



NORTH FULTON

Economic Alliance

Strategic Initiative

A five-year initiative designed to address three pressing challenges to the region's economic prosperity and quality of life

Letter

FROM GNFCC LEADERSHIP

From Greater North Fulton to the world, the business environment is getting more competitive—not less. In North Fulton, we have much of which to be proud—a prosperous region with thriving communities and many assets. We also have an opportunity before us—to elevate Greater North Fulton and increase national and global awareness of our amazing region as a premiere location for business and talent.

We can also do more to address the challenges to our continued success. Our employers—large and small—struggle to fill open positions. And other communities and regions across the nation are hard at work pursuing the same jobs, talent, and growth opportunities we want here in Greater North Fulton.

It is with these opportunities and challenges in mind that the Chamber and key private and public sector leaders have developed this strategic initiative to:

- **Brand and market** our region to attract investment, talent and jobs;
- **Expand our talent pipeline** to strengthen our regional competitiveness; and
- **Elevate regional economic development** to maximize region-wide performance.

This strategic initiative is about ensuring our present and future competitiveness as a community—and the opportunities and quality of life that come with it.

The Chamber Board believes this initiative is critical to our community's future prosperity, and this newly formed initiative of the Chamber is the best organization to lead this effort; NOW is the time for action.

As described in the following pages, this initiative is a proactive, intentional approach to sustaining and growing our businesses and total economic strength. After all, business interests are community interests—business activity and production drive our economy—and in so doing, positively impact our quality of life and families across Greater North Fulton and beyond.

We welcome your leadership and investment and hope you share our excitement about this opportunity to elevate our already strong community to the next level of global competitiveness!



KALI BOATRIGHT
President & CEO
GREATER NORTH FULTON CHAMBER



JIM TEEL
2024 Board Chair
Greater North Fulton Chamber
GOODWYN MILLS CAWOOD



DEAN COLLINS
2025 Board Chair
Greater North Fulton Chamber
AXIS COMPANIES

ABOUT GN FCC AND THE NORTH FULTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

FAST FACTS

- **Vision:** To be the premier business organization driving member and community success
- **Mission:** Grow business, develop talent, and lead regional prosperity throughout North Fulton
- **50+ year history** of growing businesses and creating jobs in Greater North Fulton
- **Award-winning chamber** serving Greater North Fulton and its six unique communities:
 - Alpharetta
 - Johns Creek
 - Milton
 - Mountain Park
 - Roswell
 - Sandy Springs
- **Highest accreditation** (5 Star) from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Chamber (only 1% of Chambers have achieved this status)
- **Convener and catalyst for making North Fulton a location of choice** for businesses and workers by:
 - Directly supporting growth and expansion of existing employers
 - Strong business advocacy
 - Building a community attractive to businesses, workers and residents
 - Developing leaders through 30+-year old Leadership North Fulton



INCREASED ROLE AS REGIONAL PROBLEM SOLVER

Especially in recent years, the Chamber has expanded its programs and impact beyond traditional "service to members"

The Chamber:

- Has developed a strategic plan focused on:
 - Business growth & expansion
 - Talent & leadership cultivation
 - Member value & engagement
- Has led work to address the lack of available talent in the region through various talent pipeline and development initiatives including:
 - Key partnerships with businesses and educational institutions
 - NextGen Connects program for over 100+ young professionals
 - Emerging Leaders Program for high school students to connect with regional business leaders
 - Launch of NorthFultonJobs.com connecting employers and job seekers
 - Businesswomen Organizing for Leadership & Development (BOLD) program offering networking and support for female business leaders
- Provided critical business support programs throughout the pandemic and beyond
- Hosts the North Fulton Futures Summit, bringing together public and private sector leaders to collaborate regarding regional challenges and solutions
- Leads bi-monthly North Fulton Municipal Association meetings and regional economic developer partner meetings
- Opened a new office at Avalon with space for collaboration, meetings, and events for Chamber members and the community

THE INITIATIVE AND NEW NORTH FULTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

- NOW, Chamber Board, staff and public and private sector leaders believe the time is right for North Fulton stakeholders to address some of the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the regional business community
- This effort will be a privately and publicly funded Initiative of the Chamber with separate funding and investor involvement in implementation and oversight.

