



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

Committee of the Whole Meeting

September 20, 2022

5:00 p.m.

County Square - Council Chambers

Council Members

Mr. Willis Meadows, *Chairman, District 19*

Mr. Dan Tripp, *Vice-Chairman, District 28*

Mrs. Xanthe Norris, *Chairman Pro Tem, District 23*

Mr. Joe Dill, *District 17*

Mr. Mike Barnes, *District 18*

Mr. Stephen Shaw, *District 20*

Mr. Chris Harrison, *District 21*

Mr. Stan Tzouvelekas, *District 22*

Mrs. Liz Seman, *District 24*

Mr. Ennis Fant, Sr., *District 25*

Mr. Lynn Ballard, *District 26*

Mr. Butch Kirven, *District 27*

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted online and on the bulletin board at County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Council Members Absent

Xanthe Norris, *District 23*

Staff Present

Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*

Mark Tollison, *County Attorney*

John Hansley, *Deputy County Administrator*

Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*

Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*

Terrence Galloway, *Information Systems*

Bob Mihalic, *Governmental Affairs Officer*

Nicole Wood, *Assistant County Administrator*

Others Present

Kevin Landmesser, *Senior Vice President, Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC)*

Jim Burns, *Chairman, GADC Board of Directors*

Don Erickson, *GADC Board of Directors*

Beverly Haines, *GADC Board of Directors*

Justin Bagwell, *GADC Board of Directors*

Marshall Franklin, *GADC Board of Directors*

Charles Piszczor, *GADC Board of Directors*

Barry Leasure, *GADC Board of Directors*

Call to Order

Chairman Willis Meadows

Invocation

Councilor Ennis Fant

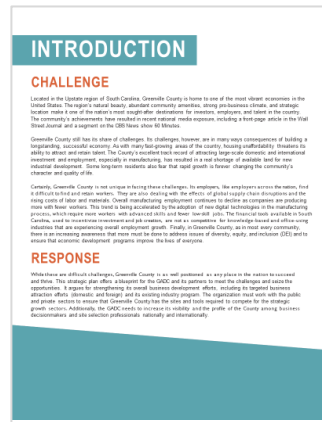
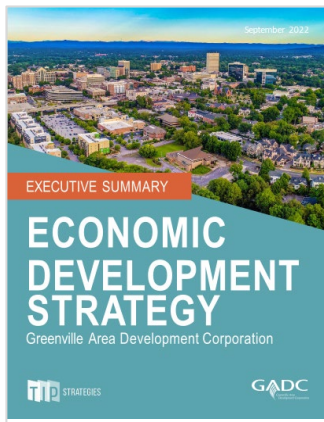
Item (3) Approval of Minutes

Action: Councilor Kirven moved to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2022, Committee of the Whole meeting.

Motion carried unanimously by Council Members present.

Item (4) Greenville Area Development Corporation Strategic Plan Update

Presented by: Jim Burns, *Chairman, GADC Board of Directors*



Mr. Burns asked the members of the Greenville Area Board of Directors who were in attendance to introduce themselves. Mark Farris, President and CEO of GADC, was unable to attend; he was in Germany on an economic development mission trip with Upstate Alliance. Mr. Burns stated TIP Strategies put the plan together for GADC.

Greenville County had been very blessed over the years in regards to economic development; however, that success presented a number of challenges. Major challenges included the ability to attract and maintain economic talent, identifying available development sites and the issues associated with continued growth. As with many fast-growing areas of the country, housing unaffordability threatened the County's ability to attract and retain talent.

Surrounding areas, such as Spartanburg County, were getting more proficient in duplicating Greenville County's success. Greenville County expected \$600 - \$700 million in investment for 2022; that figure included speculative buildings in addition to investment by new and existing companies. In contrast, Spartanburg County was on track to announce approximately \$1.9 billion in investment; its success was not Greenville County's detriment. In order to maintain a leadership position, it was important to understand the success of surrounding areas. Spartanburg County had assets, such as available sites on two interstates and different regulations and codes, that set them apart from Greenville County.

Greenville County was as well positioned as any place in the nation to succeed and thrive. GADC's strategic plan offered a blueprint to meet challenges and seize opportunities. It argued for strengthening overall business development efforts, including targeted business attraction efforts (domestic and foreign) and existing industry programs. GADC had to work with public and private sectors to ensure that Greenville County had the sites and tools required to compete for strategic growth sectors. Additionally, the GADC needed to increase its visibility and the profile of the County among business decision makers and site selection professionals, nationally and internationally.



Mr. Burns stated GADC’s mission was to improve the quality of life of every Greenville County citizen by facilitating investment and job growth from new and existing companies. It’s guiding principles were Excellence, Collaboration, Inclusivity and Collaboration.

Mr. Burns stated the Strategic Plan focused on strategies that GADC had a lead role in implementing. It was malleable and changeable; it should be continuously updated. Mr. Burns stated GADC must play a supporting role in solving critical issues that impact economic development, such as affordable housing, childcare, and DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). This support could include expanding financial assistance, raising awareness, providing thought leadership, and convening partner organizations to collectively address long-term challenges in the community.

