



Strategic Planning Session Notes

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Hinds County EDA Strategic Planning Session

VisionFirst Advisors was engaged by the Hinds County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) staff to review current activities, facilitate a discussion on strategic direction and provide marketing support. This report provides a summary of items discussed and recommendations to incorporate into the HCEDA's strategic plans.

What would we like to accomplish today?

- Grounding – Where should the team focus its efforts
- Better understand who we are and where we want to be
- How best to use resources
- What is HCEDA's role in workforce development
- Where is HCEDA's role in advocating for resources
- Focus on staff development to become more effective – training resources
- Board member roles
- Clear Path – Tracking – Communications
- Transparency vs. Confidentiality
- Benchmarking – Measures
- Why? Why do we do certain things and not do other things?
- Strategic vs. Tactical
- What type of workforce are we trying to develop?

Structure

Vision & Mission Clarity

Current Vision Statement:

“Hinds County will serve 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.”



62 Miles



33,000 Feet



12,000 Feet



Ground Level

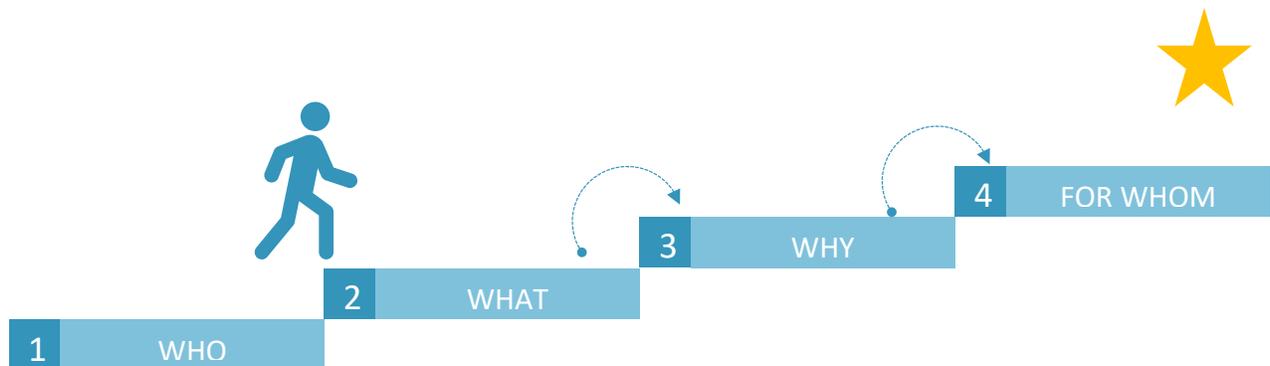
The key to economic development success is being able to articulate a shared vision for the organization then building mission, goals and tactics around it. It becomes the north star, like a view of the world from space, and all collaboration should lead to accomplishing that shared vision. In this exercise VisionFirst consistently heard the word “**opportunity.**” The idea that HCEDA creates opportunity is a clear vision around which one can build a coherent mission, strategies and tactics.

Core vision as discussed by attendees: *Hinds County EDA Creates Opportunity*

Based on the feedback from the two sessions the following example of a mission statement has been drafted:

“The Hinds County Economic Development Authority accelerates opportunity as the lead economic development entity for the county by directing resources leading to increased payroll and private capital investment in Hinds County”

To arrive at a clear mission, an organization must answer these four basic questions: who you are, what you do, why you do it and for whom?



The 4 Ws

Who?

- County's economic development entity
- Eyes and ears of economic development in the county
- Quasi-public body
- Lead economic development entity
- Providers of insight to businesses and site consultants
- Communicators
- Leaders
- Connectors to the Board of Supervisors
- Visionaries
- Shared responsibility – vision for the county
- Intellectual capital focused towards improving the county

What?

- Truth-tellers
- Responsible for responding to RFIs and RFQs
- Recruit, expand, retain
- Market the county
- Recommending body for incentives – financial, tax abatements, etc.
- Function ancillary to the county
- Develop economic development product
- Facilitator/influencer of workforce development – communicates industry needs
- Advocates
- Removes politics from the process
- Determines ROI/both financial and social

Why?

- Because we care
- Want the county to soar
- We create opportunity (new jobs; expand tax base)
- Removes some of the politics from the process
- Better customer experience
- Better quality of living
 - Access to housing
 - Income; jobs
 - Increase in annual wage
- Bringing in better jobs – allow students to find jobs at home
- Stable talent base
- Economic opportunity that impacts discretionary income; schools
- Getting more diverse groups of people involved

For Whom?

- Businesses
- Citizens and families of Hinds county
- The County
- The Region (but efforts are focused on Hinds county)

** Should be noted that these are core to future strategy*

Situation Analysis

What is Working in Hinds County?

- National Career Readiness Certification
- Higher education
- Infill Development
- Industrial Parks
- Collaboration with allied and team
- Relationship with Supervisors
- Economic advantages of Continental project
- Workforce skill sets
- Economic Incentives
- Stable employment base
- Respect from Constituencies
- HCEDA Team (Asset / stability)

What can be done to leverage all that is working?

