



GROW GRAND ISLAND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the community's ongoing efforts to make Grand Island and the surrounding region as attractive and supportive as possible for small business growth, existing business expansions, and new business relocations, a diverse group of partners including the Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (the EDC), the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber), and the Grand Island/Hall County Convention and Visitors Bureau (the CVB) have initiated a process – *Grow Grand Island* – to further enhance the business development initiatives in the area. This process has resulted in the development of a new, holistic Business Development Strategy that will help the community and the aforementioned partners focus business development resources in a manner that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness, enhances prospects for quality growth, and increases well-being for business and workers.

This document represents the final phase in this process, the Implementation Plan. While the Business Development Strategy addresses "what" Grand Island as a community seeks to pursue to enhance its business development activities, this Implementation Plan helps define "how" the community and the various organizations engaged in business development will collectively and collaboratively implement the Strategy. Specifically, it helps delineate organizational roles and responsibilities, required partnerships to support effective and collaborative implementation, resource requirements (staff and financial), and metrics for gauging return on investment in the recommendations included in the Business Development Strategy.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The roughly eight-month, four-phase research and strategic planning process will be informed by extensive resident and business input gathered via focus groups, interviews, a community survey, and steering committee guidance.

PHASE I: COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

The Competitive Assessment provides a detailed examination of Grand Island's competitiveness as a place to live, work, visit, and do business. It leverages quantitative and qualitative research (including focus groups and a community survey), and will highlight the key "stories" facing Grand Island as it seeks to support existing businesses, attract new businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship. Collectively, these stories highlight the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges as identified by resident and business input and key demographic, socioeconomic, and economic trends. The community's competitiveness is benchmarked against three communities with which the area competes for both jobs and workers.

PHASE II: TARGET SECTOR ANALYSIS & MARKETING REVIEW

The Target Sector Analysis provides a detailed examination of the community's economic composition, identifying those business sectors which have the greatest potential to create new jobs and elevate standards of living in the community, focusing limited economic development resources on those opportunities that are likely to provide the greatest return on investment for the community, its businesses, and its workers. The accompanying Marketing Review analyzes the existing economic and community marketing efforts of the EDC, CVB, and Chamber to identify any areas for improvement.

PHASE III: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The third phase of the process brings together the findings from the first two phases to create a holistic, consensus-based Business Development Strategy to guide collaborative initiatives that support existing business growth, encourage entrepreneurship, and increase the community's competitiveness for new corporate investment. Strategic recommendations will be driven by the research findings – both qualitative and quantitative input. Examples of best practice programs, policies, and initiatives from communities around the country will also be included to help inform strategic recommendations and their subsequent implementation.

PHASE IV: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The final phase of the strategic planning process is the development of an Implementation Plan that supports the effective and efficient implementation of the Business Development Strategy's various recommendations. The Implementation Plan will examine the capacity of the EDC, CVB, and Chamber to effectively implement the Business Development Strategy and will identify lead implementers, key partners, potential costs, and timelines for implementation for each recommendation. Performance metrics for gauging the effectiveness of implementation efforts will also be included.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The strategic planning process is guided by a Steering Committee of representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. These individuals will oversee the entire planning effort, help identify strategic priorities for Grand Island, build consensus, and serve as public advocates for the betterment of Grand Island and its community, business, economic, and workforce development. The following individuals have volunteered their time to serve on the Steering Committee.

Committee Member	Representing Organization
Brandi Bosselman Lofing (co-chair)	Bosselman Holdings
Don Smith (co-chair)	The Grand Island Independent
Amos Anson	The Chocolate Bar
Carlos Barcenas	Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
Tonja Broadwell	Kelly Supply
Chuck Cooper	Crane Trust Nature & Visitors Center
Nathan DeLaet	Rodeway Inn
Dr. Robin Dexter	Grand Island Public Schools
Barb Engberg	Live Well Physical Therapy
Matt Fisher	Grand Island Northwest Public Schools
Peg Gilbert	Grand Island City Council
Jay Gnuse	Chief Industries, Inc.
Kurt Haecker	Home Federal Bank
John Hoggatt	First National Bank - Grand Island
Dr. Chad Hudnall	Family Eye Care
Bill Hunter	Syngenta Seeds
Jay Kaspar	INSUR Inc.
Dave Koubek	Chief Industries, Inc.
Matt Maser	Five Points Bank
Joseph McDermott	Nebraska State Fair
Dan McElligott	Saint Francis Hospital
Mark Miller	Eakes Office Plus
Ray O'Connor	O'Connor Enterprises
Mike Olson	Central Nebraska Regional Airport
Justin Oseka	Oseka Homes
Kirk Palmer	Pioneer Hy-Bred
Angela Reynolds	Central Community College
Dave Richardson	Equitable Bank
Tammy Slater	Goodwill Industries
Mike Swanson	Hall County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Gloria Thesenvitz	Nova-Tech, Inc.

GROW GRAND ISLAND

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: OVERVIEW

The Competitive Assessment and the Target Business Review produced that comprised the research phase of this strategic planning process revealed a variety of challenges and opportunities facing Grand Island as the community seeks to enhance its economic improvement and business development efforts. This research, inclusive of resident and business input, has indicated that Grand Island’s business community needs and desires a collaborative and comprehensive approach to business development activities. This necessitates a strategic focus that seeks to care for the needs of three constituencies that are often referred to as the “three legs of the economic development stool” – existing businesses, entrepreneurs, and prospective new businesses (potential corporate relocations). Accordingly, a holistic approach to business development in Grand Island is one that builds and maintains programs, policies, and initiatives that:

1. Facilitate the expansion of **existing businesses** and mitigate potential layoffs or business closures,
2. Provide **entrepreneurs** with necessary assistance and nurture an entrepreneurial culture, and,
3. Enhance the community’s **image** and marketing activities to support business and talent attraction.

Such programs, policies, and initiatives that support existing businesses, entrepreneurs, and prospective new businesses will need to be complemented by investments that:

4. Promote **workforce** sustainability through educational attainment and skills acquisition that align with employer needs, and
5. Develop and enhance **community assets** – infrastructure, facilities, amenities, etc. – that appeal to existing and prospective new businesses and workers.



Collectively, these five issues represent the community’s “pillars” – pillars which are the foundation of Grand Island’s approach to business development. **Collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnerships** represent the glue or cement that hold our pillars together and ensure that we have a strong foundation for business development. Furthermore, these five areas all support target sector development; rather than a distinct set of recommendations for individual target sectors, this strategy acknowledges the simple fact that many strategic recommendations can and should influence the competitiveness of multiple sectors.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

While the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy identifies “what” the community should pursue to strengthen its pillars – Existing Businesses, Entrepreneurs, Image, Workforce, and Community Assets – these Implementation Guidelines help define “how” the community will pursue effective and efficient implementation of the Grow Grand Island strategy.

Specifically, it outlines the ways in which the community will develop the volunteer and organizational leadership structures necessary to promote “**collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnerships**” that were identified as the community’s foundation for business development – the glue or cement that holds the community’s pillars together. It includes a discussion of the Steering Committee’s transition to an Implementation Committee, and its critical role in supporting the organizations and full-time professionals that will be tasked with leading the day-to-day implementation of many recommendations. It discusses the role of three critical organizations that convened this process – the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB – in building an effective Grow Grand Island partnership, and the manner in which greater organizational cooperation and collaboration can be promoted. It reviews the staffing and funding needs to effectively implement the strategy’s recommendations, and provides recommendations for building this necessary capacity.

For each recommendation in the Grow Grand Island strategy, it also provides the following information in the form of “implementation grids” that can be used to guide implementation efforts, track progress, and make updates as needed: potential lead implementers; potential supporting partners; a timeframe for implementation, and; cost estimates for implementation.

Finally, it presents a set of performance metrics for tracking and measuring the success of implementation efforts and their impact on key community attributes and outcomes.

Implementation Roles and Responsibilities

This section presents a brief discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the two principal leadership structures that will help advance implementation of the Business Development Strategy’s recommendations:

1. Volunteer leadership: the Grow Grand Island Implementation Committee
2. Organizational leadership: the Grow Grand Island Partnership

The first section outlines the effective transition of the Steering Committee to an Implementation Committee and reviews its ideal role in supporting the efforts of the organizations that comprise the Grow Grand Island Partnership (the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB). The second section reviews the collective responsibilities of the three aforementioned organizations in developing and advancing a collaborative and cooperative partnership that can support efficiency and effectiveness in implementation.

Board approval from each of the three aforementioned organizations is not only an important procedural matter as it relates to any changes in organizational roles, responsibilities, and resources, but is also critical to advancing the effective partnerships that this Implementation Plan seeks to support.

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

THE GROW GRAND ISLAND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

As the strategic planning process comes to an end, *Market Street* recommends that the Grow Grand Island Steering Committee formally transition to an Implementation Committee. The Implementation Committee would serve as the “keeper of the goals,” playing a critical role as a convener and coordinator of implementation efforts across numerous organizations over time. In an anonymous poll conducted during an October 2014 Steering Committee meeting, 95 percent of Steering Committee members in attendance endorsed the transition of the Steering Committee to an Implementation Committee.

IMPLEMENTATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The Implementation Committee should fulfill multiple roles in supporting the implementation of the Business Development Strategy. First, the members of the Implementation Committee must be “champions” of the visioning process, its recommendations, and the implementation effort. They must work to inform and educate the community and its leadership, and build support for specific initiatives. They must constantly remind themselves and the community that the Grow Grand Island recommendations were derived from extensive research and public input, including the opinions of more than 1,700 residents.

But most importantly, the Implementation Committee should serve as a catalyst. It should be the primary convener of implementation partners and will need to consistently remain focused on actions and results. The members of the Implementation Committee will need to engage a wide variety of organizations, institutions, and individuals that are necessary partners to carry out the Business Development Strategy’s recommendations. While many committees have a tendency to continually discuss the community’s challenges and opportunities, the Implementation Committee must recognize that, while continued dialogue is valued, it cannot inhibit the process of *doing*. The Committee must remain focused on activating the various recommendations with the assistance of professional staff from various implementation partners, particularly the three organizations that convened the Grow Grand Island process and will comprise the Grow Grand Island Partnership: the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB. In spirit and in action, the Implementation Committee should support the three aforementioned organizations, their boards, and their staffs. **Successful communities rely on both volunteers and professional staff; neither can effectively implement the strategy in isolation.**

Finally, the Implementation Committee should track progress, evaluate the success of implementation efforts, and regularly communicate these results to the public in collaboration with the Grow Grand Island Partnership and its constituent organizations. The Committee should evaluate past year successes on an annual basis, adjusting priorities and tactics as necessary. However, it must remember that the Business Development Strategy represents its agenda; it is the “playbook” that was developed over many months and the Committee should focus on adherence to the playbook. The Grow Grand Island Partnership, its constituent organizations, and their boards will need to endorse external communications of performance and implementation progress; their representation on the Implementation Committee (to be discussed in the following section) will ensure that this is the case.

COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP: The Implementation Committee should be composed of roughly 25-40 individuals that are interested and willing to make a multi-year commitment (minimum of two years) to advance the implementation of the strategic recommendations that were developed during the Grow Grand Island strategic planning phase. It is important that a significant portion of the Implementation Committee's representation be individuals that served on the Steering Committee and are therefore familiar with the strategic planning process, the resident input that informed the research findings, the strategic implications of these findings, and the strategic recommendations themselves. This continuity in leadership is critical to a quick and effective transition from strategic planning to implementation.

However, it is also important that the Implementation Committee include key leadership from organizations and entities that will be critical implementation partners for one or more recommendations but were not officially represented by an individual on the Steering Committee. While not all potential implementation partners can and should be engaged on the Committee, those that will be called upon to lead implementation of one or more recommendations and/or devote significant financial or staff resources to the implementation of one or more recommendations should be represented. Finally, it will be important that the Committee include key elected and appointed officials overseeing annual budget establishment and staff operations at the City of Grand Island, public school systems, and other similar partners. This could potentially include the Mayor, City Council President, Superintendent(s), and top administrative leadership. The inclusion of these individuals on the Implementation Committee is also critical to supporting alignment of Grow Grand Island with the implementation efforts associated with the City's Grand Vision and other city-supported or city-sponsored strategic plans.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CHAIRS: The Implementation Committee should include a smaller Executive Committee that will also comprise the board of directors for the recommended Grow Grand Island Foundation (discussed later in this Implementation Plan). The nine person Executive Committee should be comprised of the following individuals:

- ✓ Current chairpersons (3) of the board of directors at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB
- ✓ Incoming chairpersons (3) of the board of directors at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB
- ✓ Executive staff leadership (3) at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB

Should the City of Grand Island become a significant funder of the Grow Grand Island Foundation, consideration should be given to an Executive Committee and Foundation board appointment for the City. In 2015, while the Grow Grand Island Foundation is being established, the current co-chairs of the Steering Committee should ideally maintain their service as co-chairs of the Implementation Committee, creating continuity in volunteer leadership between the strategic planning phase and the implementation phase.

Following the establishment of the Grow Grand Island Foundation in 2015 and the appointment of the aforementioned nine-member Foundation board of directors, the Implementation Committee should ideally have three chairpersons (tri-chairs) that rotate on an annual basis: the currently seated chairs of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB. With the incoming chairpersons of these three organizations also seated on the Executive Committee, this will help ensure that each Implementation Committee chairperson gains exposure to the implementation process for at least one year prior to their appointment as tri-chair of the Implementation Committee. All tri-chairs should also be required to continue their service on the Implementation Committee in the year immediately following their service as a tri-chair, although they will no longer serve as a member of the Executive Committee or Grow Grand Island Foundation board.

SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORK GROUPS: Many communities that establish Implementation Committees also choose to create subcommittees or special interest groups (SIGs) supporting the Implementation Committee that align with the high-level goal areas of their strategy; in the case of Grow Grand Island's Business Development Strategy, the five pillars (Existing Businesses, Entrepreneurs, Image, Workforce, and Community Assets). *Market Street* does not believe that it is necessary for the Implementation Committee to create subcommittees for each of the five pillars, but does endorse the creation of smaller, ad hoc committees (a.k.a. work groups) to advance the implementation of specific recommendations as needed.

While the Implementation Committee is responsible for coordinating implementation activities for all recommendations, some specific recommendations will require a great deal of initiative and hands-on work from the Implementation Committee's members to start and maintain implementation. For example, the Implementation Committee may determine that a small group of individuals and organizations needs to meet more frequently than the quarterly Implementation Committee meetings in order to plan and launch the Learn and Earn internship and apprenticeship initiative (recommendation 4.3) or evaluate the viability of developing a Fabrication Lab (recommendation 2.5), among other recommendations. In other communities, such ad hoc committees or work groups are often comprised of between 5 and 10 individuals that are particularly passionate about a specific initiative and willing to devote additional time to make the initiative a reality. These groups report back to the full Implementation Committee on their progress and remain in operation for as long as necessary, with some meeting only for a few months if they can quickly accomplish their objectives.

TRANSITION: Beginning in early 2015, the Steering Committee should take the following steps to facilitate its formal transition to an Implementation Committee:

- ✓ Seek commitments from Steering Committee members that are interested and willing to commit to a minimum of two years of service on the Implementation Committee (until the end of 2016).
- ✓ Identify key individuals (staff and volunteer leadership) at the organizations that are frequently identified as lead implementers or supporting partners for the strategy's various recommendations that would be ideal additions to the Implementation Committee.
- ✓ Speak in person with the identified individuals, inform and educate them regarding the strategic planning process and its outcomes, and invite them to serve on the Implementation Committee.
- ✓ Develop a meeting schedule for the first year (2015) of the Committee's operations, understanding that much of the work in the first-year (2015) will be devoted to capacity-building and fundraising (see section entitled "Implementation Schedule" for a complete review of implementation priorities and timing).
- ✓ Identify locations for all Implementation Committee meetings.
- ✓ Engage all current and incoming chairpersons of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB and begin steps associated with the formation of an Executive Committee.

The aforementioned items should serve as the agenda for the first Implementation Committee meeting that will ideally take place in January or early February 2015.

MEETING SCHEDULE: During its first full year of operation (2015), the Implementation Committee should, at a minimum, meet quarterly and ideally continue its monthly meeting schedule. Greater frequency can help activate high-priority initiatives from the Business Development Strategy while also helping staff at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB accomplish numerous “startup” tasks that need to be initiated before implementation can begin in full. This includes but is not limited to engaging a broader set of volunteers and implementation partners, establishing the Grow Grand Island Foundation, facilitating a variety of tasks that promote organizational alignment (see section entitled “Organizational Leadership: The Grow Grand Island Partnership”), and hiring a Grow Grand Island Coordinator (see section entitled “Staffing Grow Grand Island”).

The strength of this first-year implementation effort is a strong predictor of a community’s long-term success in activating its Plan and preventing it from becoming a document on a shelf. Getting started is often the hardest but most impactful task. Many communities lose momentum following the strategic planning phase; any amount of delay could cause some individuals involved in the strategic planning process to lose interest, disengage, and view the process as “all talk and no action.” Accordingly, the first meeting of the Implementation Committee should be scheduled for January or early February 2015 – no more than two months following the last formal meeting of the Steering Committee during the strategic planning process (December 11, 2014). During the January/early February 2015 meeting, the Implementation Committee should evaluate its meeting schedule and determine the frequency with which it needs to meet to effectively accomplish its objectives.

MEETING STRUCTURE, CONDUCT, AND FACILITATION: The Implementation Committee – and particularly its chairpersons – will need to determine the appropriate ways to structure, facilitate, and conduct meetings. Chairpersons should serve as meeting facilitators, ensuring that the committee remains on track and follows the agenda for that meeting. The chairpersons should work with the recommended Grow Grand Island Coordinator to develop agenda in advance of each meeting.

