



Growth Partnership 2014-2015 Results

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I. Highlights

1. In 2014-2015, GP increased the value it creates and delivers to trustees, local businesses, and communities. See sections II and III below.
2. GP has become a more inclusive, collaborative, and professional service-driven organization, providing high quality economic and community development services to Ashtabula County businesses and communities.
3. We have initiated a series of important new development partnerships with groups in Ashtabula County and the Northeast Ohio region, which will strengthen the “collective impact” of the economic and community development organizations serving the county.
4. We have strengthened the GP Executive Committee with new and diverse leadership talents.
5. GP is now guided by a “real” action plan that has been adopted by the executive committee and trustees. GP knows where it needs to go in the future to strengthen Ashtabula County.
6. We are working hard to diversify and grow the trustee and membership base of GP through the new tiered membership model and added service benefits.

II. Business and Community Assistance Summary

Metric	2014 (12 Months)	2015 (12 Months)	2016	Total
Local Business Outreach Calls Initiated by GP	121	114		235
Business Contacts Initiated by Local Companies with GP	261	236		497
Existing and New Business Assistance Cases Opened and Worked on	76	61		137
Business Expansions Project Announcements	6 successes	7 successes		13 successes

Metric	2014 (12 Months)	2015 (12 Months)	2016	Total
New Business Locations Announced	Worked on 44 real leads. No locations announced.	4 potential new business locations. No announcements in 2015.	4 potential new locations carried over to 2016.	4 potential new locations carried over to 2016.
Existing Business Expansion Jobs Created	166	~200 (est.)		366 (est.)
New Business Location Jobs Created	0	0		0
Private Investment by Existing Business Expansions	\$132.3 million	\$29 million (est.)		\$161.3 million (est.)
Private Investment by New Business Locations	0	0		0
Local Community Assistance Cases	42	39		81
BOLC Attendees	590	575		1,165
Career Awareness Students	~700	~600		~1,300
Profiles Breakfast Attendees	~1000 (2014-2015)	460 (first 4 sessions)		~1,460

III. Major New Economic Development Initiatives Launched in 2015

- 1. Forward Ashtabula County Action Plan:** Completed, adopted, and implementation well underway, which includes the initiatives listed below. An annual work plan will be in place by mid-January 2016 under the larger action plan.
- 2. Tiered GP Membership System:** Developed and implemented with new membership drive, which will allow more companies and individuals to be a part of GP. Membership development efforts began in 2015 and will continue through 2016 with 2-3 member development events being held; the first of which is on February 9, 2016.
- 3. Ashtabula County Manufacturers Alliance (ACMA):** Created and 20 local manufacturers have joined. First two meetings held in August and October. Focus on workforce development. Note: For manufacturers only. Quarterly meetings will be held through 2016.
- 4. New Development Partnerships:** A-Tech (Industrial Maintenance Training Program), Ashtabula Arts Center (photo exhibit), LEADERShip Ashtabula County (economic development for leaders), County Commissioners (BRN, Incentive Reviews and other), Civic Development Corporation (Dashboard), Ashtabula County Convention and Visitors Bureau (Wine Country branding initiative), and many other organizations. These partnerships will be advanced in 2016.
- 5. Ashtabula County Development Blog:** 372 articles about economic and community development posted since October 2014 and 127 active blog subscribers. The blog will continue in 2016 in much the same way it has developed in the past year.

6. **Economic and Community Dashboard:** Tool to monitor economic and community trends and performance by GP and its partners. Completed and up. We acquired a \$50,000 grant from the Ashtabula County commissioners and the Civic Development Corporation (CDC) to create the dashboard. The dashboard will be updated on a regular basis in 2016 with greater attention to helping local ED and CD organizations to develop and use performance measures to guide their work efforts.
7. **GP Rebranding:** Completed and implementation well underway. New logo and materials created and being used in all of our work. We will continue to use the brand throughout 2016.
8. **Entrepreneurial Business Growth Initiative:** New service to expand entrepreneurship and grow existing small to medium sized companies. Just started and assessment phase will be completed by year's end. We secured a \$25,000 grant the Defense Manufacturing Assistance Program (DMAP) to fund the assessment phase work. Final recommendations on January 11, 2016.
9. **New GP Website:** Providing greater Web-based data and services for businesses and communities. Will be completed in mid-February 2016.
10. **Ashtabula County @ Work Photo Exhibit:** Joint venture with the Ashtabula Arts Center. Undertaken in June 2015. 75 workplace photographs included in show from local photographers. Almost 2,000 people viewed exhibit. The exhibit will not be repeated in 2016, but will be considered for 2017.
11. **Profiles Breakfast Series:** We revamped the Profiles Series with LEADERShip AC and KSU, Ashtabula to help the county get informed and ready for the trends, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Average attendance per session is 100+ people. The "Futurizing Ashtabula County" theme will continue to be followed in 2016.
12. **News Coverage, Speeches, and Radio/TV Interviews:** GP covered in 18 news stories. 11 speeches given, including Best of the County and KSU, Ashtabula graduation keynote speech. 3 local radio and TV interviews. Public relation efforts will be stepped up in 2016 with more releases, engagement meetings, and presentations to support membership development and other goals.

IV. Major New Initiatives Expected to Launch in 2016

1. **Workforce and Talent Clearinghouse:** A website will be created to support local employers' workforce development, talent attraction and internship efforts. This grew out of the Manufacturers Alliance started in 2015. We expect the clearinghouse website to be launched by mid-2016.
2. **Broadband Improvement Task Force:** A group of local employers and institutions working together to strengthen high-speed Internet access in Ashtabula County. The task force was organized in 2015, which held its first meeting in December. A mission and plan for the task force will be developed in early 2016 and the actual assistance work is expected to begin in mid-2016.

3. **Targeted Local Business Outreach:** In conjunction with local and regional partners, undertake a carefully targeted outreach program that builds upon the BRN project. This effort will be geared to reach-out to plastics and rubber companies, Stage 2 companies in the county, at-risk businesses in the county, and growth companies in other manufacturing industries, healthcare, agribusiness, and technology products and services.
4. **Entrepreneurial Growth Network:** The assessment and strategy for this network was completed in 2015. We expect this network of local and regional business growth service providers to be established and begin offering service in 2016 to existing smaller companies and entrepreneurs. Growth Partnership would be one of these service providers.
5. **Plastics and Rubber Training Program:** Work became on scoping out this program began in 2015. We expect the program would be ready in 2016 if enough local rubber and plastics companies are willing to participate.
6. **Strategic Business Site Marketing:** Work began in late 2015 on marketing packages for the County's top business sites for marketing to local and external companies. The first three site marketing packages will be completed by the end of March 2016. Others are possible if demand and funding are available.
7. **Collective Impact Initiative:** This is a leadership initiative designed to create strategic alignment among the county's major ED and CD organizations through establishing shared priorities, a coordinated work effort focused on those priorities, and shared performance measures. This initiative grows out of the dashboard work in 2015, which is a data and analytic tool that supports our collective impact work.