

Global Economic Development Strategy

REPORT 3: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS



Presented to:

THE CITY OF MANCHESTER, NH

Global Economic Development Strategy

REPORT 3: Strategic Recommendations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	INTRODUCTION	1
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
	KEY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	4
	VISION & GOALS	5
	BUSINESS CLIMATE	7
	SITES & INFRASTRUCTURE	13
	EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	19
	QUALITY OF LIFE	25
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING	29
	PERFORMANCE METRICS	34

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Delivered to:

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Prepared by:



This report is a blueprint for Manchester’s future economic development efforts. It reflects a planning process including input from citizens, a 12-person Steering Committee, the Manchester Economic Development Office, the Mayor’s office, and regional and state leaders. Significant research and discussion have led to this *Global Economic Development Strategy* for the Manchester Economic Development Office and the City of Manchester.

This is the third of three reports delivered to the Manchester Economic Development Office (MEDO) by AngelouEconomics (AE). The first report, the Manchester Community Assessment, contains quantitative and qualitative information profiling the local economy and the perceptions of citizens and business executives on major economic development issues. The second report, Target Industry Identification & Analysis, contains a detailed analysis of the region’s current industry landscape and provided recommendations for five key target industries that should be the focus of the region’s future economic development efforts. The industries identified as suitable targets for Manchester were: Business & Financial Services, Software & IT Services, Defense and Advanced Security, Life Sciences & Medical Technology, and Aviation.

This third report presents recommendations on the following topics:

- 1. Business Climate**
- 2. Sites and Infrastructure**
- 3. Education & Workforce**
- 4. Quality of Life**
- 5. Economic Development & Marketing**

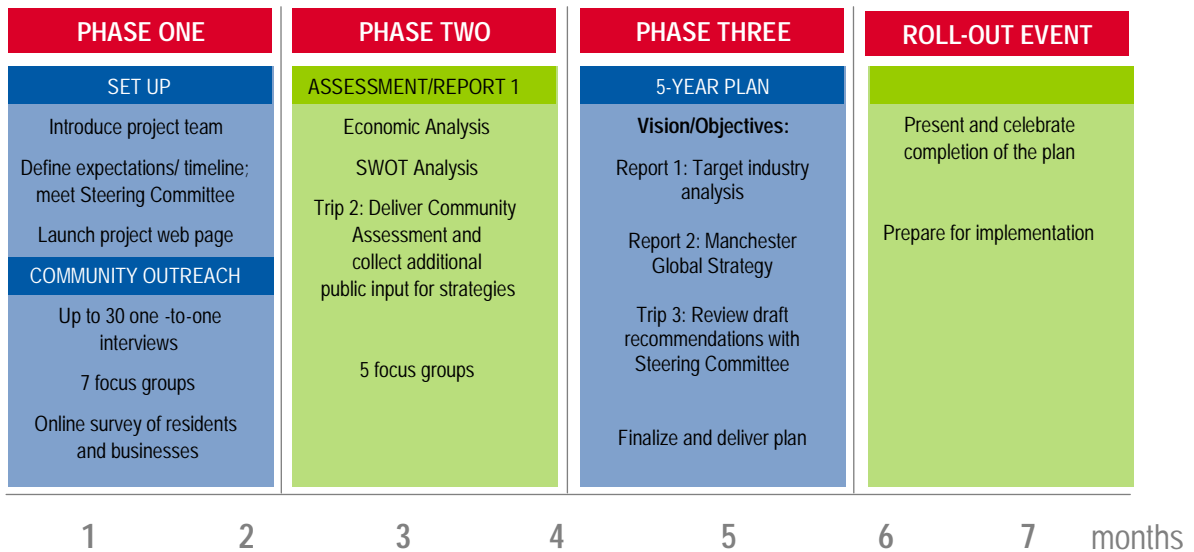
AE has prepared these recommendations based on its research, analysis, trend analysis, experience, and observations. These recommendations will guide Manchester’s future growth – leveraging current assets and creating new opportunities for economic development.

In the past, the industrial businesses in the City have generated a great number of jobs and a large amount of investment. Manchester has experienced some of the “growing pains” associated with off-shoring and overseas manufacturing for several years. The City has responded well, but still relies heavily on a population and labor pool not fully prepared or trained for a technology-driven economy.

The community has acknowledged this need and is prepared to take the necessary actions for Manchester to create a unique place for itself in the growing global economy.

AngelouEconomics designed a process that would yield a set of recommendations based on community input and realistic implementation priorities. The project team created a public website, www.ManchesterTomorrow.com, to explain the planning effort, be a source for public reports, and allow interested citizens and businesses to contribute through an online survey. The planning process is as follows:

Manchester’s Global Economic Development Strategy



Manchester has certainly had some very positive occurrences in the last five years. The City has made strides to develop its infrastructure and to create amenities that greatly add to the local quality of life. Additionally, there has been a terrific effort from both public and private sources for the redevelopment of downtown, creating a more vibrant Central Business District.

The common need identified by AE throughout this process is to create a widespread attitude of “can do”. This, above all, is what will drive the City’s economic development future.

The Manchester Economic Development Office (MEDO) and the City should rally the community behind this new Global Economic Development Strategy. Invite Advisory Committee members to speak in a public forum about their involvement in this project and how they plan to assist with implementation. By creating and maintaining momentum and encouraging on-going participation, the City will benefit from efficient and effective implementation of this plan.

AngelouEconomics would like to thank the staff at the Manchester Economic Development Office for its support throughout the course of this project. We would also like to show our appreciation to the distinguished individuals on the Steering Committee for their invaluable insight and ideas that led to the creation of this strategic plan.

Paul J. Borek, Director, City of Manchester Economic Development Office

Jane F. Hills, Marketing & Retention Specialist, City of Manchester Economic Development Office

City of Manchester Mayors Robert A. Baines (2005) and Frank C. Guinta (2006)

Steering Committee:

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Kevin Clougherty, Director, City of Manchester Finance Department

Randy Sherman, Deputy Director, City of Manchester Finance Department

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Kenneth Edwards, Assistant Executive Director, Manchester Housing & Redevelopment Authority

State of New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development

Manchester Airport

The key findings below are those discussed in the previously submitted Community Assessment report, with an emphasis on the items and areas that are of primary interest and focus for the recommendations.

The Community Assessment Report provided an in-depth analysis of key strengths, opportunities, and areas for improvement in Manchester. AE was very pleased to see the many efforts and programs that the City, the Mayor, and the MEDO have implemented. There are always economic development opportunities that will present themselves in any community. AE believes the leadership of Manchester is more ready than many other communities we've worked with around the country for taking advantage of those opportunities. The following are the most important issues uncovered in the community assessment:

- Too narrow a view of economic development
- Perception that business development needs to be centered in "industrial"
- Lack of "ready" land, sites, and infrastructure for high-growth businesses
- Lack of business support systems and entrepreneurial development
- Strong leadership for growth and development processes
- Underutilization of higher level learning institutions
- Too few programs for training/re-training of workforce
- Very strong and growing higher-education community & facilities
- Steady pace growth in the key young professional (age 25-44) demographic
- Growing number of quality retail, entertainment, and nightlife venues
- Under-focused and under-funded economic development activity
- Strong potential with riverfront and continued downtown/CBD development
- Need to streamline permitting process at the City
- Emerging concerns regarding in-town and regional transportation
- Strong key business/industry employers that show long-term growth potential

It is important to note that there were both Strengths and Weaknesses discovered in the Assessment. With the emphasis of the study being on "global" implications and opportunities, AE believes that, overall, Manchester is well positioned for business development and growth.

Overall the assessment found that Manchester has a terrific *opportunity* – not only to create prosperity for the community, but also to create a unique place for itself in the global economy.

