

# HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK

### INTRODUCTION

The Hinds County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) utilizes two main economic development methodologies to create new jobs and build wealth in the local economy; the attraction of new business and retention and/or expansion of local firms. The Authority targets companies that are compatible with existing business clusters for recruitment and establishes and nurtures relationships with existing companies to facilitate expansions and retentions. Through these, and other complementary activities, the Authority enhances the business climate, increases employment opportunities and ultimately enhances the quality of life for the citizens of Hinds County and its environs.

The Authority executes the above activities through an annual program of work to accomplish its mission of enhancing the business climate, quality of life, and employment opportunities for all citizens of Hinds County.

The Authority's 2022 program of work is driven by the following vision statement taken from our strategic plan:

***The Hinds County Economic Development Authority shall establish, maintain, and carry on a program of diversified economic development that results in the realization of Hinds County serving as the primary business and employment center for the Jackson metropolitan area as well as the premier regional destination for living, education, healthcare, entertainment, culture, and shopping.***

***GOAL ONE: IMPLEMENT A MARKETING STRATEGY TO PROMOTE HINDS COUNTY AS THE STAR OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI TO COMPANIES LOOKING TO LOCATE WITHIN THE STATE. COMMUNICATE WITH CURRENT INDUSTRIES, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTS THE SERVICES OF HCEDA***

### OBJECTIVE A: MARKETING FOR ATTRACTION

From the preliminary request for information to the final site selection decision, the name of the game in the economic development site selection process is to prevent our community from being eliminated from the site selection competition. If communities can't make the cut at each level of the elimination process, there is a 100% success rate for failure. In today's information economy, one of the major tools used to convey this information is having an online presence. Websites and social media should be a reservoir of information that can be accessed dynamically to deliver that information in multiple formats. On these and all formats Hinds County will be marketed as "The Star of the State of Mississippi" or "The Star of State".

Since currently there is limited funding, thoughtful analysis of our recruitment program is essential to maximize the probability of successfully creating primary jobs. This thoughtful analysis and competitive pressures from an ever-expanding number of communities that are aggressively seeking a limited number of opportunities for new jobs and investment has given rise to the formation of regional economic development marketing efforts.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

The Hinds County Economic Development Authority and various other entities and surrounding counties have formed the Greater Jackson Alliance to address the issue of limited funding for marketing the Central Mississippi area to site selection consultants, commercial real estate professionals and corporate real estate executives. The Alliance is well aware that HCEDA will be known as “The Star of the State” and this is where many projects should land.

### *Strategic Action Item #1 Website Upgrades, Updates, and Ongoing Maintenance*

- ❖ Review website on a monthly basis to ensure quality and up-to-date data is available for the public and prospective companies
  - Add a map of all the available industrial sites with Hinds County – make it interactive so clients can easily access information about each site
  - Workforce Site – Add language to assert HCEDA Authority within the Hinds County workforce ecosystem. Explain the concept of the HCEDA workforce nexus. List all partner organizations, with a brief description of what they do and a link to their website.
    - Add an interactive tool where citizens can search and apply for jobs
  - List current abatements to show potential new companies Hinds County is Pro Business
  - List a company success story of how HCEDA has assisted that company
  - Allow for the dynamic creation of reports.
  - Allow for reports to be easily printed and exported in PDF format.
  - Add renderings of the possibilities, videos, and drone footage courtesy of the Greater Jackson Alliance
- ❖ Prepare budget for fourth phase of website development – The current website is not user friendly and is cumbersome to update information, add photos or video, and upload documents For efficiency purposes staff need to be able to update pages in a timely manner, so other tasks can be tended to.

### *Strategic Action Item #2 Print Media*

- ❖ Engage with national economic development magazines to showcase Hinds County
  - ◆ Utilize our partnership with the Greater Jackson Alliance to create advertisements
- ❖ Build Signage or Rent Billboards to inform the public about the available sites and buildings
- ❖ Upgrade flyers or other print media to leave with industries

### *Strategic Action Item #3 Social Media*

- ❖ Create simplistic content to share about the industrial parks, available sites, and buildings on any and all social media websites
  - ◆ Through a targeted marketing campaign, promote the AeroTech Park to aerospace and aviation services companies.

