-- Best Practice --



### “Industry Cluster Grants” Rhode Island Commerce Corporation

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation offers competitive grants to start, grow, or improve industry sector partnerships, encouraging companies to work together to solve problems, exchange technology, and share talent. Planning grants up to \$250,000 are available for feasibility studies and organizational development activities. Implementation grants up to \$500,000 can be used to launch a well-defined program to improve a key industry sector's growth and effectiveness. For more information, click on: <https://commerceri.com/innovation-incentives/>.



### “Space Liability and Immunity Act” State of Virginia

The Virginia Space Liability and Immunity Act was enacted to combat certain challenges related to companies participating in the human commercial spaceflight industry. The state recognized that growing their commercial aerospace industry would require protecting them from certain risks. By understanding and addressing the major obstacles and development needs of this industry sector, the legislature passed a law that limited liabilities in an event of an accident. The policy has since enjoyed enormous success, encouraging companies to expand or relocate to the state. The success of the act has also led the Virginia legislature to pass the Zero G Zero Tax Act, another policy incentivizing with tax exemptions on certain services within the industry. For more information, click on: <https://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt501.pdf>.

# Strategic Action Plan



## Community Capacity Building: Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

- **Compare Port Incentives.** Compare the threshold of Port of Savannah economic development incentives and tax credits with competitor port city incentive thresholds (e.g., Port of Charleston, Port of Jacksonville, Port of Houston, and others) and make adjustments, as appropriate.
- **Regional Business Incentives.** Conduct a comprehensive review of regional business incentives and make sure they apply to existing expanding companies, as well as assisted corporate locates; tie to wages, employment, and other “nice-to-haves” like local workforce hiring, veteran hiring, ex-felon hiring (tiered based on thresholds; specify what type of projects are eligible for incentive and which do not get incentives).
- **Savannah Regional Film Commission Incentives.** Toronto, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, and Canada Revenue Agency promote themselves as the world’s most tax competitive entities for film, television, and digital media. The Savannah Regional Film Commission should determine how it might offer more competitive incentives for screen-based films.
- **Affordable Childcare Incentives.** Explore offering incentives for providing childcare/daycare in Census tracts that have poverty above a certain threshold.



-- Best Practice --

### “Evaluation: Film Incentives” Economic Development Incentives Evaluation Series State of Virginia

Through provisions of the 2016-2018 Appropriation Act, the General Assembly of Virginia directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to review and evaluate economic development initiatives. Relevant topics reviewed include economic development incentives, assisted corporate locate and expansion/retention outcomes, the economic benefits of incentives, and the effectiveness of incentives.

The “Evaluation: Film Incentives” report provides comprehensive information about the effectiveness and economic benefits of three incentives offers to promote the expansion of the film industry in Virginia: Motion Picture Production Tax Credit; Governor’s Motion Picture Opportunity Fund; and Film, Television, and Audio Production Inputs Exemption. Analyses are made on the distribution of film tax credit and grant awards by fiscal year of award; review of film incentive applications to identify competitors for film production activity; film incentives by state; findings of peer-reviewed research; and results of economic and revenue impacts.

The film tax credit and grant were found to have mixed success in achieving their goals; the tax credit and grant had a positive impact on Virginia’s economy; and both incentives provide a low return on investment. Options and recommendations are outlined for executive and legislative action.

For more information, click on: <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt501.pdf>.



# Strategic Action Plan

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**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #3: Rethink Economic Development Incentives

### Action Items

- Port Incentives
  - Analyze and adjust current incentives for logistics companies to more closely align with desired outcomes i.e. higher wages, more employment per sq ft, green/environmentally friendly construction or operations, etc.
  - Compare threshold of Port incentives vs. other port city incentive thresholds; adjust, as appropriate.
- Regional Business Incentives.
  - Apply to local expansion projects as well as assisted corporate locates; tie to wages, permanent employment, personal property, other “nice-to-haves” like local workforce hiring, veteran hiring, ex-felon hiring, etc.
- Savannah Entertainment Production Incentives.
  - Continue to offer competitive local incentives for the entertainment production industry.
  - Create competitive incentives for sound stage development.



# Strategic Action Plan

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**Community Capacity Building:**  
Create Economic Opportunity for All Savannahians

## Strategy #3: Rethink Economic Development Incentives

### Action Items

- Affordable Childcare Incentives.
  - Explore offering incentives for providing childcare/daycare in Census tracts that have poverty above a certain threshold.
  - Design incentives would assist childcare/daycare in becoming Quality Rated.