Focusing resources in a targeted effort – one that matches the community's desired outcomes, as well as business and industry trends – will support business growth and the community's prosperity. The strategies outlined must be "actionable"; and there must be a true commitment to that action from the stakeholders and a positive, "can do" attitude.

Every plan must begin with a vision that will guide the community in its economic development endeavors and make this plan a reality. A proper vision is the foundation of all activities that will make the community better and drives every aspect of this plan. The vision below does not describe what Manchester is today, but what it will become when this Global Economic Development Strategy is implemented.

MANCHESTER'S VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Manchester will be the destination City for "International Business Development" by creating a climate that grows existing businesses, attracts new businesses, fosters entrepreneurship, enhances an excellent quality of life, builds a premier workforce, and encourages community collaboration to support economic prosperity for all.

This vision emphasizes the importance of supporting the region's existing businesses as well as attracting new ones and creating an environment where entrepreneurship can thrive. It also stresses the importance of developing a workforce that will attract target industry businesses. The region will use its quality of life to its advantage and collaborate rather than operate independently in a way that will benefit all residents in the region.

This report, the "Global Economic Development Strategy" contains recommendations that will increase Manchester's opportunities for growing its target industries and sustaining its economy. To achieve Manchester's vision and support the region's economic development efforts, AE has identified five overarching goals to guide these recommendations:

Goal One: Business Climate

Manchester creates a business climate that supports growing local businesses and attracts companies within its target industries resulting in higher-quality jobs and long-term prosperity.

Goal Two: Sites & Infrastructure

Manchester's sites and infrastructure meet the needs of companies that are growing locally and those that are targeted to relocate to Manchester.

Goal Three: Education & Workforce Development

Manchester's students and workers meet the needs of future, targeted industry employers.

Goal Four: Quality of Life

Manchester cultivates its quality of life, embraces its heritage, and promotes its amenities to current residents, young professionals, and target industry workers.

Goal Five: Economic Development & Marketing

Manchester improves its brand awareness outside of the region and creates a more effective collaborative environment for economic development activities.

On the following pages, AngelouEconomics supports each goal by identifying several strategies with their own specific recommendations.

GOAL: Manchester creates a business climate that supports growing local businesses and attracts companies within its target industries resulting in higher-quality jobs and long-term prosperity.

Determining the right balance between retention, recruitment, and entrepreneurship is a challenge all communities face. It is essential that Manchester devote an appropriate amount of time to retaining its local businesses, essentially its “existing customers.” AE estimates that entrepreneurs will contribute more than 70% of future jobs in Manchester and that the development of businesses within the target industries will substantially improve the economy. When deciding what amount of time and energy should go into retention, recruitment, and entrepreneurship development, a good balance for Manchester is 35%, 30%, and 35% respectively.

Competitive costs of doing business, a good regional location, leadership in business services and higher education, and a “can do” attitude are among Manchester’s top strengths in its business climate. These strengths should be used as selling points when promoting the city to local and new companies.

New strengths can also be generated. The MEDO, the City, and other Business-Interest entities have the opportunity to create programming that furthers retention and recruitment efforts. One of the initiatives, which will strengthen local programming, is partnering and leading the regional economic development efforts.

Additionally, it will be important for Manchester to focus on entrepreneurship. Improvements to the entrepreneurial environment will benefit the City by creating new business owners. The existing business community will gain as well. AE recommends support of entrepreneurship through specific programming to drive a major portion of economic development activities.

Business Climate Strategy One: Build a stronger support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

A critical aspect of building sustainable economic competitiveness is building a strong support network that will encourage entrepreneurs to create new businesses and help small businesses to thrive. The stimulation of entrepreneurship through the formation and development of new commercial businesses and social enterprises can play a key role in employing underutilized resources in the distressed areas of the region.

Entrepreneurs are economic engines of the community. They are employers, people who mobilize economic resources and stimulate further economic activity because of their efforts, and serve as stabilizing factors in a community. They provide several major benefits:

- They create jobs at relatively low capital cost, especially in the fast growing service sector.
- They serve as a source of innovation in products, services, and techniques.
- They provide a productive outlet for the energies of enterprising and energetic people.
- They develop a pool of skilled workers who serve as the basis of industrial expansion.

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- They contribute to the increased participation of all communities in the economic activities of a region.
 - They serve an important social function by creating new career opportunities, fast upward social mobility, and, in many instances, preserving a set of community values.

Manchester will greatly benefit by having an increasing number of entrepreneurial programs. New and expanded programs will encourage and assist citizens in starting their own businesses and will support innovation at local startups.

Recommendation 1.1: Establish a Technology Incubator.

Business incubation is a process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledgling companies by providing business owners with an array of targeted resources and services. These services are usually developed or orchestrated by incubator managers and are offered both in the business incubator and through a network of contacts. A business incubator's main goal is to produce successful firms that leave the program financially viable and freestanding. These incubator graduates have the potential to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen local and national economies. – National Business Incubation Association (<http://www.nbia.org>).

The region is served well by the Amoskeag Business Incubator at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, which is designed to assist start-up and growing businesses by providing low cost office space and technical assistance. This incubator is a positive asset for the region, however it does not have a technology focus.

Incubators vary in the way they deliver services, in their organizational structure, and in the types of clients they serve. Recently, incubators have emerged specific to target industries such as medical technologies, space and ceramics technologies, arts and crafts, and software development. This is the direction AE recommends that Manchester take in order to create a technology-focused incubator at Hackett Hill Research Park.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO, entrepreneur team, colleges & universities, and others should research and visit best-in-class incubator facilities (and join NBIA)
 - McClellan Technology Incubator (<http://www.mtisac.com/>) in Sacramento, California
 - Blue Ridge Business Development Center (<http://blueridgebdc.org/>) in Alleghany County, North Carolina
 - Center for Entrepreneurial Growth and Technology Innovation (CEGTI) at Lane College (<http://www.lanecollege.edu>)
 - Santa Fe Business Incubator (<http://sfb.net/>) in Santa Fe, New Mexico
 - Austin Technology Incubator (<http://ati.ic2.org/>) in Austin, Texas
 - Oklahoma Center for Advancement & Technology (<http://www.ocast.state.ok.us>)
- Campaign to obtain private and public funding and plan its location. This could become an important public / private funded project – with potential federal interest
- Hire a president to oversee operation of the facility and develop a Board of Directors to provide oversight
- Identify facility tools, support systems, and equipment needs to create desired activity desired
- Celebrate the grand opening by inviting the community

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- Build and launch an incubator / entrepreneurial resource website
 - Promote the incubator both locally and throughout the region

This is an ideal project for requesting EDA funding. It should be closely tied with one of the area Universities – recommended: **University of New Hampshire – Manchester, working with the Electronics engineering** degree program. It is also recommended that a discussion be led by the MEDO with Dartmouth for their potential support and collaboration.

The guidance and funding should come from Private and Public Sectors, with an emphasis of commercialization in the Target Industries. Due to the recent location of JPSA Laser Technologies, a technology company conducting business in the defense sector, Manchester should target discussions with the DOD to create a federal laboratory in conjunction with the incubator. **The success of a program like this relies on a collaborative effort between the private sector, higher learning institutions, and the public sector.**

Recommendation 1.2: Form an Entrepreneur Team with support from the existing SCORE chapter.

The MEDO should invite five of Manchester's top entrepreneurs to serve on the Entrepreneur Team. The primary purpose of this group is to advise the MEDO and Chamber (other organizations as appropriate) and help champion this effort. These individuals will provide valuable input on how to assist small and start-up companies; they will serve as role models for beginning entrepreneurs. The MEDO should work with the SCORE office to coordinate with the Entrepreneur Team for programming and outreach, as well as advice on developing the incubator and other innovation, technology-led economy programs.

