



**Community and Economic  
Development Plan  
2018**



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## INTRODUCTION

Cabot has experienced significant growth in recent years, and is in a unique position to complete an economic development strategic planning process to proactively ensure the city's competitiveness and success. The community currently has the opportunity for further development of residential and commercial sites, as well as addressing issues related to education and overall quality of place.

Boyette Strategic Advisors (Boyette) was engaged by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, along with First Electric Cooperative, to develop a forward-thinking, competitive Community and Economic Development Plan that will provide the City of Cabot and the Cabot Chamber of Commerce with a comprehensive inventory of their capabilities, as well as recommendations on programs to focus its efforts and how the organization should position itself to move forward over the next five years. This planning effort shares insight into the community's strengths and weaknesses from a site location perspective, identifies opportunities for cluster development, and provides priorities to ensure Cabot's success in its community and economic development efforts, including action items to be pursued in the short-term, mid-term and long-term.

With stakeholder input ranging from face to face meetings, group discussions and online surveys, coupled with in-depth data analysis and research, Boyette developed a thorough, high-quality and consensus building plan. For the purposes of analyzing the market, Boyette utilized the combined geographies of the cities of Austin, Cabot and Ward. Cabot has significant potential with the right people, focused on the right things, heading in the right direction.

## STRATEGIC FOCUSES

The **six** strategic focuses for this plan are outlined below. These focuses are set forth to heighten the awareness of the assets of the city and provide a guide to address challenges. They will serve to guide Cabot's community and economic development efforts by providing short term and long term goals that increase competitiveness and support a thriving quality of life. These strategic focuses are not mutually exclusive as they are underpinned with foundational community and economic development practices. Embracing the opportunity to create a sustainable, nationally recognized community, the City and Chamber should collaborate to tackle the strategies and action items provided for each strategic focus.



## ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Establishing a community and economic development program is vital to the economic health of a city. For newly formed programs, there should be a deliberate focus on leveraging and enhancing the fundamental elements of community and economic development such as business and community vitality, marketing/communications, product development, and workforce/talent. But it is critical from an organizational standpoint that there be a focused effort on economic development to ensure each of these elements are addressed. While there are many economic development program structures that could benefit the City of Cabot (City), the model that the City of Cabot has chosen to adopt consists in entering into an agreement or contract for community and economic development services with the Cabot Chamber of Commerce (Chamber).

### Adopt a forward thinking organizational structure

#### *Action Item: Determine staffing and roles*

With the newly adopted community and economic development program agreement between the City and the Chamber, the two organizations must consider the most effective structure for staffing the program. The City and Chamber contract provides for one position, a Community Development Director, employed by the Chamber. Therefore, strong consideration should be given that the Executive Director of the Chamber and the Community Development Director should be one in the same.

For greatest impact, the City and Chamber should consider modeling the new program after the Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce model.<sup>1</sup> Implementing this model may include realigning the current roles and responsibilities of the current staff and/or include hiring additional staff to support the new community and economic development program, as well as the Chamber's program of work.

### BEST PRACTICE

#### Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce

An advocate for business and the voice of the community for nearly 100 years, the Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce has been the champion of community and economic development projects in the region. This includes activities such as leading the process for new business locations, aiding in the expansion of existing businesses, and leading community development initiatives, which may involve advocating for strong public schools, promoting a thriving workforce, as well as other typical Chamber functions. Below is the structure and or functions of each staff member of the Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce.

- Director of Economic Development & CEO
- Membership Director
- Special Events Coordinator
- Administrative Support
- Communications

***Action Item: Name a Director of Community Development***

The City and Chamber should agree that the Director of Community Development be titled Director of Community Development & CEO of the Cabot Chamber of Commerce and charged with the duties outlined in the agreement of services between the City and Chamber. The newly appointed Director of Community Development should be knowledgeable and respected among key stakeholders including the City of Cabot, Cabot Chamber of Commerce, regional economic development partners, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and the Arkansas Economic Developers and Chamber Executives.

***Action Item: Establish a Community/Economic Development Steering Committee***

As outlined in the agreement for services for community development between the City and Chamber, a steering committee should be appointed consisting of three persons appointed by the Chamber and three persons appointed by the city council. The advisory role of the committee may evolve and adapt as various community and economic development initiatives and achievements come to fruition. It is essential for collaborative purposes that this steering committee act as a consensus builder among stakeholders and a champion of community and economic development issues throughout the city. Additionally, this committee should be closely involved with the implementation of this plan at the direction of the Director.

***Action Item: Identify and pursue sustainable program funding***

With the heightened responsibilities of a focused community and economic development program and as the program evolves, the Chamber and City should explore further funding opportunities from adjacent cities within Lonoke County, as well as increased private funding from local business investors. Moreover, as momentum builds and successes are counted, the City may find it prudent to fund additional community and economic development projects. From increased capacity at the water treatment facility to improved recreational amenities, Cabot has a successful track record for investing in themselves.

## BUSINESS VITALITY

Business vitality is the intersection of community livability and increased business development. The business vitality of a city or geography is created through continuous dialogue and interaction between residents, government, education and business. Cabot has experienced a boom in residential development, supported the advancement of the educational system and responded to the needs of business. To thrive in the future, Cabot must proactively support and guide future business development, while keeping the ethos of the community at its core. To successfully develop and direct growth, a city must realize its target sector focuses, support existing business and monitor policies that effect business. Additionally, exploring the need to support entrepreneurial ecosystems is paramount.

### Identify and market to target sector focuses

In order to determine the best target sector focuses for the City of Cabot, current industry clusters were reviewed and input from stakeholders on aspirational industries that would be a good fit for Cabot was considered. The following have been identified as Sector Focuses for Cabot.



