

TARGET INDUSTRY & ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ALIGNMENT STRATEGY

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April 2020

Prepared for the
Nacogdoches Economic
Development
Corporation

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Executive Summary

The Nacogdoches Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO) hired Pegasus Planning and Development to create a Target Industry and Economic Alignment Strategy for NEDCO, the City of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County. The 5-month project involved three phases, which included extensive stakeholder and public engagement, data analysis, opportunity vetting, and culminated in the submission of this final strategy.

Nacogdoches County is a relatively rural community in Deep East Texas, with a population of approximately 33,000. The community boasts numerous assets, including being home to Stephen F. Austin University (and thus a substantial population of young, educated professionals), abundant natural beauty, a close-knit community, and a historic downtown.

The implementation of I-69, in addition to new leadership at Stephen F. Austin University (SFA) and the City of Nacogdoches' Manager's Office made this an opportune time to create a strategy which would capitalize on the Community's assets and current activities.

Unfortunately, just before this project was complete, the COVID-19 Virus struck the world. Nacogdoches, like many counties across the country, is now facing a new host of challenges, including the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the community. As such, emergency shelter and food security issues have taken precedence over many of the strategies found within this Plan. With this context in mind, strategies have been provided to help ease the transition from pandemic to normalcy.

Prior to the submission of this strategy and COVID-19, NEDCO's target industries were lumber, manufacturing, retail, and natural resources – all traditional industries for a relatively rural community. Through the analysis of employment, wage, and industry trends, it was discovered that these industries would not “move the needle” in addressing the Community's high poverty level. As such, the target industries have pivoted to higher paid industries, which show tremendous promise with future job growth, and require upskilling much of the local workforce. As a part of this strategy, the industries of Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology, Healthcare, and Aviation have been recommended for business attraction and expansion. Numerous strategies found herein are focused on bolstering these industries. Other existing industries are still important drivers of the economy. Yet, ***these new target industries will help bring the community out of poverty and create a much more sustainable and growing economy.***

This Plan also provides strategic recommendations, divided into four sub-categories: Quality of Place, Talent Attraction and Retention, Business Recruitment and Expansion, and Internal Strategies. The strategies and actions have also been placed within an Implementation Matrix, to guide the prioritization of each strategy, and to identify a timeline and critical partners to help ease the implementation of the strategies. Strategic economic development will take Nacogdoches to the next level of economic diversification that is desired by leaders, residents, and businesses. NEDCO, the City, and key stakeholders have specific roles to play and are poised to begin implementing this plan.

Introduction

The Nacogdoches Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO) commissioned this strategic plan with the goal of developing a vision and framework for the continued growth and economic development of Nacogdoches County. Specifically, this strategic plan focuses on target industries and economic activity alignment, with an emphasis on tools for implementation.

This Strategic Plan is the culmination of several phases of analysis, community engagement efforts, and collaboration with residents, business owners, economic development professionals, and city staff. The consultant and staff efforts have yielded a unique and practical set of tools for this plan, including: (1) action steps, (2) implementation guide, and (3) targeted industry recommendations.

This Strategic Plan builds upon the analysis from each phase of the project:

Phase I – Stakeholder and Asset Analysis

This plan was crafted with feedback from a deep stakeholder engagement process that included interviews, focus groups, and presentations. Additionally, Pegasus performed a Target Industry Analysis and an Asset Analysis, which included reviewing existing data and reports related to the region’s economic development assets.

Phase II – Opportunity Development

This phase focused on vetting opportunities with NEDCO, based on findings from Phase I, and crafting preliminary strategies.

Phase III – Strategy Development and Implementation

The final phase involved converting the data and opportunities into actionable steps in the creation of the strategic plan.

This plan seeks to leverage Nacogdoches’ assets, community support, and political will to steer Nacogdoches toward a brighter economic future.

Factors Affecting Nacogdoches' Economy

Developing an economic development strategy for Nacogdoches requires an understanding of the community's comparative advantages and disadvantages in the context of the larger regional economy. Below are some key considerations.

Assets

Tight-Knit Community & Quality of Life

In speaking with stakeholders, business owners, and residents, it is apparent that Nacogdoches' tight-knit community is highly revered as an asset which makes residents proud to live in the "Oldest Community of Texas". Additionally, there are various "quality of life" elements within the County which should be marketed, including its abundant natural beauty and "slower pace of life".