A common format for meetings is to utilize the first half to allow Committee members to provide updates on implementation efforts in recent months. In Grand Island, this could include representatives from the three primary organizations comprising the Grow Grand Island Partnership (the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB), Grand Island Public Schools and Grand Island Northwest Public Schools, Central Community College, or various departments of the City of Grand Island, among many other entities that will be actively engaged in leading implementation efforts. The second half of the meetings then becomes a work session to discuss the tasks and responsibilities of the Committee – both collectively and as individuals – in activating specific recommendations in the months ahead. Meetings therefore begin by taking a look back at the work that is in progress and/or has been accomplished in recent months, and conclude with a look forward at the work that needs to be accomplished in the coming months. These work sessions should identify the need to form any ad hoc subcommittees or work groups, while also developing clear “to-do lists” for individuals or subcommittees. There will be times when certain individuals are more heavily involved than others in implementation as necessitated by their subject matter expertise, interest level, or role within organizations that are working with the Implementation Committee to advance a specific recommendation.

Market Street recommends that the Implementation Committee utilize the “implementation grids” included in this document, using the timelines within to identify the initiatives that it will focus on each year.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

THE GROW GRAND ISLAND PARTNERSHIP

When the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB convened the Grow Grand Island strategic planning process in early 2014, it was clear to each that the community not only needed a blueprint for its business development activities, but also a blueprint for greater organizational collaboration and cooperation. It was recognized that the development of greater organizational collaboration and cooperation was instrumental to the community's ability to successfully implement the resulting blueprint for business development activities – the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy. Accordingly, “collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnerships” were identified in the Business Development Strategy as the the community's foundation for business development – the glue or cement that holds the community's pillars together.

Many communities and regions with a strong history of effective partnerships across organizations and engaged in community improvement and economic development, and between the public and private sectors, often choose to formalize a new public-private partnership to advance their business development activities, occasionally including the merger of pre-existing organizations. The reality in 2014 in Grand Island is that much trust remains to be built between the staff and volunteer (board) leadership at the three convening organizations (the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB). Two of these organizations (the EDC and the CVB) have relatively new executives that have been on the job for less than two years and naturally the development of strong relationships and working partnerships between organizations takes time.

Simply put, it would be not only premature but also infeasible to formalize a new public-private partnership that attempted to merge some or all operations of the three convening organizations. Furthermore, *Market Street Services* believes that such a merger of operations under a single, new organization (a new non-profit business development organization) would be inappropriate given the clear distinction in each organization's mission and purpose. However, the community clearly needs a blueprint for enhanced collaboration and cooperation between the convening organizations, ideally in a manner that not only promotes the development of trust and effective working relationships but also greater operational efficiencies for each organization. Accordingly, *Market Street* recommends that the three convening organizations join together as the Grow Grand Island Partnership, an informal partnership of three organizations seeking to advance prosperity and business development in the Grand Island region through implementation of its Business Development Strategy.

The Grow Grand Island Partnership should not simply be a partnership in name only. Rather, it should be a partnership that is supported by a deliberate set of actions that will help ensure that the Business Development Strategy's implementation is in fact embodied by the “collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnership” that was identified as the foundation of the community's business development efforts. These deliberate actions (which are discussed in greater detail in the following subsections) include:

- ✓ The establishment of a Grow Grand Island website
- ✓ The establishment of the Grow Grand Island Business Assistance Center (co-located office space)
- ✓ Regularly scheduled communication and meetings between staff leadership
- ✓ Coordinated outreach and engagement to existing businesses and external audiences
- ✓ Coordinated governance structures to promote board-level cooperation
- ✓ Coordinated fundraising to support the Business Development Strategy's implementation
- ✓ Shared staff support for the Business Development Strategy's implementation

GROW GRAND ISLAND WEBSITE: Although seemingly trivial relative to many of the other tactics necessary to advance effective partnerships, developing a unified website that can serve as a “gateway” or “landing page” for the Grow Grand Island Partnership and its constituent organizations is important. The website would fulfil multiple objectives:

1. Clearly communicate to internal and external audiences that Grand Island has an intentional, proactive, and collaborative approach to facilitating economic development and community improvement.
2. Clearly communicate that it is doing so through implementation of a Business Development Strategy.
3. Direct individuals appropriately to the three organizations, their individual websites, and their staff contacts based on that individual’s specific needs.
4. Provide information on the Grow Grand Island Foundation (see subsequent section entitled “Funding Grow Grand Island”).

The website should succinctly state the mission of the Grow Grand Island Partnership; the Partnership’s mission should principally be the implementation of the Business Development Strategy. However, it is Market Street’s opinion that the Implementation Committee, in collaboration with the three organizations that comprise the organizational Partnership, should draft the mission statement. The mission should be stated clearly on the Partnership website’s main page.

The main page should prominently feature the three organizations and their logos. Each logo should be hyperlinked, directing traffic to the appropriate organization based on that individual’s needs. Communities need principal points of contact for specific audiences. For example, site selectors and companies considering relocating to a community need a single point of contact to help them navigate the process of community evaluation, site selection, incentives negotiation, and eventual relocation. Existing businesses need a single point of contact when they have an issue that needs resolution. Small businesses need a single point of contact to help identify the appropriate resources and forms of assistance based on their needs. And travelers and tourists need a single point of contact when evaluating what to do, where to stay, and how to best enjoy themselves during their time in Grand Island. For the purposes of establishing principal points of contact for specific audiences, *Market Street* recommends that the Partnership website direct visitors according to the following guidelines:

- ✓ Existing business and prospective entrepreneurs seeking assistance should contact the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce.
- ✓ Prospective new businesses considering relocation to Grand Island, and any existing business seeking economic incentives associated with a potential expansion, should contact the Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation.
- ✓ Travelers, visitors, meeting planners, and others interested in learning about the community’s tourism assets should contact the Grand Island/Hall County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

It is *Market Street’s* opinion that all prospective businesses considering relocation, regardless of sector, should be directed to a single point of contact; this is industry best practice. That being said, it is acknowledged that the community has historically split these duties between the Chamber and the EDC, with the EDC assuming responsibility for those in export-oriented sectors (i.e. manufacturing, professional services, transportation and distribution, etc.) and the Chamber assuming responsibility for retail trade and

food service establishments considering location in Grand Island. While *Market Street* believes that industry best practice is to have a single point of contact, it also acknowledges that each community is different. Should the Chamber and EDC agree to continue to split prospect activity in the historical manner, they will need to be able to clearly and succinctly communicate to these audiences (site selectors and corporate decision-makers in varied business sectors) their organization's respective responsibilities.

THE GROW GRAND ISLAND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER (CO-LOCATED OFFICES): While the Grow Grand Island Partnership website will serve as a "gateway" and front door for external audiences to the community's collaborative approach to business development, the establishment of a Grow Grand Island Business Assistance Center will do the same for internal audiences, creating a single "front door" for the existing business community and other organizational partners to the community's collective business development resources.

In essence the Grow Grand Island Business Assistance Center is simply a singular location for the offices of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB. The co-location of office space is not only important to the manner in which the region's collaborative business development efforts are accessed by the existing business community and other organizational partners, it is critical to the development of effective working relationships between the three organizations and the pursuit of operational efficiencies. The proximity of the organizations' executive leadership and their staffs to one another will undoubtedly nurture greater day-to-day communication and collaboration. But it will also hopefully help promote greater operational efficiency for each organization through cost savings that could not otherwise be realized if each organization maintained separate offices. The aggregate cost of office space across the three organizations should be reduced, and efficiencies can be gained by sharing software, hardware and equipment (such as printers/copiers, mail room equipment, etc.), and other administrative costs.

SCHEDULED COMMUNICATION: Although shared office space will help promote more frequent ad hoc communication between staff at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB, the Partnership should be supported by regularly scheduled meetings to review the work that each is doing and the ways in which each organization and their staffs can assist one another. These meetings should promote collaborative problem-solving and advance an approach to business development that is predicated upon the belief that the work is a "team sport." Each organization can and should assist one another when available, appropriate, and necessary. Such meetings between the three executives would ideally take place weekly or bi-weekly (every two weeks). Joint staff meetings between all three organizations could be scheduled quarterly (or some other frequency) as well.

COORDINATED OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: Regular meetings between staff leadership should also help ensure that communications with the existing business community, prospective new businesses, and implementation partners are coordinated and non-duplicative. Shared customer relationship management (CRM) software could help each organization stay up-to-date and "on the same page" with regards to the current state of assistance being provided to existing and prospective future employers. Potential also exists for collaborative events that demonstrate organizational alignment. This includes member events and broader community events where the presentation of a unified voice – the Grow Grand Island Partnership – can complement, not supplant, each organization's individual voice. A joint annual meeting for the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB would send an incredible signal to the community that the Grow Grand Island Partnership is not "business as usual."

