



GREENVILLE CITY EDC BUSINESS PLAN

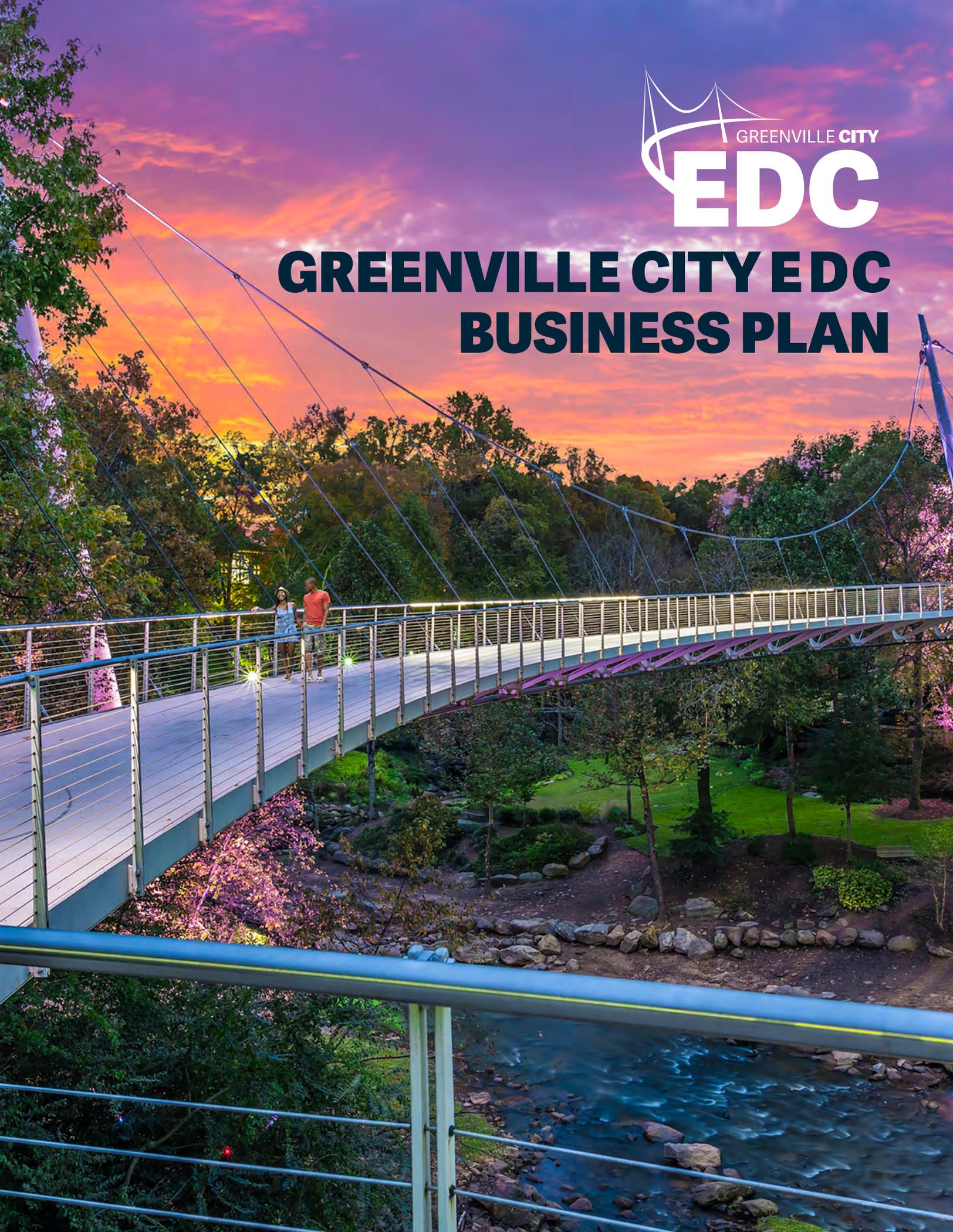


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I. Executive Summary

Greenville’s economic momentum is the product of decades of intentional planning, public–private partnership, and a community-wide commitment to quality of life and opportunity. Building on the vision established in GVL2040—including its emphasis on economic mobility, livability, and a resilient, diversified economy—the City of Greenville adopted a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan that positions the city to compete, grow, and thrive over the next decade.

The plan is grounded in rigorous data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and benchmarking against high-performing peer cities. It recognizes that modern economic growth depends on the interplay of talent, innovation, business investment, housing, and inclusion. Its vision is clear: a prosperous, innovative, and inclusive Greenville where residents, employers, and investors all share in the benefits of growth.

The Strategic Plan establishes five interconnected priorities that define Greenville’s economic development agenda:

- **Business Growth and Investment.** Attract and expand high-value employers with an emphasis on headquarters, life sciences, technology companies, research and development, and other innovation-driven firms. The Greenville City Economic Development Corporation will continue to leverage Greenville’s deep history of advanced manufacturing as a foundation for growth—using that legacy to support innovation, productivity, and next-generation business attraction without positioning manufacturing as a primary recruitment focus.
- **Entrepreneurship and Innovation.** Strengthen the ecosystem that supports startups, scaleups, and innovation-driven companies.
- **Talent and Workforce.** Align education, training, and employers to ensure Greenville has a strong, future-ready workforce.
- **Inclusive Prosperity.** Expand opportunity for minority- and women-owned businesses and ensure economic mobility across neighborhoods.
- **Brand and Place.** Leverage Greenville’s vibrancy, authenticity, and exceptional quality of life as key competitive advantages, which continue to enhance its international reputation as a preeminent destination city.

These priorities are guided by the core values of collaboration, accountability, inclusion, integrity, and excellence that define how Greenville approaches economic development and how partners work together.

To translate this vision into measurable outcomes, the city created the **Greenville City Economic Development Corporation**. GCEDC serves as the city’s official economic development arm and its execution engine for business recruitment, existing industry support, small business and entrepreneurship, innovation, talent alignment, and marketing. It also manages the systems, partnerships, and performance infrastructure that ensure transparency, discipline, and results.

To deliver this agenda with clarity and discipline, GCEDC is organized around a Front of the House/Back of the House framework. The Front of the House focuses on market-facing priorities: business recruitment, existing industry support, small business, innovation, talent, and marketing. The Back of the House provides the operational backbone: governance, financial management, data systems, and organizational culture. This structure ensures GCEDC can deliver results externally while operating with excellence internally.

This business plan turns the city’s Strategic Plan into an actionable operating model, connecting vision to execution through GCEDC’s Front of the House (market-facing delivery) and Back of the House (organizational excellence) framework. It outlines how GCEDC will focus resources, measure performance, and deliver the early wins and long-term outcomes required to keep Greenville competitive, inclusive, and economically strong.

II. Organizational Profile

Greenville’s economic transformation was built on vision, collaboration, and the belief that prosperity should be both dynamic and inclusive. GVL2040 reinforced this legacy by calling for a modernized approach to economic development—one grounded in strategic focus, clear priorities, and an organizational model capable of delivering results. In response, the city developed its first comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan, which recommended establishing a dedicated implementation entity to guide, coordinate, and accelerate this work.

The creation of the Greenville City Economic Development Corporation is the next evolution of that vision. GCEDC is a purpose-driven, professional organization designed to execute the city’s strategic economic priorities with precision, transparency, sophistication, and measurable impact. It serves as the connective platform between City Hall and the marketplace, where civic goals meet private investment, and where strategic vision becomes tangible outcomes for residents, businesses, and neighborhoods.

This section defines GCEDC’s purpose, vision, and guiding values, which ground every initiative and partnership that follows in this business plan.

VISION

Greenville City Economic Development Corporation will boldly lead next-generation urban economic development for the City of Greenville—to position the city as one of America’s most dynamic, innovative, and inclusive mid-sized economies, where businesses thrive, talent flourishes, and quality of life is extraordinary.

MISSION

GCEDC drives Greenville’s economic growth and global competitiveness by: (1) selectively recruiting targeted businesses aligned with the city’s strategic priorities; (2) supporting existing and expanding employers, local entrepreneurs, and small businesses; (3) aligning workforce talent with industry needs; and (4) enhancing Greenville’s distinctive business advantages and exceptional quality of life.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GCEDC’s work is grounded in a shared commitment to performance, collaboration, and community impact. These guiding principles define how the organization operates and how it earns the trust of its partners, investors, and residents. They also reinforce GCEDC’s commitment to agility—using data, insight, and targeted strategies to adapt to changing market conditions and ensure resources are deployed where they will have the greatest impact.

- **Enterprising.** We proactively pursue opportunities that advance Greenville’s economy and position the city to compete globally.
- **Adaptive.** We operate with agility, using data, continuous learning, and real-time market insights to adjust strategies, target opportunities, and respond swiftly to changing economic conditions.
- **Resourceful.** We maximize the value of partnerships and public investment, finding creative solutions to complex challenges.
- **Inclusive.** We ensure that prosperity is shared broadly—across neighborhoods, industries, and businesses of all sizes.
- **Courageous.** We embrace bold strategies that position Greenville to tackle transformative projects that continue to elevate the city and make it an extraordinary place for residents and visitors alike.
- **Integrity.** We act with honesty, transparency, and accountability in every decision, relationship, and transaction.

WHY GCEDC MATTERS: THE GREENVILLE ADVANTAGE

The Greenville City Economic Development Corporation is the city's independent, trusted connector between public priorities and private investment. GCEDC provides an effective and collaborative coordinated point of entry for businesses, developers, and investors to ensure that projects move forward with speed, transparency, and alignment across public agencies.

GCEDC bridges the gap between policy and practice. Unlike traditional city departments, it operates with the agility of a private enterprise while maintaining the accountability of public governance. This hybrid model allows Greenville to compete nationally, respond quickly to market opportunities, and advance complex projects that require both public coordination and private capital.

As Greenville experiences record growth and rising national visibility, GCEDC exists to harness that momentum and translate it into sustainable, inclusive prosperity. GCEDC aligns incentives, workforce pipelines, infrastructure, and quality of place to attract high-value investment and strengthen existing employers.

The **GCEDC Advantage** lies in its ability to unite leadership, leverage partnerships, and deliver results that reinforce Greenville's competitiveness:

- **A collaborative model** that aligns city, county, region, state, and private-sector partners behind shared priorities.
- **A commitment to inclusive prosperity**, ensuring that all businesses and residents share in Greenville's success.
- **A comprehensive incentives portfolio** that catalyzes investment, creates win-win partnerships, and enhances business competitiveness.
- **A skilled and expanding workforce**, supported by university partnerships and statewide programs such as ReadySC and Apprenticeship Carolina.
- **Expertise in real estate, innovation, and destination development** that helps shape Greenville's intentional placemaking, growth, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Together, these strengths define Greenville's economic identity: a city that blends innovation with integrity, competitiveness with collaboration. GCEDC ensures that growth is not just fast—but focused, equitable, and sustainable.

VALUE PROPOSITION

GCEDC's value proposition is rooted in Greenville's rare combination of quality of life, talent, international business, and a competitive business climate, a reputation consistently affirmed by independent national rankings. The organization's mission is to ensure that these advantages are used strategically so that companies can start, expand, and innovate with confidence. Greenville is not only a great place to live; it is a smart place to invest, grow, and thrive for companies around the globe.

- **A Demonstrated Culture of Public-Private Partnerships.** Greenville has a deep history and demonstrated track record of public-private partnerships that have literally transformed the cityscape and have enabled the city to achieve extraordinary projects, highly unusual for a community of its size. These dynamic partnerships are fueled by discretionary incentives that strongly focus on the transformative enhancement of public access areas, pedestrian activation, a thriving retail sector, and a dramatically enhanced cityscape.
- **A Competitive Cost Environment.** Greenville offers a cost environment that combines strong economic fundamentals with a comprehensive portfolio of local and state incentives. At the city level, companies benefit from tools that lower upfront costs and support long-term growth. These include City of Greenville incentives such as property tax abatements, access to the Greenville Local Development Corporation's Job Development Grants, targeted financing programs, and the city's Business License Fee Refund for eligible projects. The city also uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and synthetic TIF structures to support infrastructure, site improvements, and catalytic redevelopment in strategic locations. In addition, Greenville has the ability to negotiate public-private partnerships for priority projects that align with community goals and unlock private investment.

At the state level, Greenville companies can access a wide range of corporate income tax incentives, including Job Development Tax Credits, Investment Tax Credits, and other performance-based programs that improve project feasibility and reduce operating costs. South Carolina also offers specialized incentives that support the redevelopment of legacy properties and underused sites. These include Abandoned Textile Mill Credits, Abandoned Building Credits, and Historic Rehabilitation Credits, which enhance redevelopment economics for adaptive reuse, mixed-use development, and historic preservation projects.

Workforce development programs further strengthen Greenville's cost competitiveness. ReadySC provides customized recruitment and training for qualifying employers, while Apprenticeship Carolina expands access to talent through registered apprenticeships and training incentives. Together, these programs lower hiring and training costs for employers of all sizes.

Greenville's combined package of local incentives, state programs, tax increment tools, and workforce initiatives creates one of the most cost-effective environments for business investment in the Southeast.

- **A Skilled and Growing Workforce.** Within the region, Greenville employers can access a labor force of 1.7 million workers supported by regional universities and training partners. This deep talent pool, coupled with programs such as retraining tax credits and incentives, gives businesses the capacity to grow and adapt amid rapid technological change.
- **A Premier Business and Lifestyle Destination.** Ranked among the "Top 5 Best Places to Live in the U.S.," Greenville offers the amenities of a large metropolitan area with the accessibility and affordability of a mid-sized community. This balance between opportunity and livability fuels talent attraction and retention, reinforcing Greenville's long-term competitiveness.

- **University and Research Partnerships.** Home to Clemson University, Furman University, USC School of Medicine Greenville, Greenville Technical College, and other higher education partners, the region offers extraordinary access to applied research, innovation ecosystems, and academic-industry partnerships that fuel commercialization and workforce alignment.
- **An Ecosystem for Diverse Entrepreneurs and Founders.** Through collaborations with NextGEN, the Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and the Greenville Local Development Corporation, GCEDC strengthens the ecosystem for diverse entrepreneurs, coupled with launching two microgrant programs, expanding access to capital and networks for minority- and women-owned businesses.
- **A Partnership Model that Delivers.** GCEDC operates as Greenville’s one-stop economic development delivery platform, in alignment with city leadership, its Board of Directors, and private investors, ensuring seamless execution from site selection and permitting to workforce coordination and marketing.

Through its vision, mission, values, and partnerships, GCEDC embodies a new and innovative model of civic entrepreneurship that combines public purpose with private-sector performance. The organization’s foundation rests on integrity, collaboration, and measurable impact, ensuring that Greenville’s economic growth continues to create opportunity and prosperity for all who call the city home.

III. Organizational Structure

The Greenville City Economic Development Corporation operates with a lean but high-impact structure designed for agility, accountability, and results. The organization's model assigns clear accountability for every major area of work to executives, from business development and finance to entrepreneurship and communications. Each senior team member manages a defined portfolio aligned with GCEDC's strategic priorities, ensuring that the organization's daily work directly advances its mission and long-term goals.

GCEDC's structure reflects best practices from high-performing economic development organizations nationwide: small in size, strategic in focus, and collaborative in execution. This model ensures that the organization can seize new opportunities, respond to emerging challenges, and coordinate effectively with public and private partners.

GCEDC is governed by a **Board of Directors**, appointed by the City Council, that has appropriate corporate powers, including selection of the CEO and providing direction on policy and strategy. **Sam Konduros**, President and Chief Executive Officer, provides overall strategic leadership, serves as the primary liaison to the City Manager, Mayor, and City Council, and reports directly to the Board of Directors.

