



**WELCOMING DEKALB**

# Welcoming DeKalb

Strategic Plan

August 2024

**jābian**  
consulting

 **Decide DeKalb**  
Development Authority

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# 1. Introduction & Approach

## INTRODUCTION

Today, many communities recognize that immigrant residents, in addition to being valued neighbors and civic leaders, represent significant economic growth as new homeowners, taxpayers, business owners, workers, and consumers.

Together with longer-term residents, immigrants are fueling the competitiveness of local companies and communities in DeKalb County.

Immigrant-owned businesses bring diversity and innovation to DeKalb County's economy, creating jobs and revitalizing neighborhoods. They possess unique skills and international connections that benefit local markets. However, like many residents, immigrants may face challenges such as limited credit history, lack of professional or personal networks here in Georgia, or barriers in accessing capital and navigating local regulations.

To fully harness the potential of immigrant-owned businesses, DeKalb County must address these challenges and create a welcoming environment. By making strategic adjustments to programs and policies, we can support immigrants in starting and growing their businesses, thereby fostering inclusive economic growth



**WELCOMING DEKALB**

**This strategic plan outlines our approach to making DeKalb County a more welcoming place for immigrant business owners. By working together and taking manageable steps, we aim to build an ecosystem of support that facilitates inclusion and shared prosperity for all residents.**

## Community Engagement.

Community engagement encompasses the proactive involvement of a diverse set of stakeholders within the immigrant and business community ecosystems and the greater non-profit and government environment. Including these parties in the strategic planning process ensures an inclusive and equitable environment that will consider the many needs of DeKalb County's immigrant and refugee-owned businesses.

A strategic plan should help an organization:

- Understand the current baseline of both needs and available resources
- Facilitate extensive community engagement to gather insights and perspectives
- Define clear and practical strategies that can be operationalized and executed based on what's working well already, and where there are gaps

## Jabian Consulting & Hispanic Plug

Jabian is poised to enable DeKalb's Welcoming Strategy and continue making a difference in our community



### Local and Community Focus

Jabian takes pride in being active in the Atlanta community, with 100% of our staff actively serving organizations here in the greater Atlanta Community. Welcoming DeKalb's success is the success of our neighbors.



### Partnership with Hispanic Plug

Jabian and Ivan will work collaboratively to enable the success of DeKalb's Welcoming strategy. Ivan's extensive experience in the Atlanta Hispanic community is why we believe him to be a valuable partner of Jabian. Our partnership allows us to bring 20+ years of non-profit leadership within Greater Atlanta.



### Strategic Planning and Inclusion Experience

Jabian has over 20+ years of experience in defining strategic plans and over 5+ years of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion experience at both public and private sector experience. Our proven approaches and frameworks have enabled the success of countless organizations.



**Decide DeKalb**  
Development Authority

The Development Authority of DeKalb County (Decide DeKalb) has partnered with Jabian Consulting and Hispanic Plug to develop a comprehensive strategy for creating a welcoming environment for immigrants and immigrant-owned businesses in DeKalb County.

**APPROACH: LEVERAGING THE WELCOMING STANDARD**

To inform the approach, we focused on three components of the Welcoming Standard as published by Welcoming America to understand the challenges and opportunities for the immigrant business community



Jabian will utilize the Welcoming Standard to understand the pressing issues of DeKalb’s immigrant community, then design programming and an office to support the *three framework areas most aligned to business-owner needs*

**Focus to Enable Immigrant Business Owners**

The following three components of the framework will be the primary focus of programming, unless assessment determines other areas of greater need to business owners

**Economic Development**

Ensures entrepreneur & workforce needs of immigrants are met, and that diversity is a strength of the local business landscape

**Equitable Access**

Promotes proactive inclusion of immigrant entrepreneurs in local services to make sure language or status are not barriers to care

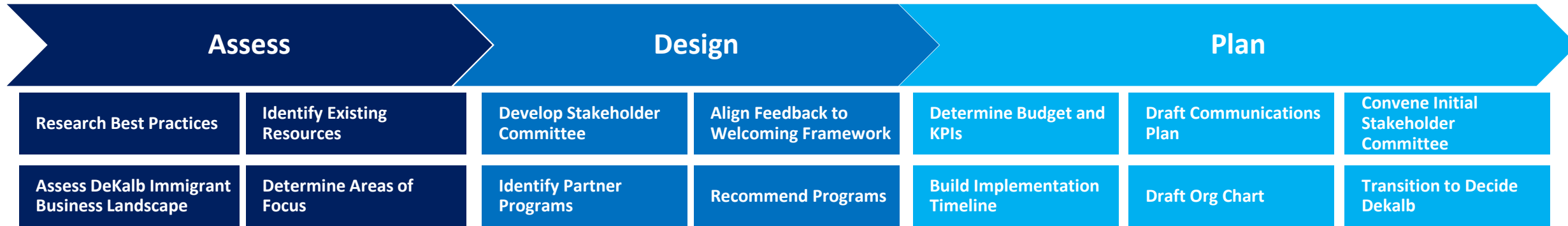
**Education**

Promotes development of skills and career paths in a manner approachable by immigrants to ensure local community members are empowered and capable of entrepreneurship



## APPROACH: KEY ACTIVITIES & PHASING

A three-phased approach sought to assess the current state of the immigrant business landscaping before designing and planning Welcoming DeKalb's strategy.



- **Research** welcoming practices and immigrant business engagement in **other cities**.
- Interview **representatives from 2-4 cities** with Welcoming Certification.
- Catalog **DeKalb's current immigrant programs and resources**.
- **Analyze demographic data and survey** immigrant businesses.
- **Conduct focus groups** to understand immigrant experiences.
- Produce an **Immigrant Business Environment Report**.
- Identify **key needs and priorities** from community feedback.
- **Conduct gap analysis to understand where DeKalb** stands against Welcome Framework and identify opportunities

- Define and **develop mission and vision** by conducting a workshop with Decide DeKalb leadership
- Form and structure a **Stakeholder Committee** representing DeKalb's diversity.
- Align community **feedback with the Welcoming Framework**.
- **List and align partner organizations with the Welcoming Framework**.
- **Propose initiatives** for Welcoming DeKalb consideration.

- Draft **program charters outlining goals, metrics, budgets, and plans**.
- Define the **organizational structure** and recommended approach.
- Host the first Stakeholder Committee meeting with a clear agenda.
- **Form structure and schedule ongoing Stakeholder Committee meetings**
- Develop a **roadmap for program implementation**.
- Create a **multilingual communications plan** for Welcoming DeKalb.
- Develop **transition plan and outline** key next steps to Decide DeKalb.

# 2. Market Research & Best Practices



A review of other cities and municipalities' Welcoming efforts helps inform our framework and desired outcomes.

# Key Themes and Trends



## Use of Welcoming America's Framework

*Current landscape research exhibited the common use of Welcoming America's Framework to structure city-wide Welcoming Plans.*

### Welcoming America's Framework

- Civic Engagement
- Connected Communities
- Economic Development
- Education
- Equitable Access
- Government and Community Leadership
- Safe Communities



## Emphasis on the Importance of Stakeholder Engagement

*Best practices across all municipalities that undergo the process of starting a Welcoming Plan emphasize the importance of meaningful and consistent stakeholder engagement*

### Common Engagement Partners

- Support organizations
- Various immigrant communities
- Local Government

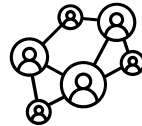


## Partnerships Play a Crucial Role

*Organizations with the capability to aid these Welcoming Plans pay a crucial role in the successful implementation of these Welcoming Plans*

### Common Organization Types

- Chambers of Commerce
- Large and Local Banks
- Non-Profits



## Value of Initiatives Focus on Economic and Cultural Improvement

*The driving force for all Welcoming Plans has been their focus on not only economic aspects but culture and the importance of it.*

### Common Trends

- Initiatives include both economic and cultural importance initiatives



## Welcoming Kansas City Framework

### 1. Civic Engagement

Goal: Empower racially and ethnically diverse residents with education and access to civic life

### 2. Connected Communities

Goal: Foster opportunities for all residents to build trusted relationships

### 3. Economic Development

Goal: Enable all residents to participate in the economy and leverage new and existing talent

### 4. Education

Goal: Prepare and support all students, including immigrants, for the workforce

### 5. Equitable Access

Goal: Ensure all residents have access to essential services

### 6. Government Leadership and Safe Communities

Goal: Advance racial justice, equity, and inclusion to make all residents feel safe and welcome



## Commitments and Initiatives

### Education

- KC will provide education opportunities for racial, business, cultural, and legal/voting topics for immigrant communities along with GED, trade/vocational classes, and internship opportunities.

### Events

- Aligned with local partnerships, Welcoming KC will host culturally enriching events to engage diverse residents

### Marketing and Awareness

- Barring any legal barriers, improvements here can lead to **real-time data and insights**

### Accessibility

- local community organizations and institutions are to be accessible and their processes clear

### Support and Programming

- Plan will promote immigrant and minority-owned businesses through innovative programs, training, and microfinance

### Policy Review and Commitment to Equity

- Welcoming KC will work to ensure policies do not include exclusionary vocabulary. It will also work to build trust between law enforcement, local government entities, and diverse communities through training and engagement





## Welcoming Dallas: A Certified Framework

### 1. Leadership & Communications

Goal: Local government is committed to being inclusive and welcoming, and plays a central role in building local capacity while advancing inclusion of diverse communities within its own agencies & bodies

### 2. Safe, Healthy, & Connected Communities

Goal: Welcoming communities build relationships among diverse communities, including newcomers and longer-term residents. They also foster trust & build relationships between diverse communities and local law enforcement and safety agencies

### 3. Equitable Access

Goal: Welcoming communities reduce barriers to services and participation so that opportunities in the community are available to all residents

### 4. Civic Engagement

Goal: Welcoming communities actively ensure that diverse populations fully participate in civic life, including increasing access to leadership, citizenship and community participation

### 5. Economic Opportunity & Education

Goal: Welcoming communities harness the full potential of all their residents. Everyone has the skills and assets to thrive, and economic development systems are prepared to leverage new and existing talent. Welcoming communities also ensure everyone has the education needed to succeed in school and the workforce.



## Commitments and Initiatives

### Establishment of Welcoming Hubs

- Creating community gathering and educational centers for immigrants to access information, resources, and opportunities. Serves as a central point for immigrants to connect with essential services and support networks

### Workforce Development Programs

- Partnering to bring workforce systems that increase skill development and career pathways to improve immigrant integration in the economy

### Language Access Plan

- Implementing and overseeing a City language access plan, including access to safety services/alerts and staff training

### Entrepreneurship Support

- Working with universities and private industry to access information and networks, promoting growth for immigrant and minority businesses, and facilitating programs that augment entrepreneurial initiatives in immigrant communities



## City of Charlotte: A Certified Framework

### 1. Civic Engagement

Focus: Promoting civic engagement among immigrants, encouraging them to participate in city governance, community activities and public dialogue

### 2. Economic Development

Focus: Ensuring immigrants have access to economic opportunities that allow them to contribute fully to our community and achieve their American dream

### 3. Equitable Access

Focus: Providing equitable access to city services, including education, health care and public safety, ensuring that language and cultural barriers are addressed



## Commitments and Initiatives



### Language Access Initiatives

- The City of Charlotte is dedicated to ensuring all residents have equitable access to city services and resources and utilize their Language Access City Policy to provide translation and interpretation services

### Community Resources Directory

- Have created a unified source to hold a vast amount of resources for immigrant communities to utilize for support

### Resettlement Resources

- An additional list of resources directly geared to resettlement and new Americans

### Charlotte International Cabinet

- A board and committee that was created to ensure the progress and sustained success of Welcoming Charlotte

### Naturalize Charlotte Initiative

- Designed to support organizations around the city that provide direct services to legal permanent residents in Charlotte on their path to U.S. citizenship



## Welcoming Detroit: A Certified Framework

### 1. Connected Communities

Focus: Build bridges between immigrants and long-term residents to foster mutual understanding and respect

### 2. Civic Engagement

Focus: Promote active participation of immigrants in civic life, including voting, community organizing, and public service

### 3. Equitable Access

Focus: Ensure equitable access to services and opportunities for all residents, with a particular focus on language access and culturally appropriate services.

### 4. Government Leadership & Safe Communities

Focus: Foster inclusive policies and practices within local government to ensure immigrant and refugee integration is a priority

### 5. Economic Development

Focus: Promote economic opportunities for immigrants through entrepreneurship programs, job training, and support for small businesses

## Commitments and Initiatives



### Inclusive Institutions

- We help governments, businesses, nonprofits and public institutions develop strategies for meaningfully including immigrants in their work

### Opportunity Neighborhoods

- Global Detroit's Opportunity Neighborhoods program helps families and small business owners connect to homeownership and home repair programs, foreclosure prevention, small business support, community engagement opportunities and other resources they need to put down roots and thrive.

### Entrepreneurship Support

- We help high-growth startups with foreign-born founders stay and create jobs in Southeast Michigan through our Global EIR program, and we connect small business owners in Detroit's immigrant neighborhoods to the city's extensive ecosystem of funding and support.

### Talent

- Through our Global Talent Retention Initiative, Global Detroit is working to help Southeast Michigan companies connect to global talent and to prepare international students for the US job market

### Research

- continue to produce an extensive body of research related to the economic impacts of immigrants, as well as recommendations for inclusive strategies for our cities, regions, states and nation



**GLOBAL  
DETROIT**

# 3. Baseline DeKalb Immigrant Business Environment



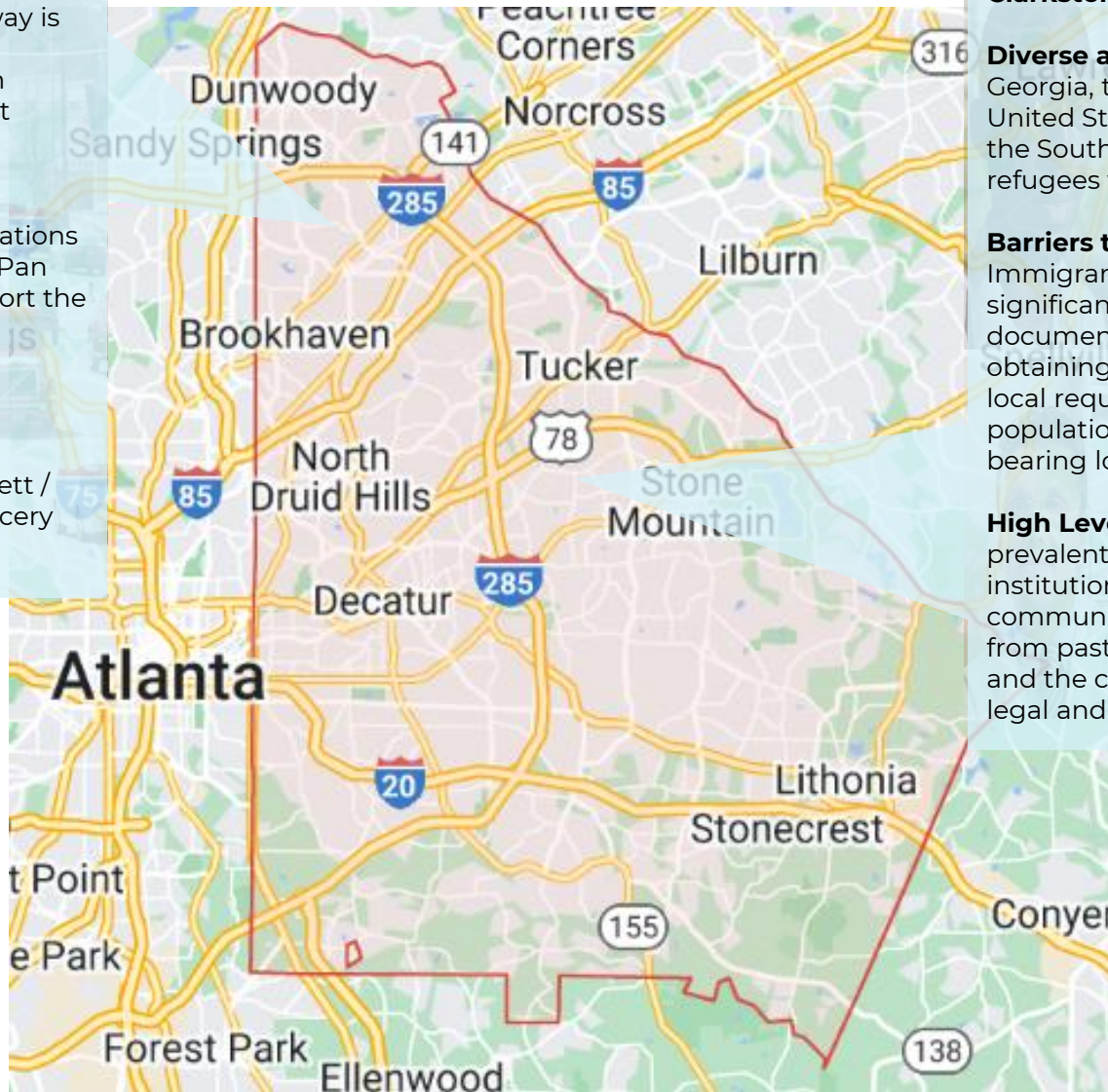
DeKalb County represents a diverse immigrant business community with two primary corridors.

