
THE JEFFERSON EDGE TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

Prepared for

JEFFERSON PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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HAMMER • SILER • GEORGE • ASSOCIATES
SILVER SPRING/DENVER
8601 GEORGIA AVENUE, SUITE 1010
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20910

INTRODUCTION

The approach to preparing the optimum technology development strategy for Jefferson Parish called for the preparation of working papers on each of the most important technology factors and then the utilization of this information to identify and describe the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities (SWOT) and threats facing the Parish as it moves ahead with the strategy. The organizational and workflow approach to the preparation of the strategy called for the distillation of these results and preparation of the technology-led strategy, as described in the diagram below.

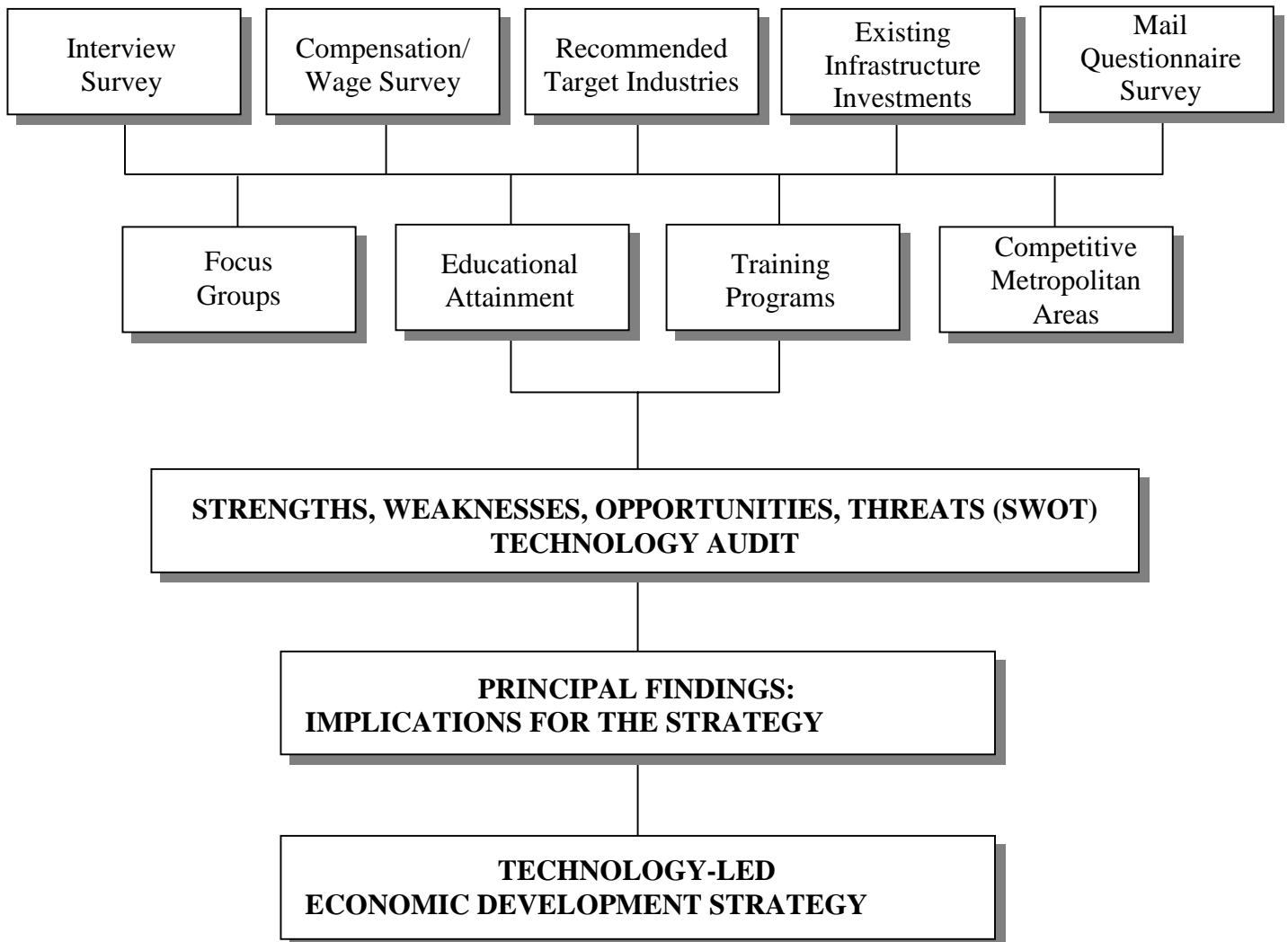


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	1
COMPONENT I. BUILDING A HIGH QUALITY TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE	2
Action 1. Technology Excellence High School Programs	2
Action 2. Additional Tech Courses at Community and Technical Colleges	3
Action 3. Pre-intern and Intern Programs	4
Action 4. Annual Technology Business Plan Competition	5
Action 5. Technology Job Opportunities Website	5
Action 6. Opportunities for Continuing Technology Education	6
COMPONENT II. SUPPORTING PARISH TECHNOLOGY COMPANY PROFITABILITY AND GROWTH	7
Action 1. Upgrade the Workforce	8
Action 2. Improve Air Travel	8
Action 3. CEO Roundtable	9
Action 4. Cluster Organizations	10
Action 5. Improve Surface Transportation	11
Action 6. Value Added Partnerships	12
Action 7. Financing Programs	13
COMPONENT III. TECHNOLOGY IMAGE AND BRANDING FOR THE PARISH	15
Action 1. Defining the Technology Strength Platform	15
Action 2. Define the Parish Technology Offering In Impressive Physical Terms	16
Action 3. Making the Jefferson Parish Technology Consortium Come Alive	17
COMPONENT IV. CREATING A TECHNOLOGY PARK AND OTHER QUALITY TECHNOLOGY COMPANY SPACE	19
Action 1. Technology Park Feasibility and Building Product Commitment	19
Action 2. Prepare a Financing Strategy for Acquiring and Improving the Park	20
Action 3. Value Added Partnerships to Attract Technology Companies	21
Action 4. Create a Technology Business Incubator	21
Action 5. Support Multi-Tenant Building Space at Nims Center	21
Action 6. Continue Entrepreneurial Activity at Ochsner Foundation Hospital	23
Action 7. Sites and Building Space Near UNO Avondale Maritime Technology Center	24
Action 8. In-reach and Out-reach Marketing of the Technology Park and Other Building Space	25

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

	<u>Page</u>
COMPONENT V. CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY START-UP PROGRAM	26
Action 1. Prepare Incubator Feasibility Analysis	26
Action 2. Organizational Options	27
Action 3. Essential university Roles	27
Action 4. Capital Cost Strategies	28
Action 5. Seed/Start-up/Venture Funding	29
COMPONENT VI. ATTRACTING TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES TO THE PARISH	31
Action 1. Create a Good Supply of Multi-tenant Building Space for Technology Companies	31
Action 2. Identification and Description of the Target Industries	31
Action 3. Identify Prospects With Existing Technology Anchor and Other Local Relationships	33
Action 4. Integrating Marketing With Regional and State Agencies and Site Location Consultants	34
Action 5. Building and Maintaining a Truly High Quality Website and Park Newsletter	35
Action 6. Continuing and Closing the Marketing Process	37

THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

There are six components to the strategy which will optimize the technology sector of the Jefferson Parish economy:

- I. Building and Maintaining a High Quality Technology Workforce
- II. Supporting Parish Technology Company Profitability and Growth
- III. Defining and Accomplishing the Technology Image and Branding
- IV. Creating a Technology Park and Other Quality Technology Infrastructure
- V. Achieving a Comprehensive Technology Start-up Program
- VI. Attracting Existing Technology Companies to the Parish

Each of these components is presented in the paragraphs which follow in terms of the purpose or role in the strategy and the actions required to achieve the purpose. Each action is described in terms of its specific importance, what needs to be done, objectives which will be achieved, and recommended roles for JEDCO and other allied organizations.