Downtown

Nacogdoches boasts a historic Downtown with an array of shops and restaurants on red brick streets. The Downtown neighborhood is highly walkable and is unique in its abundance of family-owned shops.

College Town

Being a College Town, Nacogdoches has a young and progressive culture, inspired by the large student and faculty population. Stephen F. Austin University has approximately 13,000 students and 519 full-time faculty, representing nearly 20% of the County's total population.

I-69 Expansion

This new highway will present tremendous opportunities for business and industry development with proper planning and preparation. It should be complete through Nacogdoches within 15 years with significant completion within 5-10 years.

Business-friendly Regulatory Environment

Nacogdoches has a friendly and supportive environment for prospective business owners. The County is known for its expedited permitting and approval processes.

Challenges

Lack of available sites

Nacogdoches currently has a lack of available sites to market to site selectors. One of the biggest issues is the lack of available sites over 1-acre for regional and national tenants. Infrastructure improvements will be needed to best package sites near the I-69 expansion corridor.

Infrastructure

Most of the Deep East Region suffers from a severe lack of Broadband Access. This could be the one issue that keeps the region from competing globally in the new economy. Rail and rail spur access are other issues that need to be addressed for potential industrial recruitment. Yet, for most Advanced Manufacturers, broadband technology is more important than rail.

Attracting and retaining young professionals

The County is currently a “talent exporter”, with most SFA students leaving upon graduation. Young professionals cite a lack of jobs and entertainment options as prime reasons for leaving Nacogdoches, in addition to poor NISD performance. There is a general feeling of not belonging to Nacogdoches.

ISD performance

The passing of a \$77.9 million-dollar bond for K-12 education in November 2018 marked a turning point for the Nacogdoches’ school system. While the bond investments have been a substantial catalyst for positive change on the NISD’s performance, continuous improvement is still necessary, so that Nacogdoches can compete as an ISD of choice for families and businesses.

No workforce development programs in Nacogdoches County

Nacogdoches does not currently have a workforce development program or community college presence within the County. Such a program would bolster local companies by providing them with local options for upskilling their workers. Because public transportation is limited in Deep East Texas, a local program would also improve accessibility for residents that lack car access.

Poverty levels

Nacogdoches County has a 30% poverty rate, as compared to 14% in Texas, and 11% in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). As such, lowering the County’s poverty rate should be key metric for measuring the County’s progress moving forward.

Quality of place

Quality of place amenities are key components of talent and business attraction. The availability of talent has increasingly become a key criterion for businesses, when choosing where to locate new offices and headquarters. Millennials currently represent the largest component of the workforce and many of them prefer to live in green, walkable neighborhoods with mixed amenities and activities. As such, quality of place improvements are key in attracting and retaining the young and educated workforce, which in turn, aids business recruitment.

Existing Target Industries

Prior to the creation of this Plan, NEDCO’s target industries were Lumber, Manufacturing, Natural Resources, and Retail. As one of NEDCO’s goals is to lower the percentage of households in poverty in the County, Pegasus explored the average wages for each of the current target industries, along with other factors such as projected employment growth over time and industry growth. It was found that many of the current target industries provide low wages and that if these industries continued to be the “target”, the County’s poverty level would likely remain the same in the years to come.

	Nacogdoches County	U.S
Per Capita Income	\$22,580	\$32,621
Median Household Income	\$43,598	\$60,293
Percent in Poverty	21.6%	11.8%

Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2018

Some Considerations:

- The Natural Resources Industry hosts a number of subsectors including Renewable Energy, Natural Gas, and Oil and Gas. The average Oil and Gas employment in Nacogdoches decreased 31% from 2015 to 2018 and approximately 23,094 Oil and Gas jobs have been lost in the State of Texas since 2015. This industry employs a relatively small amount of Nacogdoches residents
- Nacogdoches County has a number of traditional manufacturing plants. The County’s 2nd largest employer, Pilgrim’s Pride, employs approximately 1450 people. While the County’s traditional manufacturers will continue to play an important role in Nacogdoches’ economy, it is important to note that the majority of jobs within traditional manufacturing plants are low-skilled and low-paid. According to the BLS (2018), the average median hourly wage for a Food Processing worker was \$13.26 per hour. In Texas, the Food Manufacturing Industry is projected to decrease by 1% from 2016 – 2026
- While the Agriculture and Forestry industry offer slightly higher wages than the other target industries, it represents only 2% of Nacogdoches workforce. Employment in the Forestry and Logging Industry decreased in Texas by 8% from 2015 to 2018 and is projected to decline 4% from 2018 to 2026
- Although a community will always need retail, it is important to note that retail jobs are and will continue to be low-paying. As the adage states, “retail follows rooftops,” and more retail will naturally come to Nacogdoches as the community continues to grow. Thus, while retail is important, it is recommended that NEDCO focus on target industries which will “move the poverty needle” and further strengthen Nacogdoches’ economy

Industry/Occupation Category	Average Median Hourly Wage	Average Annual Wages	Average Annual Employment	Percent of Private Sector Employment (County)
Food Processing	\$13.26	\$27,590	2870 (total manufacturing)	17%
Wood Product Manufacturing Production	\$14.64	\$33,320		
Retail Trade	\$13.75	\$28,600	2721	16%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$7.42	\$15,449	2928	17%
Agriculture and Forestry	\$18.62	\$38,744	414	2%
TOTAL:				52%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018

Recommended Target Industries

The industries that NEDCO and its partners will focus its economic development efforts include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Information Technology
- Aviation



Advanced Manufacturing

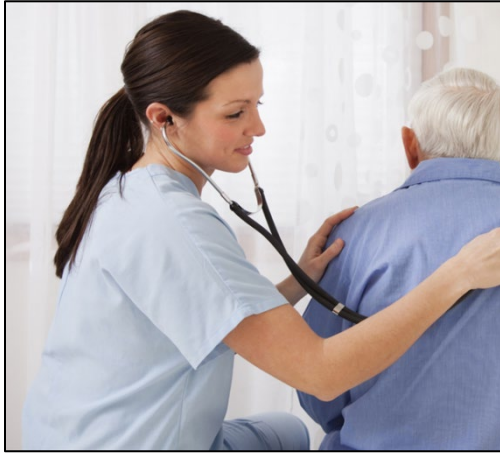
Advanced manufacturing is the process of mass-producing products on demand, using the latest technology maintain efficiency. Though most traditional manufacturing processes can be easily executed by what has been traditionally referred to as "unskilled labor," advanced manufacturing requires specialized training. Due to the higher level of training needed, advanced manufacturing workers command higher salaries than traditional manufacturing employees.

Currently, there exists a skills gap for advanced manufacturing positions, which is projected to result in 2.4 million unfilled positions by 2028. Various factors are causing this skills gap, including shifting skill sets (towards advanced technologies and automation), misperceptions about manufacturing jobs, and the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation. It has been found that 20% of these jobs require STEM expertise, while 63% require a postsecondary education. Advanced manufacturing positions demand higher wages, approximately 13% higher than traditional manufacturing positions.

Occupation Examples:

Occupation	Median Salary (2019)	Education Required
Computer Hardware Engineer	\$115,120	Bachelor's Degree
Machinist	\$44,110	One-year apprenticeship or vocational school
Mechanical Engineer	\$85,880	Bachelor's Degree
Fabricator	\$31,850	High school, additional training
Electronic Technician	\$63,660	Associate Degree

Source: BLS (2019), Pegasus



Healthcare

The healthcare industry involves numerous sectors which provide goods and services to treat patients with curative, preventive, rehabilitative, and palliative care. Healthcare occupations are projected to grow 14% from 2018 to 2028, faster than average for all occupations. The median wage for healthcare practitioners and technical occupations was \$66,440 in 2018.

Occupation Examples:

Occupation	Median Salary (2019)	Education Required
Dental Hygienist	\$74,840	Associate's Degree
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer	\$67,080	Associate's Degree
Registered Nurses	\$71,730	Bachelor's Degree
Radiation Therapists	\$82,330	Associate's Degree
Clinical Lab Technician	\$52,330	Bachelor's Degree

Source: BLS (2019), Pegasus



Information Technology

Information technology (IT) is a business sector that deals with computing, including hardware, software, telecommunications and generally anything involved in the transmittal of information or the systems that facilitate communication. Information Technology occupations are expected to grow by 12% from 2018 to 2018, faster than average for all occupations. The median wage for Computer and IT Technology occupations was \$86,230 in 2018, in comparison to \$38,640 for all occupations.