### Buford Highway

**Diverse Business Representation:** Buford Highway is home to a wide variety of immigrant-owned businesses, representing communities from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, contributing to a vibrant multicultural commercial corridor with small businesses in retail, hospitality, and wholesalers

**Community Support and Engagement:** Organizations like We Love Buford Highway and the Center for Pan Asian Community Services (CPACS) actively support the economic mobility and preservation of the multicultural identity of Buford Highway through partnerships and community-focused initiatives.

**Attritional Displacement:** Experiencing “attritional displacement” to Gwinnett / Duluth (cultural grocery stores vs. gentrifying grocery stores)



### Clarkston / South Memorial Drive

**Diverse and Community-Oriented:** Clarkston, Georgia, the most diverse square mile in the United States and also known as "Ellis Island of the South," is now home to over 17,000 refugees who speak more than 60 languages

**Barriers to Legal and Financial Resources:** Immigrant business owners in Clarkston face significant challenges related to legal and documentation issues, such as difficulties in obtaining business licenses due to stringent local requirements. Additionally, the Muslim population often avoid traditional interest-bearing loans, requiring unique solutions.

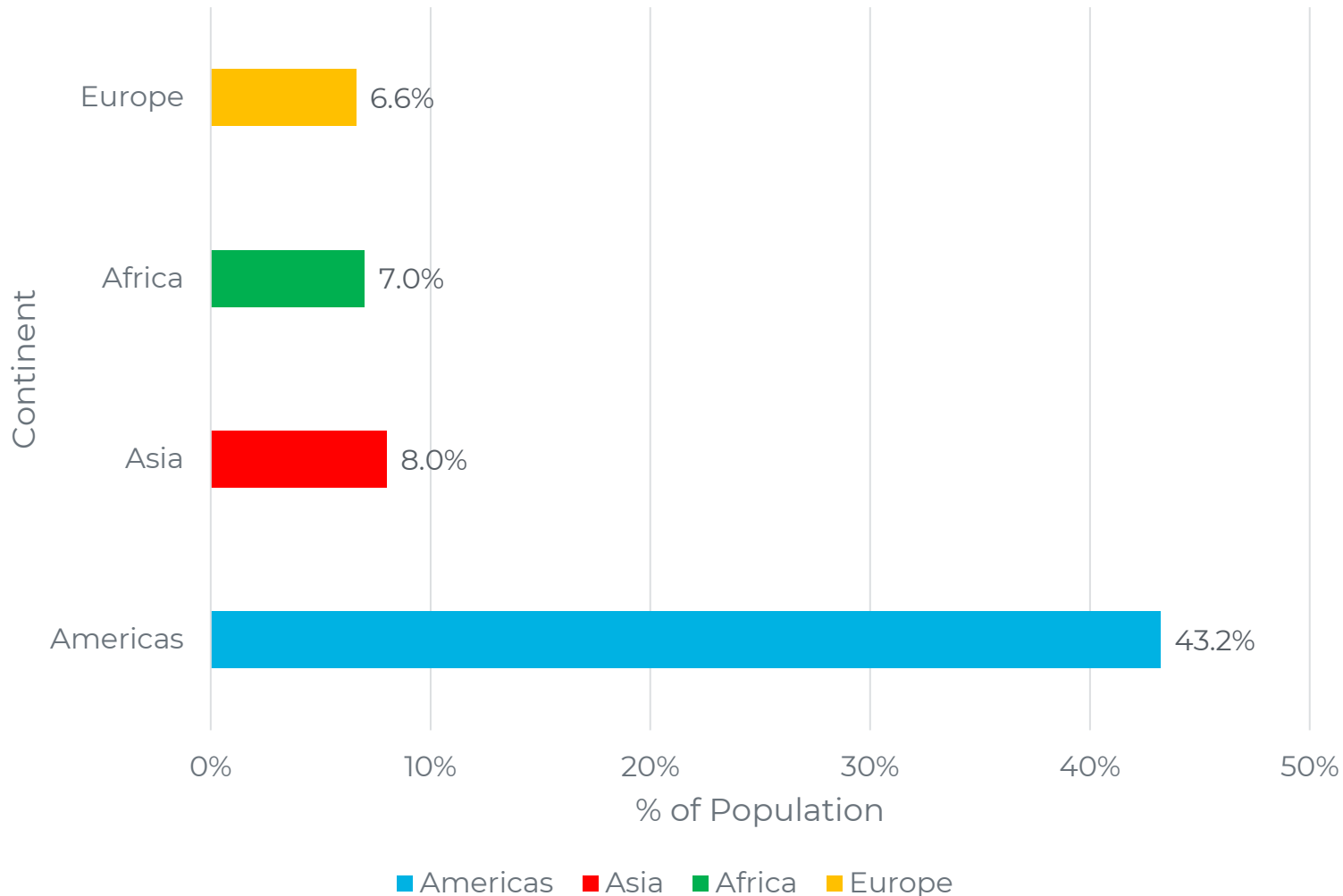
**High Levels of Trust Deficit:** There is a prevalent mistrust of government and financial institutions among the immigrant business community in Clarkston. This mistrust stems from past experiences in their home countries and the complexities of navigating the U.S. legal and financial systems



## BASELINE DEKALB IMMIGRANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: COUNTRY OF BIRTH

DeKalb County's diverse ethnic landscape underscores the importance of targeted support for immigrant business corridors.

### Foreign Continent of Birth



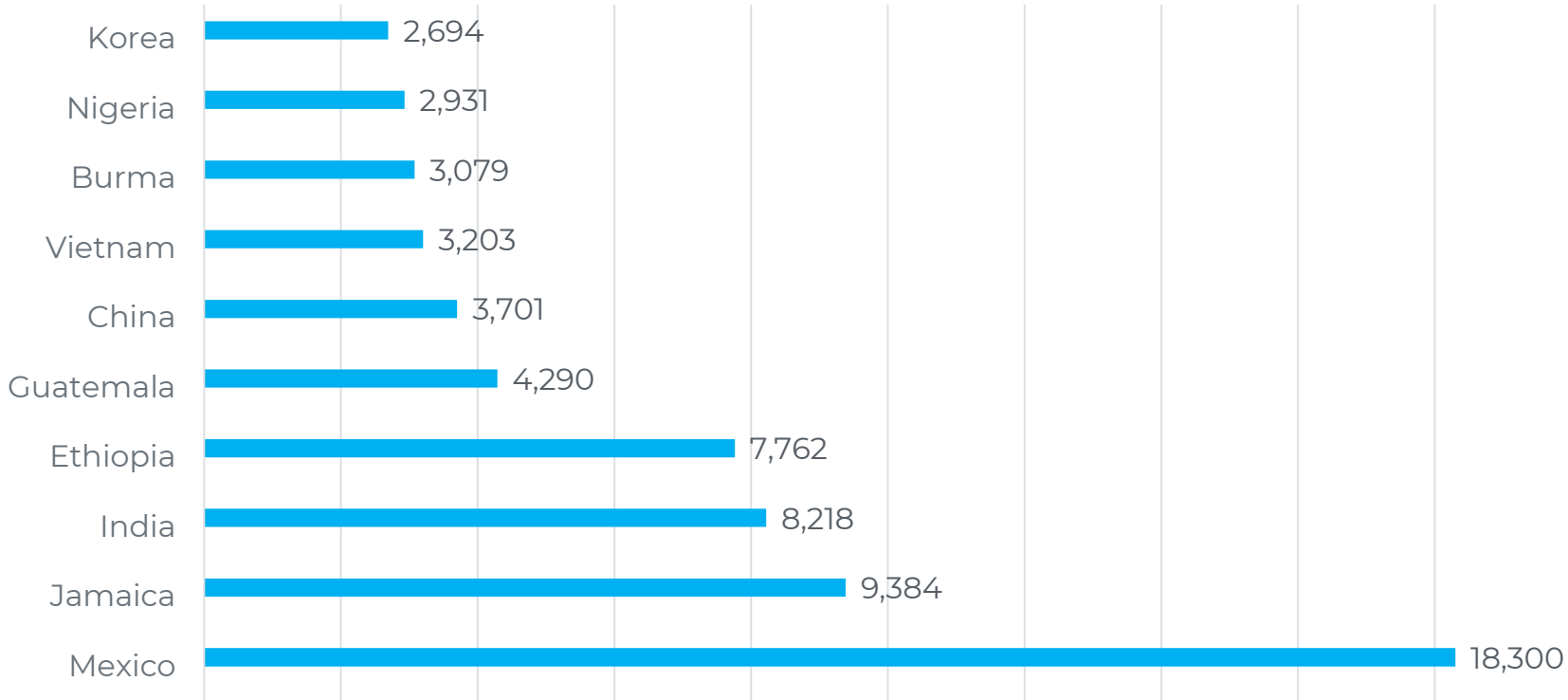
### Insights & Considerations

- **Americas:** Census data includes everyone born both in North and South America (which includes all foreign ethnicities born in the Americas including the Hispanic population)
- **Asia:** This continent includes the growing East and West Asian populations in DeKalb County
- **Europe and Africa:** These populations, while less represented in DeKalb, are growing forces in the economic landscape of DeKalb County

**BASELINE DEKALB IMMIGRANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: COUNTRY OF BIRTH**

DeKalb County's diverse ethnic landscape underscores the importance of targeted support for immigrant business corridors.

**Foreign Born Country**



	Mexico	Jamaica	India	Ethiopia	Guatemala	China	Vietnam	Burma	Nigeria	Korea
■ Pop. Count	18,300	9,384	8,218	7,762	4,290	3,701	3,203	3,079	2,931	2,694
■ Percent Pop.	15.50%	8.00%	7.00%	6.60%	3.60%	3.10%	2.70%	2.60%	2.50%	2.30%

■ Pop. Count ■ Percent Pop.

**Insights & Considerations**

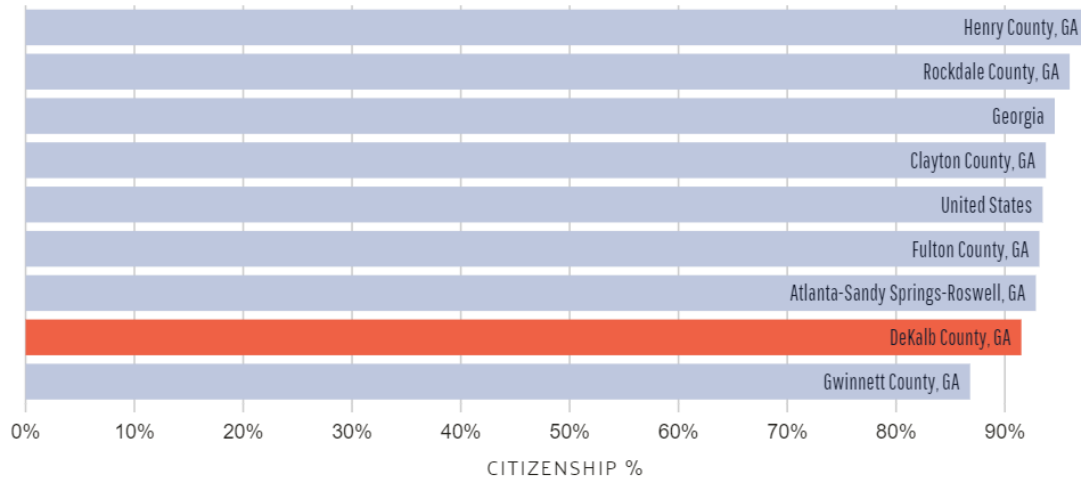
- **Significant Mexican Community:** The largest foreign-born population in DeKalb County is from Mexico, accounting for 15.5% of the immigrant population, with a strong presence along Buford Highway
- **Emerging South Asian and African Communities:** India and Ethiopia represent significant portions of the immigrant population at 7.0% and 6.6% respectively, highlighting the growing diversity and the need for tailored support in areas like Decatur and Clarkston
- **Diverse Business Corridors:** Key immigrant business corridors such as Buford Highway and Clarkston cater to a wide array of nationalities, emphasizing the need for culturally inclusive economic policies and support systems

## BASELINE DEKALB IMMIGRANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: DEMOGRAPHICS TRENDS

With DeKalb County's growing foreign-born population and lower percentage of citizen residents, a Welcoming DeKalb strategy is crucial for fostering inclusivity and community integration

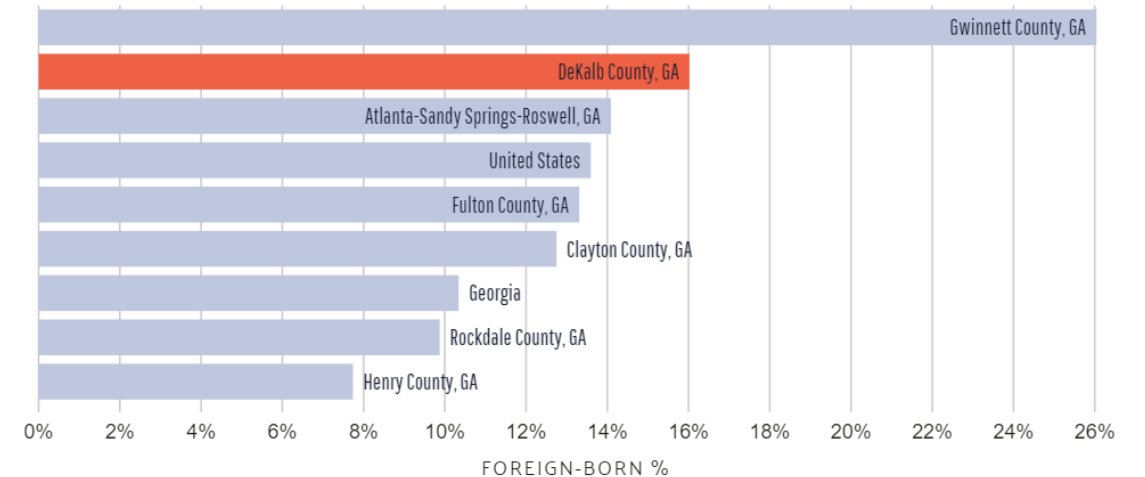
### Insights & Considerations

- **Low Citizenship Rates:** DeKalb County has one of the lowest percentages of residents who are citizens compared to other counties in Georgia, which highlights a significant portion of the population that may face challenges in accessing certain rights and services
- **High Foreign-Born Population:** DeKalb County has a notably high percentage of foreign-born residents, second only to Gwinnett County, emphasizing the county's role as a major hub for immigrants in the region
- **Steady Trends Over Time:** The percentage of citizens and foreign-born residents in DeKalb County has shown consistent trends over the years, indicating stable immigration patterns and the ongoing need for policies that support both naturalization and integration of immigrant communities.



