



Madison Region's Strategy for Economic Growth



# PHASE 3: COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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## THRIVE HERE

Thrive is the economic development partnership for the eight-county Madison Region with a vision to create a dynamic environment where people and businesses prosper. We create value with initiatives that focus on long-term, sustained results aimed at building the region's competitive advantage while preserving and enhancing quality of life. Thrive works in the spirit of collaboration to ensure resources are available to the people and organizations that do business here. We serve the Wisconsin counties of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock, and Sauk.

## LIVE WORK GROW

*Market Street* brings original insights and clarity to the evaluation and revitalization of the places where people live, work, and grow. Through honest and informed assessments, *Market Street* can equip you with the tools to create meaningful change. Our solutions successfully merge our experience and expertise with the economic and social realities of our clients. *Market Street's* community partners are successful at creating stronger programs, increasing operational budgets, and creating new quality jobs with competitive wages that improve the quality of life in their communities.

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## ADVANCE NOW OVERVIEW

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The Great Recession has significantly altered the economic landscape of the United States. While some communities are trying to “get back on track,” the **Advance Now** process is a deliberate and proactive effort to strategically position the Madison Region to take advantage of economic opportunities as they reemerge. The Madison Region—comprised of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock, and Sauk counties—enjoys tremendous assets, but has, at times, struggled to translate these strengths into economic opportunity. The region lags behind much of the nation in jobs creation and per capita income growth.

Regional leaders are thinking anew about the Madison Region’s competitive advantages and the need for visionary, aggressive new initiatives to harness these opportunities. *Market Street Services* has partnered with Thrive to coordinate **Advance Now**, a formal Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy planning process that will systematically move the Madison Region’s economy forward. **Advance Now** can unite fragmented economic development efforts with a comprehensive action-oriented strategy that will enable the eight-county region to compete on a larger scale in today’s global marketplace. It will take a much greater effort than ever attempted by the region.

Led by an engaged Strategy Committee of regional leaders representing a variety of backgrounds, the **Advance Now** process is intended to create an actionable strategy that will not sit on the shelf. The final outcome of this four-phase process will be a detailed program of work for Thrive’s leadership, professional staff, and regional partners to leverage new opportunities that concurrently strengthen the region’s business climate, create new jobs with competitive wages, and preserve and enhance quality of life across the region.

***Phase I. Competitive Assessment & Stakeholder Input:*** The Competitive Assessment provided a detailed look at the eight-county Madison Region’s demographic, socioeconomic, and economic trends in recent years compared to the metro areas of Austin, Texas; Des Moines, Iowa; and Lincoln, Nebraska, as well as the state of Wisconsin and the nation. The realities of the regional economy, well-being of residents, and growth and development of the community were examined. In addition to a community-wide online survey, a series of focus groups and one-on-one interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from throughout the Madison Region to complement the quantitative findings of the Competitive Assessment. This input will directly inform the recommendations of the five-year strategy.

*Phase II. Target Cluster Analysis & Marketing Review:* The Target Cluster Analysis drew on Phase I research and input to provide a look at the Madison Region's economy that goes beyond traditional measures of current and potential future economic activity. Leveraging Thrive's current targets and key stakeholder input, the end result was a well-refined list of business clusters that highlighted the most important existing and the most promising emerging targets for Madison's regional leaders to pursue.

The Marketing Review component of this phase assessed the Madison Region's image among national site location professionals and identified best practice economic development marketing programs across the country.

*Phase III. Advance Now Strategy:* The **Advance Now** Strategy can serve as a tool unifying Thrive and its regional partners across the eight counties behind a consensus blueprint for economic development in the Madison Region. Developed in collaboration with the Thrive staff and driven by the volunteer leadership of the Strategy Committee, the final Strategy is a detailed and visionary game plan of goals, objectives, and actions to achieve over a five-year period. The Strategy will also position Thrive to obtain a federally approved Economic Development District designation for the eight-county Madison Region.

*Phase IV. Implementation Plan:* If the Madison Region's **Advance Now** Strategy determines the "what" of the eight-county Thrive region's preferred future, then the Implementation Plan answers the "how." The Implementation Plan is a playbook that will guide the launch of **Advance Now** and drives its ongoing momentum through the five years of implementation. It will provide capacity assessments, measurement tools, plans for years one through five, and other information necessary to successfully implement the **Advance Now** Strategy with Thrive's public- and private-sector partners in the eight-county region.

## INTRODUCTION

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The Madison Region is changing.

Some of these changes are the result of national and global economic shifts. The movement of traditional manufacturing from the Midwest and North to the Sun Belt, and then from the U.S. to offshore, lower-cost countries, has been acutely felt in many of the Madison Region's larger communities. The Great Recession has shaken the region's employment base, driving unemployment rates higher than the Madison Region has ever experienced while the costs of living and housing have also grown.

There is serious concern among many regional stakeholders that the Madison Region missed opportunities and has lost its standing in sectors of historic strength as other metro areas across the U.S. aggressively position themselves for business retention, attraction, and startup creation.

Other changes include the impacts of transition at the state level. Cuts to higher education and the shrinking tax base that have historically fueled the region's strong education and government sectors have been seriously impacted. The economic base that the Madison Region has long taken for granted is in jeopardy. Political conflict has pushed Madison onto the national stage and caused serious rifts in public discourse and partnerships. The Madison Region cannot prosper without crossing lines of conflict to engage in strong collaborations and restore fractured relationships.

And still more changes are driven by the Madison Region itself and the individual communities that populate it. The region is growing in many kinds of diversity—race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, ideologies, backgrounds, and nationalities. How the region will address these demographic changes and embrace new residents will define its future standing as a community of choice. In addition, as Baby Boomers—the generation that has enjoyed a strong presence and voice in the region for nearly 50 years—are beginning to retire from the workforce and community institutions, there is a critical need to welcome and cultivate the next generation of leadership to advance the region. Questions about the future of the region's identity and economic development vision that have been discussed for decades must be resolved.

The theme of taking existing assets and advantages in the region to the next level and building sustainable momentum is emphasized throughout the **Advance Now** Strategy. The message of urgency in moving the region forward cannot be underscored enough. The region has missed opportunities to formulate a message around its historic assets while other regions across the U.S. have pushed themselves to the forefront of economic development activities. The momentum that began with

the inception of Thrive must accelerate to successfully enact the vision and objectives of this Strategy. The time to strategically position the Madison Region as a competitive, proactive, and progressive community is now.

#### STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS

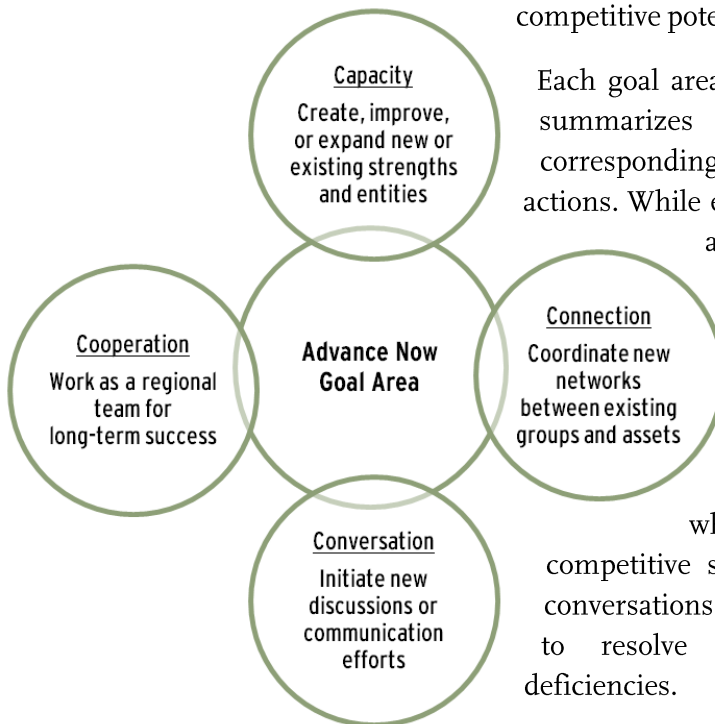
This Strategy is organized into five interrelated goal areas intentioned to advance the region's existing assets and build future opportunities and competitive capacity over the five-year course of **Advance Now** implementation:



Visionary and re-energized leadership will be necessary to realize the goals of the **Advance Now** Strategy. Regional leaders must focus on building board, volunteer, and professional staff capacity through strategic outreach to diverse communities in order to drive successful implementation of **Advance Now**. The Madison Region's public and private leadership cannot sustain the status quo or operate in silos. In addition, an emerging generation of leadership—one of the region's greatest assets—

must be plugged in and empowered to ensure that the Strategy’s progress continues and is sustainable through the course of its five-year cycle and beyond. The next five years are just the beginning of building and capitalizing on a competitive future for the Madison Region.

Each **Advance Now** goal area is interrelated and inextricably linked to the success of the others. No single goal is more important than another; the pursuit of a single goal without implementing the others will limit the future capacity and success of **Advance Now** and dull the effectiveness of a holistic regional strategic process. The Madison Region will not move forward without balanced attention to both historic and emerging challenges that could otherwise continue to hinder the region’s competitive potential.



Each goal area is qualified by a vision statement that summarizes the regional consensus for its corresponding objectives and numbered strategic actions. While each goal has diverse components, there are several core aims of many of the corresponding actions and sub-actions: capacity, connection, conversation, and cooperation in the Madison Region. Numerous activities outlined in this Strategy focus on building capacity in areas where the region currently lacks a competitive scope. Actions also seek to drive new conversations and cooperation in the region in order to resolve lingering conflicts, disparities, or deficiencies.

It should be noted that this Strategy does not encompass every activity and plan currently at play in the eight-county region, nor does it seek to please every player. The Madison Region has previously not been as aggressive or strategic in the field of economic development as similar or competitor regions in the U.S.; therefore the core purpose of this Strategy is to establish the building blocks of a strong holistic economic development program that will best advance the region’s capacity to compete and assert a distinct identity.



## REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

These goals, objectives, and strategic actions are directly informed by guidance and input from stakeholders and leaders from Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock, and Sauk counties. Through each phase of **Advance Now**, multiple stakeholder groups have provided extensive feedback on research findings—from the Competitive Assessment, Target Cluster Analysis, and Marketing Review reports—and strategic implications of the region’s assets and challenges.



## NEXT STEPS

Upon the completion and adoption of the **Advance Now** Strategy, *Market Street* will work with the Strategy Committee and Thrive staff and partners to develop an Implementation Plan, the final phase of the strategic planning process. This phase will prioritize the tasks outlined in this Strategy, identify implementing organizations, develop a five-year budget, and propose the organizational structure for enacting the Strategy.

A clear first-year plan will be presented along with priorities for immediate action. Timetables for years two through five will also be prepared with specific actions. Activity measures and outcome benchmarks will also be presented for each goal area to track the success of **Advance Now** implementation over the course of its five years. At present, the region may not have the capacity to implement every recommendation in the Strategy, but that should not discourage support for the goals, objectives, and actions. The Implementation Plan will propose approaches for building these resources.

#### NOTE ON THE STRATEGY

It is important to point out that across the eight-county Madison Region, many activities, entities, and initiatives are already in place engaging some of the actions outlined in the Strategy that follows. *Market Street* and Thrive have attempted to identify some—but not all—of the current efforts at work. However, further identification and articulation of these efforts by regional partners will be necessary to inform the final Strategy and the Implementation Plan that follows. It is incumbent upon leaders in the region to identify where their efforts align with **Advance Now**—both in this document and as the five-year effort progresses.

Please contact Joe Klosterman, Project Specialist at Thrive, to ensure the region's most critical and results-driven initiatives related to the goal areas of **Advance Now** are incorporated in the following objectives and action items: 608-443-1965, [jklosterman@thrivehere.org](mailto:jklosterman@thrivehere.org).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The following individuals provided guidance and leadership over the **Advance Now** strategic planning process. These leaders represent a diverse range of businesses and organizations in the Madison Region's public and private sectors.

The group's oversight ensured that the development of research reports and the Strategy itself was reflective of the Madison Region's true competitive issues and opportunities.

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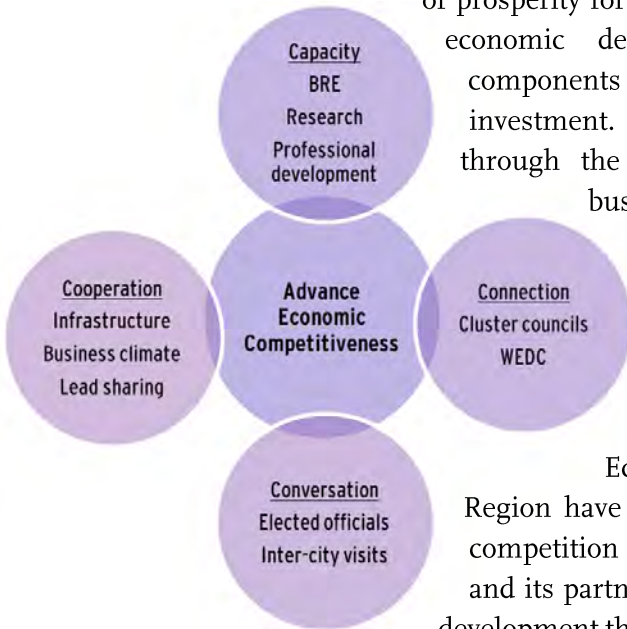
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## ADVANCE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

**Through a comprehensive regional approach to economic development and the strategic pursuit of job creation and business growth in five target clusters, the Madison Region will be a place with diverse, quality employment opportunities and viable, successful businesses.**

As the eight-county Madison Region seeks to position itself as a competitive region for business development, it is evident that more must be done to chart a new course of prosperity for the region. Building the capacity to be competitive in economic development involves a number of interrelated components that combine to encourage job creation and investment. Economic development is most successfully practiced through the pursuit of multiple strategies—including existing business retention and expansion, recruitment, and small business development—and must be championed by strong, coordinated initiatives which continually strive to enhance the regional business climate, workforce competitiveness, and quality of life amenities.



Economic development professionals in the Madison Region have worked to recruit and expand businesses, but with competition for new jobs and business at an all-time high, Thrive and its partners must ramp up team efforts and address economic development through a comprehensive, regional approach.

Key activities in this goal area:

- ➔ *Enhance business retention and expansion efforts and leverage existing firms to attract new companies to the region.*
- ➔ *Develop several shovel-ready permitted sites and other expedited development incentives—including streamlined permitting and regulatory processes at the state and local levels—to increase the efficiency of regional business growth.*

- *Expand professional development and research capacity for regional economic development practitioners.*
- *Increase collaboration and partnerships among local economic development organizations in the region.*
- *Develop and launch regional business cluster councils for businesses and stakeholders in the Madison Region's five target sectors.*

Ultimately, the efforts of **Advance Now** are about making the Madison Region more attractive for workers, businesses, and residents to increase individual prosperity and regional investments. That will not be achieved by maintaining the status quo or working in individual silos.

## **OBJECTIVE 1: Build value-added critical capacities and coordination to advance successful economic development efforts.**

- I. **Increase collaboration and partnerships between local economic development organizations in the region.**
  - Position Thrive as the “front door” and single point of contact for the Madison Region for business prospects, expanding companies, site selectors, and others considering business development in the region.
  - Clearly define protocols for handling relocation and expansion prospects considering the Madison Region.
    - Revive the Regional Principles of Collaboration commitment for lead sharing and handling and partnering on economic development recruitment.
  - Continue to meet quarterly with economic development professionals to discuss prospects, existing business visits and contact, marketing efforts, **Advance Now** progress, and research needs as a group.
  - Increase buy-in for and commitment to regional economic development through financial investments from counties and cities in the Thrive service area.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation Code of Ethics—Denver, Colorado**

2. **Expand professional development for economic development practitioners.**
  - Invest in professional development training for research, BRE, marketing, and business development staff at Thrive and at regional partner economic development organizations.
  - Compel and maintain professional certifications and credentials for Thrive and regional economic development professionals.
    - Professional development certification programs include: Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) certification through the International Economic Development Council (IEDC); Institute for Organization Management (IOM) designation run by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) designation of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives; and Development Finance Certified Professional (DFCP) from the Council of Development Finance Agencies.
3. **Provide Thrive staff and state and regional partners with the tools to succeed through value-added regional economic development research capacity and expertise.**
  - Identify core research and data needs of regional economic development partners.
  - Partner with WEDC, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, and the University of Wisconsin to collaborate on planned research and analysis enhancements at the state level.
  - Explore business data tools, subscriptions, and resources, including Dun and Bradstreet, Moody's Economy.com, the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER), and Infogroup.
  - Utilize data to identify components of the region's five target clusters for local economic development professionals to pursue.
  - Frequently update state and regional partners as well as site selector contacts on research services and data tools available.
  - Develop a process for disseminating relevant regional and cluster-specific analysis to local partners and companies within each cluster.
    - Consider providing research reports during BRE visits and/or distributing them electronically.



➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Missouri Economic Research and Information Center–State of Missouri**

4. **Continue to improve and mature regional and local economic development programs through the exploration of best practice firms and regions.**
  - Coordinate an annual inter-city visit to a best practice region with a core group of regional business leaders, elected officials, and Thrive staff.
    - Identify key leaders and staff members who would most benefit from seeing the successes of other communities and regions, including Thrive’s board, Strategy Committee members, business and community leadership, and key **Advance Now** implementation players (such as elected officials and partners in education and workforce).
      - Ensure invitee lists include a broad range of regional stakeholder groups represented by trip attendees.
    - Select a region or metro area based on the issue that will frame the visit, reserve tentative dates, and schedule a canvassing trip at least six months prior to the visit.
  - Work with the regional EDO or chamber of commerce of the destination metro to develop a meaningful itinerary for the trip that ties directly to **Advance Now** and Thrive’s mission.
    - Coordinate the agenda to include engagements with regional public and private officials and visits to local program sites, partnership-driven initiatives, and developments realized through economic development initiatives that are regional in scope.
    - Actively communicate lessons learned with partners and incorporate these lessons into **Advance Now**’s program of work as necessary.
  - Coordinate an annual intra-regional business tour with a core group of regional business leaders and elected officials.
    - Visit new projects, successful major employers and other existing businesses, infrastructure developments.
    - Use visits to showcase best practice BRE, attraction, small business, and talent development programs already at work in the region.

## OBJECTIVE 2: Engage in strategic, target-focused economic development activities to further develop and strengthen the Madison Region's target sectors and clusters.

### I. Legacy Target: Advanced Manufacturing

- Partner with large manufacturers, the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP), and the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) Foundation to aggressively promote workforce training and degree programs to the future workforce.
- Through WMEP, support and promote lean manufacturing process upgrades among the region's manufacturers, especially small and mid-sized operations.
- Link regional Advanced Manufacturing target-related efforts to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC) manufacturing targets.
- Focus economic development efforts on business retention and expansion.
  - Where possible, facilitate the connection of suppliers, producers, and distributors to establish stronger regional supply chains.
  - Through business attraction and marketing efforts, focus on co-location of related manufacturing, supplier, and distribution facilities.
  - Utilize existing-business visitations to identify small manufacturers in the region most in need of business assistance to diversify and expand.
  - Assist production employers with identifying and fulfilling international export opportunities in partnership with WEDC's international division and other state-level economic development and trade agencies.
- Formalize a contingency strategy to assist potentially displaced manufacturing employees in finding comparable jobs or starting their own companies.
  - Ensure that research on the Madison Region's Advanced Manufacturing labor force is consistently updated and confirmed through existing business visits.
  - Provide this information to employment prospects seeking a large, available, skilled Advanced Manufacturing talent base.

- Ensure that regional utility companies are responsive to the cost competitiveness of high-volume users like Advanced Manufacturing facilities.
  - Partner with utility companies to assemble incentives packages and ensure committed power capacity for energy-intensive Advanced Manufacturing firms considering relocation or expansion in the Madison Region.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Kansas City Manufacturing Network–Kansas City, Missouri–Kansas**

**2. Legacy Target: Agriculture and Food Systems**

- Strengthen partnerships between private sector agriculture and food systems businesses and the Madison Region’s higher education and research institutions to ensure a strong and sustainable pipeline of target-related talent.
- Coordinate with regional food and beverage businesses to identify advocacy efforts necessary at the state and national level that enable more efficient, safe, and cost-effective production and distribution.
  - Advocate for improved state distribution and wholesaler laws for microbrewers and other small food and beverage businesses.
  - Enlarge the scope of the region’s “local food” consumer market and distribution channels to neighboring Midwestern states and metro areas.
  - Support the expansion of the region’s cold storage capacity.
    - Identify potential local tax credits and other incentives and better market existing state resources (such as the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection’s food processing plant and food warehouse investment credit) to be applied to development of or upgrades to cold storage facilities in the region.
  - Advance the marketing and distribution components of regional food incubators, launched and supported through Thrive and UW-Extension’s Agriculture Innovation Center’s partnership, to ensure food products created in the region have wide distribution networks and access to national markets.