Occupation Examples:

Occupation	Median Salary (2019)	Education Required
Web Developer	\$69,430	Associate's Degree
Software Developer	\$105,590	Bachelor's Degree
Information Security Analysts	\$98,350	Bachelor's Degree
Computer Support Specialist	\$52,470	Associate's or Bachelor's Degree
Computer Network Technician	\$44,567	Associate's Degree

Source: BLS (2019), Pegasus



Aviation

The aviation industry is the global transportation network that carries goods and passengers by air. Various aviation industry job trends, such as increased aircraft maintenance and a developing pilot shortage, are projected to increase the demand for aviation-related occupations. Hosting regional airport space, Nacogdoches has an opportunity to utilize this space to grow its local aviation industry, focusing on pilot training and goods transportation.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 6% job growth for airline and commercial pilots through 2028. The aviation industry is set to experience employment growth due to various aviation industry job trends, including the need for increased aircraft maintenance, retiring Baby Boomer mechanics, and a developing pilot shortage. A 2016 report by Boeing indicates that 42% of the pilots currently flying for the major airlines in the U.S. will reach their mandatory retirement age of 65 in the next 10 years.

Occupation Examples:

Occupations	Median Salary (2019)	Education Required
Aircraft Mechanics and Technicians	\$63,060	FAA Certification
Commercial Pilot	\$82,240	FAA License
Aeronautical Engineer	\$115,220	Bachelor's Degree
Drone Operator	\$53,979	FAA Certification

Source: BLS (2019), Pegasus

Recommendations

All of the recommendations found below are also found in a matrix that consolidates the Action steps and assigns and schedule and key partners for implementation. These recommendations should be reviewed on an annual basis and updated and modified based on the current economic state. Furthermore, NEDCO should produce an annual “State of the Economy” that is focused on measuring and celebrating in success.

Quality of Place Strategies

Lead: NEDCO

Partners: City of Nacogdoches, County, SFA, Citizen Groups

Ensure that Nacogdoches County is a community where people of all ages want to live, work, and play by enhancing the “quality” of the place with consideration to all.

Action 1.1 Improve Neighborhoods

- Identify and prioritize the neighborhoods in need of assistance (high levels of crime, poverty, and/or physical deterioration) and establish metrics to determine the success of restoration initiatives
- Evaluate the current Building Facades Grant Program and consider the ways in which it could be improved/expanded upon
- Establish and operate a land bank for properties which have been foreclosed upon, demolishing blighted structures, and redeveloping demolished or vacant properties
- Considering fostering the creation of a local non-profit CHDO (Community Housing Development Organization) that partners with the City and SFA in planning and implementing revitalization

Action 1.2 Improve the Connection between SFA and Downtown

- Install bike lanes on a designated street between SFA and Downtown. Consider adding bike amenities (such as bike racks), pedestrian furniture, and urban design details (SFA flags along light posts) to create an inviting biking and pedestrian environment
- Create a dining/retail card which allows SFA students to spend money in local businesses (consider what services are not currently offered on campus)
- Strategically prepare and place news stories that highlight town-gown collaborations
- In line with action 2.4, continue to expand internship opportunities for SFA students in local businesses
- Form a Town-Gown Advisory Committee
- Create a targeted social media marketing campaign for SFA students, keeping students informed of local events and student discounts

- Engage SFA students in “service learning” which provides students with academic credit for volunteering in the community

Action 1.3 Add/Improve the Community Parks

- Continue to plan and improve the Park System. Such a plan would allow leadership to view the County’s park system in a holistic way
- Assess what the Community needs are, what facilities are lacking, and which facilities need repair
- Assemble a participatory team to plan for creating, restoring, or upgrading the parks and other facilities. This could be a public initiative funded by grants, a citizen-action coalition, or some other type of effort
- Add amenities to the existing parks (sports fields, pedestrian furniture, playgrounds, picnic tables, grills, community gardens, outdoor theatres)
- Consider promoting arts and cultural events within the County’s parks, such as family movie nights, farmers markets, and concerts
- Consider parks and amenities for all ages and levels