SCORE – "Counselors to America's Small Business" – is one of the best sources of free and confidential small business advice helping build businesses from idea to start-up to success. Nationwide 10,500 men and women, retired and working, donate their time and talent to assist America's entrepreneurs. Volunteers provide confidential one-to-one and team business counseling and low-cost entrepreneurial training workshops and seminars.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO should work with the Chamber and the Manchester Young Professionals Network (MYPN) to form an Entrepreneur Team
- Meet with the SCORE office for ideas and collaboration
- Meet with these individuals to set a strategy and calendar for speaking/activities
- Ask these individuals to meet with MEDO (and others) on a quarterly basis to provide insight for continued improvement to the environment for entrepreneurial success
- Create a website containing an inventory of the City's entrepreneurship resources
- Inform the community of the MEDO's effort to cultivate and improve resources for entrepreneurs
- Do ongoing research on how other communities are promoting entrepreneurship in their community
 - Example resources: the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (<http://www.entre-ed.org>); the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (<http://www.kauffman.org>).

The MEDO and City should work closely with state and federal programs in support of all entrepreneurial efforts, particularly with regard to finance and capital availability. The NBIA (<http://www.nbia.org>) is a useful source to discover funding opportunities, as are others as discussed later in this document. Locally,

Manchester has an SBIC (Small Business Investment Company – a program of the SBA), MerchantBanc Venture Partners. This office should be contacted and a relationship developed with the Entrepreneur Team.

Business Climate Strategy Two: Create new programs to support the expansion and retention of existing businesses.

Over 70% of all newly created jobs come through the growth and expansion of existing businesses in a community. It is critical then that economic development organizations work to create programs for continuing support of these existing businesses, including access to capital, workers, and services necessary to their on-going development.

Manchester must ensure local business leaders are “happy customers” through an increased Business Retention & Development Program. The MEDO has been diligent in its meetings with local industry. This must be expanded to other types of businesses, and, with a target industry agenda, utilize peer/industry team members to support the efforts, as well as the Chamber.

Recommendation 2.1: Increase activity and funding for a Retention & Development program for local businesses.

Manchester should examine and build on its retention programs so that a full range of services: Financing, Mentoring, Workforce Training, R&D, Supplier Recruitment, and Spin-Off Business Development/Support.

ACTIONS:

- Meet with local employers on a quarterly basis
- Host a speaker luncheon twice a year
- Report what the city is doing to make businesses more profitable and reasons to stay in the region
- Meet with Target-Industry related businesses first
- Create a monthly newsletter program
- Create a Business Finance Committee through the MEDO & Chamber for support/help of businesses in need of direction and funding
- Create with colleges and universities a year-long calendar of Seminars for local business

Recommendation 2.2: Develop stronger Business and Trade Services at the Chamber.

AE strongly believes in business support services being in place within a community. The MEDO's roll has expanded to undertake multiple areas of economic development, and, with the strong spirit and programming in place at the Manchester Chamber, it seems appropriate and actionable to organize these programs under a new “International Business Center of Manchester” affiliated with the Chamber, capitalizing on staff and support already in-place.

ACTIONS:

- Consider the name “International Business Center of Manchester”
- Create specific offerings: education, information, lectures, speakers, events
- Incorporate cultural activities

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- Collaborate with the colleges and universities, particularly St. Anselm – International Relations program and SNHU – International Business program
 - Create a Speakers Bureau (retirees, business owners, college and university professors, etc.)
 - Educate staff about the International Trade Resource Center’s programs
 - Establish a SBA International Export Assistance Trade Center in conjunction with the Center (there is not one in NH currently, a Boston office covers NH at present) (<http://www.sba.gov/oit/export/useac.html>)

Business Climate Strategy Three: Provide pro-business incentives to promote quality investment.

A traditional goal of incentives is to remedy a prejudiced tax system (using tax credits to reduce a high corporate income tax rate). Now, incentives are being used to promote activities that bring wider community benefits, such as downtown improvements, university programs, or brand awareness.

In the case of Manchester, AngelouEconomics recommends that the city focus on smoothing the transition of companies into the community, particularly relating to the permitting process and development costs. It is very important that a community have a positive first impression with businesses and developers as they work to create facilities that will bring positive economic impact to the area.

Recommendation 3.1: Streamline the development and permitting process.

The more difficult the process of permitting, the more likely the project will go elsewhere. The importance of a streamlined development and permitting process cannot be overstated.

ACTIONS:

- Convene the key players at the City with the MEDO
- Begin to “map out” a roundtable process
- Once a process is identified, create information for marketing materials (web to print) to promote it locally and to new prospects
- Create an annual review process for analysis of its effectiveness

Recommendation 3.2: Provide development fee discounts for companies in Manchester’s target industries.

As Manchester moves forward in its efforts to attract the recommended target industries, some incentives can be created in the development process. Manchester should put together schedules of specific discounted rates for all of the fees related to the development process for companies in a target industry and tie the provision of these discounted rates to the number of jobs and amount of capital investment a company might provide to a community.

ACTIONS:

- The City should foster the growth of targeted industries by reducing permit, tap, and inspection fees as an incentive to recruit businesses.

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- These discounts should also be available to developers who are targeting the six target industries we have identified with spec development projects. Discounted fees should be reclaimed if lease agreements in the spec development are made with businesses in industries other than the six targets.

Recommendation 3.3: Create “SmartZones” throughout the City for increased commerce and neighborhood development.

The concept of Smart Zones is drawn from a successful program in Michigan. Collaboration between universities, industries, research organizations, government, and other community institutions is meant to stimulate the growth of technology-based businesses and jobs by aiding in the creation of recognized clusters of new and emerging businesses, those primarily focused on commercializing ideas, patents, and other opportunities surrounding corporate, university or private research institute R&D efforts.

Michigan's Smart Zone plan provides distinct geographical locations where technology-based firms, entrepreneurs and researchers can locate in close proximity to community assets that will assist in their endeavors. It is recommended that Manchester adopt a similar approach to geographically defining areas throughout the City. One example of Michigan's program is the Battle Creek Aviation and e-Learning Smart Zone, where aviation, aerospace, and e-learning R&D are the foundation of the programming and development. This particular Smart Zone is supported by Western Michigan University College of Aviation and Kellogg Community College Regional Manufacturing Technology Center along with Battle Creek Unlimited and the City of Battle Creek to create vibrant strategic competencies that augment Michigan's economic and technology base.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO, along with the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) and the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce Metro Center Initiative, should spearhead this SmartZone initiative.
- Research the Michigan SmartZone program
- Identify corridors in the Manchester region that are most appropriate for designation as a SmartZone
- Work with local governments to establish the policies to allow SmartZones
- Identify educational partners to support the SmartZones and create them

GOAL: Sites and infrastructure meet the needs of companies that are growing locally and those that are targeted to relocate to Manchester.

When choosing a development location within a state or region, the availability of appropriate infrastructure is of primary importance. As infrastructure is available in almost every city across the country, business prospects will compare a region or city's infrastructure (availability and pricing) to competing markets. Sites and infrastructure should be a primary focus of Manchester's economic development strategy. The City must become creative due to land site limitations. There should be a focus on redevelopment and infill, as well as on development of Hackett Hill.

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy One: Create the facilities and infrastructure needed to support globally competitive companies.

Recommendation 1.1: Promote Hackett Hill as Manchester's Research Park.

The Association of University Research Parks (AURP) defines a research park as one that has:

- Master planned property and buildings designed primarily for private/public research and development facilities, high technology and science based companies, and support services
- A contractual, formal, or operational relationship with one or more science/research institutions of higher education
- A role in promoting the university's research and development through industry partnerships, assisting in the growth of new ventures and promoting economic development
- A role in aiding the transfer of technology and business skills between university and industry teams
- A role in promoting technology-led economic development for the community or region

"A research park is a place and environment that fosters technology, innovation and commercialization." – AURP

The park may be a not-for-profit or for-profit entity owned wholly or partially by a university or a university related entity. Alternatively, the park may be owned by a non-university entity but have a contractual or other formal relationship with a university, including joint or cooperative ventures between a privately developed research park and a university.