The following sector profiles outline the strengths of each sector:

<b>Business &amp; Financial Support Services</b>	
<p>Business and Financial Support Services includes activities in the areas of accounting/finance, human resources, payroll, procurement, marketing and related services, to fulfill the needs of a business. Customer troubleshooting and guidance via telephone or online is also an essential component of this sector.</p>	
Location Considerations	Cabot Assets
<b>Population Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot’s population is projected to grow <b>3 percent</b> over the next five years.</li> <li>▪ The median age of Cabot’s population is <b>33.8</b>.</li> <li>▪ The Millennial/GenZ age group represents <b>43.4 percent</b> of Cabot’s population. [How is that defined for this data point? Add]</li> <li>▪ The average household income of Cabot’s residents is <b>\$66,536</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Available and Affordable Workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>32 percent</b> of residents in Cabot hold an <b>Associates degree or higher</b> and more than <b>22 percent</b> of residents hold a <b>Bachelor’s degree or higher</b>.</li> <li>▪ Within a 30-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of approximately 241,000</b> and within a 60-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of more than 816,000</b>.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>More than 350 workers</b> in Cabot are employed in the Business &amp; Financial Support Services industry.</li> <li>▪ The Business &amp; Financial Support Services industry is projected to <b>grow 11.8 percent</b> between 2017 and 2022 in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ White-collar employment in Cabot totals <b>67 percent</b>.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>Arkansas State University at Beebe</b> (ASU-Beebe) offers an Associate of Art degree in Business and an Associate of Applied Science in Business Technology with an emphasis in computer applications, management/marketing, medical records and health information and public procurement.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>University of Arkansas at Pulaski Tech</b> (UA-PTC) offers several degrees and certificates in business, including accounting, entrepreneurship, office supervision and management, and office technology.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s</b> (UA-Little Rock) College of Business offers certificates, undergraduate and graduate courses in the following areas: accounting, business analytics, business information systems, economics, finance, international business, management, and marketing. Graduate degrees include Master’s of Business Administration, Concurrent MBA-JD, PharmD and MD, and Master of Science in Business Information Systems.<sup>6</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>University of Central Arkansas’s</b> (UCA) College of Business offers degrees in accounting, economics, finance, insurance and risk management, marketing, management, and management information systems.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Cost of Doing Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arkansas has the seventh lowest cost of doing business, according to CNBC’s Top States for Doing Business.<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>

<b>Business &amp; Financial Support Services</b>	
<b>Sites and Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee and Director to populate</li> </ul>
<b>Proximity to Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Less than 30 minutes from Cabot, the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport/Adams Field offers <b>direct flights</b> to Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Washington, DC, Denver, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, Las Vegas, Chicago, Orlando, and St. Louis. <sup>9</sup></li> <li>▪ There is a highly concentrated finance and banking community in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA.</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot straddles <b>Highway 67/167</b> and is located less than 30 miles from Little Rock.</li> <li>▪ Cabot is less than 150 miles from Memphis, and less than 350 miles from Dallas, Nashville, and St. Louis.</li> <li>▪ Interstate 40 runs through the heart of Lonoke County.</li> <li>▪ The <b>Bill and Hilary Clinton National Airport/Adams Field</b> is serviced by seven commercial carriers with the largest percentage of flights bound for Dallas, Houston and Chicago. <sup>10</sup></li> <li>▪ The City of Cabot has a Transportation Vision and Improvement Strategic Plan. <sup>11</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Quality of Place</b>	<p>There are ample cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities in Cabot including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabot Sports Complex</li> <li>• Cabot Aquatic Park</li> <li>• Cabot Public Library</li> <li>• Greystone Golf Courses</li> <li>• Alfam Bowling &amp; Entertainment Center</li> <li>• Space Walk</li> <li>• 7<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the state</li> </ul>
<b>Other Highlights</b>	<p>Well known companies in this sector that have a presence in Cabot include: Metova and the Centennial Bank Call Center.</p>

<b>Distribution &amp; Logistics Services</b>	
<p>The distribution &amp; logistics services sector includes industries that plan and implement the flow of goods from suppliers to customers. The sector also consists of e-commerce, third party logistics providers and warehousing and storage space.</p>	
<b>Location Considerations</b>	<b>Cabot Assets</b>
<b>Qualified Workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within a 30-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of approximately 241,000</b> and within a 60-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of more than 816,000</b>.<sup>12</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>More than 600 workers</b> in Cabot are employed in the Distribution &amp; Logistics Services industry.</li> <li>▪ The Distribution &amp; Logistics Services industry is projected to grow <b>15.4 percent</b> between 2017 and 2022 in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ There are more than 61 distribution and logistics services businesses in Lonoke County and more than 704 distribution and logistics services businesses in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA.</li> <li>▪ <b>ASU-Beebe</b> offers a certificate in diesel technology.</li> <li>▪ <b>UAPTC</b> offers certificates in <b>tractor and trailer logistics, tractor and trailer servicing and diesel technology</b>.<sup>13</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>UA-Little Rock</b> offers an online course in <b>supply chain management</b>.<sup>14</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>UCA</b> offers a bachelors degree in <b>Logistics and Supply Chain Management</b> and also offers a minor in the program.<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Transportation Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot straddles <b>Highway 67/167</b> and is located less than 30 miles from Little Rock.</li> <li>▪ Cabot is <b>less than 150 miles from Memphis</b>, and less than 350 miles from Dallas, Nashville, and St. Louis.</li> <li>▪ <b>Interstate 40</b> runs through the heart of Lonoke County.</li> <li>▪ The <b>Bill and Hilary Clinton National Airport/Adams Field</b> is located in Little Rock and is serviced by seven commercial carriers with the largest percentage of flights bound for Dallas, Houston and Chicago.<sup>16</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>Union Pacific</b> railroad serves Cabot and the Union Pacific operational hub is located in North Little Rock.</li> <li>▪ The <b>Little Rock Port Authority</b> is located in Little Rock and is part of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, the country’s farthest west inland waterway, which runs from the Mississippi River northwest to just east of Tulsa, Oklahoma.</li> <li>▪ The City of Cabot has a Transportation Vision and Improvement Strategic Plan<sup>17</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Sites and Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee and Director to populate</li> </ul>
<b>Proximity to Market</b>	<p>Within a five-hour drive time of Cabot there are more than 12 million people, nearly 5 million households and an estimated 3.2 million families.</p>

### Distribution & Logistics Services



**Cost of Doing Business**

Arkansas has the seventh lowest cost of doing business, according to CNBC's Top States for Doing Business. <sup>18</sup>