COORDINATED GOVERNANCE: As mentioned in the previous discussion related to the Implementation Committee, its structure, and its leadership, the establishment of an Executive Committee within the Implementation Committee that is comprised of the executive staff and board-level leadership (incoming and current chairpersons) of the three organizations can help ensure that the “collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnership” is not only embodied at the staff-level but also at the board-level. This level of coordinated governance is critical; clearly staff leadership must be on the same page with their board leadership if the three organizations are to advance implementation of the Business Development Strategy *together*. Furthermore, trust and effective working relationships must be developed among board members within each organization and between board members across organizations.

COORDINATED FUNDRAISING: Again, as previously mentioned in the discussion related to the Implementation Committee, the recommended Executive Committee would also serve as the Board of Directors for the recommended Grow Grand Island Foundation. As discussed in greater detail in the subsequent section entitled “Funding Grow Grand Island,” the Grow Grand Island Foundation should support a collaborative fundraising endeavor to finance, in part, the implementation of the initiatives outlined in the Business Development Strategy. An attempt to coordinate fundraising initiatives should help the organizations ensure that they are financing strategic initiatives for the benefit of the community and its existing businesses in a manner that acknowledges that such initiatives require public and private investment above and beyond what each organization can support through their individual budgets.

SHARED STAFF SUPPORT: Finally, the hiring of a Grow Grand Island Coordinator that will support all three organizations but principally the Implementation Committee will also help ensure that the spirit of “collaborative, cooperative, and effective partnerships” is not just promoted at the staff-level but also among volunteers representing various interests and constituencies through their service on the Implementation Committee. Grow Grand Island – and any collaborative, community-led business development initiative for that matter – must be supported by professional staff *and* volunteers that place the community’s interest above any individual interests.

Staffing Grow Grand Island

Make no mistake – the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy is an ambitious endeavor for Grand Island and its business community. Effective implementation will require significant additional financial resources and considerable time commitment from volunteers (the members of the Implementation Committee and its various subcommittees). It will also require an immense commitment from the staffs at the Grow Grand Island Partnership’s constituent organizations (the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB), particularly their executive leadership. Strong staff capacity exists at this executive level and *Market Street* believes that, between the three organizations, sufficient capacity exists to advance many of the strategic recommendations supporting the community’s five pillars. However, there is one area needing additional capacity to ensure that the implementation effort is successful: volunteer coordination.

Communities that establish Implementation Committee (and any associated subcommittees) often greatly underestimate the amount of work that they are about to undertake. And the organizations that lead implementation often greatly underestimate the time and resources that it takes to support an Implementation Committee and other subcommittees that will be actively involved in implementation.

Accordingly, Market Street recommends that a **Grow Grand Island Coordinator** be hired as soon as possible to support the Steering Committee's transition to an Implementation Committee, and to help advance a variety of "pre-implementation" initiatives associated with meeting planning, organizational alignment, and fundraising. In the years ahead this individual would manage day-to-day activities related to the Plan's implementation, serving as a primary point of contact and coordinator of initiatives across numerous implementation partners. They would be responsible for developing, managing, and supporting the various volunteer leadership structures that support the Business Development Strategy's implementation, including the Implementation Committee and its Executive Committee, any ad hoc subcommittees, and the Grow Grand Island Foundation. In this role this individual would be responsible for a variety of tasks, including but not limited to:

- ✓ coordinating and scheduling Implementation Committee and any subcommittee meetings;
- ✓ keeping an accurate record of meetings, the discussion, and the identified next steps;
- ✓ developing tactical work plans for the implementation of specific recommendations, as needed;
- ✓ identifying potential funding sources when needed and applying for grants if necessary;
- ✓ helping the Implementation Committee and implementation partners develop and coordinate any necessary fundraising efforts for specific initiatives;
- ✓ tracking the status of implementation efforts related to individual recommendations;
- ✓ developing and maintaining reporting mechanisms related to performance metrics and implementation progress;
- ✓ managing communications with the public and the media, and;
- ✓ engaging and soliciting input from the community and its leadership to provide a constant flow of information and feedback to the Implementation Committee.

Given the scale and scope of the Business Development Strategy's recommendations, the ideal candidate is someone that not only understands a variety of different community issues but also has a strong knowledge of the Grand Island community, its many organizations that will be implementation partners, and the state's legislative environment. They should ideally have experience in a non-profit setting, working in volunteer coordination, public relations and communications, and potentially grant writing.

This position would be housed at the recommended Grow Grand Island Business Assistance Center, home of the co-located offices of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB. It could potentially be placed on the payroll of the Grow Grand Island Foundation once established, but it likely makes more sense for the position to be placed on the payroll of one of the three Partnership organizations to provide benefits to the employee under on the three organization's existing employee benefit plans/structures. The position should be funded in the first year (2015) with monies from the three aforementioned organizations, with each entity providing an equal share of the cost associated with the position. Each organization should evaluate existing budgets and staff resources to determine if certain expenditures can be reallocated to support an expeditious hiring. A search for candidates should begin as soon as possible with the goal of hiring a qualified candidate to start no later than March 1, 2015. Ideally, a hire would be made in advance of the Implementation Committee's first meeting (recommended for late January/early February 2015). A reasonable hiring range for the position is \$35,000 - \$45,000 depending on qualifications and experience. An exceptionally well-qualified and experienced candidate will likely command a salary outside this range.

Funding Grow Grand Island

THE GROW GRAND ISLAND FOUNDATION

The Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy will not only require some additional staff support but will also clearly require additional financial resources. While some recommendations reflect continuations of slight modifications to existing initiatives that are currently captured by organizational budgets, and others will rely heavily on volunteer time, the majority of the recommendations contained in the Business Development Strategy will require new investment that cannot be supported entirely by the existing budgets of the Chamber, the EDC, the CVB, and their various implementation partners. In order for the strategy to be successfully implemented, Market Street recommends that the Implementation Committee work with the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB to establish the Grow Grand Island Foundation, a new, non-profit 501(c)(3) that can receive tax-deductible contributions from public and private investors associated with a Grow Grand Island fundraising campaign.

There are multiple portions of the federal tax code under which an economic and business development foundation is eligible to incorporate, specifically sections 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(6). It is clear that 501(c)(3) will provide the community with the greatest set of benefits and ideal attributes for such a foundation, including but not limited to the utmost flexibility and eligibility for foundation, federal and state grant monies; tax-deductibility for private contributions; and limitations on political campaigning and lobbying activity.

FOUNDATION SETUP: The establishment of the Grow Grand Island Foundation is one the first activities that must take place before any substantive work can begin towards the implementation of strategic recommendations in the Business Development Strategy. Market Street recommends that a small subcommittee from the Implementation Committee be established as soon as possible to assist the executive and board leadership at the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB in establishing the new non-profit. Necessary steps include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Identifying a provider or providers of legal and administrative support that can offer in-kind services to the Implementation Committee to aid the process of incorporation as a 501(c)(3).
- ✓ Develop a mission statement and a case for support that is based on the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy's pillars, recommendations, and intended outcomes.
- ✓ Develop bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- ✓ Identify a provider of communications and web development services that can offer in-kind services to the Implementation Committee to aid the development of key messaging, a website (the aforementioned Grow Grand Island Partnership website), and print collateral necessary to effectively "launch" the foundation, give it a public face, and enable communication with potential investors.

INVESTORS: The Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy promotes a holistic approach to community, economic, workforce, and business development activities in the community. It seeks to impact a variety of community outcomes at the individual, business, and community level, from per capita incomes and high school graduation rates to job growth and tax revenues (see section entitled "Measuring Performance and Implementation Success"). The benefits from its effective implementation will accrue to households, existing businesses, entrepreneurs, the community at-large – both the public and the private

sector should experience significant positive impacts. This is true of any comprehensive and holistic effort similar to Grow Grand Island. Best practice communities and their businesses, nonprofits, and public entities recognize this; they acknowledge that true partnerships are supported by varied interests and that each segment of the community must have “skin in the game.” That is to say, an effective Grow Grand Island Foundation is one that is supported by investments from the private, nonprofit, and public sectors. This demonstrates collective commitment and promotes collective accountability for the community’s prosperity.

With this in mind, *Market Street* believes firmly that the Grow Grand Island Foundation must be supported by investments from the private, nonprofit, and public sector. The majority of the investment should come from those who are intended to be the greatest beneficiaries – the existing business community. Market Street also believes that the public sector should also be a significant investor in the Grow Grand Island Foundation. Successful communities and their local governments recognize that the return on investment in terms of property, sales, and other tax revenues is tremendous. Non-profits from around the region and state should also be targeted as potential investors. Many will find that their organizational missions and/or specific funds align with the mission of the Grow Grand Island Foundation or the objective of a specific recommendation in the Business Development Strategy that it supports.

IMPLEMENTATION BUDGET AND FUNDRAISING NEEDS: As illustrated in the “implementation grids” presented later in this document, the potential cost associated with implementation of many recommendations is highly variable depending upon the scale and scope of recommended activities that are pursued by the community. And while all communities would embrace unlimited resources, the reality is that all communities must scale their initiatives based in part upon available resources.

