

GREATER KNOXVILLE COMMUNITY RESEARCH 2012

...to determine the most effective strategic actions to take to reach the full potential of Greater Knoxville.



Research Methodology

In order to develop effective strategies and actions, research was conducted in two primary modes:

Subjective



Objective

- 132 one-on-one interviews of regional leaders.
- Social media campaign (targeting 18-42).
 - 169 online questionnaires.
 - 80 video interviews.
 - 64 in-person interviews.
- Additional input from Leadership Knoxville surveys and Plan ET public meetings.

- Literature review of factors that distinguish great places to build careers and great places to raise families.
- Local, regional, and national studies on best practices.

Subjective Input Summary

On a scale of 1 to 10, how optimistic are you that Knoxville is moving towards its potential today versus 5 years ago?

On average, respondents are more optimistic now - 7.41 today versus 6.6 five years ago.

What are our greatest obstacles?

The greatest obstacle to success is the lack of alignment of leadership and resources. Others are negative attitudes, national challenges, and specific issues like crime, homelessness, and job availability.

What are our greatest strengths?

Knoxville has a “foot in two worlds” in our history (a place that retains its authenticity but is welcoming to outsiders), our people (a great place to raise a family with a growing embrace of creative young adults and diversity), our geography and size (centrally located, river valley, “little big city” in a beautiful mountainous region), our culture and activities (folk art to fine art; biking, hiking, rafting, and boating to downtown festivals, farmers’ markets, fountains, and football), and our economy (tourism to technology).

Objective Input Summary

Knoxville compares favorably with successful case study cities as both a great place for **building a career** and a great place for **raising a family**.

Further enhancing quality job growth will advance the **career** and **family**-related goals simultaneously.

Conclusion

The Greater Knoxville area has a unique opportunity, if it aligns its leadership and resources behind the priorities contained in this report, to become:



Educational Excellence = +

Priority 1

Globally Competitive Schools

Ensure that our schools are globally competitive.

1. **“Success by Six”** - Focus on early literacy.
2. **Teacher Advancement Program** - Full, sustainable implementation.
3. **Schools as community centers** - Aligned student, family, and community resources.
4. **Strategic compensation and teacher support** - Targeted compensation to attract and retain the best teachers; high quality instructional and technology support.



Priority 2

UT as Top 25

Transform the University of Tennessee into a Top 25 public research university.

1. **Research** - Recruit world-class research faculty.
2. **Graduate fellowships** - Recruit top-flight graduate students.
3. **Transform the UT campus** - \$500 million in improvements over the next five years.

“Major research universities are the hubs of the creative economy... undeniably our strongest talent magnets... and are a basic infrastructure component, more important than the canals, railroads, and freeway systems of past epochs—and a huge source of competitive advantage.”

-Richard Florida

Priority 3

Vigorous Vocational Campus

Transform the 221,000-square-foot former Philips Electronics campus in East Knox County into a “vigorous vocational campus” coordinated by Pellissippi State Community College.

1. **Regional vocational plan** - Location-specific vocational training for needs not adequately met now.
2. **New vocational campus** - Full utilization of new campus.
3. **Increase student access** - Achieve sustainability of Knox Achieves to ensure access to the College.



Economic Vitality =  + 

Civic Vitality =  + 

Priority 1

Clean Energy Capital

Claim the title and realize the potential.

- 1. Plant the flag at Cherokee Farm** - Claim the "Clean Energy Capital of America" title and build a cluster strategy.
- 2. Assemble and recruit talent** - Coordinate all the regional talent involved in clean energy research and recruit new talent.
- 3. "Build a Buck's"** - Buck's Diner is a Silicon Valley IT networking hub. Create an ET networking hub at Cherokee Farm.



#1 Metro area in green jobs growth per capita
#2 Metro area in green jobs per capita

-Brookings Institution, 2011

Priority 2

Media Production and Radiological Sciences

Take full advantage of media production and radiological sciences to create quality jobs for the region.

- 1. Assemble the talent** - Assemble the stakeholders to develop plans to realize the job-creation benefits.
- 2. A new joint institute** - Create a new joint institute for radiological sciences and advanced imaging at Cherokee Farm to create the next-generation cancer treatment.
- 3. Recruit additional talent** - Recruit new world-class talent and companies to the area using these two clusters.