<b>Healthcare</b>	
<p>The healthcare sector includes administration and delivery of general and specialized treatment to patients through various facilities including hospitals, outpatient centers, doctor’s offices, etc. Research and development facilities, laboratories, and support services, such as insurance processing and billing, are also included in this sector.</p>	
<b>Location Considerations</b>	<b>Cabot Assets</b>
<b>Population Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot’s population is projected to grow <b>3 percent</b> over the next five years.</li> <li>▪ The median age of Cabot’s population is <b>33.8</b>.</li> <li>▪ The Millennial/GenZ age group represents <b>43.4 percent</b> of Cabot’s population.</li> <li>▪ The average household income of Cabot’s residents is <b>\$66,536</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Available and Affordable Workforce with Technical Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>32 percent</b> of residents in Cabot hold an <b>Associates degree or higher</b> and more than <b>22 percent</b> of residents hold a <b>Bachelor’s degree or higher</b>.</li> <li>▪ Within a 30-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of approximately 241,000</b> and within a 60-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of more than 816,000</b>.<sup>19</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>More than 1,000 workers</b> are employed in the Healthcare industry in Cabot and more than 1,600 workers are employed in the Healthcare industry in Lonoke County.</li> <li>▪ The Healthcare industry is projected to grow <b>12.8 percent</b> between 2017 and 2022 in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ There are <b>98</b> Healthcare related businesses located in Cabot.<sup>20</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>ASU-Beebe</b> offers certificates and degrees in the following areas: paramedic emergency medical service, health information assistant, health sciences, medical laboratory technology, nursing-practical, pharmacy technician science, and pre-healthcare studies.<sup>21</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>UA-PTC</b> offers certificates and degrees in the following areas: pre-healthcare studies, applied health, radiography, dental assisting, occupational therapy assistant, and practical nursing.<sup>22</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>UA-Little Rock’s</b> College of Education and Health Professions houses the Department of Nursing.<sup>23</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)</b> is the state’s only academic hospital and offers degrees in nursing, medicine, health professions, pharmacy, and public health.<sup>24</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Highly Concentrated Medical Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot is home to a number of healthcare facilities, including Cabot Medical Care and North Cabot Family Medicine.</li> <li>▪ Cabot is less than 30 miles from the state’s largest and well known medical institutions: UAMS, CHI St. Vincent, Baptist Health, and the Arkansas Children’s Hospital.</li> </ul>
<b>Proximity to Market</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within a 10-minute drive of Cabot, there are approximately 30,000 people, more than 10,000 households and approximately 8,000 families.</li> </ul>

<b>Healthcare</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within a 20-minute drive of Cabot, there are approximately 106,000 people, 40,000 households, and nearly 30,000 families.</li> <li>▪ Cabot households spend an average of \$4,600 on healthcare.</li> <li>▪ 55% of Cabot’s population has a household income of more than \$50,000.</li> <li>▪ 70% of Cabot’s residents carry medical and accidental healthcare.</li> </ul>
<b>Cost of Doing Business</b>	Arkansas has the seventh lowest cost of doing business, according to CNBC’s Top States for Doing Business.

<b>Retail/Hospitality</b>	
<p>The retail/hospitality industry includes retail stores consisting of boutique retailers, big box retailers, and small footprint stores in addition to restaurants and accommodations such as midscale hotel chains with conference centers.</p>	
<b>Location Considerations</b>	<b>Cabot Assets</b>
<b>Population Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot’s population is projected to grow <b>3 percent</b> over the next five years.</li> <li>▪ The median age of Cabot’s population is <b>33.8</b>.</li> <li>▪ The Millennial/GenZ age group represents <b>43.4 percent</b> of Cabot’s population.</li> <li>▪ The average household income of Cabot’s residents is <b>\$66,536</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Available and Affordable Workforce with Technical Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within a 30-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of approximately 241,000</b> and within a 60-minute drive time of Cabot there is a <b>population of more than 816,000</b>.<sup>25</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>More than 2,900 workers</b> are employed in the Retail/Hospitality industry in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ The Retail/Hospitality industry is projected to grow <b>9.1 percent</b> between 2017 and 2022 in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ <b>ASU-Beebe</b> offers an Associate of Applied Science in Hospitality Administration with an emphasis in culinary.<sup>26</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>UA-PTC College of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Institute</b> is located in Little Rock and offers certificates and degrees in culinary arts, baking and pastry, food preparation, cake decorating, food purchasing, hospitality management, hospitality and tourism, and wine and spirits studies.<sup>27</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Cost of Doing Business</b>	<p>Arkansas has the seventh lowest cost of doing business, according to CNBC’s Top States for Doing Business.</p>
<b>Quality of Place</b>	<p>There are ample cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities in Cabot including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabot Sports Complex</li> <li>• Cabot Aquatic Park</li> <li>• Cabot Public Library</li> <li>• Greystone Golf Courses</li> <li>• Alfam Bowling &amp; Entertainment Center</li> <li>• Space Walk</li> </ul>

<b>Value Added Manufacturing</b>	
<p>Value added manufacturing takes products or raw materials and transforms them into valuable goods that are sold to customers. Through advanced technologies, waste is eliminated in the production process of value added manufacturing. Niche value added industries may include metal building/component manufacturing, metal container manufacturing, and farm machinery and equipment manufacturing.</p>	
<b>Location Considerations</b>	<b>Cabot Assets</b>
<b>Available and Affordable Workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within a 30-minute drive time of Cabot, there is a <b>population of approximately 241,000</b> and within a 60-minute drive time of Canton there is a <b>population of more than 816,000</b>.<sup>28</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>More than 270 workers</b> in Cabot are employed in value added manufacturing and nearly 450 workers in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA employed in value added manufacturing.</li> <li>▪ The Value Added Manufacturing industry is projected to grow <b>15.8 percent</b> between 2017 and 2022 in Cabot.</li> <li>▪ 32 percent of residents in Cabot hold an Associates degree or higher and more than 22 percent of residents hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher.</li> <li>▪ <b>ASU-Beebe</b> offers certificates and degrees in the following technical studies: computerized machining technology, industrial technology, and welding technology.<sup>29</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>UA-PTC</b> offers certificates in the following technical studies: automated manufacturing systems, machining and CNC, and welding technology.<sup>30</sup></li> <li>▪ The <b>Arkansas Economic Development Commission Manufacturing Solutions</b> provides technical feasibility assessments, cost benefit analysis, training, technology implementation, information transfer and resource partnering to manufacturers in Arkansas.<sup>31</sup></li> <li>▪ Cabot is home to a number of <b>manufacturers</b>, including Dreamline Manufacturing, Inc. and Arkansas Automatic Sprinklers, Inc.</li> </ul>
<b>Cost of Doing Business</b>	Arkansas has the seventh lowest cost of doing business, according to CNBC’s Top States for Doing Business. <sup>32</sup>
<b>Available Property</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee and Director to populate</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabot straddles <b>Highway 67/167</b> and is located less than 30 miles from Little Rock.</li> <li>▪ Cabot is <b>less than 150 miles from Memphis</b>, and less than 350 miles from Dallas, Nashville, and St. Louis.</li> <li>▪ <b>Interstate 40</b> runs through the heart of Lonoke County.</li> <li>▪ The <b>Bill and Hilary Clinton National Airport/Adams Field</b> is located in Little Rock and is serviced by seven commercial carriers with the largest percentage of flights bound for Dallas, Houston and Chicago.<sup>33</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>Union Pacific</b> railroad serves Cabot and the Union Pacific operational hub is located in North Little Rock.</li> <li>▪ The <b>Little Rock Port Authority</b> is located in Little Rock and is part of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, which runs from the Mississippi River northwest to just east of Tulsa, Oklahoma.</li> </ul>

## **Enhance business competitiveness and increase business support**

### ***Action Item: Develop marketing profiles for each target sector focus***

Utilizing the information provided on each targeted sector focus identified in this plan, maintain an updated marketing profile for each sector that outlines the assets of Cabot related to that target specifically. These profiles should appear on the community and economic development website of the Chamber and City. The website is further discussed in the Marketing/Communications section of this plan.