Using the cost estimates provided in the “implementation grids” presented later in this document, along with the cost estimates associated with the recommended new staff position (the Grow Grand Island Coordinator), *Market Street* has attempted to arrive an estimate of the minimum funds necessary to begin activating the recommendations in the Business Development Strategy. Beginning in 2016 (the scheduled start date for full implementation of the Business Development Strategy’s recommendations), **Market Street believes that the Grow Grand Island Foundation will require a minimum annual investment between \$300,000 and \$400,000 to support the effective implementation of the Business Development Strategy, acknowledging that the scale of many initiatives is variable and should be determined based on the success of fundraising efforts. These estimates equate to a five-year fundraising campaign goal of \$1.5 million - \$2.0 million or an average of \$350,000 annually and \$1.75 million over five years.**

These estimates are based on the burden associated with the Grow Grand Island Partnership’s role in implementing each recommendation – in many cases this role is simply support for an initiative that may eventually be assumed under the budget of another organization or institution. For example, support for the implementation of CNRA’s Capital Improvement Plan and the Downtown Redevelopment Study’s recommendations are highlighted in the Grow Grand Island study, but the costs associated with implementing these two plans should not be considered as fundraising requirements for the Grow Grand Island Foundation. Similarly, some new initiatives (such as the development of a Parent Resource Center or the GI Grads scholarship fund) may need startup funds to help them “get off the ground” but their sustainable funding will likely come from another organization (in the case of the Parent Resource Center, Grand Island Public Schools).

When establishing organizational budgets for the upcoming year, “lead implementers” (typically the Chamber, the EDC, or the CVB) should submit requests as a matter of formality to the Grow Grand Island Foundation board (which also serves as the Executive Committee of the Implementation Committee) for necessary funds to implement recommendations, consistent with the guidelines outlined in the “implementation grids” that follow in this document. These guidelines for lead implementers and potential implementation costs associated with each recommendation should be viewed as preliminary estimates and starting points for discussion; they are not to be interpreted as rigid guidelines for implementation.

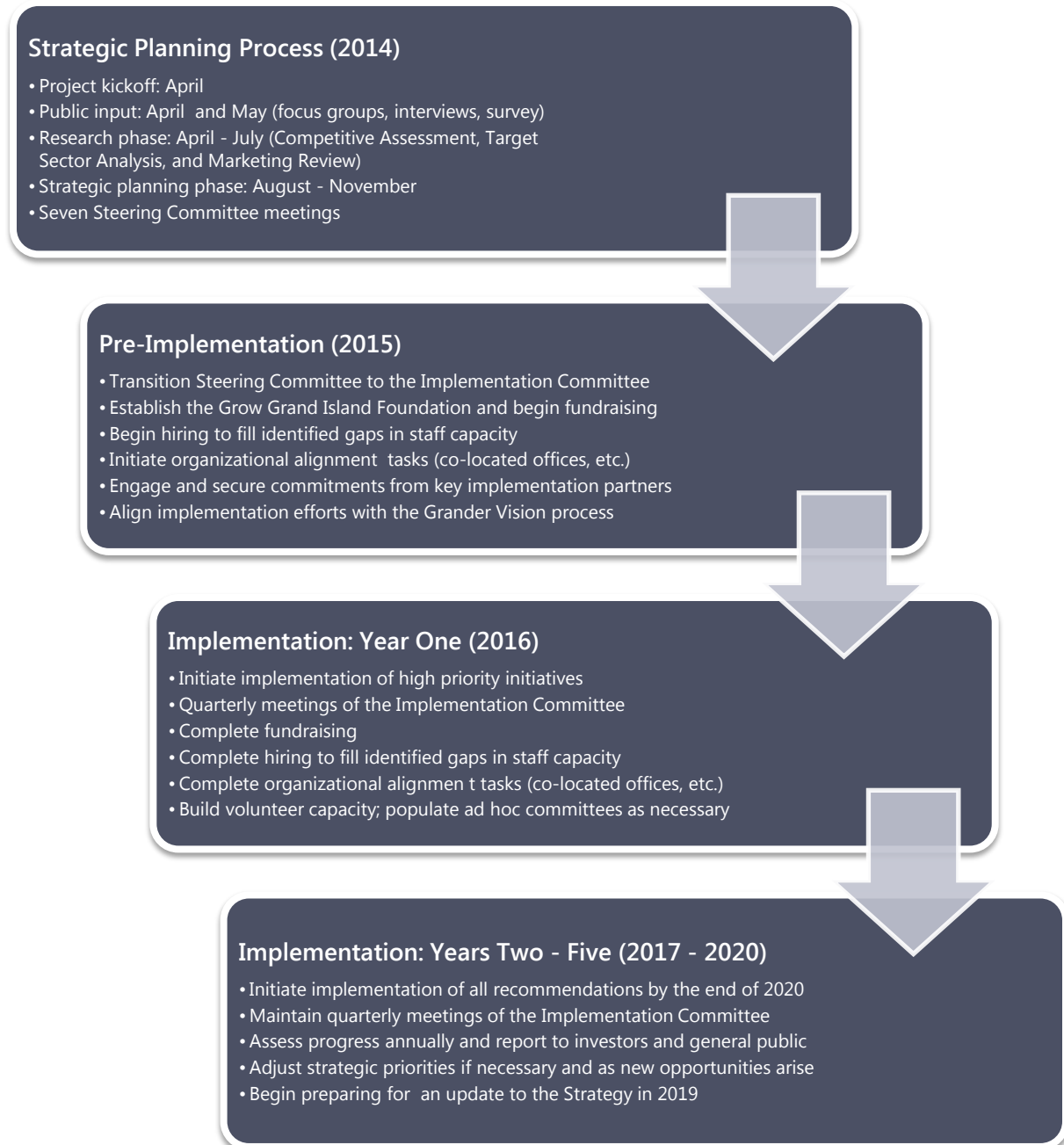
Implementation Partners

The preceding sections have discussed the volunteer and organizational leadership structures that are necessary to nurture a collaborative, effective, and well-funded approach to implementation of the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy, with specific attention paid to the role of the Implementation Committee and that of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB – the three principal organizations comprising the Grow Grand Island Partnership. However, effective and efficient implementation will require the support and participation of numerous partners throughout the community. The table that follows is a non-exhaustive list of potential implementation partners, accompanied by abbreviations for each organization/entity. These abbreviations are used in the “implementation grids” that follow to help identify lead implementers and supporting partners for each individual recommendation in the Business Development Strategy. Many other organizations can and should be engaged in implementation and the Implementation Committee will be responsible for identifying and engaging additional partners as needed.

Acronym	Organization	Acronym	Organization
AN	Accelerate Nebraska	GOV	Governor’s Office
BIZ	Business Community/Private Employers	HC	Hall County
CCC	Central Community College	HNWI	High Net Worth Individuals
CNRA	Central Nebraska Regional Airport	HUW	Heartland United Way
COC	Grand Island Chamber of Commerce	IC	Implementation Committee
CPI	Career Pathways Institute	IN	Invest Nebraska
CRA	Grand Island Community Redev. Authority	ITA	U.S. International Trade Administration
CTNVC	Crane Trust Nature and Visitors Center	LCOC	Lincoln Chamber of Commerce
CVB	Grand Island/Hall Co. Conv. & Visitors Bureau	LGs	Local Governments
CYC	Community Youth Council	LT	Leadership Tomorrow
DBID	Downtown Business Improvement District	MC	Multicultural Coalition
DGI	Downtown Grand Island	NBDC	Nebraska Business Dev. Center
DOANE	Doane College	NDED	Nebraska Dept. of Economic Dev.
EDC	Grand Island Area Economic Dev. Corp.	NDOE	Nebraska Department of Education
ELF	Edward Lowe Foundation	NDOL	Nebraska Department of Labor
EXIM	Export-Import Bank of the United States	NDOR	Nebraska Department of Roads
FI	Financial Institutions	NEDCO	Nebraska Economic Dev. Company
FNDNs	Various Foundations	NIFA	Nebraska Investment Finance Authority
FP	Fonner Park	NSF	Nebraska State Fair
GGI	Grow Grand Island Partnership	NTC	Nebraska Tourism Commission
GGIF	Grow Grand Island Foundation	RPC	Regional Planning Commission
GI	City of Grand Island	SBA	U.S. Small Business Administration
GICF	Grand Island Community Foundation	SCEDD	South Central Economic Dev. District
GIEF	Grand Island Education Foundation	USCOCF	U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
GILCA	Grand Island Livestock Complex Authority	UN	University of Nebraska
GINPS	Grand Island Northwest Public Schools	UTIL	Utilities
GIPS	Grand Island Public Schools	YEA	Young Entrepreneurs Academy

Implementation Schedule

Successful communities never stop planning. But successful communities also do not allow the processes of conversing and strategic planning – as important as they are – to impede the process of *doing*. Any set of strategic recommendations needs a schedule for implementation. As repeatedly mentioned, the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy is ambitious. All recommendations cannot and should not be accomplished fully in a five-year period. But they can all be started. The graphic that follows provides a brief overview of the timing for key phases of the strategic planning process and its implementation.



