



## SOUTH SHORE 2030: CHOOSING OUR FUTURE

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## THE SOUTH SHORE STORY

The South Shore of Massachusetts is in the enviable position as a choice location to live and do business. But it risks becoming less desirable and less competitive, missing out on some unique opportunities to become a stronger and more diverse regional economy.

The region has tremendous strength due to its mix of unique communities, strong quality of life, top schools, well run municipal governments, accessibility to employment and recreation centers, historic and new-build commercial centers, great natural resources with open space, coastal shoreline, rivers, ponds and a host of other highly favorable assets. While it would be tempting to fall back on these advantages and assume they will continue to drive the region's appeal into the foreseeable future, this would be a risky proposition.

Data reveals some early warning signs that regional trends are no longer pointing towards sustainable growth and success. Creating a climate that supports new growth, stronger job creation and public/private collaboration on community development are essential to preserving the high quality of life on the South Shore.

Times change, however, and proximity to higher paying jobs and vibrant neighborhoods has elevated Boston, like many other urban areas, as a preferred choice of residency. People, particularly younger professionals, are moving away from communities with long commutes to good jobs or ones that offer few amenities beyond quaint but quiet town centers. Lifestyle choices have turned economic development strategies on their head, with younger people now more prone to choose jobs closer to where they want to live than trying to live close to where they want to work. This rebirth of urban areas, the South Shore's aging demographics, and other factors threaten the region's economic future. In turn, that will threaten the ability of local communities to maintain the services that enhance the area's quality of life.

The analysis of the region shows that its economic base is too internally focused and "local serving," meaning too much wealth is simply recirculating the same dollars. There are not enough new dollars coming into the region to spark job growth and create a broader economic base. Even worse, the local employment and job opportunities are in sectors that are seeing some contraction nationally, especially retail and financial services.

South Shore communities are strong and most local governments are well run with professional staff and capable elected officials. However, they are restricted in how far they can go in planning for the future and sustaining their levels of service.

The formula for sustaining and even enhancing the South Shore's high quality of life is relatively simple. Business growth and job creation are the essential goal. But the key to building a stronger economic environment involves attracting more people – especially younger people – to the area, diversifying the existing economic base, working with local officials to enhance community development, and creating the infrastructure needed to support new residential and commercial growth. The region is fortunate in already having some important pieces in place for this strategy but must capitalize on them.

Restoration of mass transit and rail service to the region, long championed by the South Shore Chamber, has led to incredible opportunities for exciting transit oriented developments (TODs) that are widely dispersed in the region and have the potential to transform the South Shore. TODs leverage mass transit access through development of housing, lifestyle activities, retail shops, restaurants, recreation and, sometimes, commercial space. Use types can either be all inclusive to a project or supplement existing nearby assets with additional uses.

While TODs are often thought of as being in urban centers, many are now being created outside urban cores along transit lines. Exciting new projects are being developed in suburbs across metropolitan Boston as transit stations are leveraged for a more intensive and walkable brand of development. Commenting on this trend, a Boston-area property manager noted, "The number-one challenge for many companies is how to attract talent... Companies need to attract talent and this is one way to do it. I think we're going to see more of this in Massachusetts."

It is time for the South Shore to more aggressively capitalize on the tremendous opportunities it has for these types of projects or risk that investment will eventually pass it by in favor of more established transit-oriented markets. And, indeed, communities across the South Shore have prime opportunities – many of them already announced – to capitalize on proximity to rail transit stations for new types of mixed-use activity centers. Four of these sites are pictured below as examples.



**Quincy Center**

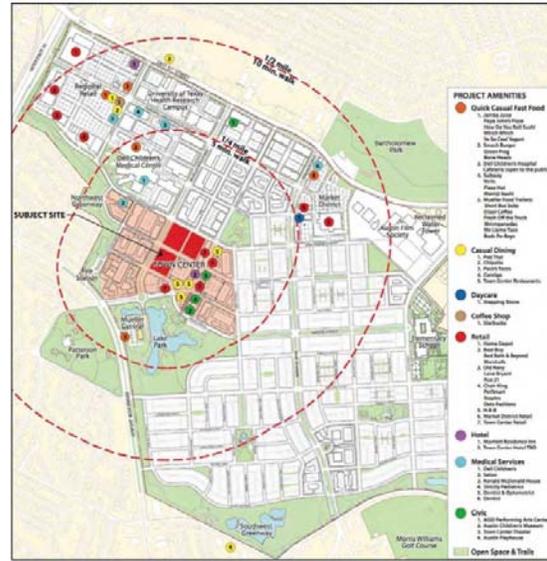


**The Landing**



**Cordage Park, Plymouth**

In SouthField – the 1,400-acre redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station – the South Shore features the most dynamic multi-acre, contiguous, transit-connected, development-ready site in all of greater Boston. With momentum for the project building, SouthField could single-handedly serve as the catalyst for a wave of new follow-on development, not only in the districts immediately adjacent to it, but more distant South Shore towns as well. Just as importantly, SouthField can change both internal and external perceptions of the South Shore as either a collection of commuter suburbs or a pass-through on the drive to the Cape.



SouthField

As more interest is generated for the South Shore as a locus for multiple types of development, additional properties in the region will come onto the radar of Massachusetts and out-of-state investors. This is especially true because of the continuing strength of the

Boston region as a hub of innovation and job-creation, and increasingly prohibitive property values, home prices, and commercial leasing rates in the City of Boston proper and close-in communities like Cambridge and Somerville.



A few of the most prominent transit-oriented development sites in the South Shore are pictured in the image to the left. This map shows not only the geographic breadth of these sites and properties in an impact radius of five miles, but also puts these opportunities into greater context in terms of their effect on the rest of the South Shore's diverse town environments. Focusing on the largest sites as the priority locations to enhance regional competitiveness to appeal to top talent and knowledge-based companies does not compromise the South Shore's established benefits as a more traditional suburban location for individuals, couples, families, and local-serving industry. Towns along the coast and inland communities without direct transit access will certainly benefit from a being in a more robust region. These developments,

while significant by themselves, are also catalysts to more growth throughout the region. However, this can only take place with substantial improvements to the area's infrastructure. The South Shore has long struggled with a "single road" problem of one dominant route in and out of the region. Mass transit provides some option but ensuring a reliable and efficient system has become a new imperative for the South Shore. Added to this are needs to improve east-west connections, identify solutions to localized water/sewer issues, enhance IT capacity, marine infrastructure, and, potentially, energy supplies.

Complementing the South Shore's transit-oriented opportunities are other strong assets, including a dynamic workforce and entrepreneurial base. Skilled professionals, growing tired of the long commute, are leaving Boston but choosing to remain in the community to change careers or start their own businesses. This provides exciting opportunities for business start-ups and new business creation as well as offering a strong workforce ready to meet the needs of new companies that come to the area.

While the economic development opportunities in the South Shore are compelling, the region will not achieve its preferred future without a concerted and coordinated strategic effort that positively impacts a host of priority competitiveness areas. It is not enough to have strong transportation and transit access and dynamic development sites. The South Shore must also foster friendlier business climates, improved mobility, enhanced entrepreneurial capacity, more diverse quality of life amenities, greater support for existing companies, and better awareness from and relationships with investors who can bring high-paying export-based jobs to the region. As seen in the following graphic, South Shore 2030: Choosing Our Future and its effective implementation will bring stakeholders together in new ways and provide valuable support to local officials looking to enhance their capacity to accommodate future growth. By leveraging public and private officials, business people, practitioners, and residents in dynamic work teams focused on the South Shore's priority strategic areas, the region can best capitalize on its most compelling development opportunities, improve its economic diversity, and ensure its workforce is sustainable for existing and future employers.



It will be necessary to remain steadfast in the South Shore's mission because of added challenges the region faces due to external perceptions. Outside of the South Shore, many state and federal officials will give low priority to helping reasonably well-off suburban communities. They will assume the suburbs have the ability to take care of themselves in ways urban areas do not have. In relative comparison to other communities it is frankly hard to fault some of that bias and those policy choices. It simply forces civic and community leaders to be more creative and aggressive in helping the South Shore thrive.

Historical perceptions of community and economic development are also a challenge in the Northeast where so much is done through the lens of individual small communities. Economic growth is more successful when there is some connection between local action and regional economic conditions. This applies to the South Shore as well; its economic growth or contraction is directly tied to the continued success of Boston and its immediate neighbors. So, while much of the 2030 strategy is aimed at building the South Shore economy, the region must also be seen as supporting Boston's continued growth, especially as it relates to housing and mass transit.