Reporting to the President and Chief Executive Officer is GCEDC's senior management team, each responsible for a defined operational and strategic portfolio that advances the organization's mission and goals:

- **Jeanette Brewster, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Manager.** Leads programs and partnerships that strengthen Greenville's small-business and entrepreneurial ecosystem, with a focus on inclusive growth and founder support.
- **Roger Drew, Business, Finance, and Compliance Administrator.** Oversees budgeting, contracts, financial management, and compliance systems across GCEDC's 501(c)(3) and future 501(c)(6) entities, ensuring fiscal transparency and organizational accountability.
- **Zach Hargett, Business Development and Technology Manager.** Drives business recruitment and innovation initiatives while leading the integration of project management, customer relationship management (CRM), and performance-tracking systems.
- **Jared Hartzell, Real Estate Development Manager.** Directs real estate and site-readiness initiatives, leads GCEDC's investor platform and private-sector engagement efforts, and plays a key role in business attraction and redevelopment projects in partnership with public and private stakeholders.
- **Michelle Suarez, Senior Research and Marketing Administrator.** Serves as Team Integrator and leads GCEDC's business-intelligence and marketing functions, producing data-driven insights that guide strategy, storytelling, and performance measurement.

In addition to the leadership team, three executive staff members provide essential operational and project support:

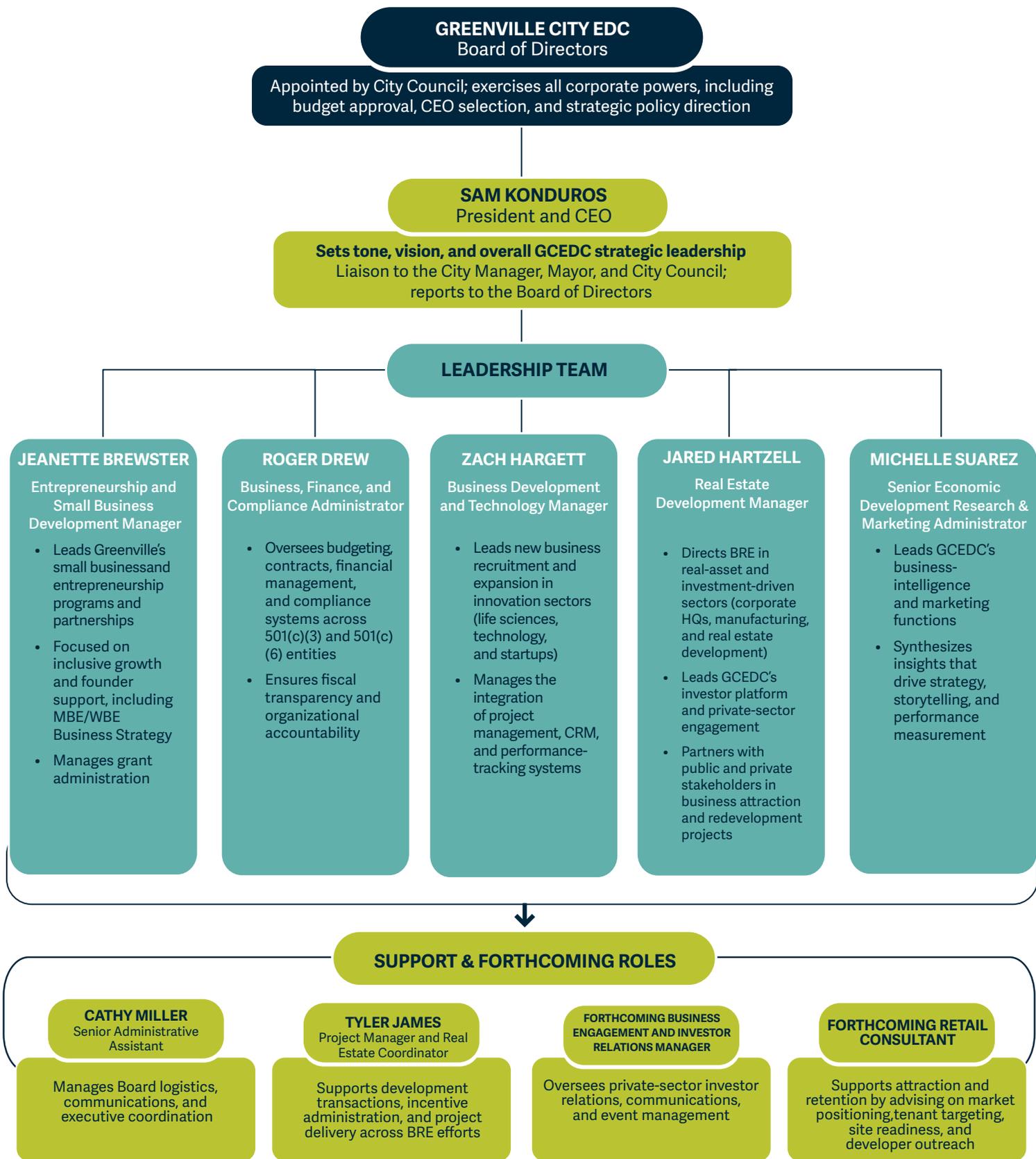
- **Tyler James, Project Manager and Real Estate Coordinator.** Supports development transactions, incentive administration, and project delivery across business recruitment and existing business retention and expansion efforts.
- **Cathy Miller, Senior Administrative Assistant.** Provides direct support to the President and CEO, and manages board logistics, communications, and executive coordination, ensuring smooth internal operations and governance support.
- **Business Engagement and Investor Relations Manager (forthcoming).** Will oversee private-sector investor relations, communications, and event management to strengthen GCEDC's network of civic and business investors.

- **Retail Consultant.** Will support retail attraction and retention by advising on market positioning, tenant targeting, site readiness, and developer outreach, with a focus on translating Greenville’s growth and household demand into a clear, actionable retail story.

ACCOUNTABILITY MAPPING

As part of this business planning process, GCEDC worked with the executive team to develop a comprehensive **accountability map**—a tool that clearly defines who owns and supports each major function of the organization. Accountability mapping is not simply an organizational chart; it is a management framework that ensures clarity, alignment, and performance at every level.

Figure 1: GEDC Accountability Map



IV. Methodology

Following a multi-month RFP/Procurement Process, the Greenville City Economic Development Corporation engaged Austin, Texas-based CivicSol to develop a business plan that translates Greenville's economic vision into a disciplined, performance-based operating model. CivicSol, a national economic development and placemaking advisory firm, served as the strategy and facilitation partner for this work. CivicSol brings extensive experience helping cities and economic development organizations across the country strengthen competitiveness, activate public-private alignment, and implement execution models rooted in accountability and measurable outcomes. That expertise shaped the design of this plan and ensured alignment with national best practices from day one.

This planning effort was intentionally collaborative and evidence-driven, pairing stakeholder-informed design with benchmarking and operational planning. The result is a business plan that not only outlines what GCEDC will accomplish but also provides clarity on how the organization will do the work, who is responsible, and how progress will be measured over time.

COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

CivicSol facilitated a multi-phase planning process that created shared ownership and alignment between GCEDC staff, board leadership, and the City of Greenville. The project began with facilitated sessions to establish GCEDC's value proposition, clarify its role within Greenville's broader economic ecosystem, and define the boundaries between policy leadership (city) and execution (GCEDC).

Following this foundational work, a series of structured workshops translated strategy into practice. Together, the team:

- Defined and mapped GCEDC's service portfolio around six lines of business that directly support the City of Greenville's economic development strategic priorities;
- Organized those services into Front of the House (external delivery) and Back of the House (organizational excellence) functions;
- Aligned program priorities to staffing roles and capabilities; and
- Developed shared definitions of success to ensure consistent execution.

Throughout the process, GCEDC's Board of Directors were fully apprised, engaged in SWOT sessions, and provided key inputs, ensuring the plan reflects investor expectations and strengthens accountability to the city and public stakeholders. Decisions were documented in plain language, translating strategic intent into executable direction—allowing GCEDC staff to take immediate ownership of both priorities and performance.

Figure 2: GCEDC Board of Directors SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Board of Directors diversity, expertise</p> <p>Strong new leadership—city and GCEDC</p> <p>City Council support of this bold endeavor</p>	<p>Must overcome “reactive” status of ED approach of the past four years</p> <p>Must increase “focus” with the new corporation now in place</p> <p>Need to define the role and prioritization in the community</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Attract headquarters</p> <p>A place for EVERYONE to THRIVE</p> <p>Powerful innovation ecosystem, fertile for startups; next-gen economic development strategies</p> <p>“Seize the Moment” with a “Will to Succeed” mentality and culture; demonstrate economic development leadership on a statewide basis</p>	<p>Chasing quantity instead of quality with ED pipeline leads—quality and impact matter way more than the total number of opportunities</p> <p>Political fractures and division (state, county, and city)</p> <p>City’s ability to work effectively with new County Council, as well as ensuring unwavering support from City Council, including long-term financial commitment</p> <p>Concerns about growth and lack of inclusivity</p>

BENCHMARKING AND BEST PRACTICES

To ensure GCEDC launches with a structure and execution model aligned to national standards of excellence and best practices, CivicSol conducted benchmarking interviews with a select group of high-performing city-focused economic development organizations from across the country. These organizations—including Boise’s Capital City Development Corporation (CCDC), Partner Tulsa, and the Louisville Economic Development Alliance—were selected for their demonstrated success in competitive markets, strong public-private alignment, and measurable results.

Benchmarking these models helped GCEDC evaluate worthy models and programs. The interviews reinforced the importance of disciplined performance management, clear market positioning, and proactive integration with workforce, innovation, and small-business partners.

While the detailed insights from this benchmarking effort are captured in the next section, this input ensured that the GCEDC business plan reflects both Greenville’s local priorities and the most current thinking in economic development nationally.

DEFINING PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE

This business plan is built around a clear performance architecture that connects long-term strategy to near-term execution. Three tiers of priorities—Quarterly Priorities, One-Year Goals, and Three-Year Goals—define what must happen now, what success looks like annually, and how those actions build toward transformational impact.

Each priority is tied to specific indicators and reporting cadences, ensuring accountability is embedded in GCEDC’s daily work and long-term decisions. This structure provides clarity for staff, focus for partners, and a consistent feedback loop that strengthens performance over time.

V. What We Learned From National Models

Launching a new economic development corporation is a next-level, pivotal moment for any city. It creates an entity that can respond to opportunities faster, compete for new investment more aggressively, and deliver economic results that benefit residents and businesses alike. Because Greenville is entering this new chapter with strong momentum and heightened expectations, GCEDC was designed with intentionality. This includes learning from cities that have already built high-performing organizations and successfully leveraged them to shape their future. As part of the planning process, GCEDC benchmarked three peer models:

- **Boise’s Capital City Development Corporation.** Demonstrates how a city-centered organization can accelerate redevelopment and create sustainable revenue by managing and investing in strategic assets.
- **Partner Tulsa.** Showcases how a modern spin-out can consolidate fragmented business-facing functions into a unified, mission-driven platform that delivers with speed and discipline.
- **Louisville Economic Development Authority.** Reinforces the importance of governance structures that ensure public accountability while operating with private-sector responsiveness.

Each of these organizations represents a different approach, but they share a core belief: Economic development requires disciplined focus, partnership, and performance. The insights from these benchmarked models helped to inform this business plan and will continue to guide GCEDC as it matures into one of the country’s most effective economic development organizations (EDOs).

LESSON 1: FOCUS DRIVES RESULTS

The strongest organizations do a few things exceptionally well. Peers consistently reinforced that overly-expanded mandates dilute effectiveness, can confuse partners, and diffuse scarce resources. CCDC and Partner Tulsa each began with a tight scope and only expanded when early successes built capacity and trust.

⇒ **IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC**

GCEDC’s mandate is ambitious based on the City Strategic Plan for economic development, but it centers on business recruitment, business expansion, innovation, small business support, talent, and marketing/business intelligence. These six levers have the greatest potential to influence Greenville’s competitiveness. If GCEDC attempts to take on additional responsibilities too early, focus will be challenged, and the results may be mixed.

LESSON 2: PERFORMANCE BUILDS CREDIBILITY

Results—not effort—determine whether a new EDO earns investor confidence and civic legitimacy. All three peers stressed that success must be visible, measurable, and regularly communicated. Absent that proof, private investment stalls and public backing wanes. Performance dashboards, CRM data discipline, and repeatable wins enabled each peer to demonstrate value quickly.

⇒ **IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC**

Greenville has established a performance framework—Quarterly Priorities, One-Year Goals, Three-Year Outcomes—to make progress visible from the start. If results are not consistently tracked and shared, external trust erodes, and the organization loses the urgency that fuels competitiveness.

LESSON 3: GOVERNANCE MUST ENABLE BOTH ALIGNMENT AND SPEED

The highest-performing models strike the right balance: tightly aligned to elected leadership and community priorities, yet empowered to act with private-sector speed. Governance determines more than reporting structure; it drives responsiveness, credibility, and strategic discipline. Louisville’s structure demonstrated how clarity and continuity protect organizational momentum, even through political cycles.

⇒ IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC

Greenville’s governance framework—city alignment combined with private-sector engagement—is a structural strength. But without continuous attention to role clarity, decision-making can slow, turf tensions can emerge, and trust between partners can fray. Alignment is not static; it must be maintained.

LESSON 4: PARTNERSHIPS MULTIPLY IMPACT

Peer organizations succeed by orchestrating their ecosystems, not by operating independently. They coordinate employers, chambers, universities, workforce agencies, and small-business intermediaries under a shared competitiveness agenda. Where partners lacked clear roles or communication protocols, the peers saw duplication, gaps, and lost opportunities.

⇒ IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC

Greenville’s ecosystem is rich: Clemson University, Furman University, USC School of Medicine Greenville, Greenville Technical College, the Upstate Alliance, the Greenville Area Development Corporation, the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, and others provide world-class assets. If GCEDC does not actively coordinate with these partners and manage hand-offs clearly, companies could experience confusion instead of a seamless business environment. Partnership is work, and it must be resourced like any other strategic priority.

LESSON 5: EARLY WINS ARE ESSENTIAL TO MOMENTUM

Every peer emphasized one urgent requirement: Prove value quickly. Landing a signature project, closing a catalytic development agreement, or launching a sector partnership signals that the new organization is real and operational. In each benchmarked model, the first wave of accomplishments built the confidence—internally and externally—that sustained later growth.

⇒ IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC

Quarterly Priorities create visible, achievable wins. If those wins do not materialize in year one following implementation of the business plan, momentum slows, board confidence dips, and investor support becomes harder to sustain.

LESSON 6: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MUST BE DESIGNED, NOT ASSUMED

Boise’s capital-project revenue model and Partner Tulsa’s asset-based structure both demonstrated that long-term sustainability requires a diversified funding portfolio. Municipal appropriation alone is not enough to fuel competitive capacity, especially as expectations expand. Without revenue innovation, strategic ambition is constrained.

⇒ IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC

The initial focus on establishing systems and delivering results is appropriate. But if GCEDC does not plan for diversified revenue—from investors, sponsorships, or asset strategies—the organization risks future limitations in staffing, marketing reach, and business-development tools. This supports the case for the formation of a 501(c)(6) entity to strategically complement the driving 501(c)(3) corporation.

LESSON 7: ROLE CLARITY PROTECTS RELATIONSHIPS

New EDOs enter ecosystems where responsibilities and visibility are already distributed across multiple actors. Without proactive communication—especially early—uncertainty and resentment can arise. Each peer invested time and effort into building trust, honoring existing relationships, and reinforcing partner value.

⇒ **IMPLICATION FOR GCEDC**

Greenville’s EDO partners have deep expertise and established reputations. Any perception of encroachment or misalignment can damage credibility before it’s fully built. GCEDC must consistently reinforce that any success is shared success and develop clear protocols and guiding principles for successful collaboration.

As Greenville launches GCEDC, the organization is grounded in lessons from leading economic development models—lessons that reinforce the importance of focus, measurable results, and strong public–private alignment. These insights provide confidence that GCEDC’s structure matches the standards of the best-performing EDOs in the country. Before detailing GCEDC’s role and priorities, it is important to restate the foundation on which this business plan is built: the City of Greenville’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. That plan established the core objectives and vision that GCEDC now carries forward into implementation.

VI. Strategic Priorities

FROM VISION TO STRUCTURE: GCEDC'S DELIVERY MODEL

In alignment with GVL2040 and the city's strategic plan for economic development, two pillars guide the entire business plan: the outward-facing engines that drive growth, and the internal systems that ensure we can deliver with consistency and credibility.