It is important to note that 83% of these parks around the country are not-for-profit entities; and by and large, these are the more successful research parks. Over 70% of the parks were established with public funds, and 73% of the parks lease their land. 82.9% of tenants are private businesses. The majority of the parks use public incentives in attracting tenants, with a large majority (63%) operating on budgets UNDER \$1 million. **Over 60% have an on-site incubator** – it is highly recommended that an incubator be a part of the development of Hackett Hill.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO should do extensive research (independent or with a firm) on parks, best practices, Manchester's target industry needs, University partnerships, architectural & engineering needs/designs
- Consider securing the services of a firm that specializes in research park design
- The MEDO and City should designate a site for the incubator
- Perform a feasibility study for the incubator that will estimate tenant demand, the need for shared equipment/labs, and tenant services
- Create a plan for the build-out of infrastructure at the park
- Identify state and federal funding sources to support the formation of the park
- Identify local institutional partners that will offer assistance and collaboration with park companies
- Pursue international partnerships for the park to assist with recruiting international tenants (One of the most significant and current trends for successful research parks is international partnership and recruitment, according to AURP)

Recommendation 1.2: Create a Broadband Strategy for the city.

While there is quite a bit of telecom infrastructure in place, and several areas of the City (including downtown) have installed wireless service (Wi-Fi), there is no City-led Master Plan for the placement of needed communications infrastructure.

It is important to the overall business development strategy that areas throughout the City be "wired" correctly. This includes ensuring adequate fiber in the medical districts, as well as laying broadband in projected (and current) technology business areas. The plan should call for broadband and Wi-Fi in developing business corridors.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO and City needs to meet and discuss preliminary needs based on Target Industries, Business Corridors, and Parks (including the Airport)
- The MEDO and City should create a plan/strategy for Broadband
- Identify broadband needs for the Target Industries, Business Corridors, and Parks (including the Airport), both fiber and wireless.
- The MEDO and City (as appropriate) should meet with Verizon (or other, private companies – Sprint PCS, Cingular, among others) to coordinate efforts.
- Approach service providers for test site set-up (Verizon is doing this at present at virtually no charge to the cities selected)

Recommendation 1.3: Develop the JacPac site into a business-focused asset.

Today, there are few existing sites in Manchester for mid-size to large businesses, restraining development and recruitment efforts. It is critical for the City to get behind the build-out of various sites for business development purposes. While Hackett Hill is the number one priority, the JacPac site in the downtown area is another premiere site for development. With the construction of the Fisher Cat baseball stadium along with a hotel and condominiums to the north and the presence of Hesser College to the south, the JacPac site is surrounded by economic activity. Future development should leverage the site's central location and river views, while looking beyond residential development to a project that will foster long-term growth. This

site should be given priority, with an eye on the creation of a corporate business park, a corporate campus site, or a hotel/convention center site.

ACTIONS:

- The City should make the JacPac site a development priority
- The City should work with a feasibility team, including outside developers and analysts, to determine best and highest use, with a focus on business
- Consider the impact of a mixed use development on surrounding sites
- Coordinate this site's development with overall downtown development goals

Recommendation 1.4: Recruit and partner with a developer to create a hotel/retail/convention center complex.

As Manchester grows its business community, another hotel/convention center complex will be needed. During interviews, there were several business residents of Manchester that expressed dismay with the few available meeting space options. Some specific interviewees indicated that existing businesses and business leaders had not been able to bid on their own association's conference due to lack of local meeting facilities.

Another hotel with meeting & conference center is needed. This is not only a tool for economic gain through general convention and tourism activities; it is a tool for business growth and relocation – there are many companies who will want to host meetings and conferences at their “headquarters” city.

ACTIONS:

- The City should make this a business priority
- The MEDO, City, and CVB should work together to formulate a development and developer solicitation strategy for the site and venue
- Perform an internal evaluation of potential sites or engage an outside planning firm to assist
 - A list of potential sites should be determined (include outside CBD as well)
 - Analyze all potential sites for their purchase availability, construction costs, user requirements, projected utilization
 - Narrow the list to the top 3-4 sites
- Hire an outside planning firm to conduct a market analysis and feasibility study of the 3-4 sites that includes a financing and development plan for the top site
- Execute an implementation strategy and plan for realization of this project

Recommendation 1.5: Expand the inventory of ready-to-build sites available for businesses.

One concern among many participants in this planning process is that many of the sites that might be available to target industries for development are not “shovel-ready” – that is, these sites are not ready for development because they are not hooked into utilities, not zoned appropriately, or in some way not ready to be used immediately. Often, identifying “ready” sites that are available for sale is a difficult task for economic developers. Be pro-active in support of a future marketing campaign by starting to identify sites for new development now.

ACTIONS:

- Conduct a complete inventory of every vacant parcel of land that might be used for a business location to determine whether it is capable of being connected to basic infrastructure including water, sewer, electricity, telecommunications, and any other basic services. Also note how the parcel is zoned and whether it is zoned appropriately for use by target industries.
- The inventory should note any parcels of land that cannot readily be connected to basic infrastructure, and determine how it could be made ready to hook up to services.
- Work to prepare those vacant parcels so they can be hooked up to services to make them more attractive to potential businesses seeking business locations.

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Two: Expand transportation mobility within the region.

Recommendation 2.1: Establish a Transportation Task Force to create and implement a regional plan.

There is a great need for citywide transportation improvements. If Manchester is to meet the needs of a growing business environment, a stronger network of transportation is necessary. A comprehensive transportation plan should include mapping and accommodation for: freeways, bus lines, cab, railways, bike paths, pedestrian walkways, light rail, and the airport.

ACTIONS:

- Convene meetings regionally to discuss regional transportation needs and plans
- Collaborate with the airport on all matters and considerations
- Consider the role of a Transportation Authority to oversee large scale infrastructure projects

Recommendation 2.2: Collaborate with the Airport to achieve business and economic development goals.

The Manchester Airport is one of the City's greatest assets. The airport has brought revenue, direct business, and profile to the City. Manchester should fully leverage this asset and work to support the needs of the airport. This should include supporting their development goals for bringing a freight forwarding company on-site, as well as the airport's recruitment of an international carrier.

The airport is a tremendous economic development tool, and the airport has done a tremendous job in creating a facility and environment that are world-class.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO should work closely with the Manchester Airport in its efforts
- Identify new collaborative efforts, both nationally and internationally, to support business creation
- Ensure that the airport remains a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) and takes steps to promote its FTZ status to attract increased business users

Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Three: Promote downtown development.

Recommendation 3.1: Execute a redevelopment plan for downtown.

Downtown redevelopment, when done well, not only helps create an overall positive image for the community, but also creates business spaces of the type desired in moving toward a higher quality of job and worker. With an emphasis on a technology-led economy and global positioning, Manchester will be pursuing many companies that seek urban centers for their businesses.

Downtown development also creates additional revenue through capturing additional dollars from citizens and capturing dollars from surrounding areas' visitors, tourism, and shoppers.

Manchester has done a tremendous job over the last few years in downtown redevelopment, realizing some outstanding returns on investment, with projects that are just now beginning to have full impact (ex: ballpark) on what will continue to be a tremendous economic boost to the City.

AE recommends that Manchester not overlook the need for office space within the "mix" of downtown, including the renovation of older structures to "open space" approaches for technology companies.

ACTIONS:

- Continue working on current redevelopment activities including the implementation of strategies and recommendations from the new Downtown Strategic Plan
- Update zoning codes and ordinances to rehabilitate, update and upgrade buildings & facades
- Consider creating an opportunity zone for the purposes of stimulating business activity and growth in the downtown area
- Include downtown in the proposed Broadband Strategy for the city
- Consider downtown transportation needs in the transportation plan
- Find ways to encourage Unique & Specialty Shopping, Mixed Demographics, and Mixed Use in downtown
- Create retail/office vertical mixed uses by converting warehouse space on outer rim to open, loft-style office properties

Recommendation 3.2: Improve the appearance of downtown Manchester and create new downtown amenities.

