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730 PEACHTREE STREET SUITE 540 ATLANTA GEORGIA 30308 404 880-7242 FAX 404 880-7246

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Market Street brings original insights and clarity to the evaluation and revitalization of the places where people live, work and grow. Through honest and informed assessments, *Market Street* can equip you with the tools to create meaningful change. Our solutions successfully merge our experience and expertise with the economic and social realities of our clients. *Market Street's* community clients are successful at creating stronger programs, increasing operational budgets, and creating new quality jobs that improve the quality of life in their communities.

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OVERVIEW

In order to best understand Palm Beach County's economic dynamics, *Market Street Services* of Atlanta has been engaged to provide the Economic Council of Palm Beach County with "an understanding of where Palm Beach County really is" in terms of:

- Its key economic competitiveness issues;
- What the community's opportunities are in business sectors that are heavily dependent upon a knowledge-based economy in addition to those that may benefit workers at all skill levels;
- What the community's opportunities are in the life sciences sector, especially as they relate to proven life sciences development models in other top regions; and
- What tangible steps the Council and its partners can take now to positively impact the future of the County.

The components of the strategic process are as follows:

Research Review and Assessment: This report included an overview of a number of recent strategic plans and studies conducted for Palm Beach County. The key findings and recommendations of these reports helped inform the development of the County's *Action Plan*. It was the intention of the process to leverage existing strategic work related to economic development being coordinated in Palm Beach County as opposed to "reinventing the wheel." The analysis was supplemented by *Market Street's* original research into the latest economic structural dynamics in Palm Beach County. The purpose of this analysis was to identify key subsectors in the County's innovation economy as well as to determine other potential industry sectors to target.

Local Stakeholder Input: This component included interviews and focus groups. Key issues identified during the Local Input Process impacted the development of both the *Research Review and Assessment* and the *Action Plan* itself.

Best Practices & Life Sciences Trend Report: This document briefly profiled five top life sciences regions and detail how they initiated – and maintained – these local clusters. *Market Street* complemented this research with an analysis of key life sciences market trends that can impact Palm Beach County as it grows its local sector.

Action Plan: All the quantitative and qualitative research to date informed the development of Palm Beach County's *Action Plan*. This Plan serves to identify the key strategies needed to best move the County towards its goals.

This *Action Plan* can serve to bring local organizations together in a more cohesive way to positively impact growth and development in Palm Beach County.

PROJECT COMMITTEE

The Project Committee provided guidance and leadership during the development of the *Action Plan*. The Committee represents a broad group of community and business leaders. It has been responsible for reviewing project deliverables, providing feedback, and participating in discussions about the future direction of Palm Beach County. The following individuals are the members of the Project Committee:

A. E. Osborne, III *Executive Vice President*
BNY-Mellon

Frank T. Compiani *Executive Managing Director*
RSM McGladrey, Inc.

George T. Elmore *President/Owner*
Hardrives, Inc.

Jody Gleason
Executive Director
Palm Beach County Education Commission, Inc.

John F. Flanigan
Vice President and Managing Shareholder
Moyle, Flanigan, Katz, Breton, White & Krasker, P.A.

Jorge Pesquera
President/CEO
Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Kathryn Schmidt
President/CEO
Workforce Alliance Palm Beach County, Inc.

Kelly Smallridge
President & CEO
Business Development Board of Palm Beach County, Inc.

Kristen Murtaugh
VP, Jupiter Campus
Florida Atlantic University

Laurie S. Silvers
President
Hollywood Media Corp.

Mike Jones
President/CEO
Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc.

Nader Salour
Principal
Cypress Realty of Florida, LLC

Nathaniel Roberts
President
Managed Citrus, Inc. Callery-Judge Grove, L.P.

