City of San Luis Obispo, California
Mayor Jan Howell Marx

Plan to achieve goal: As part of its Economic Development Strategic Plan, San Luis Obispo will develop an action plan to facilitate small business growth. To develop the plan, the city will identify business owners with fewer than ten employees, and will choose a survey provider to gather data about those business owners’ needs for knowledge and entrepreneurial support.

Stakeholders identified: A third-party data analysis company, City of San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce, San Luis Obispo County Economic Vitality Corporation, and California Polytechnic State University.

Timeline: The initiative will be complete in one to two years.

Challenges or barriers: Securing outside funding for staffing to complete the project is the major challenge. Without outside support, the project will be delayed as much as three years.

Outcomes expected: An actionable plan will improve the city’s entrepreneurship ecosystem, help small companies grow, and create head-of-household jobs.

Measurement: The city will use a detailed tactical timeline to track progress toward completion of the survey and development of the action plan. Data about employment in small companies and new company creation will inform progress toward improving the entrepreneurship ecosystem, helping small companies grow, and creating jobs.
City of Brookings, South Dakota

Mayor Tim Reed

Plan to achieve goal: To measure progress toward attracting and inspiring entrepreneurs, Brookings will hire the South Dakota State University Economics Department to collect, analyze, and report data about the city’s entrepreneurial vibrancy. Collected data about high-growth firms, employment levels in new companies, and entrepreneurial connections will reveal how a city website for startups can improve. Data and reports, which will be open-sourced so the public can assess and learn from Brookings’ efforts, will promote the city as a startup-friendly community.

Stakeholders identified: Local entrepreneurs, City of Brookings Startup-in-a-Day Grant Committee, and South Dakota State University Enspired.

Timeline: Planning and developing reporting methods, collecting data, and generating reports will take about nine months.

Challenges or barriers: Challenges include developing data-collection methods to measure entrepreneurial connectivity, and adapting economic development practices to respond to the metrics.

Outcomes expected: Brookings will become known as a startup community because new metrics will influence economic development policies in ways that support entrepreneurs.

Measurement: The goal will be achieved when a robust collection of open-source data shows a growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, and/or sparks creation of crowd-sourced programs that promote startups and business growth.
**City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

**Mayor Ron Corbett**

**Plan to achieve goal:** The City of Cedar Rapids plans to identify an economic research analyst who can collect data and develop a tool to measure the success of its robust entrepreneurial and small business ecosystem. The effort will track the long-term success of business founders who have participated in public and/or private programs, which provide them with educational and financial support.

**Stakeholders identified:** Iowa Startup-Accelerator, Entrepreneurial Development Center, Small Business Development Center, women and minority entrepreneurs, and other local entrepreneurs.

**Timeline:** Development and implementation of the study would span several years.

**Challenges or barriers:** Challenges include identifying appropriate variables and measurement tools, allocating appropriate financial and staff resources, and gathering data.

**Outcomes expected:** A robust measurement tool will provide data to shape policies and program enhancements that, in turn, will strengthen the local entrepreneurial economy.

**Measurement:** Key success measures include developing and achieving timeline benchmarks, and acquiring meaningful data that can shape policy.
City of Knoxville, Tennessee
Mayor Madeline Rogero

Plan to achieve goal: The city will map its entrepreneurial-support ecosystem to create and launch Entrepreneur Passport, a user-friendly mobile and web app that links to support resources, and allows support organizations to track entrepreneurs’ needs, progress, and engagement. Stakeholders will be able to generate technical and analytical reports using searchable data gathered by the app. The systems-based approach will help entrepreneurs select the optimal growth path, and will help keep entrepreneurs and support groups connected and accountable for progress.

Stakeholders identified: Community entrepreneurs, Innovation Valley, Knoxville Area Chamber of Commerce, Knoxville Entrepreneur Center, Tech 2020, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, University of Tennessee Anderson Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Tennessee Research Foundation, Score.org, Tennessee Small Business Development Centers, Knoxville Area Urban League, and Launch Tennessee.

Timeline: Mapping the ecosystem, creating app content, and developing, deploying, testing, and assessing the app will take thirteen months.

Challenges or barriers: Challenges include mapping the ecosystem with an honest account of each support organization’s strengths; integrating, reducing, or eliminating redundant programs; building new technology and software; and encouraging stakeholders’ commitment and use.