A third perception problem may occur with policy makers and interest groups over a false choice in development options. There is a strong bias in many minds towards "re-urbanization" and "smart-growth" being optimal goals and largely restricted to cities. There is room for a suburban smart-growth concept where quality of life is enhanced by greater accessibility to work by foot or mass transit but also by reducing "car time" because employment is located closer to home. Vibrant centers of activity do not have to be restricted just to urban core areas; they can be created in smaller districts with quiet neighborhoods nearby.

Finally, the greatest perception problems challenging the South Shore's attempts to build a stronger future will be its own. The belief that the South Shore as a region is unable to directly and positively impact its future, that "somebody else will do it," is debilitating and untrue. Local civic and community leaders do have the ability to advance an agenda for positive change. Indeed, if the South Shore doesn't do this itself, nobody else will. However, achieving progressive regional change will not happen because of the efforts of just one or even a handful of organizations and leaders. It takes an engaged and collaborative network of partners focused on a strategic vision and willing to do the hard work necessary to create communities their children and their children's children will live and work in for generations to come. Implementation of South Shore 2030 will take some stakeholders out of their comfort zones, but that is necessary if the region is to become more competitive in the metro Boston market and realize its full potential.

South Shore 2030 does not stand alone as a singular strategy. It is built around the perspective that business growth and job creation are critical components of strong communities and a high quality of life for all residents. It is designed to complement the strategies of other officials and groups in the South Shore working to achieve similar outcomes using different approaches and tactics. The South Shore Chamber of Commerce welcomes all of these approaches and hopes to support them where they intersect with its long-term strategy and implementation activities.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South Shore 2030 plan is a comprehensive strategy to promote economic growth, job creation and stronger communities. It represents a multi-year blueprint for better diversifying the regional economy and raising the quality of life for all residents of the South Shore. The strategy leveraged comprehensive research to identify and advance a handful of key initiatives to enable the South Shore to compete more effectively for the most sought-after jobs and talent in today's economy. Even as its economy is elevated, the region's diversity of towns will continue to be a major strength and drawing card for existing and future residents and businesses.

## Research: What We Know

### THE SOUTH SHORE IS A DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE WITH A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, BUT IT FACES CHALLENGES

- Aging demographics with a lack of replacement workers for older employees nearing retirement
- Strong employment base in industries that are consolidating and shedding jobs
- Local economy based heavily on residential service and consumer needs
- Transportation capacity, mobility, and long commutes are a major problem

### LACK OF PLANNED ACTION COULD LEAD TO A DECLINING REGION AND A LESS DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE OR WORK

- Residential growth without economic growth can overwhelm municipal services and infrastructure
- Shrinking employment base in higher paying jobs could lead to a loss of skilled workforce or longer commutes
- Aging population could lead to shrinking workforce and reduced local services, which could make the region less attractive for younger people or businesses that need workers
- Higher concentration of service jobs focused on catering to an aging population threatens local economic stagnation
- Declining economic and jobs base threatens home values—a critical component of wealth

### TO PRESERVE WHAT WE HAVE, WE MUST CHANGE WHERE WE ARE HEADED

- Attract younger people, including more families

- Diversify our economic base
- Attend to connection between local services, “sense of place and community,” and economic growth
- Capitalize on proximity to Boston by building a stronger regional identity with more intra-regional economic activity and growth
- Acknowledge that families are a net plus for community strength and economic growth
- Foster economic strength through growth in a broad mix of industries

## Strategy: What We Will Do

### 1) ATTRACT A YOUNGER WORKFORCE AND BE MORE WELCOMING TO FAMILIES

The strategies for this goal include continued support of the major transit-oriented development already underway or planned such as: Downtown Quincy, Quincy/Adams, SouthField, Braintree, The Landing, Hingham Shipyard, and Cordage Park. Other strategies may include revised zoning and improved permitting to reduce the costs of housing in other areas and opening more transit improvements in some areas. Where we find willing local leaders supportive of economic growth we will work to collaborate on projects that build more vibrant activity and town centers.

### 2) STRENGTHEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION TO BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Strategies to strengthen collaboration include creating and executing a shared strategic plan between town officials and private sector leaders for community and economic development, building larger and more engaged business organizations at the local level, increasing the leadership quotient of local business leaders, creating a regional advocacy agenda, and taking inventory of and partnering with other public and private organizations pursuing projects that align with the regional strategy.

### 3) STRENGTHEN AND RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN KEY TARGET SECTORS

Expanding the economic base starts with promoting existing businesses that diversify that base. These may be broadly identified as businesses selling products or services sold primarily outside the region. Expanding the economic base will not only add jobs, but also attract more companies in similar sectors or “supply chain” companies that support those sectors.

#### 4) PROMOTE NEW BUSINESS START-UPS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE SOUTH SHORE

Strategies encouraging new business growth include facilitating options for capital access on the South Shore, supporting the preservation and growth of community banks, creating a “maker space” in the region for start-ups, and enhancing business education and mentoring programs.

#### 5) RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES TO THE REGION

Boston’s growth in workforce and the South Shore’s expected growth are favorable opportunities to attract business relocation. The South Shore must develop a marketing/branding campaign to promote the region for both commercial and residential re-location.

#### 6) IMPROVE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Continuing to focus on enhanced intra- and inter-regional mobility will sustain and increase growth in the region. Key strategies include identifying a new set of infrastructure priorities tied to regional economic development and local community development in addition to working with partners to advocate for priority projects.

## Implementation: How We Will Do It

- Positioning the South Shore Chamber and a new affiliated economic development corporation as coordinators of the region’s strategic implementation efforts
- Leveraging existing relationships and reaching out to new partners to build implementation teams around our key strategies
- Increasing our capacity to conduct critical research and support regional promotion
- Strengthening ties with the commonwealth’s economic development agency to better tell the South Shore’s story in greater Boston and across Massachusetts
- Establishing and tracking a set of critical performance measures to define strategic goals, assess implementation progress, and adjust strategies based on changing competitive challenges and opportunities

**“Communities on the South Shore need to work together to make the South Shore a better place to live.”**

**Public Input Respondent**

# SOUTH SHORE 2030

## Introduction

In order to strengthen the regional economy and support South Shore communities, the South Shore Chamber of Commerce initiated an inclusive strategic planning process to address the region's current and future strategic challenges, leverage its strengths, and capitalize on its opportunities. The process comes at a pivotal juncture for the South Shore. While the "South Shore" as a regional entity is relatively new, the growth and development patterns of its component city and towns have been established and woven into the fabric of these communities for centuries. As the South Shore region, led by the Chamber, now seeks to address trends that threaten its long-term viability as a destination to live and work, these individual city and towns must recognize and acknowledge the benefit of thinking differently about their future growth and development.

The process began with two critical research phases – the Competitive Assessment and the Target Business Analysis – which served to identify South Shore's key challenges and opportunities. This process was greatly assisted by the input of residents, workers, and businesses throughout the South Shore region as well as guidance from a diverse group of regional leaders. This Steering Committee also supported the development of the Regional Plan, providing invaluable feedback to develop and subsequently refine all phases of the process, including the 2030 strategy.

The 2030 strategy advances a handful of key initiatives to enable the South Shore to compete more effectively for the most sought-after jobs and talent in today's economy. While this will necessitate changes in many of the region's component towns, there is by no means a universal need to "reinvent" every South Shore community. In fact, the region's diversity of towns will continue to be a major strength and drawing card for existing and future residents and businesses. Achieving a more dynamic balance between traditional town environments and dense, urban, transit-oriented, and jobs-rich activity centers and corridors is a key goal of the strategic effort and informed many of its principal objectives and activities.

To be formalized at a later date, Implementation Dynamics will propose potential organizational and staffing structures for implementation, identify partners to help advance key tactics, and assess priority actions to engage in during the initial stages of implementation.

## Research Overview

The Competitive Assessment and Target Business Analysis comprised the research phases of the 2030 strategy. The Competitive Assessment examined South Shore as a place to live, work, and do business by evaluating the prism of what Market Street believes to be the three key aspects of a community: its people, their prosperity, and the quality of place. Combined with input from community residents and stakeholders, key narratives or themes regarding the community's strengths, challenges, weaknesses, and opportunities began to emerge. They are summarized in the next two subsections.

### COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

**Challenges** – Research from the Competitive Assessment identified a number of key obstacles to quality growth. These findings served as the basis for strategic development.

