Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute

IMCP Implementation Committee
Meeting Notes

7/7/2014
10:00am – 1:00pm
Dalton Chamber of Commerce

Attendees: Brian Anderson, Andreas Bruhwiler, Carl Campbell, Garen Evans, Louis Fordham, Jeff Gazaway, Sarah Harrison, Leigh Hopkins, David Howerin, Larry Johnson, Greg Laudeman, Melinda Lemmon, Pete McDonald, Julie Meadows, John Neal, Peter Sigmon, Christina Span, Delmos Stone, Barbara Ward, Stephanie Watkins, Barbara Ward (via phone), Brittney Wilson, Ken Wright, Joe Yarbrough, John Zegers

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Meeting Summary

Vision + Mission Statement

- Vision received general approval from the committee. No objections, most agreed it covered all of the necessary bases.
- Mission statement also received approval.
    - There was some concern over the "research, innovation, + sustainability" bullet point, mostly due to concerns with industry competition.
        - Need to be careful of confidentiality/proprietary items.
        - However, representatives from industry present agreed that they could rally around the mission statement.
    - The committee also discussed adding a more explicit statement regarding quality of life improvements, but it was agreed that the implementation of the mission statement would lead to the vibrant/diverse community described in the vision.

Strategic Plan + Review of Draft Goals/Strategies

- 5-year strategic plan
- Implementation committee to reconvene as needed
- Add larger subcommittees to address the different areas of the plan, to be headed by a point person that also serves on the implementation committee.
- Suggestion that there may need to be "sub-goals" under each of the draft goals proposed to make the goals more achievable.
- Goals include short (1 – 2 years), medium (3 – 5 years), and long (5+ years)

GTA + Digital Georgia Initiative

- Regional digital economies strategy
- Not just tech companies – looking at tech applications to other industries, esp. interested in healthcare and manufacturing applications.
- Region in need of workforce with broader base, "deep" technical expertise

Goal 1: Workforce + Education

- Obj. 1.1– Strategy 1 – Develop industry-recognized certification programs
  - Should we open up certification programs to all secondary education rather than limit to college and career academies?
  - GNTC – currently partners with 28 schools – could lose focus if they tried to establish new certification programs in all the schools at once
  - Suggested it may be more manageable to begin offerings at college and career academies, and then grow the program to include the other high schools.
- General agreement that certification/credential recognition an important focus area.
- Comment that most of the strategies proposed have been attempted at one point or another after the last twenty years in the region. How to succeed with implementation?
  - Focus on management – need to get the leadership behind these strategies.
  - Concern that current management in the region isn't trained in advanced manufacturing mindset – no Lean, Six Sigma Black Belt
  - Noted that the community in general is further along now than it has been during past attempts to implement similar strategies – may be better positioned to take on these challenges now.
  - Important to secure the support of the top 3 – 4 industries to move forward
  - Need to get this strategic plan together before bringing it before the leadership.
- Great Promise Partnership (Southwire) Model
  - If similar program implemented regionally, is there an opportunity to pull in more businesses?
  - Possible difficulty implementing a similar model with regional mfg practices (labor/safety rules?) limiting show floor work to those 18 and over.
  - Noted that there are only 2 – 3 employers in the region with the scale to pull off a program like that at Southwire.
  - Hahn example also discussed – noting a significant difference, in that students at Hahn are also able to earn college credit.
    - Dual-enrollment opportunities are now easier to implement due to funding for such programs (this funding wasn't available until a couple of years ago).
- Marketing + Attraction
  - Comment that the marketing piece may be more important to implementation – will set the stage for the implementation of the other goals.
    - Need to educate the community about the industry – parents, grandparents, educators, school counselors, etc.
  - Industry + Chamber to drive local marketing/PR
  - The Implementation Committee will drive regional marketing
  - Also need to market to industry success stories of intern programs
  - How to make the industry attractive to students?
    - Educate schools, parents, the region
    - Maker/Hacker Spaces – Ex. GE First Build (Louisville) + GT's Invention Studio