To translate the city's economic development priorities into action, GCEDC organizes its work around two complementary dimensions: the **Front of the House** and the **Back of the House**. Together, these components form a complete model for organizational performance, connecting external impact with internal excellence.

The Front of the House encompasses GCEDC's outward-facing programs and services: the initiatives that engage businesses, investors, and community partners to generate tangible results. The Back of the House represents the systems, processes, and culture that support those programs behind the scenes—ensuring that every initiative is backed by strong governance, sound financial management, and measurable performance.

This dual framework reflects GCEDC's core belief that success in economic development depends as much on how an organization operates as on what it delivers.

THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE: DELIVERING CORE SERVICES

The Front of the House represents the programs, partnerships, and services GCEDC delivers to the public. It is the organization's interface with businesses, investors, and community partners—the place where Greenville's strategy meets execution.

- **Business Recruitment.** Targeting strategic industries and high-value employers whose investment, job creation, and innovation strengthen Greenville's competitive position.
- **Real Estate Development.** Accelerating the preparation and activation of strategic sites—particularly in downtown and key employment corridors—to support business growth and attract catalytic investment.
- **Business Retention and Expansion.** Building deep relationships with local employers to identify expansion opportunities, workforce challenges, and ecosystem gaps.
- **Small Business Development.** Strengthening local enterprises, particularly minority- and women-owned businesses, by coordinating resources and ensuring entrepreneurs can access the right help at the right time.
- **Innovation.** Cultivating Greenville's innovation ecosystem by linking startups, research partners, and investors to fuel scalable growth.
- **Talent.** Aligning education, training, and employer needs to ensure that Greenville's growth is matched by a robust, inclusive talent pipeline.
- **Marketing and Business Intelligence.** Promoting Greenville's value proposition through unified messaging, professional-grade collateral, and data systems that track performance in real time.

These initiatives define how GCEDC engages the market. Together, they represent Greenville's complete service portfolio for business success and community prosperity.

THE BACK OF THE HOUSE: BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Behind every high-performing organization is a disciplined operational backbone. The Back of the House represents GCEDC's internal systems: the structures, culture, and practices that ensure stability, accountability, and excellence. While the Front of the House delivers value to the market, the Back of the House ensures that the organization itself operates with integrity, efficiency, and measurable performance.

- **Investor Platform and New Revenue Streams.** GCEDC will establish a sustainable funding model that blends municipal support with private-sector investment.
- **Finance and Compliance.** Strong fiscal governance and transparent systems will ensure GCEDC operates with the highest standards of accountability.
- **Systems and Performance.** Modern infrastructure and technology will power GCEDC's ability to execute, measure, and adapt.
- **Team and Culture.** By developing a high-performing team, consistent governance rhythm, and culture of learning and accountability, the organization will align staff, board, and partners around a shared mission.

These internal systems are not just administrative tools—they are strategic enablers. They ensure that GCEDC's operations are efficient, transparent, and measurable, allowing staff and investors alike to see where progress is being made and where new attention is needed. Together, they create a culture of excellence that sustains GCEDC's work over time.

FROM STRATEGY TO MEASURABLE RESULTS

GCEDC's business plan turns Greenville's strategic vision into a disciplined framework for execution. Each initiative—whether external or internal—is structured around three time horizons that define momentum, accountability, and continuous improvement:

- **Quarterly Priorities.** Immediate, action-oriented priorities that move key projects forward and demonstrate early results.
- **One-Year Goals.** Annual milestones that measure program performance and community impact.
- **Three-Year Goals.** Transformational results that reflect Greenville's long-term progress as a national model for inclusive, innovation-driven growth.

This performance system ensures that strategy becomes operational. It creates a rhythm of delivery that links vision to metrics and short-term wins to long-term transformation. GCEDC measures progress through transparent dashboards, quarterly reviews, and public reporting, giving investors, city leaders, and residents confidence that Greenville's economic strategy is both ambitious and accountable.

The sections that follow detail how each initiative will be executed—outlining Quarterly Priorities, One-Year Milestones, and Three-Year Goals. Together, they form a comprehensive playbook for how Greenville will organize, compete, and deliver measurable results over the next decade.

1. FRONT OF THE HOUSE: SERVICE DELIVERY AND MARKET IMPACT

The Front of the House represents GCEDC's outward-facing work: the programs, partnerships, and initiatives that directly engage businesses, investors, and the community. This is where Greenville's economic vision becomes tangible: attracting companies, supporting entrepreneurs, developing talent, and promoting the city's brand. Each initiative in this section serves as a key lever for growth and inclusion, translating the city's strategic priorities into measurable outcomes.

Together, these programs form the visible face of GCEDC's vision and mission: how the organization competes for investment, strengthens existing employers, and ensures that prosperity is both shared and sustained across Greenville's economy.

A. BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

Greenville is a nationally recognized hub for advanced manufacturing, innovation, and quality of life. Its next stage of growth depends on how deliberately it competes for companies that bring high-value jobs, investment, and long-term economic resilience. Effective business recruitment requires disciplined targeting, proactive relationship-building, and a unified message about Greenville’s competitive advantages.

Greenville’s strength lies in a diverse industry base supported by research institutions, a steady talent pipeline, and strong civic and private-sector partners. Its location along the I-85 corridor linking Atlanta and Charlotte, access to I-26, the reach of GSP airport’s passenger and cargo service, and a direct rail connection to the Port of Charleston give Greenville a logistics advantage that few peer cities can match. Combined with a vibrant downtown, major health-care and higher-education anchors, and an exceptional quality of life, Greenville stands out as a compelling market for employers. Successful recruitment and expansion deepen the city’s tax base, generate quality jobs, and spark new economic activity—positioning Greenville for durable, broadly shared growth.

WHY BUSINESS RECRUITMENT MATTERS

Targeted business attraction is central to a resilient local economy, and success in this arena generates quality jobs, broadens the tax base, and helps fund the parks, cultural assets, infrastructure, and educational opportunities that shape Greenville’s quality of life. New projects bring direct investment and also create ripple effects by supporting local suppliers, driving customers to small businesses, and helping attract and retain talent. Supporting existing employers is equally important, since their growth signals that Greenville is a reliable place to invest and that the community delivers on its commitments.

GCEDC connects public goals with market opportunity by bringing together partners from the city, private industry, higher education, and the development community. This coordinated approach strengthens relationships with existing employers, opens pathways for new companies, and provides clarity to investors about Greenville’s priorities. Economic development becomes a shared responsibility, and success is measured not only by the projects completed but also by the partnerships built, the momentum created, and the confidence earned by delivering consistently.

WHERE GREENVILLE COMPETES: PRIORITY SECTORS FOR GROWTH

Greenville's recruitment strategy focuses on industries that align with the city's competitive advantages and talent strengths. The strategic planning analysis confirms these sectors as the areas where targeted effort will deliver the greatest impact.

1. **Headquarters and Office.** Greenville's quality of life, cost advantages, and connectivity position the city as an attractive location for corporate operations and shared-services functions.
2. **Signature Retail.** Market scale, household growth, and visitor demand position Greenville as the Upstate's premier retail destination.
3. **Life Sciences and Health Innovation.** Strong partners and a growing talent base create opportunities to attract medical technology, biotechnology, and clinical research firms in a sector that has become South Carolina's fastest-growing.
4. **Advanced Manufacturing and Supporting Technology.** Greenville's established manufacturing ecosystem supports the recruitment of automotive, aerospace, robotics, and advanced materials companies.
5. **Technology and Digital Solutions.** A maturing innovation ecosystem is creating momentum for software, data, clean tech, fintech, and AI/quantum computing firms that complement the city's industrial strengths.
6. **International Investment.** Foreign-owned firms are central to Greenville's economy, and deepening global relationships will sustain the city's role as a destination for international investment.

Together, these target sectors define where Greenville competes most effectively and where GCEDC will concentrate its efforts to deliver the greatest economic return. They reflect a balanced approach that values both scale and specialization, recruiting new anchors while helping existing firms innovate and grow. To ensure staff time and resources are deployed strategically, GCEDC is developing a structured vetting and prioritization framework that evaluates incoming prospects based on job quality, level of investment, long-term impact, strategic value, and overall alignment with Greenville's economic goals

PARTNERS

Economic development depends on strong relationships, and Greenville benefits from a deep network of long-standing partners. GCEDC will serve as the city's economic development agency while working closely with regional and state organizations such as Upstate Alliance, the Greenville Area Development Corporation, the Greenville Chamber, higher education institutions, real estate partners, and workforce and innovation groups. GCEDC is joining an established collaborative table and will focus on the city's specific needs while staying aligned with the broader regional ecosystem.

Primary Partners—Lead Generation and Global Visibility

These organizations are GCEDC's core collaborators in identifying and advancing business-attraction opportunities.

- **South Carolina Department of Commerce.** Provides statewide recruitment leadership, incentive coordination, and international trade-mission support that connect Greenville to global investors.
- **Upstate SC Alliance.** Manages regional marketing, lead generation, site-selector outreach, and project coordination, ensuring Greenville is prominently represented in regional campaigns.
- **SCbio.** Leads sector-specific recruitment and expansion for life sciences, supporting Greenville's growing medtech and biotech ecosystem through targeted outreach and industry convenings.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Advances business growth and talent development across the Greenville area through advocacy, employer services, and industry partnerships.
- **Visit Greenville SC and Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Collaborate on business and talent storytelling, hospitality coordination for site visits, and joint marketing that reinforces Greenville's livability and business climate.
- **Innovation Partners (NextGEN, SCRA, and others).** Support corporate innovation, startup engagement, and technology transfer that strengthen Greenville's competitiveness in emerging industries.
- **Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC).** Coordinates at the county level on incentives, site development, and project development.

Secondary Partners—Project Advancement and Ecosystem Strength

Once opportunities enter the market, a broader network helps validate Greenville's value proposition and accelerate project delivery.

- **Real Estate Community.** Developers, brokers, and property owners who provide critical site identification, development readiness, and transaction support for new investment projects.
- **Private-Sector Investors.** Banks, professional-services firms, and corporate champions who offer market validation, industry insight, and access to expanded business networks.
- **University Partners, including Clemson, Furman, USC School of Medicine, and Greenville Tech.** Provide research collaboration, workforce pipelines, and R&D assets that attract innovation-driven firms and support business expansion.

Incentive and Policy Partners—Closing and Enabling Investment

Economic development succeeds when public-sector alignment is strong, coordinated, and predictable.

- **City Council and County Council.** Provide the policy framework, zoning, and infrastructure investment needed to support major projects and approve incentive packages.
- **South Carolina Department of Commerce and GADC.** Collaborate with GCEDC to structure incentives (when applicable), deliver workforce assistance, and ensure consistent project evaluation and compliance across jurisdictions.
- **Coordinating Council on Economic Development (CCED).** Approves major state economic development incentives.
- **Department of Revenue (DOR).** The state regulatory authority that ensures incentives comply with state law.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

The following quarterly priorities translate Greenville’s business recruitment and real estate strategy into early, visible progress. They focus on preparing catalytic sites, implementing operational systems, and aligning partnerships that will define GCEDC’s first full cycle of measurable results. Each priority includes a clear owner responsible for coordination and delivery, ensuring accountability across both city and private-sector partners.

- **Launch CRM and Business Recruitment Dashboard (Lead: Zach)**
GCEDC will design and implement a new customer relationship management system paired with a pilot recruitment dashboard to track every lead, prospect, and project. The platform will standardize data collection, automate reporting, and provide real-time insights. Zach will oversee configuration and training, ensuring seamless integration across business recruitment, business retention and expansion (BRE), and small-business programs. This launch establishes the backbone of GCEDC’s data-driven culture—enabling transparency, efficiency, and measurable accountability at every stage of the business development process.
- **Develop Domestic and International Business Recruitment Strateg (Leads: Sam/International and Jared/Domestic)**
GCEDC will develop and launch a comprehensive business recruitment strategy that integrates domestic and international investment efforts under one coordinated framework. The strategy will define Greenville’s value proposition across target sectors—headquarters, life sciences, technology, and firms that support the existing advanced manufacturing cluster for the mobility industry—and align those priorities with Upstate SC Alliance, South Carolina Department of Commerce, and global trade partners. On the international front, the plan will formalize Greenville’s approach to foreign direct investment (FDI)—identifying target markets such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, and South Korea, where existing business relationships and supply-chain ties are strongest. It will include strategies for re-engaging established investors, expanding supplier networks, and cultivating new relationships through trade missions, partner roundtables, and industry events. The strategy will also set clear performance metrics for international recruitment, such as the number of company meetings, project conversions, and total capital investment attracted.

- **Plan Targeted International Trip (Q2 2026) (Leads: Sam, Jared, and Michelle)**
To reinforce Greenville’s global identity, GCEDC will prepare a targeted international business development trip for Q2 2026. The trip will focus on one or two strategic markets aligned with the new recruitment strategy, prioritizing companies in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and clean technology. Planning will include lead generation, trip collateral, and coordination with partners. The objective is to position Greenville as a trusted, investment-ready destination and to build a pipeline of international prospects that can be advanced throughout 2026.
- **Hire Retail Consultant and Establish Strategic Work Plan (Lead: Jared)**
Through Capital Improvement Program funding, GCEDC will procure a retail recruitment consultant to strengthen downtown and neighborhood commercial development strategies. The consultant will evaluate market trends, identify retail gaps, and support targeted outreach to experiential and convenience retailers that complement Greenville’s mixed-use growth. A finalized work plan and consultant kickoff by Q1 2026 will establish a stronger framework for retail and mixed-use attraction.
- **Conduct Innovation Asset Mapping and Hub Profiles (Lead: Zach)**
GCEDC will complete an asset map of Greenville’s innovation infrastructure, profiling key partners such as Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR), Mainstreet Labs, CUBE Inc., and the NEXT Innovation Center. This mapping will highlight innovation capacity, talent pipelines, and cluster linkages to guide future investment and marketing.

Together, these quarterly priorities establish the foundation for GCEDC’s first year of measurable results. They operationalize the business-recruitment vision—building the systems, partnerships, and early wins that will drive Greenville’s economic momentum into 2026 and beyond.

1-Year Goals (2026)

These one-year goals represent GCEDC's first full cycle of measurable performance. By the end of 2026, Greenville will have delivered visible, high-impact results that confirm the strength of its business recruitment platform. Together, these goals demonstrate how GCEDC is turning strategy into execution—closing major projects, attracting investment, and building the systems that will sustain future growth.

- **Execute Domestic and International Recruitment Strategy Milestones (Lead: Jared)**
Over the course of 2026, GCEDC will operationalize its business recruitment strategy, executing key milestones that drive measurable results across Greenville's target sectors: advanced manufacturing, life sciences, headquarters, and technology. Domestically, this includes a structured program of company visits, site selector engagement, and lead generation campaigns aimed at firms seeking expansion or relocation opportunities within the Southeast.
On the international front, GCEDC will build on Greenville's global brand through a Q2 2026 trade and investment mission to Europe coordinated with the South Carolina Department of Commerce office in Munich. The delegation will meet with at least 10 prospects and existing international partners, reinforcing Greenville's reputation for advanced manufacturing excellence and supply chain reliability. Throughout the year, GCEDC will track performance through the CRM and dashboard suite—reporting quarterly on project pipeline value, conversion rates, and investment outcomes. Collectively, these actions will expand Greenville's visibility, attract high-quality companies, and deepen relationships with both domestic and foreign investors.
- **Complete and Operationalize CRM and Dashboard Suite (Lead: Zach)**
By the end of 2026, GCEDC will have a fully operational customer relationship management and performance dashboard system that serves as the organization's central intelligence platform. This integrated system will track every lead, prospect, and project across Greenville's recruitment, expansion, and investment activities—offering a unified view of performance for staff, partners, and the board. The platform will include automated reporting and dashboards that communicate results clearly. It will also enable data-driven decision-making, helping GCEDC identify gaps, refine outreach strategies, and target high-impact opportunities. By institutionalizing these systems, GCEDC will move beyond anecdotal success to measurable, transparent performance that builds trust, accountability, and investor confidence.
- **Catalyze Main Street Retail Recruitment Strategy (Leads: Jared and Sam)**
GCEDC will launch a focused retail recruitment effort for the Main Street corridor, translating market demand and site readiness into a clear, investor-ready retail strategy. This work will prioritize signature retail opportunities that strengthen downtown vitality, including advancing site identification and partner outreach for a downtown grocery store location.
- **Optimize City-Owned Property for Signature Retail and Grocery Development (Leads: Sam and Jared)**
GCEDC will evaluate and prioritize city-owned properties for high-impact retail and grocery development, with a focus on sites that can support a signature downtown grocery opportunity. This effort will assess site readiness, infrastructure needs, development feasibility, and partnership structures, and will position at least one priority site for active developer and operator recruitment.
- **Develop Comprehensive Marketing and Asset Profiles for Recruitment Areas (Leads: Michelle and Zach)**
GCEDC will develop complete, market-ready profiles for all priority recruitment areas.