IMPLEMENTATION GRIDS

The implementation grids that follow contain important guidelines for implementing individual recommendations within the Business Development Strategy. Complemented by the detailed actions outlined for each recommendation in the Business Development Strategy, these grids should be utilized by the Implementation Committee to guide their implementation efforts, manage outreach efforts to implementation partners, help track progress, and identify “what’s next” on its implementation to-do list. The grids, grouped by pillar, include the following pieces of information (in columns) for each recommendation:

Number:	The number assigned to each recommendation in the strategy.
Recommendation:	The recommendation as written in the strategy
Potential Lead Implementer(s):	Abbreviations/acronyms of the entities that are likely the most logical organizations to lead implementation efforts for the referenced recommendation. <u>When the Grow Grand Island Partnership (GGI) is identified as the lead implementer, a set of parentheses with the acronym for one of the three constituent organizations (COC, EDC, or CVB) is included to indicate which of the three partners may take the lead on behalf of the Partnership. The other two organizations in the Partnership are not listed as supporting partners as these organizations are captured within the reference to the Grow Grand Island Partnership, and therefore assumed to be necessary implementation partners.</u>
Potential Implementation Partners:	Abbreviations/acronyms of entities that should be engaged in a supportive role for the implementation of the referenced action. This is not an exhaustive list, but simply a starting point for the Implementation Committee’s outreach efforts associated with each recommendation.
Implementation Timeframe:	A recommended start date and implementation timeline associated with each recommendation. Timeframes have been informed by prioritization exercises conducted by the Steering Committee members.
Potential Cost (Low):	A low end estimate of the potential cost associated with implementing the recommendation as written in the strategy.
Potential Cost (High):	A high end estimate of the potential cost associated with implementing the recommendation as written in the strategy.
Cost Notes:	Notes regarding what is broadly captured by the potential cost estimates.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: EXISTING BUSINESSES

#	Recommendation	Potential Lead Implementer(s)	Potential Implementation Partners	Implementation Start	Potential Cost (Low)	Potential Cost (High)	Cost Notes
1.1	Launch a collaborative Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) outreach program that seeks to facilitate expansions and mitigate layoffs by conducting a series of site visits and surveys with existing businesses in and around Grand Island.	GGI (COC)	NDED, NDOL, UTIL, GI, LGs, BIZ	2016	\$15,000	\$30,000	Primary cost will be staff-time. The cost estimate captures customized CRM software for BRE outreach and surveying, communications, travel for site visits, and a wide variety of potential costs associated with mitigating closures and alleviating barriers to expansion.
1.2	Launch the Grow Grand Island Export Initiative to support the development of new international trade relationships for Grand Island area manufacturers.	GGI (EDC), IC	NDED, ITA, EXIM, SBA, BIZ	2018	\$20,000	\$35,000	Primary cost is staff time. Estimated costs cover event hosting and coordination, travel expenses, etc. associated with hosting a "Trade Development Day" and a "Reverse Trade Mission."
1.3	Launch an Economic Gardening program in partnership with NDED and the Edward Lowe Foundation.	GGI (COC), NDED, ELF	NBDC	2017	\$10,000	\$20,000	The cost to participate in Edward Lowe's pilot program is roughly \$5,000 per firm. Costs will presumably be shared between NDED and local funding sources (GGIF). Cost estimate reflects the provision of assistance to between 2 and 4 companies each year.
1.4	Launch a local-sourcing campaign - The Grow Grand Island Challenge - that challenges businesses to identify at least one non-local supplier of goods and/or services and switch to a local provider of that same good or service.	GGI (COC), IC	BIZ, NBDC	2016	\$10,000	\$15,000	Primary cost will be staff time. The cost estimate covers the expense associated with developing a database of local companies and their areas of expertise utilizing membership (COC, EDC, etc.) and proprietary (Dun & Bradstreet, ReferenceUSA) databases, and program promotion/marketing.
1.5	Work with neighboring communities in Central Nebraska to evaluate the potential benefits of developing regional cluster councils to address sector-specific issues and challenges that are common throughout Central Nebraska.	GGI (EDC)	SCEDD, IC	2018	Highly variable	Highly variable	There is minimal cost associated with setting up councils. Once convened, any councils' annual expenditures will depend heavily upon the actions that they chooses to pursue.
1.6	Launch ENGINE - Engaging the Next Generation of Grand Island, Nebraska - a comprehensive leadership development and community service program that cultivates the next generation of business leadership in Grand Island.	GGI (COC)	BIZ, IC	2017	\$20,000	\$40,000	Cost estimate reflects a presumed cost per participant of roughly \$1,000 but program costs should be covered by tuition/fees that will ideally be supported by sponsorships from the participants' employers.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: ENTREPRENEURS

#	Recommendation	Potential Lead Implementer(s)	Potential Implementation Partners	Implementation Start	Potential Cost (Low)	Potential Cost (High)	Cost Notes
2.1	Develop a comprehensive database of small businesses in the community that can be used to support a survey-based component of the community's Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) outreach program that specifically targets small businesses.	GGI (COC)	GI	2015	N/A	N/A	Primary cost is staff time. Costs associated with database development using proprietary sources are already covered in 1.1 and/or 1.4.
2.2	Establish a privately-financed pre-seed microloan fund providing small loans to existing and potential future entrepreneurs that currently lack access to traditional bank financing.	GGI (EDC)	NEDCO, IN, FI, NBDC, IC	2017	\$50,000	Variable	Cost estimate reflects a reasonable initial capitalization and annual investment level for a modest microloan program issuing loans ranging from \$5,000 - \$25,000 per company.
2.3	Launch an angel investment fund and complementary forum for entrepreneurs to pitch their business to the fund's investors.	GGI (COC), IN	BIZ, HNWI, IC	In progress	Variable	Variable	Cost to develop the fund will depend largely on methods for recruiting investors; costs associated with fund management and administration will be incurred by investors.
2.4	Establish a comprehensive entrepreneurship program(s) and a complementary student business incubator to promote student entrepreneurship.	GGI (COC), GIPS, GINPS, CPI	YEA, USCOCF, CCC, DC, BIZ, FI, IC	2017	\$7,600	\$10,000	Young Entrepreneurs Academy, Inc. requires chamber commitments of \$7,600 annually for three years to launch the program. USCOCF awards \$2,500 grants. Most chambers require modest tuition (\$300 - \$500 per student) to cover remaining costs.
2.5	Evaluate the viability of developing a Fabrication Lab (also known as a FabLab, TechShop, or MakerSpace) to provide budding entrepreneurs with a place to develop prototypes and advance concepts for marketable goods that could become viable businesses.	CCC, IC	GGI (COC), BIZ, FNDNs	2019	Highly variable	Highly variable	Cost associated with developing a FabLab, TechShop, MakerSpace, etc can vary tremendously depending upon the tools, equipment, and staff that is included in the space. Startup costs can range from as little as \$150,000 to \$1.5 million. Any donated equipment from local employers will greatly reduce startup costs. Other costs savings should be pursued through solicitation of in-kind services, physical space, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: IMAGE

#	Recommendation	Potential Lead Implementer(s)	Potential Implementation Partners	Implementation Start	Potential Cost (Low)	Potential Cost (High)	Cost Notes
3.1	Launch a comprehensive internal marketing campaign to develop a positive self-image, encourage the community's own residents to be its best ambassadors, and increase resident engagement in community improvement initiatives.	GGI (CVB), IC	BIZ, GI, LGs	Ongoing	Highly variable	Highly variable	Some program costs are already covered by the existing CVB budget. New program costs will be associated with the development of the recommended Ambassadors Program and the recommended Community Improvement Ideas contest (matching grants, contest promotion, etc.). Variability of costs will depend heavily on the scale of the Community Improvement Ideas contest and associated grant monies.
3.2	Launch a national public relations campaign to promote positive stories about Grand Island and Central Nebraska in national media outlets.	IC, GGI (CVB)	NTC, BIZ	2019	\$40,000	\$60,000	Cost estimate reflects the expenditure associated with retaining an experienced public relations consultant to proactively seed stories, as well as costs associated with inbound events hosting national media representatives.
3.3	Develop long-range Corridor Improvement Plans and signature gateway beautification projects to promote positive first impressions upon entering the community.	RPC, IC	NDOR, GI, HC, LGs, CNRA, BIZ	2016	Highly variable	Highly variable	Cost to develop Corridor Improvement Plans can vary tremendously, from as little as \$20,000 and staff time if developed internally to in excess of \$300,000 if a consultant is retained for design services. Cost associated with signature beautification projects can also vary widely depending on scale. A reasonable budget for such projects is, on the low end, \$10,000 for certain artwork and upwards of \$200,000 for "landmark" landscaping and beautification projects.
3.4	Proceed with planned updates to the Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation and Grand Island Chamber of Commerce websites, and regularly update websites with relevant information demanded by internal and external audiences, consistent with the findings of the Marketing Review.	EDC, COC	N/A	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Costs associated with website updates and maintenance are already captured by existing organizational budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: IMAGE (CONTINUED)