Profile Parents and Neighbors

2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022

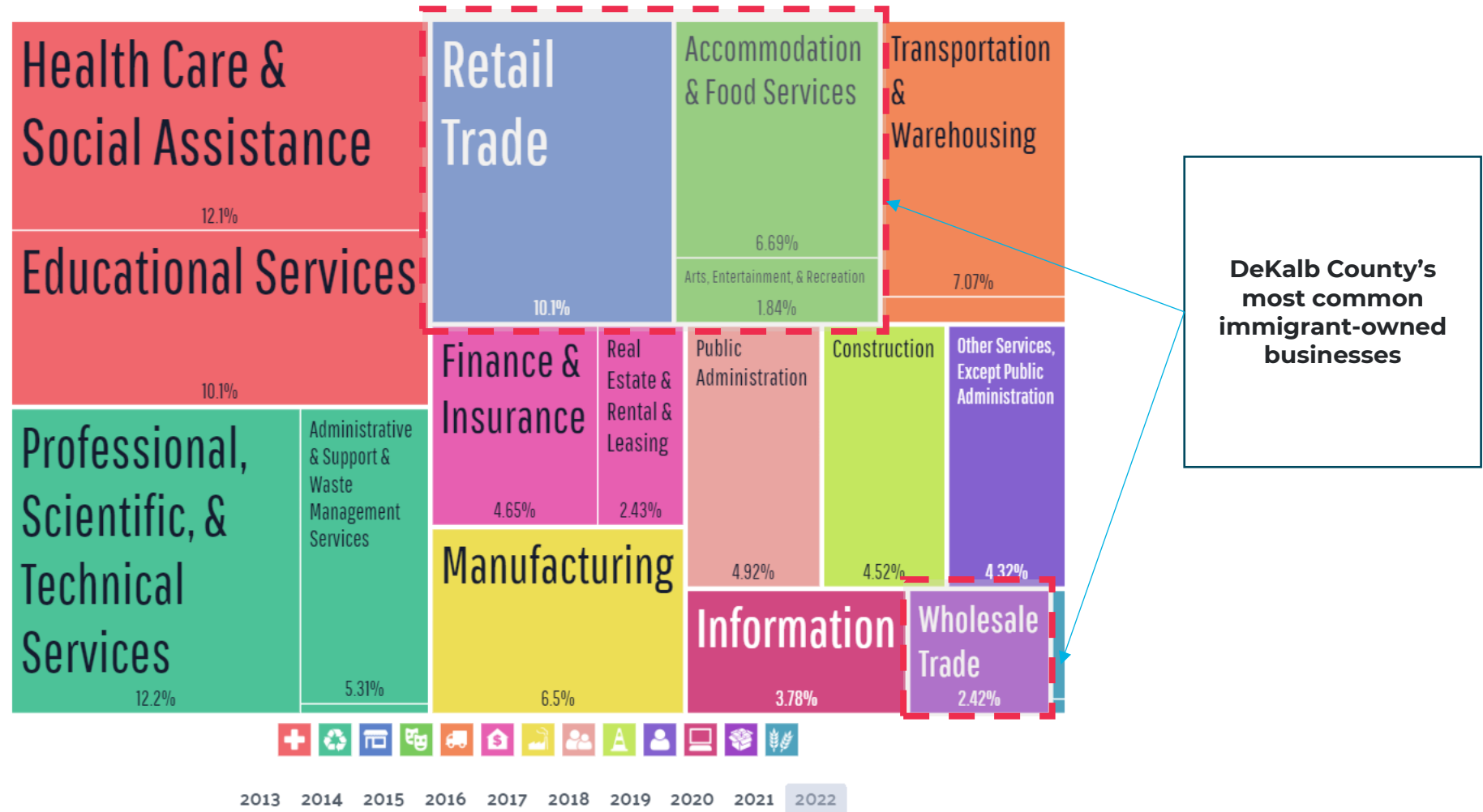


Profile Parents and Neighbors

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022

**BASELINE DEKALB IMMIGRANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: TARGET INDUSTRIES VS. IMMIGRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

While Healthcare and Technology have historically dominated the DeKalb County industrial landscape, the immigrant communities skew primarily towards retail, food services, catering, wholesale, etc.



**DeKalb County's most common immigrant-owned businesses**

The dominant industries often overlook the immigrant community's skillsets and capabilities, making starting up their own small businesses the most efficient path to economic mobility.

## Healthcare & Social Assistance

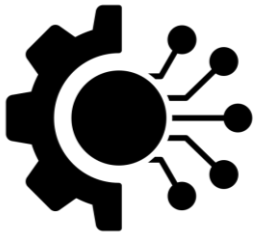


**Overlooked Skills:** Many immigrants have medical qualifications and experience from their home countries that may not be recognized in the U.S., limiting their ability to work in their trained professions.

**Negative Impact:** Immigrant professionals often face barriers in credential recognition, leading to underemployment or employment in unrelated fields.



## Professional / Scientific / Technical Services



**Overlooked Skills:** Immigrants may possess technical and engineering skills, but language barriers and lack of U.S. certifications can prevent them from securing positions.

**Negative Impact:** The focus on large-scale manufacturing firms might not provide opportunities for small immigrant-owned manufacturing businesses. These businesses often operate on a smaller scale and cater to niche markets, which can be overlooked in traditional industry planning.



While Healthcare and Technology have historically dominated the DeKalb County industrial landscape, the immigrant communities skew primarily towards retail and hospitality.

## Key Trends and Insights

### 1. Challenges with Licensing and Permits:

- Multiple mentions of difficulties in acquiring business licenses and dealing with bureaucratic processes, especially the challenges faced in communication and online applications.
- For instance, one owner mentioned struggling for over a year to obtain a license due to miscommunications between departments.

### 2. Language Barriers:

- There are significant language barriers that complicate business operations. There is a need for multilingual support, particularly in interactions with inspectors and during the application process.

### 3. Community Support and Resources:

- The importance of community support and local resources in business success is highlighted. Entrepreneurs rely on local advice and support networks to navigate business challenges.
- One entrepreneur credits Plaza Fiesta for opening many doors and providing opportunities for growth and connection.

### 4. Perseverance and Focus:

- A recurring theme is the perseverance and focus required to succeed. Despite challenges, entrepreneurs are determined to push forward and adapt.

### 5. Technology and Online Presence:

- There is a need for better technological infrastructure and online systems to support business processes, such as license applications and inspections.
- The slow pace of online services compared to other regions is a concern for many business owners.

**BASELINE DEKALB IMMIGRANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS MATRIX**

DeKalb County’s immigrant businesses vary in terms of complexity and maturity, requiring a tailored approach to the support required based on the businesses’ particular circumstances.

<b>Business Complexity</b>	<p><b>Entrepreneurial Dreamer</b></p> <p>Driven by the desire to turn a passion or lifelong dream into a reality, they may have some formal business experience but are fueled by creativity and determination. They often start small, with a strong emphasis on building something complex &amp; meaningful.</p> <p>Example Business Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tech Startup</li><li>• Boutique Retail Store</li></ul>	<p><b>Legacy Builder</b></p> <p>An immigrant business owner who aims to create a lasting business that can be passed down through generations. They are focused on long-term success and sustainability, often building on family traditions or skills. Legacy Builders often invest in businesses that have potential for growth and longevity.</p> <p>Example Business Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Construction Company</li><li>• Agricultural Business</li></ul>
	<p><b>Aspirational Entrepreneur</b></p> <p>An immigrant business owner who sees entrepreneurship as a pathway to financial security. They may have little to no prior business experience or education but are eager to learn and adapt to the local market. This persona often seeks out resources, mentorship, and networks to help them realize their ambition</p> <p>Example Business Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bakery</li><li>• Handcrafted Jewelry Store</li></ul>	<p><b>Main Street Owner</b></p> <p>An immigrant business owner who focuses on establishing and running a business that serves the local community. This persona values stability, community connections, and providing reliable services or products. Main Street Owners are integral to the local economy.</p> <p>Example Business Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grocery Store</li><li>• Family Restaurant</li></ul>

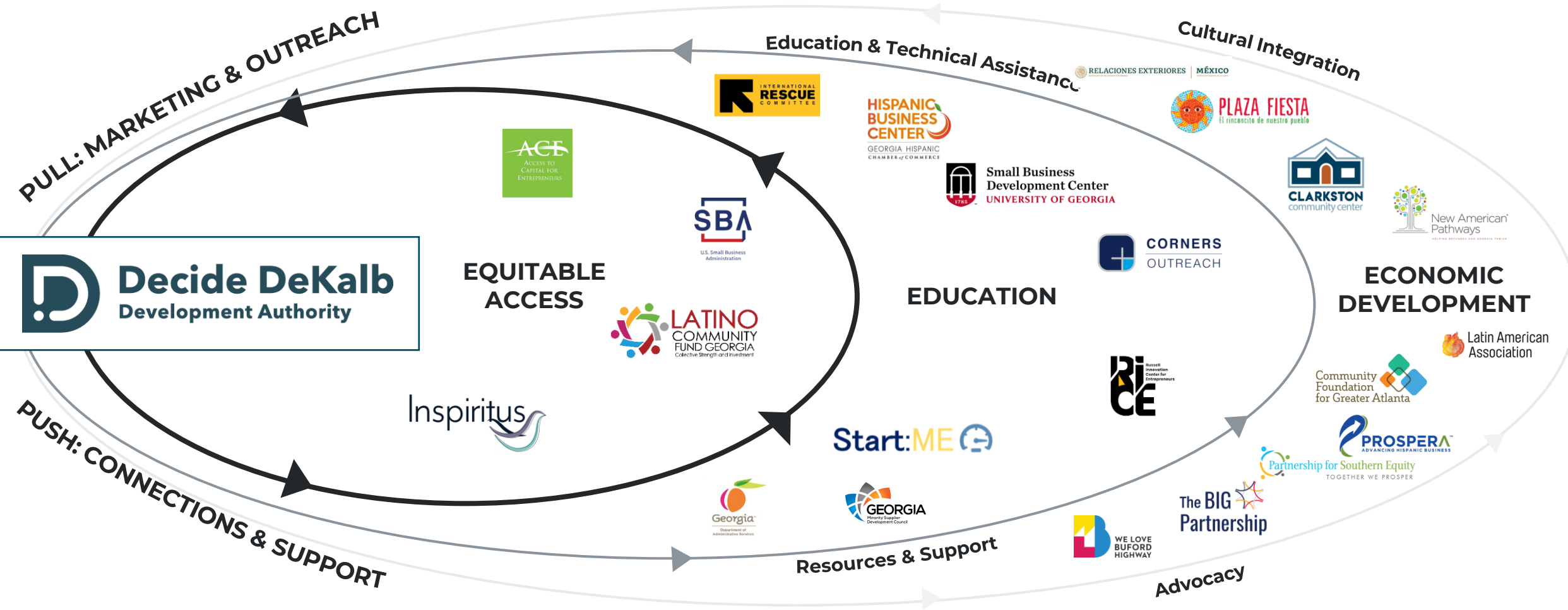
**Business Maturity**



# 4. Resource Map

## WELCOMING DEKALB ECOSYSTEM & DECIDE DEKALB INITIAL ROLE

While Decide DeKalb Development Authority will play an integral role in guiding and participating in Welcoming DeKalb initiatives and strategy, its primary role at the outset will be that of connecting people to the ecosystem of immigrant business support organizations and executing marketing and outreach.






























































































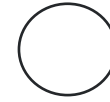







**RESOURCE MAP: ILLUSTRATIVE SUPPORT ALIGNMENT**









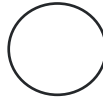












































































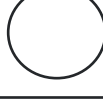













Given the defined Immigrant Business Matrix for DeKalb County, some area organizations are better suited to provide support services to specific types of immigrant owned businesses.




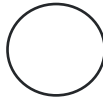
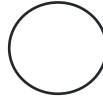




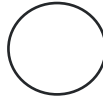

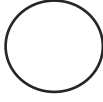



































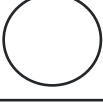










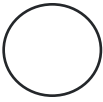










































RESOURCE MAP: SNAPSHOT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ( 1 OF 3)

Support Org	Language Support	Access to Capital	Business Education	Technical Assistance	Advocacy	Networking	Cultural Integration	Legal Support	Marketing and Promotion	Resource Accessibility
 ACE ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR ENTREPRENEURS										
 SBA U.S. Small Business Administration										
 Small Business Development Center UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA										
 27th ANNIVERSARY 1993-2020										
 RELACIONES EXTERIORES   MÉXICO										
 Latin American Association										
 PROSPERA™ ADVANCING HISPANIC BUSINESS										
 HISPANIC BUSINESS CENTER GEORGIA HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE										
 HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LA CÁMARA										

RESOURCE MAP: SNAPSHOT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES (2 OF 3)

Support Org	Language Support	Access to Capital	Business Education	Technical Assistance	Advocacy	Networking	Cultural Integration	Legal Support	Marketing and Promotion	Resource Accessibility
 PLAZA FIESTA El rincón de nuestro pueblo										
 The BIG Partnership										
 REFUGEE WOMEN'S NETWORK										
 CLARKSTON community center										
 Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta										
 Start:ME										
 GEORGIA Minority Supplier Development Council										
 Inspiritus										
 INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE										

RESOURCE MAP: SNAPSHOT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES (3 OF 3)

Support Org	Language Support	Access to Capital	Business Education	Technical Assistance	Advocacy	Networking	Cultural Integration	Legal Support	Marketing and Promotion	Resource Accessibility
										
										
										
										
										
										
										
										
										

**RESOURCE MAP: DETAILS (1 OF 4)**

Support Org	Regional Focus	Welcoming DeKalb Considerations
ACE	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACE provides grants for licensed businesses looking to grow and thrive in the state of Georgia</li> <li>ACE offers business coaching, advisory, and consultants to a variety of small business entrepreneurs</li> <li>There are some restrictions to who can and cannot receive funding from ACE for their business (i.e., legal status and yearly revenue)</li> </ol>
Small Business Administration (SBA)	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBA offers funding opportunities like loans, grants, and federal contracting for small businesses</li> <li>SBA has thorough business education and training programs available</li> <li>SBA is a statewide organization so its broad focus may not tailor directly to Welcoming DeKalb’s vision for the local immigrant business community</li> <li>There are pros and cons to partnering with this relatively large organization (funding, complexity, etc.)</li> </ol>
Small Business Development Center (SBDC)	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide extensive business education, training, and support for development (i.e. no-cost consulting)</li> <li>Provide support in accessing capital (have provided business loans in the past as well)</li> <li>Organization serves small businesses, but has no focus on immigrant businesses specifically</li> </ol>
Greater Lithonia Chamber of Commerce	Lithonia & more	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer business support and some business development opportunities</li> <li>Engage in community events and act as strong advocates for business-friendly policies</li> <li>Do not offer or have a focus on multilingual services for their resources</li> </ol>
Consulate General of Mexico	Atlanta & more	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer robust language support and assistance for Spanish-speaking immigrants</li> <li>Provide legal support to the Mexican/Hispanic immigrant community</li> <li>The Consulate General heavily focuses on the Mexican/Hispanic community and consular services</li> </ol>
Latin American Association	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LAA provides business and language educational programs</li> <li>LAA focuses on community engagement which could be leveraged for networking opportunities</li> <li>Any potential partnership may require significant resource allocation considerations</li> </ol>
Prospera	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prospera provides bilingual assistance for Hispanic entrepreneurs in the following areas: Consulting, Business Plans, Marketing Plans, Legal Assessments, Accounting, and Access to Capital (partnered with microlenders)</li> <li>Primarily focused on Hispanic entrepreneurs, which might limit broader applicability</li> </ol>