### ***Action Item: Establish a customized, local incentives policy***

Incentives are utilized to entice or encourage the creation of new or existing jobs or capital investment in a city. Establishing a flexible incentives policy will ensure that the Director of Community Development and the Community/Economic Development Steering Committee has the tools readily available to most effectively create wealth in Cabot. This localized incentive policy may include one or more of the following:

- Cash grants
- Competitive utility rates
- Environmental studies/soil borings
- Expedited permitting
- Free or reduced land cost
- Local road work
- Waiver of local permit and connection fees
- Property tax abatement
- Relocation cost offsets
- Site preparation costs
- Subsidized rent
- Temporary office space
- Utility infrastructure

Additionally, the local incentives policy should be designed to consider the location considerations of the target sector focuses as well as include defined project performance measures for the number of jobs created, average wages associated with those jobs and

the total investment of the project. The policy should also include clawbacks should the project not meet the agreed upon project performance measures.

***Action Item: Seek current, real-time retail/hospitality sector data***

Retail market data changes rapidly and providing data to companies within the retail and hospitality sector as well as developers is essential. Working with local retailers, developers and appropriate city government departments, as well as the Advertising and Promotion Commission, create a local monthly report that indicates performance in the retail/hospitality sector. This report may include new locations, increased sales by certain businesses, traffic count numbers and year over year sales tax received for businesses in Cabot. This report can be distributed to local merchants as well as housed on the economic development section of the website. If placed on the website, consider placing it behind a gate so that the inquiring party has to provide contact information to receive the report.

***Action Item: Ensure a consistently positive business climate***

As heard during stakeholder engagement, the City of Cabot has the ability to improve relationships with companies and developers wishing to conduct business in Cabot. The City of Cabot should examine all policies and ordinances with particular focus on unnecessary hurdles or challenges imposed on expanding or new businesses or developments. To build greater collaboration with developers, the City should invite local and regional developers that have completed or abandoned projects in the City to listen to their needs and regain or establish a better working relationship.

***Action Item: Support economic development issues and policies in the region and state, as well as locally***

The Arkansas Economic Developers and Chamber Executives Association and the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, as well as other regional partnerships and coalitions, consistently gather, discuss and affect policy changes that increase Arkansas' competitiveness. As it relates to Cabot's community and economic development initiatives, closely monitor and support policies that aid in better retaining or attracting existing or new businesses to Cabot. The Chamber should pay special attention to legislation that positively or negatively affects the target sector focuses and the Community Development Director and Steering Committee should discuss their position and plan of action if it negatively affects those targets.

***Action Item: Foster working relationships with adjacent and regional economic development partners and governments***

Being within the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA, Cabot has a unique opportunity to explore working relationships or partnerships with neighboring cities, regional economic development organizations and other local governmental entities. These relationships could consist of joint marketing initiatives and programming that enhances the competitiveness of the respective community as it relates to critical new business location criteria. Additionally, these working relationships could include exploring or establishing inter-governmental agreements with adjacent municipalities or counties for site development/redevelopment and asset/revenue sharing.

**Establish a business retention and expansion program*****Action Item: Create a business retention and expansion program***

Viewed as one of the best assets for recruiting new businesses, a business retention and expansion program indicates a community's appreciation and commitment to a thriving business environment. The program should include visits to key businesses at least annually, including those within the retail and hospitality sector, and include a series of no more than five or seven questions to be asked during the visit to evoke a conversation with the business owner or leadership team. The annual visits and questioning should be tracked and solutions to issues exposed during the meeting should be addressed.<sup>34</sup>

***Action Item: Establish a business retention and expansion action team***

Essential in the process to creating a business retention and expansion program is an engaged action team. The action team could consist of the Community Development Director, directors of various city departments, representatives of the Community/Economic Development Steering Committee and members of the Chamber Executive Committee. The mission of this action team is to visit the key businesses to

**BEST PRACTICE****Katy Economic Development Council  
Katy, TX**

Existing businesses create the most new jobs in communities. The Katy area recognizes the impact and importance of existing businesses and their impact on the area and directs a business retention and expansion program that has been in place for the past six years. This program analyzes the local business climate and helps Katy Area EDC staff address specific company retention and expansion projects.

**Recent Successes**

- Expansion of Academy Sports & Outdoors
- Relocation of GEICO Claims Center

learn about the company's future opportunities or challenges faced. Moreover, the action team will need to be trained in methods of interviewing and capturing information.

***Action Item: Create a solutions or resource guide***

Working with the Community and Economic Development Steering Committee, develop a solutions or resources guide that will enable a quick response to solutions or issues discovered during the planned annual existing business visits. <sup>35</sup>

***The above strategy and action items should include the following steps:***

1. Establish Action Team
2. Assess current businesses in Cabot to develop a portfolio
3. Categorize each business within the portfolio by industry sector and number of employees, and include relevant contact information
4. Prioritize visits by legacy companies, large employers, high-growth companies and startup stage
5. Develop a solutions or resource guide with contacts, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. City department resources (permitting, zoning, waste management, recycling)
  - b. Utility services (electricity, natural gas, water/wastewater, telecommunications)
  - c. Educational institutions
  - d. State agencies
  - e. Federal agencies
  - f. Financial resources including available incentives
  - g. Technical support services
  - h. Export/import trade agencies
  - i. Foundations or applicable nonprofits
  - j. Other
6. Explore and enact a customer relationship management (CRM) platform (i.e. excel worksheets or automated systems)

***Action Item: Create a business appreciation event***

To acknowledge the work of the team and celebrate successes, develop an appreciate event for those that participated.

## **Explore viability of an entrepreneurial startup focus**

### ***Action Item: Establish an Entrepreneurship Task Force***

The recent focus and attention of economic development organizations embracing the entrepreneur or startup company within a community has been a leading indicator of a strong, relevant community and economic development program. Created with community leaders, business owners, educators and local entrepreneurs, the Entrepreneurship Task Force should be convened to examine the potentially undiscovered entrepreneurial ecosystem in Cabot.

