



MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

JLBC STRATEGIC PLAN

2025



1. Comprehensive Mission Statement:

To be a nationally recognized leader in all domains of responsibility: business retention, recruitment, trade, tourism, film, energy, asset investment and grant administration, military affairs and small business development.

2. Philosophy

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) is the state of Mississippi's lead economic development entity. MDA recruits new companies to Mississippi, helps our existing companies expand and provides support to industry in a variety of sectors such as energy, small and minority business, export opportunities, film, retiree recruitment and more. MDA also helps to attract millions of visitors to the state each year through Visit Mississippi, the tourism division of the agency. MDA also supports pass-through funding and provides support for a variety of grant funds and non-profits, including Innovate Mississippi and Mississippi Main Street Association.

At its core, MDA provides investment. Our programs and incentives, along with our partner communities, companies, non-profits, universities, other agencies and federal partners, determine how we will achieve new levels of success.

MDA also is committed to setting relevant performance goals, allocating resources to achieve those goals and maintaining integrity and accountability in our work. We believe strongly in developing, training and organizing our staff to ensure Mississippi has a distinct advantage nationally and globally.

3. Relevant Statewide Goal and Benchmarks

Statewide Goal #1 – Economic Development: To develop a robust state economy that provides opportunities for productive employment available to all Mississippians.

Category: Business Climate

Relevant Benchmark #1

Mississippi's business climate is a key factor in location decisions for new corporate investment and expansions of existing businesses.

- State business tax climate (comparison of more than 100 variables across five major areas of taxation: business taxes, individual income taxes, sales taxes, unemployment insurance rates and property taxes)

Category: Commercial Activity

Relevant Benchmark #2

MDA's overall mission aims to increase the level of commercial activity in Mississippi's economy through several of its divisions.

- Per capita gross domestic product
- Percentage contribution of manufacturing sector to state's gross domestic product
- Number of new companies locating in state
- Number of expansions of existing businesses
- Volume of cargo activity at the state's ports, measured in 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and tonnage
- Tourism measured in number of visitors and dollars generated

Category: Job Growth

Relevant Benchmark #3

MDA works with local and regional economic development organizations, utility partners and elected officials

throughout the state to support private-sector job creation from new and existing industries.

Additionally, MDA actively markets the state to prospective companies and stakeholders to position it for success.

- Net job growth
- Annual percentage change in non-farm jobs
- Number of jobs in each of MDA's seven targeted industries (advanced manufacturing; aerospace and defense; agriculture, food and beverage; automotive; distribution and logistics; forestry, energy and chemicals)
- Number of jobs in manufacturing sector
- Number of jobs in agriculture sector
- Number of jobs in tourism sector
- Number of new jobs resulting from MDA's Global Business contacts (national recruitment, international investment and trade)
- Number of new jobs resulting from MDA's Existing Industry contacts
- Number of new jobs associated with oil, gas and CO2 natural resources
- Number of new businesses and jobs resulting from MDA's Minority and Small Business Development contacts

Statewide goal #2 – Infrastructure: To ensure the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, including roadways, waterways, railways, airports, water and sewer systems, pipelines, electricity lines, broadband connections and public buildings, adequate to meet the needs of citizens and the business community and to foster economic growth

Category: Transportation

Relevant Benchmark #1

The state's infrastructure is a key factor in growth and development opportunities for industries across Mississippi.

- Public airport utilization, capacity and connectivity
- Port utilization, capacity and connectivity
- Measure of the state's rail system capacity and condition
- Percentage of state's rail mileage that can accommodate double-stacked cars

Category: Public utilities

Relevant Benchmark #2

MDA will provide leadership in interagency coordination to encourage appropriate infrastructure investment that drives economic development. Site selectors, consultants and companies looking for new locations for expansions seek out locations that are "project-ready" and "shovel-ready."

- Percentage of local sewer and water infrastructure in immediate need of repair and replacement and associated costs
- Percentage of homes passed by fiber optic infrastructure
- Average and peak broadband network speed
- Ratio of supply of electricity generation capacity to demand

4. Overview of the Agency Five-Year Strategic Plan

Competition for domestic and foreign direct investment is intense, especially in the Southeastern region of the U.S., one of the fastest-growing regions of the country. Today's industries are seeking locations that offer ready-made solutions for infrastructure and industry support and place a strong focus on workforce talent. As the pace of today's global economy continues to accelerate, it is imperative Mississippi has a strong business recruitment and retention strategy in place to best compete for investment projects.