COMPONENT I. BUILDING A HIGH QUALITY TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE

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Purpose: To increase the skills of the technology workforce in order to attract new firms, retain and grow existing firms, and support an environment that encourages start-ups.

Action 1. Technology Excellence High School Programs

Importance: This action is important to produce students who can meet the challenges of beginning a technology career upon graduation, to supply these skills to local employers, and to achieve parity with such programs available in competing metropolitan areas.

What Needs To Be Done: The Parish School Board needs to establish a technology excellence high school which would attract the best technology-oriented students and provide them a concentrated high quality education. One of the most successful of the technology excellence high schools is Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, in Fairfax, Virginia, whose program statement is:

- “Using an integrated or systems approach to science and technology education, our curriculum is built on the belief that students need to learn how to synthesize, integrate and manage science and technology through practice. Their understanding is reinforced through hands-on experimentation in systems design and development and through exposure to the methods of business and industry. The key is cooperation and open communication among students, faculty and our business partners.”

In addition, the School Board, in order to create a larger total technology-able work force, needs to add clusters of technology courses to the curricula in existing high schools; particularly computer skills.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Increase the supply of technically trained high school graduates available to local businesses.

- Attract to and retain businesses in the Parish that would otherwise locate in areas having higher quality high school graduates.
- Increase the number of high school faculty members well qualified to teach technology courses.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Bring economic development perspective to curriculum development through JEDCO's outreach programs to employers.
- Encourage technology company executives to participate actively in curriculum development, course instruction, student/business teams, mentoring and intern programs.
- Play an active and continuing role in the leadership and community decision process to achieve the resources needed for this objective.

Action 2. Additional Tech Courses at Community and Technical Colleges

Importance: Increase training opportunities and workforce quality.

What Needs To Be Done: Employers should be regularly consulted and courses designed to meet needs.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Higher quality entering workforce.
- Improved retention of the upwardly mobile existing staff.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Bring technology employers and college administrators together.
- Provide broad employer feedback.

Action 3. Pre-intern and Intern Programs

Importance: This action is important to interest students in technology careers, inform them as to preparation necessary to have a successful career, and provide entry-level job opportunities.

What Needs To Be Done: Technology businesses need to create internship programs and inform junior and senior high school and college counselors of them. For each participating firm, a “point person” needs to be in charge of defining intern responsibilities, communicating them to the schools, selecting interns, assigning a mentor to each, monitoring their progress, and recommending improvements in the program.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Encourage more students to focus on technology careers.
- Raise the quality of graduates in relation to technology company needs and expectations.
- Increase the workforce supply to technology companies.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Draft a description of a good intern experience and encourage technology companies to create intern programs.
- Communicate with technology companies periodically, as a part of their regular contacts with these companies, to identify intern opportunities, post these on their website and e-mail reminders to high school guidance counselors.
- Consider sponsoring a competition among interns and others to encourage the preparation of technology projects.