### ***Action Item: Establish an asset map of entrepreneurial resources***

The first action of the task force should include creating an asset map of entrepreneurs, startups, local resources and regional resources. By facilitating the discussion, the Community Development Director should evaluate the number of times the task force meets and should consider inviting representatives of leading regional entrepreneurial support organizations, such as the Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub or The Venture Center, to share best practices. Additionally, the task force should ask companies located in Cabot that have a national presence if their respective companies have entrepreneurial support programs to assist entrepreneurs in cities where their companies operate. For example, the American Farm Bureau Federation promotes a rural entrepreneurship initiative that provides world-class business training, networks and resources for entrepreneurs.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Action Item: Evaluate feasibility of developing an Entrepreneurial Center***

The Entrepreneurship Task Force should determine if a feasibility study is warranted to establish and create an Entrepreneurial Center in the city, which would be focused on being a point of contact and information for entrepreneurs in the city. While acquiring the funding and developing an Entrepreneurial Center may seem like a challenging task, communities across the United States have discovered creative solutions such as establishing programs and support systems within their public libraries.<sup>37</sup>

## COMMUNITY VITALITY

Community vitality, the measure of thriving and engaging communities, encompasses many elements of a community. The characteristics or functional components of the community create the unique competitive advantages and systems that strengthen community capacity. Community vitality may be reflected in a distinguished brand, consistent design requirements, providing an exceptional educational delivery system, recreational amenities and sustainability solutions for citizens. Cabot has a remarkable opportunity to further enhance its community vitality making it even more competitive for future new jobs and investment.

### Develop a sense of place

#### *Action Item: Define a downtown district*

In 1976, a severe tornado destroyed nearly 90 buildings include many in a 15-block area of downtown Cabot.<sup>38</sup> Recovering from this destructive natural disaster has taken time. During the renewal and recovery process, Cabot established CabotFest as a community festival that reminds citizens of the strength and resilience of the community.

Many stakeholders today seem to yearn for a downtown or city center of Cabot. While Cabot has experienced exponential growth during the years since the disaster, the community doesn't have a city center or downtown and as a result has experienced significant sprawl and a disjointed brand.

The Community Development Director should work with the City of Cabot to explore possible creative solutions to re-establish a downtown area. Not only would this instill pride in the current residents of Cabot but could be positioned as a talent retention and attraction strategy. Millennials and Generation Z seek a purpose and a place. The place must have connectivity, a sense of community and walkability. Examples of cities that have created remarkable city centers include Seaside, Florida; Franklin, Tennessee; Carmel, Indiana; and Madison, Mississippi.

***Action Item: Identify and brand other distinct areas while implementing wayfinding***

Noted during the driving tour of Cabot, the city covers a vast territory. To connect the various areas of Cabot to one another, the City should work to identify and brand districts within the city. Each distinct district should include signage and wayfinding pointing to other areas and districts. Notably, some areas in Cabot have wayfinding signage.

***Action Item: Consider design ordinances to enhance community appearance***

To address the visual pollution observed during the driving tour, the city should enforce or implement ordinances that provide design guidelines and encourage residents and businesses to clean up various areas. Notably, Boyette found the entrance off of Hwy 67/167 onto West Main Street to be cluttered and inundated with signage. Additionally, areas along South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and South Pine Street provide opportunity for encouraging remodeling and cleanup of dilapidated and unsightly buildings. These areas are not indicative of many of the assets throughout Cabot, including neighborhoods and areas near the schools, yet these are highly trafficked areas.

***Action Item: Collaborate to beautify the entrances, intersection and medians of Cabot***

Corresponding to the action item above, Cabot should work with the County and adjacent cities to encourage cleanup and beautification of the entrances and exits of the city. Additionally, the City should seek to establish a community landscaping program. This program should identify key areas that need assistance and encourage local businesses to sponsor or adopt these areas for beautification projects. In order to establish guidelines, hire a landscape architect to provide visual aides for the various identified areas and a list of drought tolerant plants that can sustain a low maintenance schedule.

***Action Item: Inventory and continue to pursue sustainability practices***

More than 80 percent of corporations have sustainability performance measures. Communities that harness and leverage their sustainable assets and programs when recruiting companies to locate have a competitive advantage. An inventory of sustainable assets and practices of Cabot should be developed and a plan to further enhance sustainability efforts in the city pursued.<sup>39</sup>

## Promote increased livability

### ***Action Item: Continue to promote and improve sports and recreational amenities***

The City of Cabot has done a remarkable job investing in improvements to or the creation of new sports and recreational amenities. Seen as a competitive advantages for attracting residents and companies alike, the City and Chamber should continue to champion activities that improve these assets such as implementing the Master Parks Plan.

### ***Action Item: Connect neighborhoods with trails and walking paths***

As heard during stakeholder interaction, the City of Cabot should seek to encourage connectivity and walkability of new developments (residential or commercial) and explore methods to connect existing neighborhoods to one another, as well as to other amenities. Leading publications promote cities as “America’s Most Walkable Neighborhoods”, “The Best Places to Retire Without a Car”, or “The Most Walkable Cities in America.” Cabot should strive to emulate these cities to ensure future growth not only from future generations but also with existing generations.<sup>40</sup>

## Foster community leaders

### ***Action Item: Renew participation in the Lonoke County Leadership Program***<sup>41</sup>

Communities with a history of successful community and economic development programs have developed a community-wide leadership program and encouraged residents and business owners to participate. Steadfast leadership is essential for a city’s future. The Chamber and City should seek to provide assistance and resources to reenergize the longstanding Lonoke County Leadership Program.

***Action Item: Establish a Youth Leadership Program***

With exceptional schools and high performing students, the Chamber needs to establish a connection with students and create leadership opportunities throughout the community for youth through creation of a Youth Leadership Program. Increasing the connectivity of the student to the community will result in a greater sense of place and purpose of the city and greater responsibility to support the community in which they live. These students, in tenth or eleventh grade, will likely become ambassadors of the city, have a higher probability of establishing a life in the city after graduation or return to the city after completing a higher degree.

## **MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS**

It has never been more important for community and economic development programs to have a comprehensive, unique and well-executed marketing and communications strategy. With a targeted approach to engaging audiences and tailored messages that resonate, Cabot has the ability to establish and heighten the community's brand and create a community and economic development voice.