AE strongly believes that a properly planned downtown helps create an overall positive image for the community. Downtown amenities strongly support a higher quality of life for residents.

Downtown redevelopment in Manchester will have a broad-reaching, positive impact on the community. It is a great opportunity for creating vitality in the community, engaging the youth of the community, and further embracing the City's overall desire to be an international, cultural location.

Manchester elected leaders and the MEDO should continue to embrace The International Downtown Association, a world leader and champion for vital and livable urban centers. "Through its network of committed individuals, its rich body of knowledge, and its unique capacity to nurture community-building

partnerships, IDA is a guiding force in creating healthy and dynamic centers that anchor the well being of towns, cities and regions throughout the world." (<http://www.ida-downtown.org>)

ACTIONS:

- Focus on waterfront development – one of the greatest assets held by Manchester. Work to make it a part of the cultural amenities and beauty of the City.
- Focus on a mix of retail and shopping options
- Focus on international retail – from Italian restaurants to international art galleries to Danish furniture shops
- Embrace Manchester history in downtown investments
 - River, Millyard, International/Immigrant Culture
 - Create & Implement a Façade Program that reflects the history
 - Create additional “symbols” of Manchester history: an immigrant memorial or a history monument
 - Create destination areas in downtown – “European Crossroads” (gas light district), Little Italy
- Incorporate Public Art throughout the Downtown Area – commissioned works with private support
- Develop and enhance parks, greenways, and open spaces surrounding and throughout the downtown area,
 - Include outdoor seating areas and outdoor dining
 - Also create Gateways along the bridges and at either end of town

Recommendation 3.3: Support the expansion of parking facilities to support growth in the Millyard District.

The Millyard District has the potential to be a vibrant business and education center for the City of Manchester. Already, with the presence of technology companies Autodesk and Texas Instruments as well as the UNH-Manchester campus, the Millyard is a dynamic educational and economic center. It has the capability to be expanded further to become a productive academic, R&D, high-end office, and light manufacturing area that will support high wage jobs and advanced educational opportunities. However, this expansion of the Millyard District cannot occur without additional parking capacity. The City’s leaders need to make expansion or new construction of suitable parking facilities a priority. The Millyard has the potential to be a strong business asset for the City; it should not deteriorate or stagnate due to a lack of ample parking.

ACTIONS:

- The City, along with the MEDO, should use the recently completed Downtown Parking Study to identify the ideal strategy for increasing parking capacity to serve the Millyard District.
- The City should encourage private sector investment for the development of a suitable parking structure or develop a financing plan to partially fund the project.

GOAL: Manchester’s students and workers meet the needs of future, targeted industry employers.

Increasingly, education and workforce talent are seen as leading contributors to economic development. Fortunately, Manchester is a community focused on continuing improvements in K-12 schools and its higher education institutions. This focus must be maintained and geared toward the future demands of the Target Industries.

Workforce and economic development are strongly linked. A strong workforce leads to business recruitment. A strong industry base generates a workforce that leads to entrepreneurship and long-term economic growth. A strong pool of workers is critical to business expansion and recruitment, industrial diversification, and growing the population of young professionals.

The recommendations presented here will help Manchester achieve the following three goals:

- ✓ The City promotes its many education programs as strong contributors to business expansion, start-ups, and recruitment.
- ✓ Educational and workforce development programs are well coordinated and designed to meet needs of the City’s targeted business sectors.
- ✓ Manchester develops workforce training programs to offer advancement opportunities for all individuals, leading to an increase in young professionals who remain in or relocate to the City.

Education and Workforce Development Strategy One: The city’s economic development goals and programs are linked with local colleges and universities.

Recommendation 1.1: Colleges and universities should dedicate an individual to be a liaison to the MEDO.

The MEDO, the City of Manchester, and colleges and universities should aim to work more closely together. The new College Coalition economic development liaison should assist the MEDO and the City by interacting with clients, attending marketing missions, and conveying economic development efforts and accomplishments back to the Coalition. The simplest action for obtaining this result is to work with the existing college coalition for this purpose.

It’s important for local colleges and universities to promote the Manchester economic development brand and message. Colleges and universities play a big role in entrepreneurship programming and activities. Perhaps most importantly, as it relates to economic development, the technical schools and colleges and universities must understand the needs of the business community, today and in the future, for degree development and workforce training to be useful programs in Manchester.

ACTIONS:

- Each local college, university, and technical school should dedicate a liaison for economic development
- The MEDO should involve these liaisons in business retention, recruitment, and entrepreneurial activities recommended in this plan
- Have regularly scheduled joint meetings between all entities
- Ask the group to develop more entrepreneurship classes
- Ask the group to participate with local incubators
- Ask the group to host an Entrepreneurs Conference
- Collaborate on the implementation of business plan writing contests and other programming that will stimulate the entrepreneurial environment in Manchester
- Solicit this group's help in developing degrees and certifications in support of the business community and its workforce

Recommendation 1.2: Ensure that workforce-training programs are complementary to the needs of Target Industry companies and workers.

Develop an inventory of all workforce-training programs in Manchester that provides students with skills demanded by the City's target industries. Interviews revealed that it is sometimes difficult to find information on workforce training options because, while many are available, they are not properly promoted. Citizens need to be informed, so they can take advantage of these training opportunities. Manchester needs a single source of information about workforce development posted on the MEDO's and City's websites, which should link to all regional workforce development websites.

ACTIONS:

- Develop an inventory of workforce development programs and make it available in print and electronic formats
 - Include information on eligibility requirements, cost, time required to complete the program, and possible career tracks for individuals completing the program
 - The inventory should allow users to sort by the following criteria: eligibility requirements, time to complete, cost, and potential career tracks
- Distribute the list to a wide range of organizations in the Manchester area including local high schools, colleges and universities, the Chamber and regional economic development partners, faith-based organizations, and non-profit organizations
- Communicate the programs to the state offices: ED and Workforce
- Organize and conduct summit meetings with employers to find out what types of training they need for their employees and find out what types of new skills are required for work in their industries
- Develop an education campaign to inform employers and potential workers of workforce development programs available in the region

Recommendation 1.3: Ensure that the area's colleges and universities are properly equipped to supply a sufficient science and engineering degreed workforce required by the region's Target Industry companies.

Manchester has the capability to grow its economic base into a science and technology hub for the Northeastern United States. The region has already had success in cultivating a strong cluster of

companies in many technology sectors. The *Target Industry Identification & Analysis* report indicated that Manchester's three strongest clusters were: Semiconductors, Electronics, and Aerospace & Defense. These are all industries that are highly dependent on the availability of a skilled workforce with engineering and science degrees. Companies in these technology clusters require the full-spectrum of technologically skilled workers, from those that have associate level engineering certifications to bachelor degreed engineers and scientists to those that have graduate level technical degrees. The push by University of New Hampshire-Manchester to increase the size of their campus in the Millyard District to support science and engineering degree programs is a step in the right direction and should be supported by the City's leaders. This will not only enable Manchester to attract new technology companies to the region, it will also provide a replenished workforce for the City's existing base of technology companies.

ACTIONS:

- The City should support the Science and Technology Park initiative proposed by UNH-Manchester to provide additional classroom and laboratory space to support full science and engineering degree programs in Manchester.
- MEDO and the City should actively seek private sector investment for development to serve UNH-Manchester's expansion needs, as well as small to mid-size technology companies.
- To develop the science and engineering curriculum, UNH-Manchester should work closely with the MEDO and existing technology employers to understand the educational needs of existing technology companies and those in Manchester's Target Industries.

Recommendation 1.4: Strengthen research and development functions and funding at colleges and universities in the region.