# Economic Development Metrics

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As the global economy becomes more complex and sophisticated, measuring the impact and influence of economic development activities becomes increasingly important.

Outlined in this document are a list of economic development metrics that will assist the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) and their economic development partners in assessing performance while implementing the strategic plan. Besides helping SEDA and its partners to evaluate performance, the metrics provide a solid foundation for having informed discussions with civic leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

AE recommends preparing quarterly reports that reflect progress against the four overarching goals, strategies, and action items that appear in the plan. Transparency and accountability are organizational attributes that will help build support for economic development throughout the Savannah region. Project partners will need to agree upon a concise set of the most appropriate performance measures and a schedule for the periodic reporting of results.

Additionally, AE recommends that SEDA host an annual “scorecard” meeting to review progress. This information can be incorporated into SEDA’s Annual Report and made available on the organization’s website. This will provide an opportunity for SEDA and its economic development allies to demonstrate the positive results of their work. The economic development metrics can also be used to help guide preparation of SEDA’s Business Plan by aligning the strategies and action items with projected outcomes for the upcoming year.

## Business Climate

### *Permitting*

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

### *EDO*

- Deal conversion rate (ratio of prospect visits into recruited projects)
- Number of prospect inquiries
- Number of prospect visits
- Number of annual BR&E visits
- Percentage of businesses surveyed and profiled

### *Marketing and Branding*

- No. of media impressions about Savannah
- Website visitor engagements
  - Average number of clickthroughs on website
  - Average number of page views by visitors
  - Average time spent on website
- Number of social media followers (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.)
- Number of social media shares (re-tweets, likes, etc.)
- Number of subscribers to content (newsletter)
- R&E survey

## Economy

- Average wage
- Total wages and percent change
- Per capita income

# Economic Development Metrics

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## Economy (continued)

- Total new jobs
- Average wages for new jobs
- GDP growth
- Population changes
- Local new job listings
- Unemployment rate
- Changes in property values (all product types)

## Infrastructure/Real Estate

### *Residential*

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

### *Commercial*

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

## Target Industries

### *Growth*

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

### *Target Industries Talent Pool*

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

## Employment Centers/Corridors

- Employment center business growth
- Employment center job creation
- Employment center gross revenues
- Number of new development projects

## Entrepreneurial Metrics

### *Business Creation*

- New business starts (incorporations)

# Economic Development Metrics

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## Entrepreneurial Metrics (continued)

### *Business Creation*

- Number of incubated businesses
- No. of minority/women-owned businesses

### *Capital and R&D Activity*

- Angel and venture funding
- Number of patent applications/patents approved
- R&D spending
- ROI of private investment to public investment (annual)

## International

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

# Implementation Matrix

The Implementation Matrix serves as a tool to assign responsibility and a timeline to each recommended action item. The updating of this document should be overseen by the economic development team as responsibilities change or as progress is made.

Propel Savannah Strategic Economic Development Action Plan		Implementation Timeline			Implementation Partners															
		Short-Term 1 Year	Mid-Term 2-3 Years	Long-Term 3 Years+	SEDA	Chamber of Commerce	City Government	County Government	Creative Coast	Higher Education	K-12	Local Utilities	Nonprofits	Port of Savannah	Private Business Leaders	Savannah Film Commission	Visit Savannah	Workforce Development Entities	WTCsav	
<b>Goal 1 Economic Development: United Greater Savannah with a Cohesive Vision</b>																				
<b>1-1</b>	<b>Develop a world-class economic development marketing and attraction program</b>																			
1.1.1	Explore creating an effective, united brand strategy for Greater Savannah.		x		L	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
1.1.2	Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to promote Savannah's brand.	x			L															
1.1.3	Continue the quality development of the Savannah Manufacturing Center while executing the comprehensive marketing plan for the site to include website, press, direct correspondence, etc.	x			L	x	x	x						x						
1.1.4	Elevate high-level advocacy at the state level for advanced manufacturing projects.	x			L									x						
1.1.5	Continue to advance the strategy for growing a sustainable entertainment production industry in the Savannah area by attracting/developing sound stages, pre-production, production and post-production services, etc.	x			L										x					
1.1.6	Continue to leverage WTC Savannah's network and services to generate Foreign Direct Investment leads for the region.	x												x					x	
1.1.7	Support Visit Savannah's ongoing efforts to attract affluent visitors, lengthen visitor stays and increase spending.	x			L	x											x			
1.1.8	Strategically partner with neighboring counties like the Savannah Harbor-Interstate 16 Corridor Joint Development Authority for the location of projects that best match the company requirements and needs.				L			x												
1.1.9	Actively promote the Savannah World Trade Center for Investment, SEDA/WTCsav's 15 regional center, to attract foreign capital and create jobs in the area.				L	x													x	
<b>1-2</b>	<b>Expand the Business Retention &amp; Expansion Program</b>																			
1.2.1	Continue the existing industry visitation program.	x			L									x						
1.2.2	Better promote the BRE program and celebrate successes.	x			L															
1.2.3	Expand tools in the BRE "toolbox."		x		L															
<b>1-3</b>	<b>Celebrate economic success</b>																			
1.3.1	Strengthen the promotion of new corporate announcements locations and expansions.	x			L															
1.3.2	Employer awards.	x			L															
1.3.3	Promote and elevate the successes of existing companies (big and small), the local school system and public safety entities.	x			L		x	x			x									
1.3.4	Continue to publish the SEDA Annual Report for required release of financials and to document the SEDA story and accomplishments for the year.	x			L															
1.3.5	Explore a consistent communication from high-level SEDA staff to local organizations about relevant news, progress and accomplishments.		x		L															
1.3.6	Set up a consistent rotation of editorials from SEDA/WTC/Film staff regarding their expertise and/or relevant issues.		x		L										x				x	
1.3.7	Continue to consistently send a newsletter.	x			L															
<b>1-4</b>	<b>Leadership</b>																			