        - Add wage information to the materials used to attract students
    - Need to understand what characteristics of manufacturing make it less attractive to teachers/counselors to recommend as a career path to students
        - CRI may be able to host a roundtable to gather a focus group of educators to discuss these concerns
    - For attraction of young professionals outside of the region, Geek Move (Chattanooga) initiative offered attractive incentives, but that type of program would benefit from a connection with regional industries to ensure jobs for those who relocate.
    - Need to market the sustainability of the industry
    - Leverage tech companies in and around adv. mfg. to help fund education + marketing activities
- Internship/Apprenticeship Programs
    - Industry support has to be there to create/expand these programs – need to get the leadership behind it to do it.
    - Major Challenge = conflict between mfg and school schedules
        - Summer apprenticeship programs may be a way to get around scheduling conflicts between industry and schools.
    - Post-secondary programs maybe more easy to implement – secondary schools don't have the "clout" or curriculum flexibility to accommodate the needs of industry
        - Need to work with the State for flexibility in the curriculum
    - Currently no curriculum to prepare students for the applied skills needed in the industry.
    - Example - general criticism of WorkReady model – academic knowledge, but didn't necessarily address industry needs.
    - Suggest a model similar to QuickStart – send in a team to assess the top 3 – 5 needs of the industry
        - Industry may be able to commit to a standalone samples operation (like Southwire), where X% of the samples produced come out of the standalone training facility
        - Cooperative effort could be created around this type of facility
    - Bottom line - there is a need to develop an advanced manufacturing curriculum – if that happens, the rest will follow.
        - For example, students need to have mechanical/electrical/engineering certifications to get placed into higher jobs
        - However, important to note that only 5% of the workforce are those in mechanical/electrical engineering – there is a need for machine operator folks to fill the other 95% of the jobs.
    - GT could be a key driver in this area – partner with GNTC.
    - First step, industry needs to come together to design the requirements for the curriculum
    - How do we put this team together?

        - Create a task group
        - Think out-of-the-box for program development
            - Look at different ways to "work" the schedule – ex. split interns between 2 shifts as a way to accommodate school schedules while still providing full time coverage for the industry
- Obj. 1.1 – Strategy 5 – Summer externship for teachers
    - Bartow has a Teacher Resource Center which assists with summer externship programs for teachers
    - Chattanooga – has a number of outreach programs in place
    - Professional Learning Days for educators may be returning to local school systems
        - Opportunity to offer Professional Learning Units for industry field trips
    - Need to add high school counselors to the industry education/marketing campaign
        - Counselors should be reaching out to local manufacturers to find out which companies/programs offer tuition assistance programs for employees
- Obj. 1.1 – Strategy 9 – Develop a workforce assessment tool
    - Currently no model in place to track path of students through the system – who is coming in, who is exiting, and where are they going?
- Obj. 1.2 – Strategy 1 – Veteran Hiring Programs
    - GT Savannah's Vet2 Program
    - Programs opening up to allow vets to work in civilian occupations for up to three months while in transition. Vet can work full time off the base and the military will pay his salary. Allows companies to test the vets in new occupations before they are released from the military.
    - Need to include TCSG in the veteran hiring/training dialog.
    - Department of Labor also offers the Hire-A-Hero program
- Obj. 1.2 – Strategy 2 – Comprehensive Training Course Using Floorcovering Principles to Teach Manufacturing Fundamentals
    - Floyd County (ask David Apple for info) offers an Intro to Lean Course and Lean/Six Sigma courses
    - Dalton State used to offer Six Sigma courses – but that was part of an internal training program through Shaw. However, may be a potential resource for future program development.
- Obj. 1.3 – Strategy 1 – STEM + E focused schools
    - Ex. I-CAR STEM elementary school – promoted creative thinking through project based learning
    - Calhoun City Schools are all becoming STEM certified
    - STEM labs present in middle schools in Dalton
    - What did the educators do to prepare themselves to deliver the STEM curriculum?
        - One example, educators asked industry representatives to provide problem sets or basic training information to be used in the classroom
        - Could tie-in with mentoring program (See Obj. 1.3 – Strategy 6).