Action 1.4 Arts and Cultural Programming

- Arts and culture activities and initiatives can help define a community’s identity and create a sense of place. Whether through low-investment arts and culture programming or more elaborate projects such as public art master plans, they can enhance the artistic, cultural, and historical characteristics and assets of a community
- Partner with local organizations to increase arts and cultural programming in Nacogdoches County. Consider utilizing a combination of SFA and K-12 students
- Focus on creating events catered to the younger demographic (e.g. college students) and families
- Expand access to the Arts through classes and workshops in community centers, local libraries, and/or schools
- Create and nurture local artist networks. Encourage public art, such as murals in highly visible places

Action 1.5 Improve Walking and Bike Paths

- Linked to other strategies, such as improving the connectivity between SFA and Downtown, improving walking and bike paths adds to the quality of life in Nacogdoches and will encourage more pedestrian activity. Having wider sidewalks in key areas and pedestrian furniture facilitates these changes. Actions should consider streetscape improvements (such as bulb outs) to enhance pedestrian safety, weather protection where possible, and bicycle amenities
- Nacogdoches currently has numerous sidewalk expansion projects in place. The detail and design of sidewalks may require closer detail in certain key nodes (this plan may be linked to Action 1.6)

Action 1.6 Create a Regulating Plan or Design Guidelines for Key Development Districts

- Review the current design guidelines for Downtown and other key commercial areas to ensure that current guidelines are consistent with the goal of improving the pedestrian experience
- In targeted areas for commercial redevelopment, consider the creation of area-specific design guidelines to guide design and ensure uniformity of character

Talent Attraction and Retention Strategies

Lead: NEDCO

Partners: City of Nacogdoches, County, SFA, Citizen Groups

Action 2.1 Continue Improving K-12 Performance

- While it is early in the process to evaluate the full impact of the bond passed in November 2018, NEDCO should continue to work with the NISD to assess the progress and consider other ways to assist and best align the K-12 system with Nacogdoches' workforce needs
- Continue working with NISD to ensure the continued progress of the District's performance
- Through partnerships with local businesses, increase local internships and apprenticeships for high school students
- Align K-12 curriculum with target industries and STEM
- It is also essential that NEDCO and County leadership market the successes and accomplishments of the NISD

Action 2.2 Focus on Young Professionals

- Create a young professionals networking group for local businesses owners and entrepreneurs
- Start a mentorship program between existing and aspiring/new business owners
- Provide prospective business owners with relevant market data
- Consider additional business development programming

Action 2.3 Build a Workforce Development System in Nacogdoches

- Nacogdoches needs a workforce development system within the County. One option is a partnership with Angelina Community College. SFA may also be fostering their own collaboration with several community colleges. Either option is essential to follow.
- Facilitate the implementation of certification and credential programs in applicable learning institutions

Action 2.4 Expand Internship Opportunities

- In addition to expanding internship opportunities for high school students, market Handshake to local businesses and local encourage business owners to offer internships to SFA students
- Organize/host a local businesses career fair for SFA upperclassmen
- Create a mentorship program between SFA students and local business owners/professionals. These connections will help to “plug” students into life in Nacogdoches and may lead to more internship/job opportunities

Business Recruitment and Expansion Strategies

Lead: NEDCO

Partners: City of Nacogdoches, County, SFA, Citizen Groups, Private Sector

Action 3.1 Facilitate Development of I-69 Corridor

- Leverage funds to ensure that infrastructure is available on vacant parcels in the I-69 expansion area, including on/off ramps, rail spurs and/or broadband technology
- As of the time of writing, NEDCO and the City are about to undertake a Corridor Study and Plan, which will create a vision and implementable plan for land use, transportation, access management and aesthetics along I-69 and its collector streets into the City of Nacogdoches

Action 3.2 Review and Adapt Incentives Policies for Target Industries

- Traditional economic development used to focus on creating more jobs. More advanced policies focus on capital investment, talent amenities and workforce development
- Nacogdoches must coordinate an incentive policy (and align resources as such) geared towards the targeted industries and community values

Action 3.3 Market Sites and Available Office Space to Target Industries

- Research the language and priorities of target industries on their websites or publications and utilize it in the creation of marketing and PR materials
- Design marketing materials for specific industries and publish them in trade magazines, and websites. Request mentions in blogs and interact with them via social media