Action 4. Annual Technology Business Plan Competition

Importance: Promoting and running a technology business plan competition for college students and others, to be supported and judged by faculty from the universities, will bring the media attention and university entrepreneurial exposure helpful to establish a strong technology image for the Parish.

What Needs To Be Done: An organizing entity needs to be formed, likely involving university technology transfer staff and others, which would draw-up the rules, announce the competition, assemble prize money and judge, award, and promote the winners.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Good technology-oriented exposure for the Parish and the area's universities in the Metro media.
- Builds good will with those university entities.
- Platform for exposing the Parish technology resources to up and coming entrepreneurs.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Form the competition managing entity made up of economic development entity and university representatives.
- Have the managing committee judge the entries.
- Coordinate media coverage throughout the process.

Action 5. Technology Job Opportunities Website

Importance: This action is important to improve communication between technology companies having job opportunities and the student and permanent workforce. This provides a way of

reaching out to prospective employees in New Orleans and other regions that may otherwise not be aware of the jobs that are available.

What Needs To Be Done: This action can be accomplished by posting available jobs on a website. This service will require promotion among employers, schools, and the general public. The website should enable employers to post jobs on their own and website service needs to be marketed both to employers and job seekers.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Increase access to the pool of qualified prospective employees.
- Increase the services available from and awareness of JEDCO.
- Inform technology trained Parish and Metro residents of jobs available in their hometown.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Inform Parish technology companies of the service.
- Post job notices on the JEDCO website.
- Monitor the extent to which this service is used and the extent to which people are successfully placed.

Action 6. Opportunities for Continuing Technology Education

Importance: Attracting and retaining top technology staff at all levels requires that there be good alternatives for their key staff to maintain currency and achieve advanced degrees.

What Needs To Be Done: Interviews with technology employers and assessment of college technology course offerings leads to the conclusion that this very important need is being met.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Existing technology companies' employees are able to meet their continuing education needs.
- This is an important factor in retention and attraction.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Continue to monitor needs through JEDCO's retention/expansion contacts.
- Report results to education and training institutions and the Workforce Investment Board.

COMPONENT II. SUPPORTING PARISH TECHNOLOGY COMPANY PROFITABILITY AND GROWTH

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Purpose: To improve profitability and accommodate the expansion of existing Parish technology companies.

Action 1. Upgrade the Workforce

Importance: Existing technology companies express difficulty in finding quality employees. Realizing the Parish's technology potential requires meeting those needs.

What Needs To Be Done: The priority work to be done is described in Component I.

Action 2. Improve Air Travel

Importance: The quality, frequency, and price of air travel is an important factor in existing technology companies expanding markets and improving profitability.

What Needs To Be Done: This action requires working with the New Orleans International Aviation Board on its plan and capital improvements and promotion programs to assure that proper priority is given to:

- Providing information on Jefferson Parish economic and population growth to existing and prospective airlines that serve or may serve the Metropolitan New Orleans market.
- Providing information on new service cities and service to existing Parish and potential technology companies.
- Supporting improved airport access to important parts of the Parish created by expansion of the Huey P. Long Bridge and Earhart Expressway improvements.
- Improving the airport's functional and aesthetic environment to be state-of-the-art and an attractive portal for Parish technology company prospects.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Improve the quality of the air travel experience and the gateway image of the Parish.
- Improve access to and from the airport for technology companies located in the Parish.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Aggressively participate in the airport planning and project construction priority setting and funding processes to support airport and airport access improvements.
- Provide information on Jefferson Parish growth prospects to the Aviation Board and to airlines that serve or may serve the New Orleans Area market.
- Keep technology companies located in the Parish apprised of changes in airport service and access to assist their travel planning.

Action 3. CEO Roundtable

Importance: To provide a forum for representatives of companies in rapidly changing technology fields to exchange information on common issues and solutions and occasionally involve them in technology prospect recruiting.

What Needs To Be Done: The organizing entity should solicit interest of technology company CEO's and host round tables to discuss management issues and involve CEO's recruited for marketing assistance.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Provide the opportunity for CEO's to exchange information on key issues in an informal setting.
- Increase technology company CEO awareness of JEDCO services.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Solicit interest among technology company CEO's and host the periodic roundtable.
- Use recommendations from roundtable meetings as input to other aspects of the JEDCO program, as appropriate.
- Involve CEO's in priority recruiting.

Action 4. Cluster Organizations

Importance: Support establishing and maintaining contacts with people in technology companies and related businesses in the various kinds of technology that will mutually enhance businesses and institutions through joint marketing, actions on regulatory and tax matters, interfacing with educational institutions, and other related activities.

What Needs To Be Done: Cluster organizations bring together representatives of technology companies, educational institutions, professional services providers, suppliers, and economic development agencies to exchange information and take joint action. MetroVision staffs 22 of these organizations which include participation by people from Jefferson Parish. MetroVision is now reorganizing to better advance the cluster objective. The Parish should seek to be part of the leadership group for MetroVision clusters particularly important to them, including computer software and services and those related to the maritime technology, biomedical, and new media anchors which exist in the Parish.