# **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

## **2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ❖ Utilize partnership with Greater Jackson Alliance to post area drone footage and other enticing images to gets looks and likes from social media

### **OBJECTIVE B: MARKETING FOR RETENTION / PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Keeping interested parties informed of the Authority’s activities is essential. Many different organizations are involved in and/or have a vested interest in the development of the local economy. Communicating with these organizations on a consistent basis will assist in maintaining support for the Authority’s activities. Communication will also keep the Authority abreast of other organizations’ activities so that the Authority does not duplicate the efforts of those organizations.

- ❖ Develop and continuously update a media contact list
- ❖ Create relevant economic development content to be published in local newspapers – monthly?
  - ◆ Enlist the support the Clarion Ledger in providing information about the newsletter or actually posting it directly to its website. In many cases, viewing of the “hometown newspaper” is the sole source for information about Hinds County and Jackson for former residents.
- ❖ Engage with radio and TV media outlets to re-assert HCEDA position as the premier economic development agency within Hinds County for Hinds County
- ❖ Develop e-newsletter and send out flash alerts on economic development happenings quarterly?
- ❖ Develop an economic report and activity report that will be delivered monthly to Board of Trustees and County Board of Supervisors and Mayors?
  - ◆ Data to be reported
    - Hinds Employment Data
    - Regional Employment Data
    - Primary Business Recruitment Data
    - Expansion/Retention Data
    - Workforce Development Data
    - Wage Data
- ❖ Raise awareness of economic development issues and build support among Hinds County’s leadership and citizenry.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Establish an annual Economic Summit to keep local and regional leaders and citizens informed of economic opportunities and challenges in the area. The summit should include information regarding economic trends and business climate issues (e.g., taxation, initiatives, business announcements, etc.).
  - Partner with GJP to sponsor recognition for individuals or organizations that have had the most significant impact on Hinds County over the past year.
- ◆ Meet regularly with key leaders and decision makers to provide opportunities for private discussions and input on Hinds County’s business climate issues.
- ❖ Periodically host luncheons that showcase specific assets, such as available land and buildings or new projects. Local and regional developers, site consultants and industrial and commercial brokers should be invited to attend. In addition, luncheons centered around a specific target industry should include potential prospects.

### ***GOAL TWO: SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (ED ATTRACTION) AND RETENTION/EXPANSION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES***

#### **OBJECTIVE A: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

The Hinds County Economic Development Authority seeks to expand the local economy through the creation of primary jobs, those jobs that create additional indirect jobs as a result of their presence in a community, through the recruitment of new companies to the county and the expansion of existing companies in the county.

This is a time-proven economic development strategy and is the backbone of several thousand economic development agencies throughout the world. Due to their impact on local and regional economies, the creation of primary jobs through recruitment or expansion has become ultra-competitive with millions of dollars expended annually in attempts by communities to attract these jobs. HCEDA must get back to basics of strengthening relationships with each industry and business throughout the entire county. HCEDA must also be on accord with stakeholders such as MDA, Hinds Community College, and other partners that will spur economic growth.

#### *Strategic Action Item #1 Implementation of a robust business, retention, and expansion program (BR&E)*

- ❖ Meet with existing businesses, aka conduct “Industry Check-Ups”

## HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK

- ◆ Coordinate program with Greater Jackson Alliance’s existing business program and Mississippi Development Authority’s program to prevent duplication of efforts and to prevent confusion among existing businesses.
- ◆ Maintain a database/inventory of existing business to 1) ensure an understanding of types of businesses in the community and 2) keep tabs on expansions and layoffs.
- ◆ Call on existing employers in the county on a periodic basis to 1) achieve a better understanding of their ongoing challenges/issues (red flags) 2) to uncover potential opportunities and gather information for local expansions.
  - Visit 40 existing businesses in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (one per week)
  - During onsite visits, educate existing businesses about the Authority’s website and the types of information and assistance that are and will be available to existing companies to help them grow.
- ◆ Act as a liaison between area workforce development providers and local businesses to ensure their awareness of area resources and communicate the needs of Hinds County employers to workforce development providers. Implement workforce Nexus.
- ◆ Work with area taxing jurisdictions to establish formal incentives policies targeted toward local businesses, as well as outside prospects.
- ◆ Make sure that local businesses and industries remain aware of any technical and financial assistance programs that are available.
- ◆ Establish and maintain connection with city economic development groups
  - City of Jackson’s Office of Business and Economic Development Services
  - City of Clinton Economic Development
- ◆ Work with other community business and economic development officials in the county (e.g., Clinton’s Economic Development Department) to update the county-wide inventory of existing businesses. Encourage officials in the smaller communities to keep HCEDA informed about notable local business activities or changes.