### **Create a comprehensive marketing and communications guidebook**

#### ***Action Item: Define and develop a consistent community brand***

Successful community and economic development organizations spend considerable resources nurturing and promoting an authentic brand. Working with a marketing and advertising agency, develop a brand that uniquely identifies and differentiates Cabot as a preferred location for companies, people and families to live, work and play. Rather than haphazardly allow a brand to develop, an inclusive brand will propel the city into the future. The brand should be embraced by the Chamber and City as well as shared with any business or organizations that agree to utilize the brand with brand standards.

#### ***Action Item: Develop a new logo or graphic mark***

Along with the brand, the Chamber and City should collaborate to create a distinctive logo or graphic mark that embodies the core of the community, while progressively identifying Cabot as a leader in community and economic development. The logo or graphic mark should include elements, colors or a script of the current City and Chamber logos as not to disenfranchise current stakeholders.

#### ***Action Item: Develop a comprehensive digital strategy and economic development web presence***

Created to adapt to the user's device, the community and economic development program and initiatives should be displayed on a website. This compelling website should be a platform that is rooted in current data and information, while sharing relevant stories that resonate with target audiences. The website or digital content should be written to not only speak to the audiences but also contribute to organic search engine optimization (SEO). Additionally, the website should have as many interactive features as

possible, including asset maps, messages for easy distribution on social media channels and a content generating blog. Components or categories of the website should include but not be limited to the following.

- Available Sites and Buildings
- Transportation/Infrastructure Assets
- Business Climate or Economy Snapshot
- Target Sectors Focuses (individual pages for each)
- Development Assistance and Incentives
- Consumable, Updated Data including Demographics and Workforce Information
- Education and Workforce Assets
- Cultural and Recreational Amenities
- Top Employers in the City
- Blog or Content Generating Component
- Contact Information

During the development of this strategy, the City has already begun the process of updating and redesigning their current website. If feasible, and if it doesn't impede that process, the City website could include the same information above. Realizing the joint partnership between the Chamber and the City, collaboration on developing a community and economic development website is essential.

***Action Item: Identify target audiences***

Utilizing the categories called out in the box to the right, create a list of key companies, executives and influencers in each target audience to ensure targeted messages and information reaches the preferred audience.

### TARGET AUDIENCES

- Existing Companies and Businesses
- Companies in Target Sectors
- Current and Future Workforce
- Decision Makers in Sector Focus Areas
- Site Location Consultants/CREs
- Economic Development Partners
- Elected Officials and Local Residents
- Local, Regional and National Media Outlets
- Leading Business Publications
- Local Residents

***Action Item: Communicate key messages to target audiences***

Key messages are an essential component of establishing consistent communication. Proposed key messages to the right represent positive data or attributes of the City of Cabot that resonate with all segments of the target audiences. Not only should these messages be used by the community and economic development organization but should also be included in all City promotional material as possible.

***Action Item: Build a social media strategy***

A centralized component of any competitive marketing and communications guidebook is building a social media strategy that crosses multiple platforms and engages the target audiences. A social media strategy ensures promotion of the community and economic development brand while expanding reach and increasing frequency at a lower cost than traditional advertising. Once the preferred social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or LinkedIn are decided and the content/community manager becomes familiar with utilizing each channel, the next step would be to explore promotional options, such as paid social media to target audiences specifically in the target sector focuses.<sup>42</sup>

***Action Item: Monitor website analytics and track user experiences***

Vast knowledge can be gained from monitoring and adapting marketing and communication strategies through the utilization of website analytics and tracking users' experiences. From gaining insight on the user such as how they found the website, the pages they most used and other patterns, analytics can transform first party data (user data including behaviors, actions and interest) into customers or clients through targeted communications.<sup>43</sup>

**KEY MESSAGES**

- 57 percent of Cabot's population is 40 years old or younger
- 43.4 percent of Cabot's population is Millennial/GenZ
- 32 percent of residents 25 or older have an associates degree or higher, which is higher than the state average
- Cabot has a higher median household income than Lonoke County, the Little Rock MSA and the State of Arkansas
- Cabot has very low crime rates
- Cabot is located near the center of the state and the US and is within a days' drive to markets such as Dallas, Nashville, St. Louis, Kansas City, Baton Rouge
- Cabot offers abundant transportation assets, including access to 67/167 and I-40 in Lonoke County, proximity to Clinton National Airport, UP railroad, and the Little Rock Port
- Cabot's high school graduation rate is 87.7 percent
- Cabot is home to the newly constructed state of the art Cabot Sportsplex and newly developed Cabot Events Center
- There is an ample range of all types of housing price points in the community
- CabotFest is an annual community-wide event

## **Increase communications to generate awareness of competitive advantages**

### ***Action Item: Establish relationships with site location consultants, industry leaders and commercial real estate brokers***

Utilizing the marketing profiles for each of the target sector focuses, build relationships with site consultants, industry leaders and commercial real estate brokers by distributing messages describing Cabot's value proposition related to the location criteria. Additionally, proactively meet with each of these targets as schedules and travel budgets allow. As a method to engage with local and regional commercial real estate brokers, convene representatives of each firm on a quarterly basis to showcase positive business climate information and allow time for discussion of new projects, as well as possible development issues faced.

### ***Action Item: Participate in regional marketing initiatives***

Community and economic development organizations and professionals find value and great benefit in partnering in regional marketing initiatives. From participating in a formalized regional partnership to attending joint trade and business development missions, a regional approach to community and economic development marketing enhances the brand of every community that participates. As prudent, monitor and participate with regional initiatives generated among the fellow community and economic development organizations within the Little Rock metropolitan area. Additionally, provide current information and community data, including information on new or repurposed sites and buildings, to regional partners.

### ***Action Item: Pursue inclusion in publications***

National publications and organizations such as AARP, CNBC, CNNTraveler, Inc. Magazine, Time, USAToday, Forbes and House Beautiful publish annual rankings and features of cities and communities across the United States. Local publications such as Arkansas Business feature various areas in Arkansas. These earned media opportunities pose a great potential for Cabot. Each publication has a proprietary methodology that includes examining empirical data related to the various U.S. cities. Research the lists and publications that will garner the most attention for the City of Cabot, examine the empirical data each publication uses if available and develop a marketing campaign to attract attention of the city from journalist, editors and publishers of each of the respective publications.

## **PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT/DEVELOPMENT**

Having product, an economic development term for sites and buildings, is essential to recruiting new businesses and providing existing businesses with areas to grow. Additionally, many communities realize great potential in reimagining former industrial or commercial space. From retooling an industrial building to becoming a premiere culinary arts training facility to transforming a former big box retail space into a multi-use educational and entrepreneurial center, cities are reaping the benefits of new and existing company investments while winning awards for brownfield or grayfield redevelopment. Cabot has the potential to reimagine various areas of the city to develop and promote sites and buildings to current employers or to those within the targeted sector focuses.