Objectives Which Will be Achieved:

- Bring together the entities and resources in the Metro Area which will be an important part of JEDCO's programs to assist existing Parish technology companies.
- Provide valuable feedback to JEDCO and the Parish on happenings in their key technology target sectors.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Participate actively and seek leadership role in the MetroVision clusters most important to the Parish.

Action 5. Improve Surface Transportation

Importance: This action is important to increasing the efficiency of technology businesses by providing improved access by suppliers, customers, visitors, and employees and reducing peak hour congestion.

What Needs To Be Done: Work towards the accomplishment of this objective through the Regional Planning Commission and Louisiana Department of Transportation. These improvements are described in Action 2 of this Component II including the Huey P. Long Bridge and Earhart Expressway improvements.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Increase traffic capacity in important corridors that are congested including to and in the west bank.
- Provide new rail transit service in the I-10 corridor to the airport and to Downtown New Orleans.
- In the longer run, create transit station areas which can accommodate higher density land development. They will be good locations for clustering technology companies, supporting amenity uses, and creating places with the “buzz.”

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Participation in the established transportation planning process undertaken by the Parish, RPC, and LDOT.
- Lobby for funding to assure steady progress toward achieving them.

Action 6. Value Added Partnerships

Importance: It is important to improve technology company access to the programs, facilities, and services available from Metropolitan New Orleans colleges and universities, including:

- University Courses
- Specialized Equipment
- Part-time and Full-time Student Workforce
- Seminars and Conferences
- Technical Assistance
- Advanced Degree and Teaching Opportunities

What Needs To Be Done: Through regular contacts with Parish technology companies, determine their needs for access to university resources by type. Direct contacts should then be made with the appropriate departments at each of the educational institutions and with representatives of specific programs to establish procedures for how the existing Parish companies can most efficiently access the university value added services, equipment and facilities. Ideally, this process would be facilitated by the designation of a point person at each university.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- University/technology company “partnerships” will be formed which will continue to enrich the programs of each.
- Technology companies will utilize this value to improve profitability.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Include needed value added diagnoses in their regular industry contacts.
- Help arrange technology company interface to meet identified needs.
- Schedule quarterly faculty seminars aimed at clusters of existing technology companies.

- Provide descriptions of company benefits achieved to university administrators.

Action 7. Financing Programs

Importance: This action is important to technology companies needing to raise equity capital and take advantage of appropriate available incentives to expand an existing business. Many companies do not have current information on sources of financing, how to prepare a business plan, or how to arrange for financing.

What Needs To Be Done: Make information on financing sources and programs and procedures required, more widely available. In addition to existing posting on websites, newsletter articles, and descriptive pamphlets, articles in the local print media would help extend to potentially interested parties this critical information. Trained staff should be available to assist these companies.

Two federally funded programs that support linkages between technology companies and university research are Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR). The SBIR program funds research on a broad range of topics that is undertaken by small companies. The research results are expected to be commercialized in order to help small businesses grow. The STTR program supports private/public sector partnerships, including those between small technology businesses and research institutions.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Increasing technology company use of available grants, loans, and other incentives in support of their business plans.
- Improving the market position of technology companies requiring equity capital to establish or continue operations or funding development of new products and services.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Continue disseminating information on financing and incentives most appropriate to the Parish's technology companies.
- Continue holding periodic seminars on the preparation of necessary funding applications and business plans.
- Assist technology businesses to identify college and university research partners required to successfully compete for STTR funding.
- Encourage elimination of the sales tax on machinery and equipment required for research and development.

COMPONENT III. TECHNOLOGY IMAGE AND BRANDING FOR THE PARISH

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Purpose: Strong image and branding projects the message for the Parish which will be most supportive of existing technology companies and the attraction of new ones. The image and branding message must be based on a platform of fact, but with a strong and effective promotional momentum. The focus must be on building a strong technology image for the Parish.

Action 1. Defining the Technology Strength Platform

Importance: There are important technology strengths in the Parish and elsewhere in the Metropolitan Area convenient to the various parts of the Parish. These are described in detail in the SWOT analysis report and are highlighted here.

Strong Technology Companies. There are well over 800 technology companies in the Parish, with strong clusters in computer and data processing, engineering and architecture, and communications. The number of technology companies has increased by over twenty percent over the last three years. Total employment in these technology companies is just under 10,000.

Important Technology Anchors in the Parish. The UNO Avondale Maritime Technology Center, the Ochsner Foundation Hospital, and the Robert E. Nims Center for Entertainment Arts and Multi-media Technology are three strong technology anchors in the Parish. In Component IV of this strategy, recommendations are made to create the building space required to attract existing and start-up companies to these strong resources.

Metropolitan Research and Technology Institution Strength. Our analysis of the university offering in competitive cities, shows that New Orleans ranked high, third of eleven cities, in terms of research funding and has strong program offerings. This strong university complex, readily accessible to the Parish, is an important part of the platform for a strong image and branding program.

What Needs To Be Done: Our economic developer, site location consultant and technology company interviews confirm locally-held views that the New Orleans entertainment image dominates and that the Metro Area is not thought of as a technology center. In terms of technology, the Parish does not presently have a strong independent technology image.

Data is presented in the SWOT analysis report which documents the real technology strength of the Parish and the Region. This information needs to be effectively communicated.

Objective Which Will Be Achieved:

- Strong platform of fact for the Parish Image and Branding Program.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Continue to monitor data sources to project a clear and strong definition of the role of technology in the Parish.

