

JOURNEY TO GROWTH PLAN ROCHESTER AREA, MINNESOTA

Submitted by *Market Street Services Inc.*
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	2
Steering Committee.....	4
Journey to Growth Plan.....	6
Key Initiatives.....	7
Theme 1: Expand and Diversify the Regional Economy.....	9
Objective 1: Tell the Story.....	9
Objective 2: Pursue Targeted Employment Growth.....	10
Objective 3: Develop an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.....	14
Objective 4: Improve the Business Climate.....	17
Theme 2: Optimize the Regional Talent Base.....	19
Objective 1: Coordinate Enhancement of School Readiness and Early-Childhood Programming.....	19
Objective 2: Enhance and Align Career Focused Education.....	20
Objective 3: Engage, Retain, and Attract top talent.....	24
Objective 4: Work to Become a More Inclusive Region.....	26
Theme 3: Become a Cohesive, Connected Region.....	29
Objective 1: Foster Dialogue to Forge a Shared Regional Identity in Southeastern Minnesota.....	30
Objective 2: Partner to Explore Benefits and Alternatives for Comprehensive Regional Planning and Development.....	31
Objective 3: Pursue Priority Transportation and Communications Enhancements.....	33
Conclusion.....	36
Appendix: Best Practices.....	37

OVERVIEW

The Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan is a comprehensive five-year strategy coordinated by Rochester Area Economic Development, Inc. (RAEDI) and the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce to effectively grow and diversify the economy of the Rochester metropolitan area consisting of Dodge, Olmsted, and Wabasha Counties. While health care will always be critical to the Rochester Area's economy, the eight-month planning effort has focused on creating a competitive environment for business growth across a wide range of different Rochester Area employment sectors. The Journey to Growth Plan's full regional approach has identified strategic actions necessary to enable the Rochester Area to truly think, act, and compete like a region.

The Journey to Growth Plan complements Mayo Clinic's Destination Medical Center (DMC) initiative, the city of Rochester and Olmsted County's forthcoming Comprehensive Plan, and any number of local and regional planning efforts that will launch in the coming months and years. The organizers of the Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan, DMC, and other efforts are working closely together to ensure that processes are complementary, research does not overlap, and information is shared. The Journey to Growth Plan is a four-phase process:

The **Community and Programmatic Analysis** answered the question: how is greater Rochester doing? The research assessed the metro area's trends along three areas of competitiveness – People, Prosperity, and Place – benchmarking its performance to three peer regions (Ann Arbor, MI; Madison, WI; and Sioux Falls, SD), the state, and the nation. Stakeholder input sessions augmented the perspectives brought by the Steering Committee and served as an opportunity for diverse constituents to offer solutions and innovative ideas for the Journey to Growth Plan. Key findings of the Analysis were:

- ✓ The health care sector is both the Rochester Area's top asset and greatest challenge
- ✓ Translating world-class research capacity into quality local jobs must be a priority focus
- ✓ Dynamics of talent in all its forms will strongly influence the Rochester Area's future success
- ✓ The Rochester Area's urban evolution must continue
- ✓ Rochester's community culture is special and must be preserved

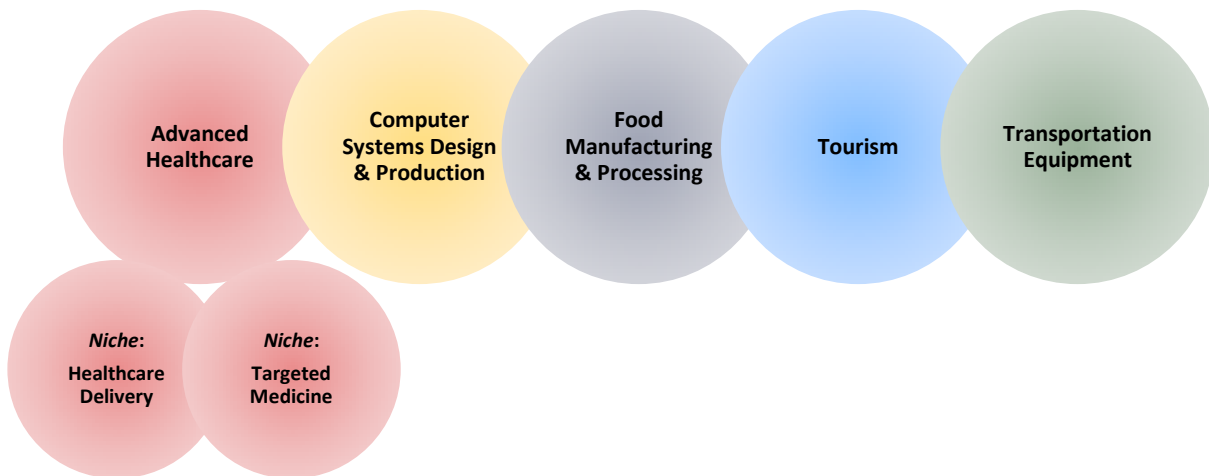
The **Target Sector Analysis** assessed the Rochester Area's economic structure, business sector trends, occupational composition, training resources, and other factors to identify a set of business sectors to target that represent the most important existing and emerging growth opportunities for RAEDI and other regional partners to pursue. Key criteria in the identification of potential target sectors were:

- ✓ Current employment totals and concentrations
- ✓ Future development opportunities
- ✓ Sector and sub-sector growth trends
- ✓ Presence of top employers

- ✓ Average wage data and trends
- ✓ Supportive resources such as research and training capacity
- ✓ Diversification potential and competitive position of suburban/rural Rochester Area counties

The following targets were identified as the most promising sectors for the Rochester Area to pursue. They are listed alphabetically and should not imply any hierarchy or prioritization.

ROCHESTER AREA TARGET SECTORS



Only one of the sectors – Advanced Healthcare – has so-called component “**niches**” included in the target. Niches are differentiated sub-categories within the sector that require separate but ultimately complementary development strategies.

Findings from the first two phases framed the challenges and opportunities that were addressed in this **Journey to Growth Plan**. The Plan details the priority goals and strategies necessary to ensure the Rochester Area’s growth is sustainable, equitable, and diversified across multiple business sectors and geographies.

The final stage of the process is the **Implementation Plan**, an action-oriented report that operationalizes the Journey to Growth Plan recommendations and assesses the capacity, resources, timing, and partnerships necessary for implementation to be successful. Importantly, the final report also provides benchmarks and performance measures to track implementation progress and assess the Rochester Area’s success in activating the Journey to Growth Plan’s recommendations.

STEERING COMMITTEE

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

Al Berning, Xcede

Alan De Keyrel, CWS Inc.

Andrew Barbes, Dodge County EDA

Angie Bowman, Bowman Tool & Machining

Annie Henderson, Citywide Appraisals of Rochester

Ardell Brede, Mayor, City of Rochester

Augie Schleicher, Schleicher Funeral Homes

Barb Porter, Mayo Clinic

Bill Schimmel, City of Stewartville

Brad Jones, Rochester Convention & Visitors Bureau

Brent Buchan, Energy Products & Design, Inc.

Dave Oeth, McGladrey, LLP

Dave Pederson, Wendland Utz, LTD

Duane Sauke, RE/MAX Results - Rochester

Elaine Garry, Peoples Energy Cooperative

Erin Sparks, Lake City EDA

Gail O'Kane, Rochester Community and Technical College

Gary Smith, Rochester Area Economic Development, Inc.

Greg Layton, U.S. Bank

James Rogers, Mayo Clinic

Jerry Williams, Community Member

JoAnn Stormer, Rochester Area Foundation

Joe Powers, Powers Ventures

John Eischen, Rochester Area Builders, Inc.

John Wade, Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce

Jose Rivas, CRW Architecture & Design Group

Karen Doll, Pine Island EDA

Larry Koshire, Rochester Public Utilities

Laura Bowman, United Way of Olmsted County

Lisa Clarke, Mayo Clinic

Mark Carlson, IBM Corporation

Mark Hayford, C. O. Brown Agency, Inc.

Mark Steege, Titan Development & Investments

Marty Lenss, Rochester Airport Co.

Mary Blair-Hoeft, City of Byron EDA

Mary Welder, IBM Corporation

Melissa Brinkman, Custom Alarm/Custom Communications, Inc.

Michael Munoz, Superintendent, Rochester Public Schools

Mike Benike, Alvin E. Benike, Inc.

Mike Martin, Kasson EDA

Paul Mackin, Think Mutual Bank

Randy Chapman, Post-Bulletin Co., LLC

Randy Demmer, Schwab, LLC

Rep. Kim Norton, State Representative

Richard Devlin, Olmsted County

Scott Heck, RBC Wealth Management

Scott Hoss, Dunlap & Seeger

Sen. Dave Senjem, State Senator

Sheila Kiscaden, Olmsted County

Stevan Kvenvold, City of Rochester

Steve Lehmkuhle, University of Minnesota-Rochester

Sue Reinke Walch, Minnwest Bank

Tessa Leung, Sontes

Tim Weir, Olmsted Medical Center

Market Street would like to recognize and thank **Gary W. Smith**, RAEDI President, **John Wade**, former Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce President¹, **Melanie Hoppenworth**, Chamber Finance and Operations Director, and **Tonya Bernard**, RAEDI Administrative Assistant and all local staff who have provided valuable support, coordination, and insight during the strategic planning process.




¹ John Wade helped guide the strategic process through the development of the final approved Journey to Growth Plan before moving on from the Chamber for another career opportunity.