Shannon Larocque-Bass
Scripps Program Manager
PBC Board of County Commissioners

INTRODUCTION

Palm Beach County – like the state of Florida itself – finds itself at a crossroads. No longer can tourism and retail serve as the predominant private industries to sustain the tax and employment bases of local communities. In addition, the relatively constant population growth that helped feed the employment pipeline with construction workers, mortgage brokers, retail workers, bankers, civil engineers, road builders and many other growth-dependent industries has started to wane, and, in some communities, decline. Palm Beach County has to decide “what’s next” for its economy and how to build the capacity necessary to capture employment in the high-paying industries of tomorrow.

Currently, the County’s capacity is lacking in a number of regards. Certain costs of doing business (permitting and regulations, provision of insurance and others) are prohibitive, availability of various types of workforce skills are lacking, housing costs are said to be driving away lower- and middle-class residents, some local schools are struggling to educate student populations becoming more diverse and lower-income, the “inventory” of tourism-serving assets is static, and the amount of translational research and innovation being conducted is sub-optimal. So too is the availability of sufficient capital resources to seed and nurture new companies.

Local economic development, education and workforce, government and institutional entities are working hard every day to address these challenges and stimulate job creation and wage gains in Palm Beach County. Ultimately, however, a community’s ability to achieve success comes down to its capacity to invest in the human, organizational and physical infrastructure to be competitive. Time and again in this strategic process, stakeholders and local leadership expressed the need for enhanced programs, infrastructure and funding capacity to be competitive. One of Palm Beach County’s top near-term challenges (and long-term concerns) will be sourcing and generating the funding necessary to compete with the many regions that are investing millions of dollars in their local economies. Unfortunately, with soaring budget deficits and looming program cuts dominating the agenda of the state legislature, most needed capital increases will not be provided from the state for the foreseeable future.

Now is the time for Palm Beach County governments, businesses and residents to step up efforts and investments in a major way to acknowledge that the County is competing on a changed playing field against communities and regions with histories of investing millions more in economic development than ever before. To sit idle or wait for the Florida legislature to allocate additional resources for local efforts will be a losing proposition.

And, most importantly, Palm Beach County must become more united and act as one community as it goes about implementation of its key strategies. Internal

competition, organizational “silos” and stakeholder divisiveness will only serve to impair efforts to present to the world a new Palm Beach County – a place where knowledge business thrive along with the tourism economy and residents of all ages and incomes can thrive.

STRATEGIES

The strategies in this *Action Plan* represent priority efforts that will enable Palm Beach County to take a great leap forward in its competitive capacity. These strategies are not intended to replace or supersede the plans and efforts being implemented by entities such as the Business Development Board, Palm Beach County Economic Development Office, Palm Beach County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and others.

Rather, the *Action Plan* seeks to forward a set of transformative efforts that can serve to provide the most "bang for the buck" for local investors and implementers. They are achievable, actionable and consensus-based. These strategies emerged from both the quantitative and qualitative analysis conducted throughout this strategic process and were selected and confirmed by the Project Committee from a list of potential recommendations. The strategies are divided into **High-Priority Efforts** to be embarked upon as soon as possible, and **Medium-Priority Events** that should be launched in the next year to 18 months.

High-Priority Efforts

- Nursing Shortage
- Regulatory Climate
- Education Funding
- Early-Stage Capital
- Inland Port

Medium-Priority Efforts

- Convention Hotel
- Talent Retention and Attraction
- Internal Marketing

High-Priority Efforts

NURSING SHORTAGE

Though the shortage of nurses in Palm Beach County has been identified previously as a key issue, the crisis is reaching critical proportions and must be acted on aggressively or the local health care industry – a prime source of high-paying jobs – will suffer. Research has shown that the deficit of trained nurses is not necessarily the result of a shortage of interest. In fact, thousands of potential nursing students are routinely denied entry into local programs because of a lack of training “slots.” The choke-point for training nurses actually involves the difficulty of finding experts willing to enter teaching; providing candidates with competitive salaries will be vital to drawing them into the classroom.