Action 2. Define the Parish Technology Offering In Impressive Physical Terms

Importance: Building the technology image for the Parish will be most efficiently achieved if a major part of the message is the promotion of quality technology company operating environments located near the major technology anchors, wherever possible.

What Needs To Be Done: The “Jefferson Parish Technology Park” needs to be developed and to be the capstone to the physical offering. This park and multi-tenant space located at each of the three major technology anchors of Ochsner Foundation Hospital, the Nims Media Center, and the UNO Maritime Center need to form the four promotional focuses of the emerging “Jefferson Parish Technology Consortium.”

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- A strong technology message for the Parish will be defined and articulated.
- The combined strength of these four proposed technology anchors will come to be viewed as the image of the Parish itself.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- JEDCO needs to lead in the development and organizational effort.

Action 3. Making the Jefferson Parish Technology Consortium Come Alive

Importance: The Parish cannot rely on marketing under the metropolitan technology image because that image is weak and under-resourced. The Parish must project its own strong technology image which we recommend describe substance, rather than just sizzle, and come alive as the “Jefferson Parish Technology Consortium.”

What Needs To Be Done: JEDCO and the three anchor entities should begin meeting soon to review this action and the various physical components which are recommended in other components of this strategy. Value added and start-up considerations will be very important, and, once the technology park is well under development, this Consortium will generate much greater momentum. Tulane University operations in the Parish should also be included.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Strong Parish technology image defined.
- The consortium will become an entity with which technology companies will want to be associated.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Facilitate the development of the “technology park” and other “technology consortium” physical components.
- Bring the anchor entities together to play their roles in creating and marketing the consortium opportunity.
- Promote the “technology consortium” opportunity, particularly as it comes to exist in physical form, with particular emphasis on generating radio, television, and newspaper coverage.
- Identify prospective suppliers and customers of the Ochsner Foundation Hospital, the UNO Avondale Maritime Technology Center, and the Robert E. Nims Center for Entertainment Arts and Multi-media Technology and market to them when building space is available.

**COMPONENT IV. CREATING A TECHNOLOGY PARK AND OTHER QUALITY
TECHNOLOGY COMPANY SPACE**

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TECHNOLOGY COMPANY SPACE**

Purpose: To create a fully competitive supply of technology company space and operating environments through the development of a technology park and other technology company facilities proximate to major technology anchors and/or transportation nodes.

Action 1. Technology Park Feasibility and Building Product Commitment

Importance: The site and/or building acquisition should not proceed until a market analysis is completed to predict the pace that technology companies and activity can be attracted to the park. Then financial analysis would be completed to determine the financial requirements of development. Preferably, following the completion of the feasibility analysis, a commitment from a developer to build multi-tenant building space needs also to be in place.

What Needs To Be Done: Upon selection of the site, a market analysis, financial analysis, and forecasts need to be completed. Through a request for developer interest or other technique, a commitment should be achieved for the construction of a first multi-tenant building in the park to support early projected marketing success.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Provide a clear vision of what can be achieved through acquisition and development of the park and of its financial requirements.
- Determine and communicate financial and other requirements for the successful development of the project.
- The ultimate success of the project will be enhanced through the creation of multi-tenant building space.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Facilitate the selection decision on the technology park site.
- Perform, or have performed, the market and financial feasibility analyses.
- Facilitate the developer selection for the park.

Action 2. Prepare a Financing Strategy for Acquiring and Improving the Park

Importance: This action is important to identify sources of funding and to seek a development commitment for implementing the project.

What Needs To Be Done: With the results of the feasibility analyses completed in Action 2, it is possible to hold discussions with potential local, state, federal and other sources of funding for site acquisition and improvement and to have applications submitted/negotiated. At the same time, a request for developer interest can be prepared and circulated to find a developer prepared to build the early buildings and perhaps to prepare the site.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Site and infrastructure financing achieved to allow the park development to go ahead.
- Private developer commitment achieved to insure that there will be competitive building inventory in the park.
- Reduce the risk of building this expensive space for many small tenants which makes the buildings difficult for the developer to finance. Other parks have benefited from guarantees from local utilities, local bank lending pools, achieving public or private anchor tenants and other creative approaches.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Evaluate the availability of alternative sources of financing, through discussions and applications.

- Prepare, or have prepared, comparative cash flow analyses.
- Determine the financing strategy which most supports its technology business development objectives.
- Prepare a request for proposals (RFP) to select a developer to build the first multi-tenant building in the park and negotiate a deal which works for both parties.

Action 3. Value Added Partnerships to Attract Technology Companies

Importance: In addition to the technology park real estate product, its image and value will be enhanced by facilitating linkages to universities and other locally available resources and by broadening the services available at the park.

What Needs To Be Done: Identifying the linkages and achieving the value added commitments of university and other technology institutions is essential. Implementing this action is described in Component II.

Action 4. Create a Technology Business Incubator

Importance: Analysis of technology parks across the country shows that, while some parks do not have incubators, those that do have greater marketing success. They find that from a third to one-half of their tenants come from an incubator once the incubator program is firmly established.

What Needs To Be Done: This action is important to the technology park, but is a fundamental part of the “Component V Comprehensive Technology Start-up Program,” and is described in that section.