JOURNEY TO GROWTH PLAN

The Rochester Area’s economic assets and resources far exceed the average community of its size. Principal among these is Mayo Clinic, one of the world’s most renowned and identifiable healthcare brands. Economic development in today’s ultra-competitive world is all about capitalizing on your community’s strengths, differentiating assets, and competitive niches. Therefore, it would be foolhardy for the Rochester Area to not aggressively promote and leverage the presence of – and its connection to – the Mayo Clinic. However, it is also not wise to put all your community eggs in one economic basket; the Rochester Area’s dependence on healthcare employment (40 percent of regional jobs) to fuel and sustain its economy has left it vulnerable in the event of contraction in the healthcare economy or some other unforeseen occurrence.

It should also be acknowledged that the Rochester Area is seen and quantified as a three-county metropolitan statistical area by state and federal statistical agencies as well as many site-location consultants and prospect companies. Healthcare is not necessarily the most competitive opportunity sector for Dodge and Wabasha Counties, which feature strong percentages of employment in agricultural and manufacturing sectors and different workforce composition and skill sets. Therefore, this Journey to Growth Plan has been conceived to not only support and leverage healthcare assets such as Mayo Clinic, but also to identify and pursue economic diversification opportunities for the region and its more rural counties. Recommendations were wholly informed by all quantitative and qualitative research conducted to date for this planning process.

The Journey to Growth Plan is structured into three key competitive **themes**, which are then broken down into principal **objectives** and **strategies** to accomplish those objectives. The Plan’s themes and objectives are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the Story • Pursue Targeted Employment Growth • Develop an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem • Improve the Business Climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate Enhancement of School Readiness & Early-Childhood Programming • Enhance & Align Career Focused Education • Engage, Retain, & Attract Top Talent • Become a More Inclusive Region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Dialogue to Forge a Shared Regional Identity • Explore Benefits & Alternatives for Comprehensive Regional Planning & Development • Pursue Priority Transportation & Communications Enhancements
<p>Expand and Diversify the Regional Economy</p> 	<p>Optimize the Regional Talent Base</p> 	<p>Become a Cohesive, Connected Region</p> 

Effectively implementing these strategies will only result from a collaborative process among all public and private Rochester Area partners. No one entity will “own” the entire strategy, but each will be responsible for one or more key actions. These dynamics will be detailed and discussed as part of the process’ Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan will also prioritize actions in the Journey to Growth Plan and estimate implementation costs and personnel needs.

The Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan will be implemented in coordination with the development and implementation of the transformative Destination Medical Center initiative, a \$6 billion, 20-year plan designed to expand Mayo Clinic's Rochester campus and transform Rochester into a worldwide destination for medical care. DMC will be implemented by Destination Medical Center Economic Development Agency (EDA) set up by Mayo Clinic and contracted by the state-designated Destination Medical Center Corporation. The DMC Strategic Plan is estimated to be complete and approved by October 2014. As this Journey to Growth Plan has acknowledged DMC and reflected the initiative's key focus areas in the context of the strategy's goals and actions, so too must the DMC Plan recognize and expressly note its support for and coordination with the Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan.

Because of the breadth and scope of DMC and its projected impact on Downtown Rochester and local quality of life, as well as anticipated strategies related to high-speed rail linkages with the Twin Cities, a Downtown light rail or trolley circulator system, hospitality and tourism development in the Rochester core, and other actions, *Market Street* **did not include these components** in the region's Journey to Growth Plan. However, the potential impact of DMC on Rochester and regional communities was a constant theme of public input conducted for this process. Recommendations related to regional planning, connectivity to downtown visitors, collaboration and consolidation opportunities, and other strategies are included in the Journey to Growth Plan to ensure that the Rochester Area derives the full benefit from DMC implementation, but not at the cost of regional livability or resource availability.

Ultimately, the success of the Rochester Area will be dependent on the successful implementation of both DMC and the Journey to Growth Plan. Ongoing coordination in the activation of core strategies of both efforts will ensure that the two initiatives are complementary, accrue benefit for businesses and residents across the entire Southeastern Minnesota region, and address the full, holistic range of issues that will directly impact the Rochester Area's competitiveness as a place to live, work, and visit. Rochester leaders' recent vote to share part of the city's new sales tax revenue with 17 surrounding communities in the area was a great start to a new era of regional collaboration; now it is time to take efforts to the next level.

Key Initiatives

The Journey to Growth Plan focuses on "what" the Rochester region must do to be most competitive for future jobs, investment, and talent. "How" that will be accomplished will be the focus of the forthcoming Implementation Plan, including prioritization of strategies and action steps based on their regional impact and viability, identification of lead and support entities, cost projections, and other factors. That said, it is clear that certain Journey to Growth Plan activities are deemed to be higher priorities by regional leadership.

As such, the following Key Initiatives will preview the Implementation Plan by detailing the region's strategic priorities as determined by Steering Committee discussions and responses to an online survey.

The Key Initiatives for the Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan are:

- ✓ **Create a regional brand and communications platform (Theme 1, Objective 1, Strategy 1)**
- ✓ **Create Leadership Teams to oversee development of the Rochester Area's target business sectors (1,2,1)**
- ✓ **Formalize a best-practice startup acceleration program at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator (1,3,1)**
- ✓ **Identify, enhance, and promote capital-formation resources (1,3,4)**
- ✓ **Confirm the regional basis for support of statewide efforts to reverse recent changes to Minnesota tax laws (1,4,3)**
- ✓ **Conduct a regional workforce gap analysis based on the Rochester Area's target business sectors (2,2,1)**
- ✓ **Provide career and technical education options to all eligible regional students (2,2,3)**
- ✓ **Develop a comprehensive graduate-retention program (2,3,1)**
- ✓ **Form a coalition to create a regional talent-attraction campaign (2,3,2)**
- ✓ **Pursue regional transit service for high-volume weekday commuting periods (3,3,2)**

These Key Initiatives will also be reflected in the First Year Action Plan for the Journey to Growth Plan that will be included in the forthcoming Implementation Plan.

For many of the Journey to Growth Plan action steps, *Market Street* has identified **BEST PRACTICES** that can help inform the Rochester Area's implementation activities. Recommendations with associated best practices are noted by the letters **BP** included parenthetically after the action title.

Theme 1: Expand and Diversify the Regional Economy



Data show that the presence and impact of Mayo Clinic clearly dominate the Rochester Area economy; nearly half of regional employment is in healthcare with thousands more jobs in other sectors impacted by the spending of Mayo employees and visitors and expenditures of the Clinic itself. The overriding goal of the Journey to Growth Plan – and this Theme in particular – is the continued growth of the healthcare sector in greater Rochester, but balanced by key strategies designed to better diversify the regional economy and ensure local employment is sustainable regardless of major fluctuations in the healthcare sector. These strategies must be an equivalent mix of retaining and expanding existing regional employers, facilitating startup and entrepreneurial growth, and attraction of high-value employers to the Rochester Area.

OBJECTIVE 1: TELL THE STORY

The Rochester Area has a strong and dynamic story to tell, not only of Mayo Clinic and advances that position it at the cusp of changes occurring to health and wellness management worldwide, but also of other major employers in a diverse set of sectors, a skilled and hard-working labor force, and a community culture that values collaboration as its defining factor. The reality is, however, that while Mayo Clinic is a globally-known brand, Rochester, Minnesota is not. Becoming more aggressive in telling the Rochester story across a number of different marketing channels and investing the resources necessary to have this story heard are key strategic priorities for the region.

Strategy 1: Create a regional brand and communications platform (BP1)

Components:

- ✓ Empanel a Volunteer Committee to oversee the process
 - Ensure that the Committee is fully representative of the Rochester Area's component communities, economic development professionals, and employment sector leadership
- ✓ Issue a request for proposals and contract with a marketing firm
- ✓ Develop the brand, message, and communications program
- ✓ Components of implementation could include:
 - Refreshed website
 - Social media strategy
 - Contracted public relations program
 - Electronic collateral and targeted sales sheets
 - Selective marketing in influential, target-specific media

Strategy 2: Formalize an external marketing and hosting schedule

Components:

- ✓ Identify the highest-value target-specific events, meetings, and conferences to program for attendance
 - Determine the optimal attendee list, inclusive of key business leaders, elected officials, and staff
 - Conduct extensive pre- and post-meeting planning to optimize the impact of the trips
 - Leverage state-sponsored travel whenever possible
- ✓ Develop at least one site consultant hosting event annually
 - Program the visit around a high-profile Rochester Area event such as a major Mayo Clinic conference or large community festival
 - Outreach to economic development partners to identify the most impactful site consultants to invite to the event
 - Ensure the visit agenda incorporates all top regional assets and sites

OBJECTIVE 2: PURSUE TARGETED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Data show that the vast majority of new jobs in a community are created by existing firms. The Rochester Area is certainly no exception; the region's economic trajectory is closely tied to rapid expansion at Mayo Clinic and the spinoff effect that growth has on other local employment sectors. Because Mayo Clinic is such a dominant local, national, and global player in the healthcare field, a viable development strategy will be to leverage Mayo's size, influence, supplier relationships, and spending to support growth in healthcare and other identified Rochester Area target sectors. However, stand-alone strategies are also necessary to stimulate growth in sectors such as food processing, manufacturing, and regional tourism that may not have as much direct benefit from Mayo activities. Strategies to more effectively work with leaders in the Rochester Area's most competitive employment sectors as well as capitalize on the research capacity and presence of the region's other major legacy employer – IBM – complement marketing and attraction as critical elements of a holistic development program.