The lack of ability of colleges and universities in the region to conduct research and development is a major concern. Many companies, particularly high tech companies, are attracted to regions that have colleges and universities with research and development capabilities, which are an important component in turning research into marketable products.

ACTIONS:

- Organize meetings between representatives of the colleges and universities in the region and representatives of industries in the region and develop a plan for research and development programs that are most needed by industries to commercialize products or processes. Determine which existing research programs most closely fit the research needs of industries and match those programs and industries for research and development purposes.
- Enlist support from state legislators from the region and the governor's office to seek state funding to support research and development programs at the region's colleges and universities.
- Manchester should make an effort to attract a government research laboratory that is connected to a local academic institution and partially funded by the state and a federal department such as the Department of Defense (DOD). See the Connecticut Center for Advanced Research (www.ccat.us) as an example and for additional information.

Education and Workforce Development Strategy Two: Make Manchester's public schools world-class.

Recommendation 2.1: Improve the readiness of high school students for entering college or getting jobs.

As is reported in a recent report prepared in collaboration by the Aspen Institute Education and Society Program and Jobs for the Future, “high schools have become a central focus of education reform.” The President has announced specific initiatives. The nation’s governors and business leaders held a summit in February 2005 on high school improvement. Bill Gates kicked off the summit with a critique of the contemporary high school experience.

The report further describes a “consensus (that) high school career and technical education has reached a critical juncture -- high school career and technical education has reached a ‘change or die’ moment when it must confront its capability and commitment to upgrade both academic rigor and technical relevance.”

Not all students want to go to college, and it is also important for high schools to better prepare young people for careers. High school and technical education must make better links to local employers that are demanding new and more complex skills.

ACTIONS:

- Establish alternative vocational and technical programs teaching specializations such as avionics, electronics, biometrics, and medical technologies
- High school planning committees should invite the MEDO and the City to join their planning efforts
- Strengthen connections between high schools and companies
 - Request that local companies donate equipment for training and sign up to provide internships
 - Request that local companies establish on-site study programs
 - Establish a job bank for after-school, part time and summer work programs
- Consider the build-out of a Charter School focused in a key target industry area at West High School
- Manchester School of Technology should build new programs in technology education
 - Establish a Center for Advanced Research and Technology (www.cart.org) to match the curriculum and instructional strategies of high schools to the needs of a competitive economy.
 - Fund an aviation trade school. Invite the airport and corporate executives in this industry to become involved in this project and to discuss the feasibility of creating this program.
- Consider the establishment of a Math & Science Academy, in coordination with one of the universities
- Develop an all-encompassing international studies program throughout the public K-12 program

Recommendation 2.2: Start a local business plan competition and scholarship fund with a local college/university.

A highly successful, nationally-recognized Business Plan competition exists at UT/Austin-McCombs Business School. In this instance, the “winners” actually receive funding for their Plans. This competition, however, could be emulated by Manchester high schools, as well as implemented at the college/university level with the “winner” receiving a scholarship. The program is known as MOOT CORP (<http://www.mootcorp.org>).

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO should spearhead this initiative and tap the Manchester Young Professionals Network (MYPN) as an implementation partner

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- Approach colleges/universities for support and implementation
 - Identify judges in the private sector and education to judge the competition
 - Host an annual entrepreneurial conference/competition and award winners

Recommendation 2.3: Create a youth entrepreneurship program to teach young people about becoming a successful entrepreneur.

In the future, entrepreneurship will be responsible for more than 70 percent of economic development in the U.S. As manufacturing jobs continue to be lost to overseas to competition, the U.S. economy will be driven even more by the success of small businesses. It is critical, therefore, to prepare today's workforce for a future in which they create their own jobs, rather than expect a job with a large employer to be waiting for them when they graduate.

Seven out of ten high school students want to start their own businesses, according to the first national Gallup poll on entrepreneurship education commissioned and co-developed by the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL) of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation [1994]. For this reason, Manchester should have an entrepreneurial mindset in all K-12 school programming and investment.

ACTIONS:

- Start a school business mentor program
- Strengthen the Junior Achievement program, with efforts focused on Target Industries and after-school programs
- Start a summer entrepreneurship-training program for teachers.
- Incorporate entrepreneurship lessons in schools.

Education and Workforce Development Strategy Three: Expand efforts to attract and retain young professionals.

Recommendation 3.1: Fully support and engage the existing Manchester Young Professionals Network (MYPN) in economic development activities.

Communities with a high percentage of college-educated young professionals are attractive to companies looking to expand. Manchester needs to build upon the young professionals network that has been created through local efforts and work to retain and attract more young professionals.

The City and Chamber should empower this group to campaign to graduating students at nearby institutions and young professionals statewide. The young professionals group should create an interactive networking web portal (see www.styp.org for a good example) and continue to send out regular electronic newsletters highlighting Manchester's resources and activities for young professionals. The MEDO or Chamber should provide links to the young professionals website and mention it in all communications targeting young people. Working with local colleges and universities on this campaign to co-market this effort will also help drive its success.

ACTIONS:

- The Chamber and City should support and fund efforts by the MYPN and, in turn, listen to the needs and issues of this demographic to guide economic development programs
- Launch an interactive web portal as part of the MYPN website with discussion forums, a calendar of events that can be updated by members, and other relevant information to be shared among this group.
- Use additional information sources such as e-newsletters, direct mailers, and advertising to reach young professionals
- Jointly market with local colleges and universities
- Conduct a campaign toward young professionals in Manchester during the holiday season while university students and recent graduates are home. Let students know Manchester wants them to return home after they graduate.
- Ask young professionals to write an on-going column for the website(s) about "What's Happening in Manchester". Make this a regular feature on the MYPN website as well as the MEDO's and City's website.
- The City, MEDO, and Chamber should encourage young professionals to volunteer for leadership board positions in the region

GOAL: Manchester cultivates its quality of life, embraces its heritage, and promotes its amenities to current residents, young professionals, and target industry workers.

The most successful economic development regions in the U.S. contain strong quality of life amenities. These amenities are a draw for young, skilled professionals, businesses, citizens, and tourists.

The recommendations offered within this section are aimed at maintaining and improving the quality of life for three audiences: current residents, young professionals, and target industry workers. Each of these groups desire locations with good healthcare, quality housing, low crime rates, ample parks and green space, artistic and cultural amenities, vibrant downtowns, and environmental cleanliness. **By investing in quality of life amenities, the City will also be able to target specific tourists.**

Quality of Life improvements should showcase the city's creativity and focus on its unique assets: the river, millyard heritage, educational contributions, and international culture.

Quality of Life Strategy One: Enhance Manchester's downtown as a way to improve the quality of life for local residents.

Recommendation 1.1: Support the development of downtown amenities.

As described in *Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Three*, improving downtown Manchester will dramatically improve the quality of life of local residents.

Please refer to this recommendation for details on how to promote a stronger downtown.

Quality of Life Strategy Two: Promote diverse housing that is affordable for local workers and more outdoor amenities.

The National League of Cities (<http://www.nlc.org>) states:

Local governments are responsible to their residents for maintaining communities where their people can live, work, enjoy recreational activities, and access services. Affordable housing, comprehensive community development, and well planned and coordinated land use foster communities that are vibrant, diverse and sustainable. Further, these are critical components to the economic vitality of communities and local economic regions for creating jobs and increasing municipal tax bases.

Recommendation 2.1: Identify new tools and programs that ensure a housing stock that meets the needs of all residents.

There are many examples of diverse housing in an urban, downtown setting. Incorporating various types of housing in Manchester to stabilize the overall economy and provide for new workers is critical. All levels of employees must have access to an affordable, well-placed housing supply. Diverse housing also supports the balance needed in cities for vibrant neighborhoods, while reducing blight and crime-prone areas.

