



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

FOREST PARK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Six Month Strategic Plan

AUGUST 23, 2024
FOREST PARK, GA
785 Forest Parkway

Economic Development Department Six Month Strategic Plan

Forest Park, Georgia, is poised for significant economic growth and development. To harness this potential, we have crafted a comprehensive six-month strategic plan focusing on key areas of the department. This plan encompasses business retention, marketing, internal operations, training, website improvement, and networking. Our goal is to strengthen our relationship with existing businesses, attract new investors, and promote Forest Park as a great place to live, work, and play.

1. Business Retention

Objective: Strengthen existing businesses to ensure long-term economic stability and growth.

Actions:

1. Business Visitation Program:

- Conduct monthly visits to local businesses (2 visits per month) to understand their challenges and needs per ward.
- Visit small businesses informally to build relationships and rapport
- Collect feedback from Business visits and help with goals and issues businesses may be having
- Gather participation for workforce development program, sponsorship for events, and engagement in the community

Metrics:

- Number of business visits conducted.
- Feedback collected and addressed.
- Partnerships formed through the visits

Timeline: Began in August of 2024. Conduct 10 BRE visits by January of 2025.

2. Marketing

Objective: Increase the visibility of Forest Park as a prime location for businesses, visitors, and residents.

Actions:

1. Economic Development Website/Update Marketing Campaign:

- Work with the PIO's office to revamp and update the Economic Development Website - adding demographics, flyers, etc.
- Update our information and list of film locations on state's film website

2. Public Relations:

- Determine what publications and avenues to promote the city – KnowATL, James Magazine, etc.
- Create a business newsletter to send out to businesses – highlights BRE visits, Ribbon Cuttings, Resources, upcoming events, etc.
- Create marketing materials to promote Forest Park to potential investors and businesses

3. Social Media:

- Create post highlighting visits with businesses on social media
- Use LinkedIn, Facebook and more to promote Forest Park

Metrics:

- Reach and engagement on social media.
- Visits to the website.
- Subscribers to newsletter.

Timeline: Complete by November 2024. We have already begun posting about business visits and highlighting our events on social media platforms.

3. Internal Operations

Objective: Improve efficiency and effectiveness within the Economic Development Department.

Actions:

1. Process Review:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of all internal processes and identify areas for improvement.
- Create Standard Operations and Procedures document.

- Create new tracking system for businesses assisted
- 2. Staff Training:**
 - Pursuit of certifications and professional development training – GMA, IEDC, GA Main Street, Leadership Clayton, etc.
 - Encourage participation in regional and national economic development conferences and workshops.
 - Participate in webinars on the state of the economy like GA State’s Market Watch
- 3. Performance Metrics:**
 - Develop clear performance metrics for all staff members. (New KPIs: Businesses assisted, new real estate connections)
 - Implement a regular review process to ensure accountability and progress.

Metrics:

- Attendance of conferences and trainings in the next six months (GEDA, GA Downtown Conference)
- Monthly tracking of KPIs.

Timeline: Have SOPs and system of KPI tracking complete by December 2024.

4. Small Business Improvement

Objective: Enhance the city’s ability to support the small business community and help entrepreneurs thrive.

Actions:

- 1. Host Business Support Program with Clayton State Small Business Team:**
 - Partner with Clayton State Small Business Development Center to host open house forums where entrepreneurs can receive free consultation from CSU business consultants.
 - Ensure the website is mobile-responsive and optimized for search engines.
- 2. Content Development:**
 - Create business newsletter
 - Create a blog that highlights success stories on the revamped website
- 3. Forest Business Association**
 - Increase participation and attendance at these events through expanding outreach efforts and promoting the association during business retention visits.

Metrics:

- Number of workshops held and attendance rates.
- Participant feedback and outcomes from training.
- Increase in business inquiries through the website, email, or phone call.

Timeline: Increase participation in Forest Park Association by December 2024. This will be an ongoing initiative.

5. Networking

Objective: Build strong relationships with key stakeholders and foster a collaborative business environment.

Actions:

1. Business Networking Events:

- Attend networking events with real estate brokers and investors in order to promote Forest Park and build relationships (Contractors, Connectors, & Closers, Co-Star State of Market, etc.)
- Reaching out to the local real estate brokers in the city and sharing Forest Park’s goals and vision
- Giving tours and sharing information on city DDA, DA, URA, and City owned properties

2. Partnership Development:

- Strengthen partnerships with local chambers of commerce, business associations, and educational institutions.
- Collaborate on joint initiatives like Aerotropolis catalytic site project and CID expansion

Metrics:

- Attendance and connections made from networking events.
- Number of partnerships and collaborative projects.

Timeline: This will be an ongoing initiative.

6. Authority Boards Update

1. Downtown Development Authority:

- Project Moonshot: 6-acre mixed-use development on College and Main Street. This project will encompass 275 apartment units, 22k square feet of retail space, and 400 parking spaces.
- Main Street events – Up Early on Main, Blues on Main Street, and more
- Operation Unload: We are marketing properties that DDA owns to real estate brokers, developers, and potential commercial prospects

2. Development Authority:

- Redevelopment of 850 Main Street Building
- We are marketing properties that DA owns to real estate brokers, developers, and potential commercial prospects

3. Urban Redevelopment Authority:

- URA Strategic Retreat, Master Plan and expansion of URA boundaries
- We are marketing properties that URA owns to real estate brokers, developers, and potential commercial prospects