“ The North Fulton Region represents one the largest business economies in the state with a compelling inventory of economic development assets. It is only fitting that the leaders of this region would embark on an effort to work together to author and harness this compelling brand as well as strengthen a regional approach to economic development. ”

JOHN ASBELL, *Georgia Power*



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT GIVE RISE TO THE 2025 – 2029 INITIATIVE

1. Competition for businesses, jobs, and investment

- **Competitive reality** - other communities and regions throughout Georgia and across the nation are also hard at work pursuing the same companies, jobs, and growth opportunities as Greater North Fulton
- **Regional economic development collaboration** - many communities with which Greater North Fulton competes have fully funded, ambitious, multi-year economic development programs with strong brands and marketing campaigns to gain a competitive advantage in growing businesses, talent, and jobs
- **Lack of marketing of Greater North Fulton** - Fulton County's size (1M+ residents; 534 square miles, 60+ miles from north end to south end) and number of municipalities present a challenge for a unified, effective county-wide marketing effort
 - **Currently, there is no Greater North Fulton-focused, proactive marketing** underway to attract target industry sector businesses to this region. There is lack of awareness nationally and internationally about Greater North Fulton, its tremendous assets and its unique desirability within metro Atlanta.



2. Lack of available talent

- **Demand outpacing supply** - Employer demand continuously outpaces the supply of qualified workers. In short, there are more jobs than workers; workforce is THE top-of-mind issue for nearly every industry.
- **Demographics** - Greater North Fulton's **population has decreased by about 2%** – almost 8,000 residents over the last five years – and is projected to decrease by another 0.6% – about 2,285 residents – over the next five years
 - Although this is not a large population decrease, Greater North Fulton's **number of jobs grew by almost 189,500 over the last five years** and is **projected to grow by almost 23,500** over the next five years (Source: Lightcast/Georgia Power 2024)
 - Slightly **fewer millennials and Gen Z than national average for an area this size**
 - Nationally, declining...
 - Number of women in the workforce - women's participation in the labor force has been on a steady decline since the late 1990s – and COVID-19 exacerbated the trend
 - Population, births and fertility rates - Americans continue to have babies at a historically low rate.
 - Working age population with the “silver tsunami” of baby boomers retiring
- **Talent Barriers** - Barriers that impede talent availability:
 - **High cost of living** - high housing costs, inadequate childcare options, etc.
 - **No formal, large-scale, region-wide program** in North Fulton to attract or connect local talent to industry – the Chamber and other partners have been making great strides regarding talent, however, there is no large-scale coordinated effort.