Outcomes expected: A continuity of services and better-aligned resources will be easily available to entrepreneurs at all stages of business creation and growth. Connections between mentors and entrepreneurs will strengthen in ways that benefit the community. Improved collaboration among support organizations should produce an increased number of new companies that remain viable. Improved data, reporting, and analytics will inform the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Measurement: The city and the Knoxville Entrepreneur Center will adopt progress milestones for mapping, content creation, software development, testing, and launch. After the passport is fully adopted, metrics will include:

- Consistency of participation from organizations and entrepreneurs.
- Increased number of new entrepreneurs served by support groups.
- Increased retention of current entrepreneurs within the ecosystem.
- More accurate data that measures continued progress toward a fully engaged, collaborative ecosystem.
City of Wichita, Kansas
Mayor Jeff Longwell

Plan to achieve goal: The City of Wichita, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, and Greater Wichita Partnership will launch Entrepreneur 2 Entrepreneur to provide mentoring, curriculum, hands-on support, connections, investment, and collaboration opportunities for entrepreneurs in the Wichita region. e2e’s holistic approach is centered within a multi-function incubator/accelerator space designed to support startups, and create new businesses and jobs. Aggressive marketing and partnerships with associations and investors will attract entrepreneurs and business owners. A planning grant will help underwrite curriculum development and launch the program.

Stakeholders identified: City of Wichita, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, Greater Wichita Partnership, e2e Accelerator, Inc., and investors in the e2e for-profit limited liability partnership venture fund.

Timeline: Nine to twelve months will be required to engage business leaders and resource providers, hire an executive director, benchmark national programs, identify an appropriate location and space, form a team to review participant applications, launch an e2e website, select the first participants, and launch the first class.

Challenges or barriers: Challenges include finding an executive director with entrepreneurial experience, defining the program’s structure and content, securing funds to execute the program plan, and identifying cost-effective short- and long-term locations with ample space.

Outcomes expected: During the first year, e2e will enroll five new businesses to the incubator, ten startups to the accelerator, and five early-stage businesses into leases in its collaborative ecosystem. In the long term, e2e will be the catalyst for developing an entrepreneurial community and a thriving Wichita economy. It will create a sustainable ecosystem that identifies, activates, and invests in entrepreneurial innovation, and that fundamentally enhances the Wichita region.

Measurement: Key stakeholders will continually evaluate the:
- Number of businesses and jobs created through the incubator.
- Growth of young businesses through the accelerator.
- Program participation.
- Financial viability.
City of Livermore, California
Mayor John Marchand

Plan to achieve goal: The city’s i-GATE Innovation Hub will enhance the recently launched StartupTriValley.org, a new website containing a crowd-sourced community asset map, and a call to action for entrepreneurs, investors, research institutions, corporations, and others to add themselves to the map. New site features will include a forum, jobs board, guest blog, and podcast. An outreach campaign will attract site users. In addition to connecting entrepreneurs with resources, data from the community map, forum, and job board will allow local policymakers and startup community leaders to identify and address gaps in the ecosystem.

Stakeholders identified: Entrepreneurs, local government officials, startup community supporters, and the business community.

Timeline: Building the new site features, and developing and implementing the outreach and engagement campaign will take nine months. Long term, the site will be sustained by corporate sponsorships and perhaps by a membership organization that supports the startup community.

Challenges or barriers: Leveraging i-GATE’s community of entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, local governments, and other supporters to achieve a critical mass of engagement on the site is the major challenge.

Outcomes expected: The online platform will help:
• Facilitate access to resources and peer networks.
• Identify and address gaps in the startup ecosystem.
• Reveal trends, needs, and connectivity of the Tri-Valley entrepreneurial community.

Measurement: i-GATE will assess the Tri-Valley’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, identify gaps, and build community by monitoring:
• Number of entrepreneurial community members who visit and join StartupTriValley.org.
• Items added to the community map.
• Engagement with new StartupTriValley.org features.
• Attendance at outreach events.
City of Santa Fe, New Mexico
Mayor Javier M. Gonzales

Plan to achieve goal: Santa Fe will sponsor a space-design and business-plan contest with the goal of transforming a city-owned space into a hub for entrepreneur-development resources. The winning design will detail an attractive, flexible physical space that generates income to reimburse the city for the cost of remodeling it. The winning business plan will outline a public-private partnership with one or more anchor businesses to seed and inspire entrepreneurial activity. The partnership effort, which will be sustained by entrepreneurial referrals, will provide mentors and connect entrepreneurs to support organizations and services. The business plan also must recommend a sliding scale through which entrepreneurs contribute rent or donated services to support the space and its operation. Marketing and publicity will attract a private sector entrepreneurial partner to lead the initiative, and to coach growing businesses. Entrepreneurial support organizations may receive stipends for education services and prizes for offering the most useful support.