3-Year Goals (2028)

By 2028, GCEDC will be positioned to be one of the nation's most effective and innovative business recruitment organizations. Over the next three years, success will be defined by regional, state, and national recognition; a diversified portfolio of new businesses and jobs; and a steady flow of international investment that strengthens Greenville's role in the global economy.

- **Successful Recruitment of New Businesses and Jobs Across Key Sectors**

Within three years, GCEDC will have delivered measurable targeted recruitment results that advance Greenville's target industry strategy and strengthen its economic base. The organization's goal is to attract:

- **Headquarters and Office.** Three new headquarters or major office operations, adding approximately 500 jobs and broadening Greenville's employment mix.
- **Life Sciences.** Eight new businesses, adding approximately 100 new jobs.
- **Technology/Digital Solutions.** Five new firms, adding approximately 75 jobs across automation.
- **Advanced Manufacturing.** Five new firms, adding approximately 150 jobs across automation, AI, and digital solutions.
- **Retail.** Full activation of all retail spaces along Main Street, landing at least five major national brands and eight regional brands.

GCEDC will develop a comprehensive economic impact analysis of recruitment wins to quantify direct, indirect, and induced impacts and better understand how new investments contribute to Greenville's jobs, tax base, and long-term economic growth.

- **International Recruitment Delivers Consistent Wins**

By 2028, GCEDC will have established a reliable pipeline of international investment, generating consistent wins from key partner countries and global markets. Over the three-year period, Greenville will secure 10 new international company locations or expansions, creating 200 new jobs, and generating \$5 million in economic impact. The organization's international recruitment strategy will focus on deepening ties with markets where Greenville already has strong relationships, such as Germany and the United Kingdom, while expanding outreach to emerging partners in Asia and Europe. Annual trade missions, participation in global industry expos, and sustained engagement with existing foreign-owned firms will ensure Greenville remains visible and trusted on the global stage.

- **National Recognition as a High-Performing Recruitment Organization**

By 2028, GCEDC will demonstrate, with evidence, how it has become a model for how sector-driven economic development can deliver high-impact results for a growing, globally competitive city. GCEDC will also achieve external recognition by at least one national organization or major economic development publication. This recognition will reflect more than project wins; it will capture the organization's ability to combine disciplined strategy, transparent performance reporting, and strong investor alignment into a sustainable model for metropolitan economic competitiveness.

GCEDC's leadership will be featured through conference presentations, case studies, and professional networks such as the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), ICSC, or the Urban Land Institute, where Greenville's approach to business recruitment and public-private collaboration will be highlighted as a best practice. By achieving this recognition, GCEDC will not only elevate Greenville's national profile but also validate its long-term approach to growth, which is grounded in accountability, partnership, and measurable community benefit.

B. REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Greenville's ability to attract and retain high-value employers depends not only on strong business fundamentals but also on the quality and ambition of the places it creates. Real estate is the physical platform for growth and identity, shaping where employers locate, how downtown functions as a destination, and how economic opportunity is experienced across the city. GCEDC plays a central role in coordinating public and private partners, identifying catalytic sites, and advancing development that aligns with Greenville's long-term vision for a vibrant, competitive, and distinctive downtown.

Greenville is well positioned for destination-oriented real estate development, supported by sustained population growth, a diversified economy, strong visitor demand, and major institutional anchors. Its central location and thriving downtown create opportunities that extend beyond traditional commercial, residential, or retail projects to include mixed-use destinations, signature public spaces, hospitality-driven development, and placemaking investments that define Greenville's brand. By advancing projects that strengthen downtown as a regional destination, meet employer and workforce needs, and expand the tax base, GCEDC ensures real estate functions as a strategic lever for economic vitality, community identity, and long-term competitiveness.

WHY REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Real estate development is a central pillar of the GCEDC's mission to shape Greenville's next generation of economic growth, ensuring that the city remains competitive, future-ready, and positioned to attract high-value investment. Through a deliberate and data-driven approach, GCEDC focuses on advancing projects across Greenville's core development sectors, including office, mixed-use, light industrial, multifamily, and residential housing, all of which are essential to meeting the evolving needs of employers, residents, and investors.

As this section outlines, the GCEDC will pursue disciplined quarterly and annual goals designed to support project pipelines, unlock catalytic sites, enhance permitting and entitlement efficiency, and drive high-impact development outcomes that reflect the priorities of the GVL2040 vision. Through this strategic framework, the GCEDC will guide and influence Greenville's built environment in ways that advance opportunity, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

WHAT GREENVILLE DEVELOPS: PRIORITY SECTORS FOR REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Greenville's real estate landscape is evolving rapidly, and the GCEDC plays a central role in guiding that growth with intention and clarity. This section outlines our key development sectors and the partners who help bring catalytic projects to life.

- **Mixed-Use.** Development that blends residential, commercial, and community spaces to create vibrant, walkable environments that support economic activity and daily living.
- **Office.** Workspace development that attracts employers, supports job growth, and strengthens Greenville's position as a hub for corporate investment and innovation.
- **Multifamily.** High-quality rental housing that meets growing demand, supports workforce attraction, and expands diverse living options across the city.
- **Hospitality.** Hotels, venues, and visitor-focused amenities that strengthen Greenville's tourism economy, support major events, and enhance the city's overall guest experience.
- **Light Industrial.** Flexible production and operations space that supports advanced manufacturing, logistics, and emerging industries while driving job creation and investment.

- **Commercial.** Retail and service-oriented development that enhances consumer amenities, supports small businesses, and contributes to the economic vitality of key corridors.
- **Residential.** Attainable for-sale and rental housing that meets community needs, strengthens neighborhood stability, and supports balanced and inclusive growth.
- **Special Projects.** Transformative initiatives in sports, education, health, and innovation that elevate Greenville’s identity, attract investment, and create lasting community impact.

Together, these development sectors form a balanced framework that supports Greenville’s long-term economic strength and community well-being. By advancing high-impact projects, the GCEDC ensures that growth is both strategic and sustainable.

PARTNERS

This work is grounded in close collaboration with partners, including the City of Greenville, leading developers, institutional stakeholders, and strategic private-sector leaders. It is further strengthened by strong coordination with secondary partners such as regional utilities, state agencies, financial institutions, and community organizations whose expertise and resources help accelerate project readiness. Together, these relationships create a comprehensive ecosystem capable of delivering transformative development, expanding the tax base, and fostering long term market stability.

- **South Carolina Department of Commerce.** Provides statewide recruitment leadership, incentive coordination, and international trade-mission support that connect Greenville to global investors.
- **City Council and County Council.** Provide the policy framework, zoning, and infrastructure investment needed to support major projects and approve incentive packages.
- **Department of Revenue.** The state regulatory authority that ensures incentives comply with state law.
- **Real Estate Developers.** Developers who bring projects to life through site acquisition, design, financing, and construction, driving growth across Greenville’s key development sectors.
- **Real Estate Community.** Brokers and property owners who provide critical site identification, development readiness, and transaction support for new investment projects.
- **Private Investors.** Individuals, firms, and capital partners who provide essential funding and market confidence for transformative real estate projects across Greenville.
- **Institutional Investors.** Pension funds, investment managers, and large financial entities that support long-term, high-value development through stable capital and strategic investment partnerships.
- **Institutional Stakeholders.** Universities, health systems, and major public or nonprofit institutions that anchor districts, shape long-term land use, and catalyze large-scale investment.
- **Private-Sector Leaders.** Business and industry partners who provide market insight, investment capacity, and strategic collaboration to advance high-impact development opportunities.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Advances business growth and talent development across the Greenville area through advocacy, employer services, and industry partnerships.
- **Visit Greenville SC.** Collaborates on business and talent storytelling, hospitality coordination for site visits, and joint marketing that reinforces Greenville’s livability and business climate.
- **Greenville Area Development Corporation.** Economic Development organization, county counterpart that collaborates on state incentives whenever applicable.

Quarterly Priorities

- **Launch Pilot Database for Real Estate Inventory (Lead: Tyler)**

GCEDC will launch a pilot database that captures available real estate opportunities across the city, providing a foundational tool to support development, business recruitment, and existing industry efforts. This platform will centralize key property information, enhance market visibility, and streamline how opportunities are identified and evaluated. The database will expand organically throughout the year as new sites, buildings, and redevelopment prospects are uncovered, evolving into a dynamic resource for Greenville’s growth strategy.
- **Launch Targeted Marketing Campaign for Top Three Properties (Leads: Jared and Tyler)**

GCEDC will conduct a targeted marketing campaign to ultimately advance negotiations on priority downtown development opportunities toward a formal agreement/letter of intent in 2026. This milestone will demonstrate the city’s capacity to close complex, public-private transactions that bring investment, jobs, and vibrancy to the core. Sam will assist by helping to coordinate across legal, planning, and private-sector partners to ensure the deal structure aligns with GCEDC’s broader recruitment and site-development strategy.

 - **Complete Active Real Estate Opportunity Assessment (Leads: Tyler and Jared)**

GCEDC will complete a comprehensive inventory and assessment of downtown development opportunities, evaluating ownership, infrastructure readiness, zoning alignment, and catalytic potential. This assessment will identify properties that are best positioned for new real estate development while informing a coordinated readiness strategy with the City of Greenville and private developers. The outcome will be a detailed map of opportunity sites that will guide marketing, incentives, and investment decisions in 2026.
 - **Highlight and Market Flagship Development Opportunities (Leads: Sam and Jared)**

Building on the site assessment, GCEDC will select two to three flagship downtown properties to actively position for investment and marketing. These sites will anchor Greenville’s next wave of downtown growth and signal the city’s readiness for high-value, mixed-use development recruitment campaigns.
- **Defined Real Estate Development Project Management Strategy (Lead: Zach)**

GCEDC will establish a fully defined real estate development project management strategy by creating standardized project profiles, outlining key phases, and identifying measurable metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs). This framework will ensure consistent tracking, clearer decision-making, and greater alignment across all development initiatives.
- **Launch Pipeline and CRM Dashboard for Real Estate Development (Lead: Zach)**

GCEDC will utilize the new customer relationship management system to track every lead, prospect, and project. The platform will standardize data collection, automate reporting, and provide real-time insights. Zach will oversee configuration and training, ensuring seamless integration across business recruitment, BRE, and small-business programs.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **Develop a Real Estate Priority Work Matrix Aligned to Economic Development Goals (Lead: Jared)**
GCEDC will develop and implement a real estate priority work matrix that clearly links active and prospective development projects to Greenville’s economic development goals. The matrix will be used to prioritize staff time, coordinate partners, and guide decision-making based on project readiness, economic impact, alignment with target sectors, and contribution to downtown and destination development objectives.
- **Develop a Class A Office Real Estate Strategy (Lead: Jared)**
GCEDC will develop a Class A office real estate strategy that assesses market demand, competitive positioning, site readiness, and delivery models for high-quality office space in Greenville. The strategy will identify priority locations, target users, and implementation pathways to support employer recruitment, downtown vitality, and long-term economic competitiveness.
- **Signed Development Agreements with Three Real Estate Development Projects (Lead: Jared)**
In 2026, the GCEDC will secure signed development agreements for at least three real estate projects within core sectors, demonstrating measurable progress in advancing Greenville’s strategic growth priorities. These agreements will formalize commitments between the city, our development partners, and key investors, ensuring alignment around timelines, investment levels, and community impact. Achieving this goal will help accelerate project pipelines, unlock high-impact sites, and reinforce Greenville’s position as a premier destination for transformative development.
- **Groundbreaking for Two Real Estate Development Projects (Leads: Sam and Jared)**
These projects will bring new office, residential, and retail investment to the urban core, adding employment density, housing supply, and commercial activity. These developments will serve as flagship examples of the city’s ability to deliver transformative investment, creating a replicable template for future site activation and reinforcing Greenville’s position as one of the Southeast’s most competitive small-city markets for mixed-use and corporate investment.
- **Complete and Operationalize CRM and Dashboard Suite (Lead: Zach)**
By the end of 2026, GCEDC will have a fully operational customer relationship management and performance dashboard system that serves as the organization’s central intelligence platform. This integrated system will track every lead, prospect, and project across Greenville’s recruitment, expansion, and investment activities—offering a unified view of performance for staff, partners, and the board. The platform will include automated reporting and dashboards that communicate results clearly. It will also enable data-driven decision-making—helping GCEDC identify gaps, refine outreach strategies, and target high-impact opportunities. By institutionalizing these systems, GCEDC will move beyond anecdotal success to measurable, transparent performance that builds trust, accountability, and investor confidence.
- **Full Launch Database for Real Estate Inventory (Lead: Tyler)**
GCEDC will launch a database that captures available real estate opportunities across the city, providing a foundational tool to support development, business recruitment, and existing industry efforts. This platform will centralize key property information, enhance market visibility, and streamline how opportunities are identified and evaluated.
- **Develop Systematic Marketing Materials for Priority Real Estate Sites (Leads: Jared and Michelle)**
GCEDC will develop a consistent, high-quality set of marketing materials for the top 10 priority real estate sites in Greenville. These materials will clearly communicate each site’s location, scale, zoning, infrastructure capacity, access and visibility, surrounding uses, and development potential. The site profiles will be designed for use with developers, site selectors, and investors, ensuring Greenville presents a cohesive, professional, and market-ready real estate story across all outreach and recruitment efforts.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **Advance City Hall Office/Innovation Hub Feasibility Assessment**
GCEDC, in coordination with the city, will advance a feasibility assessment to evaluate the potential conversion of a portion of the future, fully-renovated City Hall into market-ready commercial office space. The assessment will examine physical conditions, space configurations, market demand, operating considerations, and potential users to determine whether the space can be competitively positioned to support private-sector tenants and strengthen downtown office supply.
- **Successful Completion and Ribbon-Cutting of Four Major Real Estate Development Projects**
GCEDC will support the successful completion and ribbon-cutting of at least four major real estate development projects across Greenville. These projects will represent catalytic, high-quality development aligned with Greenville’s priority sectors and downtown vision, demonstrating the city’s momentum in attracting investment, advancing destination-oriented development, and delivering projects with lasting economic and community impact.
- **Advance Development Agreements for Three Additional Priority Projects**
GCEDC will help advance at least three additional real estate projects to execute development agreements or equivalent milestones. These projects will be positioned for future delivery and will reflect Greenville’s long-term growth strategy, with an emphasis on downtown vitality, mixed-use and destination development, and projects that strengthen the city’s tax base and regional competitiveness.

C. EXISTING BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Greenville's economic success is built first on the strength of the businesses that already operate in the city. From advanced manufacturing and life sciences to locally owned firms and fast-growing employers, these companies anchor Greenville's tax base, employ its residents, and shape its long-term economic identity. As Greenville continues to grow, competitiveness will depend not only on attracting new investment but also on helping existing employers expand, modernize, and remain rooted in the community.

Business retention and expansion is, therefore, a core economic development function. Through structured outreach, regular engagement with employers, and coordinated problem-solving, GCEDC serves as the primary connection point between businesses and the public, institutional, and workforce partners that support their growth. This work allows GCEDC to identify challenges early, respond quickly to changing conditions, and ensure that growth is sustained and locally anchored.

WHY BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION MATTER

Most new jobs and investment come from companies that are already in a community. These firms have existing facilities, trained workforces, and established supplier relationships, making their expansion both more likely and more cost-effective than new recruitment. Supporting their growth strengthens Greenville's economic base, reinforces local supply chains, and creates opportunity across neighborhoods and industries.