3.5	Realign marketing expenditures at the Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation in a manner that is consistent with the findings of the Marketing Review, such that expenditures primarily focus on the most effective techniques including inbound marketing trips.	EDC	N/A	2016	N/A	N/A	No cost associated with expenditure realignment. Recommendation simply relates to shifting expenditures to more productive uses.
3.6	Proactively maintain strong relationships with NDED staff overseeing business recruitment and regional business development to ensure that state partners are well-informed of the assets in Grand Island, and the planned investments in the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy.	GGI (EDC)	NDED	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Minimal costs are associated with relationship maintenance. Travel expenses will be the primary cost and such expenses are already captured in the budget of the EDC.
3.7	Evaluate a variety of mechanisms to facilitate the acquisition and assemblage of tax-delinquent or otherwise vacant parcels and the subsequent return of these parcels to revenue-generating uses.	IC, GI	HC, RPC	2016	N/A	N/A	Minimal costs are associated with the evaluation process. Costs to acquire and either demolish or revitalize properties should be largely recouped through the resale of any acquired or "banked" land, but such costs will not be incurred by Grow Grand Island or its Foundation as they will not directly administer such a program.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: WORKFORCE

#	Recommendation	Potential Lead Implementer(s)	Potential Implementation Partners	Implementation Start	Potential Cost (Low)	Potential Cost (High)	Cost Notes
4.1	Continue to work with regional employers to optimize career pathways and programs offered in public schools, including but not limited to those at Career Pathways Institute (CPI).	CPI, GIPS, GINPS	IC, BIZ, COC, EDC, CCC	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Cost associated with soliciting input from regional employers should be minimal and captured within costs associated with BRE outreach and surveying (recommendation 1.1).
4.2	Evaluate short-term and long-term opportunities to expand the availability of two-year and four-year degree options in Grand Island, with consideration given to the potentially catalytic redevelopment role of a higher education presence and accompanying student population on downtown Grand Island.	IC	DBID, DGI, GI, CCC, DC, UN, COC	2016	N/A	N/A	Minimal cost associated with the evaluation process and outreach to potential public and private institutions.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: WORKFORCE (CONTINUED)

4.3	Develop a comprehensive internship and apprenticeship initiative - Learn and Earn - that challenges all local businesses to develop at least one internship or apprenticeship for high school students (summer only) and recent college graduates or work-ready individuals (year round).	GGI (COC), BIZ	EDC, CVB, LGs	2017	\$10,000	\$25,000	Cost is primarily associated with retaining an experienced web developer to create a web-based portal to post internships and apprenticeships, and resumes of those interested in available opportunities. Potential exists to receive in-kind web development services from a local partner. Some cost may be associated with outreach and program promotion, including marketing collateral.
4.4	Develop a Parent Academy and Parent Resource Center to promote parental engagement in student learning and school activities, while also supporting basic adult skills attainment in areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and English language to improve employment prospects for interested parents.	GIPS, GINPS	GIEF, GICF, UW, FNDNs	2018	Highly variable	Highly variable	The annual operating cost of maintaining a Parent Resource Center will primarily fit within the school system's budget, with potential support from various foundations. Startup costs could be supported by a small grant from the Grow Grand Island Foundation as well as other foundation with missions supporting public education and adult learning.
4.5	Establish a gap-financing scholarship program - Grand Island Graduates (GI Grads) - that provides partial scholarships to supplement all other forms of financial aid for individuals interested in pursuing training, certification, and degree programs offered at Central Community College.	GGI (IC), CCC	FNDNs	2020	Highly variable	Highly variable	Cost will depend highly upon the chosen scale of the program, which should be determined in part by available funds. The GGIF can provide some support but additional funds will need to be raised from other foundations to create a sustainable scholarship fund.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: COMMUNITY ASSETS

#	Recommendation	Potential Lead Implementer(s)	Potential Implementation Partners	Implementation Start	Potential Cost (Low)	Potential Cost (High)	Cost Notes
5.1	Work with relevant state and local partners to evaluate a variety of potential uses and redevelopment projects for the Veterans Home site that align with and support community improvement and business development objectives.	IC, GOV, GI	Numerous	2015	N/A	N/A	Cost associated with advancing support for identified ideal sites will largely be staff and volunteer time. Some minimal travel expenses may also exist.
5.2	Work with NDED to develop and pilot a Certified Ready Site program that provides developers and site selectors with confidence that a "certified" industrial site is "shovel ready" for development.	GGI (EDC), NDED	UTIL	2016	N/A	N/A	Cost associated with development of potential Certified Ready Site program is primarily staff time. Some minimal travel expenses may also exist.

IMPLEMENTATION GRID: COMMUNITY ASSETS (CONTINUED)

5.3	Evaluate the potential benefits of establishing a Foreign Trade Zone to promote job creation in target sectors such as Manufacturing, Transportation and Distribution, and Repair, Reuse, and Recycling.	GGI (EDC)	LCOC, NDED	2018	N/A	N/A	Cost associated with establishing a foreign trade zone (subzone) is primarily staff time. Some minimal travel expenses may also exist.
5.4	Evaluate opportunities to utilize state-enabled "enhanced employment areas" that generate revenues to support redevelopment objectives in targeted areas.	GGI (EDC)	NDED, RPC, GI, HC	2019	N/A	N/A	Cost associated with evaluating the use of EEAs is primarily staff time.
5.5	Develop a local incentive fund to support the attraction of large livestock shows, trade shows, and other events to Grand Island based on their potential economic impact.	GGI (CVB)	GILCA, NTC, BIZ, NSF, FP	2018	\$50,000	Variable	Annual budget for the incentive fund should depend in part upon the success of fundraising efforts for the GGIF.
5.6	Continue to advance the development and utilization of facilities in and around Fonner Park, as well as other unique assets in the community such as the Heartland Public Shooting Park.	IC, GILCA	FP, NSF, GI, HC	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Cost is primarily staff time. Any resources associated with development of new facilities (such as new hotels or amenities) will be incurred by the private sector.
5.7	Support the implementation of Central Nebraska Regional Airport's (CNRA) Capital Improvement Plan and continue to advance the expansion of passenger air service to major markets.	CNRA, IC	Numerous	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Costs associated with implementation of the CNRA CAP will not be incurred by the GGIF.
5.8	Work with the City of Grand Island and all relevant partners in the community to align implementation efforts associated with Grow Grand Island and the City's Grand Vision process.	IC, GI	Numerous	2015	N/A	N/A	Cost is primarily staff and volunteer time associated with coordination of implementation efforts.
5.9	Implement the recommendations of the Community Housing Study for Grand Island to ensure that ample, affordable, and attractive housing is available to meet the diverse needs of existing and potential future residents.	CRA, BIZ, GI, HC	EDC, NIFA	Ongoing	Highly variable	Highly variable	Cost associated with implementing the recommendations of the study will come from a variety of public and private sources, but the financial burden associated with implementation should not fall on the GGIF.
5.10	Support reinvestment in the downtown area by implementing the recommendations of the Grand Island Downtown Redevelopment Study, focusing on the advancement of three catalytic projects identified in the Study: residential conversions, a boutique hotel, and reuse of the Kauffman Plaza/Park.	GI, DBID, DGI	Numerous	Ongoing	Highly variable	Highly variable	Cost associated with implementing the recommendations of the study will come from a variety of public and private sources, but the financial burden associated with implementation should not fall on the GGIF.

Aligning Grow Grand Island and Grand Vision

The City's "Grand Vision" visioning process was conducted concurrently with the Grow Grand Island strategic planning process in 2014. Although alignment and coordination of the two strategic planning processes was pursued when feasible, greater coordination will be required during the implementation phase of both strategic plans. Stakeholders clearly identified similar issues as priorities in both processes – the "Grand Vision" Vision Plan identified a variety of initiatives related to economic development, workforce development, and public education as central to achieving the community's collective vision.

In order to promote harmony in the implementation of the two strategic plans, the Grow Grand Island Implementation Committee should evaluate the "Grand Vision" Vision Plan to determine which objectives and recommended action steps align with the broad goals (pillars) and recommended actions of the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy. A large portion of the Grand Vision action steps can simply be integrated into the activities of the Grow Grand Island implementation effort as they are clearly aligned with the objectives of Grow Grand Island and would require minimal, if any, additional financial and staff resources to implement above and beyond those recommended within this Implementation Plan. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the recommended action items from the "Grand Vision" Vision Plan that could be partially or wholly assumed under the Grow Grand Island implementation effort:

- ✓ Provide economic development strategies and tools, such as tax abatement, tax increment financing, tax credits, and/or land banking to incentive the development of affordable housing units, senior housing development, and missed use development projects.
- ✓ Promote programs and standards to maintain and create "quality housing" in the communities.
- ✓ Further enhance marketing packages for targeting potential employers.
- ✓ Develop economic development strategies for all key areas.
- ✓ Develop a culture of entrepreneurship in the local communities to support small and emerging businesses.
- ✓ Support community beautification initiatives.
- ✓ Develop a "lifelong learning plan" for the area.
- ✓ Further enhance career pathways and training programs with local and future education providers.