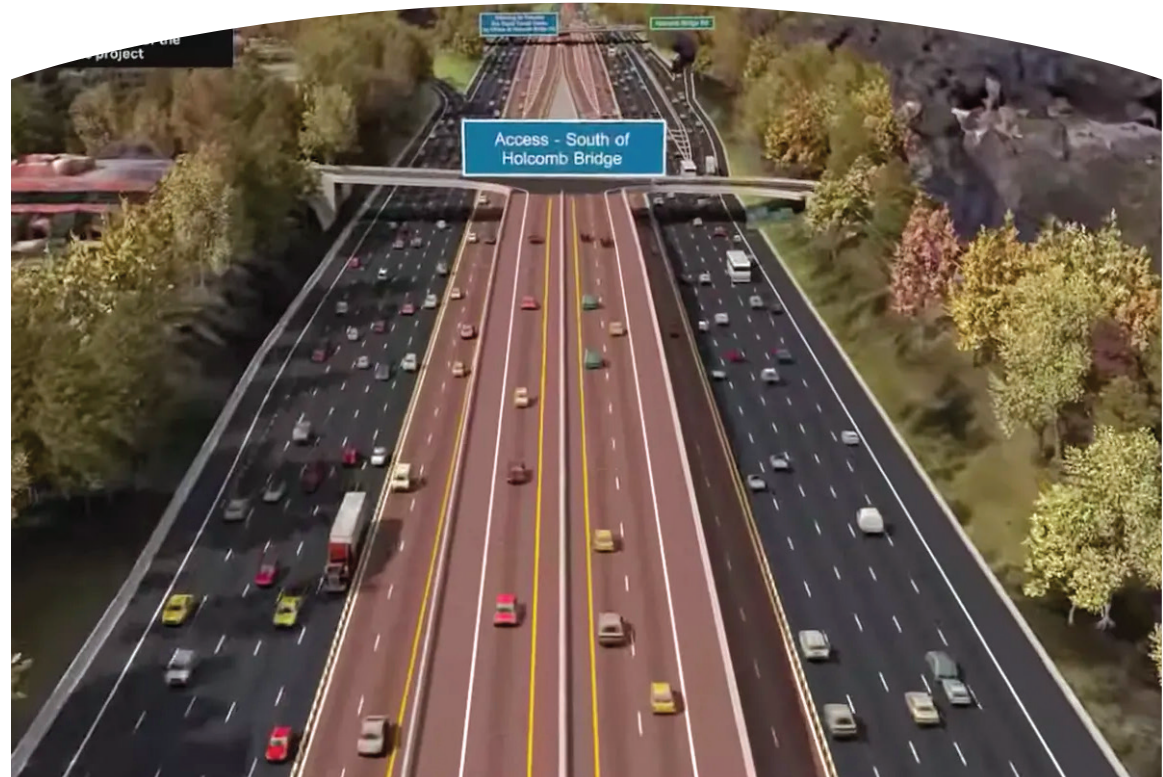
A BOLD, NEW INITIATIVE FOCUSED ON GREATER NORTH FULTON'S KEY CHALLENGES

3. Sub-optimal regional economic development structure and function

- **Distinct sub-region** - Greater North Fulton is a distinct sub-region of Fulton County with six thriving cities and, even though only part of a county, is itself a formidable competitor of many metro-Atlanta counties and other communities across the Southeast.
- **Siloed regional economic development** - economic development efforts for Greater North Fulton are not unified:
 - **Six cities with separate economic development offices** and a county-wide economic development office for the largest county in the State
 - **Small municipal economic development teams** limit ability to:
 - **Proactively market** and take action on business attraction leads
 - Implement a **formal business retention and expansion program** to solicit information from existing business and respond to these businesses' challenges
 - **No centralized research function** to support economic development across Greater North Fulton
- **Lack of unified advocacy effort** – the Chamber advocates for the business community but does not have sufficient resources to monitor and take action on policy issues at all levels of government affecting Greater North Fulton.

In recent years, the Chamber and other organizations and partners have taken steps to address these broad community challenges and have produced the previously noted successes. However, it has become clear that more resources are required to fully tackle these challenges together and produce lasting results.

Accordingly, as described in subsequent pages, the Chamber and key private and public sector leaders have developed a new initiative that, if fully funded, will be the private-public partnership driving economic prosperity for North Fulton and beyond. The new entity, the North Fulton Economic Alliance, will be an initiative of the Chamber but funded separately with significant engagement and implementation oversight from investors.



NORTH FULTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

2025-2029 REGIONAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY INITIATIVE

In response to key challenges impacting the Greater North Fulton Region, GNFCC and key private and public leaders have developed the following five-year strategic initiative, which is segmented into three primary goals with supporting strategies, tactics and measurable objectives



ECONOMIC
Strength &
Opportunity
for Businesses
& Individuals

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



COLLABORATION

Engage and collaborate with partners across the region; when we work together in our economic development activities, we are stronger and more competitive



DATA DRIVEN

Employ robust data to drive strategy; the Alliance will maintain online information and data that will enable the Alliance and its partners to identify challenges, respond effectively, and track progress



CREATIVE APPROACHES

Seek and deploy creative approaches to driving economic and community growth; the Alliance will seek out local and national best practices, convene key regional partners, and catalyze creative economic and community growth solutions



ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Focus on improving equality of access and opportunity; the Alliance views equality of access and opportunity as an economic issue and is committed to connecting financially-challenged individuals and families to education and employment opportunities



MEASURABLE RESULTS

Pursue objective measures and ensure transparency; the Alliance has identified performance measures and will track and report progress in a transparent fashion



GOAL

Brand

Brand & Market Our Region

to attract investment, talent, and jobs

[ALLIANCE ROLE: LEADER]