ACT Workkeys National Career Readiness Certification

- HCEDA is the service delivery partner for ACT Workers NCRC
- Stable employment base
- Respect from Constituencies

HCEDA Team (Asset / stability)

- “One Stop Training Center”
- Market results to business

Industrial Park

- Marketing
- Product – Need ready sites and possibly a speculative building

What is Not Working in Hinds County?

- Budget
- Product
- Education
- Workforce
- Legislature (occasionally)
- Infrastructure
- Reputation
- Marketing
- MDA
- Local Government
- Crime
- Behind other counties
- Image / perception in Hinds County
- School System
- Bridges / Pot Holes
- Available Resources

What can be done to address that which is not working?

- Infrastructure - Develop a plan with resources and timeline
- Reputation / Marketing – Launch and ongoing marketing & communications program

Barriers & Risks

While it is not in HCEDA's purview to solve perceived problems such as the state flag issue, the team can recognize and appropriately use its influence and voice to remove barriers and mitigate risks to economic development and growth in the county.

Barriers

- Hinds County EDA Budget
- Education in the Hinds County area
- Politics [Locals working with the State]
- Image - The state flag for example
- Housing Stock
- Not working together



What can be done to address these barriers?

- Leadership to address political divide
- Remove silos – bring the team and extended team together periodically the encourage everyone to work together. “Working together works.”

Risks

- Reputational Risks – State flag, “Religious freedom” legislation
- Continuity – Leadership, staff changes
- Quantity / quality of the workforce – such as the ability to pass a drug test
- Infrastructure
- Crime – especially in certain areas
- Public Schools

What can be done to address these risks?

- Reputation – testimonies of business people who can point to their success in Hinds County
- NCRC Programs
- Sell regional Workforce



Community Visioning Exercise

How do you see Hinds County today?

- Place of opportunity (open for business)
- Hasn't tapped full potential
- Image problem
- Poor Infrastructure
- Supportive leadership (Board of Supervisors)
- Disjointed cooperation
- Crime
- Need improvement in education
- Potential for improved workforce
- Lack of buildings and sites



How do you see Hinds county in the future? (What could it be)?

- Equity (jobs, food, housing)
- Inclusiveness
- Cohesiveness
- Strongest Educational System in the state (and national / international recognition)
- Transparency & Communication (a must!)
- Morale
- Visionary Thinking
- Economic Pipeline (Waiting list)
- Greatest promoter of Hinds County
- Financial Stability (tax base)



Successful Economic Development Practices



Prepare in Advance



Metrics



Programs, Products, Services



Tell Their Story



Crawl, Walk, Run



Resources, \$\$

Business Development (Assets on Which to Build)

- Existing business and industry
- Packaging your labor pool to match talent to sector
- Capitalizing on being the capital city of Mississippi
- Universities and colleges (New industry person hired specifically to address workforce programs)
- Excess capacity in water and sewer (The City is easy to work with on this asset)
- Comprehensive plan and zoning
- Central location could be an asset for automotive in terms of ‘Half-NAFTA’ on Hinds County
- Airport
- Permitting is easy (Continental is a good example)
- Entergy Qualified Site program

Building Product

- Looking at all product:
 - Sites
 - Spec building
 - Workforce
- Need resources, i.e. dollars
- Consensus building around what’s really needed
- Professional project manager needed to construct a spec building

Stakeholders

Collaboration Space – Others in the Economic Development Process.

- Chambers of Commerce
- Greater Jackson Alliance
- MCEDA spill over
- Central Mississippi PDD
- Others identified by common need or objectives



Strategies and Tactics

1. Actions to Take Internally to Strengthen and Engage the Team

- Team Building
- Regular Team Meetings!
- Celebrate Wins
- Involve Board members
- Communicate to the Board of Supervisors

2. Strengthen Board Involvement

- Develop a Board Member Orientation
- Set aside time in each Board Meeting to discuss strategic issues and opportunities

3. External Strategies to Improve Competitiveness

- Invite educators / workforce leaders to have a discussion with the board
- Get the voice of the customer – Existing Industry – about the workforce needs of the future
- Make presentations at local schools

4. Strengthen Product

- Lack of sites for industrial/distribution projects limits Hinds County's success
- Numerous available buildings are in Hinds County, but few are in a condition of occupancy with minimal refurbishing
- Add more “shovel ready” sites to the inventory
- Explore feasibility of a spec building

5. Implement an Ongoing Marketing & Communications Program

Two-Pronged Marketing approach to reach:

INTERNAL AUDIENCES	EXTERNAL AUDIENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citizens• Supervisors• Elected Officials• Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Decision Makers• Site Consultants• Existing Industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the Hinds County Story!• Continually message the vision of creating opportunity• Social Media program to better communicate timely messaging [LinkedIn, Twitter]• Talking Points to start communicating:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tax revenues invested into school system○ \$2.25 Billion in projects!• Recapture the Continental celebration for HCEDA	



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