



ATHENS – CLARKE COUNTY

GEORGIA, USA



Janus Economics

- Economic development, business location and related consulting services
- Clients include:



ECLIPSE
AVIATION



Introduction and Scope

- Community economic development assessment
- Company/Consultant perspective
 - Economic development strengths & weaknesses
 - Recommendations
 - Target industries, marketing
- Information sources
 - EMSI data (Georgia Power's account)
 - Response to RFI by ACCEDF
 - Two-day visit and tour
 - Professional judgment, experience and best practices

Economic Overview

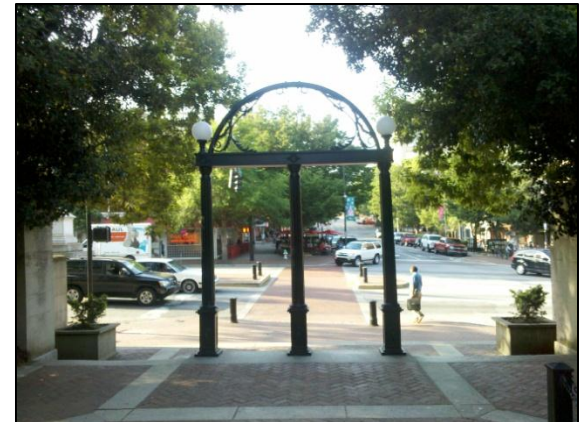
- Total employment (covered) rise and fall:
 - 64,323 in 2002
 - 72,260 in 2008 (peak)
 - 68,960 in 2Q 2011
 - 4,637 jobs, 7.2% growth since 2002
- Current unemployment rates (June 2011)
 - ACC: 8.8%
 - Athens metro area: 8.4%
 - Georgia: 10.5%

The five largest employers by SECTOR in ACC are:

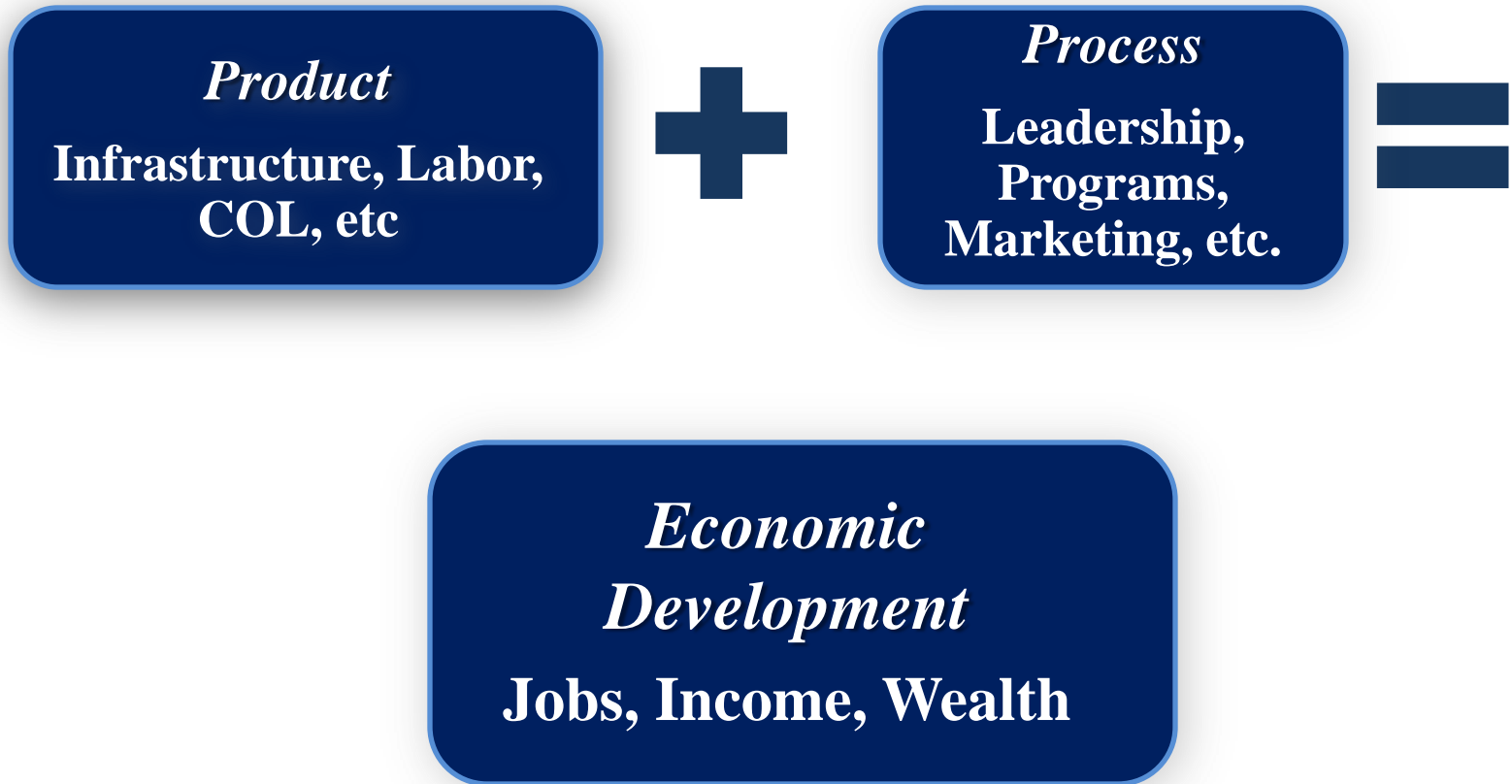
- 1) Government
- 2) Health Care and Social Assistance
- 3) Retail Trade
- 4) Accommodations & Food Service
- 5) Manufacturing