KEY STRATEGIES

1.1 Develop our brand and plan

- **Community benchmarking and research.** Benchmark Greater North Fulton against other innovative communities **(NEW!)**
- **Customized marketing plan.** Develop, with a branding / marketing firm and public/private partners, a detailed marketing plan for Greater North Fulton to attract jobs, investment and talent **(NEW!)**
- **Brand and collateral development.** Create a distinctive Greater North Fulton brand that has some integration with Atlanta, promoting the advantages and assets of the region, for use with external and internal audiences **(NEW!)**
 - **Brand toolkit.** Create a digital brand toolkit with content for downloading by economic development partners and employers; use to sync messaging across Greater North Fulton for a regional shared voice
 - **Regional website.** Build a regional economic development website
 - **Marketing materials.** Craft print and digital marketing materials, including video that can be used by the Chamber, our six cities, Greater North Fulton businesses, and economic development partners with targeted sector and talent prospects

TARGET INDUSTRIES

- Technology
- Healthcare
- Bio Sciences
- Finance/Insurance
- Telecommunications
- Logistics & Business Services
- Sports / Entertainment

1.2 Market Greater North Fulton as a premier location for business

- **Marketing campaign.** Deploy new brand and marketing collateral through a regional and national marketing campaign to support the generation of more business location “leads” **(NEW!)**.
In collaboration with regional partners:
 - **External events.** Promote Greater North Fulton’s strengths at industry and trade conferences
 - **Inbound events.** Conduct inbound marketing events showcasing Greater North Fulton to domestic and international business leaders, their in-house or site selector representatives, and brokers on behalf of the region
 - **Ambassador program.** Develop Greater North Fulton C-Suite ambassadors and provide tools and training needed to assist in promoting Greater North Fulton as a place to locate businesses
- **Media relationships.** With regional partners, identify and build relationships with influential members of the print and electronic media, especially those covering business news of Greater North Fulton’s target industries **(NEW!)**
- **Project leads.** With regional partners, collaborate to respond to prospect leads from direct inquiries, the State, and other partners **(NEW!)**

“The idea of bringing together our North Fulton cities for enhanced marketing of our region to drive economic development activities is exciting and much needed.”



DANIELLE CHEUNG, Wells Fargo

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Cohesive, inspiring regional brand identity
- Greater awareness of region amongst site selectors and other decision-makers
- Benchmarking needs of Cities
- More economic development wins



PRIMARY BUDGET ITEMS

- VP, North Fulton Economic Alliance
- Brand development, marketing campaign and media placement
- Conferences and events and regional exhibit production



“Much of our success over the next decade and beyond will depend on Greater North Fulton establishing a national identity that businesses and people want to be a part of; this Initiative allows us to widely share the story of our strong business community and quality of life.”

JIM TEEL, Goodwyn Mills Cawood

GOAL 2 Talent

Expand Our Talent Pipeline

to strengthen regional competitiveness

[ALLIANCE ROLE: CONVENER]

KEY STRATEGIES

2.1 Develop & Retain Local Talent

- **U.S. Chamber TPM system.** Apply to and implement the Talent Pipeline Management® (TPM) program, an innovative, “best practice” approach to closing the skills gap by applying lessons from supply chain management to talent and workforce partnerships **(NEW!)**
- **Curriculum.** Collaborate with area educational institutions and local businesses to ensure current curriculum matches employers’ future workforce needs **(EXPANDED!)**
- **Work-based learning.** Recruit and educate employers to offer internships and apprenticeships in high-demand careers; grow business engagement in work-based learning to significantly increase the number of participating employers **(NEW!)**

2.2 Attract New Talent

- **National talent attraction campaign.** In coordination with broader Greater North Fulton branding efforts, position Greater North Fulton as a magnet for—and top destination to find—workforce talent and implement a national, targeted recruitment strategy **(NEW!)**
 - **Partnerships.** Partner with local and regional businesses and other organizations to implement the campaign and identify and prioritize other talent attraction “best practices” **(NEW!)**
 - **Talent return and retention.** Explore collaboration with Fulton County Schools and Greater North Fulton secondary education institution graduates to entice graduates back to the community; work with partners to create and maintain database of graduates **(NEW!)**