A new dynamic also has emerged of late. Site availability is a dominant factor for major development projects, and Mississippi is a major global player in part because of investments made through MDA's Site Development Grant Program. Nearly \$120M has been allocated to MDA for site development over the last several years. Making prudent investment decisions for these site development projects is as important to our state's future as customer development is currently.

This competitive business environment has forced the expansion of economic development service offerings by location. The development of and marketing of business locations has become requisite to successfully locating companies interested in investing their financial resources. Mississippi's growth strategy therefore must be adaptive to market demands and include a significant outreach and marketing component.

As a rural state, Mississippi looks to MDA to not only lead recruitment and expansion activities, but also to work with local economic developers and leaders to ensure they are prepared to capitalize on development opportunities. MDA is focusing on five priority areas over the next five years, all of which encompass the overall goal of creating a stronger, more competitive Mississippi in the economic development and business investment sectors. The overall goal of these strategies strengthens the statewide benchmarks set for economic development by the Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

The five focus areas of MDA's strategic plan include: business environment, infrastructure and available real estate for business location and expansions, workforce, economic development service delivery and increased tourism outreach.

1. Over the next five years, MDA plans to work toward a more competitive, less complex business environment, including business tax, property tax and incentive perspectives, that can draw private-sector investment and jobs to the state.
 - a. Streamlining and adequately funding a discretionary incentive to compete in the marketplace and modifying tax incentives to better meet the needs of today's industries are primary goals of this focus area.
 - b. The goal of these efforts is to grow Mississippi's commercial base by creating more career opportunities throughout the state that offer a higher wage base and/or more benefits to the state's citizens.
 - c. With a larger economic base for jobs and career pathways, this economic stability reduces the risk of residents leaving Mississippi for gainful employment outside of the state.
 - d. While there are numerous factors affecting the state's gross domestic product, the goal of this strategy is to grow the state's economy and produce a return on investment.
2. Improving the state's infrastructure and available real estate offerings while increasing its visibility for business locations and expansions also is a core focus area.
 - a. MDA has defined a list of the top sites ripe for economic development. MDA must continually redevelop this list as sites are utilized and new product comes online.
 - i. MDA will establish baseline due-diligence requirements expected for all marketable sites and communicate those to local partners.
 - ii. MDA will work with a third party to determine which sites not only meet those site certification requirements but also possess additional highly marketable attributes, making them particularly attractive to site selection consultants.
 - iii. MDA will continue to offer site development grants to communities to assist with site due diligence and possible eligible improvements.
 - b. MDA will continue to increase local community adoption of its online state site location service.
 - i. The new site operates on desktop and mobile platforms and is fully searchable.

- ii. MDA will coordinate outreach efforts across Mississippi to assist communities, including economic developers and elected officials, with using the state's new platform for available site inventory.
 - iii. The platform will include GIS mapping capabilities.
- c. This focus will support local efforts to invest in real estate and development, with the purpose of meeting existing and future industry capacity needs.
- d. Harnessing federal and state community development resources also will help local communities better position themselves for future economic development opportunities.
- 3. MDA will work in collaboration with Accelerate MS to ensure the effective utilization of workforce development incentives.
- 4. Economic development service delivery is a priority for MDA as it works to successfully position the state for maximum investment opportunities. MDA will work toward improving this delivery in various ways:
 - a. All groups within MDA are assessed to ensure alignment with the agency's mission. Goals for the agency have been established based on growing the economy faster than our surrounding states, growing wages, increasing the number of tourists and their spend and other measures. Metrics have been established for each division to directly impact the overall measures of effectiveness. Those divisional metrics also have been applied as appropriate at the staff level. All of this was done to drive a culture of effectiveness and accountability.
 - b. Through outreach efforts, MDA will work to raise awareness of its overall goals and work with statewide, local and regional partners to achieve those benchmarks.
 - c. MDA will educate local civic and elected leaders about the economic development process and the steps that must be taken to position their communities for success. MDA will work with economic stakeholders and governmental associations to ensure the effective coordination of its economic development strategy.
 - d. Professional development training for the MDA recruiting and leadership team remains a critical component of Mississippi's strategic plan. To best compete for and win projects in economic development, the state must actively recruit and retain top talent in this dynamic field. In addition to keen awareness in the state's target industries, possessing the technical knowledge in today's data-driven economy is a necessary skillset for MDA.
- 5. Increasing Mississippi's tourism outreach and marketing efforts will yield a higher visibility of the state's unique cultural, recreational and culinary offerings with the goal of attracting more visitors to the state. The goals of this core focus area will allow Mississippi to tell its own story in an accurate manner while also increasing the state's tax revenue generated by tourism dollars. As an economic driver, tourism is a significant contributor to the state in both jobs and revenue generation. The creative economy, including film, music and the visual arts, enriches the state's cultural offerings. By successfully promoting these industry sectors, Mississippi can attract new business investment and tourists.