- Consider developing a public market to create urban-rural food system linkages, showcase local food-related businesses, and provide small-scale, low-capital startup opportunities for a diverse range of entrepreneurs.
- Champion a renewed effort to realize the Wisconsin BioAg Gateway Campus.
  - Partner with the City of Madison and the Madison Development Corporation to seriously address current funding gaps.
- Support efforts to launch a local food packaging and processing facility in the Madison Region.
- Support Dane County initiatives to expand and improve the Alliant Energy Center to meet the growing demands of the World Dairy Expo.
  - Ensure the recommendations of the county's task force for expanding the center are implemented.
  - Consider event spin-off potential with the World Dairy Expo, such as local agritourism opportunities, local food and beer festivals, dairy and agriculture conferences, and other related events to occur concurrently with the Expo.

### 3. Leading Target: Health Care

- Utilize regional leadership to facilitate cooperation and forge stronger partnerships and communication between health care providers in the region.
  - Continue to engage Thrive's Healthcare Leadership Collaborative of health care and hospital CEOs for regular meetings to focus on issues critical to the growth and development of the health care cluster.
    - Through the region's business community leadership, bring pressure to health care CEOs to resolve competitive issues among hospitals that negatively affect the region.
    - Discuss service and facility expansions and their overall impact on the region and on health care costs.
    - Identify potential strategies to recruit professional, technical, and administrative talent as a region, including connecting efforts already in place.

- Determine how economic development entities can most effectively support Health Care sector growth.
- Coordinate talent development, attraction, and retention efforts between health care cluster employers and regional education institutions.
  - Identify the hardest-to-fill and most in-demand technical, assistant, and aide occupations at regional health care providers and hospitals.
  - Identify training and degree and certificate program gaps or weaknesses that can be more effectively filled or improved by local technical colleges, high schools, and workforce development boards.
  - Support ongoing communication between education and training programs and health care employers.

#### **BEST PRACTICE: Nashville Health Care Council–Nashville, Tennessee**

- Converge talent retention efforts on current Epic employees to build more critical mass in the region’s health information technology niche and other clusters and sub-sectors that leverage similar skill sets.
- Support health care providers’ efforts to market to and attract patients and consumers from outside of the region.
  - Formalize a joint marketing campaign for key markets outside of the Madison Region in which to advertise the region’s top-quality services and specialties.
- Identify strategies to address the needs and concerns of national corporations that offer for-profit insurance plans, rather than provider owned, in order to both recruit and adapt to national firms to the region.
  - Partner with health care providers to pressure national firms to offer multiple insurers to employees, in order to overcome objections to the payor-provider insurance system.
  - Communicate to prospective businesses the cost per employee and quality of health care provided under the provider-owned insurance accepted at the region’s largest health care systems.

#### 4. Leading Target: Life Sciences

- Work with University Research Park to build out the Phase 2 west side location.
- Through existing business visits and cluster activities, increase the transparency and visibility of Life Sciences companies and the density of networks so that regional talent is aware of the multiple career opportunities available.
- Identify and promote alternative streams of capital to life sciences researchers and entrepreneurs.
- Advocate for state and federal legislation that eases or more efficiently streamlines regulatory burdens and allows for faster transfer of innovations to the marketplace.
- Aggressively market the Madison Region as a global life sciences hub, incorporating a major biotech component to the region's marketing and communications efforts.
- Pilot a life sciences entrepreneur network to establish a sustainable forum of talent, ideas, research, capital connections, human resources, and social capital as well as to link researchers with innovative business experience.
  - Work with the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), the UW–Madison Office of Corporate Relations (OCR), BioForward, and Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network to identify new and established entrepreneurs and researchers in the regional field.
  - Determine the need to further sub-divide the network into specific sub-field niches.
  - After a successful launch, consider replicating the model to other entrepreneurial niches in the region's target clusters, such as software and information technology.

#### BEST PRACTICES: BioCrossroads–Indianapolis, Indiana; LifeTech Boston Funding Programs–Boston, Massachusetts

#### 5. Emerging Target: Design and Technology

- Identify the region's formal and informal networks, organizations, and other groups that capture design and technology talent and firms.

- Better coordinate and publicize these groups to incorporate a wider complement of existing talent and firms from across the eight-county region.
- Where gaps exist, consider the formation of new networks as a forum for resource and idea sharing.
- Pursue linkages between Design and Technology cluster and rest of Madison Region’s business community.
- Facilitate relationships among existing industry groups, other Madison Region high-technology organizations and entities, University of Wisconsin (UW) Madison, and the region’s design, gaming, communications, and software development communities to determine potential synergies, conduct needs assessments, and investigate talent and product development collaborations.
  - Support organizations such as Capital Entrepreneurs, Accelerate Madison, and the Forward Technology Festival.
  - Strengthen and expand Madison Entrepreneur Resource, Learning and Innovation Network (MERLIN) Mentors.
  - Work with the UW–Madison School of Education and the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery to advance and augment efforts to develop educational games and train students and faculty on gaming-related technology.
- Feature and incorporate the skills and capacities of Design and Technology firms into the Madison Region’s marketing and branding efforts.
- Promote the redevelopment of the East Washington Corridor as a critical area for cluster development through startup growth and business attraction.
  - Support innovative incentive tools for developers and businesses investing in redevelopment efforts, especially processes —such as retrofitting, environmental remediation, and infill—with high up-front costs.
- Leverage strong relationships between real estate firms and the region’s higher education institutions to ensure ample co-working and accelerator space is available and marketed through redevelopment efforts.

- Link cluster development activities to creative economy efforts throughout the region.
  - Support the development of a regularly-updated regional cultural plan to develop and leverage networks, businesses, entrepreneurs, and non-profit organizations that drive the region’s creative economy and cultural life.
  - Reconsider the creation of an arts incubator in the region, to assist emerging arts businesses with small business resources and support.
    - Partner with UW–Madison’s Arts Enterprise program to explore opportunities to offer a stronger creative business infrastructure in the region through incubator facilities and other services.

 **BEST PRACTICES: IDEA Commons–Springfield, Missouri; Working Artists Ventura–Ventura, California**

**6. Opportunity Area: Tourism and Experience**

- Leverage the opportunity area of Tourism and Experience to enhance economic competitiveness for the Madison Region.
  - Market the eight-county region as a place to live and work to visitors who come to the region for conferences, sporting events, and other events.
  - Coordinate Tourism and Experience programs and sites with regional clusters such as Agriculture and Food Systems, Design and Technology, and Health Care when the potential to overlap and align efforts arises.
- Seriously address the shortage of hotel rooms and meeting spaces in the region necessary to attract mid-sized conventions and conferences.
  - Implement the recommendations of recent studies and plans to increase adjacent hotel facilities in Downtown Madison and throughout the region, and to seek solutions to development concerns.



- Pursue the recommendations of the City of Madison’s 2011 Downtown Plan regarding development of a new hotel close to the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.
- Establish a regional tourism council comprised of local convention and visitors bureaus and business leaders in the tourism industry across the eight counties, as well as the Wisconsin Department of Tourism’s regional representatives.
  - Utilize the council to identify issues that would be most effectively addressed at the regional or state level.
  - Coordinate as a region on branding, marketing, and advertising efforts.
  - Combine sites, activities, tours, and other visitor attractions to craft themed regional travel packages to market to visitors through travel print publications, blogs, social media, and national media.
  - Identify and address transportation infrastructure challenges that hinder visitors from traveling throughout the region.
- Consider partnering with regional and statewide tourism entities to formalize Frank Lloyd Wright visitation itineraries for the Madison Region.
  - Determine the value of creative standalone or affiliated web pages, quick response (QR) codes, audio tours, and other tools focused on Wright’s Central Wisconsin legacy.

 **BEST PRACTICES: Cooperative Advertising Grant Program–Greenbrier Valley, West Virginia; AgriMissouri.com–State of Missouri**

7. **Develop and launch regional business cluster councils for businesses and stakeholders in the Madison Region’s five target clusters.**
  - Identify two priority clusters around which to form councils.
  - Coordinate cluster council formation.
    - Assess existing cluster councils and support organizations or groups to potentially serve the role of regional cluster councils, such as the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin’s Industry Partnerships.

- Include the region's top academic, private, and institutional researchers.
- Engage other community stakeholders in target business councils, such as city and county government officials and administrators.
- Launch the councils and leverage cluster council discussions to inform business support functions related to workforce development, policy issues, and external prospect identification.
  - Staff each cluster council with economic development professionals at Thrive and regional economic and workforce development partners.
  - Facilitate quarterly meetings with the target business councils and update target-specific actions based on the outcomes of each meeting as new opportunities and challenges arise for businesses.
  - Through the meetings, councils, events, and interactions, evaluate ways to provide the clusters with additional business support.
    - Use councils to identify other markets that excel in attracting and retaining the targeted clusters, and then perform an in-depth analysis of their strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of enhancing the Madison Region's external marketing and recruitment efforts.
- Create annual cluster development work plans for each council and link council accomplishments to **Advance Now** performance and activity measures.
- Seek out broader regional opportunities for collaboration and marketing the target sectors such as the IQ Corridor, the Midwest Research University Network, Silicon Prairie, Rust Belt to Artist Belt, and other efforts connecting and promoting metro areas in the Midwest.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Greater Austin Technology Partnership–Austin, Texas**

8. Increase the global scope of the Madison Region's target development efforts.
  - Leverage regional economic development partners and chamber of commerce contacts to provide import-export assistance, as necessary, to Madison Region firms seeking presence in the global marketplace.

- Partner with WEDC, the Dane County Regional Airport, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection's International Trade Team to position existing business visits to expand import/export traffic and international trade in the Madison Region.
  - Explore potential to better utilize the South Central Wisconsin Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) as necessary, based on growth in import and export movement in the region.
- Identify international prospects through regional postsecondary education institutions' global relationships and networks, especially those with UW–Madison.

 **BEST PRACTICE: International Business Development Team–Orlando, Florida**

9. **Partner closely with WEDC and the state on all target-related and major business development activities.**
  - Continue to align with the WEDC on lead sharing, request for information (RFI) responses, and prospect handling (including confidentiality protocols) to facilitate the direction of prospects to the Madison Region.
  - Continue to invite state-level economic officials to participate in priority recruitment and business recruitment activities.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Fully develop and formalize a business retention and expansion (BRE) program actively supported by all regional and state partners.**

- I. **Professionalize and better coordinate current BRE efforts.**
  - Ensure the program is professionally staffed, data-driven, and is closely tied to advocacy, business recruitment, talent development, internal and external marketing, and other holistic economic development activities in the Madison Region and Wisconsin.
  - Partner with WEDC to focus and tailor BRE activities to target clusters in the Madison Region.
    - Leverage the recommended cluster councils as key players in regional BRE efforts.
  - Create a tiered business visit schedule based on firm size, level of local or regional investment, and growth dynamics.

- Work with visited companies to identify critical competitive issues impacting business growth such as local and state permitting processes, talent attraction, and others
- Formalize individualized follow-up protocols to address these issues and general findings and data gathered on visits, and ensure through a BRE database that these actions are carried out in every visitation.
- Expand the use of BRE software (Thrive’s BusinessLink program or WEDC’s planned statewide system) and a single regional database of existing businesses.
  - Ensure current lists of regional businesses by size and industry or NAICS code are accurate and recently updated.
- Before existing business visits, perform extensive research to inform discussions on business supply chains, external prospect identification, and competitiveness issues that could be effectively addressed by Thrive and local economic development professionals.
- Ensure business retention and expansion efforts—visits, calls, announcements, and other events—are regularly tracked and measured through the BRE software.
  - Measures include net change in employment at existing companies, additional capital investment, number of businesses contacted, number of resource interventions, number of recruitment leads generated, and number of concerns addressed.
  - Aggressively communicate these results to highlight the importance of BRE activities, and develop a marketing plan for ongoing promotion of the program.
- Communicate regularly with local officials regarding any new findings on the strengths and weaknesses of the regional business climate for existing firms.
  - Develop a business intelligence system with local municipalities that notifies them on how to mitigate issues that could trigger a business’ departure from the region.
- Use the BRE program to engage headquarters and growing major employers that have previously not been active in regional efforts.

- Consider creating targeted strategies around specific major private-sector employers in the region to better engage them in promoting business growth, entrepreneurship, marketing, and talent development.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Business First Greater Richmond–Richmond, Virginia**

**2. Leverage the BRE program to attract new businesses to the region.**

- Through BRE visits, gather structured input from major firms in target sectors on necessary factors to attract their peers, buyers and/or suppliers to the Madison Region’s market.
  - Leverage business leadership to share specialized cluster and industry knowledge as well as membership associations, alumni, and other industry-related contact lists and databases to help identify and reach out to companies for potential attraction and business development pursuits.
- Map supply chains and identify any firms outside of Thrive’s service area or Wisconsin with relatively large numbers of connections to multiple existing businesses in the region.
- Reach out to executives of existing businesses in the region with linkages to prospects identified from supply chain mapping and develop a plan for effective and collaborative outreach to the identified prospects.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Pursue infrastructure developments that further enhance the competitiveness and connectivity of the region’s target sectors.**

**I. Develop shovel-ready sites and other expedited development incentives.**

- Pilot a regional shovel-ready program and site certification.
  - Leverage Rock County’s shovel-ready and certified manufacturing and distribution sites program to expand standards and marketing to a regional scale.
  - Advocate for the expansion of the program throughout Wisconsin and for formalization of a statewide shovel-ready program.
- Partner with WEDC and regional real estate and industrial development professions to increase and promote the number of shovel-ready sites in the Madison Region.

- Focus on areas that currently lack any shovel-ready sites.
- Identify other site incentives and expedited processes that can be offered to prospects or expanding businesses.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Tennessee Site Certification Programs–State of Tennessee**

2. **Include and frequently update available industrial and business parks, facilities, sites, and buildings on the Thrive website.**
  - Create a searchable web database of sites and buildings that can be filtered by specifications including square feet or acres, price, for sale or lease, utilities, location, city or county, and other key factors in site location decisions.
    - Utilize the regional Zoomprospector license to embed the LocateinWisconsin.com map and data on the Thrive website.
    - Ensure the database can generate comparison queries, printable reports, and other information takeaways for users of the data.
  - Ensure all available sites and buildings in the Madison Region are also included on LocateinWisconsin.com and that listings are up to date.
    - Qualify the Thrive region as the Madison Region to ensure site selectors and other website visitors associate Thrive with its geographic service area.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Indy Partnership InSite–Indianapolis, Indiana**

3. **Work closely with state and federal elected officials to develop broadband connectivity across the Madison Region.**
  - Through BRE visits and key partners, inventory existing infrastructure and gauge the level of need for expanded broadband networks to benefit business growth and development.
    - Leverage local chambers of commerce to survey members and identify telecommuting trends, download and upload speed challenges in certain areas, and current and future technology infrastructure needs for small and large businesses.
    - Communicate these findings to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, elected leaders, and state officials.

- Support the implementation of Link Wisconsin’s Broadband Action Plans for regions within the Madison Region, the UW–Extension’s Building Community Capacity Through Broadband (BCCB) project and the Federal Communications Commission’s Broadband Adoption Taskforce.
- Advocate for favorable state-level legislation to promote the ease of expansion of broadband efforts, especially those in rural and underserved areas.
  - Seek to expand BadgerNet and BCCB to businesses and private sector consumers.
- 4. Inventory Class A office space and assist with development of additional office space in key commercial areas across the region.**
  - Regularly update of the region’s inventory of Class A, B, and C office capacity and boutique, co-working, and incubator or accelerator spaces downtown or in urban areas that can accommodate smaller firms.
  - Facilitate relationships between the region’s development community and firms in target clusters that might have interest in build-to-suit, infill, or retrofitting development projects.
- 5. Market and improve air service capacity and access at the Dane County Regional Airport.**
  - Relaunch a “Fly MSN” campaign to encourage residents and businesses to use the Dane County Airport first.
  - Explore pricing methods and structure to assess if or how to make MSN airfares more competitive with closest major airports.
  - Study expanded efficient ground transportation options between Madison and Milwaukee, Rockford, and Chicago for travel between airports for flights and airlines not available at MSN.
    - Ensure the region’s proximity to air service from Milwaukee and Chicago is included in marketing materials and campaigns that cite the region’s transportation options and business climate.
  - Build on previous successes to advocate for more direct flights and increased capacity at the Dane County Regional Airport (MSN).
    - Through BRE visits and cluster councils, identify the most in-demand potential direct flights for which to advocate.

- Gather seat guarantees from regional businesses—major employers and smaller firms—to purchase a certain number of seats on potential flights in a given quarter.
  - Partner with the Dane County Airport Commission and top regional CEOs to lobby an airline for the most needed flight options, demonstrating regional businesses’ commitment to utilize increased capacity.
    - Assess the potential to provide route-guarantee incentives to compel carriers to add route frequencies or new destinations.
- 6. Continue efforts to advocate for transportation infrastructure opportunities within and through the Madison Region.**
- Support the widening of I-39/90 from four to six lanes through Beloit and Janesville as a priority project for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
  - Improve intra-regional bus access and schedules between the Madison Region and other major markets, such as Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis-St. Paul.
  - Advocate for other specific transportation infrastructure developments based on business needs identified in cluster councils and BRE visits.
  - Continue conversations with Amtrak and regional, state, and federal officials about rail possibilities through the Madison Region.
  - Support improvements to Amtrak’s Empire Builder between Milwaukee and Minneapolis-St. Paul.
    - Identify opportunities for the Madison Region’s cities along the route—including Wisconsin Dells, Portage, Columbus, and Watertown—in terms of business attraction, expansion, and networks to other major metros.
    - Consider options to connect Madison to the route.
  - Advocate state elected officials for the reinstatement of regional transit authorities as mechanisms to improve transportation options to attract and retain businesses and talent.



**OBJECTIVE 5: Take action on bold improvements to the region's business climate.**

- I. **Work to streamline state and municipalities' permitting and regulatory processes to increase the efficiency of business growth.**
  - Utilize BRE visits and recommended cluster councils to identify issues to pursue with specific local and state-level departments and agencies.
    - Issues may include zoning, fire codes, permitting, shovel-ready sites, and property and business taxes (including property taxes levied on equipment).
  - Advocate for the City of Madison to establish predictable (in terms of procedures and timing) permitting processes for small businesses.
    - Push for a clearly-defined and expedited permitting and zoning process in the City of Madison, including web-based forms and processes.
    - Market the value and justification for permitting procedures and timelines that appear non-competitive with other regions.
  - Advocate for predictable, efficient permitting in other major municipalities in the region where the acute need for streamlined approval processes has been identified through BRE visits and cluster councils.
    - Establish a small business permit advisor liaison to coordinate between local governments and businesses seeking permits and other approvals.
  - Partner with WEDC to address any state-level regulatory and oversight concerns at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies charged with regulatory duties.
  - Address state and local tax rate concerns by informing businesses and the public of actual costs to companies and individuals contrasted with neighboring and competitor states and regions.

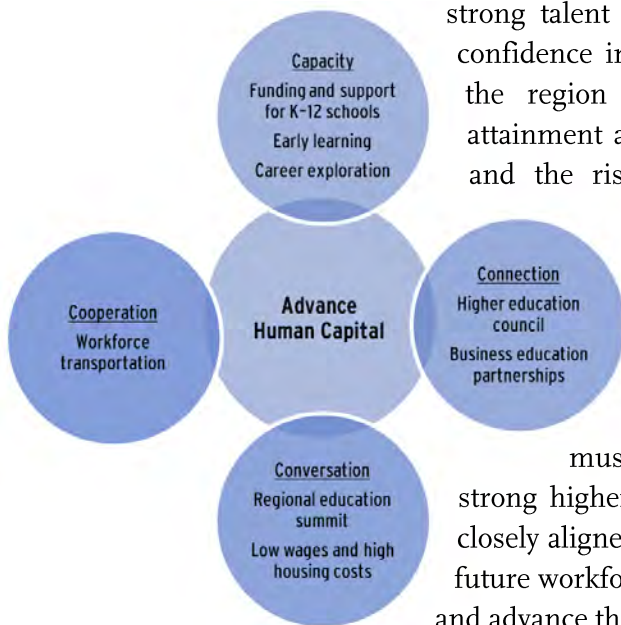
 **BEST PRACTICE: One-Stop Shop—Boise, Idaho**

2. **Foster a local business climate supportive of economic development site-location requirements including prospect anonymity and delivery of time-sensitive data and location dynamics.**
  - Leverage existing or enhanced lead-distribution protocols to ensure that relocation prospects are provided seamless support during assessment processes and site visits.
3. **Meet regularly with elected and government officials at the local and state level to provide updates on regional economic development efforts, infrastructure issues, and other business climate concerns.**
  - In partnership with local chambers of commerce and other business development groups, host a bi-monthly (six times annually) lunch meeting of state representatives for districts in the Madison Region to update them on **Advance Now** progress and economic development issues in which elected officials may partner.
    - Include a small rotating group of top CEOs, small business owners, entrepreneurs, and other business representatives in the lunches.
  - Identify staff members in the offices of the five U.S. representatives and two U.S. senators serving the Madison Region and plan quarterly one-on-one meetings at district offices to brief staff on federal legislation, regulations, infrastructure, and funding opportunities in which congresspersons may play an important role in facilitating for continued economic and business growth in the region.
    - Include representatives from regional businesses to accompany Thrive staff or volunteers to meetings.
  - Demonstrate to elected officials through data- and outcome-driven evidence the effectiveness of the Madison Region in driving the state economy.