The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Priority 3

Entrepreneurial Support

Become the best place in the country to start a business.

- 1. Talent recruitment** - Recruit research, entrepreneurial, and business mentoring talent and people with access to capital from within and outside the region.
- 2. Support system** - Build on the recently created collaboration—the East Tennessee Regional Accelerator Coalition—to build a robust, connected entrepreneurial support system with a memorable brand and easily accessible "front doors."
- 3. Mentors and angels** - Create a business mentoring and angel early-stage funding network.



“American cities and towns cannot just sit around hoping Ford, Boeing, or Intel will come and build a 5,000 worker factory... What a town needs today is 100 people starting companies that employ 25 people each... 20 people starting companies that employ 50 people each, and 5 people starting companies that employ 300 people each.”

-That Used to Be Us

Priority 1

Outdoor Knoxville

Position East Tennessee, with Knoxville as a hub, as a premier destination for the 32 million people in the United States who annually participate in outdoor and adventure tourism.

- 1. Launch the initiative** - Launch the Outdoor Knoxville brand and open the Outdoor Knoxville center at Volunteer Landing.
- 2. Improve the assets** - Make our outdoor amenities attractive, accessible, and safe.
- 3. Knoxville to the Smokies** - Develop a bike trail from Cherokee Farm to the Smokies.



Priority 2

Creative Community

Recognize our creative arts, music, culture, and entertainment community as a key driver of economic development and quality of life. Broaden the base of funding and celebrate and promote our "foot in two worlds" cultural diversity.

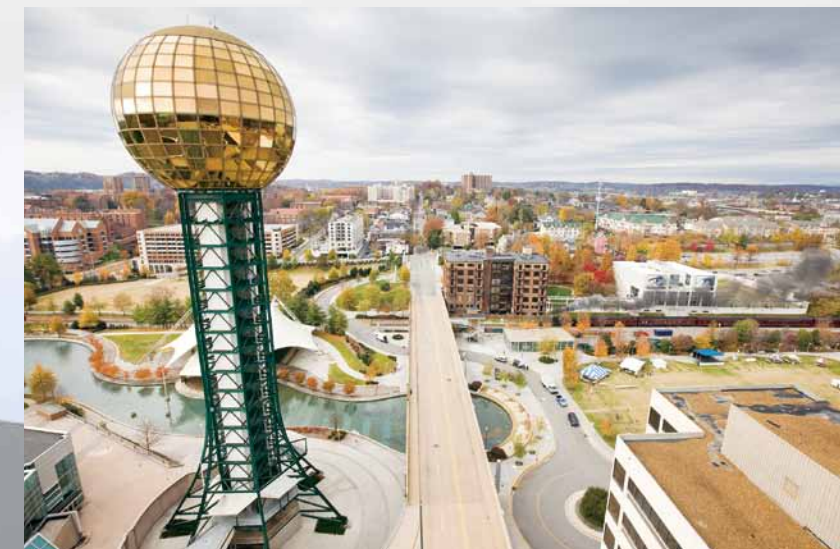
- 1. Arts & Heritage Fund** - Broaden this "united fund for the arts" with a penny on the tax rate leveraging matching contributions from businesses and institutions (a 1% for the arts campaign).
- 2. "The Orchard"** - "Plant" a physical location adjacent to the Downtown Arts District that augments living-working artspace with creative coworking, entrepreneurial, and networking space.

Priority 3

Downtown → Out

Build off the Downtown development momentum to move out from the core to transform the Heart of Knoxville.

- 1. Downtown to the University** - Including Cumberland Avenue public improvements and public-private development proposals, UT capital improvements, and World's Fair Park cultural investments.
- 2. Downtown to the South Knoxville Waterfront** - Including resolution of the mixed use development of the former Baptist Hospital site, implementation of the Riverwalk and other public improvements, and linkages to Outdoor Knoxville's Urban Wilderness and Historic Corridor.