- **The region's largely suburban orientation and high housing costs negatively impact its competitive position to retain and attract skilled young-professional talent.** Data showed that the South Shore's labor force will experience significant shortages for key occupations if current trends are not reversed.
- **The South Shore's economy is disproportionately local-serving. As a consequence, significant wealth is not "imported" from outside of the region.** Creating and attracting more export-oriented jobs will require the South Shore to identify, prepare, develop, and market office, industrial, and mixed-use products more in line with current preferences.
- **The South Shore lacks competitive entrepreneurial-support and innovation capacity.** In contrast to many Greater Boston communities, the South Shore does not currently offer established business services, programmatic infrastructure, meeting and event spaces, or research activity to sustain a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- **The business climate in certain South Shore towns is not supportive of development that can sustain its talent base or diversify its economy.** Towns often favor maintaining the status quo over approving projects that could make the region more competitive in the marketplace for jobs and talent.
- **Traffic congestion and limited connectivity or frequency of transit service in many towns serve as physical constraints.** Many South Shore businesses and leaders also operate outside of Greater Boston's corporate, financial, institutional, and political networks. Such relationships could be leveraged to bring new talent into the region.
- **Perceptions of the South Shore in Greater Boston are incomplete.** External stakeholders and companies do not understand the full breadth of the South Shore's advantages and opportunities for talent, business, and investment.

**Opportunities** – The Competitive Assessment also identified a number of key opportunities ripe for strategic action and support.

- **The South Shore is a great place to live.** Leveraging and enhancing the region’s diversity of current housing and lifestyle options will enable even more people to take advantage of these assets.
- **Key “catalyst” project sites can be found across the region.** Positioning these developments as opportunities to diversify office, housing, and lifestyle products will broaden the region’s appeal to talent and companies.
- **Educational quality is a current strength of the South Shore.** Improving the coordination and cooperation between training providers and employers can better prepare the South Shore’s incumbent workforce for existing and future jobs.
- **The South Shore is located in one of the nation’s most economically dynamic and talent-rich metro areas.** More effectively tapping into Greater Boston opportunities and networks will bolster the South Shore’s export economy and establish a two-way talent flow with other metro communities.
- **A talented and enterprising workforce calls the South Shore home.** Laying the groundwork for a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem to leverage this talent and local sources of capital will create opportunities to launch, grow, and sustain fast-growing firms in the region.

## TARGET BUSINESS ANALYSIS

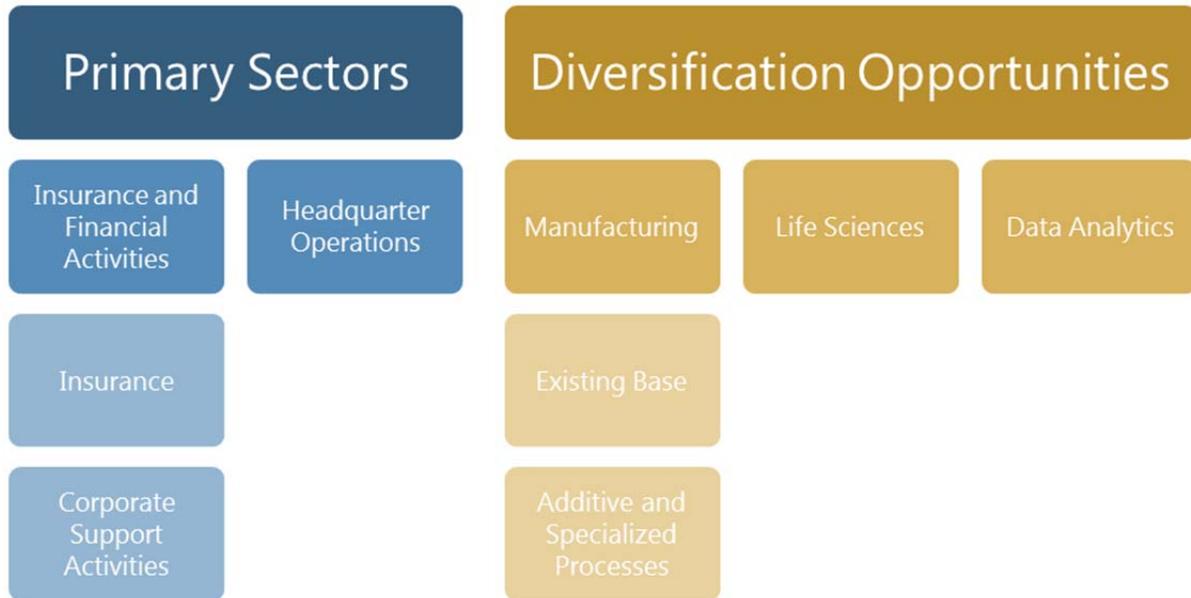
The Target Business Analysis identified the economic sectors that are best positioned to drive future growth and wealth creation, taking into account South Shore’s connection to the economic engine of Greater Boston. The Target Business Analysis also contained an in-depth assessment of the factors that may be inhibiting economic diversification.

Market Street identified five strategic economic development targets – two primary sectors and three diversification opportunities – that merit strategic targeting of economic, community, workforce, and business development resources within the South Shore.

“Primary sectors” represent business sectors that are concentrated in the South Shore and for which Greater Boston is highly competitive. They are some of the South Shore’s most important export-oriented sectors that bring in wealth from outside the community, and are significant providers of high-quality jobs. They exhibit strong near-term growth potential in the next five years, and currently benefit from an existing asset base from which companies derive some competitive advantage(s).

“Diversification opportunities” are those sectors that provide the South Shore with the best chances to diversify its economy beyond its established primary sectors and other non-export sectors such as health care and retail. The South Shore does not have the same competitive capacity in these categories as in its primary sectors, but each diversification opportunity is nevertheless viable based on key local conditions, access to Boston, or the South Shore’s attractiveness as a residential destination. Additionally, the manufacturing target encompasses a fairly large existing sector that faces numerous external threats that

require short-term strategic attention to help preserve the current employment base. Each high-value traded job preserved is essentially the equivalent of a job gained.



Target “**niches**” (lighter boxes above) are further differentiated as opportunities that share complimentary strategic concerns and competitive advantages such as talent, buyer/supplier networks, infrastructure, technologies, marketing messaging, and others, that warrant being considered under the same overarching target category.

## South Shore 2030

With a strong foundation established by the Competitive Assessment and the Target Business Analysis, the 2030 strategy serves as a blueprint for attaining the South Shore’s desired future.

The South Shore 2030 strategy is a comprehensive economic and community development plan for the region’s one city and 24 component towns. It represents a multi-year blueprint for better diversifying the regional economy with higher-value jobs and addressing critical potential workforce shortages in key existing and emerging industries. This vision of the South Shore as an attractive, affordable, geographically diverse live-work community with a self-sustaining economy and appeal to a range of age groups and lifestyles has led to the identification and confirmation of key strategic goal areas to help advance the work necessary to address challenges, capitalize on strengths, and ensure that economic and talent development are sustainable.

While there are many *potential* strategies that a community can pursue, the priorities identified for the South Shore came from the full breadth of research conducted for this process. Among potential strategies that other communities pursue that *were not* determined to be applicable to the South Shore are:

- A "broken windows" program to combat the perception and reality of crime;

- Build an airport and recruit a major "hub" airline;
- Develop a sports arena to house a potential major league franchise;
- Create an environmental and species protection plan;
- Implement comprehensive health and wellness programs;
- And many others.

The following goal areas and potential strategic tactics were informed by research, vetted, and confirmed by the project's Steering Committee.

**Ultimately, the full breadth of potential and final tactics to support implementation of the 2030 strategy goals will be identified, discussed, and confirmed by public and private stakeholders coming together in Working Groups associated with key elements of the plan.**

These Working Groups will be discussed in more detail in the Implementation Dynamics report that will be developed as the final component of the South Shore's strategic process.

## GOAL 1: ATTRACT A YOUNGER WORKFORCE AND BE MORE WELCOMING TO FAMILIES

Age dynamics stand out as one of the biggest challenges to the South Shore's future economic competitiveness. A large portion of the region's residents will reach retirement age in the next two decades, and there are not enough younger residents to replace these individuals in the workforce. Attracting new residents to the South Shore – especially young professionals and families – is therefore a key priority.