## ADVANCE HUMAN CAPITAL

**The Madison Region will grow and attract top talent through a coordinated pipeline, while the current and future workforce will meet and exceed the expectations of firms and business clusters that are starting up, expanding, and locating in the region.**

Stakeholders repeatedly cited the Madison Region’s highly-educated workforce as one of its most competitive strengths. Community leadership also identified the region’s strong talent pipeline from higher education institutions and its confidence in K–12 education among the greatest advantages for the region to leverage. However, disparities in educational attainment and K–12 performance across the eight-county region and the risk of long-term workforce challenges threaten the competitiveness of the Madison Region’s highly-educated labor force. In many areas of the region, the workforce is aging and out-migration threatens the future labor pool. The many, often fragmented resources and organizations to support the full regional continuum of workforce development must be more effectively coordinated. In addition, the strong higher education institutions of the region must be more closely aligned with economic development efforts and current and future workforce needs in order to ensure that the region can retain and advance the world-class talent being cultivated within the region.



Key actions in this goal area:

- ➔ *Advocate for increased business and community funding and other support for public schools.*
- ➔ *Continue to coordinate cluster-based career training pipelines in regional education and workforce development organizations, and align diploma, certificate, and degree programs with employer needs.*

- *Launch an annual regional education summit to address major educational changes facing the region as well as opportunities for innovation.*
- *Develop stronger institutional collaborations between UW–Madison and other higher education institutions in the region.*
- *Partner with real estate and human resources professionals to address challenges like low regional wages, high housing costs, and high living costs that impede talent attraction and retention efforts.*

This goal area focuses on fully developing a talent pipeline that spans early childhood to career advancement, linking each stage of this continuum with regional efforts and ensuring that all residents and workers can fully benefit from the incredible educational assets offered within the eight counties.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: Forge strong partnerships between educators, parents, students, and regional businesses.**

- I. Develop a successful, coordinated business education partnership program for the entire Madison Region.**
  - Coordinate existing business-education partnership programs at school districts and high schools to develop a program—regional in scope—that facilitates employers’ direct involvement in professional training, curriculum content, and related issues.
  - Include workforce development board members, representatives of major employers, entrepreneurs and small business owners, and civic and philanthropy organizations (including education foundations) in the business education partnership.
  - Through the partnership, adopt a program of work based on previously-identified major issues in the region’s K–12 school districts which the partnership can play a role in improving.
    - Program of work action items may include improving graduation rates, hands-on career exploration opportunities, higher education financial aid application assistance, soft skills development, and funding for extracurricular career and technical education activities.
    - Ensure that issues and initiatives approached by the business education partnership go above and beyond basic support with a

direct goal of cultivating a more competitive, skilled, and prepared future workforce.

- Through manufacturing and production employers involved in the partnership, promote the opportunities available in Advanced Manufacturing jobs.
  - Share specific information regarding necessary skills and average salaries, to students, school guidance counselors, and parents.
- Create periodically-updated tools for accountability and performance measurement between schools and businesses, as well as the regional community at large.
- Accountability tools may include annual progress reports of schools' performance on key indicators identified by the Partnership as well as reports of proactive efforts of the business community to assist in achieving success in these indicators, including breadth and frequency of internship/externship, apprenticeship, career shadowing, tutoring, and mentoring opportunities.

### **BEST PRACTICE: Business Education Partnership–Paducah, Kentucky**

2. **Increase regional high school students' exposure to the Madison Region's major employers and higher education institutions.**
  - Promote the expansion of existing internship programs and develop additional capacity for the region's high school students to gain experience in the Madison Region's target business clusters.
  - Work with K–12 representatives, colleges and universities, and company officials to assess the existing capacity and participation rate in ongoing programs such as the John Deere PowerUp/TECH Program, and Youth Health Services Corps and internship programs at regional businesses.
    - Determine if regional leadership can assist the region's education institutions in securing additional resources and funding necessary to expand programs and create new programs.
  - Leverage cluster councils, workforce development boards, CESA regions, and other key regional expertise to source ideas for new internship programs and opportunities to expose students to cluster-based occupations.

- Encourage the business community and major employers in target sectors to expand paid and unpaid summer internships for high school students.
- Work with regional partners to help identify firms that can accommodate highly-qualified students in applied research settings.
- Gauge interest among regional high schools in incorporating for-credit senior capstone projects related to target sector work experiences into their curriculum.

 **BEST PRACTICE: 12 for Life–Carrollton, Georgia**

**3. Advocate for increased business and community funding and other support for public schools.**

- Identify school systems that lack an independent education foundation and support the formation of such entities and approval by necessary oversight organizations such as boards of education.
- In partnership with education foundations, develop and coordinate a public awareness campaign to inform regional businesses and residents on diverse means by which to support public education, including volunteer time, professional development, donations, and advocacy.
- Leverage the recommended regional education summit (Objective 3.2) as a platform for identifying ways to streamline funding and support.
- Encourage the pursuit of additional grants and funding for public education-related efforts.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Alignment Nashville–Nashville, Tennessee**

**4. Promote successes and good news in the Madison Region’s schools.**

- Develop a marketing component that highlights key programs and performance data across the Madison Region’s school districts and illustrates how regional schools compare to state and national averages.
  - Ensure that positive news and data reaches regional real estate agents and major employers to improve perceptions of area schools and aid new residents and families in location decisions.

- Assist school districts within the region in sharing success stories with the regional business community and residents.
  - Inform regional media outlets about improvements and accomplishments in local schools.
  - Publicize student achievements in publications and events of Thrive and its partners.
  - Offer assistance to school districts, as needed, with the implementation of communications strategies.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Community Education Progress Reports–Austin, Texas**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Align education and workforce development efforts with target sector initiatives.**

- 1. Assist regional education and workforce development professionals in the continued coordination of cluster-based career training pipelines.**
  - Better coordinate education and workforce development resources and organizations.
    - Identify service gaps and duplication to streamline services across the region and increase communication between key players.
  - Identify cluster-specific skill competencies based on input from businesses and individuals participating in cluster councils and BRE visits.
  - Based on workforce and talent issues identified at cluster council events and through BRE visits, communicate training needs to K–12 school districts, workforce development boards, technical colleges, and colleges and universities in the Madison Region.
- 2. Expand the reach and availability of career and technical education in the Madison Region.**
  - Partner with Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESA) 2 and 5 to identify successful models within the CESA service areas and the state that can be effectively adapted in other areas of the Madison Region.

- Inventory career and technology education (CTE) programs in Madison Region schools such as the Stateline Career and Technical Education Academy (SCTEA).
  - Promote existing programs such as the John Deere PowerUp/TECH Program, SCTEA, and CESA 5's Portage Project. Leverage them to apply regionally and adapt them to other clusters.
  - Consider broadening the scope of career and technical education programs to middle and elementary schools.
- Explore career academy development linked to the region's target clusters, such as Design and Technology, Life Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing, as well as key economic development strategies such as entrepreneurship.
  - Inventory other flexible modules and career exploration programs through the region's technical colleges and workforce development boards to be further expanded in the public K–12 schools.
  - Bring together K–12 schools and postsecondary education institutions engaging in innovative, flexible learning programs to identify where effective, targeted technical and four-year college programs can be adapted to elementary, middle, and high school curricula.
    - Advocate for increased flexibility in public schools' curricula, structure, and programs to continue to adopt and expand innovative programs.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Biotechnology Academy at Andrew P. Hill High School—San Jose, California**

3. Partner with K–12 schools, colleges and universities, and workforce development resources to align diploma, certificate, and degree programs with employer needs.
  - Through the BRE program and the business education partnership, continually identify target sector employers' workforce and training needs.
  - Communicate findings to education and workforce development service providers, and assist in adapting programs accordingly.



- Monitor target-aligned diploma, certificate, degree, and training programs for successful outcomes or necessary adjustments and enhancements.
- 4. Ensure federal funding for the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, and other federally-supported workforce development services is applied to training and placing job-seekers in targeted, growing business clusters.
  - Apply successful regional target-focused workforce development programs to all five targets.
  - Adapt target cluster workforce development programs across the Madison Region.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Strategically identify educational attainment disparities and close racial and socioeconomic performance gaps among students in the Madison Region.**

- I. Expand capacity and access to early learning programs such as pre-K, four-year-old kindergarten (4K), Head Start, and child care programs.
  - Build support among business and regional leaders for expanded best practice early learning programs in the Madison Region.
    - Leverage regional public and private sector partners to advocate for improved state level policy to support further development of Wisconsin’s early childhood development initiatives.
  - Identify geographic program gaps, underserved populations, and accessibility challenges that must be resolved, and key partners and funding sources to address issues.
    - Partner with providers to gather service area and demographic data of populations served by existing programs.
    - Include employers that offer child care in efforts to inventory and improve existing services.
  - Seek region-wide training for and adoption of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and YoungStar.

## 2. Launch an annual regional education summit.

- Identify the top education-related issues within the region to be addressed at the summit, such as growing poverty rates and socioeconomic disparities, racial performance gaps, funding changes and challenges, workforce entry challenges, and innovative education models.
  - Ensure that conversations and initiatives already underway—such as strategies to close racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps—are incorporated.
- Gather key stakeholder groups to lead and participate, including underserved or underrepresented groups, major employers, small businesses, postsecondary education institutions, and interested community members.
- Involve national and regional practitioners, leaders, and experts in the critical issues identified to speak at and facilitate the inaugural event.
- Following the summit, publicize the speakers' and attendees' findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions.
  - Delegate participating regional public and private sector partners to actionably address findings and recommendations that arise from the summit.
  - Report progress on action step implementation throughout the year.
  - Leverage findings and planned actions to emerge from the community-wide education summit to direct specific performance disparity solutions.
- Utilize social media and the local press to build awareness for regional public education issues, challenges, and opportunities throughout the year.
- Between annual summits, consider coordinating smaller-scale roundtables within the region in order to address new issues and challenges that arise in school districts.
  - Other alternative formats for educational discussions may include TED (Technology Entertainment and Design) talks or Pecha Kucha models.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Hopkinsville Education Summit–Hopkinsville, Kentucky**

3. **Increase non-profit leadership and organizational outreach to focus partnership efforts on activities and programs aimed at closing racial achievement gaps across regional school districts.**
  - Leverage leading organizations already addressing these issues to involve more regional partners.
  - Through non-profit organizations, churches, community centers, and social service providers identify means by which to strategically engage greater participation by underrepresented groups in regional education efforts and conversations.
  - Especially focus on groups facing the most significant education achievement gaps, negative outcomes, and low adult educational attainment.
  - Assist schools in developing more early intervention practices and protocols to identify students falling behind in performance benchmarks and standardized test scores.
4. **Target adult and continuing education programs in geographic areas with low average incomes and educational attainment rates.**
  - Identify areas in the region with the lowest educational attainment and lowest annual average wages or per capita income.
  - Promote and improve access to GED programs.
  - Promote technical college offerings, including short-term certificates that build marketable skill sets.
  - Capitalize on viable opportunities to effectively and efficiently retrain displaced workers for complementary jobs in the region’s target clusters.
    - Work with the regional media and community partners to effectively inform regional workers of job retraining opportunities.
    - Ensure that workforce development partners across the region are well informed of the Madison Region’s target clusters and potential retraining opportunities for displaced workers.

- Partner with major employers in the region to target multiple entry points for potential workers to re-enter or advance in the labor force to ensure training and up-skilling can be immediately utilized.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Fully engage the higher education institutions in regional economic development efforts.**

- 1. Develop strong institutional collaborations between UW–Madison and other higher education institutions in the region.**
  - Create a regional higher education council to gather top leaders—chancellors and presidents—of the region’s ten public and private colleges and universities.
  - Use the forum to discuss new programs and facilities in development at the institutions, identify opportunities for collaboration and resource-sharing, and deal with challenges.
- 2. Engage UW–Madison as a key player in all regional economic development, talent, and marketing initiatives.**
  - Continue strengthening communication and collaboration between UW–Madison and economic development professionals within the Madison Region.
    - Provide UW’s top administrators and target cluster-related department leaders a seat at the table on future economic development initiatives.
    - Advance advocacy discussions with UW–Madison related to community development and business recruitment.
    - Maintain support for the Wisconsin Idea and the new Wisconsin Idea Scholars Program, and assist as necessary in identifying efforts in which UW may participate or lead.

3. **Best promote the top-ranked and most innovative degree and research programs of the region's institutions to ensure the Madison Region is recognized for its internationally-competitive education capacities.**
  - Ensure that the specific competitive strengths of the colleges and universities are well marketed inside and outside of the Madison Region.
  - Consider conducting internal and external image surveys to identify what academic, research, and professional areas executives and leaders associate with regional higher education institutions and to identify where targeted public relations efforts are necessary.
  - Support UW–Madison's marketing and advertising efforts, such as its 2012 Rose Bowl commercial, to continue to brand and identify the unique assets and world-class innovations of the institution.
4. **Ensure the workforce needs of regional employers are shared with higher education institutions.**
  - Leverage BRE and cluster council feedback to identify effective current programs of colleges and universities and suggested improvements or realignments.
  - Share feedback directly with specific institutions, where appropriate, or through the regional higher education council.
  - Support higher education institutions seeking to enhance or expand their programs and capacity to meet the needs of employers and target development efforts.
5. **Incorporate all higher educational institutions in economic development activities.**
  - Facilitate better coordination between colleges and universities and the region's private sector and business community.
  - When appropriate, ensure that a representative(s) of UW–Madison, UW–Whitewater, two-year colleges, technical colleges, private colleges, or other postsecondary institutions is present on recruiting trips and prospect meetings.

- Update key contacts at all of the region's two- and four-year colleges and universities on **Advance Now** efforts and identify where higher education institutions can play a new or more active role in regional economic development practice.
- Connect the dots, where necessary, to help higher education administrators bridge education and economic development efforts through more strategic curricula and courses.

### **OBJECTIVE 5: Attract and retain talent critical to maintaining the Madison Region's competitive advantage.**

- I. **Develop coordinated marketing campaigns strategically designed to attract to the Madison Region top professionals in critical skill areas related to the region's targets.**
  - Involve leaders and representatives of the region's target clusters in identifying workforce-related barriers to growth.
    - Partner with executives and human resources leaders to align with existing recruitment efforts.
    - Identify attractive regional assets and package information about these to be used in the recruitment process.
    - Leverage the social and professional networks of business executives and alumni of the region's colleges and universities.
    - Expand cooperative and internship programs for students at colleges and universities in the region and state to build connections with talented students early in their careers at firms in the Madison Region's target clusters.
  - Explore the possibility of providing employment placement assistance or tax credits to recruit C-level executives in targets.
  - Partner with researchers and entrepreneurs to recruit and develop entrepreneurial managers (C-level managerial, non-research talent) in the Madison Region.
    - Create an entrepreneur leadership development program to mentor entrepreneurs and staff under a manager-level executive in order to

more fully cultivate and develop innovative leadership and management skills in emerging entrepreneurs and employees.

- Leverage and expand existing organizations such as MERLIN Mentors and Wisconsin Entrepreneurial Bootcamp (WEB) to create entrepreneurial management mentorship opportunities.
- Support the increase of formalized and coordinated joint, double, and dual graduate degrees at UW–Madison.
  - Seek opportunities for pursuit of MBA degrees paired with other life sciences-related graduate and professional degrees offered outside of the Wisconsin School of Business, such as master’s and doctorate programs at the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, College of Engineering, School of Education, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, School of Pharmacy, and School of Medicine and Public Health.
  - Better promote cross-college elective credits and course approval for graduate and professional degree programs.
  - Better promote the Wisconsin School of Business’ certificates in entrepreneurship and strategic innovation to non-business students.
- Seek federal approval of a designated EB-5 Regional Center adjacent to university or incubator facilities to attract more foreign nationals investing in Madison Region firms and research.
  - Assess and advocate for pending federal legislation related to expanding visa categories for foreign nationals who are graduates of American universities, entrepreneurs or investors, such as the proposed EB-6 “startup” visa.

- Advocate for the Madison Region’s role as a pilot location for new temporary and permanent visa programs to attract and retain talent (particularly recent master’s and doctorate graduates of UW–Madison) and investor funding.
- Create and develop talent recruitment and development efforts in the region’s young professionals and talent networking organizations across the region.
  - Target young professional and networking groups outside of Dane County for inclusion and engagement.
  - Coordinate and train a volunteer group of young professionals to assist regional employers in hosting and recruiting competitive employee prospects.
  - Target key young professional groups, such as recent college graduates and current and exiting Epic employees.

 **BEST PRACTICE: ystark! Fellowship Program–Canton, Ohio**

2. **Partner with regional colleges and universities in talent retention and attraction efforts.**
  - Collaborate with alumni associations and clubs, including the Wisconsin Alumni Association, Edgewood College Alumni, Beloit College Alumni Association, and the UW–Whitewater Alumni Association to access alumni who have left the Madison Region.
    - Partner with the region’s colleges and universities to provide lists of expatriate alumni.
      - Collect the lists in a database to serve as a contact resource for talent-recruitment marketing materials and out-of-market events.
      - Provide the colleges and universities the flexibility to contact alumni directly in order to preserve the confidentiality of proprietary alumni rosters.
  - Facilitate relationships between college career counselors, young professional organizations, and cluster councils to offer target-focused internships and entry-level positions to new college graduates.



- Align internship and career counseling and placement programs at the Madison Region's postsecondary education institutions with job opportunities at the region's businesses.
  - Engage cluster councils and BRE visits as resources to improve career placement services at regional higher education institutions.
  - Based on council members' and existing businesses' input, direct students and graduates towards occupations and careers in demand.
  - Promote career counseling and placement services to graduating students in order to more effectively retain them in the Madison Region.
  - Encourage employed alumni to actively promote college and university career services programs to their employers.
- Develop talent attraction programs through regional higher education institutions' resources and networks.
  - Collaborate with major employers' human resources representatives to identify high-wage and hard-to-fill jobs to attract expatriate alumni back to the Madison Region.
  - Utilize the BRE program and cluster councils to identify employment opportunities at regional companies to inform talent attraction efforts.
  - Formalize a program that assists expatriate alumni as they move back to the Madison Region.
  - If available, use two- and four-year colleges and universities' alumni rosters to target expatriates to consider returning to the Madison Region to live and work.
- 3. Tackle challenges like low regional wages, high housing costs, and high living costs that impede talent attraction and retention efforts.**
  - Partner with the region's real estate and housing development professionals to identify, develop, and market areas of the region that are attractive and affordable to specific sectors of in-demand talent, from early-career professionals to C-level executives.

- Partner with human resource directors at major employers and target sector firms across the region to discuss challenges to recruitment (including wages), and identify solutions and messaging to potential talent.
  - Leverage BRE visits and cluster councils to address wage concerns for attracting national talent.
  - Create a recruitment and welcome packet that outlines the unique assets and advantages of the region in addition to cost breakdowns to communicate the competitive benefits couched in regional wages.
- 4. **Leverage external marketing, public relations, and media efforts to include talent recruitment messaging as well as business attraction.**
  - Where appropriate, ensure that internal and external marketing efforts outlined in the Advance the Madison Region’s Story goal area include an emphasis on talent development.
  - Coordinate and communicate the region’s talent recruitment and retention programs through marketing and social media mechanisms.
  - Align business development and outbound marketing trips and events with talent recruitment efforts, identifying potential target groups such as UW–Madison alumni organizations in key cities

 **BEST PRACTICE: Austin: The Human Capital–Austin, Texas**

**OBJECTIVE 6: Develop, enhance, and maintain regional quality of place assets and amenities to attract and retain talent.**

- I. **Pursue transit and transportation infrastructure and innovations that better link residents to jobs, recreation, and retail and dining, and improve intraregional connectivity.**
  - Support trail network and bicycle path expansions to fully link communities throughout the region.
  - Advocate for improved bicycling law enforcement in the region and state.
  - Explore further connections between local bus transit systems.

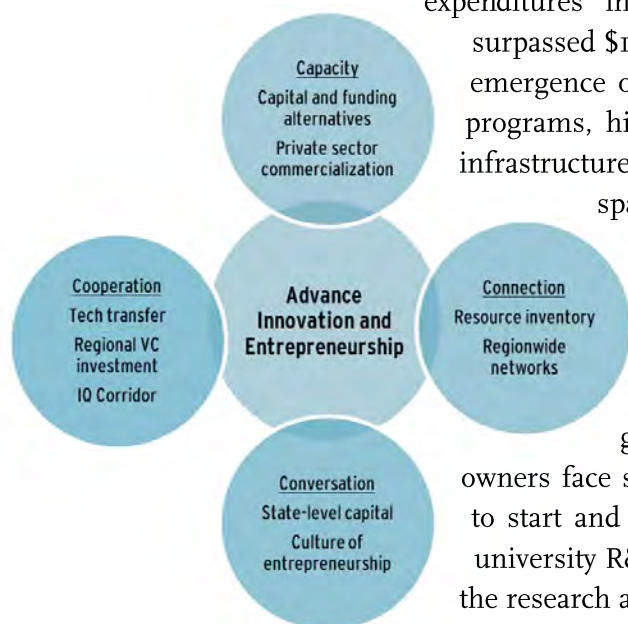
- Identify where significant gaps in routes and service exist between residential areas and major employers or commercial hubs in the region.
    - Identify also gaps in bus schedules that do not align with workforce commuting needs.
  - Gather private sector support for expansion of necessary routes and frequency and consider multiple funding options to ensure workers' access to jobs.
  - Explore potential expansion and development of transportation-on-demand amenities, which currently include bicycle and car sharing programs.
    - Partner with entrepreneurs and students in the region to challenge further innovation to the region's complement of mobility on demand options.
- 2. Address environmental concerns related to lakes' water quality.**
- Establish a collaborative and informed relationship with the lakes and river foundations across the region.
  - Communicate economic development challenges or opportunities related to water quality, impacts, and costs to businesses and elected officials.
  - Gather multiple stakeholders to develop a water quality plan for regional lakes and watersheds with consistent development guidelines.
    - Reach out to the Clean Lakes Alliance and Wisconsin Association of Lakes to explore the opportunity to assert new programs and funding opportunities at the federal level to develop a regional lakes and watershed plan.
- 3. Promote and advance regional beautification efforts, especially at entry points into the region from interstates and primary highways.**
- Champion key redevelopment efforts such as Beloit's Great American Main Street program, the Nolen Centennial Project, the East Washington corridor redevelopment, and revival of delayed projects such as the City of Janesville Downtown Vision and Strategy.