# Appendices

# Appendix A – SEDA Annual Report

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Approximately 19,000 U.S.-based communities and economic development organizations compete for 5,500 corporate locate projects each year. Of this amount, roughly 3,500 of these projects are new corporate locates, and the remaining 2,000 are local expansion and retention projects. This is the competitive environment in which the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) operates. Moreover, SEDA is often “competing up,” as evidenced by three benchmark communities identified in the strategic plan—Charleston, SC; Houston, TX; and Jacksonville, FL.

## SEDA Annual Report

SEDA’s mission is to help create jobs and attract investment to expand the regional economy. The work they do is outlined in SEDA’s Annual Report, which lists 19 expansions/announcements, 1,056 new job opportunities, and \$494 million in capital investment for the organization’s economic development activities in 2017.

Representative of SEDA’s success economic development efforts are the organization’s “Top 10” projects:

- ⑩ Major infrastructure progress at Savannah Manufacturing Center and marketing to 200 site selectors and project managers around the nation.
- ⑨ Three Creative Technology announcements for a total of \$365,000 investment with an average wage for jobs created \$43.31 per hour.
- ⑧ World Trade Center Savannah hosted U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, Canada’s Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food Lawrence MacAulay and Mexico’s Minister of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food Jose Eduardo Calzada Roviroso for a panel, “Partners for Agriculture in North America.”
- ⑦ Nearly \$65 million in direct economic spend by entertainment productions in Chatham County with 99 professional and 161 student productions. Savannah was also named number one “Best 10 Small Places and Towns to Live and Work as a Moviemaker” for the second year in a row by *MovieMaker Magazine*.
- ⑥ Won Excellence in Economic Development Silver Award in the Multi-Year Economic Development category by the International Economic Development Council for SEDA’s entertainment production strategy and the valuable partnership of the City of Savannah, Chatham County and SEDA in the creation of a Savannah Area Film Office.
- ⑤ World Trade Center Savannah led a German business development mission trip with eight economic development county partners: Screven, Brunswick and Glynn, Bryan, Charlton, McIntosh, Valdosta-Lowndes, Bulloch, Liberty and Chatham.
- ④ SEDA and SCAD announced a groundbreaking partnership, SCAD+, designed to help SCAD alumni develop commercially viable digital products and advance Savannah’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.