5. Agency's External/Internal Assessment

The following have very real implications on the state's ability to compete effectively for investment, whether corporate or tourism-related:

1. Ability of local leaders to effectively plan and support community and economic development at the local level
2. The growth in new-to-Mississippi businesses versus existing industry expansion, particularly growth in foreign direct investment and the need for more direct interactions overseas

3. Ability to rapidly capture the multiplier impacts of the data center, artificial intelligence/machine learning boom
4. Availability of power/energy supply capacity
5. Talent retention and labor force participation rate
6. Internal agency needs that include human resources tools, back-office tech such as robust CRM software.
7. A need for new and additional relevant research and marketing products to support all areas of the agency.
8. Reformulation of incentives to adapt to needs of business and reduce complexity with integral partners such as universities.

6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program for FY 2026 through 2030

MDA is the state's lead economic, tourism and community development organization with a primary focus on private-sector job creation through new business locations and industry expansions, recruiting new investment and revenues and marketing the state's business opportunities and unique cultural offerings to the world.

MDA's core focuses are business development, community development, site development, tourism and brand promotion. State and federal funds allow MDA's professionals to globally compete for new job growth and investment, assist the state's municipalities and rural areas in preparing their infrastructure and communities for economic development and promote Mississippi as a premier destination for both tourism and business.

MDA operates four primary programs to attain these goals and objectives: Economic Development/Incentives, Community Development/Incentives, Support Services and Tourism (Visit MS). The yearly program goals and outcomes are derived from annual appropriations language and are outlined below with objectives and outcomes attached to each.

Program 1: Economic Development and Incentives

GOAL A: To promote Mississippi as a highly regarded location for new business investment and to grow the state's economy faster than surrounding states.

OBJECTIVE A.1.

Support the creation of 3,000 new careers and \$1.7 billion in investment by recruiting targeted new companies to Mississippi

Outcome: Growth or strengthening of the state's employment

A.1.2. STRATEGY

Develop comprehensive short- and long-term recruitment strategies for foreign direct investment target countries, including the identification of target sectors within each country; develop outreach and networking plans to include diplomatic, business and trade sources; leverage opportunities to expand international cooperation through universities, other state government bodies and existing foreign business in Mississippi; and develop long-term partnerships within FDI target countries.

Output: With additional legislative appropriations, increase international contacts, recruitment missions,

recruiting events with partners, trade shows, marketing campaigns and media outreach

Outcome: 3,000 new careers

Efficiency: Return on investment and increased win rate

A.1.3. STRATEGY

Increase international recruitment interactions – in target countries and in Mississippi – through an efficient outreach effort, resulting in expansion of FDI source networks and strengthening of existing contacts

Output: More strategic approach results in intensification of efforts in target countries

Output: Increase consultant and company contacts to 1,000

Outcome: More customer awareness of Mississippi and its sites, more exposure to projects so Mississippi can compete

Outcome: Increased number of projects to compete for and win

A.1.4. STRATEGY

Implement more strategic approach to engagement with foreign representatives and consultants based on country-specific recruitment strategies

Output: Increase lead generation in target countries

Outcome: Higher quality FDI leads to higher success rate and improved return on investment

A.1.5. STRATEGY

Market the value of a Mississippi location in FDI target countries

Output: Increasing quality of engagement in selected target countries

Output: Increasing contacts for FDI to 1,800 and trade to 1,000

Outcome: Greater number of potential FDI projects and more opportunities for existing industries to do business in foreign markets

A.1.6. STRATEGY

Provide trade opportunities to existing Mississippi businesses in growth export markets and expand international relationships

Output: Ten export trade missions and target-sector trade shows, including virtual events

Outcome: Net export sales of \$2.2 million statewide

Outcome: Twelve new Mississippi companies to the export market and 38 Mississippi firms expanding their current exports

Efficiency: By efficiently using the federal State Trade Expansion Program, MDA can assist eligible businesses with lower costs for trade promotion activities (i.e., trade shows, business-to-business trade missions, international market research) by nearly 50% on travel and export promotion related costs.