4. Identify demand for additional young professional amenities and pursue formal initiatives and informal movements to develop these assets.
  - Partner with local residential and commercial developers to identify housing and retail gaps in amenities that are attractive to young professionals.
    - Seek expedited approval processes from municipalities and neighborhoods in developing such housing, retail, entertainment venue, and dining opportunities.
  - Support efforts to nurture a regional music scene.
    - Ensure emerging cultural and arts dynamics are incorporated into talent recruitment and overall marketing initiatives.

## ADVANCE INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Madison Region will have access to world-class capital, support services, and management tools in order to productively grow operations and access new markets.**

The research and innovation generated by UW–Madison is among the top in the nation. The university ranked third in the nation for research and development expenditures in 2009; in 2010 total university R&D spending surpassed \$1 billion for the first time. The region is also seeing the emergence of a strong entrepreneur culture driven by university programs, highly-educated and creative individuals, and physical infrastructure such as incubator, accelerator, and co-working spaces.



However, the Madison Region’s culture of entrepreneurship needs more sophistication and strong presence to drive the risk, capital, and leadership necessary to see gazelle firms take off and grow. The region’s entrepreneurs and small business owners face significant challenges in raising the capital necessary to start and expand their innovative businesses. In addition, the university R&D process often does not carry an innovation beyond the research and development phase to be produced, marketed, and consumed.

Key actions in this goal area:

- ➔ *Promote high-potential firms to possible investors, maintaining an updated list of startups with strong growth potential.*
- ➔ *Champion further private sector technology transfer and commercialization.*
- ➔ *Instill a culture of entrepreneurship in the region’s young talent through entrepreneurial education, experience, and mentoring.*
- ➔ *Promote an innovative culture in “traditional” workplace settings.*

→ *Nurture relationships and networks that support interaction among, and cultivation of, entrepreneurs and small business owners.*

The region needs to see stronger networks of entrepreneurs emerge, develop a culture of entrepreneurship and productive innovation, and gather the critical mass of capital necessary for businesses to succeed. This goal area identifies the capacity-building, resource-connecting, and advocacy efforts that will better develop the culture and capital to fuel innovation.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Enhance entrepreneur and small business capacity to access capital in the region, including seed capital, gap financing, angel investment, and venture capital.**

- I. Inventory small business development support, technical assistance, capital sources, networks and membership organizations, and other related resources.**
  - Map small business development resources and services available to small enterprises in the Madison Region, including supportive organizations, community banks, contact persons, and information.
  - Create an online regional database (similar to Thrive’s Capital Connections Inventory) with the mapped inventory and continue to update and expand the resource.
  - Promote the database through state agencies, local chambers of commerce, and other business organizations as the central resource for small businesses starting or expanding in the Madison Region.

**➔ BEST PRACTICE: RCGA Capital Alliance and Arch Angels–St. Louis, Missouri**

- 2. Continually identify top barriers and challenges to the availability of regional and state venture capital and support partners engaged in addressing these barriers.**
  - In partnership with regional innovation entities including the Wisconsin Technology Council, OCR, the Wisconsin Early Stage Symposium, and the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network, host an innovation capital roundtable to discuss existing venture capital and angel investment opportunities, current challenges, national and international best practices, and policy implications including the pending venture capital legislation.

- Follow up on ideas and issues addressed in the roundtable to pursue continued growth in innovation and startup financing.
  - Identify and meet with key partners that lead or assist in target-specific capital formation initiatives.
- 3. **Assist existing angel investor networks, including the Wisconsin Angel Network and Wisconsin Investment Partners, in finding and accrediting new angel investors.**
  - Connect regional startups to these investment opportunities.
  - Ensure angels have the support necessary to effectively vet potential funding opportunities and assist funded enterprises with early-stage growth.
- 4. **Advocate for increased state-level capital resources.**
  - Continue to lobby state legislators for resolution to its current venture capital impasse.
    - Push for creation of a state-leveraged venture capital fund for Wisconsin companies.
    - Ensure inclusion of angel acceleration funding for seed investments and private investment leverage in state legislation.
  - Encourage state investments to incorporate early-stage funds into its investment portfolio in order to build stronger capital options for the state and region's entrepreneurs.
  - Advocate for capital incentives to attract entrepreneurs and private sector startups to the state.
- 5. **Identify, build capacity in, and publicize the full continuum of capital as well as funding alternatives.**
  - Assess ongoing opportunities for regional firms to attract federal monies through Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.
    - Identify federal agencies that have funded or plan to fund research in fields related to the region's target clusters.

- Promote training and seminar opportunities offered regionally by WARF and other support organizations for technology transfer.
- Work with existing angel investor networks to evaluate regional opportunities related to online “crowdfunding.”
- Integrate relevant “Got Moo-La?” resources by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection with Thrive’s Capital Connections Inventory database.
  - Optimize the website as a one-stop portal for regional and state-level business resources.
  - Promote the database as a single “clearinghouse” for information for emerging businesses.
- Build capacity in emerging and non-traditional funding sources for startups and early-stage firms.
  - Alternative funding opportunities include micro-venture capital, debt financing, friends and family, and super angel investors.
  - Seek to capitalize a proof-of-concept fund to support early-stage (zero to 18 months) enterprises through startup seed money.
  - Create a fund to more effectively transition innovations and research to Series A round funding.
  - Create incremental funding milestones for startup enterprises, provided established benchmarks are met.
  - Support and promote funding campaigns for projects from the Madison Region on sites such as AngelList.com, Kickstarter.com, PeerBackers.com, RocketHub.com, LuckyAnt.com, and IndieGoGo.com.
- Evaluate the feasibility of creating collectives of small business gap financing opportunities between local revolving loan funds (RLF) and regional banking institutions.
  - Support WEDC’s efforts to regionalize RLFs.



- Assist community banks and local governments in establishing and administering RLFs for startup and small business capital.
- Connect underwriting and servicing resources for local RLFs.
- Consider opportunities to aggregate or syndicate loan funds from a group of regional or community banks in order to lessen risk exposure and expand the number of deals.
- Assess the possibility of locating a branch of TechStars in the City of Madison.
- Through the international trade missions and visits of WARF, WEDC, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, identify best practices for startup capital and other forms of entrepreneurial capital development that can be adapted in the Madison Region as state or federal pilot programs.
- Encourage the region's public and private pension funds, university and foundation endowments, and other institutional funds to allocate a single-digit percentage of assets for regional venture capital investments.
- Reach out to employers to establish a Madison Region-focused special situations fund option on their 401K plans or pension funds.
  - Assist in connecting employers with entrepreneur and capital networks in order to identify opportunities to invest through currently undervalued shares of firms based in the region.

 **BEST PRACTICE: NC IDEA–Durham, North Carolina**

- 6. Promote high-potential firms to possible investors, maintaining an updated list of startups with strong growth potential.**
  - Release an annual list of high-value regional firms and market to national investors and entrepreneur networks.
    - Establish quantitative and qualitative criteria for identifying high-potential startups to suggest, and poll regional and state-level investors and entrepreneur networks to identify which regional firms offer the greatest growth potential in the short-term.

- Create a database of projects and startups seeking seed, venture, and angel funding.
  - Include an executive summary and key contacts for the capital seekers.

## **OBJECTIVE 2: Further develop and promote a culture of entrepreneurship throughout the region.**

- 1. Increase entrepreneurship education and opportunities for youth and college students to instill a culture of entrepreneurship in the region's young talent.**
  - Promote the creation and growth of youth entrepreneurship programs such as Wisconsin Young Entrepreneurs Network (WYEN) through partners such as Capital Entrepreneurs, the Madison SCORE chapter, chambers of commerce, 94 Labs, the Wisconsin Technology Council, BioForward, and Wiscontrepreneur.
    - Establish local chapters of WYEN in school districts in the region.
  - Support the creation of coursework in entrepreneurship and business management for elective credit towards high school diplomas, or for credit in college majors and degree programs in disciplines that support the region's targets as well as broadly in all academic areas.
    - Focus program enhancement on specific degree tracks at the region's two- and four-year postsecondary institutions that support the region's target clusters.
    - Leverage the expertise of entrepreneur organizations to inform program development.
    - As appropriate, pattern program development on successful existing models created by MERLIN Mentors, Wiscontrepreneur, UW–Whitewater's Entrepreneur Program and Collegiate Entrepreneurship Organization (CEO), and other successful entrepreneurial education programs in the region.
- 2. Promote an innovative culture and entrepreneurial opportunities in “traditional” workplace settings such as small to large businesses, non-profit organizations, K–12 school districts, and public agencies—not only at small startups.**

- Through local chambers of commerce and cluster councils, encourage participation in entrepreneurial events, business competitions (including the Governor’s Business Plan Contest and Wiscontrepreneur’s 100-Hour Challenge), and innovation opportunities for all businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations in the region.
  - Leverage the region’s entrepreneurs and college students to consult with non-profit organizations, schools, government offices, and other institutions to determine innovative, efficient new models of operations, planning, and programming.
- 3. Help UW–Madison and UW–Whitewater further foster a culture of entrepreneurship in the region.**
- Focus efforts on dramatically increasing the number of startups that utilize UW technologies, current faculty, students, and graduates.

 **BEST PRACTICE: CampusCATALYST–Chicago, Illinois**

- 4. Expand the region’s entrepreneurial identity through internal marketing efforts.**
- Ensure that local press cover startup success stories, entrepreneurial events and festivals, and other stories related to the region’s growing innovative culture.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Silicon Prairie News–Omaha, Nebraska**

- 5. Continue development of the IQ Corridor and other inter-regional initiatives.**
- Leverage cluster councils and entrepreneur groups to identify contacts and organizations in regions along the corridor and in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota to partner in moving the IQ Corridor forward.
  - Establish an interactive and frequently-updated web presence for the IQ Corridor to publicize, highlight, and discuss ongoing research, individuals and startups, events, and competitions.
  - Consider the creation of a three-state capital conference to convene entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, and other innovation-related entities to

attract national-level attention and participation in startup development and growth.

- Partner with the metro areas and organizations involved in the IQ Corridor on external and outbound marketing efforts.
    - Consider opportunities to market the initiative at the South by Southwest Interactive Festival; MIT Venture Capital Conference; BIO International Convention; J.P. Morgan Technology, Media and Telecom Conference; and other targeted events.
  - Link programs such as 94 Labs, the Midwest University Research Network, and others to internal Madison Region initiatives.
- 6. Support the continued scaling of the Forward Technology Festival and other events that promote the entrepreneurial capital and culture of the Madison Region and the Midwest.**
- Aggressively market entrepreneurial events to attract a broader range of participants and presenters.
  - Consider spin-off opportunities for the events to connect with cycling, agriculture, design, health care, education technology, and other major assets of the region.
- 7. Consider conducting inter-city entrepreneur visits to observe and experience best practice programs.**
- Seek highly effective accelerators, business competitions, funding tools, conferences, technical assistance and support programs, and networking organizations in nearby metros and across the U.S. from which to learn.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Develop, expand, and advance entrepreneurial networks and support to nurture a robust regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.**

- I. Effectively connect entrepreneurs with technical assistance providers, key regional contacts, intellectual property attorneys, and sources of entrepreneurial expertise.**
- Through the leadership of WARF and other entities, facilitate opportunities for experienced entrepreneurs to interface and share best practices with new entrepreneurs through formal and informal mentorship, networking,

roundtable and conference, business competition, and social media opportunities.

- In partnership with WARF, small business and entrepreneur resources such as the Wisconsin Small Business Development Center Network, local SCORE chapters, and local chambers of commerce, compile and update an itemized list of business startup steps that direct entrepreneurs to available tools and experience.

### BEST PRACTICE: KCSOURCELINK–KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

2. **Advance the development of regional relationships that support interaction among, and cultivation of, entrepreneurs and other small business owners.**
  - Regularly convene general and sector-specific entrepreneur and small business networking groups.
  - Sponsor regional business plan competition in conjunction with regional universities and colleges.
3. **Expand knowledge of regional entrepreneurial infrastructure, including incubators, accelerators, co-working space, and research space.**
  - Enhance an existing entrepreneurship award or create a new “iconic” award to increase the visibility of the region’s entrepreneurs at the local, state, and national level.
    - Commission an artist in the region or host a design competition to create the award.
    - Create an internal and external marketing plan to ensure strong media coverage of the winning entrepreneur(s), the event, and the award itself.
  - Convene working group of incubator companies and representatives to address regional issues.
  - Leverage and expand the success and resources of University Research Park (URP) to new and existing incubators throughout the region.
    - Consider the development of new, specialized URP facilities in the region.

4. **Create entrepreneur networks in specific niches to better formalize knowledge and resource systems and exchanges.**
  - Formalize groups of entrepreneurs and other related individuals and entities around key cluster niches such as design, information technology, life sciences, and software development and gaming.
5. **Identify opportunities for “local-sourcing” to the region’s entrepreneurs.**
  - Address services leakage to firms outside of the region.
    - Through BRE visits, address services and products available within the region but for which existing businesses are outsourcing.
  - Seek to link small business and entrepreneurial development into the Madison Region’s “alternative” and student culture in order to enhance local uniqueness and regional character.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Drive productive innovation through the pursuit of additional technology transfer and commercialization opportunities for startup firms.**

1. **Develop the regional infrastructure to take innovations to the market.**
  - Inventory regionally-available resources for research and development, capital, business expansion, manufacturing, marketing, and distribution.
  - Connect resources to create an intra-regional innovation ecosystem.
2. **Encourage further private sector technology transfer and commercialization in order to translate research discoveries into new jobs and companies in the Madison Region and the state.**
  - Utilize BRE visits and cluster councils to identify challenges and barriers in private firms’ concept, prototype development, and testing phases or any major milestones in the path to commercialization.
    - Leverage the UW Tech Transfer Team to connect directly with these firms facing barriers to commercialization.
  - Identify further opportunities to work with WARF and OCR to scale technology transfer and commercialization across the region in the private sector.

3. **Partner with talent development efforts to recruit and retain entrepreneurial managers.**
  - Link WARF and regional incubators to talent development efforts (as detailed in the Advance Human Capital goal area) to ensure talent attraction efforts benefit the growth and sustainability of regional entrepreneurs and startups.
  - Work with UW Tech Transfer team (OCR, WARF, and University Research Park) to identify post-doctoral fellows and other researchers with high potential for entrepreneurial management.
  - Advocate for local and state-level incentives to recruit experienced entrepreneurial managers to lead high-potential early-stage ventures through critical phases of growth and productivity.
4. **Promote examples of locally-grown technologies being both innovated and produced in the region to illustrate the need for comprehensive entrepreneurial supply chains, from idea inception to the final product entering the marketplace.**
  - Leverage information gathered from BRE visits and cluster councils to further the supply chain of productive innovation.
  - Facilitate networking events between academic research bodies and businesses and entrepreneurs to formalize communication that could lead to better technology transfer potential.

 **BEST PRACTICE: Innovation West Michigan–Grand Rapids, Michigan**

## ADVANCE THE MADISON REGION'S STORY

**The Madison Region will effectively develop visionary internal and external marketing efforts to become globally recognized as a competitive and distinctive place for businesses, talent, and quality of life.**

The Madison Region has a wealth of talent, quality of life assets, and business diversity attractive to individuals and firms. However, being a “best-kept secret” has little value in the competitive world of economic development marketing. The region must establish a powerful regional and national presence, touting its real, identifiable advantages and successes and communicating the value of the area to residents and businesses already located in the region and those that may consider relocation or visiting. Making the Madison Region stand out among other large Upper Midwestern metros will be critical, as will distinguishing among the eight diverse counties that comprise the full region. The region must also overcome poor perceptions of Madison and the state’s business friendliness and middling business climate standing to truly be associated in the minds of corporate decision makers as a place for business growth and prosperity.



Key activities in this goal area:

- ➔ *Launch a national public relations campaign for the Madison Region, including earned media placement and leveraging executives and researchers as national experts and the faces of the region.*
- ➔ *Create and implement a relatable, regionwide internal marketing and branding initiative.*
- ➔ *Ramp up current events in the region—such as the Forward Technology Festival—to larger audiences, higher levels of promotion and engagement, and spinoff association potential.*



- *Engage top executives to serve as regional ambassadors for external business prospects considering relocation to the Madison Region and to become the “face” of the region in national PR efforts.*

Building a strong, recognizable brand for the region is not done just through rolling out a new motto or achieving standing in a number of fickle national rankings. Economic development marketing involves changing perceptions and ensuring long-term association of the Madison Region with its most compelling advantages in the minds of top talent and leading decision makers in the region and across the world.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Leverage an internal marketing message to build consensus and understanding about quality regional economic development.**

- I. **Create and implement a regionwide internal marketing and branding initiative.**
  - Gather regional partners and key stakeholder organizations to design, develop, and launch an internal marketing program.
    - Effectively assemble a collective of marketing staff and programs from local, regional, and state organizations for the shared aim of internal marketing.
  - Establish a consensus brand and message, and organize regional partners around the message to promote the Madison Region to its residents and workers.
    - Identify a marketing message that all communities in the Madison Region can support.
    - Identify diverse audiences and stakeholder groups across the region for outreach marketing efforts.
    - Leverage public relations and marketing efforts already being implemented by local and regional stakeholder groups.
    - Harmonize individual local marketing campaigns as necessary to speak with a unified voice to the region related to priority holistic economic development issues and related efforts.
  - Engage the services of a regional public relations firm to possibly offer in-kind services to craft and implement the program.

 **BEST PRACTICE: ThinkOneKC—Kansas City, Missouri—Kansas**

2. **Best communicate the mission and ongoing activities and contributions of Thrive to internal and external audiences.**
  - Produce regular benchmarking reports for delivery to top public and private leaders highlighting Madison Region trends versus top competitor communities.
    - Identify trends of particular concern to effective Advance Now strategic implementation, economic and talent development, and other issues that pose risks to the region’s future vitality.
  - Develop a targeted campaign to increase awareness among internal stakeholders—including investors, board members, regional economic development professionals, volunteers, implementation partners, and other key investors—of Thrive programs and the extent of **Advance Now** progress.
    - Craft targeted e-mail news updates for selected investors and volunteer leaders to provide updates of **Advance Now** programmatic elements, projects, prospects, events, and successes.
    - Prepare an overview booklet for active board members and investors containing the principal **Advance Now** strategic framework, explanations of key programs, and talking points on the Strategy, its goal areas, top priority actions, implementation partners, challenges, performance measures, and to-date results.
  - Expanding and enhancing the current Thrive eNews, send out a regular e-newsletter to a broad regional and external audience highlighting economic development success stories directly linked to the efforts of Thrive.
    - Include news of recent business expansions facilitated by Thrive and partners, new location announcements, major events, marketing initiatives and outcomes, and other ongoing initiatives.
    - Highlight certain components of Thrive’s program, such as BRE or particular business support services.
    - Profile innovative business leaders and firms that are directly and positively impacted by Thrive and **Advance Now**’s program of work.

- Archive newsletters on the Thrive website or use information and announcements from the e-newsletters as blog posts.
- Reserve unflattering or negative news stories for implementation partners—such as economic development professionals—on a separate mailing list.
- Enhance Thrive’s annual report to include detailed coverage of **Advance Now’s** successes and progress.
  - Feature updates and information on each goal area and corresponding initiative.
  - Report outcomes and progress on benchmarks and performance measures.
  - Itemize the upcoming year’s priority activities and metrics to be achieved.
  - Provide printed copies of the newsletter and post the file electronically on regional partner, education institution, government, chamber, and regional organization websites.

 **BEST PRACTICE: [ImaginePittsburghOnline.com](http://ImaginePittsburghOnline.com)—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Create and control an external marketing identity for the Madison Region.**

- I. Launch a national public relations campaign for the Madison Region to promote the region’s “wins” and assets to the region, state, and nation through effective story placement.**
  - Retain a public relations firm or individual with extensive national media contacts and experience in news flow management to promote the Madison Region and its competitive assets.
    - If necessary, hire a niche public relations firm with specific industry expertise to promote regional target clusters.
    - Work with the PR professional to promote specific assets of the region, including:

- Research, innovation, and incubation facilities (University Research Park, Sector 67, WARF, FoodBIN incubators, Metro Innovation Center, Network 222, the planned Rock County Small Business Incubation and Innovation Center, and others) and their members' and graduates' success.
  - Quality of life assets such as cycling and walking trails, lakes and water sports, farmers markets and local food culture, health care specialties and facilities, fine arts and performing arts facilities and events, and historic downtowns.
  - Innovative education and training programs and institutions, from early education to graduate and post-professional programs.
  - Consistently supply the PR firm or professional with information related to positive Madison Region business and quality of life developments, corporate successes, and competitive assets.
- Aggressively counter potential negative perceptions of Wisconsin and Madison Region during national media coverage of the upcoming recall elections.
  - Continue to collect success stories, case studies, and best practice models to include in Thrive's clearinghouse of information to be leveraged in internal and external marketing efforts.