# Appendix A – SEDA Annual Report

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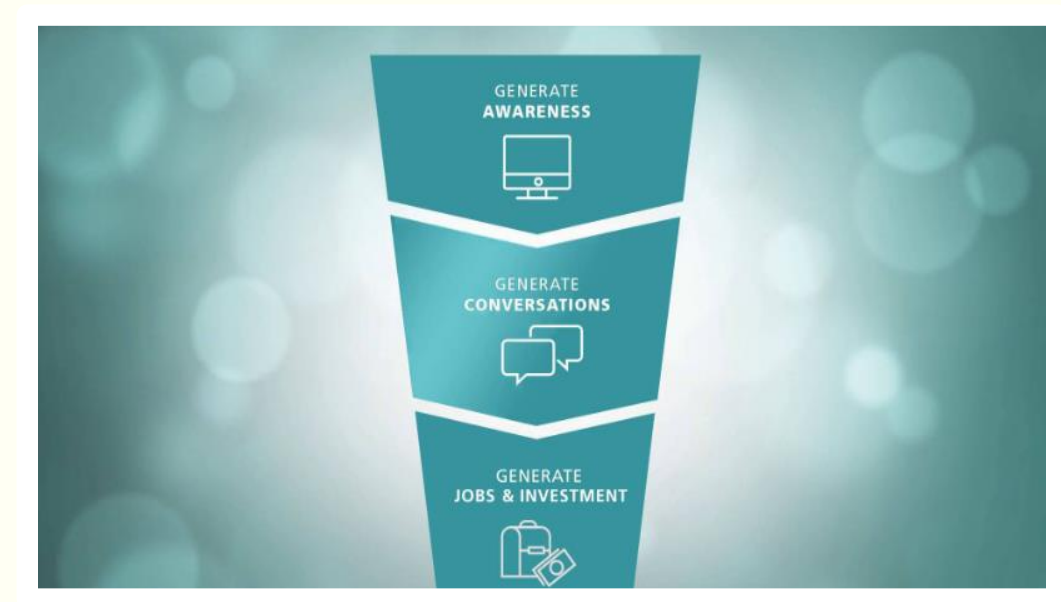
Approximately 19,000 U.S.-based communities and economic development organizations compete for 5,500 corporate locate projects each year. Of this amount, roughly 3,500 of these projects are new corporate locates, and the remaining 2,000 are local expansion and retention projects. This is the competitive environment in which the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) operates. Moreover, SEDA is often “competing up,” as evidenced by the three benchmark communities identified in the strategic plan—Charleston, SC; Houston, TX; and Jacksonville, FL.

## SEDA Annual Report

- ③ Number of Foreign Direct Investment projects opened in 2017 increased by 62.5 percent from previous year.
- ② Returned seven parcels of improved land to the Chatham County tax digest, resulting in almost \$900,000 in additional property tax revenue.
- ① Every dollar invested and every retained or new job opportunity that SEDA helped facilitate. Including 1,056 new job opportunities and \$494 million in investment.

***“Each phone call, RFI completed, trade show attended, marketing effort executed, event planned and all actions in between, supported the efforts that led to the creation of jobs and investment in Chatham County.”***

— SEDA Annual Report



Source: SEDA Annual Report 2017

# Appendix B – Metropolitan Statistical Areas

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## Savannah MSA

Chatham County, GA

Bryan County, GA

Effingham County, GA

## Jacksonville MSA

Duval County, FL

St. Johns County, FL

Clay County, FL

Nassau County, FL

Baker County, FL

## Charleston MSA

Berkeley County, SC

Charleston County, SC

Dorchester County, SC

## Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA

Harris County, TX

Fort Bend County, TX

Montgomery County, TX

Brazoria County, TX

Galveston County, TX

Liberty County, TX

Waller County, TX

Chambers County, TX

Austin County, TX

# Appendix C – Industry Selection: Cluster Concentration

Cluster Concentration		
Sector	MSA LQ	MSA Employment
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.4	2,100
Accommodation and food services	1.4	23,100
Wholesale trade	1.24	6,300
Transportation and warehousing	1.24	11,100
Administrative and waste services	1.16	11,900
Manufacturing	1.15	16,900
Retail trade	1.15	21,500
Unclassified	1.05	300
Other services, except public administration	0.98	5,400
Educational services	0.96	3,500
Health care and social assistance	0.96	20,500
Real estate and rental and leasing	0.91	2,300
Utilities	0.88	400
Construction	0.85	7,000
Information	0.58	1,900
Professional and technical services	0.52	5,500
Finance and insurance	0.49	3,400
Management of companies and enterprises	0.32	800

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, AngelouEconomics

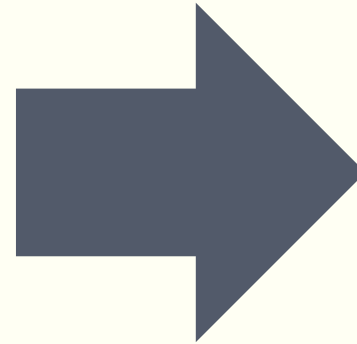
- Clusters measure know-how, employment skills, supply chain, and R&D.
- Clusters provide greater efficiency and lower costs.