### *Strategic Action Item #2 Assist with permitting and infrastructure needs to support industrial, commercial, and residential needs*

- ❖ Encourage the City of Jackson to investigate a streamlined permitting process for desirable projects, including targeted industries.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Develop a baseline comparison of Jackson’s development review and permitting process with peer and competitor communities (e.g., Little Rock, Baton Rouge, Vicksburg, etc.). If no such baseline comparison already exists, then the City should begin tracking the review time for different categories of permitting (i.e., residential/commercial and infill/greenfield development). At the same time, the County should gather information from the benchmarks and begin comparing this data with Jackson’s.
  - ◆ Obtain Feedback - Once the data have been collected, the County and City should hold quarterly meetings with the development community to review the benchmark data to obtain their feedback. This qualitative information can often be more valuable than the comparative data in improving the development review and permitting process.
- 
- ❖ Re-ignite Entergy Certification Initiative for West Hinds industrial park (AeroTech Park)
    - ◆ Work with Entergy to finalize any remaining studies and/or collateral materials needed for Entergy to convey qualification.
- 
- ❖ Update new marketing packages for each of the industrial parks for use on the Authority’s website
    - ◆ Combine industrial parks and sites on one interactive map, so clients can click and view more details on the property
- 
- ❖ Continue the development and necessary upgrades to industrial parks in the county.
    - ◆ Wynndale – Needs an Alta Survey
    - ◆ Hinds County AeroTech Park
      - Continue to work closely with Waggoner/IMS in the development of the West Hinds Industrial Park master plan.
        - Discover masterplan and obtain update
      - Work closely with Hinds Community College and John Bell Williams Airport to ensure that all projected uses of the lands surrounding the airport are compatible with the park master plan.
      - Work with Hinds Community College to develop the necessary infrastructure to support the attraction of new businesses to the park.
      - Work with communities in the county to improve transportation access and signage
- 
- ❖ Continue supporting the construction of the Byram-Clinton Parkway and the development of the surrounding properties.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Continue to monitor parkway development by meeting with individuals and agencies responsible for its planning and construction.???
- ◆ Continue to update community regarding progress on the parkway.
- ◆ Work with the Hinds County Board of Supervisors, based on the recommendations of the Planning Commission, to establish county zoning regulations on the land adjacent to the parkway. The purpose of the zoning is to ensure the Byram-Clinton Corridor develops in accordance with the wishes of the county and its citizens.
  - Examine the existing Major Thoroughfares Commercial Authority (C-3) for appropriateness, as it allows such commercial uses as auto dealerships, hotels/motels, and mini-storage warehouses which may not be desirable along the parkway.
  - Work with the County to consider limiting business and commercial development along the frontage of the corridor to professional business and office parks.
  - Industrial and light industrial use along the corridor should be limited to the Hinds County AeroTech Park.
- ❖ Prepare for development along the Byram-Clinton Corridor
  - ◆ Work with Supervisors to zone properties along the Corridor for highest and best use.
- ❖ Assist smaller communities in the county to identify and apply for state, federal, and non-profit assistance.
  - ◆ Work with the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) to apply for and secure funding aid from the Mississippi Small Communities Community Development Block Grant Program. (<http://www.cmpdd.org/>)
  - ◆ Work with the CMPDD to pursue grant assistance from the Delta Regional Authority's (DRA) Federal Grant Program.
  - ◆ Pursue grant assistance from the Mississippi Development Authority's Small Municipalities Grant Program. This program provides local infrastructure grants (up to \$150,000) to communities with less than 10,000 residents.

### *Strategic Action Item #3 Work to Attract New Industries*

- ❖ Our strategic plan has identified the following targets as being the most viable new business investment opportunities for Hinds County: Distribution & Logistics, Health Services, Integrated

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

Building Systems, Business Services, Aviation, Automotive Suppliers, Alternative Energy Technologies, and Information Services.