Action 5. Support Multi-Tenant Building Space at Nims Center

Importance: One of the entities in the Parish which has the potential to attract technology companies, is the Robert E. Nims Center for Entertainment Arts and Multi-Media Technology in

Elmwood Industrial Park. There are four small spaces in the Center's building leased to related companies. Grants totaling a million dollars are anticipated to be utilized this year to further enhance the area's competitiveness for production of digital motion pictures. There continues to be feature movie making success. Achieving the related technology development potential requires that there be multi-tenant space available for these companies.

What Needs To Be Done: A relationship needs to be established with UNO, multi-tenant building space made available, a list of companies which carry-out similar activities or make use of the highly sophisticated, digital movie motion capture equipment and sound stage prepared, and a systematic program of contact and follow-up carried-out to attract them to the Parish. The State has been very successful with its special incentives program for this industry, and the application of this program in this strategy will be important. This effort is also a "natural" for generating national earned media attention.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Define the amount and type of needed multi-tenant space.
- The presence and operations of an important technology anchor will be translated into a high potential marketing strategy.
- Related technology companies attracted.
- Technology image and promotional base of the Parish raised.
- Achieve continuing earned media coverage.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Set up a special district in Elmwood, encompassing UNO's motion picture production studio, with local incentives.
- Continue to meet with UNO and the Nims Center to form a relationship.
- Work with nearby property owners to achieve building space availability.

- Market the space to the related metro and other prospects and start-up candidates.
- Continue to support tax incentives for this industry as well as support improvements to make them more user friendly.

Action 6. Continue Entrepreneurial Activity at Ochsner Foundation Hospital

Importance: The role of the Medical Center is important in its own research and technology transfer activity, the potential for additional such activity and the linkage it provides to the Parish with LSU, Tulane, and other strong medical research operations. Ochsner is well known in clinical trials and medical apparatus research and development.

What Needs To Be Done: Ochsner has strong momentum and commitment and substantial accomplishment in the entrepreneurial area. The need is to make available small company building space, with potential outfitting for wet-lab development, very close to the Medical Center. Ochsner has acquired land and multi-tenant, small company space could be an important part of the offering.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Increased bio-medical business start-up activity from Ochsner.
- Attracted tenancy from faculty/clinicians from other medical institutions needing wet-lab space.
- A higher Parish profile in the biomedical sector of the technology market.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Define, or have defined, an estimate of the amount of building space and wet-lab space which is needed by Ochsner entrepreneurs and others.
- Work with Ochsner to package the development of this space.
- Provide private developers the opportunity to participate.

- Consider seeking Federal EDA funding to assist in the effort.

Action 7. Sites and Building Space Near UNO Avondale Maritime Technology Center

Importance: The Maritime Center is an important technology partnership between the University of New Orleans and Northrop Grumman. The many contractors, suppliers and research partners who are involved and will be involved in this continuing project are strong technology targets for the Parish strategy.

What Needs To Be Done: There need to be quality sites and building space to attract these companies plus incentives, targeting and effective marketing. Working with key land owners, UNO and the company will be key to making this a sound public and private investment.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Attraction of technology companies with linkages with the University and Northrop Grumman.
- Creation of an important component of the total quality technology company land supply for the Parish.
- Enhancement of the role of the Avondale complex in the total cutting-edge technology image being projected for the Parish.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Continue to work closely with UNO and Northrop Grumman to make the existing operation all it can be by supporting local, state and federal efforts to fund their capital requirements for a state-of-the-art shipyard.
- Assess the extent of market demand for related building space.
- Seek arrangements with landowners adjacent to the complex and developers to develop building sites and building space.
- Provide assistance in creative packaging of the space.

- Take a lead role in marketing the space.

Action 8. In-reach and Out-reach Marketing of the Technology Park and Other Building Space

Importance: In-reach marketing to prospects in the community and outreach to prospects outside the community are very important to tenanting the park. The success of the park depends on substantial success in each of these efforts.

What Needs To Be Done: The in-reach marketing effort is described in Component V and the outreach component in Component III.

COMPONENT V. CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY START-UP PROGRAM

COMPONENT V. CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY START-UP PROGRAM

Purpose: Substantially increase the pace of technology company start-up and growth in the Parish.

Action 1. Prepare Incubator Feasibility Analysis

Importance: This action is important to determine the timing, size, functions, and cost of the incubator building. While this would be the third JEDCO-supported incubator, it would be the first whose purposes would be focused on technology companies and their specific building space needs.

What Needs To Be Done: This action can be accomplished by a technology incubator feasibility analysis including statistical analysis, survey of prospective tenants, benchmarking of comparable incubator facilities and examination of competitive building spaces.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Define market-driven characteristics of the proposed incubator.
- Quantify the project's 10-year cash flow.
- Distinguish the project from JEDCO's two existing incubators and other building space available in the Parish to start-ups.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Conduct the incubator feasibility analysis.
- Integrate the operations of this incubator with its existing incubator facilities.

Action 2. Organizational Options

Importance: This action is important to determine the most effective organizational structure for the incubator.

What Needs To Be Done: A group of the logical stakeholders, JEDCO, Parish, State, universities, and businesses need to come together and, based on the feasibility analysis and financial requirements, determine whether the community wishes to move ahead and what organizational form would be best. As a part of the feasibility analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of each of the organizational options would be described:

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Provide information to policy makers who will select the organizational option.
- Establish the staffing parameters for the proposed incubator.
- Prepare incubator operating requirements.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Convene the group of logical stakeholders described above.
- Provide technical assistance to this group and the special purpose entity as it decides on and moves ahead with the project.
- Take the lead in preparation of funding applications.