2.3 Connect Employers and Talent

- **Extension of employers' HR department.** Provide resource toolkit of policy, programmatic, and partnership strategies to support employer efforts to retain talent within their companies **(NEW!)**
- **Recruitment tools.** Provide to employers recruitment tools such as videos highlighting the strong quality of life in Greater North Fulton and PDFs on benefits of working and living in the region **(NEW!)**
- **Employer relationships with education and workforce development organizations.** Strengthen employer relationships with WorkSource Fulton, local universities and colleges, nonprofits and other organizations to promote immediate placement of jobseekers and educational opportunities for existing employees (e.g., upskilling) **(EXPANDED!)**
- **Talent activation.** Encourage workers to re-enter the workforce. For example, launch community-wide campaign focused on engaging parents / caregivers to return to work after many departed during the pandemic to care for their children; recommend steps employers can take to utilize these workers **(NEW!)**
- **Digital job board.** Expand NorthFultonJobs.com website connecting employers and jobseekers to include internships **(EXPANDED!)**
- **Market wage information.** Publish annual wage resources to allow for transparency around employee pay scales and provide individual Company Talent Profiles through a data research tool that increases understanding of hiring market share, competitors in hiring and transitions, skill summaries, and more **(NEW!)**



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Decrease in number of unfilled high-demand career positions and open jobs in target sectors within the region
- Larger talent pool
- Formal regional intern / apprenticeship program with increased number of work-based learning opportunities

PRIMARY BUDGET ITEMS

- Director, Talent
- Talent attraction marketing campaign

“ It is our responsibility as North Fulton business leaders to embrace initiatives that support sustainable economic growth. This initiative creates the edge we need to support our businesses and keep them vibrant and profitable. ”

DEAN COLLINS, *Axis Companies*



3 GOALS

Elevate Regional Economic Development

to maximize region-wide performance

[ALLIANCE ROLE: SUPPORTER]

KEY STRATEGIES

3.1 Strengthen regional partnerships

- **Municipal economic development teams.** Foster and support collaboration amongst North Fulton economic development professionals: **(EXPANDED!)**
 - Convene regional economic developers
 - Determine needs of each municipality
 - Convene top Business Leaders & Stakeholders
 - Efficiently leverage resources and reduce duplication of effort by coordinating regional resources and responses from the private, public, education and non-profit sectors
- **Region-specific information.** Maintain a dynamic website to support regional economic development, including **(NEW!)**:
 - A dashboard tracking regional metrics
 - Links to municipal / regional partners' websites
 - A database of foreign companies operating in the region, the region's most marketable buildings and sites, etc.



3.2 Implement next level BR&E

- **Proactive BR&E.** With municipal economic development partners, implement a proactive Business Retention and Expansion program to engage and assist target industries and other high-impact employers driving the Greater North Fulton economy (**NEW!**)
 - **Business identification.** Identify top 50 employers in Greater North Fulton
 - **Business visitation.** With local economic developers, annually conduct 50 one-on-one meetings with businesses to identify challenges and opportunities; track and analyze data from visits
 - **Solutions.** Conduct 4-5 roundtable meetings per year with businesses in the same geographic area; provide an update on key issues and gather input on challenges businesses in the area are facing; work with local economic developers and municipalities to address businesses' stated challenges
- **Key supplier identification and recruitment.** During visits with businesses, identify key suppliers the Alliance might recruit to the region (**NEW!**)
- **Database of local suppliers.** Develop database of local suppliers that serve a variety of industries and needs; raise awareness among the business community of these local suppliers to create more opportunities for area businesses and reduce extended and vulnerable supply chains (**NEW!**)
- **Rapid Response Team.** Form and maintain a volunteer "Rapid Response Team" to intervene in situations involving a company's possible expansion or departure (**NEW!**)
- **Macro emergencies.** Respond with agility to time-sensitive and emergency situations (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, weather events, etc.); the Alliance is well situated to lead and bring partners together to achieve expedited results (**NEW!**)