- A strong contingent of local organizations and agencies has been working to address this challenge.
 - These existing efforts need additional focus and support.
 - Stakeholder groups would benefit from working under a more united effort, perhaps involving organizations outside of the health care realm that could bring influence to bear on the issue.
- A “business case” for development/attraction of nurses must be made relative to number needed; cost to train and attract; classroom and capital capacity required, etc.
 - A local firm could potentially develop this report pro bono.
 - The research will inform requests made to funding organizations and foundations.
- Ultimately, with state governments unable to enhance local capacity to fill the pipeline of trained nurses in Palm Beach County, it becomes necessary to identify other means to realize these goals.
 - Palm Beach County has a tremendous potential funding capacity in its group of philanthropic foundations, including the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Educational Foundation of Palm Beach County, Palm Healthcare Foundation and the Quantum Foundation.
 - Leveraging these foundations, along with private and institutional dollars, can help fill critical gaps in local funding.
 - In addition, available of grants from organizations such as the Gates Foundation offers tremendous opportunities for funding progressive and well-conceived programs.
 - It is also critical that a long-term, SUSTAINABLE funding source be identified to ensure that capacity can be met into the long-term future.

Action Steps
Under the auspices of a lead organization, assemble a comprehensive and representative group of stakeholders to oversee the strategic effort to train more nurses in Palm Beach County
Come to agreement on the key steps of the action planning progress
Identify a local firm or expert willing to research the critical dynamics of the local nursing shortage that can serve to make a “business case” for expanding the nursing population in the County
Work to secure consensus and buy-in among local stakeholders behind the “business case” to address the nursing shortage
Leveraging the conclusions of the “business case” report, reach out to local and external funding partners to obtain the resources necessary to implement the plan to grow the local nursing population
Implement the nursing-development plan – consistently monitoring the effort to ensure it is on track to reach its goals
Work to identify and secure a sustainable, long-term funding source to provide the capacity necessary to effectively train local nurses; utilize County stakeholder relationships with state elected officials to further this action, if necessary

REGULATORY CLIMATE

Perception is reality in economic development. If Palm Beach County is thought to be a “pay to play” community in which companies and developers have to make “under-the-table” payments to elected officials or staff in order to secure a project, they will more than likely look elsewhere to make their investments. The fight for jobs and investment is far too competitive in today’s economy to succeed with a perceived disadvantage related to business climate. Likewise, burdensome, costly and inconsistent regulatory and permitting processes have the potential to drive prospects to other, more business-friendly communities – either in Florida or elsewhere.

- A Regulatory Task Force of key public and private stakeholders should be assembled to lead the assessment and optimization of Palm Beach County permitting processes.
 - The Task Force should incorporate and leverage all existing work related to local permitting, most specifically the BDB’s development of tools to fast-track priority projects.
 - By effectively communicating to elected and appointed officials the critical role government can play in expanding existing businesses and recruiting new companies, they will be more inclined to display the leadership and ethical standards necessary to achieve positive and lasting change.
- The ultimate goal of the Task Force’s work will be to create a best-practice and uniform set of regulatory guidelines that can be adopted by governments in Palm Beach County.
 - Greater consistency in permitting processes among the County and city governments will equalize development costs and ensure that businesses can effectively prepare to secure approval for projects in Palm Beach County.
 - Task Force members might consider making visits to communities that are known for having best-practice permitting systems and speaking with local officials.
- The Task Force should also determine the role local regulations can play in advancing other priority efforts in Palm Beach County.
 - These efforts include set-asides for development of affordable housing; provision of greenspace and public art; securing a percentage of incentivized or government-awarded contracts to qualified minority-owned businesses; and developing a process to reserve certain land as “certified” sites for industrial development.