Leadership Alignment = +

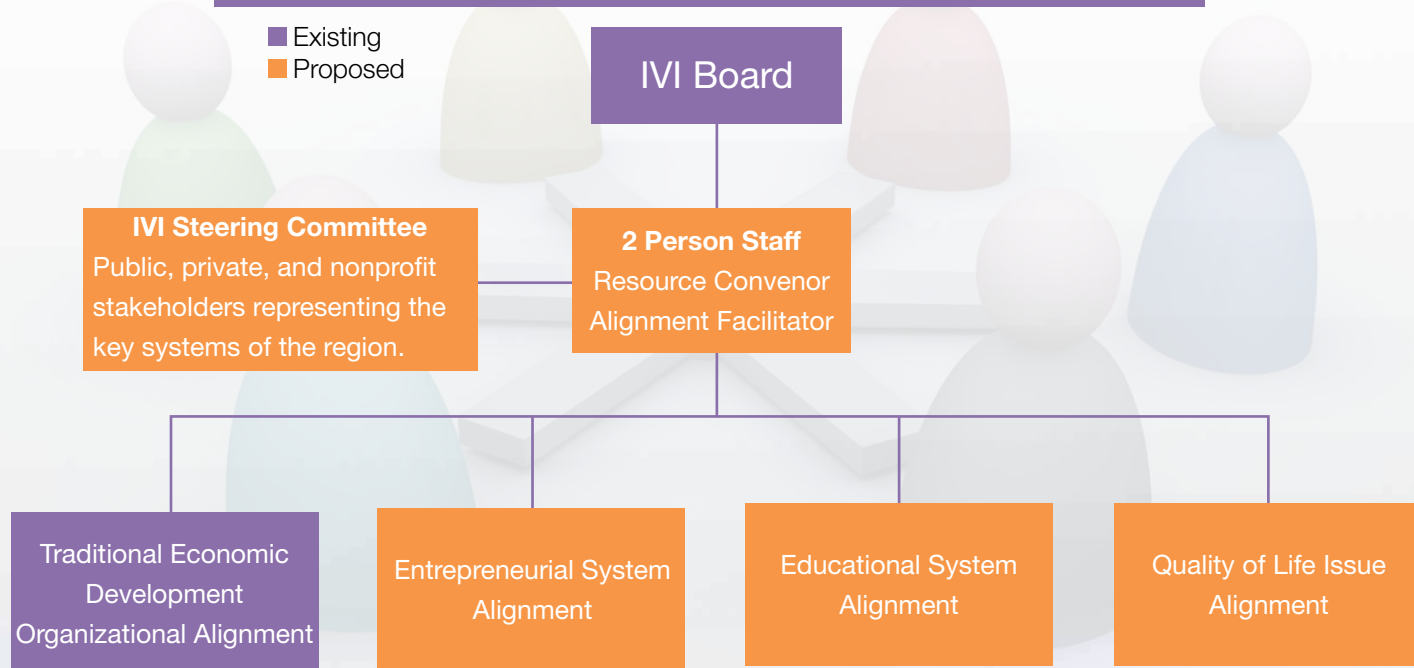
Priority

Regional Leadership Alignment

Build on the success and strength of Innovation Valley, Inc. (IVI), and the positive lessons from Tennessee SCORE 's Advisory Steering Committee model to align regional public, private, and non-profit resources.

- 1. Commitment** - Secure commitment of IVI Board.
- 2. Steering Committee** - Using the Tennessee SCORE model of stakeholder inclusiveness, create an Advisory Steering Committee of key stakeholder groups.
- 3. Staff** - Hire a two-person staff, a "Resource Convenor" and an "Alignment Facilitator."
- 4. Continuous- improvement process** - Steering Committee and staff, with Board approval, continually identify the next issue and the required set of resources, and convene, organize, and align those resources around a desired measurable outcome.

Proposed Innovation Valley, Inc. Alignment (Incorporating the Steering Committee model of Tennessee SCORE)



Our full potential: a great place to build a career and a great place to raise a family



“Fixing America’s biggest problems and re-winning the world can only be accomplished one city at a time. Ultimately all solutions are local... Every city has strong, caring leaders working on numerous committees and initiatives to fuel their local growth... The feat these leaders have to pull off is doubling their entrepreneurial energy by aligning all their local forces.

They succeed by declaring all-out war.

I don’t use the term “war” lightly. This really has to be a war on job loss, on low workplace energy, on healthcare costs, on low graduation rates, on brain drain, and on community disengagement. Those things destroy cities, destroy job growth, and destroy city GDP. Every city requires its own master plan that is as serious as planning for a war.”

-Jim Clifton, Chairman & CEO of Gallup

Research Team

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