3.3 Advocate for the Region

- **Identify and address policy issues** that impact businesses and the region through: (**EXPANDED!**)
 - **Position development.** Track issues affecting Greater North Fulton and develop policy positions and legislative agenda
 - **Policy monitoring.** Monitor policy and draft legislation at municipal, state, and federal levels
 - **Input from business.** Host sector-specific roundtables to gather feedback on key economic and quality of life issues and provide education about government issues and policies
 - **Thought leadership.** Draft white papers to provide "thought leadership" on key policy details and impact to the Greater North Fulton community
 - **Action.** Advocate for a supportive business environment through: (**EXPANDED!**)
 - **Regional leadership.** Work with regional partners to address regional policy challenges including, for example, manage North Fulton Municipal Association, lead local / regional E-SPLOST and T-SPLOST efforts; collaborate with MARTA and Georgia DOT regarding transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit expansion on Georgia 400)



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **More project leads and wins (leading to more jobs and capital investment)**
- **Increased number of business expansions and jobs**
- **Greater intra-region collaboration**
- **Business friendly policies and environment**

PRIMARY BUDGET ITEMS

- **Manager, Business Support & Advocacy**



PROGRAM DIVISIONS AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

CHAMBER MEMBER SERVICES DIVISION

The Chamber is funded by member dues, sponsorship, events, programs and services, which supports the Chamber's business plan.

13 Chamber Staff and \$2.3 million annual investment in delivery of services to members and the community.

CHAMBER MEMBERS FUND:

- Member Support and Business Connections
- Regular Communications About Business and Community Issues
- Monitoring and Advocacy on policy issues
- Access to Business Education and Professional Development
- Business Exposure and Marketing
- Networking Events
- Relocation and Community Information
- Member Recognition and Awards
- Member Directory and Listings
- Networking Access with Elected Officials
- Committee Opportunities

NORTH FULTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE INITIATIVE DIVISION

The Initiative is funded by private and public partners to address key regional challenges and opportunities.

3 dedicated Initiative Staff and \$600k annual investment (via five year pledges) in delivery of the Initiative.

INITIATIVE INVESTORS FUND:

- **GOAL 1** Brand & Market Our Region (to attract investment, talent and jobs)
- **GOAL 2** Expand Our Talent Pipeline (to strengthen regional competitiveness)
- **GOAL 3** Elevate Regional Economic Development (to maximize regional performance)



“ It is truly exciting to see the Chamber and its partners taking such a bold move to collaborate and bring together broad local support to help guide the direction of our community – especially with the focus on helping businesses thrive, engage and find the workforce they need to support their growth and success. This is a vision worthy of our attention. We should all be proud supporters of this Initiative. ”

LAURA MADAJEWSKI, *HLB Gross Collins*

INVESTOR ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Initiative will offer the following engagement opportunities based on level of investment:

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & NETWORKING

- Invitation to Initiative implementation meetings - QUARTERLY
- Invitation to Investor summit and economic forecast - ANNUALLY
- Exclusive briefing with Head of the Alliance - ANNUALLY
- Invitation to VIP and exclusive events with elected and appointed local and state leaders, existing companies, and newly relocated or expanding companies
- Early access to research and analysis
- FLASH emails, texts, or calls prior to major initiative and project announcements

FOUNDER INVESTOR

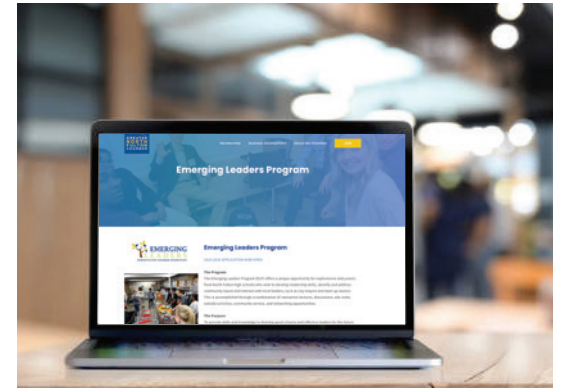
- Consideration for service on Initiative Investor Council
- Consideration for service on Initiative Implementation Committees

MARKETING

- Listed on Preferred Vendor List which is shared with other investors
- Listing recognition on Initiative webpage
- Subscription to and recognition in quarterly progress publication

CUSTOMIZED INFORMATION

- Business intelligence - access to customized reports (individual company talent profiles, occupation wage data, and trends of interest)



“ We must continue to attract businesses and people seeking a strong business environment and a high quality of life. This Initiative is a significant step towards creating sustainable economic growth and elevating our regional identity. ”