**RESOURCE MAP: DETAILS (2 OF 4)**

Support Org	Regional Focus	Welcoming DeKalb Considerations
Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Gwinnett, Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strong emphasis on integrating Hispanic businesses into the local economy</li> <li>2. Provides extensive networking and business training events throughout the year</li> <li>3. This organization heavily focuses on the Hispanic community so other demographics may require a different partnership</li> </ol>
Latin American Chamber of Commerce	Gwinnett, Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focuses on promoting Latin American businesses and integrating them into the broader business community</li> <li>2. Offers networking events, workshops, and business resources tailored to the Latin American demographic</li> <li>3. As a chamber, this organization focuses heavily on serving its members first</li> </ol>
Plaza Fiesta	Chamblee/ Doraville	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plaza Fiesta provides many immigrant-owned businesses a physical location to conduct business</li> <li>2. They support the acquisition of business licenses, provide marketing and promotions for businesses, and serve as a community hub for diverse populations (Hispanic, Asian, African, etc.)</li> <li>3. Plaza Fiesta does not typically provide financial support for businesses at the Plaza</li> </ol>
The BIG Partnership	Atlanta & more	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focuses on fostering collaboration and partnerships between businesses and local communities.</li> <li>2. Provides resources and support for business development, particularly in underserved areas.</li> <li>3. Acts as a bridge to connect businesses with potential partners and funding opportunities, though it may have limited direct business support services.</li> </ol>
Refugee Women's Network	Clarkston & more	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides specialized support services tailored to refugee women, focusing on empowerment and integration into the community</li> <li>2. Offers language and vocational training programs to help refugee women become self-sufficient and active participants in the local economy</li> <li>3. While their primary focus is on social support and advocacy, they also connect women with resources for business development and financial independence</li> </ol>
Clarkston Community Center	Clarkston	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The community center provides strong language and educational support while fostering cultural integration for immigrants</li> <li>2. Often are active and host community events and programs</li> <li>3. Do not focus on business support, but do act as a community servant for local immigrants</li> </ol>



**RESOURCE MAP: DETAILS (3 OF 4)**

Support Org	Regional Focus	Welcoming DeKalb Considerations
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta	Atlanta & more	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide grants and financial support to nonprofits and small businesses</li> <li>2. Act as strong advocates for community development through fundraising and investments within the community</li> <li>3. Strong community support, but limited multilingual and business support</li> </ol>
Start:ME Program	Clarkston, East Lake, and South ATL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have an extensive business education and training program</li> <li>2. Through their program and on completion of it, will provide support in accessing financial resources</li> <li>3. While they serve many communities, they do not provide extensive language support (mostly English)</li> </ol>
GA Minority Supplier Dev. Council	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GMSCD acts as the state’s leading advocacy organization for small business development and supplier diversity</li> <li>2. Offer certification for small businesses to be listed as a diverse supplier statewide</li> <li>3. Offers key support in business development and supply chain, but not much support in other areas</li> </ol>
Inspiritus	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide flexible funding for immigrant-owned businesses through their CDFI (Thrive)</li> <li>2. Offer refugee and immigrant support that aids individuals in becoming self-sufficient, socially integrated, and culturally acclimated</li> <li>3. While they offer flexible funding, financial resources are not robust. They focus on microlending</li> </ol>
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide legal and language assistance and training for immigrants in Georgia</li> <li>2. IRC has allocated federal funding to support small businesses</li> <li>3. IRC focuses heavily on resettlement rather than business support</li> </ol>
GA Dept. of Administrative Services	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DOAS facilitates state procurement opportunities for businesses</li> <li>2. Offers training on DOAS resources and state procurement</li> <li>3. DOAS does have limited language and cultural assistance for immigrants (focused more on general business and state services)</li> </ol>
Latino Community Fund Georgia	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offer financial assistance for immigrant community through their member agencies and partners</li> <li>2. Act as strong advocates for Immigrant (Latino)-led organizations throughout Georgia</li> <li>3. Heavily focus on the Latino community rather than the wider breadth of immigrant communities</li> </ol>

**RESOURCE MAP: DETAILS (4 OF 4)**

Support Org	Regional Focus	Welcoming DeKalb Considerations
New American Pathways	Atlanta and State	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide legal support at low to no-cost for refugees and immigrants</li> <li>2. Provide strong language services (both multilingual and English training)</li> <li>3. New American Pathways is an organization catered towards resettlement rather than business support</li> </ol>
GA Dept. of Community Affairs (DCA)	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect communities for funding sources to encourage economic development</li> <li>2. DCA heavily focuses on providing resources and assistance to counties to strengthen communities</li> <li>3. DCA is not tailored to specific business support but focuses on larger-scale statewide support</li> </ol>
Partnership for Southern Equity	Atlanta and South Georgia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PSE shows strong advocacy for racial equity and economic inclusion</li> <li>2. PSE influences policies in Georgia to support equitable economic growth</li> <li>3. Not tailored to business support, PSE is mainly an advocacy organization</li> </ol>
Russell Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Statewide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RICE provides business education, training, and mentorship for minority business owners</li> <li>2. RICE works with many business owners to located financial resources to grow and support their business</li> <li>3. Focus on black, African American, or African businesses (does not reach all communities Welcoming DeKalb wishes to serve)</li> </ol>
We Love BUHI	Buford Highway	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An organization that is set to preserve and promote the cultural identity of Buford Highway</li> <li>2. We Love BUHI provides amazing marketing and promotional opportunities for businesses in the area</li> <li>3. They have limited financial support and business training services</li> </ol>
Corner's Outreach	Atlanta	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corner's Outreach provides robust and holistic business and workforce development support assisting with compliance, taxes, etc.</li> <li>2. Corner's Outreach also provides some strong language support for those they serve (classes in English, Spanish, and French)</li> <li>3. Due to their broad outreach and range of services, a partnership with Corner's Outreach may require significant coordination and resource allocation from DeKalb</li> </ol>



# 5. Welcoming DeKalb Stakeholder Committee



1.

*Welcoming DeKalb is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all residents, promoting diversity, and enhancing community connections through innovative programs and partnerships.*

2.

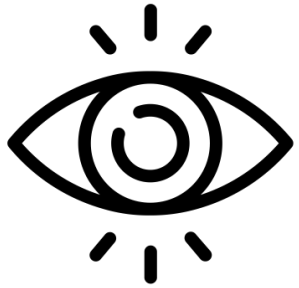
*Our mission at Welcoming DeKalb is to create a welcoming community for immigrants and residents alike, championing cultural diversity, economic opportunity, and social integration for a stronger DeKalb County.*

3.

*Welcoming DeKalb strives to build a vibrant and inclusive community by supporting immigrant integration, celebrating multiculturalism, and providing resources and advocacy to empower all residents.*

4.

*At Welcoming DeKalb, our mission is to nurture an environment of acceptance and belonging, where every individual is valued, and diversity is celebrated as a cornerstone of our community's strength and resilience*



1.

*A future where DeKalb County is recognized as a beacon of inclusivity and cultural richness, where all individuals, regardless of their background, can achieve their fullest potential.*

2.

*A community that celebrates diversity, fosters unity, and ensures that all residents have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the county's prosperity.*

3.

*A DeKalb County that is seamlessly integrated, where the unique contributions of immigrants and all residents are valued, leading to a more dynamic, cohesive, and prosperous community.*

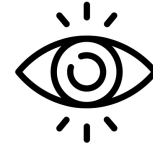
4.

*A DeKalb County where every resident feels a deep sense of belonging and is empowered to thrive, contributing to a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive community.*

## Welcoming DeKalb Mission & Vision



**Mission:** Welcoming DeKalb strives to build a vibrant and inclusive community by supporting immigrant integration, celebrating multiculturalism, and providing resources and advocacy to empower all residents.



**Vision:** A community that celebrates diversity, fosters unity, and ensures that all residents have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the county's prosperity.

## Stakeholder Committee Purpose & Objectives

The Welcoming DeKalb Steering Committee (WDSC) is established to provide strategic oversight, guidance, and support for the Welcoming DeKalb initiative. The committee will ensure that the entity's efforts align with its mission to foster an inclusive, diverse, and vibrant community in DeKalb County.

To that end, the Stakeholder Committee will:

- Provide **strategic guidance** and direction to ensure that Welcoming DeKalb's initiatives align with the community needs and organizational goals
- Facilitate the **mobilization of resources**, including funding, partnerships, and volunteer support, to sustain and expand Welcoming DeKalb's programs.
- Regularly **assess the impact** of Welcoming DeKalb's activities and programs, using data and feedback to guide continuous improvement and ensure accountability.

## Responsibilities

- **Leadership & Governance:** Elect a Chair and Vice Chair to lead Committee and establish sub-committees as needed to focus on specific areas such as funding, outreach, and performance monitoring
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with key stakeholders, including community members, business leaders, and policymakers, and foster partnerships and collaborations to enhance the impact of Welcoming DeKalb
- **Advocacy and Outreach:** Act as ambassadors for Welcoming DeKalb, promoting its mission and activities within the community, and advocating for the needs and interests of DeKalb's immigrant businesses at local, state, and national levels
- **Meeting Participation:** Attend and actively participate in regular committee meetings to review and approve strategic plans and other initiatives

## Inaugural Team Considerations

- Representation from local government and chamber community provides **local focus and attention**
  - Decide DeKalb, DeKalb Board of Commissioners, Metro Atlanta Chamber
- Local ethnic associations ensure that DeKalb County's **diverse backgrounds are heard** and accounted for
  - Latin American Association, RICE, Afghani Women's Refugee Group
- Non-profits and immigrant-focused organizations have the **trust and credibility of the local immigrant populations** and can be key for buy-in and awareness
  - IRC, Prospera, Clarkston Community Center, Plaza Fiesta
- **Access to capital** remains a key challenge, requiring dedicated focus and representation
  - ACE, Inspiritus, Bank of America



# 6. Organizational Structure

**Pros**

**Cons**

**Examples**

Option 1

**Within a Gov. Office**

- Added legitimacy and authority
- Access to resources and policy influence
- Access to funds that would support Welcoming Initiatives

- Bureaucratic constraints that could hinder the true goals of Welcoming Initiatives
- Potential for misaligned scopes and goals between new Welcoming Organization and government office



Option 2

**Non-Profit**

- Complete autonomy and little oversight
- Flexibility that allows for quick adaption and outreach to immigrant community
- Singular focus on all goals and initiatives

- Potential funding challenges due to Welcoming Organization being the sole fundraiser
- Limited resources and capacity



Option 3

**Private-Public Partners**

- Well established connections to local resources and programs
- Strong community engagement through partnerships which improve outreach of welcoming initiative
- Reduced risk due to sharing financial and operational risks. Allows WD to mitigate risk

- Managing partnerships can become complex and require significant effort
- Lack of shared vision between partners can lead to conflicts and slow decision-making
- Success of any partnership depends on the continued commitment of all parties



Option 4

**Arm of Chamber of Commerce**

- Strong business engagement connections, economic focus and promotion
- Large networking opportunities for local businesses

- Potential to exclude smaller businesses that may not be able to afford dues
- Over-representation of member business concerns and priorities
- Potential for competing visions for local immigrant business owner community



**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: WELCOMING DEKALB ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE SCORING**

Evaluating different organizational models along select criteria provides a qualitative understanding of which models make sense for Welcoming DeKalb in both the near term and the long term.



	<b>% Weight</b>	<b>DeKalb Department</b>	<b>Office of DeKalb CEO</b>	<b>Private-Public Partnership</b>	<b>New Non-Profit Entity</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.9</b>
Ability to raise outside funding (donations, etc.)	10%	3	3	5	5
Ability to sustain via internal budgets	25%	4	5	3	3
Fosters Trust and Engagement	15%	2	3	4	5
Alignment to and Ability to Execute Mission & Vision	10%	3	4	3	5
Visibility and Influence	20%	4	5	4	2
Operational Flexibility (red-tape)	20%	2	2	3	5
			<b>Near Term Recommendation</b>		<b>Long Term Recommendation</b>

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: NEAR TERM AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

A newly established organization benefits from the stability and focus of being under the Office of the CEO. However over time, flexibility and scope can benefit through a stand-alone non-profit structure.



### Near Term (2025 – 2029)

- Closeness to DeKalb County leadership provides necessary **visibility and influence**
- Under CEO's office, budgetary support can be more **stable and sustainable**, aligned to typical terms
- **Avoids conflicts of interest**, competing agendas, and “pay-to-play” mindset that can be associated with other structures (e.g. chambers, corporate donations, etc.)
- Establishes a **solid foundation** that is not subject to sometimes fickle private funding considerations

### Future (2029+)

- As the organization matures and evolves, moving to a non-profit entity structure can provide additional **funding flexibility** through corporate donations and some restricted grants
- Non-profit status may also allow for more **nimble movement** in operations and tackling new priorities
- Non-governmental entity can **distance itself over time from perceptions and political concerns** associated with government

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: NEAR TERM AND FUTURE OPERATING MODEL**

To ensure the success of Welcoming DeKalb, dedicated employees with community engagement and programming skills will be needed to direct, manage, and support all Welcoming DeKalb initiatives and programs. The team can scale over time as operations and fundraising become more critical.