GOAL B: To support and enhance the competitiveness of new and existing minority- and women-owned businesses to broaden the economic base and maximize opportunities

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Create additional wealth in Mississippi for minority and women entrepreneurs through increased sales opportunities for Mississippi goods and services, new and expanded job creation and capital investment

Outcome: Increase contracting opportunities and improve technical assistance delivery to diverse and emerging businesses

Efficiency: 100% utilization of print, social media, virtual and in-person outreach education and training to reach businesses around the state

B.1.1. STRATEGY

Define the objectives of each program and offering, assess effectiveness and refine or eliminate programs as needed

Output: Programs that are accessible and responsive to the needs of the minority- and small-business community

Outcome: Easily accessible minority directory source listings search tools, more productive bonding programs, expanded support and strategic administration of MDA's Contractors Academy and the APEX Accelerator, allowing minority- and women-owned businesses to compete more effectively for contracting opportunities

Efficiency: Increase the number of new certifications by 35 each year, increase the level of exposure to minority businesses in contracting requests, expand the list of contracting partners participating in the Academy

B.1.2. STRATEGY

Provide the managerial, financial and technical assistance needed for minority- and women-owned businesses to successfully compete for federal, state and local government contracts, including commercial contracts

Outcome: Support 150 state contracts with minority- and women-owned businesses

Outcome: Assist 15 new startup minority- and women-owned businesses

Outcome: Increase the number of certified minority- and women-owned businesses by 35 each year

Outcome: Graduate 50 contractors through the Contractors Academy

Outcome: Increase the use of assistance programs such as the Minority Surety Bond Guaranty Program and Capital Access Construction Loan Program to grow minority participation in construction and building trade contracts with state agencies and local units of government

Efficiency: Increase the rate of contracting opportunities to be bid on by minority businesses by 3% yearly

B.1.3 STRATEGY

Continue to promote the Diversity Initiative for state public procurement and support contracting opportunities at the federal level

Output: Collaborate with 86 state agency heads or procurement officers

Output: Administer the APEX Accelerator to support 100 federal minority contracts

Outcome: Increase the number of state minority contracts awarded

GOAL C: Grow the state's economy by supporting the expansion of existing in-state industries

OBJECTIVE C.1.

Support the creation of 3,000 jobs and \$300 million in investment through the expansions of existing businesses

Outcome: Growth and strengthening of the state's employment

C.1.1 STRATEGY

Actively work with the state's existing employers to identify opportunities for growth and attempt to remove barriers to growth when possible

Output: Meet with key contacts and local developers and their existing companies throughout the year to satisfy their needs/requests

Output: Corporate/regional headquarters trips to identify and/or develop expansion opportunities with multiple industries operating in the state

Outcome: 3,000 new jobs and \$300 million investment

Efficiency: Won expansion projects compared by percentage to projects worked

C.1.2 STRATEGY

Actively partner with state's colleges and universities to maintain current awareness of workforce capacity, research and development milestones and key educational offerings for the state

Output: Actively work with Accelerate MS and workforce allies across the state

Outcome: Increased ability to identify and address workforce issues on behalf of an existing industry before becoming a threat to ongoing operations in the state

GOAL D: Provide an efficient and economical energy system through a statewide plan that supports public and private consumers

OBJECTIVE D.1.

Maximize use of energy efficiency and renewable options through proper communication and outreach activities, strategies, technology deployment and new partnerships

D.1.1 STRATEGY

Promote the division to internal and external groups and work to advance initiatives by maintaining key stakeholder relationships

Output: Connect with a minimum of five external stakeholder groups, such as the Mississippi Energy Institute and universities

Outcome: Development of programs and initiatives that bring together government and the private sector to promote sound energy policies

D.1.2 STRATEGY

Provide technical and financial assistance in Mississippi industrial, commercial, and institutional sectors.

Output: Conduct energy audits for public and private entities and provide information on energy cost-saving measures

Outcome: Measure energy savings that positively impact the bottom line for energy consuming sectors and identifying investment priorities

Efficiency: Amount of energy savings identified per each audits and the number and type of energy efficiency measures installed via projects funded through the division's grant and loan programs.

D.1.3 STRATEGY

Coordinate the development and implementation of a general energy management plan for state-owned-

and-operated facilities

Output: Prepare State Energy Management Program annual legislative report to update the governor and provide technical assistance to agencies in developing five-year energy management plans

Outcome: provide strategies and best practices to energy management coordinators that foster energy efficiency awareness and maximize energy efficiency

Efficiency: Identify poor performing buildings using key metrics to identify cost-saving measures and investment priorities.

D.1.4 STRATEGY

Promote energy awareness throughout the institutional, industrial, and commercial sectors of the state.

