



# The Enterprise Group of Jackson, Inc.

## *Imagine Jackson 2020 Campaign*

### FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The following economic development plan is designed to attract, retain, and create jobs and investment, and increase community prosperity by focusing on two key priorities that all companies look for when they decide to relocate, grow, or start up:

**People** – A community with skilled and educated workforce ready to fill new openings

**Place** – A community with quality development-ready sites / buildings that can accommodate capital investment in a timely manner

#### **Strategic Initiative 1**

##### ***Jackson County Site & Infrastructure Development***

- Create a partnership between The Enterprise Group (EG), City of Jackson, Jackson County, Townships and other units of local government to address challenges for short and long term site development.
- Develop criteria to prioritize sites for further investigation.
- Investigate the feasibility of a public/private fund for preliminary engineering, and environmental reviews for sites meeting criteria for development.
- Document costs and time needed to develop sites for “shovel readiness”.
- Develop flow charts that detail steps, responsible parties, and time required to complete site plan reviews and building permits.
- Document any unique attributes or resources of sites in the system such as ultra-pure water, etc.

#### **Strategic Initiative 2**

##### ***Retaining, Expanding, and Recruiting Businesses***

- Provide continued focus on existing business entities in the County through an ongoing retention call program designed to address opportunities and threats to business growth.
- Help local businesses access local, state, and federal assistance, resources and permits; and leverage these dollars to benefit the local economy.
- Continue as staff to the Economic Development Corporation of Jackson County (EDC) to market and administer the Revolving Loan Fund to eligible retail, service, commercial and industrial clients.
- Participate in outbound and inbound prospecting events with Greater Ann Arbor Region (GAAR), Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and others.
- Serve as the lead organization in responding to MEDC and site location Requests for Proposals (RFPs) including proposal preparation and response, coordination of resources from community partners and hosting of client visits.
- Develop a program to meet with key Midwest economic development contacts; including foreign consuls, site selection consultants and others, to make them aware of Jackson County assets and EG services.
- Continue to staff local government development organizations, (Jackson County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority; The Economic Development Corporation of Jackson County; Blackman Township Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) and Downtown Development Authority (DDA); and the Parma-Sandstone LDFA) to provide the technical resources to encourage business growth and achieve their development goals.



### **Strategic Initiative 3**

#### ***Workforce Development and Skilled Training***

- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to collaborate with local school districts and the Jackson County Intermediate School District (JCISD) to establish a program for high school seniors for improving the soft skills needed to be successful employees. The EG/Chamber will convene business leaders and educators to establish a common, identifiable metric of criteria to be used to develop and improve soft skills and commitment to work. The program will be modeled after existing programs that have shown proven results.
- Continue to support partnerships with Jackson College, Baker College, JCISD, the Jackson Area Manufacturers Association (JAMA), all local school districts and the Jackson business community by enhancing the Early Middle College model to include education and work experience opportunities for identified programs/students at the Jackson Area Career Center.
- Promote the offerings of local training and education service providers including Jackson College, Baker College, South Central Michigan Works and the Academy for Manufacturing Careers, through its ongoing retention calls to over 100 local employers annually.
- Continue to serve in a leadership role in the Cradle to Career K-12 Pipeline Initiative to ensure that business interests and concerns are represented as the Jackson community addresses the education and workforce challenges of the 21st century.

### **Strategic Initiative 4**

#### ***Jackson County Brownfield Redevelopment***

- Utilize the recently awarded \$400,000 EPA Assessment Grant to continue to provide businesses a resource in the re-use/redevelopment of underutilized sites and buildings in Jackson County as staff to the Jackson County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (JCBRA).
- Investigate/develop a similar strategy for the disposition of its property holdings in the Armory Arts area, based upon the process used to successfully sell the ACME/Zoerman Clark properties. The effort will include the development of a task force of investors, local government, consultants and community partners.

### **Strategic Initiative 5**

#### ***Marketing and Communications***

- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and Experience Jackson to develop a comprehensive marketing and public relations strategy to promote Jackson's positive attributes to both internal and external audiences.
- Maintain The EG website as a resource for accurate, relevant data, and timely information about Jackson County sites and buildings; workforce and training resources; financing and incentive programs; utilities and transportation, and links to other community assets and partners.
- Continue to focus on community outreach to provide educators, local governments, business interests and community groups, insights into the role The EG plays in enhancing the local economy.
- Utilize social media venues to distribute information and data on a timely basis to investors, community partners and business decision makers. Develop/update print and digital marketing materials.
- Serve as the recognized resource for data related for business retention, expansion and new location decision makers. Gather and disseminate national and regional data, and provide customized local data related to the local labor market.
- Pursue local, regional, and national media to highlight Jackson County businesses, success stories, and opportunities.