**ROLES**

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

**PRIORITIES**

- Access to Capital
- Financial Literacy
- Fostering Entrepreneurial Skills
- Outreach and Advocacy
- Leverage Technology for Efficiency
- Measuring and advertising success stories

**THEMES FOR SUCCESS**


- Economic Development
- Equitable Access
- Education

**TECHNOLOGY**

- Omni-channel presence
- Online Resource Library
- Online Feedback
- Multi-lingual translation technology

2025 TEAM

2029+ TEAM



**Welcoming Officer**

Set direction for Welcoming DeKalb (WD)  
 Identify team needs and develop capabilities  
 Identify and develop relevant relationships




**Program Manager**

Plan and develop programming  
 Manage annual WD programs  
 Provide leadership and supervision  
 Document and measure progress



**Case Managers**

Support and counsel business owners  
 Provide resource referrals  
 Serve as liaison for partner network



**Finance and Operations Manager**

Manage WD operations (staff, vendors, space)  
 Develop budget based on input and initiatives



**Fundraising Manager**

Promote WD within the community (corporate, non-profit, etc.)  
 Identify and secure grant funding  
 Plan and execute fundraising events

2025 Total: 4 FTE  
 2029 Total: 7 FTE

# 7. Welcoming DeKalb Recommendations

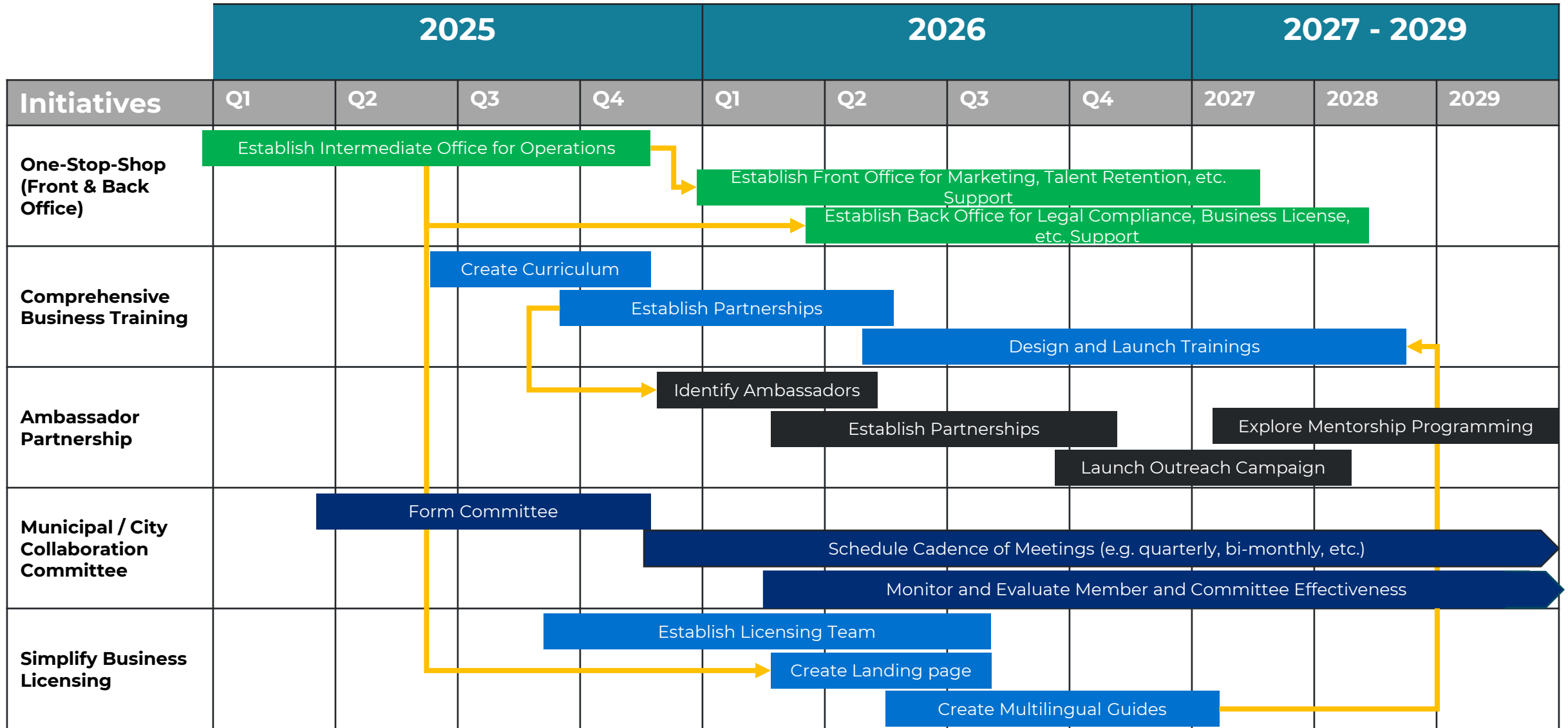
## WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: SUMMARY

Recommendation	Description	Economic Development	Equitable Access	Education
<b>Create a one-stop-shop for business support</b>	Establish a centralized location where immigrant business owners can access comprehensive support services, including business registration, licensing, and advisory assistance, with multilingual staff to facilitate easier navigation of resources.	✓	✓	✓
<b>Back Office Support</b>	Provide back-office support services to immigrant business owners, assisting them with legal compliance, tax filing, liability management, worker's compensation, insurance, licensing, permits, and other administrative requirements.	✓	✓	
<b>Front Office Support</b>	Provide front-office support services (case mgmt.) to immigrant business owners, assisting them with marketing, talent retention, recruiting, social media, and storefront operations.	✓		✓
<b>Comprehensive Business Training</b>	Develop a comprehensive in-language business training curriculum covering essential topics including Business English 101, Business License Processes, Business Planning, Financial Management, Insurance, Credit Building, Legal Compliance, Technology Use, and Marketing / Promotion (e.g. social media, Etsy storefront, Amazon, etc.)		✓	✓
<b>Multicultural Ambassador Partnerships</b>	Establish partnerships to empower Welcoming DeKalb ambassadors throughout DeKalb County. These ambassadors will provide a direct link to Welcoming DeKalb resources, training, networking opportunities, and innovation workspaces for immigrant business owners.	✓	✓	
<b>Municipal / City Collaboration Committee</b>	Establish a regional collaboration committee to bring together stakeholders from surrounding counties and cities like Avondale Estates, Chamblee, Clarkston, Stone Mountain, and Tucker to collaborate through various economic development agencies, business networks, and immigrant support organizations to share resources, best practices, and coordinate efforts to support immigrant-owned businesses	✓	✓	
<b>Business Licensing and Legal Processes Simplification</b>	Identify and implement non-regulatory process improvements to simplify business licensing and legal support system to assist immigrant entrepreneurs in navigating the complexities of starting and operating a business in DeKalb County.	✓		✓



# WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & ROADMAP

Below are key efforts for the Welcoming DeKalb plan which require support, awareness, and decisions from Welcoming DeKalb leadership.



Potential dependencies

## WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: QUICK WINS

In addition to the key recommendations for Welcoming DeKalb, there are a number of “quick win” initiatives that can be implemented in the near term to begin building awareness and sharing some success stories with the community.

Recommendation	Description
<b>Launch Welcoming DeKalb Website</b>	Create a webpage or sub-webpage dedicated to the Welcoming DeKalb entity.
<b>Launch Welcoming DeKalb Social Media Pages</b>	Create a Welcoming DeKalb social media on all relevant platforms to communicate with immigrant business owners.
<b>Conduct Welcoming DeKalb Social Media Campaign</b>	Create an outreach campaign distributed through Welcoming DeKalb social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, etc.)
<b>Partner with Language Support</b>	Partner with language support organizations to translate key documents, outreach, packets, etc., focusing on key DeKalb immigrant community languages such as Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Hindi, Gujarati, and Dari.
<b>Create a Welcome Packet</b>	Develop a welcome packet for new immigrant residents and business owners, including essential information on local services, business resources, and community organizations.
<b>Hire Welcoming DeKalb Director</b>	Hire the Welcoming DeKalb Director to run operations for the Welcoming DeKalb entity.
<b>Host Free Business Workshops</b>	Host free workshops on topics such as starting a business, marketing, and financial management.
<b>Host Networking Events</b>	Host a networking event for immigrant business owners to meet local business leaders, potential partners, and each other.
<b>Create Feedback Mechanisms (Surveys, etc.)</b>	Implement a simple feedback system, such as online surveys or suggestion boxes, to gather input from immigrant business owners about their needs and challenges.

### 1. No Brainers

Prioritize these recommendations

### 2. Strategic Initiatives

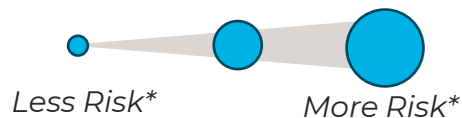
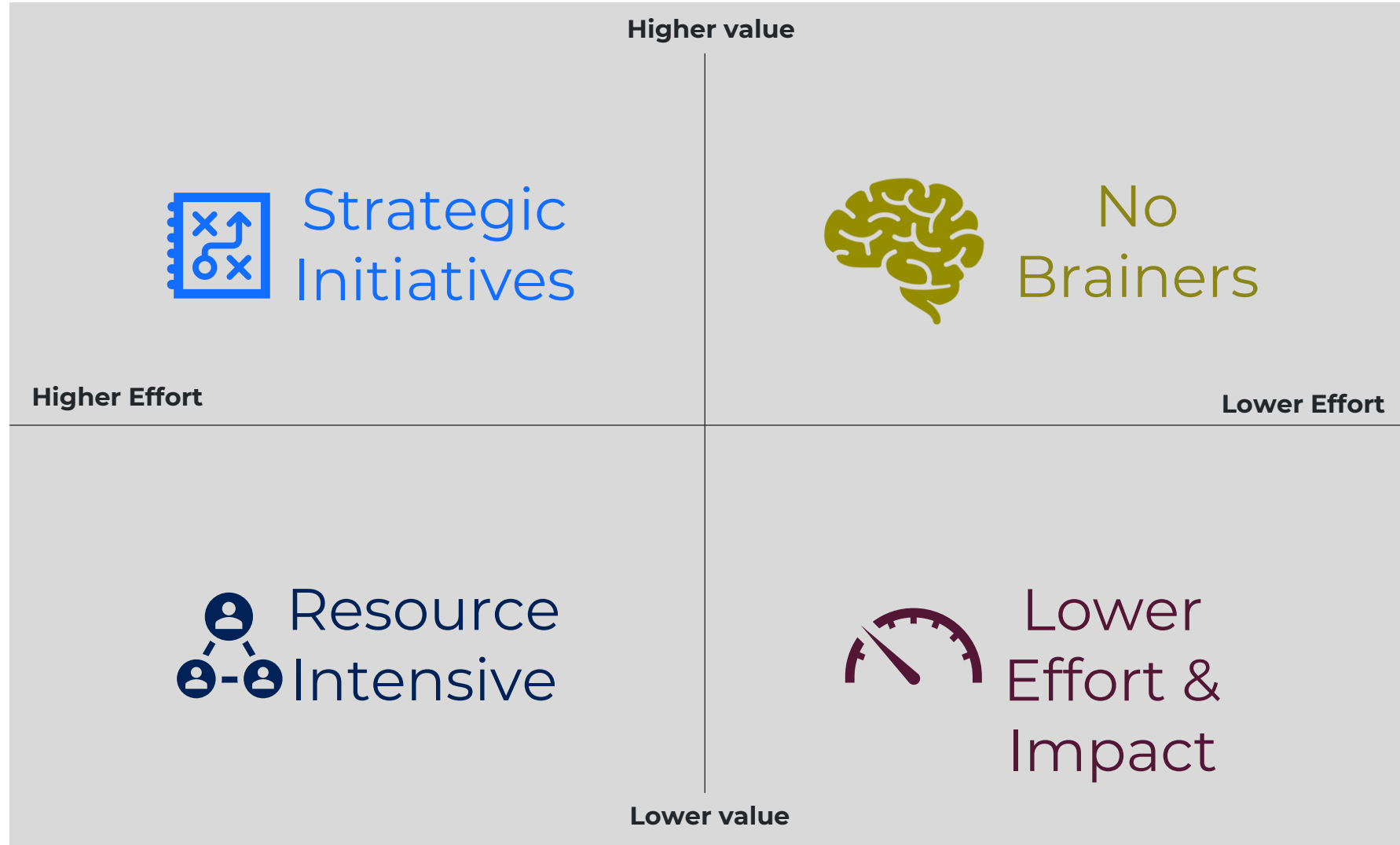
Plan to make time and resource investments to capitalize on these larger-scale initiatives

### 3. Lower Effort & Impact

Consider implementing quick win and strategic initiative recommendations first, as these recommendations provide less value

### 4. Resource Intensive

Deprioritize these recommendations; when considering, evaluate benefits and goals prior to implementing recommendations



\*Risk will be depicted as the size of icons on the graph

**Investment**



\$\$\$ → < 10% of Annual Budget

\$\$\$ → 11% - 49% of Annual Budget

\$\$\$ → 50% + of Annual Budget

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long

Short → 1 – 2 Quarters per Activity

Med → 2 – 3 Quarters per Activity

Long → 4+ Quarters per Activity

# WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT

**Rec. Summary**  
 Establish a centralized location where immigrant business owners can access comprehensive support services, including business registration, licensing, and advisory assistance, with multilingual staff to facilitate easier navigation of resources.

- Strategies**
- **Omni-channel presence:** Online, Phone, Physical
  - **Centralize Services:** Consolidate various business support services, including business registration, licensing, advisory, and financial assistance, into a single accessible location.
  - **Multilingual Staff:** Employ multilingual staff members who can assist in multiple languages to address language barriers and ensure clear communication with immigrant business owners. (Spanish, Hindi, Dari, etc.)
  - **Partnership Development:** Collaborate with local government agencies, non-profits, and business organizations (SBDC) to offer a wide range of services and resources under one roof.
  - **Establish an Intermediate Office:** Establish an initial office where Welcoming DeKalb will operate, market their loan funds BRE services, etc. Locate a free space in DeKalb County willing to house Welcoming DeKalb.
  - **Feedback Mechanism:** Implement a continuous feedback mechanism to gather user input and regularly update and improve the services offered to meet the evolving needs of immigrant business owners.

- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *Chambers that Support DeKalb County:*
    - *Role: Offer business networking opportunities, advocacy, and coordination with other county services*
  - *Small Business Development Center:*
    - *Role: Offer culturally relevant support services, language assistance, and community outreach.*
  - *Decide DeKalb Authority:*
    - *Role: Act as key partner and host site of sub-site that will be Welcoming DeKalb landing page*
  - *We Love BuHi:*
    - *Role: Engage with the local immigrant community, particularly in the Buford Highway corridor, and provide support and outreach services.*

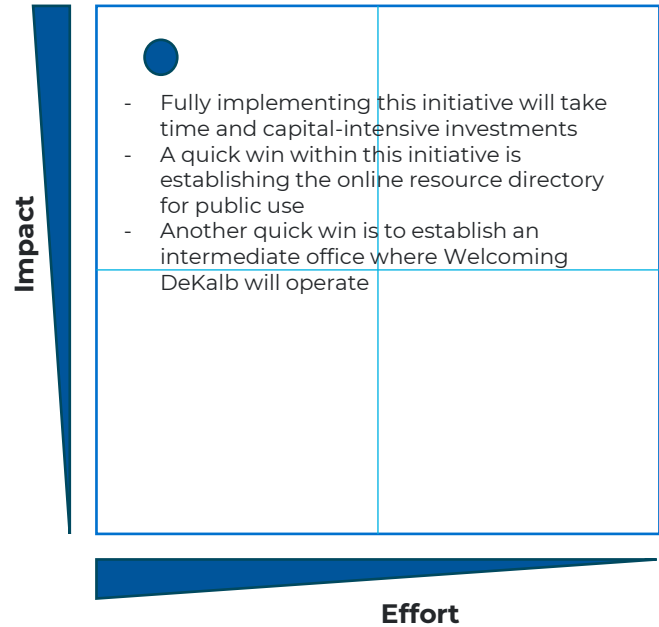
- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Manage financial budget*
  - *Develop programs*
  - *Engage and establish partners*

**Investment**

\$ \$ \$

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long



**Next Steps**

**Establish Intermediate Office:** Establish an office structure and locate an office location to begin operating Welcoming DeKalb out of this office.

Q1 25 → Q2 25 → Q3 25 → Q4 25 → Q1 26 → Q2 26 → Q3 26 → Q4 26 → Q1 27

**Develop Online Resource Directory:** Establish a landing page for all available resources for business owners categorized based on specific needs.

Q1 25 → Q2 25 → Q3 25 → Q4 25 → Q1 26 → Q2 26 → Q3 26 → Q4 26 → Q1 27

**Partner with SBDC:** Create a partnership with the Small Business Development Center to aid Welcoming DeKalb in providing centralized services to the immigrant business owner community.

Q1 25 → Q2 25 → Q3 25 → Q4 25 → Q1 26 → Q2 26 → Q3 26 → Q4 26 → Q1 27

WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: BACK OFFICE SUPPORT (DEPENDENT ON ONE-STOP SHOP)

**Rec. Summary**  
 Provide comprehensive back-office support services to immigrant business owners, assisting them with legal compliance, tax filing, liability management, worker's compensation, insurance, licensing, permits, and other administrative requirements.