Output: Conduct training sessions and programs for educators, facility and building operators, students, and the public to promote energy awareness

Outcome: Improve trainees' knowledge base on building energy efficiency and general energy awareness

Efficiency: Number of training participants, certifications and continuing education units issued

D.1.5 STRATEGY

The division is statutorily designated by the U. S. Department of Energy as the coordinating agency for energy emergency planning, response, and mitigation in the state which encompasses facilitating planning efforts that strengthens the resilience of Mississippi's energy sector from physical, cyber, and weather -related disruptions and emergencies.

Output: Develop and maintain the Mississippi Energy Security Plan (MESP), a comprehensive manual for state and local leaders charged with the responsibility of ensuring the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens during periods of energy emergencies.

Outcome: Strategically collaborate with federal and state agencies to effectively respond to energy emergencies for purposes of restoring private, institutional, and commercial systems to their full operating capability as soon as possible

Efficiency: Support timely responses and coordinated notifications to state government leaders, private sector entities, institutions, the media, and the public during the occurrence of energy emergencies and system failures, while identifying appropriate actions to be taken, including enactment of regulations, laws, and other actions by the state

Efficiency: Number of training exercises and emergency activations that require immediate mobilization in accordance with the federal and state statutes.

Goal E: Utilize federal research laboratories and military installations to attract and grow economic activity

OBJECTIVE E.1.

Grow military spending, support contracting opportunities with Mississippi businesses and encourage new military and research missions through the Governor's Office of Military Affairs (GOMA)

E.1.1 STRATEGY

GOMA has produced a guide outlining the ways military communities in the state can develop their assets and support military growth. GOMA also has worked with the Defense Communities Development Council and local economic development organizations to secure federal funding for a variety of new and improved assets (Department of Defense capital expenditures) within the state that will help communities attract relevant military missions. Deployment of the guide along with continued collaboration with senior military

leaders will lead to new missions with more jobs.

Output: Actively support military communities leading to community and installation growth

Output: Work with Defense Communities Development Council to formulate new statewide planning

Outcome: Develop defense communities within the state to attract new and beneficial missions and job growth

E.1.2 STRATEGY

Support minority- and small-business growth through the identification of installation needs

Output: Work directly with installation leadership to identify 1) upcoming development projects that can produce new missions or improve support for existing missions and 2) identify gaps in vendor and contractor needs for those projects to increase awareness of contracting opportunities with local vendors

E.1.3 STRATEGY

Revitalize and empower relationships with existing legislatively condoned external partners such as Mississippi Enterprise for Technology to explore new opportunities for growth in the innovation economy.

Outcome: MDA will utilize external partners to further the internal mission

Outcome: Utilization of federal laboratory/technology resources to promote opportunities for innovation economy growth.

Output: Venture-backed companies will locate to MS because of opportunities to utilize federal test and evaluation spaces.

Efficiency: Formalized relationships with external partners will maintain headcount within MDA and not lead to staff increases

GOAL F: Grow Mississippi's economy by increasing number of filmed projects produced in the state

OBJECTIVE F.1.

Recruit filmed productions to Mississippi while growing a Mississippi-based film industry to ensure local hiring of trained Mississippi crews and companies

F.1.1. STRATEGY

Build relationships with producers, directors and other industry decision makers, particularly those with Mississippi ties

Output: Leverage current budget and resources to increase promotional activities and marketing at targeted film festivals and industry events, in addition to targeted advertising to sell Mississippi as a filming destination

Outcome: Increased number of feature films, commercials, television shows and other filmed projects in the pipeline

F.1.2. STRATEGY

Support activities that facilitate the growth of a state film workforce

Output: Workforce training curricula to be shared with current educational programs, use of sponsorship dollars to specifically support training at state film festivals and events, facilitate film internship programs and related educational outreach

Outcome: A trained, stable and growing local film workforce available for hire to filmed productions locating in the state

Efficiency: By behaviorally targeting our consumer, we can customize the message to their specific interest areas, which allows more efficient spending on advertising dollars.

Program 2: Community Development and Incentives

GOAL A: Support the development of community assets and infrastructure so more Mississippi communities are qualified and able to compete for jobs and investment and provide a better quality of life for their citizens

OBJECTIVE A. 1.