While the South Shore has desirable suburban communities and an excellent stock of single-family homes, it has a relative lack of housing products and neighborhood types that appeal to young talent and, ultimately, to top companies in today's knowledge-driven economy reliant on that talent. Greater Boston communities that do not offer a diverse, sustainable supply of housing and traditional or modern activity centers will have a harder time competing for the metro area's most coveted talent and jobs; the economies and quality of life in these places will suffer as a result.

According to real estate development and investment professionals, the development climate in certain South Shore municipalities is extremely challenging. Even the perception of difficulty securing expedient and fair approval for quality projects is enough to discourage local investment. While transit-oriented, mixed-use projects are sprouting up all around greater Boston, the South Shore is not seeing its fair share of these developments despite a wealth of desirable locations. Opportunities for projects appealing to top companies and talent are being left on the table, which will constrain the region's ability to sustain its labor force and diversify its economy.

*The South Shore can engage in the following potential tactics to attract families and young professionals to the region:*

- ✓ Support major transit-oriented development already underway or planned, including SouthField, Downtown Quincy, Quincy Adams, Braintree, The Landing, Hingham Shipyard, and Cordage Park
- ✓ Identify additional locations with existing activity centers or future potential for a mixture of uses including housing, employment, retail, and other uses
- ✓ Identify and partner with towns interested in pursuing revised zoning and improved permitting processes to reduce development and housing costs
- ✓ Publicly support localities seeking to encourage family-friendly policies

## GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION TO BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The diversity, stability, dynamism of the South Shore's 25 component towns and city are among the region's most compelling attributes for companies and talent. The variety of living, working, and recreational assets and environments in the South Shore's defined boundaries provides a tremendous amount of choice for businesses and individuals seeking destinations that work best for them. The continued strength of South Shore communities is therefore a critical strategic priority.

But in the present climate, successful communities are developing and implementing policies and programs at a regional level. A unified voice is always more impactful at the state and federal level than a succession of localities advocating singly for a key issue or initiative. This was clearly demonstrated by the South Shore's successful efforts to bring commuter rail back to the region. The advancement of many components of the 2030 strategy, especially those related to economic development, mobility, and infrastructure, would benefit from a regional perspective and voice.

*The South Shore region can engage in the following potential tactics to further improve public-private collaboration:*

- ✓ Create and support shared strategic plans between town officials and private sector leaders for local community and economic development
- ✓ Build larger and more connected business organizations at the local level
- ✓ Continue developing and implementing a regional policy and advocacy agenda
- ✓ Support and partner with public and private organizations pursuing projects that align with the Regional Development Strategy and policy agenda
- ✓ Empanel and coordinate an Advisory Board of elected officials to identify and address issues of shared concern which the business community can help to achieve

## GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN AND RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN KEY TARGET SECTORS

The vast majority of local jobs are created by established businesses. As such, it is important for economic development organizations and their partners to tailor programs to most effectively support the growth ambitions of incumbent firms. This is principally accomplished through building relationships with these businesses and connecting them to partners who can help them address competitive issues and capitalize on development opportunities. Discussions with existing businesses must be conducted by professional staff who can speak to corporate leaders knowledgeably about issues they are facing in their industry and add value to growth strategies and activities.

Because the South Shore economy is principally comprised of small to mid-sized firms, many of which mostly serve local markets, regional economic developers and partner organizations will have to be strategic in the determination of which firms to ultimately support. Focusing largely on companies that can export products and services outside the South Shore may yield the highest return on investment.

Likely candidates for business retention and expansion strategies (BRE) are those firms engaged in export-oriented activities. As the Target Sector Analysis revealed, these firms represent current strengths of South Shore's regional economy as well as future opportunities in the South Shore. Potential tactics to strengthen and grow existing businesses in the South Shore region could include:

*The South Shore region can engage in the following potential tactics to support the growth of high-value existing businesses:*

- ✓ Create a more formalized existing business support program.
  - Research and catalogue a comprehensive inventory of major existing South Shore employers by size and principal industry sector.
  - Design a visitation program to meet with top South Shore employers at least once per year to survey their competitive challenges and potential strategic opportunities.
  - Work with local officials to help address the competitive issues and concerns of area businesses.
- ✓ Leverage toolkits of Commonwealth and Greater Boston-area organizations to assist South Shore firms with initiating or expanding product and service exports overseas
- ✓ Continue collaboration and alignment of local agendas that support a stronger region
- ✓ Create and leverage sector-based or "affinity" groups to drive strategic prioritization and implementation

## GOAL 4: PROMOTE NEW BUSINESS STARTUPS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOUTH SHORE

The South Shore is home to a well-educated and ambitious population. However, a competitive level of supportive infrastructure does not currently exist to capitalize on these individuals for the creation of high-value, technology-based startup businesses with the potential to grow good, export-based jobs. In today's economy, the key to leveraging local innovators and existing and potential entrepreneurs is to create a so-called support "ecosystem" inclusive of physical locations to host events and network, a ready supply of development capital, a group of established entrepreneurs to serve as mentors, and other elements. While the South Shore does not currently have an evolved ecosystem, it is in close proximity to one of the most established entrepreneurial nexuses in the country in the cities of Boston and Cambridge and the Route 128 corridor. The same holds true for the potential to tap into the institutional research and development capacity found in Boston but lacking in the South Shore.

The creation of a viable and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem does not happen overnight. The goal of the 2030 strategy should be to establish entrepreneurialism as a regional priority and then proceed to slowly build capacity to host events, sustain networks, and capitalize promising startup opportunities.

*The South Shore region can engage in the following potential tactics to better support entrepreneurship and small business development:*

- ✓ Facilitate growth of community banks and other small business lending institutions and work to connect lenders with aspiring entrepreneurs
- ✓ Enhance business education and mentoring programs to ensure that all existing and potential South Shore Chamber members are aware of the Chamber's small business support services
- ✓ Promote the South Shore in Boston as a competitive market for startup development and connect existing entrepreneurs with potential business opportunities
- ✓ Initiate and lead the process of creating a "maker space" in the South Shore
- ✓ Seek to facilitate options for capital access on the South Shore, including a potential South Shore Angel Investment Group

## GOAL 5: RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES TO THE REGION

In order for the South Shore to effectively diversify its economy, it will need to supplement growth of existing companies with the attraction of firms from outside the region. This will be accomplished through promotion of the South Shore's competitive assets and available properties to companies utilizing a variety of strategies. Many of these will entail developing relationships with individuals, firms, and organizations that can connect prospects with South Shore commercial brokers, property owners, developers, and local officials.

Because the South Shore is known more in greater Boston for its residential and recreational assets than its economic and development climate, the South Shore Chamber will need to take steps to change these perceptions and attract higher-value investment to the area. The Chamber will serve as the go-to partner for corporations, investors, brokers, and developers looking to establish a presence in the regional market. In addition to building relationships with metro Boston corporate decision-makers and development leaders, the Chamber must enhance the South Shore's online marketing presence and tools to raise them to expected industry standards.

*The South Shore region can engage in the following potential tactics to attract export-oriented employers to the region:*

- ✓ Create an enhanced economic development web presence for the South Shore, including an inventory of development sites and buildings and profiles of key target sectors
  - Consistently catalogue, market, and update a robust online inventory of available development sites and buildings in the South Shore and their complete specifications.
  - Develop target-based information profiles of each preferred sector on the South Shore's economic development website.
- ✓ Strengthen and sustain relationships with economic development and marketing entities and representatives within the City of Boston, Greater Boston, and the Commonwealth
  - Identify opportunities to pursue relationships with organizations and officials affiliated with one or more of the South Shore's targeted industry sectors.
  - Leverage research and relationship-building to identify Boston-area prospects for expansion or relocation in the South Shore, including suppliers of metro Boston firms.
- ✓ Determine the depth and breadth of the data analytics sector in the South Shore to inform targeted marketing and development efforts

## GOAL 6: IMPROVE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

The greatest value the South Shore Chamber has provided members and the region in recent years is through its role as a tireless advocate for key issues, initiatives, and legislation impacting the community. Principal among its victories have been expansions of road and highway capacity and the return of commuter rail to the South Shore. But advocacy work is never done, and business leaders and other key stakeholders in the South Shore identified numerous transportation, mobility, and infrastructure needs that are critical to the region's future competitiveness. The South Shore Chamber must continue to expand upon its advocacy efforts in these areas to maximize the region's long-term economic potential. This is especially true in relation to opportunities for transit-oriented development; if intra- and extra-regional connections are not robust, the ability to attract talent to these developments will be compromised.