FREDA HARDAGE, *Northside Hospital*



RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS/INITIATIVE BUDGET



GOAL

ANNUAL BUDGET

5-YEAR BUDGET

GOAL 1: Brand and Market Our Region (BRAND)

\$300,000

\$1,250,000

GOAL 2: Expand Our Talent Pool (TALENT)

\$150,000

\$750,000

GOAL 3: Elevate Regional Economic Development (JOBS)

\$150,000

\$1,000,000

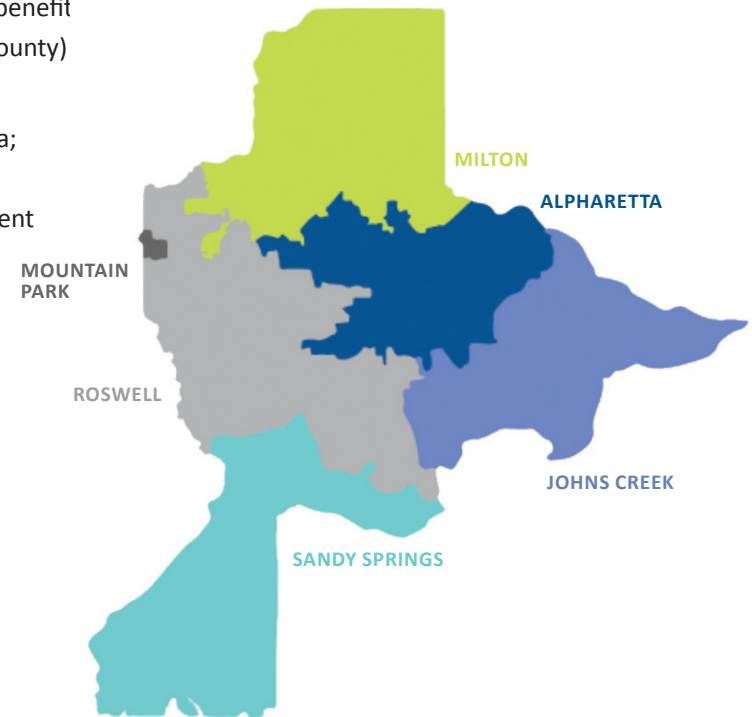
Total Budget/Funding Need

\$600,000

\$3,000,000

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC IMPACT AND BENEFITS OF THE INITIATIVE

- **Increased awareness** of Greater North Fulton as a place for business, workers and families to thrive
- **Diversified businesses** and **expanded existing businesses** in Greater North Fulton
- **New capital investment** (land, buildings, machinery)
- **Diversified high-grade jobs** in our target industries; these “direct” jobs will trigger additional “indirect” (supplier-type) and “induced” (service-sector) jobs
 - **New annual payroll** associated with direct, indirect and induced jobs
 - **New disposable** personal income to be spent in North Fulton and beyond – benefit
 - **Less Retail Leakage** (more jobs locally equals more \$’s spent within Fulton County)
- **New loan and deposit potential** for area financial institutions
- **New sales and property tax revenue** paid to governments throughout the area; increased tax base to meet community development goals
- **Significant improvement in the area’s workforce** quality, quantity and alignment that will greatly benefit both employers and employees and fuel innovation
- **Improved quality of life** for residents and workers throughout Greater North Fulton and the region





“I’m thrilled to support the new North Fulton Economic Alliance. It will be a gamechanger. As a region, we have many accomplishments and assets of which to be proud, but if we don’t have a well-orchestrated, properly resourced regional economic development function and strong regional infrastructure, we will miss out on opportunities in North Fulton.”


BRANDON BEACH, *True North 400*

ECONOMIC IMPACT of filling 1,000 open jobs in target sectors in North Fulton:

1,247
TOTAL
jobs 
DIRECT, INDIRECT & INDUCED

\$178.65
MILLION 
IN NEW **payroll**
DIRECT, INDIRECT & INDUCED

\$228.78
MILLION 
IN **value added**
DIRECT, INDIRECT & INDUCED

\$365.63
MILLION 
IN **output**
DIRECT, INDIRECT & INDUCED

SOURCE: Georgia Power, 2024



NORTH FULTON
**Economic
Alliance**