Administer effective community infrastructure financial support to increase the competitiveness of Mississippi's communities for job creation and capital investment projects

Outcome: Communities that are prepared to compete for economic development opportunities

Outcome: Better public infrastructure and facilities to improve the lives of their citizens to retain population levels

A.1.1. STRATEGY

Effectively manage numerous grant and loan programs in compliance with the law and intent of programmatic functions

Output: Provide 10 public infrastructure grants and loans annually to local units of government (municipal and county) in coordination with agency economic development projects

Output: Provide 50 basic public infrastructure grants and loans annually for municipal and county governments in support of general community development activities, making communities more competitive

Output: Proactively manage open projects to completion, with 25% of total open grants closed and 10 total loans successfully paid in full

Output: Analyze processes and approvals to ensure they are grounded in necessity and contribute to the effectiveness of the organization

Output: Monitor active projects to ensure compliance with programmatic guidelines and applicable laws

Outcome: Through successful compliance, technical assistance and project management, limit the number of findings issued on programs audited by the Office of the State Auditor or the federal government

A.1.2. STRATEGY

Better align community development projects with economic development priorities

Output: Review programs for effectiveness and modify guidelines to better align programs to job creation objectives

Outcome: Programs are geared more toward job creation and long-term community competitiveness, resulting in better investment of taxpayer funds

GOAL B: To provide effective financing and incentive options to meet the needs of prospective businesses and support Mississippi businesses as they work to increase competitiveness and grow in domestic and international markets

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Generate an overall \$10-to-\$1 leverage of private capital investments to public investments made into

economic development projects

Outcome: An efficient application of incentives to bring location and expansion projects generating career opportunities for Mississippians and substantial investments to the state

B.1.1 STRATEGY

Continue to adhere to the adopted incentives framework so that offerings remain structured and are understood by project managers and leadership and decisions regarding incentives packages and assistance offers can more quickly be made

Outcome: Consistency and transparency in decision-making process

B.1.2 STRATEGY

Efficiently administer state grant, loan and tax incentive programs under MDA's purview, streamline processes and continually improve program monitoring and servicing as needed

Output: Implement grants, loans and tax incentives management system and review processes, monitoring tools and procedures to identify ways to improve effectiveness in the administration of these programs

Outcome: Manage the incentives management system to ensure more efficient program administration, timelier customer service, more user-friendly documents and processes, greater transparency in the incentive approval and administration process and enhanced reporting capabilities. In turn, substantially improved record-keeping will be achieved.

Outcome: Enhance the monitoring plans already implemented, providing for a more robust monitoring effort with a more rigorous approach to monitoring deadlines and conducting compliance checks to determine whether companies have met their jobs and investment requirements and maintained the requisite number of jobs for the required timeframe. Review 100% of projects that have met a monitoring deadline for compliance with program requirements.

Outcome: Work in conjunction with accounting to reduce maximum time to payment while maintaining consistent oversight

B.1.3 STRATEGY

Provide guidance and technical assistance on the state's statutory and discretionary incentives programs, including all of Mississippi's loans, grants and tax incentives, to businesses, consultants, internal audiences and other economic development professionals in the state

Output: Greater awareness of the state's incentives offerings, both internally and externally, is achieved, as is a greater level of comfort among the businesses that MDA serves regarding the incentives process

B.1.4 STRATEGY

Develop project-ready sites around the state to compete for additional economic development opportunities

Output: Manage the Site Development Grant Program, which supports local efforts to conduct the required due diligence to make a site project ready

Outcome: Additional sites that have the data necessary in terms of wetlands, environmental impacts, soil composition, etc. are required by companies and consultants before a location decision is made

Outcome: Increase the number of Mississippi sites that make it through the site-selection process, which will increase the likelihood of more projects choosing Mississippi

GOAL C: Provide education and assistance with identifying community development projects that can lead to economic growth opportunities for small and disadvantaged communities

OBJECTIVE C.1

Assist communities in becoming more desirable places for public and private investment by providing community and economic development training and technical assistance for a broad-based, diverse team of local leaders

C.1.1 STRATEGY

Coordinate with economic development organizations and utility partners to plan and manage the annual Aspire Mississippi cohort designed to equip local leaders with the tools, knowledge and skills to become more effective in their economic development endeavors

Output: Four to six teams, each comprised of about 10 local leaders, committed to participating in monthly virtual and in-person educational sessions over a nine-month period

Output: Four to six community-based team projects are initiated and completed by the teams in alliance and coordination within MDA's stated economic development objectives

Outcome: An increase in knowledge and skills of specific topics in community and economic development by local leaders, thus strengthening the present and future leadership capacity in these communities

Outcome: Benchmarks of community-based team projects are met resulting in local leaders' abilities to successfully implement strategies that serve as catalysts for future projects

OBJECTIVE C.2

Provide responsive technical assistance that enables local leaders to solve problems through a coordinated and efficient process of engaging key stakeholder organizations in creative solutions to unique local challenges