Stakeholders identified: Space-design and business-plan contest winners, entrepreneurs who use the space and the services, and entrepreneurial support organizations.

Timeline: Marketing and communication, selecting a private-sector partner, hosting the contest, identifying winners, securing the final space design, and opening the new space will take fifteen to eighteen months.

Challenges or barriers: Challenges include:
- Convincing entrepreneurial support organizations about the value of participating in the hub.
- Providing clear benefit and value for entrepreneurs.
- Building flexibility into the space and operation so they can respond to demands and amplify successes.

Outcomes expected: Aggregating strong support services, and creating a supportive yet competitive environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive will invigorate Santa Fe’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurs also may have opportunities to test and validate products.

Measurement: The city will measure success by tracking:
- Attendance at events and workshops in the space.
- Various ways in which participants use the space.
- Responses to surveys through which entrepreneurs rate services and service providers, and generate new ideas for activities and programs.
Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt

Plan to achieve goal: Building on current financial and support services for entrepreneurs, Chapel Hill plans to create a resource network for firms transitioning from startup to growth. The town will hire a consultant to organize a “growth hack,” which will test the effectiveness of the new resource ecosystem. Local entrepreneurs will be invited to participate in a hypothetical exercise in which they receive seed funding, and then must take steps to grow their businesses in Chapel Hill. The exercise will reveal opportunities and gaps in marketing, support networks, labor capacity, and space. It also will solidify a network of stakeholders who contribute to Chapel Hill’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. The new support network will build collaboration among the town’s nationally recognized entrepreneurial leaders.

Stakeholders identified: University of North Carolina resources, including the Carolina Population Center, Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Center for Entrepreneurial Studies; LaUNCH; EmPOWERment, Inc.; MEY Corporation; the Chapel Hill/Carrboro Chamber of Commerce; and local entrepreneurs.

Timeline: Convening and seeking input from stakeholders, developing a request for proposal to identify a firm/individual to manage the “growth hack,” designing and completing the exercise, and compiling results to share with stakeholders will be completed in about three months.

Challenges or barriers: Finding a firm/individual to move the concept into reality and manage the process is the most significant challenge.

Outcomes expected: The “growth hack” will create deeper understanding about how Chapel Hill is competitive and where it falls short as a location for entrepreneurial growth. The collaborative process also will help form relationships and establish a common identity for the town’s entrepreneurial stakeholders.

Measurement: Holding the events and exercise described and debriefing results with stakeholders will achieve the objective. Success will be confirmed when other communities addressing entrepreneurial challenges duplicate the process.
City of Provo, Utah
Mayor John Curtis

Plan to achieve goal: General Growth Properties and the Provo Mayor’s Office of Economic Development plan to create a physical space and a program to incubate entrepreneurial retail and consumer goods companies, especially those started by women and minority entrepreneurs. The incubator will provide educational resources, mentors, and opportunities for participants to develop and sell their products in a regional mall. Targeted recruiting, outreach efforts, and tuition assistance will encourage women and minorities to participate.

Stakeholders identified: Provo Mayor’s Office of Economic Development; General Growth Properties; leading retail entrepreneurs; construction companies; philanthropists; volunteers from finance, real estate, marketing, and retail industries.

Timeline: If city and state economic development professionals secure adequate funding, the incubator space could open in nine months.

Challenges or barriers: Financing build-out of the space provided by General Growth Properties is the greatest challenge.

Outcomes expected: The incubator will:
- Increase the number of retail and consumer goods startups in Provo and Utah County.
- Offer underserved minority and women entrepreneurs real-world experience while temporarily subsidizing the cost of their brick-and-mortar businesses.
- Establish an entrepreneurial environment that could produce the “next big thing” in the consumer goods market.
- Promote Provo as a city that supports entrepreneurship and job creation.

Measurement: The city will measure success by tracking the number of:
- Minority and/or women entrepreneurs recruited for, enrolled in, and trained by the program. The goal is for half of incubator participants to be minorities or women.
- Women and minority businesses retained in the Provo area.
City of Durham, North Carolina
Mayor William Bell

Plan to achieve goal: To promote collaboration between Durham’s minority-owned businesses and its tech hub, the city and support organizations propose a pilot project to connect five minority-owned service businesses with selected technology companies in the American Underground startup community. Coaches will receive a modest stipend; entrepreneurs may be offered a small cash incentive and in-kind services to complete the program and assessment. Goals include increasing business for minority-owned companies through customized technology and training; providing access to customer feedback and new markets for tech companies; linking the two networks to serve as a regional catalyst; and drawing attention to increasing opportunities for minorities.