The three (3) goal areas of the plan were Business Development, Tools and Sites, and Organizational Outreach and Capacity.



The implementation matrix contained recommended strategies and actions; it outlined a proposed timeline for implementation. The matrix would be the working document for GADC staff to set priorities and measure progress. The strategic plan should not be viewed as a static document, but as one that invited revisions and amendments as conditions changed.



Mr. Burns stated strategic growth areas for GADC were as follows:

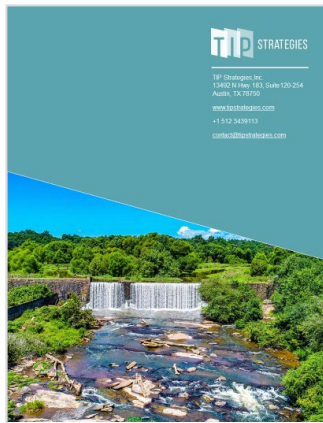
- Advanced Materials
- Mobility
- Aviation / Aerospace
- Life Sciences
- Professional and Tech Services

None of the areas were new; however, there would be a renewed focus on some and an emphasis on others.



To be successful, it was important to measure. For future use, GADC would report its metrics in very specific terms; those terms would also be specific to particular sectors.

- Job growth
- Domestic investment
- Foreign investment
- Wages
- Portion of jobs at a livable wage
- Industrial space
- Office space
- New business establishments
- Domestic migration



A major goal for GADC was continued growth, continued job growth, continued opportunities and continued quality of life for Greenville County.

Mr. Burns stated the companies that were reaching out to Greenville County were concerned about the lack of affordable housing. GADC had to acknowledge the problems associated with growth and offer solutions.

Councilor Harrison asked how GADC was addressing the lack of land, specifically industrial land, in Greenville County. He asked Mr. Burns to comment on more “creative sites” for development.

Mr. Burns stated Greenville County still had runway in manufacturing and industrial sites; however, it was obvious those sites were limited. It was important to develop in other areas that were less “space driven”, with reduced footprint and higher productivity. Mr. Burns stated it was important to keep an eye on the future, remember the past and avoid repeating mistakes.

Councilor Kirven stated the challenges that accompanied growth in Greenville County were different from its neighboring counties. At some point, the County may need to look at an overarching strategy or process that involved economic development as well as issues such as growth, education, infrastructure and conservation. He suggested a platform for stakeholders and others with a systemized approach to economic development in Greenville County.

Mr. Burns stated economic development encompassed a broad spectrum of issues. The success Greenville County had enjoyed was not guaranteed; a continuous improvement process was necessary. There were numerous groups in the area involved in the different aspects of development; GADC needed to pull that knowledge together and use the information to make informed decisions.

Councilor Fant asked Mr. Burns if he agreed there could be no dichotomy between economic growth / investment and housing. There was a housing problem in the County; not just the lack of affordable housing. Mr. Fant stated medium rent in Greenville County was \$2,000 per month for apartments. It was unacceptable for people to commute 45 minutes to work; many of those commuters lived in surrounding counties such as Pickens and Oconee. People should be able to live closer to where they work. Mr. Fant stated not everyone relocating to Greenville County earned \$35.00 per hour. He hoped GADC considered the importance of housing, in general, and how it was connected to economic development.

Mr. Burns stated it was important to have housing available in order for businesses to grow. GADC was aware of the strain on housing and was partnering with other entities to respond to the situation. Mr. Burns stated GADC needed direction from Council in regards to the issue.

Councilor Dill stated he recalled when GADC was created. At that time, workforce development was one of the main issues for GADC. Mr. Dill stated other Upstate Counties, such as Spartanburg and Anderson, were currently able to recruit new businesses but were having difficulties with workforce. Housing was also an issue for those counties. Workforce development remained an issue as well as salaries.

Mr. Burns stated workforce development remained a part of GADC's work plan; he referred to it as talent recruitment. It was important to recruit college graduates from the area universities. The workforce difficulties GADC faced 20 years ago were much different from today. Higher levels of training were required as opposed to years ago. Lockheed Martin was currently looking for workers for the F-16 program; however, potential employees had to be specifically trained. Greenville Technical College offered classes designed to train for the F-16 program. Mr. Burns stated domestic migration would be measured by GADC to determine growth in Greenville County and where new residents were coming from. Wages have increased; however, they needed to be higher. GADC would be tracking the average salaries of new jobs. He stated "low tech" jobs were decreasing while "high tech" jobs were increasing.

Councilor Dill stated he knew people who lived in other counties or states that worked in Greenville County. Those individuals wanted to work in the County but live elsewhere.

Mr. Burns stated people moved to Greenville County during the Covid-19 pandemic; they could live where they wanted and work from home. Many individuals relocated to Greenville County due to quality of life.

Councilor Ballard stated approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of Greenville County was undeveloped, most of which was located in District 17 and District 26. The remaining districts were getting very saturated. Mr. Ballard stated building more houses in Districts 17 and 26 negatively affected the quality of life.

Item (5) Adjournment

Action: Councilor Kirven moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously by Council Members present and the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina G. McCaskill
Clerk to Council