    - Possible Tellus Science Museum tie-in?
    - Bring industry experts into the classroom to run projects or specialized courses
        - Allows industry to influence the quality of education
        - May also be used as a recruitment tool
        - Ex. Wiregrass
- Obj. 1.3 – Strategy 2 – Mobile STEM/Engineering classroom
    - General interest in the idea.
    - Suggested that implementation of a mobile classroom would be pretty costly.
- Suggested that CRI may be in the position to act as a catalyst for education and workforce development.
    - There has been a prior lack of HR collaboration – but this may be pulled back together
    - Has the potential to offer information general enough to provide protection for participants (from a competition/anti-trust perspective)

Goal 2: Infrastructure

- Important impact on region – changing environmental regulations
    - Suggestion to add details to the goals/plan that speak to help industry adapt to those changes
- Obj. 2.1 – Strategy 1 – Sustainability of utilities/water resources
    - Previously, road and water infrastructure would have been an issue – now those pieces are relatively strong
        - Example – Water Resource Center draws international visitors – is there a way to leverage this asset?
    - Power + network infrastructure of greater concern
- Obj. 2.2 – Support the strategies outlined in the "Digital Economy" plan for the region
    - Digital Economy Plan
        - Finds that advanced mfg requires need for high-performance, "plug + play" network infrastructure
            - Allows for faster set-up times for service (3 – 5 days)
        - Focus on connection between middle-mile network and industrial parks
    - WiFi Infrastructure – important not only for public institutions, but also on industrial sites – this will become more important with the potential inland port
- Obj. 2.3 – Strategy 1 + 2 – Inland Port
    - Look at Front Royal, VA as a model
    - Better to go for a bigger "ask" for a larger development, than smaller requests annually
- Obj. 2.3 – Strategy 3 – East-West Connector
    - Connect NWGA to I-85, Greenville.
    - Use 282? "Cut a mountain."
    - This is an important goal, because if Dalton doesn't do it, Tennessee will
    - Reference the Thrive Bypass.

  - Tennessee previously instituted a special transportation tax to be used to connect counties to the highway system.
  - GDOT has funds available for Appalachian Highway System Development – may be able to be leveraged for this E-W connector, as it would increase the access of many Appalachian counties.
- Obj. 2.4 – Solar Power Expansion
  - Current solar incentives not enough to outweigh the cost for mfg.
    - Only allowed to produce 10,000KW (not enough to be attractive).
    - Mfg want to produce more, to help offset their energy costs.
    - Need to explore co-generation laws.
  - Utility Service improvements – Look to USDA for funding opportunities

Goal 3: Research, Innovation, and Sustainability

- Obj. 3.1 – Push the "greening" of the industry
  - CARE may be the best entity to head this up
  - Consult with Bob Peoples – how to leverage and grow what CARE is already doing in this area?
  - Access to capital/funding is important
  - Possibility to create an endowed chair at Dalton State for Sustainable Engineering
  - Talk with Paul Murray at Shaw
  - Need to help smaller businesses get caught up in terms of sustainability – no need to share industry secrets, but need to get them to a base level of sustainability, achieved by sharing best practices
    - Need to be careful of anti-trust laws
  - Recycling is expensive for the industry, but they do it, "because it is right."
    - Some of the ROI is a soft return
    - Includes eliminating post-industrial waste (many mfg now zero-waste facilities) as much as using post-consumer recycled content
  - Most of the sustainable activity comes from internal activities/innovations
- Obj. 3.3 – Support the prof. development and global reach of the industry
  - Development of a mfg specific summit may be possible
    - The region has a conference center that could be used to host such events
    - Tech companies would be interested in being a part of conferences + workshops – esp. those in adv. mfg.
      - May even be interested in helping to sponsor adv. mfg. and workforce recruitment conferences and activities
  - Funding opportunities may be available through Centers for International Business Education grant
  - Industry already has an international reach/presence
    - Need to understand the full benefits + costs of FDI
      - Not many overseas suppliers to attract

    - may attract international competition
- Committee understands that other industries in the region could benefit from this type of support
- More research needed to determine what other targeted industries would complement the region
- Correcting STEM deficiencies, marketing, and increasing apprenticeships deemed more important than attracting FDI