Action Steps
Assemble a Regulatory Task Force from a roster of top local business people and institutional representatives
Utilize staff to prepare a detailed list of national best practices related to permitting, affordable housing set-asides, government contracting, site certification, awarding of incentives, and other key practices
Leverage the BDB's fast-track permitting toolkit in the development of comprehensive best-practice regulatory guidelines
Partner with local governments to review, customize and approve new regulatory processes in County communities
As best as possible, ensure regulatory consistency across Palm Beach County governments to provide businesses with a set of uniform regulatory policies
Formalize a process for ongoing communication between government and private/non-profit leadership to ensure that new processes are pursued and re-worked (if necessary) to ensure long-term benefit
Market new County and city processes to companies and corporate relocation professionals as examples of the County's commitment to become a best-in-class community

EDUCATION FUNDING

The quality of a community's workforce has become its number one competitive concern as jobs in the New Economy are increasingly created by knowledge companies reliant on a highly skilled labor force. Thus, investments made in local educational capacity realize continuing returns as students become productive workers earning high wages that filter down to companies throughout the local economy. However, the reality in Palm Beach County – one shared by thousands of communities across the U.S. – is that funding for education is being cut at the state level and is at risk locally as tax receipts decline due to the current recession. It is of particular concern that the state of Florida has failed to follow up its progressive investment of hundreds of millions of dollars to attract top-flight research organizations to Palm Beach County with enhanced research and training capacity at local institutions such as Florida Atlantic University. The stark reality is this: Communities that provide the capacity to ensure a competitive education and training system will thrive; those that do not will fall behind.

- A more coordinated effort to replace declining state funding for education must be advanced.
 - Key stakeholders from local foundations, education and training institutions, private firms and community organizations must come together to identify a “road map” for enhancing local resources.
 - Discussion should center on potential strategies to secure both short-term and sustainable funding sources for education/training in Palm Beach County.
 - ◆ Strategies could include: targeted grants from local and national foundations; pursuit of federal funding earmarked for local science and technology education programs; and consideration of a local taxing mechanism to provide long-term resources for education.
 - ◆ Local leaders should also initiate discussions with state officials on the critical need to expand funding for two-year and four-year degree programs focused on life sciences and technology.
- Key programs benefitting from increased resources could include: science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education; experiential student learning; advanced teacher training; increased wages for teachers; scholarships, internships and other student-support programs; degree-creation efforts at two- and four-year colleges; and others.

Action Steps
Manage an effort to develop a coordinated action plan for enhancing local funding for education and training
Through a partnership of local education and training institutions, compile a report identifying key programmatic and funding needs to be addressed through the educational resource campaign
Work to assess the potential of Palm Beach County foundations to supply resources to increase local education and training capacity, and the degree to which each foundation will participate
Identify priority external foundations to approach for funding through a grant-application process supported by all local partners
Leverage individual, institutional and corporate relationships with federal elected officials to appropriate stimulus monies to projects and programs identified as key local needs
Coordinate a local effort to speak with one voice to state elected leadership regarding the need to increase funding levels for specific programs and efforts
Charge staff with monitoring progress towards achievement of resource-enhancement goals and application of monies to identified priority recipients for programmatic development
Formalize a process for staff to provide regular implementation reports to the stakeholder group assembled to oversee the resource-development process

EARLY-STAGE CAPITAL

Provision of the gap and “seed” capital so critical to facilitating enterprise creation and small-business development was said to be in great demand in Palm Beach County. With the County yet to attract significant attention from venture capitalists, it is incumbent on local stakeholders to support the development of entrepreneurs and growing companies in need of capital infusions to remain competitive in the marketplace. Funds would be utilized to support the development, growth, retention and attraction of early- to mid-stage technology and life sciences companies in Palm Beach County. There is also a strong complement of professionals in the County either displaced from technology companies or living in the area part- or full-time who may have the desire to start their own businesses. Seed monies to support these fledgling entrepreneurs could also provide great benefit for future job creation.

- Efforts should be made to leverage multiple sources for the capitalization of the early-stage investment fund.
 - Outreach to existing angel-investor groups should continue, with qualified prospects consistently brought before the group for review.
 - Relationships cultivated between local research organizations and institutions with the venture capital community should be built upon to communicate investment opportunities in early- to mid-stage companies to interested venture firms.
 - State and federal monies –the Florida Opportunity Fund, SBIR/STTR funds, NIH funds, SBA grants, stimulus funds, etc. – should be pursued (in coordination with local organizations, as necessary) to build additional resource capacity for local enterprises.
- Coordination with local entities will be critical as the process of capital-attraction and dispersion progresses.
 - Palm Beach County has professionals working to assess the viability of commercializing public research as well as a center at Florida Atlantic University focused on community engagement related to entrepreneurship.
 - A number of other local colleges and universities also have programs related to entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial-development.
 - ◆ Effectively engaging these supportive entities can further the process of supporting the growth of early- and mid-stage companies.