Strategy 1: Create Leadership Teams to oversee development of the Rochester Area's target business sectors (BP2-3)

Components:

- ✓ Develop rosters for each Leadership Team inclusive of public, private, governmental, education and training, and economic development personnel
 - Determine if any existing groups, committees, or boards can serve as a targeted Leadership Team(s), potentially with adjusted membership

- ✓ Formalize meeting schedules, roles and responsibility statements, and draft agendas for initial Team sessions
- ✓ Solicit pledges from Team members to serve as advocates, ambassadors, and champions of their target sectors
- ✓ Leverage Leadership Team members to assist with identification, prioritization, and implementation of key targeted growth strategies

Strategy 2: Leverage business retention and expansion (BRE) visits to identify and capture insourced spending opportunities

Components:

- ✓ Complement the work of the targeted Leadership Teams by partnering with top company officials to assess corporate supply chains for insourcing opportunities
 - Leverage business-development networks, associations, and communications systems to formalize a process to promote and secure local suppliers
 - Ensure discussions are ongoing with small business and entrepreneurship development staff to promote insourcing opportunities to startup and fledgling businesses
- ✓ Identify opportunities to attract top supplier firms to the Rochester Area if no local supplier can be sourced (see Strategy 3)

Strategy 3: Expand local purchasing opportunities from the region's largest employers

Components:

- ✓ Formalize a more direct, transparent, and sustainable system for local companies to pursue business relationships with the Rochester Area's top corporate purchasers
 - Assess the potential to prioritize local and regional purchasing when price-competitive and viable
 - Integrate ongoing efforts to implement a local supplier diversity program
- ✓ Gauge potential corporate support for requiring certain co-location stipulations for external suppliers seeking to do business with the area's top purchasers

Strategy 4: Study the potential to create a master development plan for a Rochester Innovation District (BP4)

Components:

- ✓ Identify potential properties to target for development of the District based on high-value location and existing availability
 - Identify property owner(s) and initiate discussions to explore scenarios for District development
- ✓ If viable, partner on the creation of a master plan for the Innovation District based on national best-practices
 - Consider incorporating elements such as housing, research facilities with wet-lab space, retail and hospitality development, natural amenities such as parks and trails, educational facilities, and other components
- ✓ Work with City of Rochester officials to conform zoning and development controls to the recommendations of the master plan
- ✓ Assess the benefit of contracting with a property-management firm to implement the master plan and market an Innovation District

Strategy 5: Pursue new research partnerships between the region's most innovative employers and institutions

Components:

- ✓ Empanel a Working Group of the region's top public and private thought-leaders to identify potentially valuable and viable partnership opportunities
 - Determine whether IBM's local presence and partnerships focused on making Rochester a global "Smarter City"² would hold long-term benefit
 - Ensure that discussions are focused and data-driven
- ✓ Based on these discussions, develop formal scenarios for designing, launching, and funding local research partnerships
 - Assess the potential to house one or more research partnership at the (proposed) Innovation District
 - Incorporate strategies to most effectively foster commercialization of jointly-sponsored research

² Per IBM, "Smarter cities of the future will drive sustainable economic growth. Their leaders have the tools to analyze data for better decisions, anticipate problems to resolve them proactively and coordinate resources to operate effectively."

- ✓ Promote partnership opportunities externally through economic development marketing and outreach efforts

Strategy 6: Create and sustain a regional Food Hub development program (BP5)

Components:

- ✓ Charge the Food Manufacturing and Processing Leadership Team (see Strategy 1) with designing a Food Hub strategy for the Rochester Area
- ✓ Leverage the August 2013 Dodge County Food Hub Feasibility Study and the University of Minnesota's Southeast Minnesota Foodshed Planning Initiative (SEFPI)³ as the foundational efforts for the initiative
 - Expand the Dodge County study's research, assessment, and strategies to the full Rochester region
- ✓ Ensure linkages between Food Hub development and implementation of the DMC strategy

Strategy 7: Connect Downtown Rochester visitors to regional tourist attractions and amenities

Components:

- ✓ Conduct a full inventory of tourism resources, destinations, amenities, and facilities in the greater Rochester region
- ✓ Develop a detailed printed and electronic guide of Tourism-serving assets in the Rochester Area and adjacent counties
- ✓ Work with the Rochester Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), Rochester Downtown Alliance, and DMC economic development officials to develop and implement strategies to increase awareness and utilization of regional sites by Downtown Rochester visitors
 - Consider the relocation of the Rochester CVB offices to a more visible, higher-profile location at street level
 - Outreach to the Minnesota's Southern Hospitality partnership⁴ to help inform resource-identification efforts and explore cross-promotional opportunities



National Eagle Center, Wabasha, MN

³ See: <http://localfoods.umn.edu/sefpi>.

⁴ Minnesota's Southern Hospitality is a joint effort between Austin, Albert Lea, Owatonna and Faribault to turn southeastern Minnesota into more of a travel destination.

OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOP AN ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

Despite the world-class research output from Mayo Clinic and IBM, the Rochester Area was not said to have a well-developed entrepreneurial “ecosystem,” or the critical mass of talent, funding, organizational support, networking activities, and events that create dynamic growth opportunities in startup “hubs” such as Silicon Valley, Austin, Raleigh-Durham, Seattle, and other communities. In a sense, Rochester’s problem is a “chicken and egg” dilemma: an ecosystem cannot be created without entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs are not attracted to communities without an ecosystem. Therefore, development of critical mass in Rochester’s innovation sector will require a mix of entrepreneurial development, attraction, and nurturing of a new generation of young business leaders. However, the aforementioned research output of Mayo Clinic and IBM is a tantalizing carrot to attract entrepreneurial attention that almost no other community of Rochester’s size can offer; it must be leveraged as such.

Strategy 1: Formalize a best-practice startup acceleration program at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator (BP6)

Components:

- ✓ Leveraging the Techstars, Y Combinator, Iron Yard (Greenville, SC) and other models, design a startup acceleration program for launch at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator
- ✓ Identify a funding resource to capitalize a seed fund for qualifying companies
- ✓ Outreach to area entrepreneurs, research faculty at Mayo Clinic, Twin Cities entrepreneurs, expatriate Rochester entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and development bankers investing in Mayo Clinic, and other qualified individuals to serve as entrepreneurs-in-residence and mentors at the Accelerator
- ✓ Develop a marketing program to nationally promote each Accelerator residency cycle
- ✓ Consider stipulating that accepted Accelerator tenants remain in the Rochester Area for a set duration after graduation
- ✓ Ensure the Accelerator has sufficient space to grow based on demand for the acceleration program
 - Consider incorporating wet lab space and provision of research equipment as residency benefits in the Accelerator

Strategy 2: Host an annual National Startup Conference in the Rochester Area

Components:

- ✓ Design a high-profile event to discuss national issues in healthcare entrepreneurship and celebrate the Rochester Area’s startup ecosystem

- ✓ Potentially coordinate Conference dates around a Demo Day at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator
- ✓ Program conference sessions and meet-ups with top experts and thinkers in the entrepreneurial field
- ✓ Create interactive, social-media-driven promotional strategies to highlight entrepreneurial opportunities in the Rochester Area
- ✓ Consider creating a Commercialization Contest based on Mayo Clinic's intellectual property portfolio
 - Select qualified applicant-teams to identify a chosen commercialization technology from Mayo's IP portfolio
 - Challenge the teams in a "startup weekend"-type event to create business development and commercialization plans based on their chosen technology
 - Announce the Contest winner at a well-publicized event during the Startup Conference
 - Provide the Contest winner with startup capital and other assistance to grow their company, potentially through the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator's acceleration program
- ✓ Leverage all local, regional, and statewide partners to aggressively promote the Startup Conference to potential attendees

Strategy 3: Foster entrepreneurial networking and mentorship opportunities

Components:

- ✓ Leverage existing entities such as BioAM, Cube, the Southeast Minnesota Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and the Rochester Entrepreneur Network to coordinate, launch, and promote multiple entrepreneurial networking events
- ✓ Assist with research into the multitude of potential networking events popularized by top startup communities nationwide
 - Examples include: Kauffman Foundation's 1 Million Cups; Pitch & Grow events, "Tech Brew" entrepreneurial mixers, meetup sessions, startup weekends, Entrepreneur Circle speaker events, "hackathon" competitions, etc.
- ✓ Utilize social media to promote the events and foster interactivity during the sessions



Cube co-working space, Rochester, MN

Strategy 4: Identify, enhance, and promote capital-formation resources

Components:

- ✓ Catalogue all existing capital formation resources in the Rochester Area, including: RAEDI's Seed Fund and SBA 504 loans, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) investment funds and loans, local Minnesota Angel Network members, and Mayo Clinic's Co-Investment Fund, seed and venture funds, Discovery Translation Fund, and others
 - Provide an electronic guide to the region's capital formation inventory through multiple online sources
- ✓ Determine the potential to organize and manage a Rochester Angels Network
 - Initiate discussions of the opportunity through existing entrepreneurial networking channels
 - Solicit inquiries from potential angels for vetting by a Coordinating Committee of local entrepreneurs
 - Decide on initial membership and investment caps, design meeting protocols, and formalize processes for identification of funding opportunities and presentation events from prospect companies

Strategy 5: Seed a local entrepreneurial talent pipeline (BP7)

Components:

- ✓ Offer classes at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator, the BioBusiness Center, the (proposed) Innovation District, and other venues for students interested in computer coding, startup finance, entrepreneurial fundamentals, and other topics
- ✓ Work with local school systems to design and implement entrepreneurial training into core curricula and, potentially, stand-alone classes
- ✓ Encourage entrepreneurial training and internship programs at local colleges and universities
 - Continue soliciting students pursuing Master's degrees in business administration to intern at the Mayo Clinic Business Accelerator over the summer
 - Identify additional opportunities for local college students to intern at a startup or high-growth small business in the Rochester Area

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPROVE THE BUSINESS CLIMATE

Overall, the Rochester Area was said by public input respondents to have a competitive business climate. This was largely corroborated by quantitative research. Two principal exceptions that emerged from the research were the permitting system in the City of Rochester and recent anti-competitive changes to Minnesota's tax laws. These issues are addressed in Objective 4, as well as the ongoing processes necessary to ensure that competitive policy and legislative priorities are continued to be managed year to year.