Timeline: Program design, company selection, and benchmarking will take one year. Evaluation and replication will follow.

Challenges or barriers: Challenges include persuading busy entrepreneurs to participate; helping project partners assign a coordinator and team to arrange meetings, identify deliverables, collect data, measure outcomes, and coordinate media coverage. Partner organizations must allocate resources from existing staff, which is a challenge for nonprofits with limited resources.

Outcomes expected: Minority-owned small businesses will become more competitive by adopting technology that allows them to reach new markets and customers. Tech entrepreneurs will gain customer feedback and marketing intelligence from minority participants. Interaction between the two groups will increase. The project will be replicated and receive positive media coverage.

Measurement: The city will measure success by:

• Compiling before-and-after-program comparisons of how participating entrepreneurs use technology to reach customers.
• Using online analytics to track businesses before and after the program.
• Asking tech entrepreneurs to provide before-and-after assessments of how minority-owned businesses use their technology.
• Identifying results linked to collaboration achieved as a result of the project.
• Tracking media coverage.
City of Louisville, Kentucky
Mayor Greg Fischer

Plan to achieve goal: Louisville will assemble entrepreneur mentors and develop a range of startup concepts to expand its Summer Up business startup program. Part of a summer jobs effort for people younger than 18 who live in poverty and have not been employed, the program began with seven African-American youth who started a business during a ten-week summer experience. Expanding to ten youth startups requires leveraging existing entrepreneur-support organizations to help identify mentors, organize mentoring sessions, and establish employment and business contracts for Summer Up ventures.

Stakeholders identified: Underserved youth, Mayor/Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, KentuckianaWorks, CodeLouisville Community coding program, and entrepreneurs/fiscal sponsors.

Timeline: During the first quarter of the calendar year, participating youth are identified by Louisville Public Schools and the city workforce board, and are assigned a SummerWorks guide. February–April, youth can select Summer Up as their priority summer job experience, and KentuckianaWorks identifies entrepreneurs interested in helping youth learn how to start and run a business. By June, students interview and apply for specific new ventures, which begin in mid-June.

Challenges or barriers: Finding a payroll and worker’s compensation provider for Summer Up businesses has been a challenge, although a state payroll mechanism for youth who work during the school year has reduced that barrier. Engaging a wider range of mentors in a broader range of business types for youth is another challenge.

Outcomes expected: In addition to expecting young people to organize and operate a break-even business, the ultimate outcome is to change the lives of youth who need an opportunity, not just a job. Softer success indicators include an increase in participants’ self-confidence and pride, and the value of learning about revenue, cost, value, and brand.

Measurement: The city will measure success by tracking:

- Number of disadvantaged youth interested in trying a Summer Up experience, number who start with a venture, and number that complete the ten-week startup program.
- Total revenue and net profit of the ventures.
- Performance of each participant.
- Media coverage about the ventures, which drives continued interest.
City of Lansing, Michigan
Mayor Virg Bernero

Plan to achieve goal: To expand The Runway—a fashion and design incubator that offers business startup programs, and supports design and manufacture of garments and textiles—Lansing Economic Area Partnership and Lansing Community College will develop Stitch517, a certificate program that teaches industrial sewing skills. Funds will go toward a targeted marketing campaign, outreach, and partial scholarships to engage Southwest Lansing’s underserved refugee population. The new course and expansion of The Runway programming will encourage private-sector action, attract diverse businesses, develop entrepreneurs, and create talent-development opportunities.


Timeline: Identifying Southwest Lansing community and stakeholder leaders, forming a steering committee to oversee the process, engaging the community, and developing marketing communication and social media campaigns will take six to eight months.

Challenges or barriers: Engaging the refugee community requires overcoming language and cultural barriers.

Outcomes expected: The new course and program expansion will connect and empower residents and businesses to create a robust, vibrant neighborhood. The number of individuals in the underserved community who participate in entrepreneurial programs will increase.