- Strategies**
- **Specialized Support Services:** Staff specialists to offer aid in back-office areas of focus
  - **Multilingual Assistance:** Ensure language support for these complex challenges that business owners face (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Dari, etc.)
  - **Collaborate with Legal and Financial Experts:** Partner with legal compliance, tax, and licensing experts (preferably multilingual) to provide wrap-around back-office services
  - **Develop Comprehensive Resource Guides:** Create detailed guides and checklists in multiple languages that cover key aspects of business administration, including licensing, permits, tax obligations, and insurance requirements
  - **Host Educational Workshops and Clinics:** Organize regular workshops and clinics to educate immigrant business owners on various back-office functions and provide hands-on assistance with administrative tasks

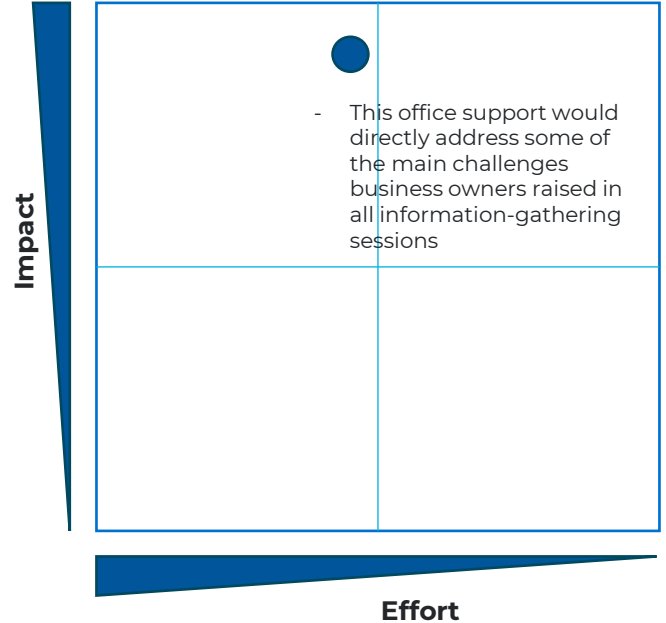
- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *Corner's Outreach:*
    - *Role: Upscale Share best practices to aid Welcoming DeKalb launch back office support in their office*
  - *Decide DeKalb Authority:*
    - *Role: Use expertise and knowledge in back-office support areas to guide training, collateral, and outreach*
  - *Start: ME*
    - *Role: Utilize in-place programming and collateral on back-office support to share best practices with Welcoming DeKalb*
  - *Refugee Women's Network:*
    - *Role: Provide multilingual help and guidance to Welcoming DeKalb for back-office support and support documents*

- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Conduct and manage Needs Assessment*
  - *Match business owners to back-office support individuals as needed*
  - *Create and distribute resource guides in multiple languages to owners*

**Example**  
 Corner's Outreach has a small simplified version of this support.

**Investment**  
 \$\$\$

**Timing**  
 Short  
 Med  
 Long



**Next Steps**

**Prioritize Areas of Need and Provide Resources to Address:**  
 Conduct a needs assessment to identify key support areas for business owners. Once prioritized, develop resources and collateral to address these areas.

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 Q1 27

**Develop and Formalize Partnerships:** Identify and establish partnerships to support back-office services (i.e., Corner's Outreach)

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 Q1 27

**Develop Outreach Campaign and Distribute Resource Guides:**  
 Develop an outreach campaign to vocalize back-office support services and distribute resource guides to the immigrant community

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027

WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: FRONT OFFICE SUPPORT (DEPENDENT ON ONE-STOP SHOP)

**Rec. Summary** Provide front-office support services (case mgmt.) to immigrant business owners, assisting them with marketing, talent retention, recruiting, social media, and storefront operations.

- Strategies**
- **Omni-Channel Support Services:** Work with office support staff to offer aid in front-office areas of focus via phone, in-person, online, etc.
  - **Multilingual Assistance:** Ensure language support for these complex challenges that business owners face such as marketing, social media, talent retention, etc. (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Hindi, Gujarati, & Dari)
  - **Establish Talent Retention and Recruiting Programs:** Develop programs and events to help immigrant business owners recruit, train, and retain employees
  - **Social Media and Digital Marketing Support:** Work with customers to execute on social media and digital marketing strategies to grow business outreach
  - **Storefront Operation and Customer Service Support:** Provide guidance and consulting on storefront operations, including layout, signage, inventory management, and customer service best practices

- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *Decide DeKalb Authority:*
    - *Role: Use expertise and knowledge in front-office support areas to guide storefront operations and marketing*
  - *Chambers that Support DeKalb County:*
    - *Role: Use network of businesses and organizations to mentor and guide immigrant-owned businesses with their marketing*
  - *Plaza Fiesta:*
    - *Role: Share knowledge on their best-in-practice front-office support system to act as a guide for Welcoming DeKalb*

- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Develop programs and partnerships*
  - *Manage all programs and seek feedback regularly from those served*
  - *Use feedback to expand and scale services to the community*

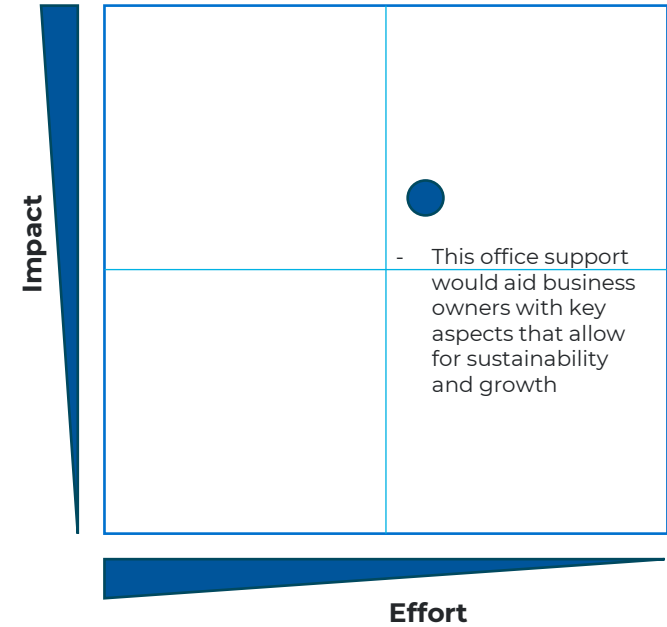
**Example** Gwinnett County Department of Business Outreach

**Investment**

\$ \$ \$

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long



**Next Steps**

**Develop Training Programs:** Create and launch comprehensive training programs and workshops on marketing, social media, talent retention, and storefront operations

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Launch Pilot Training Programs:** Initiate pilot programs in selected areas to test the effectiveness of the front office support services and gather feedback from immigrant business owners

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Expand and Scale Up Services:** Based on the success and feedback from pilot programs, expand the front office support service to reach more immigrant business owners

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029



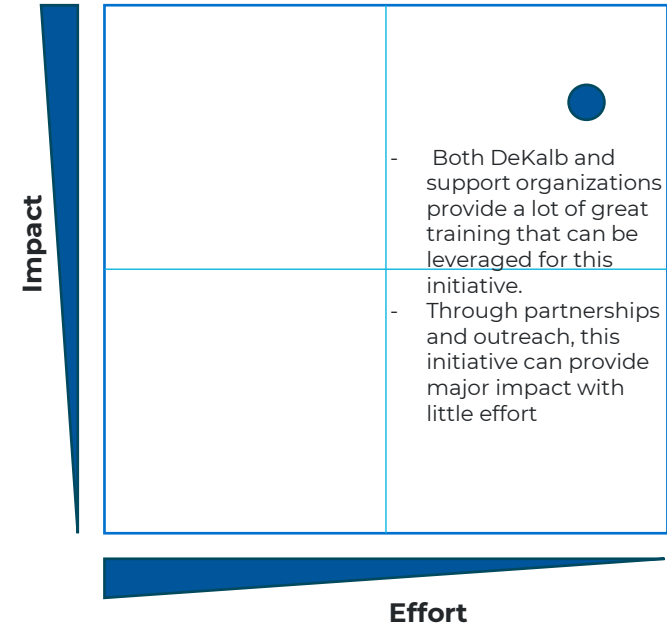
# WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: COMPREHENSIVE BUSINESS TRAINING

<b>Rec. Summary</b>	Develop a comprehensive business training curriculum covering essential topics including Business English 101, Business License Processes, Business Planning, Financial Management, Insurance, Credit Building, Legal Compliance, Technology Use, and Marketing / Promotion (e.g. social media, Etsy storefront, Amazon, etc.)
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Yearly Needs Assessment:</b> Conduct a yearly needs assessment to identify specific training requirements and needs of business owners</li> <li><b>Curriculum Development:</b> Using the needs assessment, develop curriculum to address the most mentioned needs of business owners in the community</li> <li><b>Multilingual Training Programs:</b> Offer training programs and curriculum in multiple languages to ensure effective learning (Spanish, Vietnamese, etc.)</li> <li><b>Flexible Learning Formats:</b> Provide training in various formats (i.e., online course, online video pieces of training, in-person workshops, etc.) to accommodate various preferences of learning</li> <li><b>Partner with Various Business Support Organizations Training:</b> Sponsor and host established business programs created by organizations and centers servicing DeKalb County</li> </ul>
<b>Partner Orgs and Roles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SBDC:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Role: Provide specialized training documents in multiple languages for the business owners of DeKalb County</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Start: ME:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Role: Use training and curriculum from Start: ME program and translate into multiple languages to increase the reach of the program</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>RICE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Role: Leverage training and knowledge geared towards small businesses and help revamp them for immigrant business owners</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>ACE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Role: Utilize training materials and knowledge to educate immigrant business owners on topics like loans, grants, and credit</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Welcoming DeKalb Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Develop programs and partnerships</i></li> <li><i>Conduct the yearly needs assessment to fine-tune the curriculum</i></li> <li><i>Create a landing page/portal for online and recorded business trainings</i></li> </ul>
<b>Example</b>	Various business organizations and government entities provide business training to local business owners.

**Investment**

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long



**Next Steps**

**Curate Curriculum List based on Strategic Plan:** Use the Welcoming DeKalb Strategic Plan and consider all recommendations to drive business training offered

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Establish Partnerships and/or Develop In-house Training:** Partner with business support organizations who have dedicated and established training on curriculum and/or create training on topics missed by partners.

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Launch and Distribute Training Programs and Materials:** Implement pilot training programs in selected areas to test the effectiveness of the curriculum and gather feedback from participants

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: MULTICULTURAL AMBASSADOR PARTNERSHIPS

**Rec. Summary**  
 Establish partnerships to empower Welcoming DeKalb ambassadors throughout DeKalb County. This point-person will provide a direct link to Welcoming DeKalb resources, training, networking opportunities, and innovation workspaces for immigrant business owners.

- Strategies**
- **Establish and Train Local Ambassadors:** Partner with local ambassadors in various support organizations and train them on the vision and resources that Welcoming DeKalb has to offer
  - **Access to Multilingual Staff and Services:** Employ staff who can help in multiple languages and offer services such as translation and interpretation to overcome language barriers (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Hindi, etc.)
  - **Structured Mentorship Programs:** Develop structured mentorship programs that include regular meetings, goal-setting, and progress tracking to ensure effective and impactful mentorship relationships with ambassadors
  - **Co-Host Networking events and Innovation Workshops:** Organize regular networking events, workshops, and seminars to connect immigrant entrepreneurs with local business leaders, potential partners, and resources, and to foster a culture of innovation and collaboration

- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *Chambers that Support DeKalb County:*
    - *Role: Offer business networking opportunities, advocacy, and access to business resources to help immigrant entrepreneurs connect with the local business community and partners*
  - *Inspiritus:*
    - *Role: Offer social services and support to immigrant communities, including assistance with legal matters, employment, and integration to ensure entrepreneurs have a stable foundation to build their business*
  - *Others:*
    - *Role: Use various methods of outreach and networking to raise awareness of Welcoming DeKalb to local business owners*

- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Draft charter for formalized partnerships*
  - *Develop management structure of business hubs to ensure smooth operation*
  - *Develop an outreach and marketing campaign*

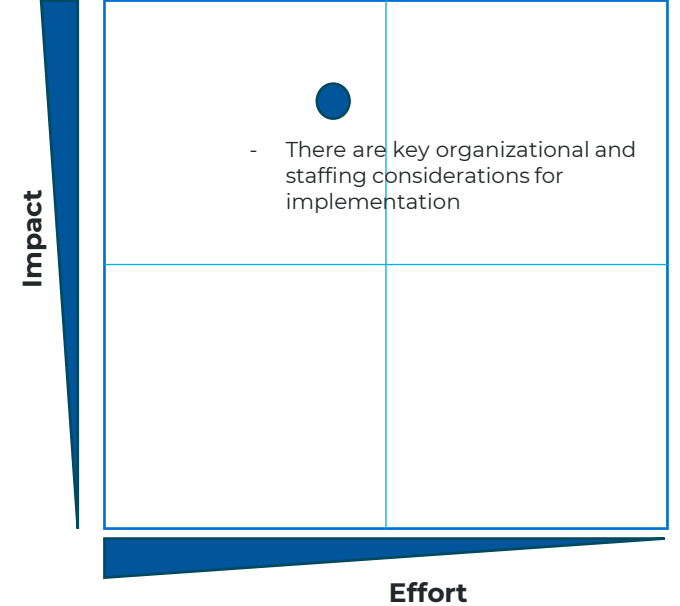
- Example**
- Partnership for Inclusive Innovation (non-profit ambassador program)
  - Emory Board of Visitors

**Investment**

\$ \$ \$

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long



**Next Steps**

**Identify Ambassadors at Desired Organizations:** Assess the needs of the immigrant business owner community and determine which locations and organizations ambassadors would be of service.

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Develop and Formalize Partnerships:** Establish formal agreements with key partner organizations like the many chambers of commerce in DeKalb County

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Design and Launch Outreach Campaign:** Create a comprehensive outreach and awareness campaign to inform the immigrant business community about the multicultural business hubs, including their services, location, and benefits

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029



WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: MUNICIPAL / CITY COLLABORATION COMMITTEE

**Rec. Summary**  
 Establish a regional collaboration committee to bring together stakeholders from surrounding counties and cities like Avondale Estates, Chamblee, Clarkston, Stone Mountain, and Tucker to collaborate through various economic development agencies, business networks, and immigrant support organizations to share resources, best practices, and coordinate to support immigrant-owned businesses

- Strategies**
- **Form a Collaboration Committee:** Create a committee of stakeholders from support organizations, bank representatives, business networks, etc.
  - **Regular Meetings and Workshops:** Organize regular meetings and workshops for committee members to discuss challenges, share best practices, and develop coordinated strategies to support immigrant-owned businesses
  - **Joint Initiatives and Programs:** Collaborate on joint initiatives and programs that address common challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs, leveraging the strengths and resources of multiple organizations
  - **Explore Partnership Between DeKalb and Municipalities:** As one of the most diverse counties in Georgia with a large immigrant population that owns businesses, explore a partnership with city municipalities to participate in resource sharing and joint initiatives that can help serve a large number of immigrant business owners who need it

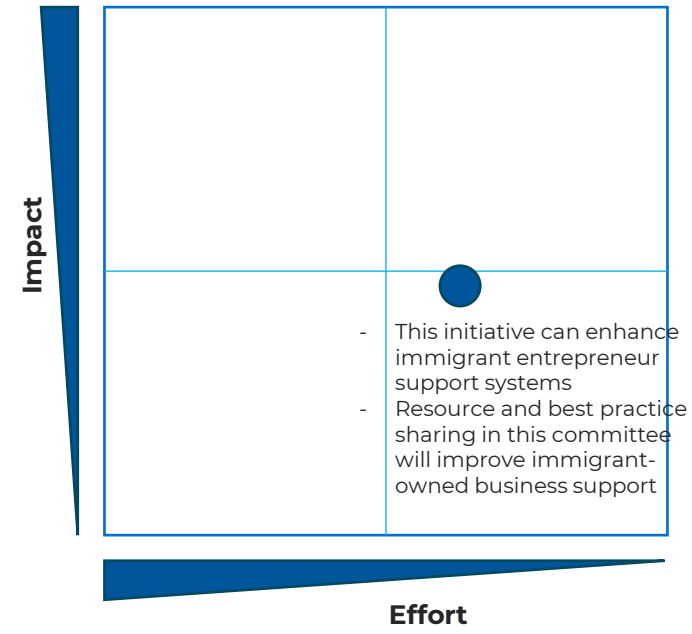
- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *Decide DeKalb Authority:*
    - *Role: In the near term, Decide DeKalb can serve as the lead for establishing a collaboration committee*
  - *DeKalb Municipalities / Cities (e.g. Tucker, Avondale Estates, Clarkston, etc.)*
    - *Role: Leverage their experience and insights from doing similar work to establish a partnership and joint initiatives; provide access to relevant resources*
  - *ACE:*
    - *Role: Provide knowledge and expertise on access to capital and share best practices*
  - *DeKalb Board of Commissioners:*
    - *Role: Serve as the home office for Welcoming DeKalb and as such be involved in committee movements*

- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Form the committee*
  - *Organize regular meetings*
  - *Monitor and evaluate committee member effectiveness*

**Example**  
 Welcoming Toledo (Lucas County)

**Investment**  
 \$ \$ \$

**Timing**  
 Short  
 Med  
 Long



**Next Steps**

**Form the Collaboration Committee:** Identify and invite key stakeholders to join the regional collaboration committee and hold an inaugural meeting

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 Q3 26 Q4 26 2027 2028 2029

**Organize Regular Meetings and Workshops:** Schedule regular meetings and workshops for committee members to discuss challenges, share best practices, and develop coordinated strategies

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q3 25 Q4 25 **Ongoing**

**Monitor and evaluate the Impact of Collaborative Efforts:** Implement a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the impact of regional collaboration efforts and refine strategies as needed

Q1 25 Q2 25 Q4 25 Q1 26 Q2 26 **Ongoing**

# WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: BUSINESS LICENSING AND LEGAL PROCESSES SIMPLIFICATION

**Rec. Summary** Create a streamlined and accessible business licensing and legal support system designed to assist immigrant entrepreneurs in navigating the complexities of starting and operating a business in DeKalb County.