### **Evaluate current marketable product**

#### ***Action Item: Inventory and assess all available sites and buildings***

At the forefront of promoting sites and buildings, a community must understand the product that is currently available. Working with various public and private sector partners, the Community Development Director should inventory all available sites and buildings in the City of Cabot. Additionally, the sites and building inventory should include property within Lonoke County, as it is likely the newly formed community and economic development program will receive inquiries regarding property that may not always be within the city limits.

#### ***Action Item: Ensure all available property is included on the local and state database***

Not only should the property section of the Chamber's newly formed community and economic development website house the most up-to-date available property information, the Community Development Director should ensure that the property is included in the state's sites and buildings database, as well as listed in partner databases such as any regional economic development marketing organizations, the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, First Electric Cooperative or Entergy Arkansas.

***Action Item: Ensure inventory aligns with target sector focuses***

Having available property is important in the economic development recruitment process; however, it is essential that the property within the sites and buildings portfolio align with the location criteria of the target sector focuses. Working with partners, determine ownership, sale or lease price, utility infrastructure contacts and other site attributes. These attributes should be included in the profiles of each site or building promoted on all of the various product databases. Initial consideration should be placed on locating developable sites for a potential ecommerce/distribution park, hotel and small conference center and a new medical/healthcare center.

**Explore site development opportunities*****Action Item: Seek redevelopment opportunities as identified***

Cabot has a unique opportunity to redevelop various buildings and sites throughout the city. Working with the owners of these properties, identify redevelopment needs and inquire about the owner's intention for the property. Some communities offer commercial or industrial property owners tools to aid in reimagining what the property can become. Working with an engineering/architectural firms, create visual/virtual design charrettes or design schematics for commercial or industrial development for areas listed below. A charrette is a design and planning tool utilized to create collaboration and consensus for land development.<sup>44</sup>

- Downtown Cabot
- Areas near the North Interchange
- Retail and commercial area that includes Walmart Supercenter, Centennial Bank Call Center, etc
- Former Ford dealership
- Former Knight's Grocery store
- Former Price Cutter Grocery store
- Commercial space along South Pine Street
- Vacant land along Hwy. 321 near the Sports Complex
- Areas between the UP Railroad and Hwy. 67/167 along Hwy 321
- Corridor between Hwy. 321 and West Pine St. along S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.

***Action Item: Identify and qualify a new business park***

Related to the areas identified above, work with electric utility partners, landowners and real estate brokers to identify property for light industrial development to support the target sector focuses. Land that is discovered during this process should be entered into the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas OnSite program or Entergy Arkansas' Select Site program. Additional potential areas to explore could include a commercial development on the south side of Cabot near the high school campus and a light industrial/distribution park near the North Interchange. These site qualification and certification process can be rigorous but provide the community with essential, marketable greenfield sites.

***Action Item: Evaluate need for intergovernmental agreements***

In the event that Cabot or surrounding communities or governments decide to jointly participate in developing industrial or commercial property, the City of Cabot should evaluate and consider partnering in these endeavors.

## **WORKFORCE/TALENT**

In addition to having a readily available workforce to meet the needs of businesses, having a pipeline of talent is of great importance when attracting new businesses and retaining current businesses. The workforce and talent in an area is a key factor in determining the competitiveness of an area.

### **Continue support of public education in community**

#### ***Action Item: Identify any needs that can be filled by public and private involvement***

The process of training and educating the workforce is no longer the sole responsibility of public entities, as private establishments are increasingly playing a role in workforce development. Companies are realizing that in order to find the qualified talent they are looking for, they have to be willing to take steps in creating and maintaining that talent. Cabot should work to understand the needs of businesses in the area and identify public and private resources that can address those needs. Is there an example of this working somewhere?

#### ***Action Item: Create additional pathway and articulation programs related to target sector focuses***

In order to create an ongoing pipeline of talent for target sector focuses, the Cabot School District should continue to work with Arkansas State University-Beebe and the University of Arkansas at Pulaski Technical College to expand articulation courses to align with target sector focuses.

#### ***Action Item: Promote and encourage businesses to offer internships and apprenticeships***

With the large number of middle school and high school students in Cabot, creating opportunities to provide them with internships and apprenticeships is a valuable approach to exposing them to career opportunities and real world experience. Internships and apprenticeships also prove beneficial to businesses in creating a pipeline of talent, increasing the productivity of the overall business, and hiring locally in addition to other benefits.

***Action Item: Implement a boomerang strategy for past graduates or residents***

There's no doubt that Cabot has been a magnet in attracting families due to the high quality schools, welcoming community, the presence of the Little Rock Air Force Base, in addition to other assets. Cabot should seek to implement a boomerang strategy to attract talent back home. Boomerangs are those who grew up in Cabot and left for college or other reasons that may consider moving back. As part of implementing the boomerang strategy, Cabot should develop target resident profiles and make sure positive messaging and activities are being published via websites and social media about Cabot.

**Enhance workforce availability*****Action Item: Conduct a commuter workforce study***

As a bedroom community of Little Rock/North Little Rock, a large share of Cabot's residents commute out of the city for work. The skills of this commuter workforce should be considered an asset for attracting companies to locate in Cabot. A commuter workforce study would allow the city's leadership to quantify the commuters, understand their skill sets, assess interest in working closer to home and determine attractive wage rates.

***Action Item: Promote skills to target sectors***

As stated previously, Cabot's commuting workforce possesses varied skills that could be used to advertise to target sectors. Workforce has become a top priority that businesses and industries analyze in their location considerations and having a detailed understanding of the skills that Cabot's residents possess will allow Cabot to effectively attract target sectors.

***Action Item: Create an online career center***

The Cabot Chamber of Commerce should create an online career center component within their website that features local jobs in addition to providing training information and other resources for residents to enhance their career opportunities.

***Action Item: Determine feasibility of establishing a training or educational center***

Working with higher educational partners such as UA-Pulaski Tech or ASU-Beebe, inquire about the feasibility of creating a continuing education center or satellite training center for businesses and residents to pursue advanced education and degrees.