At the same time, Greenville's employers are navigating rapid change. Technology adoption, evolving supply chains, workforce availability, housing pressures, and increased competition for talent all influence expansion decisions. A strong BRE program ensures that these pressures are understood and addressed through timely, coordinated action. By maintaining direct access to company leadership and responding with practical solutions, GCEDC builds trust and signals that Greenville is committed to the long-term success of its employers.

The following sections outline the specific steps, priorities, and outcomes that will turn this system into measurable impact.

PARTNERS

Greenville's business retention and expansion strategy depends on strong partnerships across local, regional, and state organizations. GCEDC serves as the connector among these partners—coordinating outreach, sharing data, and aligning services so that Greenville's employers receive consistent, high-quality support. The following organizations represent the core network supporting GCEDC's business retention and expansion efforts.

- **South Carolina Department of Commerce.** Statewide coordination of business retention, expansion, and workforce development programs.
- **SCbio.** Sector-specific collaboration supporting Greenville's life sciences ecosystem. SCbio convenes industry leaders, shares statewide data, and assists with workforce and supplier connections. Through its partnership with GCEDC, SCbio anchors Greenville's Life Sciences Sector Partnership and strengthens the city's position in biotechnology, medical technology, and clinical research.
- **South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP).** Hands-on technical assistance for Greenville's advanced manufacturing employers.
- **South Carolina Council on Competitiveness (SC Competes).** Research and coordination across statewide industry clusters.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce and Other Local Chambers.** Local business engagement and outreach.
- **Downtown Merchants Association.** Collaboration to sustain Greenville's small and locally owned business community.
- **SC NEXUS Tech Hub.** A federally designated tech hub that expands access to innovation networks, commercialization pathways, and federal funding opportunities for qualifying firms across the Upstate.
- **South Carolina Research Authority.** Provides grants, investments, and technical support that help high-growth startups scale; offers targeted funding programs that strengthen the state's innovation ecosystem.
- **Greenville Local Development Corporation (GLDC).** Offers gap financing, project support, and capital access tools for eligible businesses and development projects, helping advance projects that may not be fully financeable through traditional sources.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

The following priorities translate GCEDC's business retention and expansion strategy into near-term, visible action. These initiatives emphasize building partnerships, capturing data, and establishing a consistent rhythm of employer outreach. Together, they will lay the groundwork for a best-in-class BRE program that connects directly with Greenville's employers, surfaces shared challenges, and converts insights into solutions.

- **Define BRE Meeting Criteria and Business Strategy (Leads: Michelle and Zach)**
To bring structure and consistency to its outreach, GCEDC will develop formal criteria for BRE visits and a clear framework for categorizing local businesses by scale and economic role. Using the new HubSpot tracking system, the team will establish standard documentation fields, follow-up protocols, and performance metrics for every engagement. This framework will distinguish four tiers of employers: anchor businesses, second-tier firms, local small businesses, and start-up or entrepreneurial ventures. By segmenting the local base, GCEDC can tailor its outreach, identify systemic issues within each group, and allocate staff time efficiently. This disciplined approach ensures that every interaction is captured, analyzed, and used to strengthen Greenville's overall business climate.

- **Conduct 10+ Anchor Employer Visits (Leads: Sam, Jared, and Zach)**
 GCEDC will conduct at least 10 meetings with anchor employers—major firms that drive employment and investment in Greenville’s advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and headquarters sectors. These visits will focus on understanding the industry landscape, expansion opportunities, infrastructure or permitting needs, and workforce development partnerships. Insights gathered from these sessions will inform sector briefs, identify early-stage expansion projects, and align city resources around high-impact opportunities. In addition to demonstrating GCEDC’s commitment to its largest employers, these meetings will set the standard for relationship management and responsiveness that underpins the broader BRE program.
- **Conduct 20–30 Second-Tier Employer Visits (Leads: Zach and Jared)**
 In parallel with anchor outreach, GCEDC will meet with 20 to 30 mid-sized employers that form the backbone of Greenville’s business ecosystem. These companies often face growth constraints—space, workforce pipeline, supply-chain costs—that can be mitigated through targeted assistance. Through these visits, GCEDC will identify patterns across industries, elevate common challenges, and develop a prioritized list of issues requiring a collective response. The process will build trust and position GCEDC as a hands-on, problem-solving partner for businesses beyond the city’s marquee names.
- **Conduct 20 Small-Business Visits (Lead: Jeanette)**
 Small businesses are vital to Greenville’s neighborhoods and downtown vitality. GCEDC will conduct 20 structured visits with locally owned enterprises, focusing on expansion needs, hiring challenges, access to capital, and regulatory or space constraints. Each meeting will be documented in the BRE tracking system to ensure visibility into citywide trends. The findings will inform future small-business programming and help align City of Greenville resources—such as facade grants, permitting assistance, or technical support—with the real needs of entrepreneurs and independent operators. This outreach strengthens the connection between economic development and quality of place, ensuring that growth benefits businesses of every size.
- **Conduct 20 Startup and Entrepreneurial Business Visits (Leads: Sam and Jeanette)**
 GCEDC will round out its engagement cycle with 20 visits to startups and early-stage firms, focusing on companies emerging from the city’s innovation and small-business partners. These conversations will explore space availability, mentorship, access to financing, and opportunities for integration into local supply chains.

Together, these priorities establish the operating rhythm of GCEDC’s business-retention and expansion platform. They balance data collection with relationship-building, ensuring that Greenville’s employers—large and small, established and emerging—are seen, heard, and supported. The outcomes from this first quarter will set the stage for the 2026 goals: a robust BRE Dashboard, a full year of 100 business visits, and the expansion of sector partnerships across Greenville’s priority industries.

1-Year Goals (2026)

These one-year goals represent GCEDC's first full cycle of measurable performance in business retention and expansion. By the end of 2026, Greenville will have established a consistent rhythm of employer outreach, delivered actionable insights through a new BRE Dashboard, and institutionalized data-driven practices that guide decisions across sectors. Together, these efforts will demonstrate that Greenville is not only attracting new companies but also deepening its relationships with the employers who sustain its economy every day.

- **Develop and Operationalize the BRE Dashboard (Lead: Zach)**

By the end of 2026, GCEDC will design and operationalize a comprehensive Business Retention and Expansion Dashboard that captures the full scope of employer engagement across Greenville. The dashboard will consolidate data from the HubSpot BRE tracking system and standardized meeting reports, translating hundreds of employer touchpoints into clear, actionable insight.

The dashboard will track key indicators, including expansions, job growth or decline, workforce needs, business satisfaction, and recurring issues affecting the local business climate. This system will allow GCEDC to identify cross-cutting challenges such as infrastructure capacity, workforce pipeline gaps, or regulatory friction, and to share timely insights with partners, including Greenville Technical College, SCbio, and the city. Updated quarterly, the BRE Dashboard will function as both a management tool and a shared communication platform, reinforcing GCEDC's commitment to accountability, transparency, and data-informed decision-making.

- **Conduct 100 Employer Engagement Meetings (Lead: Business Engagement and Investor Relations Manager)**

In 2026, GCEDC will conduct at least 100 structured business visits and meetings, ensuring broad and balanced engagement across Greenville's employer base. This outreach will span four key categories—anchor employers, second-tier firms, local small businesses, and startup or entrepreneurial companies—reflecting the diversity and depth of the local economy.

Each meeting will follow the standardized BRE framework developed during the initial rocks period, ensuring that data, follow-up actions, and outcomes are consistently documented in HubSpot. This structure will allow GCEDC to analyze emerging trends across sectors and respond quickly to business needs. By reaching 100 employers in the first full program year, the organization will establish a measurable baseline for engagement volume, satisfaction, and economic outcomes—setting a new standard for relationship-driven development in Greenville.

- **Develop a Formal Strategy to Identify, Encourage, and Support Existing Business Expansion Projects (Lead: Business Engagement and Investor Relations Manager)**

This effort establishes a clear, proactive framework for identifying expansion opportunities among existing employers, engaging them early, and coordinating internal and external resources to support growth.

- **Develop Strategies Around Events to Engage Existing Industry Partners (Lead: Business Engagement and Investor Relations Manager)**

This action focuses on using targeted events as intentional tools for business engagement rather than one-off networking opportunities. The strategy will outline how industry roundtables, site visits, and recognition events are designed to strengthen relationships, surface business needs, share relevant updates, and reinforce the community's commitment to existing employers.

Collectively, these 2026 goals mark GCEDC's transition from building systems to demonstrating impact. A robust dashboard, 100 structured employer engagements, and sector-driven intelligence will form the foundation of a modern, measurable, and accountable BRE platform. By year's end, Greenville will have the tools, insights, and relationships needed to sustain growth and ensure that its existing employers remain the city's most powerful ambassadors for investment and innovation.

3-Year Goals (2028)

By 2028, GCEDC will have established Greenville as a model for proactive, data-driven employer engagement—where retention and expansion are treated with the same strategic rigor as recruitment. Over the next three years, GCEDC’s work will evolve from individual business outreach to an institutionalized platform of partnerships, analytics, and continuous improvement that sustains Greenville’s economic vitality.

- **Actively Support and Incentivize 10 Business Expansions**
GCEDC will actively support and, where appropriate, incentivize at least 10 business expansions that result in new job creation and capital investment in Greenville. These efforts will focus on existing employers aligned with Greenville’s priority sectors and will leverage coordinated incentives, workforce partnerships, and infrastructure support to accelerate project delivery and long-term impact.
- **GCEDC Established Rapport with All Major Firms in City Limits**
By 2028, GCEDC will have logged at least one existing industry visit with all firms employing 500+ employees in the Greenville city limits.
- **GCEDC Recognized for a Best-in-Class Business Retention and Expansion Program**
By 2028, GCEDC will be recognized by state or national peers as a best-in-class business retention and expansion organization, known for measurable results and a culture of collaboration. This recognition will reflect a three-year record of consistent outreach, clear communication, and tangible expansions among Greenville’s employers. Through published performance data, quarterly dashboards, and demonstrated responsiveness, GCEDC will build the trust and credibility that define high-performing development organizations. The city’s reputation for service excellence—rapid follow-up, cross-agency coordination, and tailored support—will make Greenville a benchmark for how local governments and economic-development corporations can partner with employers to retain and grow jobs.

Greenville’s ability to grow depends on the strength of the companies already here. Through proactive engagement, data-driven insight, and consistent follow-through, GCEDC is ensuring that existing employers remain the city’s strongest advocates and partners in growth. The next phase of this work—sector partnerships, business dashboards, and continuous outreach—will transform retention into a shared civic enterprise. By listening carefully and responding strategically, Greenville will sustain the trust, collaboration, and innovation that define its economy and its community.

D. SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Greenville’s story has always been written by its entrepreneurs. From family-owned shops and creative startups to manufacturers that began as garage ventures, small businesses are the backbone of the city’s economy and the lifeblood of its neighborhoods. They employ thousands, build local wealth, and create the vibrancy that defines Greenville’s streets and downtown corridors. As the city continues to attract national investment, its next chapter of competitiveness will hinge on ensuring that small businesses—especially minority- and women-owned enterprises—can participate fully in that growth.

WHY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Small businesses shape Greenville’s identity and employ a significant share of local residents, yet many struggle to access the capital, resources, and networks needed to grow. These challenges are often greater for minority- and women-owned firms, which face limited visibility and difficulty navigating support systems.

Greenville has strong entrepreneurship programs, but a clear gap remains for firms that have moved beyond launch and need targeted help to scale. Many promising businesses stall not for lack of talent, but for lack of coordinated growth support.

GCEDC’s role is to close this gap. The organization will not duplicate existing programs; it will connect entrepreneurs to the right resources, simplify city processes, and coordinate partners to ensure businesses move through the system with clarity and support.

Through shared data, clear pathways, and streamlined processes, GCEDC will help position Greenville as a top small business city and advance the city’s commitment to inclusive growth by expanding opportunity and strengthening local ownership.

PARTNERS

Greenville’s small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem is one of its defining strengths. GCEDC’s role is to connect, align, and amplify the efforts of the many organizations that help entrepreneurs start, scale, and thrive. This network spans local, regional, and state partners whose collective mission is to expand opportunity, promote inclusion, and grow the city’s base of small and locally owned enterprises. While not an exhaustive list, key partners include:

- **NextGEN.** Entrepreneurial development and early-stage investment network supporting Greenville’s innovation ecosystem. NextGEN provides mentorship, technical assistance, and capital access for emerging founders, with an emphasis on scaling high-growth startups and fostering inclusive entrepreneurship.
- **Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Furman University).** Academic and ecosystem partner advancing innovation, entrepreneurship education, and applied research. The Hill Institute convenes students, faculty, and community entrepreneurs through training, mentorship, and accelerator programs.
- **South Carolina Department of Commerce.** Statewide coordination and funding for small business support and minority enterprise programs.
- **South Carolina Small Business Development Centers (SBDC).** Technical assistance and advisory support for new and growing businesses. SBDC offers individualized counseling, market research, and financial planning services to help entrepreneurs navigate startup and expansion challenges.
- **Greenville Local Development Corporation.** Grants and Loans available to eligible small businesses.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Central hub for small business networking, advocacy, and leadership development. The Chamber’s programs—including business roundtables, mentorship opportunities, and supplier diversity initiatives—complement GCEDC’s engagement and retention goal.

- **Village Launch.** Inclusive entrepreneurship organization supporting minority-and women-owned businesses through training, mentorship, and access to capital. Village Launch works directly with neighborhood-based entrepreneurs to build capacity, strengthen financial readiness, and connect local enterprises to broader supply chains.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

The following priorities lay the groundwork for a coordinated and inclusive small-business ecosystem. They focus on connecting existing partners, formalizing shared goals, and creating the tools and data systems needed to measure impact across the network.

- **Strengthen Partnership Strategies Through Updated and Targeted MOUs (Leads: Sam and Jeanette)**

In coordination with the City, GCEDC will strengthen Greenville’s entrepreneurship ecosystem through a focused partnership strategy grounded in clarity, shared accountability, and measurable outcomes. This work will include a comprehensive review of existing memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and the development of new agreements where strategic gaps exist, ensuring that partner roles, expectations, and deliverables are clearly defined and aligned with ecosystem priorities.

A central component of this effort will be supporting NextGEN in the evolution of the StartupGVL platform. While GCEDC will not lead the relaunch, it will collaborate closely with NextGEN to help shape StartupGVL into a central navigation hub for entrepreneurs, featuring a universal intake process, clear resource pathways, and navigator support. This structure will ensure entrepreneurs can easily access guidance and remain connected as their businesses start, operate, and scale.

MOUs with key partners such as NextGEN and the Hill Institute will be updated to strengthen performance expectations, clarify data-sharing practices, and align metrics around long-term outcomes rather than participation alone. In parallel, GCEDC will identify organizations that serve unique or underserved geographies, populations, or business stages and assess opportunities to formalize partnerships where unmet needs persist. Each MOU will clearly articulate the purpose of the partnership, the value it delivers to entrepreneurs, and how it advances a connected, accessible, and inclusive ecosystem. This approach ensures partnerships are intentional, complementary, and collectively reinforce a seamless support system for Greenville’s founders.

- **Identify FY27 Funding Targets for Innovation and Startup Partners (Leads: Sam, Roger, and Jeanette)**

In coordination with the city, GCEDC will identify priority partner organizations for FY27 funding that demonstrate measurable impact in advancing Greenville’s innovation and startup ecosystem. This includes partners that accelerate early-stage ventures, support technology commercialization, and help high-growth firms scale. The early identification process will allow GCEDC to align budget proposals with evidence-based outcomes, ensuring that public and private resources are directed toward programs that strengthen Greenville’s position as a leading hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and talent-driven growth.

- **Review and Refine Opportunity: Community Development Grant Program (Leads: Jeanette and Roger)**

GCEDC will review and refine the Opportunity Community Development Grant Program to ensure it is clearly positioned as a place-based and inclusion-focused tool that strengthens neighborhood-level entrepreneurship and small business stability. This review will assess how effectively the program reaches minority- and women-owned businesses, early-stage entrepreneurs, and businesses operating in historically underinvested areas of Greenville.