Action 3. Essential University Roles

Importance: This action is important to establishing the mutual support between higher education institutions and technology start-ups. From the institutions' perspectives, the start-ups provide practical problems to be researched, internship and job opportunities, a source of curriculum advisory committee members, and employees and equipment necessary to

commercialize new products and services. From technology business' perspectives, the institutions provide management assistance, access to research funding, research principals and staff members to analyze problems.

What Needs To Be Done: Form a higher education advisory group for the implementation of the Parish technology strategy. This group would meet periodically with JEDCO staff and appropriate committees and would hold periodic networking functions. This council would be the vehicle to work with JEDCO to bring appropriate university resources to assist the start-up companies.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Facilitate bringing the appropriate university programs, services, facilities and equipment to support the health and growth of start-ups.
- Enrich university programs with applied research problems and dollars to focus business education and workforce needs.
- Create an incubator/start-up services program in advance of the proposed incubator building being available for use.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- JEDCO leaders meet with university leaders to consider and, hopefully, form the advisory group and its agenda including asking the JEDCO education and technology committees to work with the university to prescribe joint technical assistance, research and education initiatives.
- Facilitate continued interaction between the start-ups and the university resources.

Action 4. Capital Cost Strategies

Importance: Technology start-ups cannot afford to pay rents which will provide net operating income adequate to pay a significant part of the capital cost of their incubator building development.

What Needs To Be Done: Incubator development is typically financed by a combination of local, federal and state financing, often with input from universities and business groups. After the feasibility analysis determines financing requirements, the stakeholders must determine if this financing can be assembled. The State has financed such facilities in Shreveport, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans. The US EDA has provided financing help at a number of such facilities. Local, state, and federal government, foundations, universities, and business groups have participated in various communities.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Commitments as required to finance the incubator building.
- An incubator services program in place.
- An important part of the strategy committed.
- Closer integration of the universities with the technology strategy.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Convene the stakeholders to achieve the needed financing.
- Seek federal and local matching funds.
- Continue to facilitate the project.

Action 5. Seed/Start-up/Venture Funding

Importance: The input most crucial to technology business start-up and growth is seed, start-up, intermediate stage and later stage venture financing. Such financing is very high risk and difficult to raise.

What Needs To Be Done: A maximum effort should be made to establish a working relationship between the incubator management and JEDCO staff and existing seed, start-up and

later stage venture funding operations located in the region or otherwise serving it and with individual angel networks. JEDCO has the objective to work towards starting such a fund.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Relationships with existing funds achieved.
- Angel network built.
- Start-ups provided reasonable financing.
- A successful deal flow established.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Work with its incubator staff to build a data base on available venture funding sources and their requirements and to access the network.
- Establish a “broker” role for JEDCO bringing companies passing initial screening to the attention of angel and other investors.
- Work with existing venture placement entities in the community to best meet companies’ needs.

COMPONENT VI. ATTRACTING TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES TO THE PARISH

COMPONENT VI. ATTRACTING TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES TO THE PARISH

Purpose: To carryout a marketing program that targets, attracts and closes technology company prospects for the Technology Park and other Jefferson Parish locations.

Action 1. Create a Good Supply of Multi-tenant Building Space for Technology Companies

Importance: Technology company multi-tenant building space is difficult to finance because of the high tenant improvement costs and a generally thin potential re-leasing market for this specialized and expensive space. Having a good supply of this space is an important advantage in competing with other jurisdictions for technology company prospects.

What Needs To Be Done: In Component IV of this strategy, recommendations are made for how the Parish should facilitate the development of quality technology company building space in a first quality technology park and near to each of the major technology anchors.

Action 2. Identification and Description of the Target Industries

Importance: In another part of this technology strategy effort, analysis was undertaken to identify those technology industry sectors which should be an important focus of the Parish technology strategy. The 13 first priority technology-related target industries described below are those that the Parish has the strongest opportunity to attract.

What Needs To Be Done: JEDCO's marketing program should include priority for these target industries in infrastructure creation, outreach marketing, deal closing and other activities. Characteristics of these first priority target sectors are described below. Detailed treatment is presented in the "Recommended Target Industries" Working Paper.

3511 Turbines and Turbine Generator Sets. This industry manufactures steam, gas, and hydraulic turbines.

3625 Manufacture Control Systems. These firms manufacture relays, motor starters and controllers, and other industrial controls.

3661 Manufacture Telephone Equipment Systems. This industry includes companies that manufacture telephone and telegraph equipment, modems, and other communications interface equipment.

3731 Ship Building and Repairing. This industry builds and repairs ships, barges, and lighters (large open barges) and manufactures offshore oil- and gas-well drilling and production platforms.

3841 Diagnostic and Therapeutic Apparatus. This industry manufactures medical, surgical, ophthalmic and veterinary instruments and apparatus.

4812 and 4813 Wireless Voice/Data Computer Networking and Wired Telecommunications Services. Wireless and personal communication services (PCS) services providers of wireless and wired services which have grown rapidly in recent years.

7372 Computer Software. Companies in this industry design and publish software programs, develop electronic commerce technologies, and provide online information services. It has been one of the fastest growing industries in the country.

7371, 7373, 7379 Computer Systems Design and Networking. This industry provides computer programming services, software design, and training in the use of custom software. The use of these services permeates other industries which are information- or automation-intensive.