- Strategies**
- **Develop Multilingual Documentation:** Create comprehensive guides in multiple languages that outline the business licensing process, required documentation, and key legal considerations
  - **Establish a Support Team:** Form a team within the local government (licensing offices) or partner organizations with licensing experts to match support team members to business owners
  - **Simplify Application Processes:** Review and provide translated business licensing application forms and procedures for non-native English speakers
  - **Train on License Process (Online):** Organize workshops and training in multiple languages for the new online business license process meant to simplify and expedite the current process.
  - **Leverage Technology for Accessibility:** Develop an online portal or landing page where business owners can access resources and submit applications for review in their preferred language

- Partner Orgs and Roles**
- *DeKalb County Department of Planning and Sustainability*
    - *Role: Be accessible for business licensing support and act as a connector to the Department of Planning for training and support*
    - *Role: Provide Spanish language (bi-lingual) support in licensing space*
  - *City of Clarkston, Chamblee, Brookhaven, etc.:*
    - *Role: Be an expert point of contact to DeKalb County for business licensing support*
  - *Georgia Hispanic Chamber (Hispanic Business Center):*
    - *Role: Leverage partnerships to obtain business language support for the Latin American community*

- Welcoming DeKalb Activities**
- *Develop programs and partnerships*
  - *Coordinate matches between business owners and licensing expert*
  - *Create a landing page/portal for business license support*

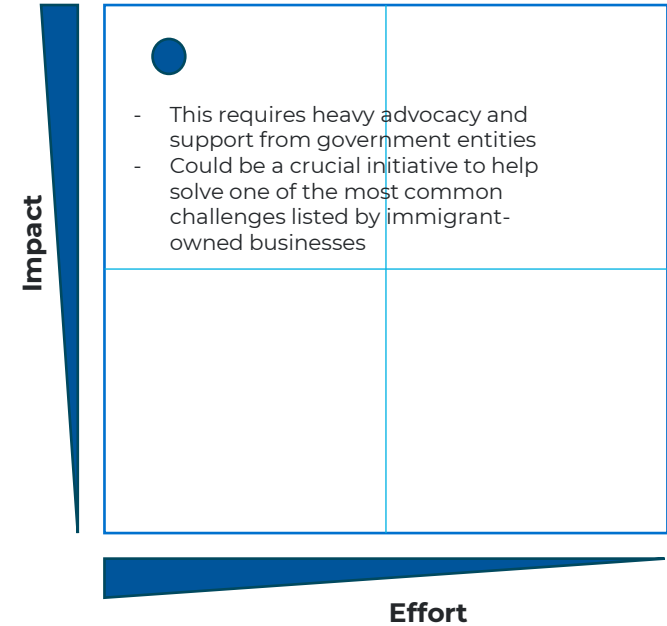
- Example**
- The City of Brookhaven provides wrap-around services for licenses for citizens in Brookhaven
  - The City of Chamblee has multilingual services and documents

**Investment**

\$ \$ \$

**Timing**

Short  
Med  
Long



**Next Steps**

- **Create Multilingual Licensing Guides:** Develop comprehensive guides covering the business licensing process in multiple languages  
 Timeline: Q1 25, Q2 25, Q4 25, Q1 26, Q2 26, Q3 26, Q4 26, 2027, 2028, 2029
- **Establish the Licensing Team:** Establish a team to assist immigrant business owners with licensing applications and legal questions  
 Timeline: Q1 25, Q2 25, Q3 25, Q4 25, Q1 26, Q2 26, Q3 26, Q4 26, 2027, 2028, 2029
- **Create Business License Landing Page:** Develop an online portal for accessing resources and submitting applications  
 Timeline: Q1 25, Q2 25, Q4 25, Q1 26, Q2 26, Q3 26, Q4 26, 2027, 2028, 2029

## WELCOMING DEKALB RECOMMENDATIONS: LANGUAGE TRANSLATION SERVICES

A sample of translation service providers and pricing estimates are included below to support multi-lingual resource development and engagement.

Company	Languages	Price per Page
<b>TransPerfect</b>	Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dari, and more...	~ \$80
<b>Lionbridge</b>	Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dari, and more...	~ \$30
<b>Gengo (by Lionbridge)</b>	Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dari, and more...	~ \$15 - \$30
<b>One Hour Translation</b>	Over 120 Languages	~ \$30
<b>SDL (bought by RWS)</b>	Over 200 Languages	~ \$40
<b>Straker Translations</b>	Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dari, etc.	~ \$25
<b>The Translation Company Group LLC</b>	Over 200 Languages	~ \$40
<b>Ulatus</b>	Over 50 Languages	~ \$25

# 8. Communications Planning



## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: OVERVIEW

The project team met with various immigrant business owners across DeKalb County to capture challenges, identify opportunities, and build awareness for the Welcoming DeKalb initiative.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

#### Outreach Planning

- Identify target DeKalb County immigrant business owner stakeholder groups
- Develop workshop approach and facilitation guides
- Translate key communications (e.g. invites, questionnaires, etc.) into multiple languages
- Plan and schedule workshops

#### Workshop / Interview Execution

- Plan and execute workshop logistics (e.g. invites, location planning, food / beverage, etc.)
- Facilitate workshops to capture feedback on challenges, resources / support, and process improvements
- Consolidate and draw out insights from feedback

#### Define Future Engagement

- Define future communication plan for ongoing engagement opportunities
- Continue developing in-language collateral to support marketing and awareness efforts
- Maintain presence at key community events and promote Welcoming DeKalb initiative

### BY THE NUMBERS

32

# of Support Organizations

60 +

# of Business Owners

5

Workshops Conducted and Outreach Events

36

interviews conducted

5

different types of stakeholders:

- Government
- Access to Capital
- Chambers of Commerce
- Immigrant Business Owners
- Non-Profit

*The team attempted to contact and interview additional organizations but in some cases were unable to secure conversations. We have attempted to summarize potential support areas based on external research, and additional follow-ups will be needed to vet further.*



Connecting with  
DeKalb-area  
support  
organizations and  
immigrant  
business owners  
uncovered the  
most common  
challenges and  
opportunities.

## Quotes

**"People want to work online, but the application process and communication are too slow compared to other regions like Gwinnett"** – Plaza Fiesta Workshop

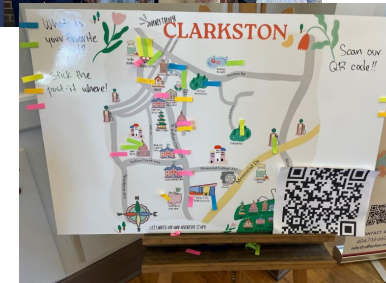
**"This is the first time anyone from DeKalb County has come to speak with us... and we had to come"** – Plaza Fiesta Workshop

**"As a Korean woman business owner, I feel my resources are limited when it comes to help for my business"** – Asian Business Owner Outreach

**"Plaza Fiesta opened many doors for my business; it's all about perseverance and focus."** – Plaza Fiesta Workshop

**"I have seen DeKalb County's support grow and become easier to work with over time"** – Asian Business Owner Outreach

**"Finding the right talent is the key to success in this business"** – Asian Business Owner Outreach



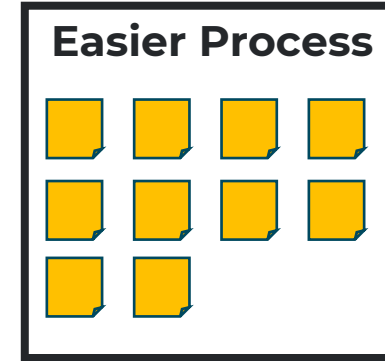
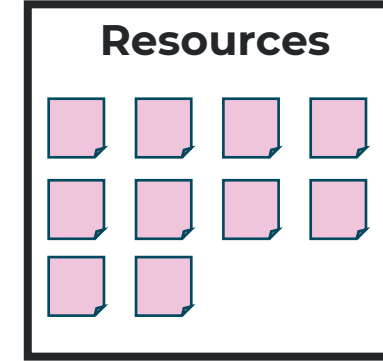
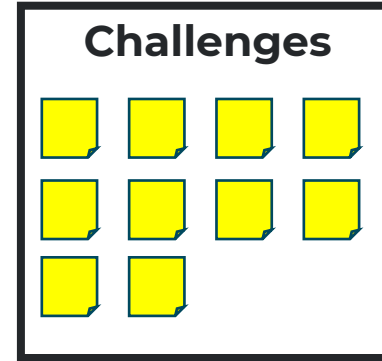
A **Plaza Fiesta immigrant business owner workshop** was conducted to collect first-hand experiences and perspectives of the current immigrant business environment.

**Event Details:**

- Date: 06/20/2024
- Time: 9:00 am
- Location: Main Food Court at Plaza Fiesta
- Invitees: All Plaza Fiesta tenants; breakfast provided
- Conducted in both English and Spanish

**Workshop Details:**

- Jabian posed 3 overall questions to attending business owners:
  1. What were the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?
  2. What could have been different to make the process easier for you?
  3. What resources (financial, educational, networking, etc.) have been most helpful to you as a business owner?
- Business owners documented responses on post-it notes (English and/or Spanish)
- After each question, Jabian prompted the owners to discuss a few verbally with the group as that generates discussion and share experiences





## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

On behalf of Welcoming DeKalb, Jabian attended the **City of Clarkston Juneteenth Festival Celebration of Freedom** where we connected with local DeKalb County immigrant business owners and the organizations that support the Clarkston community.

### Event Details:

- City of Clarkston Juneteenth Festival
- Date: 06/15/2024
- Time: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Location: Downtown Market Street, Clarkston, Ga.
- Commemorating and Celebrating freedom  
With the Clarkston community.



### Connected with DeKalb Organizations & Business Owners:

- Mayor Beverly Brooks - Clarkston City Council
- Roberta Malavenda - CDF Action
- Fernando Rochaix – GSU Dept of Humanities
- Jacob Bouie – City of Clarkston
- Fatemah Rahimi – Garments for Her
- Sadiqa Rahmani – Laman
- Audria Marshall – Behind This Leaf
- Maria Alvarez – LATN Language Solutions





## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

On behalf of Welcoming DeKalb, Jabian attended the **World Refugee Day Celebration** where we connected with local DeKalb County immigrant business owners and the organizations that support the Clarkston community.

### Event Details:

- World Refugee Day Celebration
- Date: 06/22/2024
- Time: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
- Location: Clarkston Community Center
- A celebration of diversity, culture and advocacy for refugees and immigrants

### Connected with DeKalb Organizations & Business Owners:

- Luay Sami - Clarkston Community Center
- Ashley Coleman - Inspiritus & CoChair of CRSA
- Shaista Amana – Afghan American Alliance of Georgia
- Awet "Howard" Eyasu - D-7 DeKalb School Board
- Yonas Abraha - Eritrean American Community of Ga
- Omar Shekhey - Somali American Community Center
- Karima Sultani - KS Art & Craft
- Marcella Cortes –Luvaboo

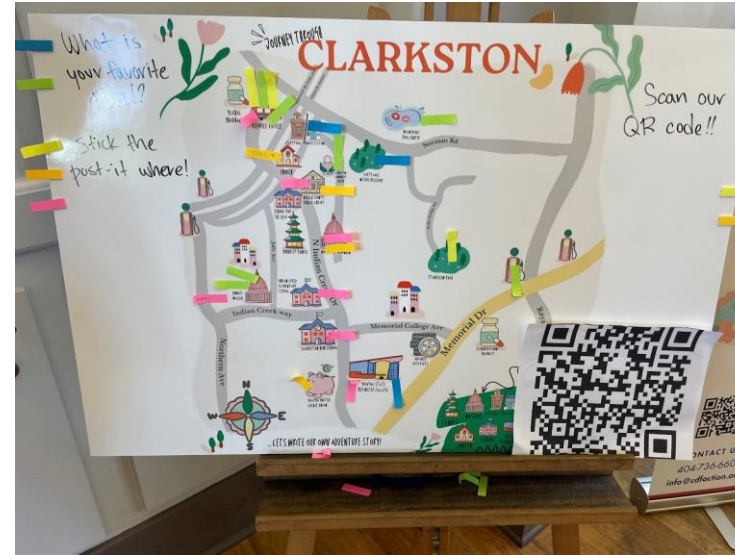




## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We attended the **World Refugee Day Celebration** and connected with local Dekalb County immigrant business owners and the organizations that support the Clarkston community.

### More Pictures from World Refugee Day Celebration:





## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A series of individual interviews and conversations were conducted with **Asian immigrant business owner** to collect first-hand experiences and perspectives and communicate the Welcoming DeKalb objectives.

### CLEO CLOTHING:

- Owner is Jackie (Jung Min Youk) originally from Korea
- New business owner who bought into this clothing store business 3 months ago.
- When she told her CPA that she wanted to buy her next business specifically in DeKalb County, the CPA was concerned and had strong reservations.
- As a Korean woman business owner, she feels her resources are limited when it comes to help for her business. She leans on the direction of her CPA as well as her landlord for updates and business needs advice and direction.
- She asks that the processes be faster and is concerned about the long wait times to receive answers.



### TIFFANY'S SALON & DAY SPA:

- Owner is Tiffany and team is from Vietnam
- Tiffany has had this business for close to 27 years.
- She said she has seen DeKalb County grow and now be easier to work with.
- She feels DeKalb's support was ranked a 1 but now feels it's a full 10.
- Doing business with DeKalb County is now easier since so much is online.



### ASIAN PEARL BUFFET:

- Co Owners are Tim and Jason originally from China, among others.
- This is an established business for the past 12 years, and they have come on as new partners about 6 months ago.
- Finding the right talent/hires is key to the success of their business. They post a Hiring sign in the window when they need help.
- As an established business, they do not work with the county much, they lean on their landlord when something arises.



## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A **Clarkston immigrant business owner workshop** was conducted by Jabian in collaboration with the Afghan American Alliance of Georgia. The AAAGA recently launched its Second Cohort called Sew-Zan that is made up of 25 Afghan women who are all immigrant business owners. The goal was to collect first-hand feedback and experiences of their immigrant business environment as new business owners, new to this country and in most cases not speaking any English.