Action 3.4 Improve External Marketing

- NEDCO should adopt a Marketing plan. Items to include:
 - Vignettes of successful local business owners to bolster Nacogdoches’ image to prospective business owners
 - Market the business-friendly environment and expedited City processes
 - Highlight existing businesses in each target industry with video interviews and testimonials (peer to peer communication is always most effective in economic development)

Action 3.5 Leverage Opportunity Zones

- Create “Market Prospectus” sheets for several properties in Nacogdoches to attract Opportunity Zone Funds to Nacogdoches
- Market Opportunity Zones to potential investors and site selectors
- Hold a forum for local developers
- Network with local, regional, or national funds that have create funds which are applicable to Nacogdoches

Action 3.6 Bolster Entrepreneurship

- Additional programming and Business Plan Competitions would facilitate entrepreneurship in the County
- NEDCO should partner with SFA on the Center for Applied Research so that students are continuing to work on local issues
- Another action to bolster entrepreneurship would be to provide marketing assistance and access to market data to prospective business owners

Action 3.7 Manufacturing Alliance Strategy Implementation

- The nascent Alliance of Manufacturers in Nacogdoches and Angelina Counties have put forth several recommendations and even begun implementing talent programs with the high schools. There is also preliminary discussion among SFA and others about creating an Advanced Manufacturing entity in the region. This should be a major priority for this entire plan, as it will help the region move from traditional to high-skilled industry and employment

NEDCO Internal Strategies

Lead: NEDCO

Partners: City of Nacogdoches, County, SFA, Citizen Groups

Action 4.1 Improve Internal Marketing

- In line with the efforts to improve the internal marketing regarding the successes of the NISD, NEDCO should be consistent with its message and market its successes within the organization, to local leadership, and to the community
- Create an internal newsletter, which discusses values, goals, works in progress, and successes

Action 4.2 Provide More Data for Site Selectors, Entrepreneurs, and Business Owners

- There are various data points which are currently unavailable or difficult to find. Access to this data (such as the commercial and multifamily vacancy rates) would help investors in evaluating opportunities in Nacogdoches. Labor Market Data and Real Estate Data are

key data points for investors, developers, and businesses that are looking to expand or relocate in Nacogdoches

- Involving businesses and brokers/realtors in quarterly online surveys is an easy way to obtain data and maintain a better relationship with clients

Action 4.3 Craft a Strategy for the Hospital District

- Losing a hospital, even in a community with a 2nd hospital, is a big deal – especially given the level of indigent care at the non-profit hospital. Not only is healthcare access an issue, but there are many jobs that are at risk of being lost. This issue must become a community and civic issue immediately
- As the hospital issue evolves, there is an opportunity to look at how the hospital district is funded. Described as the “linchpin”, NEDCO’s ability to access much-needed funding is tied to the Hospital District. Crafting a strategy which would allow NEDCO to access sales tax funds is of great importance, because the success of many strategies can be multiplied with increased funds
- Create a Taskforce to tackle this issue and create a specific action plan

Action 4.4 Sustainable Funding Mechanism

- NEDCO is one of the lowest-funded economic development organizations in Texas. NEDCO staff is at competitive disadvantage when it comes to resources to lure or retain companies in Nacogdoches. The funding should be at least doubled and outside resources (public and/or a combination of public/private) need to be secured to foster additional site development and complement all strategies in this plan
- A serious discussion on public/private partnerships and dedicated tax sources for economic development needs to be had at all levels of government with the private sector in full support
- Create a Taskforce to tackle this issue and create a specific action plan. Same Taskforce should be utilized for both Actions 4.3 and 4.4

Implementation Matrix

This Implementation Matrix is meant to assist NEDCO in navigating the prioritization of the various recommended strategies.

While all strategies are important, the assigned priority levels reflect the urgency of implementing each strategy. As such, strategies marked “high” should be implemented within a shorter timeframe than the strategies labeled “low”.

NEDCO may deem it necessary to further modify the priority levels based on other factors such as the organization’s resources and funding limitations.