### Location Quotient (LQ)

LQ = 1.0 indicates average cluster  
 LQ > 2.0 indicates a strong cluster  
 LQ < 0.5 indicates a weak cluster

# Appendix C – Industry Selection: Cluster Concentration

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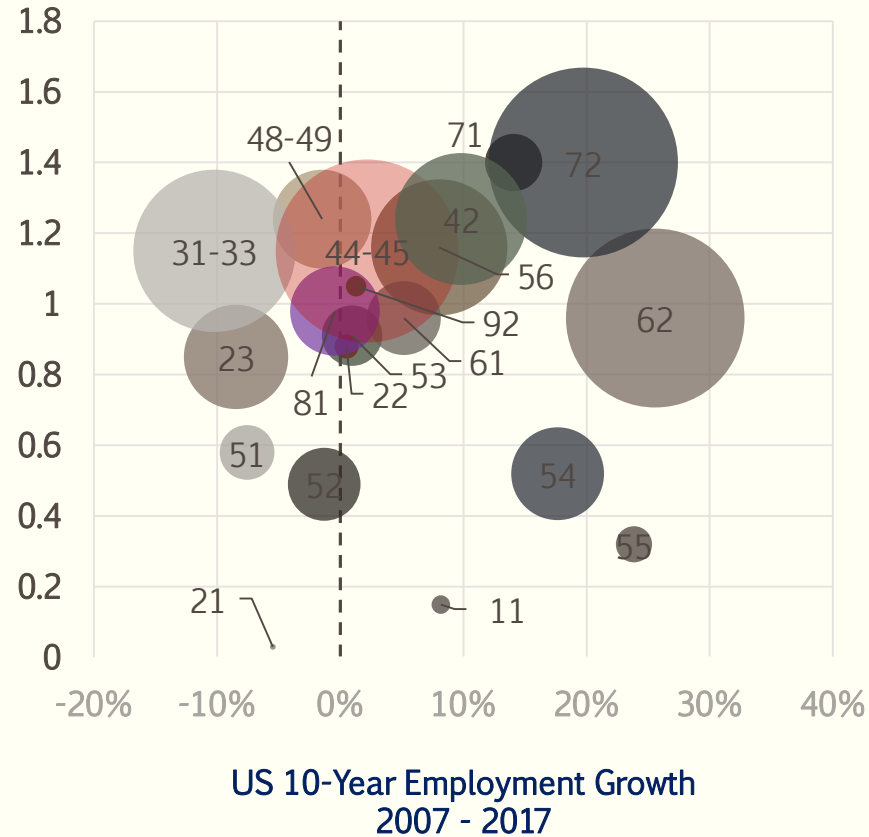
Cluster Concentration	
Sector	MSA LQ
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.40
Accommodation and food services	1.40
Wholesale trade	1.24
Transportation and warehousing	1.24
Administrative and waste services	1.16
Manufacturing	1.15
Retail trade	1.15

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, AngelouEconomics

# Appendix C – Industry Selection: Industry Trends

Savannah MSA  
LQ 2017

Bubble size =  
MSA Employment

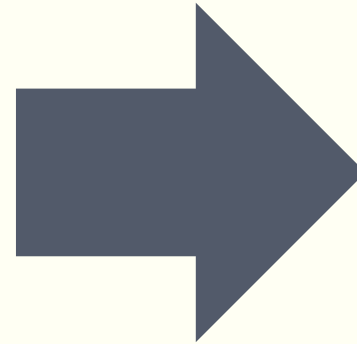


Industry Key		
Industry	NAICS Code	US 10-Year Growth
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	11	8%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	21	-5%
Utilities	22	1%
Construction	23	-8%
Manufacturing	31-33	-10%
Wholesale trade	42	-1%
Retail trade	44-45	2%
Transportation and warehousing	48-49	10%
Information	51	-8%
Finance and insurance	52	-1%
Real estate and rental and leasing	53	1%
Professional and technical services	54	18%
Management of companies and enterprises	55	24%
Administrative and waste services	56	8%
Educational services	61	5%
Health care and social assistance	62	26%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	71	14%
Accommodation and food services	72	20%
Other services, except public administration	81	0%
Unclassified	99	1%

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, AngelouEconomics

# Appendix C – Industry Selection: Industry Trends

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US 10-Year Growth	
Sector	10-Year Growth
Health care and social assistance	26%
Management of companies and enterprises	24%
Accommodation and food services	20%
Professional and technical services	18%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	14%
Transportation and warehousing	10%

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, AngelouEconomics



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AE is located in west Austin on Hwy 2244 (Bee Cave Road) directly between the Hwy 360 interchange (to the east) and the Hill Country Galleria in Bee Cave (to the west).

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## About Us

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

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

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

To learn more, visit [www.angeloueconomics.com](http://www.angeloueconomics.com)

## Project Team

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