### **BEST PRACTICE: Success Starts Here Bus Tour–Montgomery, Alabama**

- Partner with local and state partners on regional media relations efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
  - Coordinate public relations activities with the WEDC, UW–Madison, and other major agencies and institutions to insure the region's competitiveness complements the messages of state-level media efforts.
  - Co-issue media releases and press advisories to the media with WEDC and other state-level organizations.

- Engage regional partners in a consistent process of information exchange to identify newsworthy developments in regional businesses and research enterprises, and other regional success stories.
  - Through BRE visits, cluster councils, and social media, encourage Madison Region companies to share success stories about business innovations or accomplishments that Thrive can promote.
  - Strive to celebrate and report entrepreneurial and small business success stories from across the Madison Region.
  - Exchange information and newsworthy developments with regional partners.
    - Identify business development news, research endeavors and successes, business owners and executives to be profiled, best practice programs, and quality of life and place-based interests.
  - Frequently update the public relations firm with story ideas and new developments related to the Madison Region’s businesses, workforce and competitive talent, cultural amenities, educational and research institutions, and infrastructure to launch and inform earned media stories.
    - Position executives, researchers, and business owners as national and global thought leaders in key areas of competitiveness for the Madison Region and leverage these individuals as niche “experts” in news stories and interviews.
2. **Engage top executives of firms in the region’s target clusters to serve as regional ambassadors for external business prospects considering relocation to the Madison Region.**
- Train the executives to ensure that they are informed spokespersons and can speak to the Madison Region’s business advantages and competitive capacity.
  - Connect supportive company executives with prospect representatives in the Madison Region on site visits.

3. **Retool Thrive and Madison Region marketing collateral and media—print and electronic—to reflect new and aligned target clusters and **Advance Now** initiatives.**

  - Expand existing target-related web content highlighting the Madison Region’s targets.
    - Include sub-pages for economic and demographic data, talent (including job opportunities), target-specific case studies or testimonials from major and small employers, site and infrastructure assets, news stories, cluster council news, and contact information for Thrive professionals staffing the cluster.
    - Add more visual media to the pages through photographs, graphics, maps, and video specific to each target within the Madison Region.
    - Include specific data about the region’s competitiveness in the given target.
  - Develop an effective multi-channel advertising campaign to focus on the Madison Region’s competitive advantages, target clusters, and talent recruitment.
    - Consider ad placements in specific niche web media outlets such as Technology Review, VentureBeat, Fast Company, and other key specialty publications geared to audiences in the Madison Region’s target clusters.
    - Emphasize the truly unique attributes of the Madison Region’s quality of life and talent assets.
  - Upload target-specific collateral materials to the Thrive website in PDF and data report formats.
    - Consistently update data, contacts, and other information on all target-specific collateral.
  - Increase the social media presence of Thrive.
    - Develop content that will drive national media to Thrive’s Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Facebook accounts, blog, and other new media tools.

- Work to build social media following by those who live outside of the region, especially corporate executives, site selectors, and expatriates and others with Madison Region ties.

➔ **BEST PRACTICES: Kansas City Area Development Council Target Sector Portals–Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas; GRPVA.com–Richmond, Virginia**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Address and dispel the perception of “business unfriendliness” in the Madison Region and Wisconsin.**

**1. Address historic and ongoing discord between the public and private sectors and seek public cross-sector consensus on critical regional economic development issues.**

- Facilitate roundtables with elected officials; local government staff; neighborhood representatives; city and county departments, boards, and commissions; regional economic development professionals; and top business leaders from across the region to create ongoing conversations about the definition and purpose of economic development in the Madison Region.
  - Seek to educate elected and public sector leadership about economic development and the everyday operations, impacts of regulations and approval processes, and long-term needs of businesses in the region.
- Identify existing areas of strong agreement between the groups in order to publicize consensus between diverse parties.
- Seek resolutions to contentious issues that undermine the progress of the Madison Region as a whole.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Regional Council of Mayors–Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota**

**2. Identify major hindrances to a favorable business climate image and aggressively work to improve these factors or dispel myths.**

- Promote improvements for major business impediments like the City of Madison’s permitting process and the increase in shovel-ready sites.

- Tout concrete indicators of positive business climate, such as concentration of firms in target sectors, percentage of higher education graduates in high-demand fields, and other relatable data and figures.
- Clearly define business support services available throughout the region and key contacts for existing and prospective businesses.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Create new opportunities and develop existing events and assets as launching pads for drawing attention to the Madison Region.**

- I. **Enlist existing business leaders to optimize inbound marketing events focused on bringing top site consultants and prospect companies to the Madison Region.**
  - Arrange for top local firms to give tours of their facilities and demonstrations of operational processes, if determined to be valuable, to site consultants and other “influencers.”
  - Collaborate with leading employers in the region to coordinate site and region tours, inviting suppliers and key members of each employer’s supply chain.
    - Consider appealing to existing companies to host dinners and/or events for visiting prospects.
  - Partner with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and local convention and visitors bureaus to identify other sites and opportunities in the region to be showcased to visiting executives.

**➡ BEST PRACTICE: Red Carpet Tour–Memphis, Tennessee**

2. **Integrate major regional events into the public relations and marketing calendar, leveraging events to further showcase the Madison Region’s competitive assets.**
  - Incorporate annual social media and public relations campaigns related to UW football games, tournaments, Iron Man, and other nationally-televised sporting events; the World Dairy Expo; national or international cycling events; the Fall Art Tour; fine art exhibits and performances; and other events.

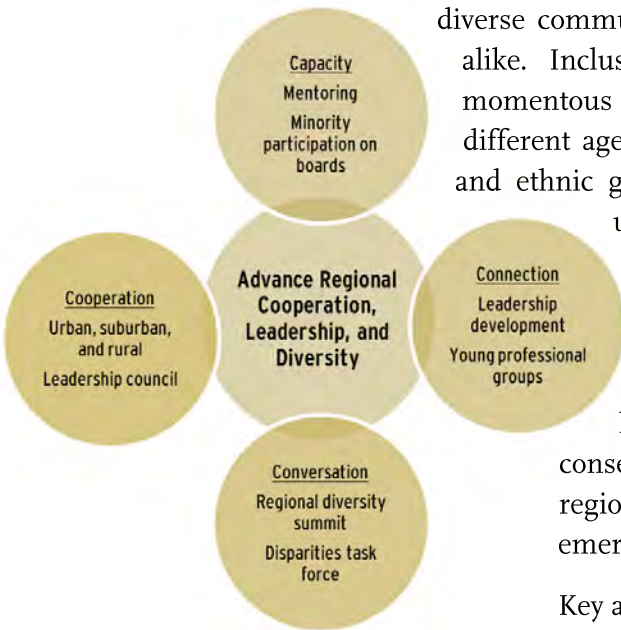


- Invite external corporate executives and site selectors to the region for inbound marketing events to coincide with major events.
3. **Scale existing events in the region to larger audiences, higher levels of promotion and engagement, and spinoff and association potential.**
- Possible events include the Games+Learning+Society Conference; Forward Technology Festival; cycling events; World Dairy Expo; and local food, beverage, agriculture, and agritourism events.
  - Assist burgeoning events with broader promotion.
  - Identify cross-cluster potential with specific events and facilitate related events to coincide with their agendas.

## ADVANCE REGIONAL COOPERATION, LEADERSHIP, AND DIVERSITY

**The Madison Region will fully engage its diverse constituencies and establish partnerships that enhance regional collaboration and demonstrate a consensus approach to shape the eight-county region’s economic future.**

Even the most innovative economic development strategy will collect dust on the shelf unless its region embraces a culture of implementation, engaging members of diverse communities and developing existing and new leaders alike. Inclusiveness will leverage growing diversity as a momentous opportunity and engage citizens and groups from different age, socioeconomic, nationality, political, and racial and ethnic groups across the region’s rural, suburban, and urban geographies. The **Advance Now** Strategy can come to life with strong support from regional leaders and organizations. Economic development organizations and key community players across all eight counties have previously not been united behind a single, consensus strategy. An unprecedented level of regional collaboration and greater capacity must emerge to support and carry out **Advance Now**.



Key actions in this goal area:

- ➔ *Better link urban, suburban, and rural areas and the diverse range of communities in the eight counties under the banner of the Madison Region.*
- ➔ *Develop and sustain mentoring and networking opportunities between young professionals and mid-career and established regional leaders.*
- ➔ *Improve minority participation on boards, commissions, and other community leadership opportunities through outreach and education.*
- ➔ *Host an annual regional diversity summit to address both new and historic components of diversity across the eight counties.*

- *Create a regional leadership council of top “influencers” representing broad constituencies to take a unified leadership approach to major issues and challenges in the Madison Region.*

While Thrive will take the leading role in organizing and setting the pace for implementing the Strategy, a single organization cannot achieve all five goals without the full support of the entire eight-county region. This means strengthening existing leaders and organizations, as well as empowering previously underrepresented groups and the next generation of regional leadership. The growing demographic diversity of the Madison Region, in addition to the impending retiring out of the region’s established leadership, signals the critical need for leadership development and a new focus on the changing makeup of the people who live and work there.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Further focus regional and local programs that support inclusivity, diversity, and minority engagement in economic and community development.**

- I. Engage the alumni and member networks of leadership development and young professional organizations in region-wide efforts.**
  - Organizations include Leadership Greater Madison, Leadership Wisconsin, Magnet, Rock County Young Professionals, Young Professionals of Green County, the Portage Area Chamber of Commerce’s Youth Leadership Program, Leadership Development Academy (Rock County).
  - Ensure young professional organizations are supported by professional staff to carry out focused functions and build internal capacity and external presence.
  - Consider opportunities to merge or formally partner leadership programs and young professional organizations in order to further unify regional leadership development efforts.
  - Identify areas of the region not covered by leadership development or young professional organizations and connect with state-level efforts while working with local chambers of commerce to develop such programs at the community scale.
  - Formalize an elected office track within Leadership Greater Madison and other leadership programs in order to guide participants through the qualifications and steps necessary to run for competitive elected office.

- Reach out to underserved populations to identify and cultivate future leaders.
- 2. **Develop and sustain mentoring and networking opportunities between young professionals and mid-career and established regional leaders to cultivate high levels of engagement and leadership from the region's younger citizens.**
  - Support the hosting of ongoing events, mixers, and panels to allow relationship building and direct communication between young and established professionals across the region.
  - Create a year-long mentoring program to pair young professionals with mid-career executives and established entrepreneurs for mentorship sessions monthly.
    - Mentees should be members of a young professional organization in their community—if such programs exist—and preferably graduates of the community's leadership development program.
    - Mentors must be established mid-career public or private sector executives, directors, or entrepreneurs with experiences that match the careers, interests, and ambitions of accepted mentees.

 **BEST PRACTICE: HYPE and MENTOR—Richmond, Virginia**

- 3. **Improve minority participation on boards, commissions, and other community leadership opportunities through outreach and education.**
  - Conduct an inventory of top-appointed boards, commissions, and other leadership entities in the Madison Region to determine the scale to which they represent the demographics of their service areas.
  - Assess barriers to the expansion of inclusivity and minority participation on boards, commissions, and other leadership entities and develop plans to proactively address these obstacles.
  - Develop an updated internal database of minority community members with interest in serving in leadership positions,
    - Partner with minority-interest groups to identify potential leaders for inclusion.

- Partner with key community leaders on outreach efforts to organizations with boards and commissions that are inconsistent with service area demographics to emphasize the importance of inclusivity and representation across the region's public, private, and non-profit sectors.

➔ **BEST PRACTICES: Multicultural Leadership Program–McLean County, Illinois; Neighborhood Resident Leadership Certificate Program–Des Moines, Iowa**

## **OBJECTIVE 2: Address and embrace the region's emerging and historic diversity.**

- I. Host an annual regional diversity summit to address a number of diversity dynamics and issues across the eight-county region and seek regional consensus on inclusiveness.**
  - Develop a theme and program for the summit based on current regional dynamics and recent discussions of K–12 performance gaps, socioeconomic and health disparities, public and private sector relationships and understanding, geographic and community variety, growing international communities, political thought and conflicts, and generational relationships and leadership transition.
    - Identify regional, state, and national speakers.
    - Involve the participation and sponsorship of major employers in the region, especially those with diverse workforces.
    - Potentially partner with UW–Madison to expand its existing annual Diversity Forum and *Spectrum* magazine to include regionwide leadership and participation.
  - Ensure a wide and representative cross-section of residents (including youth and college students) plan, lead, and attend the conference.
  - Through the summit, formalize a one-year agenda for continuation of diversity discussions and efforts.
    - Establish clear goals related to actionable efforts for follow up, issues that are close to resolution, and the following year's agenda priorities and targeted number of participants.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Montgomery Diversity Summit–Montgomery, Alabama**

2. **Establish a disparities task force to study and develop solutions to socioeconomic, geographic, and racial and ethnic disparities in educational attainment, health, and quality of life across the eight-county region.**
  - Seek volunteers from the private, public, non-profit, and academic sectors to serve on workgroups within the larger task force that focus on specific disparity concerns, primarily educational attainment and health as well as other critical factors impacting the region's overall quality of life improvement, as deemed necessary.
    - The education workgroup will be tasked with identifying and analyzing the breadth and depth of disparities in educational attainment, standardized test scores and other formalized measures; attendance rates; access to after-school programs, tutoring, and other support resources; graduation outcomes; college acceptance; job readiness; transfers from two-year and technical colleges to four-year colleges; access to financial aid; and other components of the region's complete "cradle to career" education continuum.
    - The health workgroup will be charged with identifying and analyzing the extent of disparities in the region's health factors (socioeconomics, physical environment, and health behaviors); health outcomes (mortality and morbidity); access to clinical care and specialists; access to healthy foods; access to recreation and fitness facilities; uninsured rates; overall well-being and quality of life; and other facets of public health.
    - Where appropriate, align workgroups with existing initiatives in the region such as the Collaborative Center for Health Equity, Wisconsin Office of Rural Health, Urban League of Greater Madison, Madison College's Community Councils of Color, and the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin.
  - Based on the task force's findings and recommendations from the two workgroups, pursue partnerships and strategies to address actionable short- and long-term equity and access solutions to the disparity factors and causes analyzed.
    - Involve the region's Agriculture and Food Systems, Life Sciences, and Health Care clusters in addressing relevant findings and delegating key elements of follow-up actions.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: African American Quality of Life Initiative–Austin, Texas**

3. **Better link urban, suburban, and rural areas and the diverse range of communities in the eight counties under the banner of the Madison Region.**
  - Facilitate dialogues between geographically-diverse stakeholder groups for the purpose of unified economic development and marketing efforts.
    - Identify partnership opportunities between new and existing organizations, initiatives, and campaigns across civic boundaries.
  - Pull in influential groups and initiatives with a regional or statewide service area, such as workforce development boards, UW and UW–Extension, and BioForward to identify issues and leaders that could be better connected across the region.

➔ **BEST PRACTICE: Congress of Neighboring Communities–Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Leverage the Madison Region’s present and future leaders in proactive, long-term regional community improvement and engagement efforts.**

1. **Create a regional leadership council to engage the Madison Region’s most influential public and private leaders and executives in the process of regional economic development and cooperation.**
  - The regional leadership council will be more representative of all constituencies than the Thrive board and its investors.
  - Invite top executives from major Madison Region constituencies, including the top business, civic, educational, and philanthropic organizations.
    - Engage early-stage participation from leaders and companies with existing relationships to Thrive and regional economic development efforts.
    - Identify CEOs and major employers in the region that have historically been disengaged from economic development activities and regional cooperation, and consider inviting key individuals to participate in the leadership council.

- Appoint early-stage council members to serve as ambassadors to reach out to detached groups and seek their participation in **Advance Now** and other regional efforts.
- Utilize the council to take a unified regional leadership stance on major issues and challenges faced by the Madison Region.
  - Directly address issues of competition between the region's municipalities.
  - Create a detailed work plan for the leadership council that includes clearly-defined goals, benchmarks, and desired outcomes.
  - Leverage the council to determine how best to leverage the leaders' time and energies for business recruitment and retention efforts.
- Through inter-city visits, facilitate "leadership exchanges" between the Madison Region's leadership council and significant public and private sector decision-makers and thought leaders from the hosting region.



## CONCLUSION

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The **Advance Now** Strategy can serve as the next chapter in the Madison Region's history—a proactive tool for addressing the key issues identified in the Competitive Assessment and effectively growing the region's economy through the targets and niches identified in the Target Cluster Analysis. Extensive quantitative research and input from hundreds of leaders and stakeholders across the eight-county Madison Region have driven the goals, objectives, and actions found in this Strategy. The recommendations are centered on five core goal areas: economic competitiveness; human capital; innovation and entrepreneurship; marketing; and regional cooperation, leadership, and diversity. These interrelated and interdependent goal areas provide a strong foundation to integrate **Advance Now** efforts into emerging and ongoing initiatives across the Madison Region.

Capitalizing on the existing assets of the region and building new capacities will require a much higher level of cooperation between regional public and private leadership than ever before. By leveraging and marketing existing businesses leaders, high quality of life, world-class education opportunities from early childhood to post-graduate studies, and the region's highly-skilled workforce, **Advance Now** can build significant value for investors and partners and increase the competitiveness of the Madison Region and Thrive.

Major employers, small businesses, Pre-K–12 schools, young and established professionals, higher education institutions, entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, previously underrepresented groups, elected and other public officials, and other key stakeholder groups will each have crucial parts to play in the success of **Advance Now** over the next five years.

The Madison Region is very competitive for some of the most high-profile, high-growth, and well-paying sectors in the new economy, but the region must seriously engage in a disciplined, collaborative, and targeted program to take true advantage of its vibrant opportunities for quality growth and development. Given the degree of change, progress, and the exciting opportunities that face the Madison Region, the **Advance Now** Strategy endeavors to take the region to the next level and continue to significantly raise its profile as a competitive, world-class region.

Following the finalization and approval of this Strategy, the last phase of the **Advance Now** process will be creation of an Implementation Plan. This document will specify how the Madison Region will take action on **Advance Now**, including task assignments, timelines, budgets, and performance measures.

## APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

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*Market Street* maintains an extensive library of best practice programs, processes, organizations, and efforts for application to key competitive opportunities and challenges identified through our comprehensive research process. Best practices recommended to inform **Advance Now** were selected based on their specific relevance to actions and efforts the Madison Region can pursue. Ultimately, the region's leadership should utilize these best practices as guidelines and potential programmatic models to inform strategic efforts custom-tailored to the region.

Several of the best practices included in the appendix were also used in the Phase II Marketing Review.

Best practices are organized by the goal in which they are referenced, with the corresponding objective and action numbers.

### **Advance Economic Competitiveness**

#### 1.1 METRO DENVER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION CODE OF ETHICS *Denver, Colorado*

<http://www.metrodenver.org>

The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is the economic development arm of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. It is a strong public-private partnership of numerous local entities dedicated to promoting the full Metro Denver Region, including 70 cities, counties, and economic development organizations from nine counties.

To ensure that standards of conduct are advanced and adhered to by Metro Denver EDC's full complement of diverse economic development organizations as they seek to promote the region as a single economic entity, the groups developed a code of ethics to follow. Components of the code include the following pledges:

- “When representing the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (EDC), we shall endeavor to sell ‘Metro Denver First’ and our individual communities and projects second.”
- “We shall honor the confidentiality requested by both our fellow members of the Metro Denver EDC and our prospects.”
- “We are committed to the concept of competition for locations and expansions among our individual communities and projects, provided that

the prospect has asked for specific proposals or has settled on a Metro Denver location.”

- “At no time shall any member of the Metro Denver EDC solicit a fellow member’s prospects.”
- “We are committed to sharing among our membership as much information as is necessary and prudent on any activity undertaken by or in the name of the Metro Denver EDC.”
- “At no time shall any economic development organization member of the Metro Denver EDC advertise or promote its respective area to companies within another member’s geographic area in a manner that is derogatory or insulting to the other geographic area.”

In addition, the Metro Denver EDC adheres to strict confidentiality guidelines regarding the handling of prospects. Whenever possible, the EDC shares specific information within the realm its regional members and the Colorado Governor’s Office of Economic Development and International Trade. When prospects are dealing directly with individual communities within the region, only Metro Denver EDC staff and the local ED representatives involved share information. In cases where a prospect requests to remain completely confidential with an individual community, the rest of the Metro Denver EDC members and staff honor that confidentiality until the prospect chooses to announce.

In terms of external marketing, when a Metro Denver EDC member establishes a prospect generated from the Metro Denver EDC’s national advertising and trade shows, the member utilizes the EDC’s standardized prospect tracking system in all prospect contact. Members are strongly discouraged from advertising in local media outside of their own market area.

Member municipalities and organizations have approved the code for application and the agreement has been effective in promoting and maintaining regional cooperation across a number of economic development-related issues, not solely leads management. Other regions across the U.S., such as Northeast Indiana, have adopted regional economic development codes of ethics modeled around Metro Denver EDC’s agreed non-compete standards.