Manchester should study various programs and best practices for diverse housing needs in urban and downtown environments. Some examples follow: National League of Cities (<http://www.nlc.org>); National Urban League (<http://www.nul.org>); The Downtown Research and Development Center (<http://www.downtowndevelopment.com>); and the Urban Land Institute (<http://www.uil.org>).

ACTIONS:

- Encourage the development of mixed use, diverse housing accommodations in the City. New incentives could be structured for developers who provide the most overall benefit to this mixed use philosophy.
- Determine state and federal entities that might provide grants for conducting a needs assessment throughout the region.
- Host town hall meetings to understand the housing needs of residents in the city and region.
- Determine best practices of other similar cities that have supported an affordable mix of housing. Some might include the City of Chicago (Highland Park), Oklahoma City, and Ardmore, PA.

Recommendation 2.2: Develop more trails and parks for the young and active segment of the population, and enact beautification efforts for parts of Manchester.

Outdoor recreation is an important factor impacting the location decisions of professionals and retirees. With today's technological infrastructure, skilled workers have more flexibility in where they live. Cities must continue to make efforts to create atmospheres that invite professionals to stay. Creating City greenways will help to establish a quality of life that is more marketable to both younger and aging populations.

Successful programs have used "rails to trails," floodways, and electric transmission and other utility easements as opportunities for potential trails. Models to examine include the Land & Greenspace Initiative of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council.

ACTIONS:

- This strategy should be overseen by the City's Parks Department
- Create a private-led Parks Improvement Group for idea generation, support, implementation
- Examine successful greenway projects and orchestrate improvements to Manchester's parks, particularly the riverfront
- Incorporate beautification in existing areas: airport, industrial parks, downtown, schools
- Organize an "adopt a spot" program, encouraging citizens & organizations to adopt an area for upkeep and beautification, as well as the development of new landscaping
- Include beautification measures alongside the City's gateways & downtown

Quality of Life Strategy Three: Expand Entertainment, Cultural, and Sports amenities in Manchester.

Recommendation 3.1: Establish new arts, cultural, and entertainment festivals, activities, and venues.

The City of Manchester has a very active Chamber and CVB, as well as cultural groups that create and support a variety of cultural events. In keeping with the theme, Manchester should make an effort to take its International Business focus into the cultural arena.

Manchester was built by immigrants from multiple nationalities who created a unique setting and diverse culture. To some degree, the City has moved away from its immigrant roots. AE suggests moving back to them by creating business and cultural opportunities and creating a unique place and position in the Northeast and the world.

Examples of possible new programs for Manchester are:

- Creation of a Performance Center (bring in international performance groups)
- After-School Arts Programming based in international study
- Host Annual “Bastille Day” celebrations and a “Festival Beaujolais”
- Develop a Foreign Film Festival
- Host an International Soccer Exhibition/Tournament
- Develop with The Currier an International Art & Culture Exhibit (rotating)
- Develop & Host an International Wine Competition
- Host an International Speakers Series with St. Anselm’s International Relations program
- Create an International Literary Festival
- Faith-based organizations host: International Bazaar

ACTIONS:

- Endorse young professionals’ art organizations. Make information on these types of organizations widely available and linked to other websites
- Fully embrace the “International” angle for development
- Work with the Manchester Chamber to add new festivals that the community desires and can lead
- Engage all existing international & cultural organizations in the creation & development of such programming
- Involve local musicians, artists, and young people in coordinating these events. The City has a Young Professionals Network that participated in the planning of this strategy that can continue to offer excellent ideas and lead some of these efforts
- Promote the events throughout the region, nationally and internationally

It is very important to recognize the importance of arts and culture to Manchester’s economy and quality of life. These types of activities retain and draw in creative, talented people. The international angle on creation of new events and programming is very exciting. It furthers Manchester’s place as an international city and prepares them for the global marketplace.

Recommendation 2.2: Expand upon the work of the Manchester Sports Council and develop a comprehensive Sports Strategy.

Over the last decade, it has become clear to communities that sports are not only great for quality of life, but also great for the general economy. This is so evident that most major market cities, and even second and third tier markets, are creating Sports Commissions. These commissions typically work to foster economic development and add to the quality of life through the sports events' utilization of public and private sector resources. The recruitment and creation of sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities for the community produce a positive economic impact.

Manchester has created the Manchester Sports Council; AE strongly recommends that this initiative be supported. With the number of sports venues in the area and with youth sports so active in the existing culture of Manchester, the Sports Council will become a viable economic development partner for the City. Currently, the Sports Council is self-funded through periodic fundraising initiatives. The Council is not supported with a full-time staff or public sector funding.

ACTIONS:

- Support the activity underway for the broadening of sports as an economic driver in Manchester
- Convene stakeholders and potential stakeholders to identify a clear funding mechanism (allocation of public sector funds in addition to private sector contributions) to support the Sports Council ongoing operations
- Determine what will be required as an annual budget to run a small staff focused on sports programming development (for the Sports Council's initiatives)
- Create the campaign necessary to raise needed funding
- Organize an inventory of all existing facilities and events throughout the area
- Generate an assessment relative to what type of events & programming should be pursued and/or promoted
- Create a business plan for this entity, including a Board of Directors for oversight
- Create this entity with defined goals and objectives

GOAL: Manchester improves its brand awareness outside of the region and creates a more effective collaborative environment for economic development activities.

It is critical that Manchester work to re-generate and continue growing jobs for its citizens and for surrounding communities in working to capture incremental revenue. Growth will come through a broad-based economic development strategy focused on “readiness”, business support & growth programs, entrepreneurship, a technology-based economy, and target industries.

Once a strategy is in place, and Target Industries are established, a clear message and brand should be developed in order to properly convey Manchester to existing and prospective businesses. It is important that a marketing campaign properly reflect internal and external goals, while creating a desire by businesses to evaluate Manchester for future expansion/relocation.

Economic Development & Marketing Strategy One: Strengthen the regional economic development initiative and clarify its vision and operational plan.

Recommendation 1.1: Agree on the City of Manchester’s economic development vision.

AngelouEconomics has presented a proposed Vision Statement within this document supported by gathered information and community input. It is imperative that the MEDO and the City commit to an economic development vision. Without buy-in for a vision and its end-goals, unfocused activity will occur which will sidetrack the City’s path to achieving their stated objectives.

ACTIONS:

- The MEDO, Board of Mayor and Aldermen, economic developers, and the Advisory Committee should agree to a vision statement for economic development
- The Mayor should announce the vision during this project’s roll-out event
- The local press should be invited to the event and encouraged to write stories on the completion of this planning process, new vision statement, and priority projects. This will keep the community informed and excited about what’s to come
- Promote the vision through the creation of newsletters, economic performance report(s), the Chamber’s efforts, and other appropriate vehicles
- Ensure the vision is the core of every economic development activity over the next five years

Recommendation 1.2: Create a new regional economic development organization.

To achieve the many objectives of a comprehensive economic development strategy, it takes time and people. Manchester is not a small market, and it is growing. Its economic development needs are also growing, and so should its office dedicated to success in this critical area.

AngelouEconomics recommends that a new regional organization be formed that will enable stronger public-private collaboration and funding. AngelouEconomics believes that economic development should have strong private sector involvement and funding – successful programs receive 50% or more of their funding from the private sector.

AE recommends that Manchester not only participate in regional marketing, but that the City takes a leadership role with the regional economic development group. The investment of area stakeholders will increase the awareness of its activities and the office's importance with regard to business development. Broadening the base of support should bring additional dollars to the programming.

More staff will be required to strengthen economic development activities for the region. Possible positions include: President, Vice President of Expansion & Retention, Vice President of Recruitment, Director of Workforce Programming, Technology Specialist, Business Services Specialist, Marketing Director, Administrative Assistant, and interns.