Strategy 1: Formalize a high-profile list of annual state and federal legislative priorities for the Rochester Area

Components:

- ✓ Leverage the Rochester Area Chamber's Government Affairs staff and volunteers to outreach to local leaders to identify, prioritize, and formalize an annual list of state and federal legislative priorities
 - Capture and record discussions in target sector Leadership Team (see Objective 2, Strategy 1) meetings to inform legislative priorities
 - Incorporate key findings from BRE visits on regional companies' principal concerns related to state and federal policy and regulations into the list
- ✓ Publicize the legislative agenda in traditional and online media and through social media channels
 - Follow up on progress, victories, and continuing challenges after legislative sessions and key votes

Strategy 2: Implement recommendations to improve the City of Rochester permitting system

Components:

- ✓ Continue efforts to effectively implement recommendations from the May 2013 Government Redesign Task Force Report
 - Update the city's computer technology to enable online submittal of permit applications, sharing of planning documents, and receipt of approved permits electronically
 - Provide code inspectors with handsets to wirelessly input field reports into the city's database
- ✓ Consider the creation of a Community Development Director position at the City of Rochester to work with companies and individuals seeking permits and guide them through the system

Strategy 3: Confirm the regional basis for support of statewide efforts to reverse recent changes to Minnesota tax laws

Components:

- ✓ Outreach to Rochester Area businesses to assess their real and anticipated impacts of 2013 changes to Minnesota's tax laws
 - Seek to quantify regional impacts in real/anticipated job losses due to tax-related impacts
 - Determine the level of consensus and support for Rochester Area leaders to partner with state, local, and regional entities to advocate for reversal of the new tax policies
- ✓ If supported regionally, partner with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Metro Cities, and other statewide advocacy groups working to address anti-competitive tax policies in the 2014 legislative session
- ✓ Encourage statewide partners to develop a white paper and issue statement related to the competitive challenges created by Minnesota's revised tax code
 - Procure signatures from Rochester Area leaders in support of the white paper's findings
- ✓ Enlist participation from Rochester Area leaders on all lobbying efforts in support of tax reform
 - Provide top leaders as potential interview candidates and op-ed writers in support of the tax-reform campaign

Theme 2: Optimize the Regional Talent Base



The capacity and quality of a community's labor force are the defining features of economic development competitiveness in today's economy. Top talent can increasingly locate wherever it wants; the destinations that are most successful in attracting this talent are also those with the strongest and most sustainable modern economies. Rochester, Minnesota will never be Austin, Texas, nor should it be. And the numbers show that the region's percentage of college-educated adults is competitive with many top knowledge metros. However, regional employers and other stakeholders consistently noted challenges to find, keep, and attract top talent in greater Rochester. While the quality of life amenities expected to be developed in response to DMC investments will address a certain number of the lifestyle concerns expressed by young professionals and other constituencies; Rochester Area leaders must implement a "full-court press" approach to talent development, retention, and attraction in order to achieve the kind of economic success it is capable of.

OBJECTIVE 1: COORDINATE THE ENHANCEMENT OF SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY-CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING

Study after study has shown that the experience a child has in the first years of his or her development and schooling can define that child's performance for the rest of his or her academic life. Even so, identifying funding to support comprehensive and effective early-childhood educational programs is a challenge for most communities, especially those in states that do not fund universal pre-Kindergarten programs. The Rochester Area fits in this category and therefore must work doubly hard to identify and provide the resources necessary to insure that local children are best prepared to succeed in school and, ultimately, the workforce and life.

The Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) supports Early Childhood efforts as one of its two core programmatic areas along with Entrepreneurs. SMIF annually supports a variety of early childhood development projects and programs. Likewise, local organizations like the United Ways in Olmsted County, Dodge County, Goodhue-Wabasha-Pierce Counties, and Mower County are actively engaged in supporting early-childhood-development efforts.

In order to most effectively leverage and enhance early-childhood programming in the Rochester Area and develop additional capacity as necessary, it will be important to approach these goals in a coordinated, collaborative, and holistic way.

Strategy 1: Enhance the coordination of partners, programs, and performance metrics to improve early childhood outcomes

Components:

- ✓ Identify the existing partnerships and coalitions in the Rochester Area focused on school readiness and early-childhood development⁵
- ✓ Seek to link together existing coalitions and entities into a coordinated Rochester Area Network of organizations, agencies, and practitioners
- ✓ Work with members of this Rochester Area Network to best align programmatic targets and data measurements to develop shared goals and performance expectations
- ✓ Ensure that the members of the Network are effectively connected to – and supported by – private-sector businesses, organizations, and associations
- ✓ Assess the potential to promote and report on the work and outcomes of the Network and its members through online and/or traditional media as well as regional events organized around the topic of early-childhood development and school readiness

Strategy 2: Support the expansion and development of school readiness and early-childhood programs

Components:

- ✓ Support the ability of United Way coalitions and other partners in the Network (Strategy 1) to broaden resources and grow their programmatic capacity
 - New opportunities include programs such as Success by 6, Early Head Start, full-day kindergarten, and others
- ✓ Ensure that capacity enhancements are coordinated, not redundant of other efforts, and aligned with agreed upon performance targets
- ✓ Consider the potential to develop programs with a regional scope under the auspices and coordination of Network partners
- ✓ Consistently assess best practices in the field to identify and inform programmatic needs, opportunities, and development

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE AND ALIGN CAREER FOCUSED EDUCATION

Employers are best able to grow and contribute to regional economic dynamism when they are able to find the quality workers they need to be competitive. Linking well-prepared talent to available occupations has

⁵ For example, the United Way of Olmsted County's early childhood coalition.

the twin benefit of sustaining local employers as well as retaining the best and brightest workers in the community. Long-term growth in high-value occupations also serves as a key attractor for outside talent. The preparation “pipeline” steering students into available regional careers works best when education and training providers are fully aligned with regional companies, with economic developers and other “facilitators” serving necessary roles to bring the two sides together. The Rochester Area’s job-preparation pipeline was said to be fairly well developed and aligned, but many input respondents said more must be done to improve connectivity and communication between the training community and employers.

Strategy 1: Conduct a regional workforce gap analysis based on the Rochester Area’s target business sectors

Components:

- ✓ Partner with Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) to conduct an assessment of worker skills in its 11 southeast Minnesota service area counties based on targeted economic sectors
 - Leverage existing studies⁶ to inform targeted skills research, as appropriate
 - Capture and integrate findings and action items from WDI’s first and future Skills Gap Solution EXPOs
- ✓ Based on the analysis, determine the additional programmatic capacity necessary to address labor-availability gaps
- ✓ Work with regional education and training institutions and entities such as Workforce 2020 and GRAUC⁷ (Greater Rochester Advocates for Universities and Colleges) to inform and support program development to address identified labor needs

Strategy 2: Continue to expand business-community engagement with the education and training system

Components:

- ✓ Leverage Workforce 2020 participants to identify additional opportunities for business to positively impact educational outcomes. Potential programs include:
 - Enlisting business-community volunteers to assist area families with filling out higher education financial-aid forms (i.e., FAFSA)
 - Formalizing internship and job-shadowing programs for high school and college students
 - Vetting and lobbying for preferred school board candidates and legislation

⁶ Including the recent WDI study of the Southeast Minnesota labor force under Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development’s (DEED) FIRST project.

⁷ A staffed organization, GRAUC advocates for advancing the innovation, growth, and excellence of public higher education to serve the greater Rochester area community, students, and employers

- Securing corporate sponsorships of school facilities, classroom equipment and technology, student-achievement programs, and scholarships
- Development of mentorship programs
- ✓ Continue to evolve and optimize current programs including Learn. Do. Earn; the STEM Summit, Educators in the Workplace Institute; When Work Works; and the Business Learning Network
- ✓ Identify, leverage, and create programs focused on skills-development in the Rochester Area's highest-value occupations
 - Fully support and promote the Rochester Area Math Science Partnership (RAMSP) and its AgriScience Initiative to promote careers in ag science
 - Coordinate with the (proposed) Sector Leadership teams, education and training providers, and economic development entities to identify and develop additional career-specific training initiatives
- ✓ Utilize discussions and issues communicated by (proposed) target sector Leadership Teams and through BRE visits to inform program- and curriculum-development needs
 - Leverage the (proposed) Food Manufacturing Leadership Team to inform and support RAMSP's AgScience Initiative

Strategy 3: Provide career and technical education options to all eligible regional students

Components:

- ✓ Aggressively pursue resources and partnerships to support expansion of career and technical education in the Rochester Area
- ✓ Determine how the CTECH program at Heintz Center can potentially inform the development of additional career and technical education capacity in the region
 - Work with RCTC (Rochester Community and Technical College) and MnSCU (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities) to identify opportunities to export the CTECH model to other interested communities
- ✓ Inform career and technical program development based on Rochester Area target business sectors, local occupations in demand, and core skills necessary for success in college and careers
 - Leverage the regional workforce gap analysis (Strategy 1) as well as WDI's career-pathway mapping analysis to support program development

Strategy 4: Enhance GRAUC's capacity to inform and promote higher educational program development

Components:

- ✓ Expand GRAUC's programmatic responsibilities to include data collection, assessment, and dissemination, grant writing, and full-time advocacy to support higher education expansion
 - Partner effectively with education and training institutions, WDI, and other entities to ensure that GRAUC's data services complement and enhance existing efforts without duplication
 - Assist higher education institutions with defensibly proving latent demand for new degree and certificate programs
 - Lead and/or support efforts to source program-development funding from all potential state, federal, non-profit, foundation, and philanthropic sources
 - Support GRAUC's lobbying efforts with participation from the Rochester Area's most influential private-sector leadership
- ✓ Continue to ensure that Rochester Area higher educational institutions partner effectively, work together seamlessly, and do not create redundant programming