C.2.1. STRATEGY

Build a comprehensive cohort of stakeholders with representatives from organizations that communicate regularly and share best practices that lead to a consistent and comprehensive approach to community assistance

Output: Provide regular opportunities for stakeholders to engage in conversations about the locations and types of assistance being provided to communities so the delivery of requested expertise is coordinated and not duplicated

Outcome: This coordinated approach among communities results in the measurable impact of services provided by the technical assistance providers, which creates greater impact at the local level

GOAL D: Utilize existing structure of retiree attraction program and expand to include family attraction/repatriation of former Mississippians

OBJECTIVE D.1

Provide support to communities seeking to attract retirees to the State of Mississippi

D.1.1. STRATEGY

Grow and strengthen Welcome Home Mississippi Retirement and assist the certified retirement communities in their efforts to attract retirees through statewide and localized marketing and promotion activities

Output: Receive at least 1,000 direct leads from marketing and promotion efforts and disseminate those

leads to the appropriate certified retirement cities

Output: Provide technical assistance and training to the 12 retiree attraction directors

Output: Aggressively market the benefits of becoming a certified retirement city to select communities in Mississippi

Outcome: Convert 5% of the direct leads generated to retirees relocating to Mississippi

Outcome: Enable the 12 retiree attraction directors to increase their lead generation by 25% over the past year because of the training and technical assistance received

Outcome: Increase the number of certified retirement cities in Mississippi to 15

Objective D.2

The existing retiree attraction program – Welcome Home Mississippi – operates in the community development space and has opportunity to expand its current focus on retirees to include a family attraction/repatriation effort.

D.2.1 Strategy

Utilize research to determine the market for family attraction/repatriation of former Mississippians at least one of whom may be in a profession needed in Mississippi's private sector economy (business expansions and new-to-MS businesses).

Output: Expanded focus of existing program

Outcome: More families and professionals move or repatriate to Mississippi leading to economic growth

Efficiency: Synergistic support of other MDA programs

Program 3: Support Services

GOAL A: Support departmental staff and the state's economic development community by providing systems, services and information, which facilitate effective and efficient achievement of MDA's mission

A.1.1. STRATEGY

Actively position the state strategically in domestic and foreign markets through consumer-targeted advertising, marketing and event efforts

Output: Develop and execute economic development events, including virtual events, domestically and internationally

Output: Produce consumer targeted marketing collateral and advertising campaigns

Output: Generate 300,000 page views to MDA's primary website showcasing Mississippi's competitive advantages and success stories

A.1.2. STRATEGY

Strengthen the initiative and support networks among MEC and MEDC membership to closely align with the state's business climate goals and objectives

Output: Consolidated messaging, public-sector and private-sector collaboration

Efficiency: Economies of scale reduce duplication of effort

A.1.3. STRATEGY

Implement a Performance Based Career Path for accountability and excellence by encouraging MDA staff to meet and exceed metrics/goals and achieve professional development benchmarks

Output: MDA staff reviewed on a regular basis for progress toward their goals based on agreed-upon metrics

Output: Budgeting process reflecting the demonstrable effectiveness of each unit within MDA

Outcome: A more effective and efficient MDA with lower instances of turnover

A.1.4. STRATEGY

Be actively engaged with industry stakeholders and policymakers in working collaboratively toward overall statewide goals of improving Mississippi's business climate

Output: Discussions among stakeholders in public and private sectors about the process of economic and community development

Outcome: More informed and capable leadership around the state

A.1.5. STRATEGY

Improve financial management systems and processes to increase effective and efficient utilization and management of the agency's fiscal resources

Output: More efficient processing of invoices for economic development requests for reimbursement

Efficiency: Improve the state's position with developers and consultants as a place to locate a business

A.1.6. STRATEGY

Maintain and improve information technology designed and managed to assist MDA in meeting its economic development and community program objectives

Output: Utilize industry research and analytics to deploy leading technology to support efficient and effective work both in and out of the office

Output: More efficient processing of business intelligence and target market requests for information

Efficiency: Improve the state's position with developers and consultants as a place to locate a business

GOAL B: Support the development of communities and leaders around the state so they can successfully compete for jobs and investment (industrial, commercial or retail) through asset-development efforts

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Implement a program that will provide direction to communities on improving economic development competitiveness

B.1.1. STRATEGY:

Offer group training to leaders in communities, enabling the development and implementation of long-range plans geared toward economic development success. Sessions will include successful industrial development programs, retail development and community revitalization.