Measurement: The city will measure success by tracking:

• Attendance at outreach events.
• Number of interested applicants, qualified applicants, scholarships granted, and course/program graduates.
• Number of companies formed in underserved areas.
City of Madison, Wisconsin
Mayor Paul Soglin

Plan to achieve goal: Madison will work with partner organizations to connect people of color and women to new opportunities in the technology industry by:

- Studying current educational assets aimed at diversifying the tech industry.
- Assessing the number of minority- and women-owned businesses that can benefit from one-on-one and/or long-term business planning.
- Creating and marketing shared physical workspaces for the target groups.
- Supporting emerging technology companies owned by underserved populations.

Stakeholders identified: Latino Chamber of Commerce; Madison Black Chamber; Starting Block Leadership; Doyenne Group; and City of Madison Business Development, Economic Development, Community Development, Civil Rights Contract Compliance, and Department of Civil Rights.

Timeline: Completing assessments, connecting stakeholders, developing oversight, and setting up progress tracking will take one year. Creating, assessing, and modifying educational and support programs will follow and be ongoing.

Challenges or barriers: Capacity of community organizations to become appropriately involved, and funding long-term planning and financing for new technology businesses are among challenges.

Outcomes expected: Communities of color and women will become visibly connected to city-funded technology programs; technical, educational, and financial assistance for entrepreneurs in those groups will increase; and program assessment will positively influence future efforts.

Measurement: The city will measure project impact through tools that track and report:

- Incremental increases in technology businesses owned by women and people of color.
- Visible involvement of Latino and black chambers of commerce in technology-based programs funded by the city.
- Increase in diversity-in-technology entrepreneurship projects launched by community partners.
City of North Las Vegas, Nevada  
Mayor John J. Lee

**Plan to achieve goal:** The City of North Las Vegas plans to add a pitch competition to its INC YOUR IDEA workshop and business incubator series. The series provides minority entrepreneurs with practical business education, and connects them to government, mentors, potential funding sources, accountants, lawyers, marketing professionals, and potential customers. The new competition—in which participants pitch to business and elected leaders—will help inspire minority entrepreneurs to get involved in INC YOUR IDEA because:

- Top finishers win $25,000 in startup capital.
- All participants gain presentation, sales, and marketing experience.

**Stakeholders identified:** Minority entrepreneurs, Nevada Minority Business Enterprise Center, North Las Vegas Downtown Business Network, University of Nevada School of Business, Nevada State Treasurer’s Office, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, Nevada Workforce Connections, Southern Nevada Community College, Las Vegas SCORE startup counselors, and area corporations.

**Timeline:** Planning logistics and marketing, seeking sponsors, issuing the call for entries, hosting the workshop series and competition, evaluating results, and submitting a final report will take nine months.

**Challenges or barriers:** The community and stakeholders have indicated they will participate in and help finance the plan, but securing broad-based community support and additional funding may be a challenge.

**Outcomes expected:** New minority-owned businesses will succeed and grow, thus creating new jobs and spurring economic development. The loyalty and passion involved in homegrown businesses also could inspire future generations to become involved in the North Las Vegas business community.

**Measurement:** To increase the program’s effectiveness, the city will use participant information, surveys, and comment cards to track:

- Number of new minority businesses that participate in the competition.
- Workshop topics and attendance.
- Effectiveness of startup pitches.
- Mentoring involvement.
- Sponsors’ return on investment.
- Resources provided.
**City of Santa Cruz, California**

**Mayor Don Lane**

**Plan to achieve goal:** Because 19 percent of the Santa Cruz population is Hispanic or Latino, the city will create Spanish-language versions of:

- ChooseSantaCruz.com, which improves access to resources and tools needed to build or start a business, and celebrates the city’s businesses and entrepreneurs.
- SantaCruzCityArts.com, which provides resources for arts-based businesses.

Targeted outreach and marketing will emphasize how content on the translated sites can help Spanish speakers start and grow businesses.

**Stakeholders identified:** Santa Cruz Economic Development Department and Spanish-speaking business owners and entrepreneurs.

**Timeline:** Site development and content translation will take ten weeks. Outreach to Spanish speakers and translation of new site content will be ongoing.

**Challenges or barriers:** Reaching Spanish-speaking communities to make them aware of the websites and resources will be a challenge.

**Outcomes expected:** More Spanish-speaking residents will use the sites’ resources and assistance to become entrepreneurs and to open businesses.

**Measurement:** The city will measure success by tracking:

- Google Analytics, which will reveal the demographics of site visitors and in which language they viewed the site.
- Increases in calls or requests for service from Spanish speakers.
- Whether social media campaigns and other targeted marketing influenced Spanish speakers to visit the sites.
- Growth in the number of new businesses started by Spanish-speaking residents.