UM-R campus at University Square

Strategy 5: Effectively integrate adult education, retraining, and upskilling programs into workforce-pipeline discussions and development

Components:

- ✓ Incorporate Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded adult education and training programs into strategies to address identified labor and skills gaps
 - Utilize findings from the skills-assessment and gap analysis (Strategy 1) to enhance training for under-employed and displaced workers, and the long-term unemployed
 - Optimize processes to continuously engage adult education agencies, facilities, personnel, and programs in regional workforce capacity discussions and development strategies
- ✓ Enhance current and future sector-specific adult training academies
 - Fully promote and support WDI's Southeast Minnesota Healthcare Academy to attract, train, and direct adults into healthcare positions in demand
 - Assess the potential to relaunch WDI's Manufacturing Academy and inform curricula through the Rochester Area's targeted manufacturing sectors and sub-sectors

- ✓ Leverage target sector-based workforce needs identified by Leadership Team (Theme 1, Objective 2, Strategy 1) discussions to inform the programming of WDI and RCTC's Center for Business and Workforce Education

OBJECTIVE 3: ENGAGE, RETAIN, AND ATTRACT TOP TALENT

The best way to achieve workforce sustainability is to hold on to the talent graduating from local colleges and universities. The Rochester Area is challenged in this regard as it does not feature a major public research university. However, it has a small but growing branch campus of the University of Minnesota, a large and dynamic technical college, a local presence of Winona State University, and a host of small liberal arts colleges preparing workers for careers in healthcare and a number of other sectors. The main campus of the University of Minnesota system is also only a short drive away in the Twin Cities. Capturing the opportunities to engage and retain the graduates from these institutions as well as more effectively attract individuals who have grown up or gone to college in Rochester then moved away will be important future strategies to pursue.

Strategy 1: Develop a comprehensive graduate-retention program (BP8)

Components:

- ✓ Identify a local organization(s) to coordinate program development
 - Research best-practice retention efforts nationwide to inform the Rochester Area's efforts
 - Form a Volunteer Leadership Team to support staff with program design, implementation, and administration
- ✓ Outreach to all colleges and universities in a 100-mile radius of Rochester to build relationships with job-placement staff, departmental leadership, key professors, student organizations and associations, and other influencers
- ✓ Work with regional companies of all sizes to build a customized, scalable database of all existing and potential internship and employment opportunities
 - Ensure the database is updated daily
 - Design access protocols for employers, career-placement staff, students/recent graduates, and other users
- ✓ Develop an online and social media campaign in support of the initiative
- ✓ Create follow-up procedures to support graduates in any way necessary to ensure they choose to locate in the Rochester Area
 - This may include: assisting with finding desired housing, schools, child care, networking opportunities, professional services providers, etc.
 - Consider the provision of tuition-forgiveness as an incentive to commit to Rochester Area residency

- ✓ Track program performance to secure continued fiscal support and optimize programmatic components

Strategy 2: Form a coalition to create a regional talent-attraction campaign (BP9)

Components:

- ✓ Assemble a Work Team from staff of RAEDI, DMC Economic Development Agency, Rochester Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Rochester Area Chamber, along with local executive-recruitment personnel, top human-resources staff, and other applicable professionals
- ✓ Charge the Work Team with leveraging existing/planned marketing and messaging programs along with any necessary new elements to customize a campaign to attract talent to the Rochester Area
 - Partner with regional colleges and universities to utilize alumni lists to identify geographic areas of concentration of Rochester Area and Twin Cities expatriates
 - Customize a portal of the job-availability database (see Strategy 1) for positioning to external talent
- ✓ Consider inclusion of potential campaign components such as:
 - Sponsorships of “meetup events” in communities with large concentrations of Rochester and Twin Cities expatriates
 - Active and ongoing social media outreach
 - A targeted campaign aimed at Twin Cities talent
 - Sponsorships and/or booth displays at events such as the BIO show, South-by-Southwest, Consumer Electronics Show, etc.
 - Utilizing young professionals as “ambassadors” to meet with prospective talent interested in the Rochester Area
- ✓ Create follow-up protocols with all declared talent-attraction prospects
 - Apply a case-management system to pursue and track all prospect engagements
 - Consider developing talent-attraction incentives such as tuition-forgiveness, subsidized moving costs, and assistance with home purchases

Strategy 3: Re-energize and redesign the Rochester Area young professionals (YP) group (BP10)

Components:

- ✓ Put together a team of area young professionals to work with Chamber staff to inform program redesign

- ✓ Identify resources to supplement membership dues to ensure events are not cancelled at the last minute
- ✓ Improve social media use and access to information for YP group members
 - Consider creation of a stand-alone website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed
- ✓ Provide more collaboration opportunities with business leadership and the community as a whole
- ✓ Create subcommittees focused on arts and culture, community issues and advocacy, entrepreneurship and startup development, diversity, and other elements
- ✓ Connect the YP group with the Rochester Area's entrepreneurial ecosystem to generate opportunities for speaking engagements and networking events
- ✓ Increase the number of professional-development activities and seminars on network-building and job seeking
- ✓ Reposition the YP Summit as a major annual event in the Rochester Area calendar
- ✓ Consider dedicating full-time staff support to administer the program

Strategy 4: Develop a "trailing spouses" employment program (BP11)

Components:

- ✓ Approach Mayo Clinic about the potential to customize an employment program for so-called "trailing spouses" of Mayo physicians, researchers, executives, and staff
- ✓ Promote the opportunity to all newly relocated Mayo employees
- ✓ Work with participating spouses to identify skill sets and job preferences and connect them with Rochester Area employers
- ✓ Foster engagement for relocated Mayo employees and spouses in volunteer opportunities, membership in community organizations, faith-based programs and entities, and other activities

OBJECTIVE 4: WORK TO BECOME A MORE INCLUSIVE REGION

A road sign welcoming visitors to the city of Rochester proclaims becoming an inclusive community as a top local goal. However, as some public input participants commented, Rochester is still more welcoming to diversity than it is inclusive of it. Taking the next step – not only in the city but the region as a whole – in the evolution from welcoming to inclusive will require continued efforts to build trust among different constituencies, promote current programs and develop new initiatives, and make the region's leadership reflective of its population diversity.

Rochester is further along than many communities in the pursuit of inclusion because of the presence of the Diversity Council. It offers multiple programs and outreach efforts that have laid a strong groundwork for improving Rochester's understanding and leveraging of its growing diversity. However, not everyone is

aware of the Council or its numerous programs, especially outside of Rochester-Olmsted. Thus, strategies to build awareness of important local programs and agencies, develop additional capacity and connections, and better embed discussions of inclusive diversity in community dialogues are necessary to fully embrace and capitalize on Rochester's unique mix of races, ethnicities, cultures, faiths, and lifestyles.

Strategy 1: Increase awareness and utilization of existing diversity resources

Components:

- ✓ Put out a call for volunteers to serve on an Awareness Building Marketing Committee
 - Approach Rochester Area marketing and communications firms, media, community and faith-based leaders, and other individuals to serve on the Committee
 - Charge the Committee with developing a strategy to increase awareness of Rochester Area diversity-focused organizations, programs, events, and services
 - Develop strategies to ensure that awareness-building activities are scalable and sustainable
 - Work to ensure that diverse voices are represented in all public decision-making contexts
- ✓ Ensure the full breadth of Diversity Council programs are included in the awareness-building campaign, including:
 - Educational programs such as Spark! K-12 Anti-Bias Workshops; Student Leaders Creating Change (anti-bullying); Becoming the Solution (corporate training); and SmartKids (parent training)
 - Multicultural Calendar listings
 - Publications including: Diversity Council E-News; Business Edge; Rochester Immigrant Guide; and Tools You Can Use
- ✓ Promote and champion the Rochester Area Chamber's Diversity In Business program, women entrepreneurial roundtable, and the supplier-diversity program



Rochester World Festival

Strategy 2: Formalize dialogue and outreach to foster greater community inclusion

Components:

- ✓ Leverage the full breadth of local and regional diversity-serving organizations and entities in a coordinated outreach to diverse Rochester Area constituencies to identify needs and opportunities to enhance community inclusion
 - Based on feedback, establish quantifiable performance targets for community inclusion and identify actionable strategies to achieve them
 - Ensure that tracking metrics created to measure goal achievement are shared by implementation entities and partners and effectively communicated and reported
- ✓ Complement diversity outreach efforts by launching a series of local forums on Community Inclusion
 - Utilize the forums to report on progress towards achievement of community inclusion benchmarks
 - Invite local and non-local speakers and panelists with a range of opinions and experiences to generate interest for the events and stimulate constructive dialogue on Rochester Area diversity-related efforts
 - Utilize forum dialogues to continuously inform and enhance regional diversity inclusion strategies and implementation

Strategy 3: Assess the need to create community centers with on-site services that meet the needs of specific ethnic and cultural constituencies (BP12)

Components:

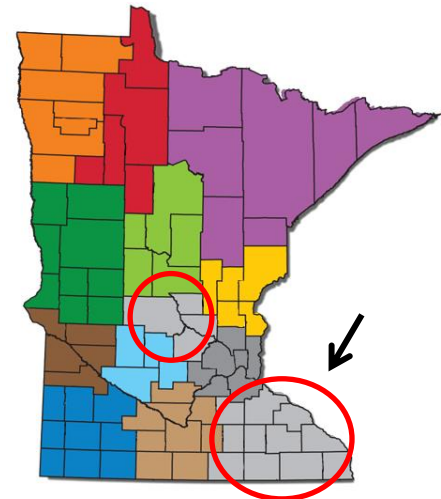
- ✓ Leverage outreach efforts (Strategy 1) to determine the potential for, and feasibility of, creating targeted facilities to support diverse populations in Rochester
- ✓ If interest is shown, proceed with a full feasibility analysis of the facility(s), perhaps through the pro-bono work of a local company
- ✓ Based on the analysis, identify potential funding sources to sustainably design, construct, and program the center(s) for years to come

Theme 3: Become a Cohesive, Connected Region



As one community stakeholder noted, the Rochester Area is a region “in name only.” Though working collectively will be difficult, the stakeholder said, it also provides many benefits and takes the burden off communities to be “everything to everyone.” As could probably be assumed, this person works outside of Rochester-Olmsted County. Multiple representatives said that Rochester-Olmsted needs, issues, and opportunities receive the majority of attention, investment, and programming from regional entities. This narrative is not meant to condemn those charged with implementing regional programs; Rochester-Olmsted is home to Mayo Clinic and the majority of employment, wealth, resources, and assets in the region. Plus, many entities like the Council of Governments are only charged with serving Rochester-Olmsted. However, history has shown time and again that as core cities and counties grow, patterns of suburbanization take hold as families choose to move outside the core either for fiscal reasons (priced out of housing) or familial reasons (seeking schools they perceive to be better and streets they perceive to be safer). Those communities that do not build the relationships necessary to effectively manage these inevitable growth patterns eventually face issues such as traffic congestion, loss of natural resources, higher taxes, and other contingencies. One public input respondent after another said that suburbanization trends are already starting to emerge in the region.