Action Steps
Determine the optimal structure and function of the early-stage capital fund, identifying and researching national best-practices as potential models for Palm Beach County's fund
Develop a business plan formalizing the detailed dynamics of the fund, how it will operate, its management and oversight structure, loan and follow-up processes, capitalization goals, eligibility requirements, etc.
Initiate the capitalization of the fund through coordinated outreach to potential local, state and federal funding partners
Launch the fund through targeted marketing to an audience of potential fund recipients, research organizations, colleges and universities, and government partners
Monitor disbursed grant monies and utilize findings to optimize funding processes

INLAND PORT

Projects like the Inland Port proposed for the South Florida region inclusive of Palm Beach County come around once in a generation. Similar developments in other U.S. communities have led to hundreds of millions of dollars in investment and the creation of thousands of jobs. Logistics is one of the fastest growing, most stable national industries with jobs that are essentially “outsource-proof.” Projections for the South Florida Inland Port are that a minimum of 20,000 jobs will be created if the project reaches full build-out. These are good jobs with competitive wages that could draw thousands of adults displaced from other industries back into the local workforce. Wherever the Port is ultimately built, the spin-off effect from its development and the attraction of other firms to the site would positively impact every county in the region. Certainly, a development of this breadth and scope has the potential to lead to conflict among the entities vying for it to be located within their borders; but it is contingent on these governments to act as partners not partisans if the Port is to be ultimately developed.

- A Coalition¹ is being formed among the stakeholder entities in the region that stand to benefit from the Port’s construction.
 - Palm Beach County must be an active and vocal member of this Coalition and help lead the charge to attain state support behind this effort.
 - ◆ It will require a high degree of inter-regional coordination to reduce the potential for conflict and successfully lobby state legislators.
 - The local business community can play an active role to compel government to join the team lobbying for project approval.
 - ◆ It is critical that any partisanism from Palm Beach County elected officials be sacrificed for the greater good that would come from the Port’s development, even if it ultimately locates in another regional county.
- The Port of Palm Beach is spearheading the effort to receive approval from the state to move forward with actions related to land-acquisition, provision of infrastructure and other elements.
 - Local relationships with hometown port officials will also enable Palm Beach County to be intimately involved in the dynamics of securing state approval for the project.

¹ Coalition for a Sustainable Lake Region.

Action Steps
Proactively reach out to the entities organizing the Coalition for a Sustainable Lake Region and indicate Palm Beach County's willingness to be a leading voice in this effort
Mobilize public, private and institutional support in the County behind the Coalition's agenda
Determine the network of local relationships with state-level officials that could be leveraged in support of the Coalition's priorities
Ensure that ongoing Coalition efforts and agendas are communicated to all affected County stakeholder groups
Integrate into internal marketing efforts the dynamics behind the Coalition's goals and the projected impacts of the Inland Port on the Palm Beach County economy

Medium-Priority Efforts

CONVENTION HOTEL

The development of “product” to support Palm Beach County’s convention and hospitality industry has slowed dramatically in recent years. Resting on the laurels of the County’s well-known amenities to attract seasonal residents and visitors threatens the County’s competitiveness in this sector; more capacity is needed to compete with communities making major investments in their convention-serving infrastructure. It is critical that a new convention hotel in Palm Beach County have the guestroom and meeting-space capacity to attract and accommodate major shows. Development experts have said that there is a gap between the number of rooms the private sector can profitably develop and what the County needs to attract top shows. The public sector can serve to bridge this gap. The current weak development and lending environment also makes it contingent on Palm Beach County government to take proactive steps to facilitate the development of the convention hotel. When built, the hotel would stimulate the attraction of more and larger conventions, which would generate a ripple effect through the entire local hospitality and retail economies. In addition, amenities developed to support a growing hospitality industry would enhance the quality of life of existing Palm Beach County residents.