The five largest employers by COMPANY in ACC are:

- 1) UGA
- 2) Athens Regional Medical Center
- 3) Clarke Co School District
- 4) Pilgrim's Pride
- 5) ACC Unified Government

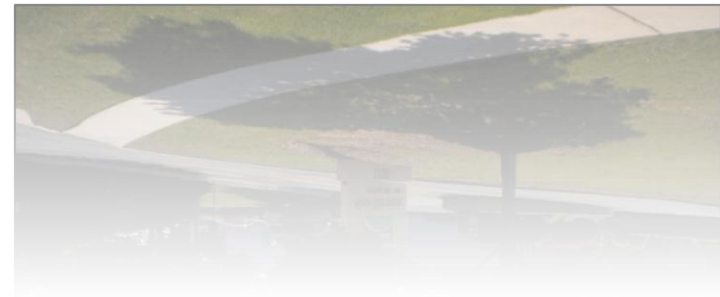


Formula for Economic Development Success



Product: Strengths to Build on

- Higher Education
- Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- Workforce
- Existing Industrial Base
- Transportation



Product Weaknesses

- Business Climate
- Image
- Poverty and Homeless Population
- Site and Buildings (Mixed)



Some Product Recommendations

- Address permitting and ordinance issues
 - Streamline permitting
 - Develop appropriate ordinances and regs for “industrial” properties
- Better public transportation to industrial areas
- Use signage and the transportation plan to improve Athena industrial park
- Address building inventory needs in economic development planning process

Economic Development Process



Process: Leadership

- No community sense of urgency or priority for economic development
- Permitting and regulations not business friendly
- No public/private partnership for economic development
- Little regional economic development effort

Leadership Recommendations

- Improve permitting and regulatory situation
 - Complete expert assessment
 - Establish committee to review and recommend
- Diversify economic funding
 - Private sector funding

Process: Strategy

- No shared vision and definition for economic development
- No long-term plan for economic development
 - Guides ED effort and resource allocation

Strategy Recommendations

- Conduct county-wide ED planning process with vision and strategic plan
 - Structured process over 4-6 months
 - Inclusive with input from all stakeholders
 - All issues and viewpoints on table
 - Define economic development in ACC
- End result – vision and plan with broad community support

Process: Services

- Economic Development service roles are overlapping and confusing
 - No clear “point group” for ED
 - BRE services divided among ACCEDF and Chamber
- Confusion on ACCEDF mission and Board role

Service Recommendations

- Define ED roles and establish a clear lead ED organization
- Provide adequate resources for lead ED org
 - Bring ACCEDF up to “best practice” funding and staff levels
 - ACC ED Office should take more of a business advocacy role

Target Industries

- **Best practice to increase likelihood of recruiting success**
- **Identify industries that:**
 - **fit the county's location assets**
 - **are growing in surrounding states**
 - **diversify economy**
- **Data analysis and professional judgment**



Target Industry Clusters

Manufacturing

- Pharmaceutical and medicine
- Medical equipment
- Other equipment
- Transportation
 - Motor vehicle parts
 - Aerospace products & parts
- Misc Manufacturing
 - Advanced fibers
 - Plastics products

Service Industries

- Consulting services
 - Mgmt and environmental
- FIRE
 - Financial mgmt
 - Insurance
- Information
 - Data proc and hosting
 - Internet publishing & broadcasting
 - Call centers

Incentives

- **Athens-Clarke County gets a mixed grade on incentives**
- **Free or discounted land or buildings is not offered. Some options to be more competitive:**
 - 1) **EDF or industrial authority owns the real estate and sells it at a discounted price**
 - 2) **EDF uses cash to “buy down” privately held real estate.**
- **The permitting problem and lack of a business “advocate” in local government to help expedite permits and navigate regulations is a disadvantage for ACC**

Marketing Athens-Clarke County

- **Develop an internal & external ED marketing plan based on vision and strategic plan.**
- **Build an image of ACC as a place for business and lifestyle.**
- **Develop a free-standing website that speaks to economic development audiences rather than local government.**

Concluding Observations

- Athens-Clarke County has tremendous economic development potential and assets to build on.
- Athens-Clarke County does not have an economic development vision for the future, and therefore no commonly accepted goals and objectives and action plans. Athens-Clarke County can continue with the status quo and let growth happen, or it can chart and pursue its own destiny.
- Economic development potential would be significantly enhanced if Athens-Clarke County reviewed and adjusted its business permitting procedures and regulations.
- The roles of different economic development organizations in Athens-Clarke County need clarification.
- A more formal arrangement between or even combination of ED activities between ACCEDF and the Chamber should be considered

Discussion/Questions?

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