Decades ago, the Rochester Area and surrounding counties had a state-chartered entity responsible for regional planning and development. The Southeastern Minnesota Regional Development Commission was in existence from 1971 to 1981 but has been dormant ever since. The RDC served the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona. As the map to the right shows, Southeastern Minnesota (**Region 10**) is now one of only two regions in the state without a regional development commission. RDCs are funded by property taxes levied in the member counties and contracts for service with local governments and other partners.



A current entity representing the interests of the Rochester Area and surrounding counties is the Southeastern Minnesota League of Municipalities (SEMLM), which serves the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha and Winona. However, SEMLM is an unstaffed, volunteer-driven organization of member cities that often struggles to effectively attract and engage leadership from the municipalities in its service area, according to input respondents. With DMC approved by the state, funded, and already attracting hundreds of millions of dollars in investment even before its development strategy has been produced, the forces of suburbanization and regionalization will almost certainly accelerate greatly in the Rochester Area as property values rise and population growth increases.

Another established regional asset with representation across Southeastern Minnesota is Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA). In fact, this private, 501(c)3 non-profit corporation was originally created in 1986 as the Southeastern Minnesota Development Corporation to provide contracted economic and community development services to small-to-midsized areas without the capacity to engage in these activities. Though CEDA has since expanded beyond Southeastern Minnesota, it still has a comprehensive presence across the counties of Region 10.

OBJECTIVE 1: FOSTER DIALOGUE TO FORGE A SHARED REGIONAL IDENTITY IN SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA

Even though stakeholders said the Rochester Area does not yet think or act like a region, they are quick to add that relationships between stakeholders in Olmsted, Dodge, Wabasha, and non-regional counties do exist and have been nurtured over the years. The Rochester Area is not starting from scratch where regionalism is concerned. However, real strides must be made to take regional efforts to the next level before growth pressures further exacerbate divisions between counties fighting for ever-dwindling state and federal allocations to support infrastructure and services development.

Before any formalized programs or planning can take place at the regional level, however, work must be done to acknowledge and address Southeastern Minnesota's long-standing lack of regional identity, sense of shared objectives and interests, and history of working collaboratively. Until a regional culture of competition and parochialism can be minimized, no comprehensive initiatives at the regional level will have a chance of succeeding.

Strategy 1: Host a series of facilitated discussion forums to develop a Regional Compact for Southeastern Minnesota (Region 10)

Components:

- ✓ Identify and populate a roundtable of top public, private, civic, and non-profit leaders from across the region to commit to the development of a Regional Compact
- ✓ Create a list of discussion categories to comprise the principles of the Compact
 - Categories may include: Shared interests; defining characteristics; regional objectives; opportunities for collective action; regional identity; regional governance; and others
- ✓ Conduct the facilitated forums to develop consensus among roundtable members for the principles of the Compact
- ✓ Formalize and secure approval of the Compact among roundtable members
- ✓ Gain official support of the Compact through votes of Southeastern Minnesota's component city and county governments
- ✓ Establish a regular frequency for revisiting and adjusting the Compact over time

Strategy 2: Explore options for increasing the role of the Southeastern Minnesota League of Municipalities

Components:

- ✓ Outreach to SEMLM members regarding the potential to leverage the organization to help advance the principles of the Rochester Area Journey to Growth Plan
 - Explore opportunities to partner and strengthen the League's role in regional economic development and intergovernmental cooperation
 - Utilize the approved Regional Compact (Strategy 1) to inform discussions on the League's role in regional affairs
- ✓ Consider the potential to identify and solicit resources to hire one or more permanent staff to administer SEMLM and develop/run programs
- ✓ Determine the efficacy of allowing regional counties to enter the League as paying members

Strategy 3: Program and host an annual Southeastern Minnesota Regional Summit (BP13)

Components:

- ✓ Charge one or more local organizations with designing, programming, and hosting an annual summit of Southeast Minnesota leaders and stakeholders
 - Utilize the Southeastern Minnesota Regional Compact (Strategy 1) to inform the summit's discussions and panels related to key issues and regional-improvement strategies
 - Put together an Event Committee with rotating membership to coordinate the planning and implementation of the Summit
- ✓ Seek in-kind contributions of space, promotion, food and drink, and other donations to help allay costs of the Summit
- ✓ Follow up the Summit with a printed and electronic proceedings report widely distributed to attendees, media, and regional and statewide partners
- ✓ Track implementation of initiatives generated by Summit meetings and discussions and report on progress towards completion through SEMLM and partners' communications outlets

Strategy 4: Design a component of the external marketing campaign (Theme 1, Objective 1, Strategy 1) to focus on an internal regional audience

Components:

- ✓ Differentiate a segment of the regional branding and messaging program with a sub-campaign customized for Rochester Area/Southeastern Minnesota residents and businesses

- ✓ Highlight messages that communicate the value and benefit of regionalism for all local communities and constituents
- ✓ Consider developing corresponding media and materials
 - Examples could include: website, social media feeds, print and electronic media advertising, placards/stickers for placement in participating businesses, collectables, etc.
- ✓ Ensure that internal marketing is integrated into the (proposed) Southeastern Minnesota Regional Summit and other regionally-focused outreach and events

OBJECTIVE 2: PARTNER TO EXPLORE BENEFITS AND ALTERNATIVES FOR COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Rochester-Olmsted consolidated planning department and the Rochester Council of Governments have launched a comprehensive planning process for the city and county, largely in anticipation of growth pressures and infrastructure demands resulting from DMC. But, as has been noted, those impacts will be felt far beyond the Rochester-Olmsted core into Dodge and Wabasha Counties and beyond. As such, the transportation element of the comprehensive plan should be coordinated with the Southeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (District 6 ATP), an 11-county group inclusive of Rice, Goodhue, Wabasha, Steele, Dodge, Olmsted, Winona, Freeborn, Mower, Fillmore and Houston counties. The District 6 ATP is comprised of MnDOT staff and city and county planners, engineers, and transit officials principally focused on state and federal highway systems within the district. However, as noted, no organization oversees regional planning beyond the borders of Rochester-Olmsted County. The implementation of this Journey to Growth Plan, the development/implementation of DMC, and the positive momentum generated by Rochester leaders' recent vote to share part of the city's new sales tax revenue with 17 small towns in the area can be key catalysts to initiate substantive discussions on how Southeastern Minnesota can become a more cohesive, connected, and collaborative region across multiple issue areas.

Strategy 1: Leverage the Regional Compact (Strategy 3,1,1) as a starting point for discussions on comprehensive planning and development in Southeastern Minnesota

Components:

- ✓ Convene a Working Group of Region 10 staff practitioners, public officials, private-sector leaders, and community representatives to discuss how the principles of the Compact can be applied to issues of regional planning, growth management, infrastructure development, shared services, etc.
- ✓ Conduct a comprehensive inventory of existing Region 10 entities, plans, studies, and initiatives focused on regional or sub-regional planning, land use, infrastructure development, economic development, and other germane activities
 - Ensure District 6 ATP members are key partners in assessing regional transportation development

- Include descriptions and analysis of previous efforts such as the Southeastern Minnesota Regional Development Commission and other examples of regional partnerships
- ✓ Utilize the inventory as a starting point for facilitated brainstorming sessions on opportunities to better formalize regional planning, land use, growth management, and infrastructure-development strategies
- ✓ Produce and publicize a final report of the Working Group on the history of, and potential for, comprehensive regional planning in Southeastern Minnesota

Strategy 2: Advance high-value strategies for regional collaboration based on the final report of the Working Group (Strategy 1)

Components:

- ✓ Identify priority strategies from the report for advancement of regional planning, growth management, infrastructure development, and resource sharing and/or consolidation initiatives
- ✓ Formalize the list into a detailed, phased Regional Action Agenda for approval by Region 10 counties and municipalities and integration into their current initiatives (as applicable)
- ✓ Determine if an existing entity (or entities) can coordinate the implementation of identified high-value strategies
 - Develop a plan to leverage this entity (or entities) into a formalized network to oversee implementation of the Action Agenda
 - If no entity (or entities) is determined to be feasible to coordinate implementation, launch discussions on the potential to develop a new organization to facilitate and manage regional initiatives in Southeastern Minnesota

OBJECTIVE 3: PURSUE PRIORITY TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS ENHANCEMENTS

As the Rochester Area and Southeastern Minnesota discuss opportunities to more effectively and sustainably plan, grow, and provide services to residents and businesses, a handful of high-value projects and opportunities could be catalysts for bringing leaders and stakeholders together to launch partnerships that could be leveraged for more comprehensive planning and development efforts in the future. Some of these opportunities have been pursued for years (four-laning Highway 14, growing Rochester's airport), while others are new (regional transit and broadband). Regardless, as DMC ramps up and the Rochester Area's population, job base, and visitor counts increase, issues of improved transportation and communications capacity and connectivity will become paramount.