- **Review and Refine Local Roots Small Business Grant Program (Leads: Jeanette and Roger)**

GCEDC will review and refine the Local Roots Small Business Grant Program to better support existing small businesses as they invest, expand, and remain competitive in Greenville. This effort will focus on aligning the program with business retention and growth priorities, including capital investments, operational upgrades, and job creation.

- **Perform Ecosystem Analysis re: What Does the Greenville Chamber of Commerce Currently Offer/Do for Small Business (Lead: Jeanette)**

This analysis will document and assess the programs, services, and touchpoints the Greenville Chamber of Commerce currently provides to small businesses. The goal is to clarify what is already working, identify gaps or overlaps with other partners, and create a clear baseline to inform future small business support strategies.

Together, these actions create the foundation for a connected, accountable ecosystem—one in which GCEDC and its partners share data, align investments, and deliver coordinated support to small businesses across the city.

1-Year Goals (2026)

By the end of 2026, GCEDC will have established a fully coordinated, data-driven approach to small-business development—one that makes Greenville’s ecosystem visible, navigable, and outcome-oriented.

- **Establish an Evaluation Framework for Small-Business Investment (Leads: Jeanette and Roger)**

GCEDC will formalize an evaluation framework to guide how it invests public and private funds in small-business programs. The framework will define criteria for partner selection, performance measurement, and return on investment—shifting funding from ad-hoc grants to strategic, data-backed investments. By linking dollars to deliverables, GCEDC will ensure transparency and accountability, demonstrating to both City Council and investors that small-business funding drives measurable outcomes in job creation, revenue growth, and inclusion.

- **Advance the Small-Business Portal and Microgrant Programs (Lead: Jeanette)**

Building on the Entrepreneur Resource Network, GCEDC will support progress toward the development and refinement of the city’s small-business portal in partnership with NextGEN. The GCEDC team will collaborate on defining functionality, user pathways, and integration needs so the platform becomes a reliable point of entry for entrepreneurs seeking resources. In parallel, GCEDC will update and streamline the city’s microgrant programs, ensuring clearer eligibility, stronger outreach, and targeted support for startups and early-stage minority- and women-owned businesses. Together, these tools will make the ecosystem easier to navigate and the path to support clearer and more equitable.

- **Strengthen Partnerships with Chamber and GLDC (Lead: Sam)**

GCEDC will formalize collaboration with the Greenville Chamber and the Greenville Local Development Corporation (GLDC) to align marketing, capital access, and technical-assistance strategies. These partnerships will bridge the gap between large-scale business recruitment and grassroots entrepreneurship, ensuring that every stage of Greenville’s economy—from startup to corporate headquarters—is connected by shared goals. Through regular coordination meetings and shared data reporting, GCEDC will create a seamless pipeline for business growth and capital readiness.

- **Strengthen Partnerships with Local Lenders and SC Launch (SCRA) (Lead: Jeanette)**

GCEDC will identify and formalize collaboration with local financial institutions to align marketing, capital access, and technical-assistance strategies. These partnerships will bridge the gap between large-scale business recruitment and grassroots entrepreneurship, ensuring that every stage of Greenville’s economy—from startup to corporate headquarters—is connected by shared goals. Through regular coordination meetings and shared data reporting, GCEDC will create a seamless pipeline for business growth and capital readiness.

By the end of 2026, these efforts will strengthen Greenville’s coordinated small-business ecosystem with shared data, clearer pathways, and consistent follow-through—ensuring entrepreneurs remain supported beyond launch, can access the right growth-stage resources, and are better positioned to build long-term roots in the community.

3-Year Goals (2028)

By 2028, Greenville City Economic Development Corporation will operate as the city's central coordination point for small-business support—demonstrated through strong partner alignment, shared data systems, and measurable progress in entrepreneurship access, growth, and inclusion.

- **GCEDC Recognized as an Effective and Collaborative Coordinating Hub for Small-Business Support in the Greenville Market**

Over the next three years, GCEDC will strengthen its role as the city's central coordinating entity for small-business and entrepreneurship support. Through the Entrepreneur Resource Network and formalized partner MOUs, GCEDC will maintain the most comprehensive, real-time view of Greenville's entrepreneurial landscape and use shared data to guide strategy across the ecosystem. The organization will publish annual reports that track partner performance, small-business activity, and minority- and women-owned business enterprise participation—establishing GCEDC as the primary source for aligned data, ecosystem insight, and strategic direction in the Upstate. By 2028, GCEDC will have a clear baseline of entrepreneurs served and measurable improvements in how business owners navigate resources, progress from launch to growth, and stay connected to long-term support.

- **Strengthening Minority- and Women-Owned Enterprise Growth, Capacity, and Retention**

By 2028, GCEDC will strengthen the growth and retention of 25 minority- and women-owned businesses through a coordinated platform of programs, partnerships, and targeted support. Using shared data and metrics, GCEDC will identify gaps, direct entrepreneurs to the right services, and ensure minority- and women-owned firms have access to capital pathways, mentorship, technical assistance, and procurement opportunities aligned with their stage of growth. GCEDC will also prioritize building the internal capacity of minority- and women-owned firms—helping owners reduce operational overwhelm, improve back-office systems, and prepare for sustainable expansion. GCEDC will establish a baseline and measure year-over-year improvements in business stability, revenue progress, procurement readiness, and continued engagement with ecosystem support. The emphasis will be on ensuring that minority- and women-owned firms not only launch but also gain the resilience and foundation needed to grow and remain rooted in Greenville long-term.

Greenville's entrepreneurial ecosystem is entering a new era—one built on coordination, equity, and accountability. GCEDC's leadership will ensure that small-business development is not an afterthought, but a central pillar of the city's economic strategy. By aligning partners, data, and resources, Greenville will foster an environment where every entrepreneur—regardless of background or zip code—has the tools, networks, and confidence to succeed.

E. INNOVATION

Greenville's next economy will be driven by ideas and by the people who create them. Founders and creative professionals are choosing cities where they can live well, connect easily, and test new concepts quickly. Greenville offers that environment through its strong quality of life, a growing base of technical and creative talent, and a record of public investment that has earned national recognition.

These strengths are now shaping an emerging innovation ecosystem supported by universities, entrepreneurship programs, and a growing community of makers and early-stage firms. Innovation in Greenville is accessible and community-oriented, taking place in shared workspaces, university labs, and collaborative studios. GCEDC's role is to help bring these efforts together by aligning resources, partnerships, and investment so that the city's creative potential translates into new companies, new jobs, and broad-based economic opportunity.

WHY INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP MATTER

Innovation ecosystems are now the accelerators of modern economies. Research shows that communities that connect startups, universities, and industry partners grow faster and create more resilient jobs than those that rely solely on recruitment. Startups and scale-ups drive wage growth, generate intellectual property, and attract investment capital that circulates locally.

For Greenville, innovation is not an abstract goal; it is an extension of the city's DNA. The same ingenuity that transformed a textile town into a modern, advanced manufacturing hub now powers a new wave of entrepreneurship and applied research. A thriving innovation ecosystem ensures that Greenville remains competitive in an economy increasingly driven by technology, creativity, and collaboration.

Equally important, innovation is a pathway to inclusive growth. When residents can access the tools, spaces, and mentors needed to launch businesses or commercialize ideas, innovation becomes a driver of shared prosperity. By connecting underrepresented founders and small-scale innovators to the region's research and capital networks, GCEDC can help ensure that Greenville's next economic chapter expands opportunity for all.

PARTNERS

Economic development thrives on innovation—and Greenville's ability to nurture startups and scale-ups will determine how it competes in the next economy. GCEDC's innovation agenda is built on collaboration with a network of partners that connect entrepreneurs to capital, mentorship, workspace, and commercialization pathways. These organizations form the foundation of Greenville's innovation ecosystem, helping translate ideas into enterprises and talent into opportunity.

GCEDC will not act alone; it will operate as a strategic connector and funder, aligning resources to strengthen the city's capacity for entrepreneurship and innovation. The following list is not exhaustive, but highlights the key organizations—both funded and unfunded—that will play critical roles in advancing Greenville's startup and innovation ecosystem.

Key Partners

Tier 1

- **NextGen.** A leading innovation platform that supports startup founders through mentorship, investor connections, and accelerator programming, helping early-stage companies scale rapidly within Greenville's ecosystem.
- **Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.** Furman University's anchor for entrepreneurship education, connecting students, startups, and community ventures through programs that promote innovation, leadership, and inclusive growth.

- **Main Street Labs, CUBEInc, CU-ICAR, NEXT Innovation Center, and Crescent One.** Physical and institutional anchors of Greenville’s innovation corridor, supporting commercialization, advanced manufacturing, and applied research.
- **Greenville Local Development Corporation.** A public–private financing partner supporting small-scale real estate development and access to capital for growing firms.
- **SCbio.** The state’s life sciences industry organization, offering innovation support and connections for biotechnology and medtech startups.

Tier 2

- **South Carolina Research Authority/SC Launch.** One of the state’s leading innovation investment organizations, providing grants, mentorship, and capital to early-stage technology companies across South Carolina.
- **VentureSouth and Angel Networks.** Investor groups that supply seed and growth capital to high-potential startups in Greenville and throughout the Southeast.
- **Palmetto Venture Fund and InnovaSphere.** Private investment and incubation partners that focus on scaling emerging technology and advanced manufacturing ventures.
- **Flywheel.** A co-working and innovation space that provides flexible environments for entrepreneurs, investors, and mentors to collaborate.
- **Founderville.** A local venture capital fund and accelerator that provides early-stage entrepreneurs with access to investment funds, peer networks, and business development resources.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

The following priorities translate GCEDC’s innovation and entrepreneurship agenda into visible early action. These initiatives focus on building the partnerships, data, and infrastructure required to make Greenville a recognized hub for startups, research, and scale-ups.

- **Complete and Submit South Carolina Department of Commerce Innovation Ecosystem Proposal (Leads: Zach and Michelle)**
In partnership with NextGEN, GCEDC will prepare a proposal to the South Carolina Department of Commerce to secure funding for a replicable innovation ecosystem model. The proposal will define a Greenville-based framework for identifying, recruiting, and landing new investment, or for recruiting innovative talent.

1-Year Goals (2026)

These goals represent GCEDC's first full cycle of measurable progress in building Greenville's innovation ecosystem. By the end of 2026, Greenville will have established a clear innovation roadmap, active partnerships, and foundational infrastructure to support scalable startups and research-based ventures.

- **Establish a New MOU with Greenville Local Development Corporation (Lead: Sam)**
GCEDC will formalize a new partnership agreement with the Greenville Local Development Corporation to support early-stage funding aligned with business recruitment and innovation-based growth. The agreement will outline a coordinated strategy for providing seed and bridge capital to startups connected to Greenville's target industries, helping early-stage firms move from concept to commercialization.
- **Create an Ecosystem Partner Map and Identify Gaps/Opportunities (Leads: Zach and Jeanette)**
In tandem with NextGEN, GCEDC will finalize a comprehensive innovation-partner map that defines the roles, resources, and relationships among Greenville's entrepreneurship and R&D institutions. This tool will identify ecosystem gaps—particularly around early-stage capital, commercialization, and inclusive founder support—and will guide collaborative programming in 2026–2027.
- **Launch Joint Programming with NextGEN (Leads: Zach and Jeanette)**
Building on MOUs and ecosystem assessments, GCEDC will explore a joint programming and venture capital strategy with NextGEN, such as founder accelerators, seed-funding initiatives, or an innovation sprint, focused on growing Greenville's innovation-driven enterprises.
- **Formalize GCEDC's Role in CU-ICAR 2.0 (Leads: Sam and Zach)**
GCEDC will partner with Clemson University and local industry leaders to define its role in the next phase of CU-ICAR's development (CU-ICAR 2.0) as both a recruitment asset and an innovation platform for Greenville companies. This collaboration will include a focused effort to fully confirm site readiness, identify gaps, and optimize site planning to support future research, mobility, and advanced manufacturing uses. Together, these actions will strengthen Greenville's integration into regional innovation initiatives and ensure CU-ICAR continues to perform as a competitive, market-ready asset.
- **Evaluate Best Practices to Support and Expand Accelerator and Innovation Spaces (Leads: Zach and Sam)**
GCEDC will evaluate best practices for supporting and expanding accelerator and innovation spaces in Greenville, including Main Street Labs and the NEXT Innovation Center. This work will assess programming models, governance structures, funding approaches, and partnerships used by peer communities to strengthen entrepreneur support, increase utilization, and improve long-term sustainability. Findings will inform recommendations for how GCEDC can better align these spaces with workforce development, capital access, and business growth pathways.
- **Develop an Engagement Strategy with the Venture Capital Community**
This action defines a targeted approach to building relationships with venture capital firms, increasing their exposure to Greenville's companies, and positioning the community as a credible place for investment. The strategy will focus on curated introductions, hosting targeted investor visits, and aligning local growth companies with the right capital networks to increase the flow of venture investment into Greenville.

Collectively, these 2026 goals will formalize Greenville's position as a collaborative innovation city, linking entrepreneurship with institutional research and business recruitment.

3-Year Goals (2028)

By 2028, Greenville will be recognized as a regional innovation hub—a connected, data-informed ecosystem where research institutions, startups, and established firms work together to generate investment, jobs, and intellectual property.

- **Recognition as a Regional Innovation Hub**

By 2028, Greenville will earn recognition from at least one national or state-level publication or industry association for its innovation ecosystem. Key performance metrics will include:

- 20 new innovation-based firms supported
- 40 million in venture capital attracted in partnership with NexGen
- 3 new R&D partnerships (academia + industry)

These outcomes will reflect Greenville’s success in connecting its entrepreneurial network, talent base, and civic infrastructure into a cohesive engine for innovation-led growth.

- **Institutionalized Innovation Network and Expanded Access to Capital**

By 2028, Greenville’s innovation ecosystem will function as a coordinated, inclusive network that connects research institutions, entrepreneurs, investors, and support organizations under a shared vision for growth. GCEDC will serve as the central convener—aligning programs, data, and funding across partners such as NEXT Upstate, Furman University, Clemson University, and CU-ICAR.

Through this structure, GCEDC will help secure new sources of early-stage and growth capital for Greenville’s entrepreneurs—including minority- and women-owned founders—through partnerships with local lenders, the Greenville Local Development Corporation, and regional venture funds. These efforts will ensure that innovation and wealth creation are accessible to all residents, strengthening Greenville’s position as a model for inclusive, innovation-driven economic development.

Greenville’s innovation agenda is about more than startups or research—it’s about building a city where ideas turn into opportunity. By connecting entrepreneurs with investors, universities, and established firms, GCEDC is creating the infrastructure of an innovation economy that is both competitive and inclusive. The investments made over the next three years—new capital networks, shared innovation spaces, and coordinated partnerships—will establish Greenville as a place where anyone with a good idea can start, scale, and succeed. In doing so, Greenville will not only attract new industries but also shape the next generation of homegrown companies that define its economic future.

F. TALENT

Greenville is one of America's most dynamic cities for opportunity and quality of life. As the economy continues to diversify, sustained growth will depend on the city's ability to attract, develop, and retain talent. Greenville stands out as a top place for technical, creative, and professional talent, with strong capabilities across advanced manufacturing, engineering, and knowledge sector fields.

This mix of technical strength and rising professional expertise sets Greenville apart. Traditional production sectors remain globally competitive, while creative and professional sectors are expanding quickly. At the same time, employers continue to compete for mid-skilled and technical workers, underscoring the need to align education and training systems with both employer demand and resident aspirations.

For GCEDC, talent is not a standalone initiative. It is woven into business recruitment, retention, and innovation as a top priority for all targeted and coveted employers. By strengthening partnerships and championing inclusion, GCEDC will help position Greenville as the Southeast's model for a talent-driven economy, one that grows from within, adapts to change, and ensures that prosperity is shared across the community.

WHY TALENT MATTERS

Talent is the foundation of every competitive economy. In a marketplace where companies can locate anywhere, the availability and adaptability of the workforce often determine where they choose to invest. For Greenville, that means ensuring a seamless connection between its education institutions, employers, and workforce partners.