Output: Host 10 local training sessions around the state

Outcome: Twenty-seven local elected officials and local leaders with a better understanding of how economic development success can be achieved

B.1.2. STRATEGY:

Provide direct training of local elected officials and relevant partners of local elected officials.

Output: Training programs developed and implemented, known as "First Steps."

Output: One-on-one consultative and training sessions related to fee-in-lieu, project development, site development, and economic development program creation.

Outcome: More comprehensive working relationships between MDA and local elected officials and more knowledge around the state regarding economic competitiveness

Outcome: More sites around the state will become eligible for site development funding leading to higher eligibility for significant economic development projects

Program 4: Special Projects and Pass Throughs

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Program 5: Tourism

GOAL A: Grow the state's economy through aggressive advertising and marketing of the state's tourism assets in targeted media markets and through an optimum mix of media platforms

OBJECTIVE A. 1.

Host 26 million visitors resulting in \$7 billion in Mississippi expenditures

A.1.1. STRATEGY

Invest in a range of advertising outlets and Visit Mississippi program activations. Develop marketing and advertising campaigns and activations around Visit Mississippi's key pillars and annual themes. Align campaigns and activations with markets corresponding to key pillars, themes, state regions and geographic demographics.

Output: Leverage current appropriations through allocation to print, digital, broadcast and streaming media placements; inclusion in sales, sports and outdoor publications and guidebooks; digital influencers; website and social media content; research and data analytics to drive placement strategy.

Outcome: Generate 1.3 million page views to the Visit Mississippi website through unique visitors and digital advertising

Efficiency: Higher return on every \$1 spent on advertising and marketing

Efficiency: Track overall program success and ROI through new investments in research services

A.1.2. STRATEGY

Strengthen regional and international partnerships to sell Mississippi as a destination internationally and connect Mississippi partners with our global contacts

Output: Media buys, social media campaigns and direct marketing to targeted international markets

Outcome: Increase in international travelers and international expenditures in the state

A.1.3. STRATEGY

Continue market-specific tactics to build international programs and increase international travel to Mississippi from established markets (United Kingdom, France, Germany) and developing markets

Output: Participate in international sales and media missions and trade shows, both in-market and domestic, to build relationships with international tour operators, itinerary planners and media. Host international trade and media familiarization tours in partnership with Mississippi DMOs and attractions.

Output: Joint marketing and participation in trade shows with CVBs, DMOs, convention centers and venues to recruit meetings and conventions

Output: Utilize international in-market representatives and regional marketing organizations such as Travel South International to leverage international impact opportunities including advertising co-ops and earned media

Outcome: International travelers are proven to stay longer and spend more money, resulting in more revenue for Mississippi and recognition as a premier destination in the American southeast.

A.1.4. STRATEGY

Continue development of leisure, group, business, sports and outdoor programs to increase domestic visitor spending year over year

Output: Lead coordination and programming of Visit Mississippi trade show booths with inclusion of Mississippi DMOs, attractions and venues to recruit domestic leisure, group tour, conference business

Output: Distribute multi-city and regional itineraries with new attractions, exhibits and events at trade shows and activations. Develop relationships with industry partners and fulfill itinerary planning service requests.

Outcome: Drive increase in tourism-related spending and length of stay by domestic visitors

GOAL B: Increase brand recognition, asset awareness and positive media coverage, resulting in increased economic development and leisure/cultural tourism travel to Mississippi

B.1.1. STRATEGY

Maintain Mississippi's 12 state welcome centers and cultural programs, including historic trail marker programs, to increase new and repeat visitor sentiment. Fulfill inquiry leads efficiently and effectively for greatest conversion rate.

Output: Lead staff development initiatives and hospitality trainings for state welcome center employees; Provide up-to-date tour guides, informational brochures and calendars promoting Mississippi events, attractions, lodging and dining options.

Output: Develop and promote Mississippi's four cultural trails: the Mississippi Blues Trail, the Mississippi Freedom Trail, the Mississippi Country Music Trail and the Mississippi Writers Trail. Source and coordinate activations complementing Visit Mississippi pillars such as music-, culinary- and literary-themed festivals.

Outcome: Growing Mississippi's economy by encouraging more drive-market and drive-through visitors to stop and spend at Mississippi attractions, events, restaurants, and hotels

Efficiency: Measure success of pitches, promotions and earned coverage of all programs through monthly reporting by contracted public relations firm. Measure success of consumer activations by lead inquiry and fulfillment.

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Utilize retiree attraction and recruitment as a viable economic development strategy for Mississippi by promoting the state as a retirement destination throughout the country and abroad