Congestion on Route 3 is the most visible mobility challenge for South Shore leaders to address. But constraints to and opportunities for improved east-west mobility in the South Shore and Metro South regions are also potential issues to pursue. North/south mobility improvements will especially support opportunities for “reverse commuting” from Boston into the South Shore.

In addition to transportation infrastructure, the ability to accommodate more growth across all development types will require solutions to localized water/sewer capacity issues, IT capacity, and potentially, energy supplies as well.

*The South Shore region can engage in the following potential tactics to sustain and enhance its infrastructure capacity:*

- ✓ Continue to focus on enhancement of intra- and inter-regional mobility by identifying and advancing infrastructure priorities and Route 3 relief strategies
  - Identify a new set of infrastructure priorities tied to regional economic development and local community development.
  - Work with partners to advocate for priority projects.
  - Support the assessment and advancement of Route 3 relief strategies, including potential widening and creation of localized north/south alternatives.
- ✓ Inform efforts to ensure the reliability of the MBTA system to the South Shore
  - Support Massachusetts’ efforts to modernize rolling stock.
  - Stress the importance of maintaining and enhancing existing transit points, including more frequent service.
  - Consistently assess opportunities to expand transit infrastructure.
- ✓ Advance the narrative of the potential gain from regional cooperation on water/sewer sustainability and expansion while not ignoring marine infrastructure, IT, and community centers infrastructure

## NEXT STEPS

At the launch of the South Shore’s 2030 strategy process, foundational questions were posed to drive the research, input, and eventual development of the strategic plan itself. The principal questions were:

- Will the South Shore continue to be seen as a collection of bedroom communities of Boston and a gateway to Cape Cod, or will it be known as its own dynamic economy?
- What are the *realistic* opportunities for economic diversification?
- Though the South Shore is generally a highly desirable community, what are its shortcomings and how can it maintain and improve its standing in an increasingly competitive world?

Through the course of quantitative and qualitative research into the South Shore's business climate and key competitive issues, challenges, and opportunities, the perspective of the region and its leaders on these questions became clear. Indeed, the South Shore does want to evolve its economy to capitalize on export-oriented sectors, increase diversification opportunities, and provide more employment options for existing and future residents. Adjusting to the economic and workforce realities of a new economy will ensure that the region continues to be a desirable community by becoming more competitive for the top talent and companies in greater Boston and beyond.

## APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

The following programs, initiatives, and activities are intended to serve as a menu of strategic ideas and opportunities to help inform the action planning of volunteer leadership groups brought together around the implementation of the South Shore 2030 strategy. While it is not suggested that these efforts be implemented exactly as pursued by the profiled geographies, they can nevertheless provide ideas for customization to South Shore realities, challenges, assets, and opportunities. There is also the potential to build relationships with these communities – either virtually or through inter-regional visits – to derive first-hand knowledge on effective programmatic implementation from the practitioners with experience taking them to scale.

It should be noted that many activities implemented directly by the South Shore Chamber or through relationships with regional partners will reflect not only ongoing efforts but also core programmatic functions that do not necessarily require associated best practices to inform their activation. For example, the South Shore Chamber has a long and successful history of advocacy for key issues and infrastructure development. In addition, effective programming and development of networking and special events has enabled the Chamber membership to increase even during economic downturns. The continuation and/or enhancement of these and other core activities will not be the focus of this analysis.

The six confirmed Strategic Categories of the South Shore 2030 strategy were utilized as the structure of this Best Practices Analysis.

### GOAL 1: ATTRACT A YOUNGER WORKFORCE AND BE MORE WELCOMING TO FAMILIES

#### *Unlock the Commonwealth*

<http://www.massgrowth.net/>

Unlock the Commonwealth is a statewide policy initiative to foster housing development to ensure that the Massachusetts economy continues to grow. The initiative's leaders argue that most Massachusetts towns make little allowance for multifamily housing and require large lots for new homes. They assert that the Commonwealth's zoning discourages housing for young workers and families and makes it clear that new development should happen "somewhere else." Their solution is to establish a growth policy for Massachusetts that allows for the development of needed housing only where it makes sense, preserves open space, protects the environment, and creates a more enduring fiscal partnership between the state and its municipalities. The Initiative measures the impacts of housing and frames policy debates and choices.

The organization's research ([http://www.massgrowth.net/research\\_and\\_policy/](http://www.massgrowth.net/research_and_policy/)) and policy (<http://www.massgrowth.net/resources/?reset=&page=1>) archives contain information that may be useful in crafting local pro-housing arguments and identifying potential policies for town-level implementation.

The site also provides useful links to organizations and efforts that might also support advocacy for and development of South Shore housing at all price points. Some of these entities include:

- Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (<http://www.chapa.org/>)
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council's MetroFuture initiative (<http://www.mapc.org/metrofuture/>)
- Northeastern University's Commonwealth Housing Task Force (<http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/housing/commonwealth-housing-task-force/>)

### *Mass.gov's Smart Growth Toolkit*

[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/mod-tod.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-tod.html)

In order to encourage non-traditional development types including transit-oriented development, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts designed the Toolkit as an educational guide and reference document for smart growth/compact development. It contains model bylaws for many smart growth/smart energy techniques providing a framework or starting point for communities to draft necessary laws. The Toolkit also contains recommended regulatory language as well as numerous annotations to provide guidance on how to customize the bylaws to best fit a community's needs. Accompanying this recommended regulatory language are a set of PowerPoint slide shows for smart energy and smart growth proponents to make presentations to developers, site planners, and the public at meetings and hearings. These slides can likewise be used to assist town meeting/city council voters who are considering adopting bylaws/ordinances.

Toolkit case studies ([http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/SG-CS.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/SG-CS.html)) provide a wealth of information and examples of smart growth and transit-oriented development. Where possible, three distinct types of case studies were identified: a rural, a suburban, and an urban setting. Also to the extent possible, Massachusetts case studies were utilized. An interactive case study map gives the user a geographic reference point for each case study.

### *Tulsa's Young Professionals (Tulsa, OK)*

<http://www.typros.org/>

This example could be used to help inform enhancements to the South Shore Chamber's Young Professionals program.

Tulsa's Young Professionals was founded by the Tulsa Regional Chamber in 2005 in response to the region's "brain drain" of new graduates and young professionals to other cities and states. The mission of Tulsa's Young Professionals is to attract and retain young talent in the Tulsa region while also establishing Tulsa's next generation of business and community leaders. TYPros has grown to more than 7,000 members. The organization is a key component of the Tulsa Regional Chamber's regional economic development plan, Tulsa's Future, now on its third campaign.

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 has organized work crews around the following issues: Business Development, Colleges & Universities, Community Ambassadors, Community Redevelopment, Diversity, Government Relations, Next Generation Leadership, Special Events, and 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 the Tulsa region.

In 2010, TYPros launched The Forge, a business incubator specifically targeting young professionals. Other major programs of TYPros include Street CReD, an annual event that focuses on community redevelopment in a specific neighborhood each year by “showing what Tulsa can become when it creates the change it wants to see,” a board internship program, and TYPros Foundation (TYPF), started in 2014. The mission of TYPF is “Bridging economic development with efforts to create a sense of place.” Many events raise money for TYPF’s strategic projects to accomplish its mission.

### *Calgary (Alberta) Economic Development*

<http://www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com/workforce-management/workforce-management-services>

<http://www.bepartoftheenergy.ca/>

Seeking to assist regional employers with talent development and attraction, the Calgary Economic Development organization works in partnership with businesses, post-secondary education, government, and industry stakeholders in the implementation of four core workforce management functions:

#### 1. **Labor attraction support**

- ✓ Calgary Economic Development’s marketing campaign, Calgary. Be Part of the Energy, is aimed at attracting the best and brightest to Calgary to make a living and make a life.
- ✓ In addition, Calgary Economic Development works with the local workforce and human resources community to provide information, tools, research and networking opportunities to ensure employers are set up for success in their recruitment and retention efforts.

#### 2. **Information on moving to Calgary**

- ✓ <http://www.lifeincalgary.ca/> is an authoritative website that offers support for people considering relocation to the city as well as recent arrivals. The website provides information important to new and prospective residents’ transition to the city such as choosing a neighborhood, obtaining a driver’s license, and selecting an educational institution for their children.

#### 3. **Employer best practices**

- ✓ Through a series of best practices forums, programming and information, Calgary Economic Development shares information to assist employers with the development of effective talent attraction, development, and retention strategies.