- Private financing is said to exist to realize the development of the convention hotel.
 - However, what the private sector feels is reasonable to develop (roughly 350 to 400 rooms) does not align with the number of rooms (500) deemed optimal for a convention-center-serving property.
 - Public monies will need to supplement private financing in order to develop a convention hotel that best serves the Palm Beach County tourism industry.
- Government officials should proactively reach out to development interests seeking to construct the convention hotel.
 - Elected officials and staff should stress to these interests that government will be a willing and upstanding partner in the development of the convention hotel.
 - The public-financing tool utilized to supplement the capacity of the convention hotel should be determined based on substantive discussions between local government, economic development professionals and community leaders.

Action Steps
Identify and assemble a Task Force of local stakeholders with an interest in the development of a convention hotel and host a meeting to determine the optimal development scenario for the property
Reach out to the private developer that comes forward with plans to build the convention hotel
Determine the difference between the number of rooms the developer feels the market can absorb and the optimal number to support convention activities
Work out an agreement between the developer and the government entity offering incentives to determine the amount of public financing that would be required to construct and operate a 500-room hotel
Initiate dialogue to reach consensus on the most effective public funding mechanism to facilitate full build-out of the convention hotel
When public funding is approved, proceed with development and construction of the convention hotel
Integrate development of the hotel into tourism-related marketing materials

TALENT RETENTION AND ATTRACTION

Communities are now vying to recruit and retain talented professionals with the same vigor and intensity as companies. Availability of a skilled workforce will be the number one determinant of local competitiveness in the New Economy. Therefore, it is essential that Palm Beach County – already said to have difficulty retaining young professionals – steps up its efforts to provide local businesses with a future workforce. The talent retention and attraction program will be a two-pronged approach: an Internal component will focus on the development of a “talent pipeline” for local businesses, as well as retention of existing workers. The External component will market the County’s lifestyle as a draw for talented workers and will partner with local college and universities to target their ex-patriot alumni for return to Palm Beach County. Needless to say, the ultimate success of the talent retention and attraction effort will be partially contingent on a number of ancillary strategies also showing progress. Among these are the development of affordable housing, lessening traffic congestion, improving public safety, and creating high-value jobs that will enable talented workers to stay in the area or migrate to the County in search of quality employment.

- It is essential that the talent retention and attraction program be a coordinated effort.
 - There are numerous entities – be they companies, hospitals, universities, research institutions, etc. – that already have talent-recruitment functions.
 - By formalizing a coordinated process for the attraction and retention of talent, Palm Beach County will be able to avoid duplication of efforts and better leverage the dollars already spent on this function.
- Emphasis should be on sourcing internal candidates for openings first, then pursuing external attraction efforts.
 - If County governments, institutions, graduates and available workers feel local adults are being passed over for jobs in favor of external candidates, it will adversely impact the consensus-building necessary to achieve success with the talent development program.
- Local stakeholder organizations should also work to develop a consistency-of-message related to branding and marketing of Palm Beach County as a destination for skilled workers.
 - This may entail the retention of a marketing firm specialized in this practice and a fundraising effort to implement the recommendations of the marketing plan.

Action Steps
Initiate a process to reach out to all local organizations with talent retention and attraction efforts to better coordinate programs
Assess additional stakeholder organizations that need to be involved in the program
Leverage local workforce-development, training and educational organizations to help formalize the “internal” talent-retention component of the program
Similarly, coordinate a process among key stakeholder groups to establish the dynamics and parameters of the “external” talent attraction component
Determine the potential to develop the “external” component using existing resources and staff -- otherwise, consider the retention of a talent-marketing consultant to help develop a plan
Initiate implementation of both internal and external talent retention and attraction efforts, leveraging existing programs to the degree necessary to be effective
Determine the need to hire a full-time manager of the talent-attraction program in coordination with all partners
Monitor the progress of implementation through measurement of metrics, retooling the program as necessary