**Create opportunities to immerse military spouses into the community and workforce*****Action Item: Welcome and provide military families with essential information about Cabot and job opportunities***

With the large number of military families in Cabot, Cabot should host a quarterly or biannual Welcome Dinner for new military families. At this event, welcome packets with essential information on how to become familiar with Cabot and potential job opportunities should be provided to the families. A Facebook group should also be created specifically for military families and the families should be encouraged to join the Facebook group to connect with other military families and gain information on volunteer opportunities, jobs, etc. Sharing this event through social media, as well as with the Little Rock Air Force Base, would be a great way to create excitement and garner attention to the event.

In addition, Cabot should become familiar with the resources available at the Little Rock Air Force Base that support families of military personnel. The Airmen and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) provides information and services to military families to help them become acclimated to the area. Services include mobilization and deployment readiness, personal work life, relocation assistance, transition assistance, exceptional family member program, crisis assistance/intervention, leadership consultation, and employment/career support.<sup>45</sup> A&FRC also has a calendar of events that consists of upcoming trainings and workshops available to military families.<sup>46</sup>

## Timeline

	Short Term Action Items	Intermediate Action Items	Long Term Action Items
<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>			
<b>Adopt a forward thinking organizational structure</b>			
<i>Action Item: Determine staffing and roles</i>			
<i>Action Item: Name a Director of Community Development</i>			
<i>Action Item: Establish a Community/Economic Development Steering Committee</i>			
<i>Action Item: Identify and pursue sustainable program funding</i>			
<b>Business Vitality</b>			
<b>Identify and market to target sector focuses</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business &amp; Financial Support Services</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution &amp; Logistics Services</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail/Hospitality</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value Added Manufacturing</li> </ul>			
<b>Enhance business competitiveness and increase business support</b>			
<i>Action Item: Develop marketing profiles for each target sector focuses</i>			
<i>Action Item: Establish a customized, local incentives policy</i>			
<i>Action Item: Seek current, real-time retail/hospitality sector data</i>			
<i>Action Item: Ensure a consistently positive business climate</i>			
<i>Action Item: Support economic development issues and policies in the region and state, as well as locally</i>			
<i>Action Item: Foster working relationships with adjacent/regional economic development partners and govts</i>			
<b>Establish a business retention and expansion program</b>			
<i>Action Item: Create a business retention and expansion program</i>			
<i>Action Item: Establish a business retention and expansion action team</i>			

	Short Term Action Items	Intermediate Action Items	Long Term Action Items
<i>Action Item: Create a solutions or resource guide</i>			
<i>Action Item: Create an business appreciation event</i>			
<b>Explore viability of an entrepreneurial startup focus</b>			
<i>Action Item: Establish an Entrepreneurship Task Force</i>			
<i>Action Item: Establish an asset map of entrepreneurial resources</i>			
<i>Action Item: Evaluate feasibility of developing an entrepreneurial center</i>			
<b>Community Vitality</b>			
<b>Develop a sense of place</b>			
<i>Action Item: Define a downtown district</i>			
<i>Action Item: Identify and brand other distinct areas while implementing wayfindng</i>			
<i>Action Item: Consider design ordinances to enhance community appearance</i>			
<i>Action Item: Collaborate to beautify the entrances, intersection and medians of Cabot</i>			
<i>Action Item: Inventory and continue to pursue sustainability practices</i>			
<b>Promote increased livability</b>			
<i>Action Item: Continue to promote and improve sports and recreational amenities</i>			
<i>Action Item: Connect neighborhoods with trails and walking paths</i>			
<b>Foster community leaders</b>			
<i>Action Item: Renew participation of the Lonoke County Leadership Program</i>			
<i>Action Item: Establish a Youth Leadership Program</i>			
<b>Marketing/Communications</b>			
<b>Create a comprehensive marketing and communications guidebook</b>			
<i>Action Item: Define and develop a consistent community brand</i>			
<i>Action Item: Develop a new logo or graphic mark</i>			

	Short Term Action Items	Intermediate Action Items	Long Term Action Items
<i>Action Item: Develop a comprehensive digital strategy and economic development web presence</i>			
<i>Action Item: Identify target audiences</i>			
<i>Action Item: Communicate key messages to target audiences</i>			
<i>Action Item: Build a social media strategy</i>			
<i>Action Item: Monitor website analytics and track user experiences</i>			
<b>Increase communications to generate awareness of competitive advantages</b>			
<i>Action Item: Establish relationships with site location consultants, industry leaders &amp; CREs</i>			
<i>Action Item: Participate in regional marketing initiatives</i>			
<i>Action Item: Pursue inclusion in publications</i>			
<b>Product Enhancement/Development</b>			
<b>Evaluate current marketable product</b>			
<i>Action Item: Inventory and assess all available sites and buildings</i>			
<i>Action Item: Ensure all available property is included on the local and state database</i>			
<i>Action Item: Ensure inventory aligns with target sector focuses</i>			
<b>Explore site development opportunities</b>			
<i>Action Item: Seek redevelopment opportunities as identified</i>			
<i>Action Item: Identify and qualify a new business park</i>			
<i>Action Item: Evaluate need for intergovernmental agreements</i>			
<b>Workforce/Talent</b>			
<b>Continue support of public education in community</b>			
<i>Action Item: Identify any needs that can be filled by public and private involvement</i>			
<i>Action Item: Create additional pathway and articulation programs related to target sector focuses</i>			
<i>Action Item: Promote and encourage businesses to offer internships and apprenticeships</i>			

	Short Term Action Items	Intermediate Action Items	Long Term Action Items
<i>Action Item: Implement a boomerang strategy for past graduates or residents</i>			
<b>Enhance workforce availability</b>			
<i>Action Item: Conduct a commuter workforce study</i>			
<i>Action Item: Promote skills to target sectors</i>			
<i>Action Item: Create an online career center</i>			
<i>Action Item: Determine feasibility of establishing a training or educational center</i>			
<b>Create opportunities to immerse military spouses into the community and workforce</b>			
<i>Action Item: Welcome and provide military families with essential information about Cabot and job opportunities</i>			

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.paragould.org/your-chamber/chamber-leadership>
- <sup>2</sup> Esri, Business Analyst
- <sup>3</sup> Esri, Business Analyst
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.asub.edu/academics/bus-math-sci/business/index.aspx>
- <sup>5</sup> [https://uaptc.edu/degree\\_plans/business-and-information-technology](https://uaptc.edu/degree_plans/business-and-information-technology)
- <sup>6</sup> <http://ualr.edu/cob/programs/undergraduate/>
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- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/11/americas-top-states-for-business-2017-overall-ranking.html>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://www.clintonairport.com/airlines-flights/nonstop-flights-from-lit/>
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- <sup>24</sup> <http://web.uams.edu/about/fast-facts/>
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