If the Grow Grand Island Implementation Committee and the Grow Grand Island Partnership (inclusive of the Chamber, the EDC, and the CVB) should work with the City of Grand Island, expressing interest in leading the implementation of these action steps and others. This would send a clear signal to the City and other partners that the Grow Grand Island Partnership is interested in being a proactive partner in implementing the Grand Vision action steps. By assuming responsibility for many of the initiatives in the "Grand Vision" Vision Plan, the Implementation Committee and the Grow Grand Island Partnership can make a clear and compelling case for public investment in the Grow Grand Island Foundation.

To promote a consistent process of communication and collaboration between the two implementation efforts, the Implementation Committee should work with the City of Grand Island to identify two or more individuals that can serve on any committees associated with the two implementation efforts. These individuals would become de facto liaisons between the two implementation efforts, ensuring that both parties are well informed of the activities and discussions that are taking place related to both efforts.

Measuring Performance and Implementation Success

Performance measurement is critical to any economic development or community improvement initiative. The process of establishing and tracking performance metrics will allow the Grow Grand Island Partnership, the Implementation Committee, and the community at-large to assess progress towards implementing the Business Development Strategy. Metrics can help determine if implementation is having the desired impact and producing the desired return on investment.

Market Street recommends that the Grow Grand Island Partnership and the Implementation Committee track performance for three distinct sets of metrics:

1. **Community Context:** These metrics represent community attributes and outcomes that may be impacted by effective implementation of the strategy's recommendations but are heavily influenced by a variety of other factors unrelated to implementation and outside the control of implementing organizations. They measure the community's performance in key demographic, socioeconomic, economic, and quality of life attributes that the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy seeks to impact. Measuring performance in these indicators – employment, high school graduation rates, poverty rates, etc. – can help provide the appropriate “community context” for more specific metrics that are directly tied to implementation of specific recommendations.
2. **Implementation Progress:** These metrics are more closely tied to individual recommendations within the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy and are thus more directly – and in many cases, exclusively – influenced by the implementation effort.
3. **Public Reporting:** These metrics represent some of the most important community outcomes that the Business Development Strategy intends to influence. They are a subset of the Community Context and Implementation Progress metrics described above. This smaller subset can be used in public reporting whereas the more comprehensive list of Community Context and Implementation Progress metrics can be utilized internally by the Grow Grand Island Partnership and the Implementation Committee to ensure that they are well informed through a wider variety of measures of the community's overall performance (the “community context” metrics) and their collective performance in advancing implementation (the “implementation progress” metrics).

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Community Context metrics that should be monitored annually include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Total employment
- ✓ Employment by business sector (for target sectors)
- ✓ Unemployment rate
- ✓ Number of business licenses issued annually
- ✓ Retail sales per capita
- ✓ Hotel occupancy rates
- ✓ Hotel revenue per available room (RevPAR)
- ✓ Average annual wage
- ✓ Average annual wage by sector (for target sectors)
- ✓ Per capita income
- ✓ Median household income
- ✓ Poverty rate
- ✓ Child poverty rate
- ✓ Annual net migration
- ✓ Percentage of annual in-migrants with a bachelor's degree or higher
- ✓ Percentage of all adults (age 25+) with a bachelor's degree or higher
- ✓ Percentage of all adults (age 25+) with no high school diploma
- ✓ Percentage of Hispanic adults (age 25+) with no high school diploma
- ✓ Percentage of adults age 25-44 with a bachelor's degree or higher
- ✓ Percentage of the population aged 25-44
- ✓ Student proficiency on key grade-subject matter end-of-course exams
- ✓ High school graduation rate
- ✓ Percentage of students that are English Language Learners (ELL)
- ✓ Central Community College enrollment by program
- ✓ Central Community College degree completions
- ✓ Total higher education enrollment across all campuses, part-time and full-time
- ✓ Passenger enplanements at Central Nebraska Regional Airport
- ✓ Air cargo handled (lbs.) at Central Nebraska Regional Airport
- ✓ Occupancy rate (retail, office) in downtown Grand Island
- ✓ Amount of new investment in downtown Grand Island
- ✓ Housing affordability (ratio of median single-family home price to median household income)

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Implementation Progress metrics that should be monitored annually include but are not limited to:

First Pillar: Existing Businesses

- ✓ Number of in-person visits with existing businesses as a component of BRE program
- ✓ Number of telephone interviews with existing businesses as a component of BRE program
- ✓ Number of surveys completed by existing businesses as a component of BRE program
- ✓ Number of businesses assisted via the Grow Grand Island Export Initiative
- ✓ Number of businesses assisted via the Economic Gardening program
- ✓ Number of businesses accepting the Grow Grand Island Challenge
- ✓ Amount of business expenditure retained in the community from the Grow Grand Island Challenge
- ✓ Number of young professionals participating in the ENGINE program

Second Pillar: Entrepreneurs

- ✓ Number of businesses receiving microloans
- ✓ Amount of microloan investment
- ✓ Number of accredited investors participating in new angel fund
- ✓ Capitalization of new angel fund
- ✓ Total investment made by new angel fund
- ✓ Number of local businesses receiving investments from the new angel fund
- ✓ Number of students enrolled in student entrepreneurship program
- ✓ Number of individuals utilizing the recommended Fabrication Lab

Third Pillar: Image

- ✓ Number of positive press mentions in non-local or national media outlets
- ✓ Number of gateway beautification projects completed
- ✓ Number of hits and page views for the Chamber, EDC, and CVB websites
- ✓ Number of hits and page views for a new Grow Grand Island website
- ✓ Number of tax-delinquent, abandoned, or vacant parcels demolished or acquired for revitalization

Fourth Pillar: Workforce

- ✓ Number of internships and apprenticeships available to (and filled by) students and local residents
- ✓ Attendance at Parent Resource Center courses
- ✓ Capitalization of the Grand Island Graduates (GI Grads) scholarship fund
- ✓ Number of students supporting by the Grand Island Graduates (GI Grads) scholarship fund

Fifth Pillar: Community Assets

- ✓ Number of volunteer hours devoted to supporting implementation of various recommendations
- ✓ Number of enhanced employment areas in the community
- ✓ Capitalization of a local incentive fund for recruitment of trade shows, livestock shows, etc.
- ✓ Number of events held at Fonner Park, Fairgrounds facilities, and the Heartland Events Center

PUBLIC REPORTING

Market Street believes that effective implementation of the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy can help the community achieve the following outcomes by the conclusion of 2020, a time period that roughly aligns with the five-year implementation cycle associated with the Strategy:

- ✓ **JOB CREATION:** Support the creation of more than 4,000 new jobs paying annual wages above the community's average between 2015 and 2020 in Hall County.
- ✓ **ELEVATE STANDARDS OF LIVING:** Through support for local and regional high-wage job creation, elevate per capita incomes by an average of 3.0 percent annually in Hall County, exceeding the historical rate of inflation and the historical rate of income growth regionally and national. This rate of growth will help close the income gap between Hall County residents and the average Nebraskan, and result in a per capita income level that exceeds \$48,000 in 2020.
- ✓ **TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION:** Maintain recent trends of positive net in-migration from other parts of the country such that annual net in-migration averages 200 net new residents each year, for a cumulative 1,000 net new migrants to the region between 2015 and 2020.¹
- ✓ **IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:** Through a variety of initiatives that target skills acquisition and educational attainment, elevate the percentage of adults age 25 and over in Hall County with some college exposure by five percentage points to at least 55 percent, while also reducing the percentage of adults with no high school diploma to less than 14 percent by 2020.
- ✓ **INCREASE VOLUNTEERISM AND ENGAGEMENT:** Through the work of the Grow Grand Island Implementation Committee and its various ad hoc subcommittees and work groups, the community should commit at least 2,000 volunteer hours annually to support business development and community improvement activities as defined in the Grow Grand Island Business Development Strategy.
- ✓ **HELP EXISTING BUSINESSES GROW:** Conduct at least 50 site visits with local businesses each year, and recruit at least 50 local businesses to participate in the Grow Grand Island Challenge (which seeks to identify local alternatives to non-local suppliers of goods and services).

A NOTE ON OUR METHODOLOGY: *Market Street* examined historical trends in the aforementioned indicators and projected forward these trends assuming that the community's historical rate of progress towards improving these indicators continues into the future. This produces a "baseline" estimate of the value for each indicator in the year 2020. These baseline estimates are then augmented based on a subjective evaluation of the community's ability to affect change in these areas through successful, complete implementation of the Business Development Strategy's recommendations. In many cases, particularly for indicators that are influenced by initiatives that are not scheduled to be implemented until 2018 or 2019, it will take years beyond 2020 for the community to realize certain benefits and see meaningful change in certain performance metrics. This naturally reflects the realities of holistic business development and community improvement initiatives that are focused on substantive, long-term change.

¹ Net migration refers to the difference between the number of people moving to Hall County from outside the County (domestic and international) and the number of Hall County residents moving to other parts of the country in a given year. It is a component of population change, but is not equivalent to total population growth.