### 1.3 MISSOURI ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND INFORMATION CENTER (MERIC) *State of Missouri*

[www.missourieconomy.org](http://www.missourieconomy.org)

As the research division for the Missouri Department of Economic Development, MERIC's mission is to provide value-added research with the customer in focus. Its customers include policymakers, economic developers, and the public-at-large. Formed in 2001 as the result of a merger between the state's Department of Economic Development research group and the state's Labor Market Information unit, MERIC produces a variety of economic studies including target industry profiles, economic condition reports, and economic impact assessments as well as coordinating the publication of Labor Market Information in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor. Examples of MERIC's work, reports, and data files are available at the MERIC website.

However, much of MERIC's work shines behind the scenes of local, regional, and state economic development partner organizations throughout Missouri. For example, MERIC supports the efforts of the Missouri Partnership, the state's non-profit marketing outfit, with the research it needs to effectively market Missouri as a competitive place for business. MERIC's staff prepares workforce, business cost, and employer information in dynamic, engaging ways for the Partnership to use in marketing its target industries. Access to high-quality data analysis enables MERIC's partners to develop powerful marketing collateral. Examples can be viewed at the Partnership's website ([www.missouripartnership.com](http://www.missouripartnership.com)).

MERIC has over a dozen national research awards over the last decade from organizations such as the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA). Its senior level researchers are known nationwide within the field of economic development research (particularly its founding director, Dr. Marty Romitti, who ran MERIC from 2001 to 2011) and the customer-focused orientation of the organization breaks stereotypes of red tape and government agencies.

MERIC's expected 2012 fiscal year budget is \$1.8 million, up from \$1.3 million in 2009.

### 2.1 KANSAS CITY MANUFACTURING NETWORK *Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas*

[www.kcmn.org](http://www.kcmn.org)

The Kansas City Manufacturing Network (KCMN) brings area manufacturers together to share business experiences and other nonproprietary information. By

providing a forum for manufacturers and their direct suppliers to share business experience, KCMN assists its members in finding solutions to common manufacturing problems and promotes learning from experts in manufacturing. The organization was established in 1993 in Overland Park, Kansas and its direction is developed by a committee of member representatives in collaboration with its sponsor, the Mid-American Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC). Membership is limited to manufacturers and their direct suppliers.

KCMN has developed resources to benefit its members by presenting:

- Roundtables – These regularly-scheduled meetings feature speakers who can address the manufacturing community, provide opportunities for networking and establish a forum for problem solving that is unique for local manufacturers.
- Plant tours – Companies that have a special grasp of a manufacturing technology or technique open their doors to members to share their operations and experiences.
- Executive workshops – Scheduled as indicated throughout the year, these workshops examine a roundtable topic in greater depth and are geared to company management.
- Website – The website answers inquiries about the organization, announces various events, provides registrations, and updates the membership on manufacturing news and information.

### 2.3 NASHVILLE HEALTH CARE COUNCIL

*Nashville, Tennessee*  
[www.healthcarecouncil.com](http://www.healthcarecouncil.com)

The Nashville Health Care Council was founded in 1995 as an initiative of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. Since that time, the Council has evolved into one of the nation's top industry-specific councils and led to the creation of dozens of new companies employing thousands of workers. A staff of seven works with the Council's nearly 200 member organizations to foster a supportive operating environment for existing, startup, and relocating health care businesses. Through educational programs, the Council also provides executives with information on key operational and policy challenges facing health care companies, as well as networking and mentoring activities. Sub-sectors represented by member companies include hospital management, outpatient services, disease management, pharmaceutical services, academic medicine, medical technology and health information technology. Also represented are professional services firms with wide-ranging expertise in the health care industry.

## 2.4 **BIOCROSSROADS** *Indianapolis, Indiana*

<http://www.biocrossroads.com>

The Indianapolis region has benefitted tremendously from the location of the Indiana University School of Medicine, the second largest teaching hospital in the country. A recent study by the Indiana Business Research Center showed that more than one quarter of all job growth since 2000 in the state of Indiana has been in life sciences companies. The region has begun to aggressively target biopharmaceuticals as a niche within the region's life sciences cluster, leveraging the existing strength of giants such as Eli Lilly and Roche Diagnostics, as well as a supportive environment for early-stage, small and medium-sized business to grow. A big part of this supportive environment comes from Indiana's 21st Century Research and Technology Fund (21 Fund). Between 2005 and 2008, the Fund awarded more than \$75 million in grants to 59 establishments in the state. The fund also matched more than 50 SBIR awards received by small businesses during the same time period.

In partnership with the state, the City of Indianapolis launched the BioCrossroads initiative in 2002 to support growth and innovation within the region's life science companies. The collaborative initiative has raised more than \$120 million to support the Indiana Future Fund and the Indiana Seed Fund. BioCrossroads has also actively supported and funded K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education as well as a unique young professionals group. The initiative's website is both informative and engaging, conveying to the user that the region and the state are committed to developing this cluster.

## 2.4 **LIFETECH BOSTON FUNDING PROGRAMS** *Boston, Massachusetts*

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

LifeTech Boston was established in 2004 to encourage growth in Boston's life sciences sector and is managed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Launched by Mayor Thomas Menino, LifeTech works to attract, retain, support, and strengthen biotechnology companies as well as pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, and other ancillary companies.

One program component of LifeTech Boston is a set of funding programs that connects companies to various sources of capital. Options include local, state, and federal tax incentives and credits, loan programs, and bonds. Specific programs include:

- The LifeTech Finance Program

- The Innovation Fund
- The LifeTech Build-out Fund

The LifeTech Finance Program was started to provide assistance to early and later stage companies for real estate costs such as security deposits and build out, the purchase of equipment, and debt refinancing. The funds are extended through low-interest, asset-based loans with two to ten year amortization. Each company may qualify for up to \$250,000 and are reviewed after the second year to determine if an extension will be granted.

The Innovation Fund provides funding to startup companies that have not yet attained venture capital funding and have no other investors than the owner(s) of the company. Principals must have a credit score of at least 620 to qualify for this program, and personal guarantees are not required.

The LifeTech Build-out Fund provides assistance to more established companies that are beginning manufacturing of their technologies and have already attained venture capital funding. Offering loans with a maximum term of seven years, this loan program assists with location, build-out and expansion and can be also be used for equipment upgrades, working capital, and lease hold improvements. Principals must have a credit score of at least 700, and personal guarantees are required.

## 2.5 IDEA COMMONS *Springfield, Missouri*

<http://www.missouristate.edu/ideacommons/>

IDEA Commons is a program of Missouri State University. Located in a complex of buildings in downtown Springfield, IDEA Commons is concerned with combining “Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship, and Art.” The site represents MSU’s desire to create an urban research park that is blended with residential, retail, and entertainment facilities, and supported by various university programs. IDEA Commons includes space for university programs and spin-off commercialization of technologies. The plan is to spur creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation for the benefit of the Springfield region. IDEA Commons has three goals:

- Expanding opportunities for business development and commercializing research
- Developing capacity for university partnerships with innovation entrepreneurs
- Focusing on domains where they feel expertise exists and synergy can be most effectively exploited: innovation, design, entrepreneurship and art

Both the Jordan Valley Innovation Center and Brick City are located within IDEA Commons. The Jordan Valley Innovation Center (JVIC) is a research institution affiliated with MSU. It provides investigative learning opportunities for MSU's students, as well as its corporate, private, and governmental affiliates. JVIC provides lab space, in addition to conference rooms, and a demonstration area. Research is conducted on a variety of industrial R&D and manufacturing-related subjects, including advanced technologies, bio-materials, bio-systems, genomics/proteomics, medical material device and instrument technologies, nanotechnology, product development, and software engineering. JVIC maintains relationships with over two dozen partners in the community, including corporate affiliates, corporate and private funding, project affiliates, federal sponsors, and university affiliates.

Brick City is a seven-building retail, residential, and office complex that provides arts and design students and professionals the opportunity to share a close proximity and community with entrepreneurs. Brick City enables hundreds of students to take art and design classes from the undergraduate and graduate programs offered at the relatively new development.

The downtown IDEA Commons has created and grown strong programs that drive innovation but there remains significant potential to further develop the center. MSU has highlighted possible uses for remaining space at the IDEA Commons, including labs and research space, art and design studios, and more entrepreneurial support.

## 2.5 WORKING ARTISTS VENTURA *Ventura, CA*

<http://www.cityofventura.net/cs/arts/wav>

<http://www.wavartists.com>

The City of Ventura, California has established itself as a world leader in incorporating support for the arts into downtown development and tourism. Through its innovative Working Artists Ventura (WAV) project, it simultaneously remediated a brownfield site downtown, developed a new half-city-block sustainable community, established a vibrant arts district, and boosted tourism prospects.

The WAV is a multi-dimensional development that resulted from a community-driven process. City leaders wanted to anchor its downtown cultural district and called in a non-profit consultancy called PLACE (Projects Linking Art, Community, & Environment) to coordinate the project. PLACE worked to bring together the City, business leaders, grassroots organizations, artists, and developers to craft and deploy a shared vision for arts-based development. The project was guided by three groups of stakeholders: a working group, which met monthly to provide conceptual



oversight; an advisory board, composed of influential community members; and the community at large, which met 142 over the course of the project. Once the development site was chosen, the broad collaborative effort helped to raise a total financing package of \$65 million from HOME and CDBG grants, RDA funds, and other public and private sources.

When completed in December 2009, the project included live-work space for over one-hundred artists, a theater gallery, and space for arts-related small retail and small business establishments. Live-work units range from subsidized, affordable homes to luxury, market-rate condos. The WAV's residents represent a mix of incomes and a diversity of artist types, including painters, dancers, musicians, poets, and others. There is a strong sustainability component, and the community is seeking LEED Gold certification. Car sharing, conservation, and renewable energy (through the use of solar panels) are key components of the community's vision. On some days, the site generates enough electricity to sell back to the grid.

The WAV has become a key link between downtown and other revitalizing districts. The development brought over 300 new jobs to the city and helped to draw the foot traffic needed for neighborhood vitality. Greater than one-third of the site is devoted to public and community space. It has proven to be an innovative model for pursuing joint interests in arts development and urban revitalization.

## COOPERATIVE ADVERTISING GRANT PROGRAM

### 2.6 *Greenbrier Valley, West Virginia*

[http://greenbrierwv.com/tourism\\_partners/cvb\\_mini\\_grant\\_program/](http://greenbrierwv.com/tourism_partners/cvb_mini_grant_program/)

The Greenbrier County Convention and Visitors Bureau (GCCVB) promotes travel and tourism throughout the Greenbrier Valley region of West Virginia. The GCCVB developed a Cooperative Advertising Grant Program to help financially support the advertising efforts of various entities in Greenbrier County. The program is designed to increase overnight stays in Greenbrier County, promote a positive image of the county's attractions, increase visitor expenditures, and publicize activities that draw additional tourists. The annual grant program was launched in 2002 and has been continued each year since its inception.

Eligible projects are those which are advertising, marketing, or promotional in nature, promote out-of-county visitors, and have more than a local impact. The GCCVB's Grants and Research Committee reviews all applications and exercises discretion in determining which applicants are eligible and merit financial support. All grant recipients must incorporate the GCCVB's logo and tagline in all advertising, marketing, and promotional materials supported by the grant.

## 2.6 AGRIMISSOURI.COM *State of Missouri*

<http://agrimissouri.com/>

AgriMissouri.com is an extension of the Missouri Department of Agriculture and is a clearinghouse for all things related to agritourism in the state. For a small fee agriculture businesses can be listed and the site has over 1,350 members (which is more than triple the participation at the beginning of the year). Rather than simply listing farms and contact information, site users can search for products grown and made in Missouri, as well as fun events. The listings are very comprehensive and are inclusive of farmers' markets, CSAs, livestock, fresh produce, "u-pick" farms, hayrides, and educational classes, among others. The site also has a mapping feature which allows the user to see locations of different agri-attractions on a Google map.

In addition to receiving publicity through the site, producers and business owners get other membership benefits, including participation in the bar code cooperative (helping make products sales ready), inclusion at the Missouri State Fair, discounts on educational classes (such as "Microsoft Excel for Financial Recordkeeping" and "Farm and Small Business Estate Planning Course"), and use of the AgriMissouri logo. A mobile web app is forthcoming and robust activity on social media sites keeps members and tourists aware of the latest agriculture news and events.

## 2.7 GREATER AUSTIN TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP *Austin, Texas*

<http://www.austinchamber.com/do-business/technology-partnership/tech-partnership.php>

Austin, Texas has been envied by many regions around the nation for its unique character, educational assets, and attractiveness to businesses and young people, among many other qualities. But Austin has not been immune to challenges. The region experienced tremendous growth in semiconductor manufacturing and related technology employment throughout the 1990s. As this sector declined in the early 2000s, the region was left in a vulnerable position. The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce's Opportunity Austin initiative was an ambitious plan to refocus regional resources on ensuring that Austin remained one of the country's most attractive places to live, work, and do business.

A portion of the Opportunity Austin initiative focused on economic diversification. There was a need to identify and target emerging clusters that leveraged the existing assets in the region. Financial and technical services were captured within the Convergence Technologies and the Corporate and Professional Operations targets. Since the implementation of Opportunity Austin and Opportunity Austin 2.0, the

region has far surpassed the originally ambitious growth targets; more than 120,000 new jobs have been added to the regional economy since 2004. Employment has boomed particularly in the financial, professional, and technical services sectors. Home Depot and Hewlett-Packard located large data center operations in the region, adding to a stock that already included Dell, IBM, Oracle, and Citigroup, among others. The region attracted new major employers in financial and technology services including Borland Software and Dimensional Fund Advisors.

The Chamber has also helped drive a number of green energy initiatives that have helped Greater Austin become one of the most progressive regions in the country with respect to green energy adoption among residents and businesses. One program in particular, the Data Center Efficiency Program at Austin Energy, provides rebates up to \$200,000 per site per year as well as other incentives for opting into the company's renewable energy program.

In September 2010, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce created the Greater Austin Technology Partnership (GATP) to engage technology community executives in strategic planning efforts to recruit and retain high-tech companies. The technology partnership consolidates all of the chamber's tech-related efforts under one umbrella.

Technology is a prime driver of job creation in Austin. As the region evolved from high-tech manufacturing to broad and diverse technology sectors, the Chamber saw a need to create a regionally-focused economic development strategy that leverage local senior technology leaders in creating a long-term vision for Central Texas' high-tech future.

GATP brings together 60 technology executives from the region under the GATP Advisory Board, who meet quarterly, and a working group of 15 to 20 executives that meets more frequently to identify next generation technology trends and develop a long-term strategy for the technology industry in Austin. The GATP partners are also active in providing advocacy at the local, state, and federal level on technology development and enhancement policies.

The GATP falls under the umbrella of the Chamber's existing Business Retention and Expansion program. The four BRE staff divide work among three clusters: semiconductor, clean technology, and advanced manufacturing; software, wireless, and creative media; and life science and health care. The staff created three Sector Industry Groups (SIG) from these clusters, populated with top-level corporate executives. Chamber staff in the business attraction, communications, public policy, and workforce development programs participate in quarterly SIG meetings. Each

SIG determines an appropriate agenda of activities and responsibilities to be executed by members and Chamber staff.

In addition to the coordination of SIGs and advocacy efforts, GATP has identified three “game changer initiatives” to pursue: the University of Texas’ energy lab, the location of a medical school in Austin, and the Pecan Street Project smart grid lab. The GATP has also assessed long-term investments in K–12, higher education institutions, infrastructure, and planning policy as they relate to Central Texas’ technology growth.

## 2.8 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM *Orlando, Florida*

<http://www.orlandoedc.com/Relocate-Expand/International-Business/intlbusconnections.shtml>

The Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission (MOEDC) serves the City of Orlando and the surrounding four-county region by attracting new business investments through marketing, and by assisting existing local companies with expansion and retention concerns. To help achieve this mission, the MOEDC has an International Business Development Team to help local businesses boost export sales and by marketing the Orlando region globally.

Some of the specific activities of the team:

- Assisting local companies to identify and capitalize on export opportunities;
- Supporting international companies that are expanding to the Orlando region;
- Aggressively marketing the region through advertising and key international business development missions;
- Facilitating business matching through inbound trade missions;
- Providing counseling sessions on visas, tax laws, and other issues of concern to international companies;
- Working with the University of Central Florida and its Technology Incubator to recruit world-renowned researchers to bring R&D programs to Orlando for commercialization and startup opportunities; and
- Publishing a monthly e-mail newsletter “news brief” to circulate to its members and key contacts.

The organization began pursuing international opportunities early in 2004 and has ramped up capacity over the last several years. The organization has registered some clear “wins” as a result of these focused efforts. In 2006, six international companies

from Germany, Canada, Spain, and Australia announced direct investment in the region.

Luncheons, tours, and trips are all special events economic development organizations sometimes sponsor in order to promote their communities. Often times the purpose of such events is to learn from other communities or to provide networking opportunities that help facilitate business leads.

### 3.1 BUSINESS FIRST GREATER RICHMOND *Richmond, Virginia*

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

Founded in 2006, Business First Greater Richmond is a proactive initiative managed by the Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP) to support existing businesses in the area. The program is based on face-to-face meetings with CEOs and top company officials conducted by both Partnership staffers and trained volunteers from the business community. Interviews cover a wide range of topics and findings include hiring prospects for the next year, perceptions of the regional workforce and specific skill shortages, projected sales, and business climate issues. The data allows the GRP to gauge the health of the regional economy and provide targeted solutions.

The program also responds to specific requests for assistance. By partnering with local government entities, the program leverages the full suite of available resources and provides customized service to businesses.

In FY 2010–2011 Business First staffers and volunteers met with 567 companies and assisted companies created 1,045 jobs, invested \$68 million in capital investment, and retained 172 jobs. Since 2006, assisted companies have created over 2,000 jobs, invested over \$270 million, and retained more than 2,500 jobs.

### 4.1 TENNESSEE SITE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS *State of Tennessee*

<http://www.tvaed.com/megasites.htm>

<http://www.tvaed.com/datacenters/>

Tennessee was recently ranked as a top ten state in which to do business by *Area Development*, a leading economic development publication. The survey was based on analysis from site selectors, and Tennessee's high ranking was driven in part by its first-place tie (with North Carolina) for the best certified sites and shovel-ready programs. Two programs worth highlighting include certification by the Tennessee

Valley Authority (TVA) and a collaborative certification organized by the West Tennessee Industrial Association (WTIA) and the Middle Tennessee Industrial Association (MTIA).

**TVA Certified Megasites:** Originally developed to attract automotive and auto-related industries, the megasite program has garnered national attention and actually attracted non-automotive companies to Tennessee. Working with McCallum Sweeney, a leader in site selection, seven megasites have been certified in the state, using more than 240 site-specific criteria. Criteria include a minimum of 1,000 acres, environmental and geotechnical testing complete, proximity to interstate highways, railways, and suppliers, a plentiful labor supply, and an acceptable infrastructure development plan. Of the original seven megasites, only two remain. The market for megasites has dropped off with the economic downturn, but the marketing efforts continue. All pertinent information on the sites can be found via the TVA website, along with GIS maps, infrastructure specifications, and community information.

**TVA Certified Data Centers:** Recognizing the importance of engaging a third-party to help certify sites, the TVA recently engaged Deloitte Consulting to evaluate and designate sites as primary locations for data centers. The sites are intended to be ready for enterprise data centers, financial services processing, and technology companies. The criteria used to designate the sites included the following:

- Accessibility and physical characteristics,
- Strong telecommunications infrastructure, and
- Availability of reliable, competitively priced electric power.

The TVA also offers the most competitive electricity rates to companies with high power demand, a monthly load factor of 80 percent or higher, and listed under an eligible NAICS code, such as an internet service provider or financial transaction processor.

**WTIA and MTIA Certified Deal Ready Sites:** The WTIA and MTIA have certified sites ranging from 20 to 1,000 acres. Approved by third-party consultants CH2M Hill and Strategic Development Group, the Deal Ready Certification encompasses over 100 requirements. All Deal Ready sites are free of ownership issues, the terms of sale are established, and infrastructure is ready for construction to begin. All sites are visited to ensure requirements are fulfilled.

Sites greater than 50 acres must conform to the following:

- Transportation access

- Four Lane Truck Route
- Within 2 hours of commercial airport
- Zoned for industrial use
- Outside of the 100-year flood plain
- Free of environmental issues; Phase I study complete
- Utility minimums of 7,500 KVA electricity, natural gas, 250,000 GPD water and sewer, T1 telecommunications
- Site and topography maps prepared

## 4.2

### INSITE, INDY PARTNERSHIP

*Indianapolis, Indiana*

<http://www.indypartnership.com>

The Indy Partnership, the regional business development and research organization for the nine-county Indianapolis region, represents local economic development organizations and coordinates contact with and response to relocating and expanding firms.

The Indy Partnership's research department utilizes GIS mapping tool InSite which provides single-screen thematic layer data and point data for site location decisions and generation of customized reports from InSite's datasets.

Detailed property information can be mapped by preferences, including size parameters, sale or lease, ceiling height, price, zoning, contiguous space, transportation infrastructure access, and specific locations. Selected properties can then be compared side-by-side and sorted by size and price.