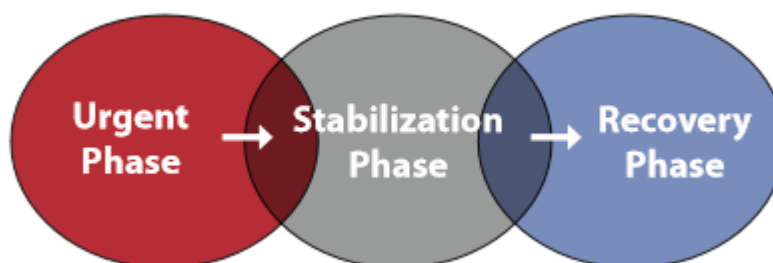
Recommendations	Priority Level	Timeline	Partners
Quality of Place Strategies			
Action 1.1 Improve Neighborhoods	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Action 1.2 Improve the Connection between SFA and Downtown	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, SFA
Action 1.3 Add/Improve the Community Parks	LOW	Year 2-5	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Action 1.4 Arts and Cultural Programming	MEDIUM	Year 2	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Action 1.5 Improve Walking and Bike Paths	MEDIUM	Year 2	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Action 1.6 Create a Regulating Plan or Design Guidelines for Key Development Districts	MEDIUM	Year 2	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Talent Attraction and Retention Strategies			
Action 2.1 Continue Improving K-12 Performance	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, County, Citizen Groups
Action 2.2 Focus on Young Professionals	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, County
Action 2.3 Build a Workforce Development System in Nacogdoches	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, County
Action 2.4 Expand Internship Opportunities	LOW	Year 2-5	City of Nacogdoches, County, SFA, Local Business Owners
Business Recruitment and Expansion Strategies			
Action 3.1 Facilitate Development of I-69 Corridor	HIGH	Year 1	City of Nacogdoches, County
Action 3.2 Review and Adapt Incentives Policies for Target Industries	LOW	Year 2-5	City of Nacogdoches
Action 3.3 Market Sites and Available Office Spaces to Target Industries	MEDIUM	Year 2	City of Nacogdoches, County

Appendix

Strategies and Considerations – Post COVID-19

At the time of this writing, the pandemic of COVID-19 has changed the way “business as usual” operates, with measures such as social distancing and business closures impacting all elements of everyday life. As such, below are some considerations for operating through and after COVID-19.

The Path to Recovery



- In an effort to not lose momentum, many planning departments, economic development corporations, and other organizations are choosing to use technology (such as video conferencing) to proceed with projects and plans. Various EDC’s have been using Zoom Video Communications (or similar technology) to conduct meetings in lieu of in-person meetings. Alternatively, live meetings can be hosted on YouTube which allows for comment from a broader range of constituents
- The need to shift to internet-based communication has brought to light the issue of broadband access (or the lack thereof) for many rural communities. APA suggests that each community “plan for broadband” by becoming familiar with county coverage and incorporating broadband and technology-related goals and objectives in comprehensive plans. NEDCO could consider ways in which it could partner with the County to improve broadband connectivity for the most rural communities. Local leaders should review local regulations and consider amending barriers to broadband deployment, if they exist. NEDCO can also review the use of online technology and consider ways in which to improve access to online services and information. This is the time to pull together and collaborate with the Deep East COG to pursue funding to enhance regional broadband connectivity. Additionally, getting laptops or similar devices in every household should also be a priority right now.
- NEDCO can help small business owners by bridging the gap of information and resources. Various resources are continuously becoming available in light of the current circumstances. NEDCO can reach out to small business owners and/or share the

pertinent information on social media. For example, the U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest loans to small businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacts by COVID-19 through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program

- Having a COVID-19 response plan in place will help to ease recovery efforts. A helpful example to reference is the *Utah Leads Together Plan* created by Utah’s Economic Response Task Force. The strategy is divided into three phases:
 - **Urgent Phase:** expected to last 8-12 weeks beginning from March 16, 2020. The objective of this phase is to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, before the hospitals reach saturation. It is important in this phase to measure the transmission rate and the decline in jobs over time
 - **Stabilization Phase:** expected to last 10-14 weeks and focuses on making sure there is no “backtracking” on health outcomes. By this phase, the transmission rate should be declining, and the job losses should be slowing
 - **Recovery Phase:** expected to last 8-10 weeks and focuses on renewing economic confidence and continuing to provide medical treatments and support. By this phase, the measures should a near zero transfer rate and job *growth*