#### 4. **Labor market information and studies**

- ✓ Calgary Economic Development provides detailed local labor market information for employers and local and international job seekers. This information includes current and future opportunities, areas of job growth, and labor market conditions.

## GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION TO BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES

### *Municipal Finance Resource Center (Greater Houston Partnership)*

<http://www.houston.org/municipal-finance/>

Faced with concerns over the City of Houston's long-term fiscal health, the Greater Houston Partnership created a forum and tool for the community to become more familiar with the situation and the data driving municipal finance conversations. Housed on the Partnership's website, the Municipal Finance Resource Center provides context and a foundation for the Houston business community to engage in proactive conversations on the complex topic of municipal finance.

The Partnership also created the Municipal Finance Task Force in 2014 to identify the City of Houston's fiscal issues and propose methods to address them. In July 2015, the Task Force released a municipal finance whitepaper titled, "The City of Houston's Finances: Let's Be Clear About Where We Are." The whitepaper was the first in a series of papers produced by the Partnership's Municipal Finance Task Force to advance dialogue and action on this issue.

### *City of Boston Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT)*

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/DoIT/>

In order to engage, empower, and improve the lives of citizens and partners across the city through technology, the City of Boston created the Department of Innovation and Technology to enhance online service delivery, empower City employees with digital tools, and improve access to technology and the internet for all Boston neighborhoods. Under the direction of its Chief Innovation Officer, the Department focuses on the following initiatives:

- ✓ Core Infrastructure – optimizing the City's technology infrastructure
- ✓ Tools for Government – tools and technologies to help departments serve external constituents
- ✓ Digital Engagement and Service Delivery – providing services through digital channels for citizen engagement and participation
- ✓ Data and Analytics – data-driven management to improve public accountability and transparency and measure progress
- ✓ Broadband and Digital Equity – providing access to affordable, high-speed broadband and opportunities to develop digital "readiness" for all residents and businesses

### **Central Iowa Code Consortium**

<http://www.capitalcrossroadsvision.com/central-iowa-code-consortium/>

The Central Iowa Code Consortium is a collaborative effort between 16 communities and one county to improve uniformity and consistency in the adoption and enforcement of construction codes in Central Iowa communities. Many Central Iowa jurisdictions are on different code cycles and have different code provisions that can make it difficult and confusing for businesses, developers, and residents to follow and understand code requirements. The Consortium is a collaborative effort between all participating communities to review code changes, recommend changes to these codes, and produce a metro "model" code for all communities to consider through their local code adoption process. The Consortium is not proposed or intended to make recommendations on permit processes, code administration, appeals processes, or specific local amendments deemed necessary by local code officials. An Executive Committee of six local government representatives oversees seven working committees and is responsible for writing the full code. Each code subcommittee is made up of seven members (four from various government agencies and three from appropriately related industries). Their meetings are open to the public with feedback from industry professionals and consumers welcomed. The seven committees are:

- ✓ Electrical/energy
- ✓ Fire
- ✓ International building code
- ✓ International residential code
- ✓ Mechanical/plumbing/fuel gas
- ✓ Pool/spa/property maintenance (residential)
- ✓ Joint fire/building

### **Elected Officials Leadership Training Program (Pennsylvania)**

[http://www.pamunicipalleague.org/index.asp?SEC=E8F8E641-0188-4002-B799-864EFE1E7B17&DE=B173CF6C-E6F7-43E5-9B73-4860C723D209&Type=B\\_BASIC](http://www.pamunicipalleague.org/index.asp?SEC=E8F8E641-0188-4002-B799-864EFE1E7B17&DE=B173CF6C-E6F7-43E5-9B73-4860C723D209&Type=B_BASIC)

The Elected Officials Leadership Training Program is a voluntary certification program created by the Pennsylvania Municipal League's Center for Municipal Development that connects elected officials to the tools necessary to be an effective leader and successful elected official. The overall purpose of this program is to enhance the performance of elected officials. To achieve this, training seminar topics are selected and developed, ensuring that the information presented is both timely and relevant to the responsibilities of an elected official. The training program provides new and veteran elected officials a primer (or refresher) on the ins and outs of local government. The curriculum helps officials understand their role as well as reinforce fundamental knowledge on topics such as basic budgeting, fiduciary responsibility, ethics, risk management, labor issues, and sunshine laws. Sessions are led by labor law experts, political pollsters, financial management professionals, and other experts. The participants are also afforded the opportunity to network with colleagues and state officials.

The Program consists of four core curriculum areas, each representing numerous sub-topics relating to the specific responsibilities of elected officials. The core areas are:

- ✓ Pennsylvania local government
- ✓ Community planning and development
- ✓ Organizational development and management
- ✓ Municipal finance

## GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN AND RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN KEY TARGET SECTORS

### *The Supplier Network (Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce)*

<http://www.greaterphilachamber.com/suppliernet>

The Greater Philadelphia Chamber's Supplier Network is an educational and networking series that prepares small to mid-size businesses to pursue bids from large companies and government agencies and build relationships with their regional procurement officers. Companies can learn best practices that prepare them to build vendor relationships, network with top purchasing officers, and market their firms to the Greater Philadelphia region. More than 400 vendor companies from an array of industries have been trained and designated as Supplier Network members since 2005. Among advantages for vendor companies are:

- ✓ Ongoing exposure with regional procurement executives at networking sessions
- ✓ Personal opportunities to pitch to procurement officers about products or services
- ✓ Exclusive networking invitations to continue cultivating new business relationships
- ✓ Advanced workshops addressing topics such as certification options, negotiating skills, and cold-calling techniques
- ✓ Inclusion in the Supplier Network online database accessible to supporting corporations, other vendors, Chamber member companies, and the public
- ✓ Special Supplier Network vendor designation published in print and online Chamber Membership directories
- ✓ Recognition for graduates in the Chamber's online newsletter and other e-communications

### *Critical Talent Network (Quad Cities IA-IL Chamber of Commerce)*

<http://talent.quadcitieschamber.com/>

Comprised of experienced retired corporate executives, business owners, functional experts, entrepreneurs, and interns, Critical Talent Network experts help regional businesses overcome barriers and capitalize on opportunities for growth. Participation is through paid, short term engagements where experts can lend

their expertise to regional businesses based on their interest and availability. Support is provided through individual assistance, membership on problem-solving teams, mentoring, and facilitation. While similar to services provided by the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), the Network has less of a focus on small business and more on working with medium- to large-size businesses.

The participation of the Critical Talent Network supports business retention and expansion efforts in that issues identified through existing business efforts can lead to the deployment of Network talent to a regional company to help problem-solve, develop new products, or streamline their operations.

### ***Capital Area Manufacturing Council (Lansing, MI)***

<http://www.camconline.org/>

Facing systemic employment loss caused by outsourcing and the relocation of manufacturing operations to the Sunbelt, manufacturing business leaders from central Michigan came together 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!

### ***Twin Cities (MN) Area Economic Gardening Partnership***

<http://www.hennepin.us/business/work-with-henn-co/business-assistance>

Recognizing the need for sustained growth of second-stage companies, the Minnesota counties of Hennepin, Carver, Anoka, Scott, and Ramsey established the Regional Economic Gardening Network to provide select growth companies with no cost business research and enhancement. Companies who participate in this opportunity must show potential for job creation and longer-term business growth.

In its Economic Gardening Program, the Partnership supports existing businesses well-positioned for growth by providing strategic research assistance to participating firms. Eligible businesses have between 10 and 99 employees and revenue between \$1.0 and \$5.0 million. Expanded from a pilot project implemented by Hennepin (Minneapolis) County, the Partnership now includes the aforementioned counties. Hennepin County is the lead agency in the implementation of the Edward Lowe Foundation model gardening program. Services include:

- ✓ Custom research: 40 hours per chief operating officer (CEO) of four "pods" of 15 selected core companies (for a total of 60 companies)

- ✓ CEO round table sessions: Eight half-day sessions for the CEO's of the 60 selected core companies
- ✓ CEO forum events: Four sessions for CEOs of up to 100 companies per session

#### ***Connect-2-Business (Des Moines, IA)***

<http://connect2businessdm.kuder.com/>

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 (the regional chamber of commerce and economic development organization) 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.

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.