- ◆ Site Selection Consultant forums
  - ◆ Information Services/Data Centers
  - ◆ Distribution/Logistics
  - ◆ Aviation
  - ◆ Health Care / Health Services
    - Establish healthcare industry cluster team?? (need to see if this exists) To develop this cluster, create a team made up of local healthcare leaders, government officials, educators, and technical experts to guide the implementation process. Once this implementation team is formed, its members will evaluate the following recommendations and set an implementation schedule:
      - Encourage local healthcare providers to collaborate and partner in healthcare education, workforce training, and talent attraction and recruitment efforts. Community-wide workforce development and training efforts have more credibility and leverage when all major healthcare interests are involved. It results in more workers entering healthcare fields and more staying in healthcare. It is an inefficient and counterproductive use of resources for local healthcare employers to compete with each other for a limited pool of workers.
      - Grow healthcare workforce locally. It is always more efficient and cost-effective to grow our own talent rather than importing it from the outside.
  - ◆ Automotive Suppliers/Manufacturers
  - ◆ Integrated Building Systems
  - ◆ Alternative energy technologies
- ❖ Leverage lead generation through tight integration with Greater Jackson Alliance (GJA)
- ◆ Work closely with the Greater Jackson Alliance to generate new leads and opportunities through participation in marketing trips and development of marketing plans and other lead generating activities.
    - Participate in Atlanta site selection consultant marketing event.
    - Participate in Chicago site selection consultant marketing event.
    - Participate in Greater Jackson Alliance consultant event at PGA tour event.
    - Participate in Greater Jackson Alliance event at baseball game in Dallas
- ❖ Leverage lead generation through participation in Mississippi Development Authority marketing events.



## HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK

- ◆ Develop and nurture relationships with Mississippi Development Authority project managers.
  - ◆ As funding permits, participate in mission trips, trade shows and recruiting trips to leverage access to clients that might not otherwise be available to a single county or region.
- ❖ Leverage lead generation through participation in Entergy Mississippi marketing events.
- ◆ Work closely with Entergy Mississippi project managers and participate in Entergy recruiting trips as funding allows.
- ❖ Maintain contact with local allies and political entities necessary for new business development assistance.
- ◆ Continue to foster excellent working relationship with Hinds County Board of Supervisors in the development of the Authority's budget, finalizing master plans and site planning for the county's industrial parks and implementation of the county's strategic plan.
  - ◆ Continue development of relationships with utilities, city halls, engineers, etc.
  - ◆ Continue educating allies on the assistance we are going to need from them to keep our new web portal updated.
- ❖ Strengthen relationships with regional developers, brokers, and site selectors. Forging relationships with these groups can help the HCEDA stay abreast of local private development efforts and possibly tap into new networks of businesses.
- ◆ Database. Update and maintain a database of developers, brokers, and site consultants.
  - ◆ Information. Continue to maintain and update information typically of interest to commercial and industrial developers on the HCEDA website.
  - ◆ Visitation Program. Call on site consultants in major metropolitan areas (e.g., Dallas, Atlanta, and Houston). A formal program of visits (i.e., quarterly) is most effective; however, resources may limit this action to visits made in conjunction with the Greater Jackson Alliance or attendance at trade shows or other events.
  - ◆ Marketing Assistance. Offer assistance to aggressively market developers' and land owners' properties and buildings to future tenants.

### *Strategic Action Item #4 Work with CMPDD and county cities to develop and implement a county-wide comprehensive plan*

- ❖ Commission a comprehensive county-wide economic development and land-use plan.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Encourage Hinds County to engage a team of professional consultants to assist it in the development of a comprehensive county-wide plan. The plan should include an analysis of the County’s structural and organizational capacity, planning and zoning guidelines, as well as economic development tools and incentives. The plan should also detail how the County can guide and influence future residential, commercial, healthcare, recreation, tourism, and industrial development.

### *Strategic Action Item #5 Promote entrepreneurship and retail development in the county*

- ❖ Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center?? to foster the growth of new high-growth businesses in Hinds County Work with MDA and City of Jackson as a referral network
  - ◆ Encourage and support the establishment of a new Entrepreneurship Center at the Eagle Ridge Conference Center. The center should be considered an expansion of services offered by the existing Small Business Development Center and International Trade Center at Hinds Community College.
- ❖ Actively promote entrepreneurship in the community by lowering barriers of entry and raising awareness of successful entrepreneurs.
  - ◆ Consider structuring an incentives tool specifically targeted towards entrepreneurs.
  - ◆ Organize an annual business plan contest to identify promising entrepreneurial ventures in the community. Reward the contest winner a grant to help defray start-up costs.
- ❖ Celebrate and support entrepreneurship in region.
  - ◆ Utilizing a public relations campaign, profile area entrepreneurs (“success stories”) – current and past – and inform residents of entrepreneurial activity and initiatives. This will help foster an entrepreneurial spirit and a community that values entrepreneurship.