### Event Details:

- Date: 08/09/2024
- Time: 10:00 am - 1pm
- Location: Clarkson Women's Club, Clarkston, Ga.
- Invitees: 25 Cohort Business Owners of the Sew-Zan Program created and run by the Afghan American Alliance of Georgia.
- Conducted in English and translated to Dari and Pashto.



**Workshop Details:**

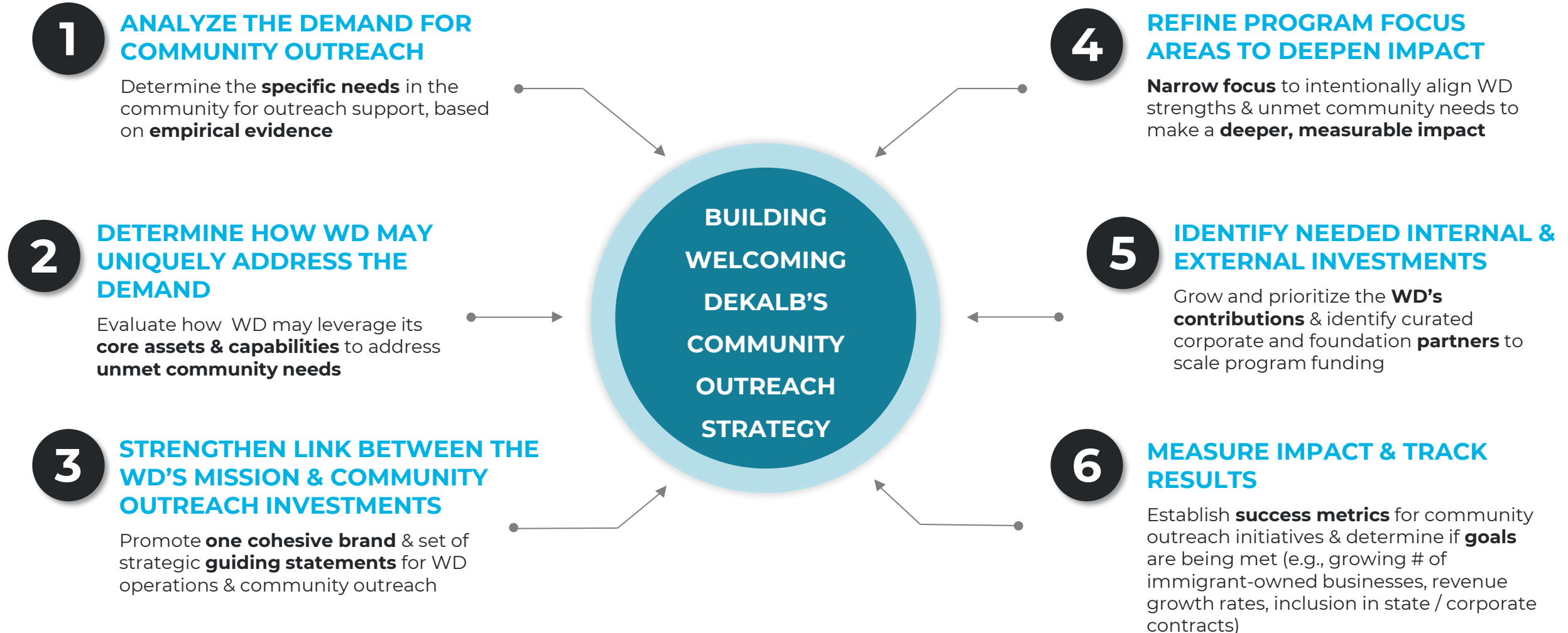
- Jabian was able to secure a special guest speaker Tulu Kaifee, who works for the SBDC, in their multicultural business division. The cohort was able to relate directly with Tulu as she has worked with small businesses for years, she is a Muslim immigrant woman business owner who was able to share her experiences and the cultural relevancies she has had to navigate over the years.
- Jabian also provided the cohort with a list or resource organizations that support small businesses in Dekalb and around the state of Georgia.
- Jabian facilitated a conversation of 3 overall questions to the cohort of business owners:
  1. What were the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?
  2. What could have been different to make the process easier for you?
  3. What resources (financial, educational, networking, etc.) have been most helpful to you as a business owner?





## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Going forward, Welcoming DeKalb can build on our preliminary outreach efforts to develop a sustainable community outreach strategy



## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: WELCOMING DEKALB LOGO

Designed in harmony with DeKalb County's website aesthetics, our logo establishes a strong presence and signals connected, cohesive content for a unified community initiative.



**WELCOMING  
DEKALB**



**WELCOMING DEKALB**



### Design Considerations

This design uses DeKalb County's color palette while emphasizing the spirit of the Welcoming DeKalb initiative. While other Welcoming plan logos focus on globe-inspired designs, we took the community approach of a simple heart inside of the Welcoming DeKalb initiatives to mirror the current logos in DeKalb County's inventory and convey a message of inclusivity and support.

## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: ENGAGEMENT HANDOUTS

Once omni-channel presence established, simple informational flyers can be used at community events and outreach opportunities to introduce target immigrant business owners to Welcoming DeKalb.

The flyer features the Welcoming DeKalb logo at the top center. Below it, the main headline reads "We are Welcoming DeKalb!" in green and white. A paragraph follows: "We are dedicated to empowering and supporting immigrant business owners in DeKalb County. Our mission is to create an inclusive and thriving business environment where everyone has the opportunity to succeed." Below this is the question "Are you an immigrant business owner in DeKalb?" and the phrase "We can Help!" in blue. To the right is a photograph of a green "OPEN" sign hanging from a chain. The middle section is titled "WHAT WE DO" and contains three columns: "Economic Development" with a photo of a construction site and the text "Providing resources through"; "Equitable Access" with a photo of a handshake and the text "Connections to CDFI and small business loan organizations"; and "Educational Resources" with a photo of people at a meeting and the text "Training, Mentorship, etc.". The bottom section is titled "CONNECT WITH US" and shows social media icons for Instagram, X, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook. At the very bottom, contact information is listed: "1234 Welcoming Way DeKalb County Atlanta, GA 30000", "(404) 123-4567", "info@welcomingdekalb.org", and "www.welcomingdekalb.org".

**Welcoming DeKalb Logo:** consistent brand and logo build recognition, trust, and differentiation, making your organization memorable and credible

**What We Do:** Simple and concise overview of support available through Welcoming DeKalb

**Social Media:** expands your reach, builds relationships, and drives engagement, ultimately boosting awareness and growth

**Omni-Channel Presence:** ensures seamless customer experiences across all platforms, enhancing engagement and loyalty

**COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: FUTURE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Welcoming DeKalb can maintain a presence in the community by attending and engaging at various events throughout the year.

Engagement Type	Vehicle	Description	Timing	Links
Grass Roots	In-Mall Partnerships	Marketing Campaigns inside the Plaza Fiesta that represents hundreds of minority owed businesses with over 280 retail and specialty stores. Includes in Mall Digital Advertising, Buford Hwy Digital Board, and other creative direct to Biz Owner Opportunities	Ongoing	<a href="https://plazafiesta.net/el-riconcito">https://plazafiesta.net/el-riconcito</a>
Grass Roots	Hispanic Festivals	Fiestas Patrias at the Plaza Fiesta, welcoming over 50,000 people, along with the Consul of Mexico for the official Independence Day Celebration	September	<a href="https://plazafiesta.net/events/">https://plazafiesta.net/events/</a>
Grass Roots	Hispanic Community Events	Presence at Health Fairs, Holiday Events and more around DeKalb County heavy minority locations such as the Plaza Fiesta or the Latin American Association	Ongoing	<a href="https://plazafiesta.net/event/el-grito-fiestas-patrias-mexican-independence-day/">https://plazafiesta.net/event/el-grito-fiestas-patrias-mexican-independence-day/</a>
Grass Roots	Clarkston Community Events	World Refugee Day , businesses and organizations set up and meet the community, including political heads.	June	<a href="https://clarkstoncommunitycenter.org/">https://clarkstoncommunitycenter.org/</a>

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Grass Roots	City of Clarkston	Juneteenth Annual Festival, with community leaders and businesses on hand.	June	<a href="https://www.clarkstonga.gov/news/clarkstons-juneteenth-annual-festival">https://www.clarkstonga.gov/news/clarkstons-juneteenth-annual-festival</a>
Grass Roots	We Love Buford Highway	FEAST Festival -We Love BUHI promotes cultural diversity and the prosperity of the family-owned businesses and communities living along the Buford Highway corridor. This is the annual gathering.	August	<a href="https://givebutter.com/8C49bF">https://givebutter.com/8C49bF</a>
B2B Events	Ga Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Events focused on Minority Business Ownership taking place in Dekalb County. GHCC has 1300 Members, of which 45% are women owned businesses. Includes partnership in advertising and events with the GHCC.	Ongoing	<a href="https://ghcc.org/en/">https://ghcc.org/en/</a>
B2B Events	GHCC VALOR Program	VALOR program is focused on entrepreneurs and professionals who have served in the Military. Sponsorship allows for speaking opportunity and information to be passed to its attendees	TBD	<a href="https://ghcc.org/en/">https://ghcc.org/en/</a>
B2B Events	GHCC	50 Most Influential Latinos of Ga Event, attended by business owners and community leaders, takes place at in partnership with the Atlanta Braves	September	

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Engagement Type	Vehicle	Description	Timing	Links
B2B Events	GHCC EME Program	EME program is for women: Empowerment Mentorship & Education. Presence at their events with speaking opportunities and sharing of information	TBD	<a href="https://ghcc.org/en/">https://ghcc.org/en/</a>
B2B Events	GHCC - Womens Empowerment	Women’s Empowerment Conference, attended by many Hispanic Women Owned businesses and leaders	October	<a href="https://ghcc.org/en/eme-womens-conference/">https://ghcc.org/en/eme-womens-conference/</a>
B2B Events	GHCC Business Conference	Business Conference and Expo attended by many business owners, companies and those interested in opening their own business. Many sessions full of entrepreneur information	November	<a href="https://ghcc.org/en/regional-hispanic-business-conference-expo/">https://ghcc.org/en/regional-hispanic-business-conference-expo/</a>
B2B Events	GHCC Gala	Annual Awards Gala for Businesses. 1000 attendees from small LLC's to Corporate America	August	
B2B Events	GHCC - Biz Coffees	Coffee with the Chamber, some session in English and some in Spanish.	Monthly	
B2B Events	Hispanic Business Center	Partnership with the Hispanic Business Center (HBC) that provides businesses with educational programs, seminars, and workshops on accelerating the growth of Hispanic Businesses	OnGoing	

**COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: FUTURE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

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Engagement Type	Vehicle	Description	Timing	Links
B2B Events	Hispanic Business Center	ELEVA Program Sponsorship and Training Support (Growing Your Business to New Heights) supported by the GHCC and the SBA Small Biz Administration)	Ongoing	
B2B Events	Hispanic Business Center	Business Networking Groups 3 happening in Dekalb County in 2024	Ongoing	
B2B Events	Dekalb Chamber of Commerce	Partner with the Dekalb Chamber of Commerce to be present and resourceful to Dekalb Chamber small businesses educational programs, forums and partnership collaborations	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.dekalbchamber.org/economic-development-small-business/">https://www.dekalbchamber.org/economic-development-small-business/</a>
B2B Events	Latin American Association	9th annual Women Empowerment Conference put on the Latin American Association that focuses on Hispanic start up Businesses looking to grow.	May	<a href="https://thelaa.org/latina-empowerment-conference/">https://thelaa.org/latina-empowerment-conference/</a>
B2B Events	Latin American Association	Economic Empowerment that supports Latinos in achieving economic self-sufficiency. This would include participation in their classes, training, and programs.	Ongoing	<a href="https://thelaa.org/what-we-do/economic-empowerment-main/">https://thelaa.org/what-we-do/economic-empowerment-main/</a>



**COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING: FUTURE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

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Engagement Type	Vehicle	Description	Timing	Links
B2B Events	Clarkston Chamber of Commerce	Opportunity to connect and learn about about businesses and share referrals and resources.	Ongoing	<a href="https://business.clarkston.org/events">https://business.clarkston.org/events</a>
B2B Events	SBA Workshop w/Clarkston Chamber	Clarkston City Hall learning sessions about Outreach & Marketing in partnership with the SBA. Federal Contracting, Access to Capital.	TBD/ Ongoing	<a href="https://business.clarkston.org/events/details/small-business-association-workshop-2041">https://business.clarkston.org/events/details/small-business-association-workshop-2041</a>
B2B Events	US Pan Asian Chamber of Commerce	Southeast Diversity in Action Awards Gala-accomplishments of corporate partners, Asian American businesses and outstanding community leaders.	September	<a href="https://uspaacc-se.com/">https://uspaacc-se.com/</a>
B2B Events	DeKalb Chamber of Commerce	Workshops and Training for Business Owners and Chamber Members including access to capital, business grants, starting a business and more.	Ongoing	<a href="https://business.dekalbchamber.org/events/calendar/2024-08-01?q=&amp;c=7&amp;m=08-01-2024">https://business.dekalbchamber.org/events/calendar/2024-08-01?q=&amp;c=7&amp;m=08-01-2024</a>

# 9. Acknowledgements

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Geoffrey Loften, Equitable Economic Development Program Manager (Decide DeKalb)

Sunny Anderson, Senior Business Attraction Manager (Decide DeKalb)

Katelin McClure, Economic Development Coordinator (Decide DeKalb)

Ted Terry, DeKalb County Commissioner

### **Welcoming Plan Interviewees**

Sandra Font, Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (ACE)

Veronica Maldonado, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Norma Zuniga-Cardoza, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Greg Williams, Greater Lithonia Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Kwasi Oben, DeKalb Board of Commissioners

Michael Johnson, Development Director (City of Brookhaven)

Consul Javier Diaz de Leon, Consul of Mexico

Rebecca Jordan, Metro Atlanta Chamber

Katrina Young, Business Retention & Expansion Manager (Decide DeKalb)

Maria Balais, Director of Programs for GWBC (DeKalb County)

Julian Bailey, Department of Administrative Services

Tracie Sanchez, Department of Community Affairs

Paulina Guzman, Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs

Carolina Ramos, Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs

Nicholas Mulkey, Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs

Rosemarie A. Drake, Small Business Administration

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS CONTINUED

### Welcoming Plan Interviewees Continued

Jeffrey Patterson, Small Business Administration

Terri Denison, Small Business Administration

Carolina Ramon, Small Business Development Center

Nora Guzman, Small Business Development Center

Gio Garcia, Plaza Fiesta

Cristina Bolanos, Plaza Fiesta

Darlene Lynch, Center for Victims of Torture & BIG Partnership

Sushma Barakoti, Women's Refugee Network

Larry Campbell, Corners Outreach

Luay Sami, Clarkston Community Center

Katrina Julien, Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta

Erin Igleheart, Emory University: Start Me Program

Christian Sigma, City Manager (City of Brookhaven)

Sonji Franklin, Georgia Minority Supplier Diversity Council

Ashley Coleman, Inspiritus

Justin Howell, International Rescue Committee (IRC)

Santiago Marquez, Latin American Association

Latino Community Fund

Probodh Devkota, New American Pathways

Anibal Torres, Prospera Atlanta

Kaziem Woodbury, Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE)

Jay Bailey, Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs

Shakiri Murrain, Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs

John Arnold, We in Spirit

Spencer Clark, We in Spirit

Lily Pabian, We Love BuHI

David Lubell, Welcoming America

Shaista Amani, Afghan American Alliance of Georgia

Brittany Ford, Lucas County

Plaza Fiesta Tenants

Afghan American Alliance of Georgia Classes of 2023 and 2024

Thank You