A strong talent system amplifies everything else. When employers can hire locally, and residents can upskill into better jobs, economic growth becomes sustainable and inclusive. GCEDC's role is to make these connections visible and functional: aligning data, programs, and partnerships so that Greenville's workforce is not only prepared for today's jobs but ready for the industries of tomorrow.

PARTNERS

GCEDC's talent and workforce initiatives need to be targeted and aligned with its role in the broader economic development ecosystem. The following list is not exhaustive, but highlights the critical partners that form the foundation of Greenville's workforce and talent development initiatives.

- **Clemson University.** Supports Greenville's target industry clusters—including advanced materials, bioengineering, and automotive and mobility innovation—through applied research, engineering collaboration, and graduate-level talent pipelines.
- **Furman University.** Advances entrepreneurship, leadership, and innovation through the Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Furman partners with GCEDC and local employers to connect students with internship and career pathways tied to Greenville's innovation and headquarters sectors.
- **USC School of Medicine Greenville.** Anchors Greenville's healthcare and life sciences ecosystem by training future physicians, advancing clinical research, and supporting innovation in healthcare delivery. Serves as a key talent pipeline and research partner for regional health systems, with growing potential to support biotech commercialization, applied research, and employer-driven innovation.
- **Greenville Technical College.** Serves as the city's primary workforce training partner, delivering customized technical programs, apprenticeships, and rapid-response training that address employer demand in manufacturing, healthcare, and technology.
- **Upstate SC Alliance.** Coordinates regional talent marketing and employer engagement, ensuring Greenville's workforce strategies align with broader regional recruitment and retention initiatives.

- **MoveUp Upstate SC (Program of Upstate SC Alliance).** Promotes the region’s career opportunities and quality of life to attract and retain skilled professionals, positioning Greenville as a top destination for emerging and mid-career talent.
- **SC Works.** Provides critical job-matching, upskilling, and reemployment services for Greenville residents and employers. Through its statewide network, SC Works supports recruitment, training, and career navigation services tailored to local industry needs.
- **Greenville County School District (GCSD).** As one of the nation's largest public school systems, GCSD prepares the next generation of talent through career and technical education (CTE), dual-enrollment programs, and partnerships with local employers and higher education institutions to expose students early to high-demand career pathways.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

- **Launch GCEDC Internship Program (Leads: Zach and Roger)**
To strengthen civic talent pipelines, GCEDC will launch an internship program that exposes students to the work of economic development, analytics, and business engagement. The program will serve as both a leadership development tool and a bridge between higher education and the city’s public-private sector.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **Establish University and College Partnerships with Clemson, Furman, USC School of Medicine, and Greenville Technical College (Leads: Sam, Michelle, and Zach)**
GCEDC will formalize partnerships with Clemson University, Furman University, and Greenville Technical College to better align academic programs, applied research, and workforce training with Greenville’s business recruitment and expansion priorities. These partnerships will strengthen pipelines between education and employment by connecting students directly to Greenville employers and growth sectors. Engagement with Clemson will place particular emphasis on its MBA and real estate programs to support talent development, applied research, and project-based collaboration tied to economic development, real estate, and investment strategy.
- **Strengthen Partnerships with State and Regional Workforce Agencies (Leads: Sam, Michelle, and Zach)**
GCEDC will strengthen partnerships with regional and state workforce agencies to better align workforce training, credentialing, and employer needs. These partnerships will focus on closing skills gaps, supporting business expansion, and responding quickly to workforce challenges identified through GCEDC’s business retention and expansion efforts.
- **Expand GCEDC Internship Program (Leads: Zach and Roger)**
Following a successful pilot, GCEDC will expand its internship program to include fall, spring, and summer cohorts. Each session will feature structured mentorship and applied research projects that connect students to the region’s business and policy landscape, cultivating the next generation of Greenville leaders.
- **Evaluate Existing Regional Workforce and Talent Initiatives and Define the GCEDC Role (Leads: Michelle and Zach)**
This effort will assess current regional workforce and talent initiatives to understand what programs exist, who they serve, and where gaps or duplication occur. Based on this evaluation, GCEDC will develop a clear proposal defining its appropriate role, focusing on where it can add the most value through coordination, employer engagement, and alignment with economic development priorities.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **Contribute to “Five Families” Economic Development Organizations’ North Star Goals**
Over the next three years, GCEDC will work closely with VisitGreenvilleSC, the Greenville Chamber, the Upstate SC Alliance, and GADC to identify shared goals focused on economic mobility and community prosperity. Progress will be measured through indicators such as increased educational attainment among residents age 25 and older and rising per capita income across the city.
- **Expand University and Training Presence in the City**
Over the next three years, GCEDC will work with higher education and training partners to grow their physical and programmatic presence within the City of Greenville. These efforts may include applied research centers, innovation hubs, and technical programs that connect learning directly to employment. Each new investment will strengthen Greenville’s position as a regional center for talent and learning.

By linking education to opportunity, aligning data with decision-making, and embedding inclusion in every partnership, GCEDC will make talent Greenville’s defining advantage. Over time, this work will ensure that every business can find the workforce it needs, and every resident can see a future for themselves in Greenville’s success.

G. MARKETING AND BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Greenville has emerged as one of America's most compelling cities for talent, business, and quality of life. In 2024, U.S. News & World Report ranked Greenville No. 4 among the nation's Best Places to Live, highlighting the city's strong economy, affordability, and outdoor access. Southern Living described it as "the South's next great city," while The Economist recently profiled Greenville's strong startup ecosystem. These recognitions reflect a community that has blended economic competitiveness and livability, attracting both global manufacturers and creative professionals who seek a place that balances opportunity and quality of life.

The next phase of Greenville's success depends on how effectively it tells its story. Competing cities are investing heavily in place branding, digital outreach, and performance analytics to attract companies and talent. For GCEDC, positioning Greenville is about more than marketing. It is about creating a consistent, data-driven narrative that communicates the city's strengths to investors, employers, and residents alike. The goal is clear: to make Greenville synonymous with innovation, connection, and credibility.

WHY MARKETING AND BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE MATTER

A city's reputation is a core economic asset, and strategic marketing ensures Greenville's value proposition is clear, consistent, and compelling. Business intelligence strengthens that effort by providing the tools to measure how well the message is landing and how it translates into inquiries, site visits, investments, and partnerships. A modern communications and data platform will help Greenville compete with larger metros by delivering unified messaging across all channels and turning visibility into performance.

Greenville's brand reflects a place where global firms and local entrepreneurs thrive, supported by a vibrant downtown and a culture of creativity and collaboration. GCEDC will sharpen this story through consistent visuals, language, and tone, working with the city's communications department to set co-branding and content guidelines and producing high-quality recruitment materials, sector briefs, and digital assets.

Behind this effort is a unified analytics framework that connects communications, recruitment, and retention. Through its CRM and dashboards, GCEDC will track engagement across website activity, lead generation, investor participation, and outcomes. This integrated view will show how effectively Greenville's story converts into results and will help GCEDC refine outreach, prioritize resources, and demonstrate return on investment.

PARTNERS

Telling Greenville’s story, backed by credible data, is central to GCEDC’s mission. Effective marketing and business intelligence require collaboration among organizations that promote Greenville’s brand, analyze performance, and provide data that informs decision-making. GCEDC will coordinate closely with communications, marketing, and research partners to ensure Greenville presents a unified message to investors, site selectors, and residents alike.

The following list is not exhaustive, but highlights key partners that together form the foundation of Greenville’s marketing and business intelligence ecosystem.

Marketing Partners

- **City of Greenville Communications Department.** Serves as GCEDC’s communications partner for web, social media, and public information. An operating agreement will define co-branding, content production, and data-sharing protocols to ensure clarity and consistency across city and GCEDC channels.
- **VisitGreenvilleSC.** The official destination marketing organization for the City and County of Greenville. Markets Greenville as a premier leisure and group travel destination. GCEDC will align messaging and collateral with VisitGreenvilleSC to ensure consistent storytelling across tourism, business, and lifestyle platforms.
- **Upstate SC Alliance.** Leads regional marketing and site selector outreach efforts. GCEDC will coordinate with the Alliance to align Greenville’s branding within regional campaigns, leveraging shared data and creative assets for greater reach.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Promotes Greenville’s business climate and supports local companies through communications, investor engagement, and joint storytelling that amplifies Greenville’s economic success stories.

Data and Research Partners

- **Upstate SC Alliance.** Provides business and labor market data that informs both marketing and recruitment strategies. GCEDC will use Alliance data to benchmark Greenville’s competitiveness within the region and across national peers.
- **Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG).** Offers regional demographic, economic, and planning data critical to understanding trends in growth, workforce, and infrastructure. GCEDC will collaborate with ACOG to integrate shared datasets into its business intelligence dashboards.
- **VisitGreenvilleSC.** Supplies visitor data and market analytics that inform place-branding and talent marketing strategies, connecting Greenville’s livability and tourism assets to its business value proposition.
- **Greenville Chamber of Commerce.** Provides business climate surveys, employer data, and investor insights that strengthen GCEDC’s understanding of local economic trends and community priorities.
- **Greenville Area Development Corporation.** Contributes data and research on industrial sites, business recruitment, and economic trends at the county level, helping align city and county strategies within a shared regional framework.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

The following priorities lay the foundation for GCEDC’s marketing and business intelligence platform. They focus on building internal capacity, defining shared responsibilities, and launching early tools that will shape Greenville’s external image and internal accountability.

- **Hire a Graphic Designer and Develop Initial Collateral (Lead: Michelle)**
To strengthen its visual identity, GCEDC will bring graphic design capabilities in-house. The designer’s first deliverables will include collateral for initial investor outreach strategies, a master presentation deck for recruitment, one-page leave-behinds aligned with the target industry strategy, and digital templates for events and social media. These materials will reflect Greenville’s high design standards and ensure visual consistency across all communication channels.
- **Launch the GCEDC Annual Report (Lead: Michelle)**
GCEDC will publish its inaugural Annual Report, showcasing results from business recruitment, expansion, and engagement activities. The report will combine narrative storytelling with performance data drawn from the CRM system, offering a transparent view of GCEDC’s first-year outcomes. Distributed to investors, city leaders, and partners, the Annual Report will reinforce the organization’s commitment to accountability and serve as a touchstone for future communications.
- **Evaluate and Prioritize National and International Conferences (Leads: Jared, Michelle, and Sam)**
To maximize visibility and networking impact, GCEDC will evaluate national and international conferences relevant to Greenville’s target industries. The team will develop a prioritized list of events for 2026—ranging from IEDC and SelectUSA to Hannover Messe and Medica—based on potential for investor engagement, media exposure, and partnership development. This process will ensure that Greenville’s presence on the national and global stage is strategic and impactful.

1-Year Goals (2026)

These goals represent GCEDC's first full year of measurable progress in communications and business intelligence. By the end of 2026, the organization will have a unified brand identity, a fully operational analytics platform, and a refined process for telling Greenville's story with precision and authenticity.

- **Create an Operating Agreement Between GCEDC and the City Communications Department (Leads: Sam and Michelle)**

GCEDC will formalize an operating agreement with the city's communications department, within its broader memorandum of understanding. The agreement will clarify roles for web content, media relations, social media, and investor communications, ensuring that GCEDC's marketing efforts complement rather than duplicate existing city work. It will also define processes for data sharing and brand management, establishing a durable framework for consistent, coordinated messaging.

- **Hire or Contract a Marketing Executive and Establish a Unified Marketing Strategy for the Corporation's Uniquely Delineated Economic Development Role (Leads: Sam and Michelle)**

GCEDC will hire or contract a senior marketing executive to lead the development and execution of a comprehensive marketing strategy that supports business recruitment, investor engagement, real estate promotion, and signature retail positioning. This role will be responsible for aligning messaging across digital platforms, investor materials, asset profiles, and partner communications, ensuring Greenville presents a consistent, professional, and compelling market narrative. Under the leadership of Sam and Michelle, the marketing strategy will prioritize clarity, discipline, and measurable impact, strengthening GCEDC's ability to attract high-quality employers, developers, and investment partners.

- **Develop a Recruiting Collateral Library and Investor Deck (Lead: Michelle)**

GCEDC will complete a full suite of communications materials—including standardized presentation decks, sector briefs, and marketing templates—that can be easily customized for specific audiences. The library will ensure brand consistency while giving staff the flexibility to tailor content for investors, site selectors, and trade partners. Each piece will integrate key data points on Greenville's talent, industry strengths, and investment performance, reinforcing the city's credibility through evidence-based storytelling.

- **Modernize and Optimize the GCEDC Website (Lead: Michelle)**

The GCEDC website will undergo a comprehensive review and potential refresh focused on user experience, engagement, and lead conversion. Possible updates will include streamlined navigation, interactive data visualizations, embedded CRM lead-capture forms, and integrated performance analytics. Regular content updates and quarterly reporting will track engagement metrics, such as visits, session duration, and contact conversions, turning the website into a core business development tool rather than a static information portal.

- **Expand Annual Report with CRM-Linked Metrics (Leads: Michelle and Zach)**

The second Annual Report will integrate directly with GCEDC's CRM system, enabling automated reporting on recruitment, retention, and investment outcomes. The expanded format will include year-over-year comparisons, sector-level data, and visual dashboards that communicate progress with clarity and transparency. This data integration will reduce manual reporting time and strengthen GCEDC's reputation as an accountable, performance-driven organization.

- **Develop a Strategy for Capturing and Using Feedback from GCEDC Event Attendees (Lead: Michelle)**

This action establishes a consistent approach for gathering feedback from event participants and translating those insights into improvements for future programming. The strategy will define simple feedback tools, clarify how responses are reviewed, and ensure lessons learned are systematically incorporated into event planning, formats, and topics over time.

3-Year Goals (2028)

By 2028, GCEDC will have built a fully mature marketing and business intelligence platform that positions Greenville as one of the most visible and data-savvy economic development organizations in the country.

- **Fully Developed Suite of Communications Tools**

Over the next three years, GCEDC will expand and refine its communications tools into a comprehensive, interconnected system. The suite will include recruitment decks, investor briefs, annual reports, and a dynamic website supported by a coordinated social-media strategy. Together, these tools will ensure that Greenville’s message is consistent across all audiences and channels.

- **Establish a Signature Annual Investor and Economic Development Event/Celebration**

By 2027, GCEDC will launch a signature annual event to celebrate Greenville’s investors, employers, and community partners. The event will feature data presentations, success stories, and recognition of major business and civic contributions. Over time, it will become a highlight of Greenville’s annual events calendar, as a gathering that both reflects and reinforces the city’s momentum and shared vision for growth.

Through strategic storytelling and data integration, GCEDC will elevate Greenville’s reputation as a place that delivers on its promise—a city that combines authenticity with performance, creativity with accountability. Every presentation, report, and partnership will communicate a consistent message: Greenville is a community that competes with purpose, collaborates with intent, and grows with integrity.

2. BACK OF THE HOUSE: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND PERFORMANCE

The Back of the House reflects GCEDC's internal engine: the systems, culture, and capabilities that make consistent performance possible. While the Front of the House drives Greenville's growth in the market, the Back of the House ensures that the organization itself operates with integrity, efficiency, and accountability. These initiatives focus on governance, financial management, data infrastructure, and team development—creating the foundation that supports every external success. Together, they define GCEDC's commitment to operational excellence and continuous improvement, ensuring the organization remains agile, credible, and results-driven as Greenville's economy evolves.

GCEDC's internal success depends on close coordination with city departments and professional service partners that uphold standards of transparency, compliance, and performance. Key collaborators include the City of Greenville's Legal Department, Finance Department, City Manager's Office, Planning and Development Services, Engineering, and the Department of Communications, as well as third-party legal, auditing, and financial advisors. Together, these partners provide the guidance, systems, and accountability that ensure GCEDC operates with the same professionalism and rigor as the nation's leading economic development organizations.

A. NEW REVENUE STREAMS AND MEMBERSHIP PLATFORM

Greenville's economic success has always been powered by collaboration between the public and private sectors. As GCEDC matures, its long-term strength will depend on building a durable financial foundation that blends municipal support with private investment. Lessons from peer economic development organizations across the country confirm that diversified revenue is a hallmark of credibility and independence. EDOs that combine city appropriations with investor contributions, earned income, and real estate participation can sustain operations through economic cycles, act more strategically in competitive markets, and maintain greater flexibility to pursue high-impact opportunities.