### ***GOAL THREE: DEVELOP, RETAIN, AND ATTRACT TALENT***

#### **OBJECTIVE A: WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Workforce availability is now the predominant site selection criterion for most industries. Having a CWDP on staff gives HCEDA competitive advantage, ahead of other local economic development organizations. The continued development of our existing workforce and the development of our future work force are critical to the long term viability of our economy. We simply will not be competitive without a well-educated, highly skilled workforce.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

With innovations in technology continuing to be incorporated into the workplace, it is imperative that we continue to provide skills enhancing opportunities for our citizens.

Additionally, as the number of available job positions outstrips the number of available workers, assistance for employers in the identification and recruitment of prepared employees will be a necessity

### *Strategic Action Item #1 Strengthen and Leverage existing educational and workforce training assets*

- ❖ Establish a Workforce Development Task Force – Workforce Nexus is in progress
  - ◆ HCEDA CWDP is the chair has taken the lead in assembling a task force composed of business, education, training, government, and economic development leaders within Hinds County.
  - ◆ Once the panel is assembled, schedule in advance an agenda for meetings, the scope of work to be undertaken, specific tasks, and expected deliverables.
  - ◆ The task force may consider forming sub-committees to study and report on specific issues.
  
- ❖ Fully leverage Hinds County’s higher education assets.
  - ◆ Work with post-secondary educational institutions, major employers, and regional economic development organizations in the Jackson metropolitan area to establish a higher education alliance. The purpose of the alliance is to provide a forum for academic and business interests to collectively and collaboratively address regional economic development challenges.
  
  - ◆ Host a meeting of the area’s post-secondary institutions to discuss and establish a coordinated marketing message highlighting the region’s higher education assets.
  
- ❖ Continue to support and promote excellence in the public schools.
  - ◆ Develop more business/school partnerships, focused on providing resources for student performance (e.g., free laptops for top five percent of high school graduates) and participating in career fairs/days. – See is GJPChamber can help with this?
  
- ❖ Align economic development and county education programs: K-12, vocational, and post-secondary. – Staff is checking on the progress of Alignment Jackson

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Work with regional higher education institutions and area school districts to align vocational education and professional certification programs with HCEDA industry cluster development efforts. -
- ◆ Establish internship/apprenticeship programs to aid in the transfer of vocational students to entry-level positions among existing industrial employers and/or targeted industries.
- ◆ Enhance and expand partnerships between area school districts and local higher education institutions, including programs such as developing institutes geared towards gaining vocational education and experience in specific target industries.
- ❖ Participate with other Greater Jackson Alliance member counties in the updating of a labor study of the Greater Jackson Alliance labor shed (13 counties).

### *Strategic Action Item #2 Engage former residents and retain current residents of Hinds County*

- ❖ Develop one page on the website dedicated to informing former and current residents about job opportunities and economic development within Hinds County
  - ◆ Determine components of program
    - Job Postings
    - Calendar of Events
    - News
    - Investment Opportunities
    - Planning Initiatives
- ❖ Develop an awareness campaign to educate young people on the positive aspects of technical positions and demonstrate to them that these are not the dirty jobs that they are sometimes portrayed to be.
- ❖ Develop a cost-of-living index with areas that are attracting our talent that shows how much more a person has to earn in those areas compared to the Jackson metropolitan area.
- ❖ Use quality of life factors across our labor shed to hold and retain talent in the area.

### *Strategic Action Item #3 Strengthen and align Hinds Community College's training assets/budgets with our economic development targeted industries and existing business base*

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ❖ Conduct discussions with Hinds Community College regarding development and funding of after-hours training opportunities for individuals that have fulltime jobs and are seeking opportunities to improve their skills.
- ❖ Conduct discussions with Hinds Community College regarding the skills that students will need to transition into the evolving service economy and redirect dollars from programs that are outdated to new programs that address skills development for future jobs.
- ❖ In conjunction with area legislators, lobby for funding for community colleges to implement new technical training programs.

### ***GOAL FOUR: PROMOTE AND ENHANCE QUALITY OF PLACE***

Increasingly, companies rely on the skills and talent of their workforce to retain or gain a competitive advantage. Only recently have employers discovered that one way to tap into talented workers is by locating operations in communities with a strong sense of place. This is because communities offering a multitude of amenities are the ones attracting many of today's skilled and talented workers. The wide availability of choices in housing, entertainment, culture, recreation, retail, and employment will retain and attract residents.