Strategy 1: Maximize the capacity of Rochester International Airport (RIA) to serve as a gateway to the region

Components:

- ✓ Ensure that formal conversations take place – potentially in the context of DMC – related to opportunities to increase passenger demand and usage at RIA
 - Examine best practices from other “medical hub” airports around the world to inform the development of potential “concierge services” for high-profile travelers
- ✓ Assess the potential to capitalize a fund to incentivize additional nonstop destinations and more frequent flights to and from RIA

Strategy 2: Pursue regional transit service for high-volume weekday commuting periods

Components:

- ✓ Approach Mayo Clinic about the potential to formalize its shuttle service into a peak-period regional transit system
 - Determine the operational, staffing, cost, and liability concerns involved in contracting with Mayo to provide regional transit service
 - Determine levels of regional support for proposing a tax referendum to finance contracted regional transit service
- ✓ If a contracted Mayo service is infeasible, assess other options for peak-hour transit service, including:
 - Contracting with Rochester Public Transit to expand its service area to key regional locations
 - Commuter busses funded by a consortium of regional employers and institutions
 - Pursuing equipment and operational grants through the federal Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)



Rochester Public Transit bus

Strategy 3: Develop a plan to provide broadband connectivity to all Rochester Area businesses and residents

Components:

- ✓ Partner with Connect Minnesota (<http://www.connectmn.org/>) to create a detailed map of broadband coverage in the Rochester Area to identify service and availability gaps

- ✓ Based on the regional broadband map, work with the Minnesota Governor's Task Force on Broadband and the state's Broadband Development Office to pursue strategies to provide a minimum of 10-20 MB broadband service across the Rochester Area counties
 - Pursue all potential service-provision strategies, including working with private communications providers, identifying public-private funding sources and scenarios, and securing state and federal grants to install broadband lines and facilitate "last mile" connectivity to homes and businesses
- ✓ Ensure that broadband infrastructure development is included as a priority recommendation in all local and regional comprehensive planning processes

Strategy 4: Support the Highway 14 Partnership's efforts to four-lane the highway from Rochester to New Ulm

Components:

- ✓ Ensure that support for Highway 14 widening is included in all annual legislative priority lists and lobbying efforts from entities such as RCOG, SEMLM, RAEDI, and the Rochester Area Chamber
- ✓ Prioritize completion of Highway 14 four-laning in the proposed regional growth-management plan (see Objective 1, Strategy 2)
- ✓ Consistently research and pursue all alternative funding mechanisms for highway expansion, including federal TIGER grants, Economic Development Administration grants, and other sources

Conclusion

The Rochester Area is poised to embark upon the next phase of its growth evolution with the launch of the Destination Medical Center strategy, the implementation of this Journey to Growth Plan, the development of the Rochester-Olmsted County Comprehensive Plan, and other initiatives. While this growth phase – as with the community’s history to date – will continue to be driven by expansion of Mayo Clinic, the region must devote considerable time, effort, and resources to ensuring that the Rochester Area economy becomes more diverse, provides increased opportunities for non-medical professionals, and brings together regional partners in new and more productive ways to ensure that the community’s growth is smartly planned, equitable, and sustainable. This will only occur if implementation of all these strategic initiatives is collaborative, coordinated, and acknowledges the impacts of City of Rochester growth on the counties in its metropolitan area and beyond.

This Journey to Growth Plan has leveraged comprehensive and data-intensive research coupled with outreach to thousands of Rochester Area stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, and an online survey to identify the highest priority strategic actions necessary to make the region competitive for quality jobs and skilled talent across a spectrum of high-value employment sectors. This will entail not only the enhancement of core economic development functions, but also an intensive focus on talent development and regional relationship-building to ensure that the economic stimulus and quality of life benefits afforded by DMC implementation are leveraged to the fullest extent possible.

The final stage in the Journey to Growth Plan process is the development of an Implementation Plan that will prioritize strategies, identify lead and support implementation partners, assess the personnel and resource capacity necessary to implement, and detail the phasing of implementation activities in the first year and beyond. Successful community and economic development is a “team sport,” and the Implementation Plan will develop a playbook for the team to follow as it activates the Journey to Growth Plan in coordination with DMC and other efforts. The billions of dollars set to be invested in the Rochester core over the next 20 years provide an opportunity to transform the city and its region. If the leadership of the Rochester Area communities truly commit to working together to fully leverage these investments, the benefits will be felt far beyond the healthcare sector and Mayo Clinic campus alone.

APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

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

BP1 (THEME 1, OBJECTIVE 1, STRATEGY 1)

ST. LOUIS (MO), ALL WITHIN REACH

Though initially developed as a tourism brand, the “St. Louis, All Within Reach” tagline has been adopted by economic development entities is displayed on the home page of the St. Louis Regional Chamber. The messaging can be segmented for different campaigns. For example, “St. Lou is Chatting” is used for a link to an online representative to answer questions about the region. The vision of the brand was to tie into the notion that St. Louis has dynamic attractions like its sports teams, architecture, museums, and parks, but is also accessible because of a lower cost of living, negligible traffic congestion, and other benefits of being a medium-sized community.



BP2 (1,2,1)

MEMPHIS (TN) LOGISTICS COUNCIL

The Memphis Regional Logistics Council (RLC) was established in 2004 by the Memphis Regional Chamber as a way to strengthen both the Memphis metro area and the tri-state region as a whole. By addressing Memphis’ ever-growing, ever-changing role in global distribution and logistics, the council works to establish the Memphis region as a leader in the industry, and to better tap into its role as “America’s Distribution Center.” The RLC is comprised of logistics and distribution professionals who lend their insights to the city’s myriad logistics and distribution issues. Members include trucking and drainage companies, freight forwarders, steamship lines, railroads, air carriers, contractors, developers, barge lines, warehouses, and distributors.

At meetings, professionals are encouraged to share their ideas and expertise regarding how to improve Memphis’ ability to be a logistics center. The council includes four main committees: infrastructure, marketing, workforce development, and strategic alliances. The infrastructure committee recently helped execute the contract for the city’s first ever regional infrastructure plan which examines how air, rail, road, and water converge in Memphis to move goods in and out of the city. The marketing committee works to brand the community and promote Memphis’ assets and support the Chamber’s ongoing marketing efforts, including but not limited to the targeted in-house publication HUB Magazine with a circulation exceeding 20,000; hosting editors of major logistics and supply sector trade publications for the Logistics

Tour of Memphis; full advertising supplemental section to Inbound Logistics; and the maintenance of a frequently updated and interactive website promoting regional logistics capabilities. The workforce development committee focuses on promoting the city's economy by improving the quality of its workforce. The strategic alliance committee works to develop partnerships critical to logistics growth.

BP3 (1,2,1) CAPITAL AREA MANUFACTURING COUNCIL (LANSING, MI)

Facing systemic employment loss caused by outsourcing and the relocation of manufacturing operations to the Sunbelt, manufacturing business leaders from central Michigan came together in 2004 to create the Capital Area Manufacturing Council. The Council is an executive-level manufacturing committee that works together to improve central Michigan's manufacturing competitiveness by addressing common issues and challenges. The Council approaches these issues through its Executive and Workforce committees. The Executive Committee meetings are held six times per year for CAMC members with discussion centering on enhancing business opportunity for local manufacturers. Supply chain support, import/export strategies, lean manufacturing strategies, product/market diversification, and plant tours are common topic areas. Among the Council's initial successes include identifying and addressing a CNC/welder skill shortage, engaging manufacturers with M-Tech (Michigan's technical education centers), and securing a \$10 million grant from Michigan's Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) to support efforts to train and develop new and incumbent workers. The Capital Area Manufacturing Council is funded by dues, donations, in-kind support from partners and members, and grants from Michigan Works!

BP4 (1,2,4) CORTEX INNOVATION COMMUNITY (ST. LOUIS, MO)

Founded to capture the commercial benefits of university and regional corporate research in St. Louis, the Cortex Innovation Community is a 200-acre technology district embedded into St. Louis's Central West End and Forest Park Southeast neighborhoods. The innovation district features customizable lab and office space, proximity to world-class research institutions, availability of a trained local workforce, and three anchor life sciences and biotechnology research institutions. The Center for Emerging Technologies (a public-private partnership business incubator), BioGenerator (a privately funded organization that transforms promising technologies into sustainable businesses), and CIC St. Louis (a co-working space aimed at fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem) combine their efforts to support entrepreneurs in their research and funding phases. Once fully developed, the district will consist of one million square feet of space customized to fit the needs of start-ups and mature businesses.

To further support entrepreneurs, the Cortex Innovation Community has also co-located multiple venture funding and entrepreneur support institutions within the district's confines. BioGenerator's Entrepreneurs in Residence program supports bioscience entrepreneurs as they bring their new technologies while Venture Mentoring Service of the Innovate St. Louis organization builds successful entrepreneurs through networking and team-based mentoring at no cost to the entrepreneur. Traditional venture capital is provided by iTen and The Balsa Group. Along with fostering a collaborative environment, the Cortex Innovation Community utilizes local amenities and mixed-use space already in place to maximize its appeal

to knowledge workers. To date, over \$155 million has been invested in the district with another \$189 million under development. The district was established as a Tax Increment Financing district, leveraging public dollars to spur private investment.