WHY DIVERSE REVENUE STREAMS MATTER

Based on our industry analysis, the most effective economic development organizations are those that sustain diversified revenue models, ideally balancing public funding with private contributions, sponsorships, and earned income. This approach strengthens independence, fosters innovation, and reduces reliance on any single funding source. The first significant revenue strategy will include Phase 1 of the GCEDC Membership Platform, detailed below.

A strong membership platform represents more than financial stability. It reflects a shared civic commitment to Greenville's future. Through this effort, GCEDC will cultivate an engaged network of business and community leaders who not only contribute resources but also help shape the city's growth agenda. By aligning local investment with organizational accountability, GCEDC will position Greenville to compete and lead with confidence.

Membership Platform—Phase 1

The Greenville City Economic Development Corporation is introducing a first-of-its-kind Membership Platform: a gateway for private-sector leaders to engage more directly with the people, projects, and partnerships shaping Greenville's future. Early members will secure founding status and help influence the next chapter of Greenville's growth and prosperity.

As the GCEDC team rolls out a full membership platform program, early funding and strategic input are required to build out core assets (events, engagement tools, staff capacity, etc.). It is proposed that a Founder's Circle campaign be launched to offer visionary members the opportunity to join early and be recognized for helping to shape GCEDC's membership platform.

Membership Platform—Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Membership Platform will become an investor platform and build on the momentum created by the Founders Circle, transitioning from early development into a fully realized, high-engagement program. Leveraging the formation of a more flexible 501(c)(6) entity as the driver, this phase will introduce the complete suite of investor benefits, including enhanced events, expanded data and research tools, structured industry councils, and more robust opportunities for collaboration with city leadership.

With the foundational infrastructure funded and established in Phase 1, Phase 2 will focus on scaling membership, deepening value for investors, and embedding the platform as a core engine of Greenville’s economic development strategy. It will formalize long-term participation pathways and position GCEDC as a premier conduit between the private sector and Greenville’s future growth.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

- **Develop a Phase 1 “Founders Circle” Membership Model to Support the GCEDC Vision and Mission Around Investment, Recruitment, and Innovation (Lead: Jared)**
GCEDC will design a structured Phase 1 membership model outlining contribution levels, benefits, and recognition opportunities. This framework will include three defined categories—such as Founders, Catalysts, and Partners—with associated visibility, engagement, and advisory roles. A target list of prospective members will be developed based on Greenville’s business community, professional services firms, real estate sector, and institutional partners.
- **Produce Investor Communications Suite (Lead: Jared)**
To support outreach, GCEDC will create a professional member communications package, including a pitch deck, one-pager, and branded templates. These materials will highlight GCEDC’s mission, strategic priorities, and return-on-investment story—demonstrating how member contributions directly advance Greenville’s economic growth and visibility.
- **Implement CRM Tracking for Member Engagement (Leads: Jared and Zach)**
Member engagement will be tracked through GCEDC’s CRM platform, ensuring every touchpoint—from outreach and pledges to invoicing and reporting—is documented and measurable. The system will enable staff to monitor engagement levels, renewals, and event participation, laying the foundation for a transparent, data-driven member relations program.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **Launch the Full Phase 2 Investor Platform and Secure Initial Commitments (\$150,000) (Leads: Jared and Roger)**
By the end of 2026, GCEDC will formally launch its investor platform with documented tiers, processes, and benefits. The organization will secure at least \$150,000 in private-sector commitments, supported by clear protocols for invoicing, compliance, and fund administration. The platform will be positioned as an ongoing civic investment opportunity rather than a one-time campaign.
- **Integrate a 501(c)(6) Structure and Private Investment Strategy to Complement the 501(c)(3). (Leads: Sam and Roger)**
GCEDC will operationalize its 501(c)(6) framework, ensuring that private-sector contributions directly support eligible activities, including business travel, investor events, legislative policy, and professional development. Policies and accounting procedures will be finalized to maintain compliance while maximizing flexibility for investor-funded initiatives. The 501(c)(6) will solely focus on non-city-derived revenues.
- **Evaluate Real Estate LLC and Other Revenue Models (Leads: Jared and Sam)**
GCEDC will evaluate the feasibility of establishing or participating in a real estate LLC to support economic development projects. The analysis will explore structure, governance, and revenue potential. Additionally, the organization will assess alternative funding mechanisms—such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), state allocations, event sponsorships, data subscriptions, and management fees from tax increments or parking districts—to identify sustainable new revenue streams.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **Build a Sustainable Investor Revenue Stream (\$250,000)**
By 2028, GCEDC will have established a mature investor program that generates at least \$250,000 in recurring private-sector contributions annually. This diversified funding base will enhance GCEDC's fiscal resilience and allow for greater flexibility in program design and implementation.
- **Expand and Diversify the Revenue Portfolio (\$100,000)**
In addition to investor contributions, GCEDC will have formalized at least one supplemental revenue channel—such as sponsored research, event partnerships, or managed service fees—that provides predictable, mission-aligned income. This evolution will align GCEDC with national best practices, positioning it among peer EDOs recognized for financial sustainability and innovation in public-private collaboration.

B. FINANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Strong governance and transparent fiscal management are central to GCEDC's long-term credibility. Building clear structures, policies, and compliance systems ensures that the organization can manage growth responsibly while maintaining public trust.

The establishment of GCEDC's 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(6) entities is a critical step toward organizational maturity. Together, these structures will provide GCEDC with the flexibility to pursue both charitable programming and membership-driven initiatives while maintaining the highest standards of accountability. Ultimately, good governance is more than compliance; it is the foundation for performance. Transparent systems, defined roles, and predictable processes allow GCEDC's board, investors, and staff to stay aligned on mission, strategy, and results.

The most successful economic development organizations operate under professional governance frameworks that mirror those of their private-sector peers, with clear bylaws, transparent reporting, and predictable budgeting cycles. These practices safeguard public resources, build investor confidence, and attract new partners.

For GCEDC, establishing robust fiscal and governance systems will set a lasting precedent for how the organization manages growth, allocates resources, and demonstrates impact. As Greenville's development ambitions expand, this internal discipline will ensure external credibility.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

- **FY2027 Budget Launch and Submission (Lead: Roger)**
GCEDC will prepare and formally submit its FY2027 budget request in Q1 2026. This process will align internal work plans, partner commitments, and city financial procedures—ensuring the organization's funding proposal reflects measurable outcomes and a clear justification for investment.
- **Finalize 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status and 990 Filing (Leads: Roger and Sam)**
GCEDC will secure the final IRS tax-exempt designation for its 501(c)(3) arm and complete the organization's first Form 990 filing. These steps will ensure compliance with federal requirements and lay the groundwork for future grant eligibility, charitable donations, and programmatic funding.
- **Implement Grant Compliance Procedures and Templates (Lead: Roger; Support: Jeanette)**
GCEDC will implement standardized grant-compliance procedures, including new templates for reporting, reimbursement, and documentation. These tools will support consistent tracking of expenditures, adherence to funder requirements, and audit readiness.
- **Fully Refine and Implement the Council Flight Plan (Lead: Roger)**
GCEDC will operationalize an ongoing six-month governance calendar—known as the Council Flight Plan—to guide board and committee activities and all formal interactions with City Council. The plan will establish a predictable rhythm for meetings, financial reporting, policy approvals, and strategic reviews, ensuring that board members remain informed and engaged throughout the year.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **501(c)(3) Fully Operational (Leads: Roger and Sam)**
GCEDC's 501(c)(3) entity will be fully established, with governance documents adopted, bank accounts operational, and compliance systems active. The 501(c)(3) will support education, research, and workforce programming.
- **Finalize 501(c)(6) Formation Documents and Filings (Leads: Roger and Sam)**
GCEDC will complete the legal formation of its 501(c)(6) entity, including adoption of bylaws, filing of incorporation documents, and execution of required federal and state submissions. This structure will enable GCEDC to manage investor relations, private-sector contributions, and business advocacy activities consistent with its mission.
- **Institutionalize Fiscal and Audit Systems (Lead: Roger)**
By the end of 2026, GCEDC will have fully institutionalized its fiscal management systems for both entities. This includes implementation of standardized accounting policies, documented internal controls, and automated reporting processes that ensure timely, transparent financial oversight.
- **Develop a Strategy for Corporate Delineation Between GCEDC and the City of Greenville (Leads: Sam and Roger)**
This effort will clarify the respective roles, responsibilities, and operating boundaries between GCEDC and the City of Greenville, with a specific focus on budget authority and day-to-day operations. The strategy will define clear lines of accountability, improve transparency, and support more efficient decision-making while maintaining strong coordination between the two entities.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **501(c)(6) Fully Operational**
GCEDC's 501(c)(6) entity will be fully established, with governance documents adopted, bank accounts operational, and compliance systems active. The 501(c)(6) will support membership, investor engagement, and advocacy.
- **Receive a Clean External Audit**
GCEDC will receive a clean audit opinion from an independent third-party auditor, with no significant findings. This achievement will demonstrate compliance with best practices in financial management and establish GCEDC as a trusted steward of both public and private resources.

The creation of distinct 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(6) structures, paired with rigorous financial systems, ensures the organization can operate transparently, attract new investment, and deliver measurable impact.

C. SYSTEMS AND PERFORMANCE

An effective organization runs on clear systems and transparent performance management. For GCEDC, this means establishing an internal operating discipline that enables staff and partners to move in sync, measure progress in real time, and continuously improve. Systems ensure that every function, from business recruitment to marketing, operates from shared processes, consistent data, and measurable outcomes.

As GCEDC matures, building this systems framework is essential for scaling impact. The work begins by clarifying roles, decision points, and accountability structures. It continues with defining organizational key performance indicators that translate vision into measurable results. Together, these systems create a throughline from strategy to action, giving leadership and investors confidence that the organization is delivering on its commitments.

Equally important, GCEDC is investing in technology and culture to support performance management. The integration of the CRM system, performance dashboards, and the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) will provide a unified platform for planning, tracking, and reporting. These tools will enable the organization to assess what's working, identify bottlenecks, and make timely adjustments based on evidence rather than instinct.

Ultimately, a strong systems and performance culture will make GCEDC more agile, data-driven, and accountable, ensuring that Greenville's economic-development platform keeps pace with the city's growth and remains trusted by public and private partners alike.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

- **Complete Process Mapping and Workflow Documentation for Front-of-House Functions (Lead: Zach)**

GCEDC will map and document all core workflows across business recruitment, retention, innovation, and marketing. This process will clarify responsibilities, standardize steps, and identify opportunities for automation. The final documentation will serve as an internal operations manual, ensuring consistency across staff and reducing dependency on institutional knowledge.

- **Define Organizational KPIs and Create Dashboard (Lead: Michelle)**

The team will define clear KPIs and metrics that measure both activity (e.g., meetings, leads, deals) and impact (e.g., jobs created, investment value, satisfaction). A performance dashboard using a red/yellow/green visualization will track these indicators in real time, allowing leadership to quickly identify areas of strength or concern.

- **Continue Implementation of EOS Systems (Lead: Michelle)**

GCEDC will continue rolling out the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS), integrating Quarterly Priorities, weekly Level 10 meetings, and scorecards into the organization's management rhythm. This structure ensures alignment, accountability, and transparency across all teams and projects.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **Pilot Full Operational CRM and Performance Dashboard for Real-Time Management (Lead: Zach)**

By the end of 2026, GCEDC will fully implement a unified CRM and dashboard system that connects lead tracking, BRE outreach, investor engagement, website optimization, and operational performance. The system will produce automated reports and real-time analytics, replacing manual tracking and creating a single source of truth for decision-making.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **Establish Continuous Performance Improvement and Annual Benchmarking**

By 2028, GCEDC will institutionalize a culture of continuous improvement—refining KPIs, automating reporting, and benchmarking its results annually against peer economic development organizations. These practices will ensure that performance management remains dynamic, transparent, and closely tied to Greenville’s evolving economic priorities.

Over time, these systems will do more than track results; they will shape them. A culture of data-informed decision-making and operational discipline will allow GCEDC to adapt quickly to market shifts, strengthen investor confidence, and demonstrate that Greenville’s economic growth is matched by organizational excellence and accountability.

D. TEAM AND CULTURE

GCEDC's success will be driven by its team's professionalism, shared values, and ability to work with clarity and purpose. This section focuses on building the systems, best practices, and rhythms that make those attributes real: transparent governance, consistent communication, and a culture of learning and accountability.

As GCEDC grows, it must balance entrepreneurial flexibility with institutional discipline. That balance begins with defining roles for the board, city, and staff; establishing predictable meeting rhythms; and ensuring that decision-making is both transparent and efficient. At the same time, investing in the team's development and well-being is essential to attracting and retaining top talent. From onboarding and performance management to professional growth and recognition, GCEDC's internal culture will model the same excellence and collaboration it expects of its partners.

A strong culture also builds trust. When staff, board members, and investors share a common understanding of goals, roles, and expectations, the organization moves faster and with greater confidence. This alignment allows GCEDC to represent Greenville with credibility—internally united, externally trusted, and consistently high-performing.

Quarterly Priorities (Q4 2025–Q1 2026)

- **Develop a Staff Onboarding and Hiring Playbook (Leads: Roger and Cathy)**
GCEDC will develop a standardized onboarding and hiring playbook that defines recruitment processes, interview protocols, and orientation materials. The playbook will ensure that every new hire—regardless of role—understands GCEDC's mission, values, and operational standards from day one.
- **Develop Protocols for Inter-City Collaboration with the City Manager's Office, City Council, and City Departments (Lead: Sam)**
This action establishes clear protocols for how GCEDC coordinates with the City Manager's Office, City Council, and relevant city departments on economic development priorities. The protocols will clarify communication channels, roles, and expectations to ensure alignment, reduce friction, and support timely, coordinated decision-making.
- **Fully Implement NeoGov for Performance Evaluations, Position Descriptions, and Pay Structures (Leads: Sam and Roger)**
GCEDC will complete the implementation of NeoGov to standardize human resources functions, including performance evaluations, job descriptions, and compensation frameworks. This platform will bring consistency and transparency to personnel management, aligning individual performance with organizational goals.

1-Year Goals (2026)

- **Establish an Event “How-To” Guide
(Lead: Business Development + Investor Relations Manager)**
To improve coordination and institutional memory, GCEDC will establish an internal event planning guide. This system will standardize logistics, communications, and partner coordination for recurring activities such as investor events, board meetings, and community roundtables.
- **Consistent Governance Rhythm and Internal Communication Systems
(Lead: Sam and Roger)**
By 2026, GCEDC will have established a consistent governance rhythm—including a six-month council flight plan, annual work sessions, and standing committee meetings—paired with regular staff communication channels. These practices will reinforce alignment, foster transparency, and ensure that all levels of the organization remain connected and informed.
- **Board Recognition and Feedback on Annual Plan Performance (Lead: Sam)**
The board will formally review GCEDC’s annual plan performance through structured evaluation and recognition processes. This will include feedback sessions, performance dashboards, and celebration of key milestones, reinforcing a culture of accountability and shared success.
- **Implement the First Edition of Protocols for Inter-City Collaboration with the City Manager’s Office, City Council, and City Departments (Lead: Sam)**
GCEDC will implement the first edition of formal protocols for inter-city collaboration in coordination with the City Manager’s Office, City Council, and key City departments. These protocols will establish clear roles, communication pathways, and decision-making processes for how economic development initiatives are coordinated across the organization.

3-Year Goals (2028)

- **Fully Launched GCEDC Operating Effectively as a Unified Organization**
Within three years, GCEDC will operate as a fully mature organization—clear in mission, confident in execution, and trusted by partners. The board, staff, and city will function as a coordinated leadership team, each fulfilling their roles with clarity and collaboration.
- **All Employees Have Individual Professional Development Plans**
By 2028, every GCEDC employee will have an active professional development plan that includes training, mentorship, and performance goals. These plans will ensure that staff continue to grow with the organization, fostering a culture of learning, innovation, and excellence.

Together, these investments in people, culture, and governance will make GCEDC more than an organization—they will make it a model. A strong team, united by purpose and guided by accountability, is the foundation of every successful economic development strategy.