INTERNAL MARKETING

Many times, a community's best "salespeople" are the companies and residents that do business, work and live there. However, it is often the case that these firms and individuals are not aware of the competitive issues, successes or challenges that the community faces. This was said to be the case in Palm Beach County. Ensuring that County stakeholders are strong advocates for priority efforts like government accountability, affordable housing development, provision of incentives to stimulate economic growth, balanced land use, and a myriad of other issues would do much to improve the County's competitive position. Successes at area businesses, Scripps Florida, Max Planck, the School District of Palm Beach County, local colleges and universities should be also widely publicized. On the economic development side, corporate executives can be leveraged as "ambassadors" for the County in both official and unofficial contexts when interacting with colleagues or prospective businesses that might be interested in relocating to Palm Beach County. But they must be "trained" to sell the County in an optimal way and know the most effective "story" to tell.

- The internal marketing initiative should take utmost advantage of public relations and marketing efforts already being implemented by local stakeholder groups.
 - Personnel and programs from County organizations should be pooled as effectively as possible for the common purpose of internal marketing.
 - ◆ This includes any existing "ambassador" corps from local Chambers and economic development organizations.
 - Messages should be coordinated as necessary to speak with one voice to the community related to priority issues and efforts.
 - The ultimate goal is to better coordinate local stakeholder groups around a consensus program and message to promote Palm Beach County to those who live, work and visit there.
- Eventually, the internal marketing program could be expanded into a broader effort that is branded and formalized as a "curriculum" for County organizations that want to train their employees in the nuances of Palm Beach County, its history and existing/future resources.
 - Best practice programs of this type from other communities should be investigated to potentially inform the development of Palm Beach County's "curriculum."

Action Steps
Assemble a roster of local stakeholder groups to collaborate on the development of the internal marketing initiative
Seek a local public relations firm that could potentially offer in-kind services to develop and help implement the program
Assess current internal marketing efforts and messages, ambassador corps, printed and electronic materials, etc., for the purpose of developing a more coordinated, unified message and program for outreach to local constituencies
Finalize program design, messages, media and markets
Begin program implementation, including assessing the potential to expand the program into a formal "curriculum" that can be offered to County organizations interested in training their employees in the appropriate ways to present the community to visitors and companies

CONCLUSION

Palm Beach County's *Action Plan* can serve a vital role in furthering the County's economic development competitiveness and success. By uniting diverse organizations, staffs and stakeholders in a new and unique way, it can lead to enhanced coordination between entities implementing critical strategic efforts in the community. Whether these efforts involve the overall economy, specific business sectors, industry-focused educational programs, innovation and technology commercialization, infrastructure development or a host of others, eliminating "silos" between local stakeholder groups would maximize the use of critical resources and forge partnerships that can move the County forward well into the future.

But simply having the framework to implement new and ongoing strategies is not enough. At the end of the day, initiating and successfully realizing strategic efforts will require additional resources – personnel, physical and fiscal. Nearly every week, *Market Street* becomes aware of another community reaching out to its public and private stakeholders to raise funds for strategic implementation. Nearly all of these effective regions also speak with one public-private voice.

Palm Beach County leaders will have to be creative in their pursuit of resources available locally, at the state level, and nationally through foundations and federal government funding entities. If it speaks with a more consistent voice, improves local coordination and reaches out to these potential funding partners with a single hand instead of many, the County will make a more convincing case that it will utilize these funds effectively.

The *Action Plan* process identified a long list of important needs and projects to address key issues and opportunities in Palm Beach County. But resources are short, so strategic priorities were established. Palm Beach County must seize this opportunity to further the critical work being done by entities such as the Business Development Board, County Economic Development Office, Education Commission, Convention and Visitor's Bureau and others by providing them with the capacity and coordination to be successful. The Economic Council can serve the vital role of coordinating body, supporter and advocate, disseminator of information, and constituency-builder to ensure seamless integration of key local efforts. With the global economy changing faster than ever before, the time to act is now