ACTIONS:

- Determine if a new regional organization should be created
- Create a Board of Directors/Advisors for the organization
- Organize job descriptions and hiring strategy/criteria
- Create a budget for a full-time staff, with support personnel
 - Place current MEDO staff under the new organization. Manchester's staff will be tasked to lead the new effort.
- Manchester should determine private and public funding sources and solicit funding assistance from local companies.
 - Consider hiring an outside fundraising firm to assist with the fundraising effort.
- Organize the volunteer side of the entity simultaneously
- Outline a five-year plan of action, with defined goals and objectives, including benchmarks for measuring success
- Make the overall mission and strategy inline with this plan's recommendations

Economic Development & Marketing Strategy Two: Create and initiate an external marketing campaign to target industries.

Recommendation 2.1: Develop and Fund a Marketing Campaign for Manchester.

Manchester should develop a marketing strategic plan that properly conveys the goals of the region for its existing and growing business community. It is important to develop strategies that target residents, new businesses, existing businesses, and visitors collectively.

Business-as-usual won't be enough in today's competitive landscape. Traditional marketing vehicles such as brochures no longer attract companies, and workers' lifestyle preferences often guide site decisions. Perceptions are important in these decisions, and marketing is the best method for enhancing any region's positive image.

ACTIONS:

- Manchester should hire a consultant to assist with marketing implementation for the region (brand execution, website development, etc.)
- Manchester should, with input from others including a consultant, establish a realistic targeted goal for funding of the marketing plan.
- Consider hiring a public relations firm to manage the marketing campaign.

Recommendation 2.2: A primary focus of the Campaign should be to market to target industry business executives to relocate in Manchester.

While growing local companies should be the priority, Manchester also needs to attract new target industry businesses to the area.

ACTIONS:

- Create a professional-looking economic development website.
- Create a new economic development brand for the region.
 - Communities that market as a region, in addition to their own efforts, can dramatically increase their chances of success.
- Use a database of prospective companies in the target industries for marketing
 - Include technology companies already located in small surrounding New Hampshire markets
 - Include northeast, national, and international markets as well.
- Develop an e-newsletter, as well as other marketing/collateral materials.
- Attend selected target industry association events and small-scale tradeshows to personally sell Manchester to companies and site selectors.
- Visit key geographies with a heavy concentration of target industry businesses that are likely to relocate.
- Host a private conference for 10 national site selectors (a Familiarization Tour) who have strong relationships with Manchester's target industry businesses.

Recommendation 2.3: Launch a campaign to retain and attract more young professionals.

Communities with a high percentage of college educated young professionals are attractive to expanding companies. While the numbers have improved in the last few years, Manchester needs to continue to attract and retain more young professionals. To a large degree, by creating jobs in the target industries identified in this plan, younger workers will naturally be drawn to Manchester – but the City must work to keep them as a part of the community.

ACTIONS:

- Support the initiatives of the Manchester Young Professionals Network (MYPN).
 - Provide financial support.
 - Get the MYPN to provide insight and programming to the City / MEDO / Chamber about what young professionals desire in a community.
 - Empower this group to market to other young professionals.

-
- Involve this group in economic development programs and efforts.
 - Make sure promotional activities; such as e-newsletters, direct mailers, and advertising have content and design that will be attractive to young professionals.
 - Ask local businesses to support “interest” clubs that attract young professionals such as a wine club, canoe/kayak club, etc.

Economic Development & Marketing Strategy Three: Promote stronger collaboration within Manchester in support of economic development.

Recommendation 3.1: Build a large team of community promoters.

Generate local awareness by launching an internal marketing campaign that builds on a team of Manchester promoters. One way to accomplish this is for the MEDO to conduct monthly workshops on “How to Promote, and/or What’s Happening in Manchester.” The workshops should first be offered to City staff members, then to hospitality and restaurant management/associations, real estate professionals, and lastly to others who interact with the public.

Another way to build a team of promoters, or “ambassadors”, is through the attendance by City and MEDO executives to local business association events such as the Rotary and providing updates on economic development progress.

Continue to build local media support by identifying media champions on the Advisory Committee who can work with the MEDO. These champions should provide media interviews on topics related to economic development.

ACTIONS:

- Conduct “How to Promote Manchester” training workshops twice a month for one year
- Keep workforce development and training opportunities top-of-mind
- Develop and communicate stories on positive economic impact from businesses, facilities, and/or projects
- Organize a specific public campaign on Hackett Hill
- Have economic developers provide routine updates at local business association meetings and events
- Identify Advisory Committee media champions

Recommendation 3.2: Create a volunteer marketing team that is available to attend marketing missions or respond to prospects visiting the region.

Economic development marketing should include private sector individuals who can talk with corporate prospects as their peers. Prospect visits should include these individuals, and they should be prepared (i.e. “prepped”) to highlight the region’s strengths for businesses.

ACTIONS:

- Select charismatic leaders from the public and private sector to serve on the marketing team.
- Members should be true champions for the region who are energetic and well spoken about the virtues of living and doing business in Manchester
- Ask members to be “on call”, in the event of a prospect visit, for meetings or entertaining.
- Rehearse prospect visits with the marketing team. Each member should know what his/her respective role is relative to other team members. Everyone should have the same selling points and marketing message that they use when talking to the prospect.

Recommendation 3.3: Form Target Industry Teams to advise the economic development organization and provide new leads for recruitment or retention efforts.

AE believes very strongly in taking the approach of Peer Marketing for overall business development in Manchester. This is an effort to tap the vast knowledge already at local companies on industry trends and location requirements. It is important to fully focus on the target industries as well as to leverage the industry-specific knowledge while simultaneously creating an “investment” on the part of the region through participation in the process and “stake” in the outcomes.

ACTIONS:

- Identify which of the target industries should have its own Industry Team
- Select individuals from the public and private sector to serve on these teams
- Schedule regular meetings and record their input
- Ask members to identify companies that should be targeted for recruitment to Manchester
- Identify policy or regulatory issues that should be addressed to improve Manchester’s business climate

Recommendation 3.4: Partner with local and regional organizations that support economic development goals.

Internal marketing involves opening the lines of communication among organizations in the region that impact economic development. This process ensures that the region is well coordinated and can respond quickly to the needs of a prospect or expanding company. Through collaboration, internal communications, and marketing campaigns, Manchester will build much greater awareness for the region and, in turn, generate more business opportunities.

ACTIONS:

- Reach out to state and regional economic developers, leveraging their personnel for recruitment to and promotion of Manchester.
- Meet with workforce development and education leaders to present the plan and let them know how they can become involved in implementation.
- Meet with elected officials, brief them on activities, and discuss ways to improve the business climate

PERFORMANCE METRICS

AngelouEconomics has identified several data sets that we believe will be good measures of economic performance. These data are easily found at state and national sources, are available at the county level, and should be considered good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its citizens. Performance metrics for each recommendation area of this plan are below:

Business Climate

- Net firm creation
- Venture capital inflows
- Membership in entrepreneurs associations
- Number of companies in the Business Retention Program

Education & Workforce Development

- Job growth in target industries
- Average wage growth
- Percentage of college educated workers
- Changes in SAT scores and dropout rates
- Changes in educational attainment, particularly community college enrollment
- Use and quality of workforce development programs

Quality of Life

- Percentage of population in the 25-44 year-old demographic
- Membership rates in the Young Professional organization
- Net migration of new people to the county/region
- Poverty rate
- Per capita income
- New retail establishments downtown
- Property value increase in neighborhoods
- Percentage of new affordable housing units constructed

Sites & Infrastructure

- Existence of quality business parks and sites
- Available development acreage (with utility service)
- Transit usage rates
- Office and industrial vacancy rates

Economic Development & Marketing

- Local, state and national media mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity (info requests or visits)
- Tourism revenues
- Changes in web traffic

*The City could have an annual “scorecard” meeting where an outside consultant reviews progress made and gives the City a score on each goal and strategies implemented or not implemented.

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