BP5 (1,2,6) LOUISVILLE (KY) FARM TO TABLE

Recipient of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' outstanding achievement City Livability Award, Louisville Farm to Table increases the capacity of the local food system by working to increase production, marketing, distribution and sales of Kentucky edible agriculture products and to meet Louisville's demand for local food. The Farm to Table initiative provides a crucial link between local agricultural producers and customers seeking to eat healthier, local food. To this end, Farm to Table aids local farmers to enhance production capacity and shift their focus to high demand agricultural products. At the same time, Farm to Table establishes links between farmers, processors, and large institutional purchasers to develop a robust supply-chain that translates into more local food on the table of Louisville residents. In many respects, Farm to Table is an information broker – matching supply with demand or demand with supply. Working with Jefferson County Public Schools – who sought to add more leafy greens and orange vegetables to their lunch menu – Farm to Table established relationships between butternut squash producers and a local processor that peels and seeds squash. These efforts not only introduced butternut squash on the lunch menu but also caused the Jefferson County Public Schools district to request 40,000 servings of locally raised chicken wings and drumsticks. Further energies to connect producers with local purchasers include "speed dating" workshops that connect local farmers and institutional purchasers which result in supply-chain relationships. Other workshops such as "Snout to Tail" seek to increase the chef's capacity to utilize every portion of the animal thereby increasing local food's impact.

BP6 (1,3,1) IRON YARD (GREENVILLE, SC)

Launched in 2010 as a co-working space, the Iron Yard quickly grew in scope. The Iron Yard today is equal parts business accelerator, academy, co-working and event space. Iron Yard seeks to bring entrepreneurs, investors, developers, and artists together to inspire innovation. The Iron Yard runs two accelerator programs per year – an open tech program in the spring, and a digital health program in the fall. To enhance the experience, and ultimately the success of the accelerator participants, Iron Yard partners with specialists in marketing, design, community management, and other disciplines to offer well-rounded support and immerses potential companies in its co-working space, provides intensive code education, and invites entrepreneurs to their local technology and design events. At the programs conclusion, Iron Yard holds a Launch Event to generate buzz about the company's product, entrepreneurs may also go on two fundraising trips to market their product to investors.

BP7 (1,3,5) LAUNCH ENTREPRENEURSHIP (CHATTANOOGA, TN)

LAUNCH High School Entrepreneurship program – held over a course of an academic semester – is focused on teaching business fundamentals to high school students. Upon completion of the course, students are equipped to launch and grow successful entrepreneurial ventures. The Program focuses on the ideas of

market opportunities, viability, feasibility, innovation, and basic concepts required to develop a competent business plan. At the conclusion of LAUNCH, students compete in a regional business plan competition held at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Students pitch their business ideas with the winning team awarded a \$10,000 prize package of start-up financing and services to begin their business venture. Over 12 groups of entrepreneur students are slated to compete in the 2013 competition this December. Previous winners have gone on to create a product, engage investors, and launch their business. The High School Entrepreneurship program is facilitated by LAUNCH, a nonprofit organization formed in 2010 by local businessmen whose eyes were opened to the needs of the underserved and believed that the business community has many of the tools necessary to address poverty.

BP8 (2,3,1) CONNECT-2-BUSINESS (GREATER DES MOINES, IA)

Connect-2-Business (C2B) is an online network interface and database designed to more effectively connect local talent to the private sector. The Greater Des Moines Partnership sponsored and licensed the C2B tool for youth and adults in Dallas, Polk, and Warren counties. Participating high school students are able to create a career-focused plan of study and find information about colleges, financial aid programs, career options, and how to connect with over 4,400 Greater Des Moines businesses for internships, job shadowing, and employment. College students can access local job openings, identify job shadowing and internship opportunities, identify potential education and training opportunities, and receive information on regional businesses. Both high school and college students can create an “e-Portfolio” of their work and accomplishments to share with recipients of their choosing. Adults who sign up for C2B have access to information that can help them find a job, find a higher-paying position, or perhaps make a career change. They are able to manage all job-search-related functions in one place, including résumé-building and updating, cover letters, assistance with job-interviews, information on careers and companies, and – like students – access to posted job openings from over 4,400 regional businesses. Adults can also create and maintain an e-Portfolio of their work. Employers who sign up for C2B are able to connect with the students and adults seeking employment and information. They can create specific profiles for their businesses, update available job shadowing, internship, and staff positions, and engage with system users like education/training providers and other practitioners who connect talent with companies. These system users are provided real-time access to C2B data through customizable reports, can review career-trend forecasts, and communicate directly with C2B members about education and career information, events, and other talent-development opportunities.

BP9 (2,3,2) WORK IN THE TRIANGLE (RALEIGH-DURHAM, NC)

Formed as a collaborative partnership between numerous economic development agencies within the Raleigh-Durham Area, the Research Triangle Regional Partnership is a proactive talent initiative that showcases the Research Triangle’s amenities attractive to young professionals. Dubbed “Work in the Triangle, Smarter from Any Angle,” the regional marketing strategy contains a robust communications platform encompassing an attractive website including resident testimonials, job search capability, and a wide swath of information pertinent to an individual making a relocation decision for themselves and/or their family. Work in the Triangle also features integrated social media; leveraging Twitter, Facebook, and

Flickr to reinforce each social media tool as well as provide fresh content that maintains a connection to perspective talent. Social media accounts hosted by Work in the Triangle are updated regularly with relevant updates on new job postings and local current events. The website and social media tools combine to project a clear message: Raleigh-Durham is a premier destination for young talent. To further enforce their messaging, Work in the Triangle invites local young professionals to become an ambassador empowering them to share their experience with friends, family, and perspective residents. Talking points are provided for ambassadors which entail current Research Triangle rankings, Top 3 reasons to live in the Research Triangle, and the Top 3 myths the Research Triangle is attempting to dispel. Ambassadors are also encouraged to post testimonials regarding their experience living in the Raleigh-Durham area on their website.

BP10 (2,3,3) TULSA'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (TULSA, OK)

Tulsa's Young Professionals (TYPros) was founded by the Tulsa Metro Chamber in 2003 in response to the region's "brain drain" of new graduates and young professionals to other cities and states. TYPros has since grown to more than 8,000 members. The organization is a key component of the Tulsa Metro Chamber's regional economic development plan, Tulsa's Future. To ensure that the group was maturing into an active facilitator of community change, TYPros developed "work crews" allowing young professionals to have a collective voice and impact on a number of community concerns and initiatives. TYPros work crews are focused around the following issues:

- Business Development
- Colleges & Universities
- Community Ambassadors
- Community Redevelopment
- Diversity
- Government Relations
- Next Generation Leadership
- Special Events
- Sustainability

The Government Relations Crew organized has organized legislative days in which they rent buses and take a large consistency of young professionals to the state capital for a day of meetings with state representatives from the region. The Diversity Crew promotes greater diversity within TYPros membership while hosting a number of events to promote dialogue about diversity in Metro Tulsa. The organization's mission is to attract and retain young talent in the Tulsa metro region while also establishing Tulsa's next generation of business and community leaders.

BP11 (2,3,4) CONNECT SIXTY-FOUR (KALAMAZOO, MI)

The result of a collaboration of business organizations along a 64-mile corridor between St. Joseph and Battle Creek, Michigan, the Connect Sixty-Four program provides qualified “trailing spouses” of top job candidates with a “VIP Pass” that allows them exclusive exposure to the area’s hiring agents and priority consideration for interviews. All of the Fortune 500 companies with headquarters or divisions in the corridor have signed up for the program, including Stryker, Eaton, Kellogg’s, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Whirlpool. Résumés of trailing spouses and job openings are organized and matched by Connect Sixty-Four staff. When the service is offered to a job recruit, a career consultant will meet with the trailing spouse to assess their career aspirations and begin identifying and facilitating employment opportunities. There is no fee to those participating organizations who hire a trailing spouse through the Connect Sixty-Four program but there is a \$5,000 charge for individual who’s trailing spouse lands a local position. Often, Connect Sixty-Four services are offered as a relocation benefit to the prospective employee.

BP12 (2,4,3) LATINO COMMUNITY CENTER (DES MOINES, IA)

As part of implementation of Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa’s Capital Crossroads strategy, an initiative was launched to create a multi-purpose Latino community center to help the region’s 38,000 Latinos connect with one another and community organizations that can provide educational and financial resources as well as leadership and mentorship-development opportunities. The center is intended as a place to develop and empower Latino leadership, foster community pride, deliver social services efficiently, and serve as a central access point for information.

A feasibility study for the center was financed by Polk County government and four Greater Des Moines companies and conducted by a local planning firm. The study identified a strong desire for a multi-purpose Latino center and presented a potential facility design, funding model, and governance structure. Currently, Latino stakeholders in Central Iowa are selecting a leadership team for the project and forming a nonprofit organization to secure funding for the center and provide operational oversight.

BP13 (3,1,3) POWERS OF TEN (NASHVILLE, TN)

On May 1, 2013, the Powers of Ten convened its fifth annual summit. Over 600 government, economic and community development, planning, architecture, and engineering leaders were invited to downtown Nashville in order to learn, connect, and collaborate on Middle Tennessee’s challenges and opportunities, now and in the future. Each year the Powers of Ten summit features an issue most pressing to Middle Tennessee’s ten-county region. The 2013 summit focused on land use and quality growth. Keynote speakers at the summit included Mitchell Silver, American Planning Association President and Raleigh, North Carolina Chief Planning and Economic Development Officer; John Schroer, Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner; and Robin Rather, Collective Strength. Discussion topics during the conference related to the region’s defined issue areas:

- Regional Transportation and Transit
- Regional Land Use and Quality Growth and Sustainable Development

- Regional Infrastructure
- Regional Open Space Conservation
- Regional Air and Water Quantity and Quality
- Regional Economic Competitiveness

A record 51 sponsors and partner organizations provided direct or in-kind support to the summit.