InSite also features mapping of companies in the ten-county region, searchable by industry (two-digit NAICS), county, firm size, and revenue. Demographic and workforce data is also available.

The customized maps and reports can be downloaded, printed, or e-mailed. While InSite is intuitive—the platform is Google Maps—the website also offers an illustrated tutorial.

Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) recognized Indy Partnership with the “Excellence in Research Projects Supporting Business Development” award in 2010. Due in part to the InSite tool, the Indy Partnership was awarded “Best Economic Development Website” in 2009 by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and has been recognized by Site Selection magazine for being “one of the best economic development websites we’ve ever

seen.” Indy Partnership staff have attributed the InSite tool and quick workforce data on the website as critical elements of closing most of their recent deals.

## 5.1 ONE-STOP SHOP

### *Boise, Idaho*

<http://pdsonline.cityofboise.org/pdspemits/default.aspx>

The City of Boise opened a one-stop-shop permit center in 2005 that includes staff members from various departments and agencies in one physical location, making it possible for applicants to obtain information, application materials and pay fees for necessary permit and development approvals in one consolidated location. The city also instituted an expedited “Fast Track” permit review process that utilizes a predevelopment review procedure to identify incoming permits and direct them along a path of least resistance towards an efficient and timely issuance. Lastly, the city’s computerized permit plan tracking system has also helped to expedite the permitting process by making current project and permit information available electronically.

Through this online permitting system—PDS Online—users can view their company’s active permits on one screen, and manage all active projects online. Users can track a permit’s progress through the planning department, apply for a permit online, request an inspection, and even get inspection results by e-mail/text messaging.

## Advance Human Capital

### 1.1 BUSINESS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

#### *Paducah, Kentucky*

<http://www.bep.paducahchamber.org>

The Business Education Partnership (BEP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to linking education with local businesses in the Paducah, Kentucky area. The organization’s mission is to “develop collaborative partnerships between business and education and become a pro-active voice for educational issues at the local, regional and state level.” Educational networks of the Partnership include Paducah McCracken County Schools, Paducah Independent Schools, Community Christian Academy, and St. Mary’s School systems.

The objective of the BEP is to prepare students to successfully enter the workforce upon graduation from high school or completion of post-secondary degree. This goal is met by promoting direct interaction between employers and students through



classroom presentations, internships, field trips, mentoring, mock interviews, and scholarships. Since its establishment in 1996, the BEP has grown to include one full-time staff member, a BEP Committee of over 40 volunteers, and a youth focus group.

The Partnership has a comprehensive website, which encourages even more participation and information dispersal throughout the community. Business representatives can volunteer to make classroom presentations, provide internship opportunities, and contribute to other activities to promote interaction between students and businesses.

## 1.2 **12 FOR LIFE** *Carrollton, Georgia*

<http://www.12forlife.com/>

Led by Southwire, one of the largest electrical wire manufacturers in the U.S., the 12 for Life partnership with Carroll County School System focuses on high schoolers at risk for dropping out. The program mixes up the school day with traditional classroom time and then time on the factory floor at a Southwire facility where students work, receive on-the-job training, and are coached on job and life skills, all while receiving a paycheck. Students begin at \$8 an hour—much more than other part-time jobs in the area—and are eligible for raises based on attendance and work ethic.

The up-front investment of constructing a modified plant designed for the safety needs of teenagers was significant for Southwire, but as a productive, operating plant training a future full-time workforce the costs have paid off.

With a goal to see 175 high schoolers through to graduation in its first five years, Southwire has already helped 275 graduates in four years. Since the launch of 12 for Life, the school district's graduation rate has gone up 10 percentage points and its on-time graduation rate for the poorest students has jumped up 22 percentage points. Around 40 percent of 12 For Life graduates go to college, while others begin full-time positions at one of Southwire's main plants, where they receive prioritization for openings. In 2011, Southwire executives were invited to present their model to White House staff. The program has been so successful for Southwire's workforce that it is replicating 12 for Life in Alabama and at other plants in Georgia.

### 1.3 ALIGNMENT NASHVILLE *Nashville, Tennessee*

[www.alignmentnashville.org](http://www.alignmentnashville.org)

Funded by public and private entities in Metro Nashville, Alignment Nashville is a community-wide collaboration among schools, non-profits, businesses, and the public sector designed to effectively align organizations to help public schools succeed and youth live healthier lives. The program serves as a scalable framework for school improvement that brings community organizations and resources into alignment to coordinate support of Nashville's youth health and education outcomes, public school success, and the success of the community as a whole. A board of directors was created to provide oversight and an Operating Board, consisting of Metro Nashville Public Schools administrators and community organization executives, was formed to develop direction and processes for the initiative's working committees. Program goals include the following: greater returns on investment; higher quality services; enhanced capacity; and better leveraging of local funding. Alignment Nashville was leveraged in the creation of the Metro Nashville Public Schools' 2007-14 Strategic Plan developed by the Cambridge Group.

### 1.4 COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORTS *Austin, Texas*

<http://www.austinchamber.com/education-talent/community-education>

As a component of Opportunity Austin 2.0, the five-year economic development strategy for metro Austin, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce publishes annual progress reports for each of the ten independent school districts and one community college in its region.

Each district's community education report uses standard metrics to monitor K-12 student performance indicators predicting success leading up to high school, with a focus on high school graduation rates, college and career preparedness, and higher education enrollment rates. The two specific performance goals these indicators measure attainment towards are (1) increasing the post-secondary enrollment of metro Austin students to 20,010 by the year 2010 and (2) closing achievement gaps among economic, ethnic, and racial student groups, both objectives of Opportunity Austin 2.0. The intent of the reports is not to benchmark Austin's schools to other communities, the state, or the nation, but to evaluate actual school district performance to community expectations.

## 2.2 BIOTECHNOLOGY ACADEMY AT ANDREW P. HILL HIGH SCHOOL *San Jose, California*

<http://ah.ca.campusgrid.net/home/Academy+Programs/Biotechnology+Academy>

The Biotech Academy is a school-within-a-school, launched in 1999 as a component of the medical/health professions magnet program at Andrew P. Hill High School in San Jose. The Biotech Academy serves about 125 out of the school's 2,000 students. More than half of Academy students were chosen for the program because of their "at risk" status due to socioeconomic and academic challenges. At the end of ninth grade, students are recruited and enroll in the program for grades 10 through 12.

The small learning community, college prep curriculum, personalized environment and successful postsecondary partnerships poise students to achieve and to plan their academic futures.

Several local Silicon Valley firms and institutions partner with the Biotech Academy, providing guest speakers, hosting field trips, and offering job shadowing, mentoring, and internship opportunities. Current partners include Genentech, Incyte Genomics, Kaiser Permanente, and Stanford Medical School. Biotech Academy Juniors are matched with volunteer mentors from local biotech firms, who donate two hours each month to provide academic assistance and encouragement and role modeling to students. During visits to companies, students learn about specific biotech careers such as biochemistry, engineering, biology, and chemistry.

Agilent Technologies has provided monetary grants to the Biotech Academy and sponsors the Agilent After School hands-on science program, in which senior Biotech Academy students partner with incoming eighth-grade students on science projects.

Ninety-five percent of the students in the medical/health professions magnet program who graduate pursue full-time postsecondary education and receive Cs or better. Fifty-seven percent of graduates go on to health careers.

The program has won national recognition from the Employment Management Foundation, *The Wall Street Journal*, and the University of California at Berkeley's Lighthouse Award.

## 3.2 HOPKINSVILLE EDUCATION SUMMIT *Hopkinsville, Kentucky*

<http://www.hopkinsvilleky.us/edsummit>

The Hopkinsville Education Summit launched in 2008 to address concerns about education quality in the Hopkinsville, Kentucky region. It has become a major

force for driving innovation and collaboration throughout the region, drawing from the ideas and talents of the business community, education leaders, and parents.

The Summit was initiated by the Christian County Education Coalition (CCEC) in 2008 and originally targeted Christian County issues. Since then, the Summit has broadened to include Trigg and Todd County public schools and is conducted in partnership with the Pennyriple Area P-16 Council (which serves a five-county area). Its basic purpose was to “enhance opportunities to increase levels of educational attainment across the region.” Organizers knew that doing so would require them to engage a broad, diverse set of stakeholders and to forge partnerships across the region. Event sponsors now include private businesses, chambers of commerce, public school systems, non-profit entities, and institutions of higher education. Through these sponsors and a grant from Murray State University’s Office of Regional Stewardship and Outreach, the event requires no additional public funding.

The Summit is held annually over four hours on a Saturday morning at Hopkinsville Community College. The agenda consists of a series of presentations, a keynote address, and finally two sets of breakout sessions. Local challenges are explored and best practices from sources locally and across the country are presented. The 2012 Summit is themed “Education Pays: Investing in our Future,” and previous summit themes include “Our Children, Our Schools, Our Future” and “Preparing Our Children for Their Future.” Keynote speakers are education experts and innovators of national reputation and have included consultants, educators, administrators, and leaders in government. The breakout sessions are usually facilitated by local and regional experts and cover a range of topics, such as applying national standards, closing achievement gaps, using technology tools to transform learning, engaging parents and the broader community, and early intervention for at-risk students.

Each of the Summits held since 2008 has attracted great interest from the community at large, with strong participation by parents, community members, and the business community. Attendance has ranged from 300 people to more than 400. There has been consistent focus on establishing rigorous curricula, challenging students to reach high expectations, and developing quality teachers. The Summits and the wide community engagement have seemingly yielded great benefits. Christian County schools have demonstrated substantial progress over the last three years, as they have risen 65 places in state rankings and have been placed on the AP District Honor Roll by College Board for increasing scores and the number of students taking AP tests each spring. Todd County schools have expanded technology offerings to students with all eighth graders receiving iPads

and all high school students receiving MacBooks. The City of Hopkinsville has now launched a Partners in Education program to link public and private sectors for the benefit of the local workforce. Finally, between 2010 and 2011, Trigg County High School increased its College/Career Readiness rate by 15 percentage points, up to 49 percent.

## 5.1 YSTARK! FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

### *Canton, Ohio*

<http://www.ystark.org/page/fellowship-program>

ystark! (Young Professionals Engaged in Stark County) is the Canton, Ohio region's young professional group. Their main goal is to help develop a young, involved, and educated workforce for area businesses.

One of ystark!'s most progressive initiatives is their ystark! Fellowship Program, which works to retain Stark County's top graduates from the region's five colleges and universities through an organized training program that promotes the leadership qualities of its participants and roots them in the Canton region.

The two-year fellowship program is an opportunity for leading college seniors searching for their first salaried, full-time position following graduation. Local firms can utilize this recruiting tool to tap into and help foster emerging talent. Participants are provided with a "total immersion experience" that exposes them to a wide range of work, social, community activities and service, and leadership training.

Through the training and retention fellowship participants receive, initiatives like the ystark! Fellowship Program help to fill the gaps between the young professional generation and the established leadership groups and executives in the community.

## 5.4 AUSTIN: THE HUMAN CAPITAL

### *Austin, Texas*

<http://www.austinchamber.com>

One of the key findings from *Market Street's* 2003 Opportunity Austin strategic process was the perception in the economic development community that Greater Austin was not "in the game" of employment growth and quality recruitment. With unemployment at near-record lows and the job market flush, regional public and private leadership did not want to risk a cannibalization of skilled workers that would result from robust job-creation efforts. As a result, economic development marketing efforts were almost non-existent prior to Opportunity Austin implementation.

A key strategic recommendation to announce to the economic development world that Greater Austin was refocused on strong employment and wage growth led to recharged efforts to “get the word out” to corporations, site selection and corporate relocation professionals, and the national media that metro Austin was again “open for business.”

The result of the Greater Austin Chamber’s strong push into external marketing was a new brand and tagline (“Austin: The Human Capital”), a refreshed website, and a new, multi-channel marketing effort complete with direct mail, horizontal and vertical trade publication advertising, on-line advertising, trade-show visitation, location advisor-hosting events, public relations-coordinated media placements, target-specific marketing materials, and other tools.

As a component of Opportunity Austin implementation, the Greater Austin Chamber completely redesigned its website and created an additional site specific to the technology and innovation economy. Chamber officials have received positive feedback from prospects and site-selection professionals on the comprehensiveness of the main site’s data, navigability and user-friendliness, and provision of support services information. Because of the efficacy of the website, Chamber officials said they are being called later in the game by site consultants who have short-listed Austin based on web-provided information alone.

In addition, the Greater Austin Chamber contracts with a New York/Dallas-based communications firm to handle proactive media placement, crisis communications, arrangement of out-of-market interviews, and other selected services. The firm secured Austin-centered stories in such influential publications as the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Economist*, *Business Week*, *Business 2.0*, and other publications.

In 2011, a survey of both site selectors and C-level executives in Austin’s target sectors found that while site selectors knew about and liked Austin’s “Human Capital” campaign, C-level executives had very low awareness of the slogan, although they did have strong knowledge of Austin and Texas’ favorable business, talent, and quality of life rankings. The survey and phone interviews found that “C-levels” preferred peer-to-peer contact in making location decisions and shaping their impressions of regions for business-friendliness.

As a result, the Chamber has worked to ramp up its public relations efforts to target C-levels, seeing placement in targeted industry publications read by executives—for example, *Information Management*—and enhancing industry segments for national and international news story ideas. These renewed efforts also leverage Austin’s

business leaders as the “faces” to the metro’s positive rankings and position top CEOs in the region as experts and national industry leaders.

## Advance Innovation and Entrepreneurship

### 1.1 RCGA CAPITAL ALLIANCE AND ARCH ANGELS

*St. Louis, Missouri*

<http://www.stlrcga.org/x1790.xml>

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

The Capital Alliance was developed by the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association in 2005 to help support the development of a more home-grown venture capital and angel investment. With an abundance of medical and plant science research and development activity, and multiple targeted incubation facilities, St. Louis was investing in and producing a number of promising startups each year. However, many of these startups were lured to California and the Northeast by venture capitalists when they were poised for growth and job creation. The Capital Alliance has helped advance a wide variety of regional and statewide initiatives, and plays a critical role in connecting potential investors with startups and the facilities that help support them.

The RCGA and the Capital Alliance supported the development of St. Louis Arch Angels, a group that seeks to provide financing to home-grown startups. With close to 50 members, each member commits to invest up to \$50,000 annually in new ventures. The Arch Angels have made investments between \$100,000 and \$5 million in multiple companies throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area since 2005.

### 1.5 NC IDEA *Durham, North Carolina*

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

<http://ptpnext.com/>

NC IDEA is a 501(c)(3) organization “created to serve as a catalyst for young, high-growth, technology companies in North Carolina.” The organization distributes grants between \$10,000 and \$50,000 to North Carolina-based companies. Applicants go through a thorough vetting process, inclusive of a pre-proposal, a full proposal, and a presentation. The grants are intended to help firms that are not quite eligible for private equity, but that have a viable and scalable business idea.

NC IDEA is the creation of IDEA Fund Partners, a venture capital firm located in North Carolina. The expertise derived from making equity investments augments the

grant making capabilities of NC IDEA, and grantees have access to robust networks of business and investment expertise, mentoring opportunities, interns, and other business services. NC IDEA partners with a full suite of private entities, but also partners with the Piedmont Triad Partnership (a 12-county regional economic development organization) to hold the twice yearly grant competition.

Since its inception in 2005, NC IDEA has held 11 funding cycles and awarded over \$2.3 million to 62 companies. During the second funding cycle of 2011, NC IDEA awarded a total of \$192,000 to five companies, out of a pool of 175 applications. Winning companies included a web marketing optimization service for small businesses, a company that develops and commercializes nitric oxide sensors for monitoring serious illnesses, and a cleantech company that makes acoustic sensing technology for the wastewater collection sector.

The model has already been expanded to Florida and working with the Community Foundation of Central Florida, FL IDEA has already awarded its first round of grants.

## 2.2 CAMPUSCATALYST

*Chicago, Illinois*

<http://www.campuscatalyst.org>

CampusCATALYST leverages the talents of undergraduate students at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago to provide pro-bono consulting services to non-profit organizations in the Greater Chicagoland area. Since the organization was founded in 2007, it has focused on providing assistance to non-profits in five areas: housing, youth and education, economic security, health, and arts and culture.

Under the guidance of MBA student mentors and faculty advisors, teams of undergraduate “community analysts” in for-credit university classes help philanthropic groups develop innovative, cost effective solutions for problems in three key areas: (1) tactical operations; (2) marketing, communications, and development; and (3) partnership building. CampusCATALYST has gained a lot of support and momentum in a short period of time. Some completed projects include the following:

- Developing a volunteer management system for the Youth Job Center of Evanston including a creating a volunteer contract, identifying sustainable streams of volunteers and interns through market research, and presenting best practice examples of volunteer management systems around the country
- Creating a comprehensive marketing campaign to help Carepoint, a social welfare non-profit organization, meet its fundraising goals



- Improving tactical operations for Hilda’s Place Transitional Shelter through case manager training, development of “go-to” community resource guides, creation of a “Plan for Success” for all residents, and internal and external communication strategies

CampusCATALYST has been successful in uniting community, corporate, and university stakeholders to improve capacity and services at many of the region’s key community development organizations.

### 2.3 SILICON PRAIRIE NEWS *Omaha, Nebraska*

<http://www.siliconprairienews.com>

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

Silicon Prairie News was founded in 2008 to highlight and support the entrepreneurial climate in the Midwest, with a specific focus on tech startups. With employees in Omaha, Kansas City, and Des Moines, the daily blog profiles trends, people, companies, and events that are integral to furthering the entrepreneurial culture of Silicon Prairie. The company also puts on an annual program called Big Omaha, which is billed as the “nation’s most ambitious conference on innovation and entrepreneurship.” Held at an open creative space called Kaneko in Omaha, the conference attracts over 500 attendees and offers artistic exposure in addition to the full slate of entrepreneurial and innovative speakers.

### 3.1 KCSOURCELINK *Kansas City, Missouri*

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

Launched in 2003 by the Kauffman Foundation, in collaboration with the Small Business Administration and the University of Missouri-Kansas City, KCSourceLink connects small business owners with critical resources. KCSourceLink connects a network of over one hundred business resource providers to help entrepreneurs in the Kansas City region grow and succeed.

The model, which is now being replicated in other parts of the United States focuses on helping individuals move through the maze of local entrepreneurship support services. The goal of the model is to save entrepreneurs time, provide more relevant information, and encourage collaboration among area service providers. The KCSourceLink site includes a list of resources: a resource navigator, a resource directory, a resource library, and a toll-free referral phone line staffed by knowledgeable personnel. KCSourceLink also tracks inquiries and the impact of its

service provider partners' work to determine how its system may be able to work even more effectively in the future.

With the formation of KCSOURCELINK, Kansas City became one of the first cities selected by the SBA for its new National Entrepreneur Center Alliance, which sets Kansas City as a model environment for advancing entrepreneurship.

#### 4.4 INNOVATION WEST MICHIGAN

##### *Grand Rapids, Michigan*

<http://www.rightplace.org/innovation.aspx>

West Michigan is a region of 1.4 million people in and around the cities of Grand Rapids, Holland, and Muskegon, served by a regional organization called The Right Place. The goal of Innovation West Michigan (IWM) is to spur innovation and commercialization within the region. With partnerships with more than 40 organizations, IWM guides companies through the process of innovation by assembling customized packages of state and local programs. Such connections include capital access, product development and prototyping, and technology transfer.

Recently, the IWM has focused on connecting regional manufacturers and universities to share innovative technology and ideas. A project to explore, develop, and manufacture a new visual-measurement technology in Michigan is already underway.

Another project revolves around establishing an innovation cooperative focused on stimulating cross-sector partnerships; companies like Whirlpool and Bissell are experimenting with an open innovation network.

### Advance the Madison Region's Story

#### 1.1 THINKONEKC

##### *Kansas City, Missouri*

[http://www.thinkkc.com/AboutKCADC/onekc/thinkonekc\\_main.php](http://www.thinkkc.com/AboutKCADC/onekc/thinkonekc_main.php)

In an effort to raise the bar in city branding, the Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) launched the OneKC and ThinkKC campaigns in 2004 using several billboards. The goal of "ThinkKC" is to promote the Kansas City region as an attractive place to live and work and upgrade the region's national image. "OneKC" is the regional unity portion of the campaign—to create a regional mindset, create a

unified product to increase the region’s competitive advantage, and to give residents a renewed sense of place and pride.

To share the overall message, “Together we are stronger. We are all KC,” KCADC commenced an aggressive grassroots level effort by making over 150 presentations to organizations throughout the metro area. Other initiatives to advertise the brand included naming a major road OneKC Way, leaders signing the “Declaration of Interdependence,” and launching a KC merchandise line.

Since 2004, over 250 companies and communities use the brand in their marketing efforts, and the Development Council has attracted over 500 new businesses to the region. As a result of acting and working as a unified region, the Kansas City region has gained many new jobs and millions of dollars in new investment.

#### **IMAGINEPITTSBURGHONLINE.COM**

### **1.2 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

[www.imaginepittsburghonline.com](http://www.imaginepittsburghonline.com)

ImaginePittsburghOnline is the new blog of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD), a partnership of affiliates including the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance (marketing), ImaginePittsburgh (talent recruitment), the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce (business advocacy), and the Pennsylvania Economy League of Southwestern Pennsylvania (research and analysis).