## GOAL 4: PROMOTE NEW BUSINESS START-UPS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOUTH SHORE

#### ***Greenhouse (St. Petersburg, FL)***

<http://stpetegreenhouse.org/>

As a partnership between the St Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of St. Petersburg, Greenhouse is a one-stop shop facility for starting or growing local St. Petersburg businesses. Greenhouse provides an array of services including business counseling, training, networking, specialized assistance, and access to start-up capital. Greenhouse acts as St. Petersburg's entrepreneurial center of gravity, leveraging a broad support network to ultimately benefit local entrepreneurs. Through its partnership with the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and ASPEC (Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College), entrepreneurs receive one-on-one mentorship programs and in-house office hours to ensure their business is on the path to success. Greenhouse is also highly focused on ensuring that entrepreneurs are equipped with the knowledge they need to proactively address or anticipate their future needs. Entrepreneurs in the St. Petersburg Area credit the creation of Greenhouse as the catalyst for bringing together what had previously been a disparate local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

#### ***Entrepreneur Boot Camp (Greater Albany, NY)***

<http://capitalregionchamber.com/about/entrepreneur-boot-camp/>

Entrepreneur Boot Camp is the Capital Region Chamber's award-winning 60-hour training program that guides would-be entrepreneurs and existing businesses through a step-by-step process of starting, operating and managing a business. The program is held two nights per week over the course of 12 weeks. Each session features business experts addressing topics critical to the growth of successful enterprises including accounting, legal, market research, real estate, taxes, insurance, payroll, cash flow, marketing, social media and more. Participants develop a business plan, and toward the end of the course present the plan to a panel of judges. The winners of the business plan competition receive a \$1,500 cash grant from Sunmark Federal Credit Union, a one-year Chamber membership, office equipment from Repeat Business Systems, a media package from R&D Media, an education package from Excelsior College, and two computer courses from MicroKnowledge.

A partnership between the Chamber and Schenectady County Community College allows students enrolled in the Business Administration A.A.S. Program or the Entrepreneurship Certificate to take the Chamber's Entrepreneur Boot Camp for college credit.

#### ***Small, Diverse and Emerging Business Council (Kansas City, MO)***

<http://www.kcchamber.com/Programs-Events/Small-Business/Small,-Diverse,-and-Emerging-Business-Council.aspx>

In 2012, The Greater Kansas City Chamber reinvigorated its small business efforts with the creation of the Small, Diverse and Emerging Business Council. Because 80 percent of Chamber members are small businesses, the Chamber conducted focus groups with representative firms, which resulted in the development of the Council. Chamber members also identified needs specific to high-growth businesses, minority-owned businesses, and the wide-ranging needs of small businesses from one to 250 employees. One benefit members receive is access to a centralized repository of small business resources.

The Chamber is also home to the largest Small Business Celebration in the United States. This event is a collection of seven months of activities and promotions to celebrate the regional small business sector and recognize the area's top small businesses. The celebration culminates with an awards luncheon where the Top 10 Small Businesses are recognized, and the Small Business of the Year, the KC Chamber Diverse-Owned Small Business of the Year, the KC Chamber Aspirational Entrepreneur Award, and the KC Chamber Legacy Award are awarded.

#### ***Artisan's Asylum (Somerville, MA)***

<https://artisansasylum.com/>

Located in a 40,000 square foot warehouse in Somerville, Massachusetts, Artisan's Asylum, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) fabrication center dedicated to supporting and promoting the teaching, learning, and practicing of design and fabrication. Operated by a staff of five and a large number of volunteers, this makerspace offers many benefits to its early stage entrepreneurs, artists, and hobbyists, including:

- ✓ Monthly memberships that provide access to the facility on weekends and after typical working hours as well as on-site material and project storage;

- ✓ Shared design and fabrication tools and equipment in an array of fields, including electronics, robotics, woodworking, jewelry and metalsmithing, welding, precision machining, rapid prototyping, digital fabrication, fiber arts, and screenprinting, and;
- ✓ Affordable, publicly accessible classes that allow students to create a final product or to receive general training on specific tools.
- ✓ Not just a space for making things, makerspaces also build communities where people can network with other makers and learn from each other. There are several other makerspaces across the state of Massachusetts, including but not limited to:
- ✓ Bostonmakers in Jamaica Plain, MA, which provides access to state-of-the-art digital production tools such as 3D printers, CNC routers, laser cutters, vinyl cutters, milling machines, and small scale fabrications tools, computer stations, and open multipurpose workstations;
- ✓ Lowell Makes in Lowell, MA, which has 3D printers and CNC mills as well as a wood shop and metal shop;
- ✓ New Vestures in Lowell, MA, a makerspace for fashion designers and entrepreneurs;
- ✓ Shire City Sanctuary in Pittsfield, MA, which houses a screenprinting shop, sewing lab, and commercial kitchen;
- ✓ South Coast Innovator Labs in Raynham, MA, which has a large Paragon Kiln and a Shopsmith, a multi-tool with several attachments such as wood lathe, drill press, table saw, and more;
- ✓ Technocopia in Worcester, MA, with tools ranging from woodworking tools to soldering stations to a laser cutter, CNC mill, and 3D printers; and
- ✓ WHALE Makerspace in Norton, MA, located at Wheaton College and offers think mobile robot platforms, a 3D printer, hundreds of LEDs, 17-gauge electric fence wire, conductive thread, and an embroidery machine.

#### *Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place (Columbia, MO)*

<http://muincubator.com/index.html>

The Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place, which opened in 2009, is owned by the University of Missouri and operated by the Missouri Innovation Center, a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors comprised of community and business leaders and senior representatives of University of Missouri system, colleges, and campus administration. The Incubator Program is open to all start-up enterprises with a technology-based product or service but priority is given to University-affiliated ventures. Innovation Center residents benefit from the following services and amenities:

- ✓ Wet labs, dry labs, and engineering suites for growth oriented companies
- ✓ Opportunity assessment of the technology, the market, and the management team
- ✓ Planning, financing, and accomplishing research and product development
- ✓ Developing the business plan and securing startup funding and growth capital

- ✓ Incubating the ventures that result, including mentoring and physically accommodating startup firms

The business incubation program is integrated with the Crosby MBA Program of the Trulaske College of Business and MBA candidates are an important resource in the incubation program. While the incubator is an organizational unit of the Office of Research of the University of Missouri, it works closely with the Office of Technology Management and Industry Relations and the Office of Research and Economic Development. The Life Science Business Incubator was selected for the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) Soft Landings International Incubator program because of its slate of business services for nondomestic firms and its demonstrated success at helping these firms enter the U.S. market.

#### *Launch Entrepreneurship (Chattanooga, TN)*

<http://www.launchchattanooga.org/highschool/>

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. 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 who believed that the private sector could help positively influence the future prospects of local youth.

## GOAL 5: RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES TO THE REGION

### *Economic Development Websites*

There are numerous examples of economic development websites that are considered best-in-class. The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) hands out annual awards to ED websites they feel are especially noteworthy (<http://www.iedconline.org/web-pages/inside-iedc/previous-program-award-winners/>). However, there is certain website content that is core to the expectations of principal audiences such as site consultants, real estate brokers and developers, and prospect businesses. These include:

- ✓ Profiles of key economic development programs and efforts supportive of competitiveness areas such as public policy, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and infrastructure development
- ✓ A development site and building database with downloadable information sheets
- ✓ Consistently updated regional economic and demographic trend data in user-friendly, downloadable formats

- ✓ Profiles of regional target industry sectors, or at least priority industries of focus; these would include a list of existing employers, data on employment and occupational totals, corresponding education and training programs, and sector-supportive infrastructure
- ✓ Contact information for economic development staff
- ✓ Profiles and links to South Shore cities and towns as well as information on quality of life amenities, housing, entertainment, recreation, public and private education, retail amenities, arts and culture, and other elements
- ✓ Links to local chamber and economic development partners
- ✓ Lists of top board of directors and working committee volunteers
- ✓ A media center with latest news releases, e-newsletters, and scrolling social media feeds

#### ***Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council***

[http://www.westernmassedc.com/Available\\_Property/](http://www.westernmassedc.com/Available_Property/)

The Western Massachusetts EDC links potential investors to the region's commercial and industrial real estate. The EDC performs comprehensive searches for sites that meet a prospect's specifications and works with commercial brokers, property developers, and municipal economic development officials to identify potential sites for consideration. Information is turned around quickly – often in 24 to 48 hours – and can be supplemented by regional data including workforce, wage, demographic, travel time, and related information. In addition, the EDC regularly hosts economic development partners – primarily municipal – from across the region to ensure that efforts are coordinated and collaborative.