7812 Motion Picture Production and Distribution. This industry produces and distributes motion pictures and video tapes.

8711 Engineering Services IT Consulting. Computer hardware, programming, software, and engineering support services are included in this industry.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Target industries recommended and described.
- Short- and middle-range growth prospects determined.
- Locational leverage points will be considered.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Participated with HSGA in Technology Target Identification and Refinement.
- Access available data bases to determine firms and contacts in these industries.

Action 3. Identify Prospects With Existing Technology Anchor and Other Local Relationships

Importance: Experience across the country shows that technology company prospects are much more likely to be attracted to a project or community in which they have an existing relationship with an institution or company.

What Needs To Be Done: Technology anchors both inside the Parish (Ochsner Foundation Hospital, UNO Avondale Maritime Technology Center, Robert E. Nims Center for Entertainment Arts and Multi-Media Technology), and outside (Tulane University, Tulane Hospital & Clinic, Medical Center of Louisiana, Xavier University and others) are high potential sources of leads through corporate and individual relationships. Through networking and more systematic inventory, these relationships and their owners need to be recorded and made an important focus of marketing.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- List of higher probability prospects prepared.
- Staff marketing efforts made more effective.
- Earlier market success achieved.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Continue to build and maintain relationship prospect base.
- Integrate them into the prospect “tickling” system.
- Effectively market these prospects.

Action 4. Integrating Marketing With Regional and State Agencies and Site Location Consultants

Importance: The staffs and financial resources of Metro Vision and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development complement those of JEDCO and increase the level of effort toward achieving JEDCO’s goals and objectives set forth in its annual strategic plan. Site location consultants represent a large source of leads as well.

What Needs To Be Done: Component III recommended actions for the Jefferson Parish image and branding program. JEDCO should coordinate its program with the state and Metro Vision through membership on their committees, use of their promotion and statistical materials, regular personal contacts, and availability of the state, local, and federal economic development incentives.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Maintain current information on incentives available to technology companies.

- Provide information to site location consultants which will familiarize them with Parish advantages to technology companies.
- Personal and professional relationships with key individuals in both groups.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

- Maintain data-rich, up to date website to ease the prospect screening work of both state/regional and site consultant staff.
- Carry on an outreach program to steadily expand the number of site consultants familiar with the technology assets of the Parish.
- Rigorously work to achieve site location and regional/state marketing visits when there are important achievements to share, like the opening of the technology park and/or major technology company locations.

Action 5. Building and Maintaining a Truly High Quality Website and Park Newsletter

Importance: Much effective communication with prospects and their site consultants can be achieved through the website, brochure materials, and a hard copy newsletter. These tools are also important to communicating with community and other leadership.

What Needs To Be Done: The characteristics we believe to be most important to a high quality technology-led economic development website include:

- 1) **Easy to Use**—Clear instruction on entry and adequate indexing to facilitate stratified searches. For example, if the prime concern of the technology company or their site location consultant is technology graduates or total work force, that information or sources of it should be provided.
- 2) **Focus on Quality not Quantity**—This choice is made less crucial if the navigational system is clear, but general information on the community should take an access “back seat” to the real technology strengths and exciting technology happenings like company locations and expansions, industry cluster growth, and other things which will titillate the prospect.
- 3) **Easy Interactive Approach to Filling Specific Data Gaps**—The website user should have a clear path to additional information of any kind, either

through a contact request form or a detailed listing of contacts with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. This calls for regular attention from a webmaster fully knowledgeable of the site and the local economic data system.

4) Attractive, Fun to Use—Photos and other graphics make the experience of using the website more attractive and provide visual relief.

5) Challenge to Generate Repeat Visits—The challenge is to generate the image, “exciting things are happening in Jefferson Parish, and these are the examples of what has happened just since your last website visit.” We find this is a demanding objective in terms of staff time, but an important one.

JEDCO has achieved a high quality website. It should be supplemented with two types of information. One is technology job postings as an added service for the Parish’s existing technology companies seeking employees. The second is importing tabular data from the SWOT analysis on the Parish’s strengths as a technology business location.

Objectives Which Will Be Achieved:

- Strong communication with an ever- expanding prospect base.
- Make prospect seeking and serving staff time much more efficient.

Recommended Roles for JEDCO and Allied Organizations:

The JEDCO website is a good one, and it can be further improved with modest changes aimed at three important target user groups:

- Site location consultants: provide more information with which to compare Jefferson Parish with competing jurisdictions and reinforce the Parish’s image as a technology business location. Our analysis shows the Parish stacks up well against the competition in fact, if less in image.
- Technology company CEO’s: provide information on the Parish’s market for goods and services and potential suppliers, workforce characteristics, and locational advantages.

- Prospective Technology employees: provide job openings and education and training opportunities available in the area.

Action 6. Continuing and Closing the Marketing Process

Importance: Closing sought-after technology company prospects requires not only meeting their real estate needs, often with incentives, but also achieving an agreement with a university or other technology institution in the area to provide access by the company to specialized equipment, focused faculty research or other value added considerations.

What Needs To Be Done: The process of diagnosing the university value added needs of technology companies is described in Component I. It is important to note that it is not essential that the technology institution providing the value added be located in the same jurisdiction as the location opportunity. Recommendations for assuring that quality building space and other real estate considerations are met are presented in Component IV.