

**Subcommittee: Economy**  
**Estimated Participants: 100 to 115**  
**March 27, 2006 Meeting**

**Major Ideas and Suggested Action:**

1. **Action:**

a. Steering Committee asked to re-consider format by allowing each major group to break into smaller subcommittees that should reap more involvement and input due to less restrictions based on group size and report back to Subcommittee for reporting to Steering Committee.

2. **“Living Wage”** – Hot Topic by Many – Much Discussion

**Action:**

a. Review Vermont Living Wage Model

b. UGA continue study

c. County asked to consider Salary Subsidy (Legal Question was raised)

d. UGA Student body encouraged to remain active

3. **“Labor Market Analysis”** to determine available Workforce before engaging in all out attraction efforts of industries that Athens workforce cannot support

**Action:**

1. Complete Labor Market Analysis for Athens Region to determine labor skills

a. Available skills

b. Needed skills

2. Review Entry Level Positions with regard to Advancement Opportunities – Advise those taking jobs with no advancement opportunities before they take a job.

4. **“Re-evaluate Wages in accordance with Position Requirements”.**

**Action:** UGA is strongly encouraged to re-evaluate wages in accordance with other State Organizations to enhance equity for the same job in Athens rather than less compensation because one lives in Athens –

**Concern / Opinion:** People are being hired at what they will take, not what the job is worth.

5. **“Inquire within Impacted Communities”** of Athens-Clarke County of what “they need” to improve the poverty issues that negatively influences their lives – **“ASK THE PEOPLE”**

**Action:**

a. Take the question to the street where the impacts are seen, felt, and heard – Go to where they are comfortable and others may not be

b. Ask for help from those living the life of poverty

1. Working poor

2. Impoverished

3. Persons with limited skills, etc.

6. **“Communicate with Local Industries and Businesses”** –

**Action:**

a. Community and workforce needs to understand the needs of the businesses as do the educators so business can be productive and profitable

b. Determine how “soft skills” can be integrated into business community through Non-Profit / Non-Profit Entities workers

7. “**Athens – Clarke County is a Regional, Urban Community**” and needs to be fully aware of regional impacts that will most likely negatively impact the A/C Inter-city community first. **Action:**

a. Become Fully Aware with the help of the Media of Planned Job Reductions – Industry and Government – What and when, who (job levels) will be impacted

b. Profile and Publish Existing Industry within Region for Public Use

c. Discover Culture of Poverty within Region & How it Impacts A/C

d. Develop a 5-20 year strategic plan for A/C using the PPA as a foundation for future

e. Focus on a bottom up from community rather than top down from elected officials

f. Re-evaluate Retirement and other benefit options to enhance well being of city/county employees and their families

g. Consider A/C becoming an Entrepreneur Friendly Certified Community by the GA Dept. of Economic Development

h. Evaluate the potential of Federal Empowerment and Local Enterprise Zones where Low to Moderate Income (LMI) persons are favored in employment and employers are rewarded for assisting LMI person.

8. “**Economic Development Activity**” (Note: Many ideas fall under this larger category and the suggestions can assist the regional developers to understand the thinking of the community.)

**Actions Suggested:**

a. Diversify economy away from Government Employers (Local, State and Federal)

b. Balance Environmental Concerns when seeking New Employers Attractions

c. Develop and Promote a strong Business Retention and Expansion Program to Enhance Existing Businesses

1. Find out what businesses needed from government

2. Find out what infrastructure problems are causing problems for business

d. Engage Regional Technical Colleges and Businesses to develop a Workforce that can fill the existing and future jobs as described by those needing workers

e. Engage Dept. of Technical & Adult Education (DTAE), QuickStart to assist in retraining or training under skilled labor force

f. Focus on Entrepreneurship and Small Business as a priority with committed resources (staff and money & strategic plan)

g. Identify with A/C government Low Census Tracts to determine eligibility for grants, tax credits and low interest loans when assisting Low to Moderate Income (LMI) persons – “**A Hand up and a Possible Lift out of Poverty**” Concept

h. Create a Regional Community and Economic Development Laboratory with the five – seven partnering counties of the Regional Joint Development Authorities as they experience the same issues and the resources of the Fanning Institute and UGA

1. A/C w/ Barrow & Oconee

2. A/C w/ Jackson, Madison, Oglethorpe & Elbert

i. Consider explaining to the public in lay terms how a Bond Issue and / or the Economic Development Foundation may be utilized to enhance Community and Economic Development

9. **“Entrepreneurship”**

**Action:**

- a. Explore and maximize use of Small Business Development Centers
- b. Explore and maximize use of local and regional Microenterprise Resources
- c. Engage the Regional Resources of GA to enhance Entrepreneurism
- d. Become an Entrepreneur Friendly Community and Regional Representative
- e. Engage DTAE, Regional Technical Schools and High Schools and Colleges in Entrepreneurial Development Training Programs using the Entrepreneurial Training Curriculum adopted by GA DTAE
- f. Consider Developing a Small Business Service Provider Summit – VOLUNTEER:  
Catherine Hogue, ATD