Other programs include:

- ✓ Pre-Permitted Sites: The Western Mass EDC leverages the Commonwealth's 43D Priority Development Site program to provide available sites that can be permitted in less than 180 days. Western Mass now has a host of these pre-permitted sites to expedite expansions and relocations.
- ✓ Ready Mass sites: The EDC also takes advantage of MassEcon's Ready Mass program, which identifies premier sites that are available in each region of the Commonwealth. The EDC works closely with MassEcon to ensure information on the region's sites is current and accurate.

#### ***North Central Massachusetts Economic Development Council Site Listings***

[http://www.ncmedc.com/real\\_estate/real\\_estate\\_search/default.cfm](http://www.ncmedc.com/real_estate/real_estate_search/default.cfm)

The Council has aggregated all the principal sites available in the region and made them available through its website. Site information includes type, location, total and available square footage, acreage, and purchase and lease rates. Importantly, each site has an accompanying data sheet available for download that provides the full complement of relevant site information, including photographs.

#### ***Regional Branding Initiative (Orlando, FL)***

<http://www.orlandoedc.com/Invest-With-Us/Branding.aspx>

Aware of the fact that most external stakeholders principally viewed their region as the home of a theme park, the Orlando Economic Development Commission (EDC) launched a Regional Branding Initiative to measure current perceptions of business targets – both in- and out-of-market – and develop a strategic campaign to get Orlando into the consideration set for business location decisions. Learning more about what others in and out of Orlando think about the region helped drive the creative direction of the branding campaign. While the campaign primarily targeted out-of-area business decision makers, its efforts were also focused on better educating Orlando residents and local influencers about what the region offers. Research revealed that Orlando only made it onto the "short list" for consideration as a business location about one-third of the time because decision makers were unfamiliar with the region's strengths and advantages for business.

Informed by these surveys and stakeholder input, the EDC launched the "Orlando. You don't know the half of it" campaign in December 2014 as a way to increase the number of companies evaluating Orlando as a business location. The campaign was designed to highlight the region's innovative business community and wealth of activities and lifestyle amenities that Orlando has to offer. The campaign built on Orlando's reputation as a world-class tourism destination but also showcased corporate, innovation, and higher education assets largely unknown by outside influencers. The anticipated five-year economic impact of the branding campaign includes 17 percent more jobs; \$600 million in additional income; \$1 billion in new gross regional product, and \$2.2 billion more in sales.

#### ***MadREP Site Selectors Tour (Greater Madison, WI)***

<http://myemail.constantcontact.com/Madison-Region-leaves-site-selectors--thoroughly-impressed-.html?soid=1104030180118&aid=bjNHeRCithI>

As the recently enhanced and rebranded economic development entity for the Greater Madison region in Wisconsin, MadREP held its first-ever familiarization tour for site selection consultants in summer of 2015. Four site selectors from Omaha, Richmond, and Chicago visited Madison for a two-day tour of the region's business and economic development assets, including stops at the Ironworks Campus, Electronic Theatre Controls, Epic Systems, Promega, and Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery, as well as visits to several of the region's available and certified sites. With the identification of an unfamiliarity with Madison's assets among the economic development community, a key finding of its Advance Now strategy, MadREP was focused on ensuring that relocation consultants left the visit with more accurate awareness of what the region has to offer. Feedback from the site selectors was positive, with many commenting that they were not aware of the true breadth of the region's knowledge economy, which in many cases outperformed Greater Madison's peer regions. Another key site selector takeaway was the capacity of the region's higher education institutions and existing partnerships and collaborations with the business community.

Nearly 50 regional partners participated in the planning and hosting of the event, which was facilitated through investments from multiple public and private supporting sponsors at the state and regional level.

#### ***Chattanooga (TN) Earned Media/Public Relations Strategy***

Ever since Walter Cronkite called Chattanooga the "dirtiest city in America" in the 1970s, the community has been focused on changing both its local realities and also external perceptions. Beginning in the 2000s,

the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce, partnering with the region's Convention and Visitor's Bureau, contracted with a national public relations firm to try to change the outside perceptions of Chattanooga as a declining industrial city with few modern assets for companies, talent, or visitors.

Focusing on strengths such as its revitalized downtown, America's first city-wide gigabit fiber network, emerging entrepreneurial climate, and other assets, the public relations (earned media) strategy has seen notable success. Since implementing the strategy, the Chattanooga region has been featured in hundreds of business media placements with more than 1 billion impressions worldwide in a wide range of national, regional trade and online outlets including The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, The Economist, Fortune, CNN, Fox Business News, CNBC, and The Huffington Post. The tourism and visitation campaign was also effective, with nearly 1 billion impressions showcasing Chattanooga in outlets such as ABC News, Birmingham Parent, Baltimore Sun, Chicago Tribune, Delta SKY, Forbes.com, Georgia Magazine, National Geographic Weekend, Preservation, and Southern Living.

## GOAL 6: IMPROVE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

### *OneVoice Agenda (Tulsa, OK)*

<https://www.tulsachamber.com/subject/government-affairs/>

The OneVoice Agenda is the regional legislative agenda initiative of the Tulsa Regional Chamber, uniting all of the counties in northeast Oklahoma around common priorities for the region's success. The Government Affairs division of the Chamber works closely with regional partners across this swath of the state to develop a strong, unified voice for business-friendly legislation that supports the efforts of Tulsa's Future III, the five-year regional economic development strategy implemented by the Chamber. Nearly 70 regional partners and community groups endorsed the 2014 OneVoice Agenda, and regional partners frequently emphasize that their greatest value from Tulsa's Future III is the influence and success of OneVoice.

The Agenda is supported through lobbying trips to Oklahoma City and Washington, D.C., participation in task forces, ongoing legislative events, and the Chamber's four-part Priorities to Policy advocacy training.

### *Charleston (SC) Metro Chamber of Commerce Infrastructure Visioning Task Force*

[http://www.opportunity-next.com/pdf/reports/CMCC\\_Infrastructure\\_White\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.opportunity-next.com/pdf/reports/CMCC_Infrastructure_White_Paper.pdf)

After assessments determined that metro Charleston's existing infrastructure was not adequately accommodating the current or future needs of the area, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce formed the Infrastructure Visioning Task Force in the fall of 2011 to prioritize the short and long-term infrastructure needs of the Charleston region. These priorities became the platform for the Chamber's Business Advocacy agenda. In 2013, the Task Force gave a progress report on the projects that were underway, reassessed future regional needs, and analyzed the return on investment to taxpayers from current transportation sales tax programs in each of the region's three counties. The result was a November 2013 White Paper called "Transportation/Infrastructure Priorities: Issues to Consider." In the paper, the Task Force identified the region's most pressing infrastructure projects and categorized them under four general headings: 1) Promote Economic Development of the Region, 2) Facilitate Freight

Movement, 3) Accommodate Anticipated Residential Growth, and 4) Preserve and Enhance the Quality of Life.

The Chamber's goal was then to work with local, state, and federal elected officials to secure approval and funding for the categorized priority projects. Reserving the option to add additional projects in the future, the Chamber nevertheless was able to move forward with an approved list of regional infrastructure priorities to support the continued growth and development of metro Charleston.

#### *Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance (Northern Virginia)*

<http://www.nvta.org/>

Founded in 1987 by a group of regional businessmen and citizens, the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance is a non-partisan, private sector organization focused on improving transportation for citizens and businesses in the Northern Virginia region. The Alliance has grown to represent more than 20 major business organizations in the region who are dedicated to making transportation a critical policy objective. The metro Washington D.C. area and Northern Virginia has some of the nation's most congested traffic corridors. The Alliance draws attention to and lobbies for the projects it believes will do the most to relieve traffic congestion and move people throughout the region cost effectively within a regional framework of smart land use decisions. The Alliance's website has a list of the highest priority mobility initiatives with maps and project descriptions. Since its inception, the Alliance has been successful in advancing projects it deemed important, including commuter rail service, limited access parkway projects, highway widenings, bridge replacements, a rail line to the Dulles airport, and a comprehensive regional land use and transportation plan.

In 2013 the Alliance led a campaign that helped to successfully secure new, long-term, dedicated state and regional transportation funding. HB 2313 includes between \$300-350 million each year for Northern Virginia with revenue components tailored to the needs of the region. The organization adopted a resolution signed by twenty major business organizations that outlines five criteria to base regional transportation investments on and identifies eight regional priority projects.