### **OBJECTIVE A: SUPPORT HINDS COUNTY REVITALIZATION, REDEVELOPMENT, AND REBRANDING**

#### *Strategic Action Item #1*

- ❖ Support ongoing revitalization and redevelopment efforts.
  - ◆ Promote downtown Jackson as a destination for residential development and specialty retail.
  - ◆ Highlight the downtown presence of major employers to demonstrate Jackson's importance as an employment destination with strong traffic generation capacity.
  - ◆ Work with Downtown Jackson Partners and other area economic development organizations to recruit new businesses to the downtown.
- ❖ Work with Downtown Partners, Inc. (DJP) to market downtown buildings to possible users of available space.
  - ◆ Encourage owners of buildings to do 3-D virtual tours of their properties for use on our website.

## HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK

- ◆ Continue to market downtown office buildings.
- ❖ Support development of downtown retail businesses, condos and apartments.
  - ◆ Analyze projects and make recommendations to Board of Supervisors regarding tax increment financing requests.
- ❖ Support downtown retailers with county's new geographical information system.
  - ◆ Aid business owners in analyzing their trade area to assist them in focusing in on their customer base resulting in more efficient use of their marketing dollars.

### *Strategic Action Item #2 Leverage existing natural, cultural, historical, and recreational assets in Hinds County to promote tourism*

- ❖ Support and promote heritage tourism efforts in Hinds County.
  - ◆ Within the HCEDA website, provide links to the websites of organizations promoting historical tourism in the county (e.g., Friends of Raymond).
  - ◆ Improve tourism signage in the county.
- ❖ Support the expansion and promotion of outdoor recreation options available in Hinds County.
  - ◆ Promote the county's tourism amenities, including entertainment, the arts, outdoor recreation, museums, and festivals, in all marketing materials for Hinds County.
  - ◆ Help area tourism development organizations to identify and explore funding assistance options with area taxing entities, state and federal agencies, and area non-profits.
  - ◆ Meet with communities in the surrounding area to understand the competitive environment for meeting regional recreation & entertainment demands. Support the Southwest Mississippi Area Recreational Trail Committee (SMaRT). SMaRT is working with all communities in the region to improve recreation opportunities. More information on SMaRT below.
  - ◆ Continue working with the Natchez Trace Compact and the U.S. Park Service to promote the Natchez Trace Parkway as a featured destination for motorists, hikers, and bikers.
  - ◆ Consider engaging with a tourism promotions consultant for assistance in packaging Hinds County's assets.
- ❖ Support the expansion of existing local beautification programs to include all of Hinds County. Currently, Hinds County is served by Keep America Beautiful affiliates in Jackson and in Clinton.

## **HINDS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2022 PROGRAM OF WORK**

- ◆ Approach the existing Jackson and Clinton organizations about expanding their activities to include the entire county. Focus areas for the organization should include advocacy for litter prevention, recycling, graffiti prevention, and beautification and community improvement (i.e., neighborhood clean-up programs and community-oriented planning).

### *Strategic Action Item #3 Work with GJP to implement and sustain a local positive image campaign*

- ❖ Publicize positive stories about Hinds County and Jackson to local media outlets and the region.
  - ◆ An important task for the public relations should be to work with local chambers of commerce and other similar organizations to develop and communicate a consistent set of positive talking points about Hinds County.
  - ◆ Meet regularly with local groups to learn about local positive events and stories in Hinds County.
  - ◆ Provide public relations expertise and training to community and city officials in the County.
- ❖ Develop and implement an internal marketing effort designed to promote a positive image of Hinds County and Jackson within the region and build awareness regarding current economic and community development initiatives. This effort should promote a positive image not only to Hinds County residents, but those living throughout the wider Jackson metropolitan region. Some cost-effective initiatives to market the region internally include:
  - ◆ Assist GJP? Developing a single community-wide “calendar of events” on the Hinds County website that allows cities and community organizations to manually update their events on the calendar and display it on their own websites.
  - ◆ Regional partners (e.g., Hinds County, City of Jackson, Downtown Jackson Partners, Greater Jackson Alliance and Clinton Chamber of Commerce) should work with the local media, including both print and broadcast media, to promote positive stories about the county. For example, highlighting local business achievements can help create a positive image of the community.
    - Develop a “speakers’ bureau” of professionals who are available to speak at community meetings and promote local initiatives.