ACCD staff and partners update ImaginePittsburghOnline.com multiple times weekly with original posts about news and events related to economic development, job creation, and quality of life trends in the southwestern Pennsylvania region. Authors thoughtfully offer commentary on Pittsburgh’s placement in national and international rankings, local news stories, recent economic development events and marketing trips, success stories of regional companies, location and expansion announcements, and regionally-driven innovation and entrepreneurship.

Each entry features a thumbnail photo of the post’s author and a brief bio of their role at ACCD or partner organizations and initiatives. ImaginePittsburghOnline also maintains YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter accounts which are linked from the blog.

ImaginePittsburghOnline serves as an internal and external marketing tool, informing businesses and residents about economic development efforts and trends in and around Pittsburgh, and showcasing the positive dynamics of the region to outside visitors.

## 2.1 SUCCESS STARTS HERE BUS TOUR

### *Montgomery, Alabama*

<http://www.montgomerychamber.com/page.aspx?pid=1667>

While new businesses and relocations typically make the splashiest headlines, the Montgomery region's existing businesses are building significant capital investments and creating high-value jobs. To see the growth for themselves and recognize the long-term investments of these existing businesses, the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a tour—called the “Success Starts Here Bus Tour” – for top business leaders and elected officials to visit the region's most successful and rapidly-expanding existing businesses. The seven companies visited boast a combined workforce of around 1,600 employees and have added 194 jobs and \$56.8 million in capital investment to Montgomery in 2011. The local CBS affiliate also attended the tour, which included the announcement that KyungshinLear's Montgomery location would become its U.S. headquarters, creating 64 new jobs.

## KANSAS CITY AREA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL TARGET SECTOR PORTALS

### 2.3 *Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas*

<http://www.thinkkc.com>

The Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) represents, markets, and coordinates economic development in the two-state, 18-county Greater Kansas City region.

KCADC has created standalone portals for its four target business sectors—animal health, supply-chain management (SmartPort), energy, and technology (KCnext). Each site features regularly-updated news about the specific target, upcoming events, contact information and profiles of the KCADC sector specialists, videos, general information about and benefits of the sector in Greater Kansas City, supporting trade and development organizations at the regional and state level, as well as specialized information tailored to each target:

- **Animal Health Corridor** (<http://www.kcanimalhealth.com/>): Overview of the history of agriculture in the region, key public and private players in the KC Animal Health Initiative, strategic priorities, annual work plan, animal health research highlights, information on major veterinary schools in the region and within a 300-mile radius, a list of animal health companies (including weblinks and brief descriptions) and supporting firms.
- **KC SmartPort** (<http://www.kcsmartport.com/>): Site location information, foreign trade zones, trade corridor maps, global export statistics, detailed

information on logistics and transportation educational and workforce programs.

- **Advanced Energy** (<http://www.kcadvancedenergy.com/>): Details the four sub-targets within Advanced Energy, maps that show specific subsectors for firms, suppliers, and subcontractors in specialized energy fields; maps of non-stop jet destinations and distance to major metros; shipping routes and rail lines; information about the Advanced Energy Advisory Council.
- **KCnext, also known as the Technology Council of Greater Kansas City** (<http://www.kcnext.com/>): Resource partners from the technology sector and details on the arrival of Google Fiber in Kansas City.

KCADC's targeted marketing programs have resulted in national media coverage in 2010 and 2011 on the region and its success in specific targets in publications including *Wall Street Journal*, *Animal Pharm News*, *Bovine Veterinarian Magazine*, *Logistics Management*, *World Trade 100*, *USA Today*, *Start Up Digest*, *Fast Company*, *Forbes*, *CNNMoney.com*, and *VentureBeat.com*.

### 3.1 GRPVA.COM Richmond, Virginia <http://grpva.com>

The Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP) is the economic development organization for the three-county, one-city region of Greater Richmond.

The organization first launched its website in 1994 but has overhauled it several times in the past decade, earning a national award in website design from the IEDC in 2003 and an AIGA Richmond Chapter merit award for advertising design. The website has also been deemed a “webpick of the day” by *Communication Arts* magazine.

The header of the website has a clearly-visible drop-down menu of information for site location consultants that provides high-quality, up-to-date information on business incentives, major employers in the region, the local workforce, available buildings and sites, and cost of doing business.

The website has some unique features that connect a variety of users to Greater Richmond:

- The report “U.S. Start-Up Model for International Firms” which details two models for foreign companies seeking to establish a U.S. presence and

compares the startup and operating costs of each model in Richmond and eight other major and mid-sized metros. The report also identifies the resources available in the Greater Richmond region — GRP assistance, higher education institutions, and real estate assets—for international firms looking to expand in the U.S., as well as contact information for GRP’s U.S., U.K, and German offices.

- Companion GRP website, [RichmondWorldView.com](http://RichmondWorldView.com), available in several languages and targeted at 14 global markets to further leverage international development opportunities.
- Calendar of upcoming national and international marketing trips where GRP and the region will be represented.
- A custom report builder that allows users to generate customized reports with detailed data and information about the region.
- Frequently-updated regional business news about announcements, expansions, relocations, business rankings, international marketing trips, and other press about Greater Richmond’s flourishing business community.
- Companion website [LoveWhatYouFind.com](http://LoveWhatYouFind.com), a relocation website that directs users to the different communities in the Greater Richmond region and guides them to an online photo tour, videos, information, and resources based on users’ interest in the region as a place to work, live, learn, or play. The site provides visitors with a “sense of place” by showcasing Greater Richmond’s neighborhoods and rich quality of life assets.
- Individual pages for each of the region’s target industries.
- Detailed staff profiles.

In FY 2010, the GRP websites received 32,200 unique visitors, up 43 percent from the previous year, with an average of 130 visits per day. New visitors to the site comprise 67 percent of its traffic. Social media tools, communications efforts, and Google Adwords drove a significant portion of the website’s traffic, with GRP’s efforts highlighted in the Mashable article “Five Ways Cities Are Using Social Media to Reverse Economic Downturn.”

An online ad campaign through Google Adwords, ESPN.com, and LinkedIn during Virginia Commonwealth University and University of Richmond’s placements in the 2011 NCAA Men’s Final Four netted 2.37 million impressions and 1,476 total click-throughs.

Through GRP’s international marketing and public relations efforts, the region has gained placement in international publications and newspapers. In 2011, a reporter from one of Israel’s most widely-read daily newspapers visited the region on an

invitation from GRP. The corresponding news article promoted Greater Richmond and Virginia as places for Israeli firms to consider, especially in terms of energy technology.

#### REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MAYORS

##### 3.1 *Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota*

<http://minnesota.uli.org/RCM.aspx>

<http://minnesota.uli.org/~media/DC/Minnesota/Minnesota%20Docs/RCI%20CEO%20Conversions.ashx>

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a national and international organization that provides education and research on real estate development and land use policy. Local councils customize ULI programs and events to serve local public and private constituents. In Minneapolis/St. Paul, the local ULI council supports the Regional Council of Mayors (RCM). This group, made up of 45 mayors, engages in regular collaboration sessions and developed a body of work entitled the Regional Cluster Initiative. One of the main tenets of the Initiative is a program called “CEO to CEO Conversations.” The program promotes conversations between the mayors (public CEOs) and private business leaders, in order to identify growth strategies and growth impediments. Along with an annual summit, the goal of the program is to create a collaborative approach to regional economic development.

##### 4.1 **RED CARPET TOUR** *Memphis, Tennessee*

<http://www.memphischamber.com>

In 2011, the Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce hosted a Red Carpet Tour for 17 site selectors who help large companies make site selection decisions for corporate headquarters, manufacturing sites, call centers, and other operations. The event focused on showcasing the region to location advisors and building relationships between these consultants and elected leadership and economic development professionals at the local and state level. The one-day event included a lunch at the Peabody, Downtown Memphis’ historic luxury hotel, and a bus tour of major assets in the region.

To demonstrate the strong partnerships between the private sector and government officials at the local and state level, Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam, Memphis Mayor A.C. Warton, Jr., and Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell spoke to the site selectors in attendance. Other speakers included *Site Selection* magazine editor-in-chief Mark Arend and FedEx founder, chairman, and CEO Fred Smith.

The group toured the region's major logistics cluster assets: the Mississippi River and Port of Memphis, interstates, CN-CSX Intermodal Gateway, FedEx Super Hub, and Memphis International Airport. Fred Smith praised FedEx's experiences with the airport.

The tour also traveled to sites aligned with the region's biosciences target, including the Memphis Bioworks Foundation, Frank C. Pidgeon Industrial Park (which houses Electrolux Home Products' manufacturing facility), international medical device company Smith and Nephew's orthopedic reconstruction and trauma headquarters, and the rapidly-growing life science and medical device corridor in Bartlett, a community in northeast Shelby County.

In addition to the site selectors learning more about the assets of Greater Memphis, the tour gave Chamber and government leaders the opportunity to learn about emerging trends in location criteria that the consultants were experiencing firsthand with clients, and to establish personal relationships for future prospects.

Past tours have resulted in direct job creation in the region; the most notable recent example is Mitsubishi Electric, which this year began construction on a \$200 million, 350,000 square-foot transformer factory in Memphis that will bring 200 high-skill jobs to the region. Mitsubishi Electric was personally introduced to Greater Memphis through a Red Carpet Tour after the metro area was short-listed for the transformer facility.

## Advance Regional Cooperation, Leadership, and Diversity

### 1.2 HYPE AND MENTOR *Richmond, Virginia*

<http://www.grcc.com/view.aspx?page=hype/hypeabout>

<http://www.grcc.com/View.aspx?page=mentorr>

In 2004, the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce (GRCC) went on an intercity visit to Pittsburgh which seeded the idea of engaging Richmond young professionals. Through subsequent trips to Louisville and Nashville in the following years, the GRCC launched HYPE (Helping Young Professionals Engage) in 2007. The inaugural event attracted over 120 young professionals. Since then the organization has only gained in popularity and visibility. Ongoing programs include:

- HYPE: Off the Clock: Social events and networking.
- HYPE: ED Leadership Spotlight: An ongoing series of casual conversations with are business leaders. The event is held at a local bar.



- HYPE Teams: Teams are a mechanism for young professionals to address issues in the organization and community, providing the opportunity for more involvement and leadership opportunities.

The GRCC also operates a program called MENTOR Richmond which is a team-based model of bringing local executives and young professionals together. Each MENTOR class is comprised of around 15 young professionals and eight to 10 mentors. The classes meet twice monthly for two hours after work with the goals of creating the next cadre of Richmond leaders, improving communication skills, and development of career and personal growth.

### 1.3 MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

*McLean County, Illinois*

<http://www.bn-mclp.org>

Run by a partnership between the University of Illinois Extension-McLean County, Heartland Community College, and local businesses, the Multicultural Leadership Program prepares participants for increased service in public, private, educational, political, and non-profit sectors in McLean County. The program develops leadership skills that enable participants to address specific community needs and promote inter-community unity. Participants are selected by a panel based on their commitment to community issues, desire to learn and willingness to contribute to the community at large. Once selected, participants attend bi-weekly sessions for eight months. During these sessions, program members participate in exercises and attend panel discussions on issues such as public speaking, mentoring, crisis management and communication skills. Participants will also work in groups on a non-profit project designed to benefit all of McLean County.

### 1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

*Des Moines, Iowa*

<https://go.dmacc.edu/conteddsc/Pages/residentialleadership.aspx>

In close partnership with residents and community leaders, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) launched the Neighborhood Resident Leadership Certificate Program in fall 2007. The program was developed by community partners dedicated to resident leadership as critical to changing outcomes for vulnerable children and families living in underserved neighborhoods.

The program's development was initiated when the City of Des Moines identified a lack of leadership programs for citizens at the resident level. By building on existing resident leadership development courses offered through a number of agencies, a broad public-private planning group formalized a set of goals and a corresponding

curriculum for resident engagement was created. Less than a year after the initial idea was proposed, the first round of classes was offered to residents.

The 40-hour curriculum requires six core courses (24 hours) and four elective classes (16 hours). Classes are held at DMACC's Urban Campus and at the United Way. Courses cover data and research use, results-oriented communication, strategic planning, facilitating effective meetings, and public-private partnership development. In just the program's first year, attendance and demand were high with 90 courses offered in the fall and 254 in the spring. Five residents graduated from the program; the first graduate went on to, for the first time, get involved in his neighborhood association and was even elected to an office. After the City stripped one neighborhood of its neighborhood association status due to its dysfunctional leadership, four residents of the area took classes and started a new association which was recognized by the city.

Not only does the certificate program build skills and confidence in citizens to effectively lead their neighborhoods, it also provides a point of entry for DMACC, Iowa State University, and other higher education partners. This is a critical role for these colleges and universities in linking residents in underserved areas with further educational and career training resources.

## **MONTGOMERY DIVERSITY SUMMIT**

### **2.1** *Montgomery, Alabama*

<http://www.montgomerychamber.com/page.aspx?pid=1154>

Like many major Southern cities, Montgomery was an important location for a number of pivotal Civil Rights events of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, starting with Rosa Parks' refusal to yield her bus seat to a white man in 1955. While the region's role in social justice has been a point of pride for many, historic racial tensions and distrust in many cases perpetuated among community members for decades.

In 2005, the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce initiated a process to develop their five-year strategy called "Imagine a Greater Montgomery." During the course of strategy development, stakeholders identified a lack of diversity in Montgomery's civic and business leadership that did not represent the makeup of the community's demographics. "Civic engagement is badly colored by race," said one community member. Others noted that women were underrepresented in decision making.

Four major goals emerged from this planning, one of which emphasized the community's need to further embrace diversity and enhance leadership capacity. "The very future of Montgomery hinges upon our ability to capitalize upon the

strength of our diversity,” the plan explains. The extent to which the chamber set out to accomplish this goal has been a model example for other chambers.

In 2008, the Chamber and its minority business development staff launched its inaugural Montgomery Diversity Summit. The purpose of this day-long event is to offer executives, human resources professionals, and community leaders an opportunity to have a conversation about workplace diversity, inclusion, and engagement. The summit’s immediate success in just its first year made it a national best practice, replicated by other chambers eager to leverage their diverse community strengths.

Each year’s summit boasts a different theme and nationally-known speakers and leaders on topics related to diversity; in 2011 the premise was “Engaging a Multicultural Workforce” with keynote speaker J. Phillip Holloman, President and COO for Cintas. By its fourth year, the Diversity Summit attracted over 700 attendees to its day of speakers, breakout sessions, and a networking mixer. Breakout session topics included “I Work to Live, Not Live to Work: How Generation Y Faces Cultural Accommodation and Assimilation,” “Cracking the Concrete Ceiling,” and “Leading to Harness a Multicultural Workforce.” The event’s top sponsors were Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, Alabama Power Company, MOBIS Alabama, and Walmart.

## 2.2 AFRICAN AMERICAN QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE

### *Austin, TX*

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/african-american-quality-life>

In 2005, Austin’s African American leaders communicated with the City’s leadership that there was a significant discrepancy in the local African American community, as opposed to other Austin residents, in terms of standard of living. The City Demographer conducted a Quality of Life Scorecard study that confirmed African Americans lagged behind the rest of the city population in multiple socioeconomic factors, at which point the City Council launched the African American Quality of Life (AAQOL) Initiative, a two-year plan focusing on six areas as they relate to Austin’s African American community: arts, culture, and entertainment; business and economic development; employment and education; health; neighborhood sustainability; and police and safety. These six categories span 56 individual initiatives and were implemented between January 2006 and January 2008. The successful objectives and actions of the AAQOL Initiative will be adapted for a Hispanic Quality of Life Initiative.

The AAQOL subcommittees met monthly with community members, business owners, and other stakeholders to determine applicability of each initiative and the

steps necessary to complete them. This input was reported back to the City Manager and Austin City Council.

- *Arts, Culture, and Entertainment:* To market Austin as welcome to African Americans to live, work, and play, the Austin Convention and Visitor's Bureau (ACVB) launched the "Diverse Austin" website, which includes links to the Capitol City African American Chamber of Commerce and the City's African American cultural events. The NAACP recognized the ACVB Community Relations Manager for attracting over 25 African American conferences and more than 5,000 African American tourists to Austin through "Diverse Austin," generating a \$6 million impact to the City's economy.

The City Council also unanimously approved Austin's first African American Cultural Heritage District in Central East Austin. In addition to the existing concentration of landmarks, business, churches, and cultural and educational center that represent the significant contributions of African Americans, creation of an African American Cultural Heritage District began 2009, which included the construction of a \$1.5 million bond-funded facility to house African American business and arts resources.

- *Business and Economic Development:* The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce's Opportunity Austin initiative partnered with the Capitol City African American Chamber of Commerce to provide opportunities for the minority business leadership to participate in recruitment trips and meet with businesses looking to relocate to Austin. Actions have also been taken to increase the incidence of contracts with minority-owned businesses through incentives, rewards, and recognition.
- *Employment and Education:* The City joined with the Austin Area Urban League in a venture to place paid interns in City departments. The positions were advertised in minority media outlets and ten paid interns were hired for the 2006–07 fiscal year.

The City funded a General Education Development program for ex-offenders re-entering the workforce to teach professional success and sustainability skills. Entry-level positions in the City were identified for placement of graduates of the program and to continue training through on-the-job experience. Austin Community College will offer certification and long-term professional development training programs to ensure success.

- *Health:* The Mobile Prevention Outreach Unit identified areas of high need to administer screenings and educational services. The Mobile Unit logged 69,423 encounters in two years, 60 percent of which were African American clients. 7,385 of these interactions were for medical services such as HIV tests and blood pressure tests.
- *Neighborhood Sustainability:* The focus of this initiative was home purchasing and retention, as well as rebuilding historic neighborhoods to their original conditions. Housing Smarts, a counseling and education program for potential homebuyers, graduated nearly 300 individuals in its two years of operation, 20 percent of which are African American.

In addition, the City is moving forward on several sustainable housing initiatives, including a Community Land Trust Initiative in gentrifying neighborhoods, \$55 million of affordable housing from a bond package, and an Affordable Housing Incentives Task Force established by the City Council to review and advise upgrades to the current housing policy.

- *Police and Safety:* The Austin Police Department implemented the nationally-recognized Community Immersion Program training for all cadets in an effort to learn about the various diverse cultures in Austin and how to improve communication and interactions between these groups and police officers.

### 2.3 CONGRESS OF NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES (CONNECT) *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

<http://www.connect.pitt.edu/>

Launched in 2009, CONNECT is a forum for collective local government collaboration, intended to coordinate the shared activities of the City of Pittsburgh and the 35 adjacent towns and cities in Allegheny County. Major issues like transportation, public safety, economic development, storm water control, and securing federal funds can be more effectively dealt with cooperatively as a region with a larger service area than piecemeal as independent municipalities. CONNECT also serves to ensure that major City of Pittsburgh issues, such as the G-20 conference or river ice conditions, are effectively communicated to smaller municipalities also impacted.

CONNECT's mission is "to coordinate the activities of the city and these municipalities by advocating for and voicing the collective interests of the urban core

and its 680,000 residents; developing and enhancing ways the 36 municipalities can work together to deliver important public services; and maintaining a forum for the discussion, deliberation, and implementation of new ways to maximize economic prosperity for Western Pennsylvania.”

CONNECT was initiated by Dr. David Miller at the University of Pittsburgh, who also coined the term “AlsoUrbs” in reference to the communities that share Pittsburgh’s border. He defines these places this way: “For a metro area the AlsoUrbs become the ‘glue’ that holds it together. They can translate urban issues to the true suburbs better than the city can. They can explain suburban issues to the city better than the true suburbs can. In partnership with the city, they represent a truer picture of the urban.”

As the towns around the region’s major city have grown and developed, their issues have become more urban while still retaining their original suburban characteristics. No longer just bedroom communities to Pittsburgh’s once-powerful steel industry, these “AlsoUrbs” or first-ring suburbs have downtowns, retail and recreation amenities, aging infrastructure, overburdened school systems, and employment centers that are critical to their futures.

This is a new model for Pennsylvania, particularly the western half of the state. Allegheny County alone is home to 130 municipalities and 43 school districts—in other words, in its efforts to increase efficacy through regional solutions, CONNECT still represents just a piece of one county. Historically, efforts to find consensus and common ground among the City of Pittsburgh and the other 129 municipalities were unproductive and at times divisive.

While some communities in CONNECT’s reach are hesitant to join for fear of Pittsburgh’s interests and problems eclipsing those of the surrounding cities and towns, many believe the partnership is a good way to maximize resources. In a 2010 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* article about CONNECT, one city manager says of the effort, “We don’t want to be dragged down by Pittsburgh and its problems. But we don’t want to be left behind if something good comes out of it.”

Four elected officials lead CONNECT; the Executive Committee is comprised of one representative from each municipality. The CONNECT membership is made up of three representatives from each member municipality, a representative of Allegheny County, and several non-voting members including the Pittsburgh City Controller and a representative of Allegheny County’s Department of Community and Economic Development.

Though still a relatively young organization, CONNECT has already made notable progress toward its mission. By 2011, CONNECT gained the participation of all of the 36 municipalities; has received grant funding to address sewer management issues in its municipalities; and has facilitated significantly improved communication between its member municipalities. In late 2011, CONNECT was instrumental in winning a \$315,697 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to advance the region's solar power efforts. The Borough of Bellevue reports that it has saved money through CONNECT, including \$1,200 from participating in an energy use audit, and \$300 in gas purchases.

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