Town of Century: Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
March 2014
**Town of Century**
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**ABOUT US**
Located in the SunTrust Tower in historic downtown Pensacola, Florida, the Haas Center collects, analyzes and distributes economic data for clients seeking expert economic advice. We exist to help entrepreneurs and industry leaders—from traditional manufacturing to emerging technologies—meet their information needs in the modern economy.

The Haas Center specializes in data analysis for the purposes of economic forecasting, marketing research, business expansion, tourism, and real estate development, as well as industry and academic studies. The Haas Center's staff combine academic credentials with varied experience, ranging from economists to survey specialists. Each professional combines innovation with attention to detail to produce high-quality research products for Center clients.

For further information please visit our website at haas.uwf.edu, or contact Brice Harris at bharris@uwf.edu.
# Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................3

Analysis of Century’s Strengths and Opportunities for Economic Growth ..........................4

- *Four Golden Rules of Regional Growth* .................................................................4
- *Locational and Infrastructural Strengths* ...............................................................6
- *Opportunities for Industry Recruitment* .................................................................8
- *Future Land Use—Mixed Use/Commercial/Industrial* ............................................16
- *Housing* ..................................................................................................................17

Analysis of Century’s Weakness and Threats to Economic Growth ...............................18

- *Community Weaknesses* .......................................................................................18
- *Threats to Community Economic Development* ....................................................21

Conclusion ...................................................................................................................26

References ....................................................................................................................27

## List of Tables, Charts and Figures

- Figure 1: Regional Transportation Infrastructure ....................................................7
- Table 1: Regionally Advantageous Industries within Mobile, AL MSA .........................10
- Table 2: Regionally Advantageous Industries within Pensacola, FL MSA .....................11
- Table 3: Regionally Advantageous Industries within the Five County Regional Market .....12
- Chart 1: Mobile MSA Industry Competitiveness and Growth, 2014-2019 ....................14
- Table 4: Regional Age Demographics .......................................................................19
- Table 5: Poverty Rate by Group ..............................................................................20
- Table 6: Educational Attainment by Region .............................................................21
Introduction

The Haas Center has been commissioned by the Town of Century, Florida to create an economic development strategic plan as part of the Comprehensive Planning Technical Assistance Grant Program administered by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Division of Community Development. Utilizing funds from this program, the Town of Century, in conjunction with the Haas Center, will create an Economic Development Strategic Plan for the purposes of outlining existing local and regional market conditions, as well as assessing the area’s challenges and opportunities associated with the Town’s economic development.

By doing so, in a collaborative manner, with local and regional stakeholders (residents, policymakers and business owners), the Haas Center will assist the Town of Century with developing a long-term plan to take advantage of the area’s innate economic advantages, while leveraging regional resources in an efficient and effective manner. These actions will better position the Town and its residents to compete for jobs and investment in the 21st century economy.

In accordance with the requirements set forth by the Planning Technical Assistance Grant, the strategic plan includes a series of five tasks, which outline the project’s goals:

⇒ Task I: Development of Regional Economic and Demographic Profile
⇒ Task II: The Identification and Analysis of the Local and Regional Market Area
⇒ Task III: The Collection of Input from Local and Regional Stakeholders
⇒ Task IV: Challenges and Opportunities in the Local and Regional Market
⇒ Task V: Prepare the Final Economic Development Strategic Plan
In fulfillment of Task IV, this report provides an analysis of the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) facing Century’s potential to develop economically.

**Analysis of Century’s Strengths and Opportunities for Economic Growth**

In order to analyze the strengths of a given region, it is crucial to provide a theoretical framework from which to understand regional development. As such, this section begins with a brief explanation of the economist Mario Polese’s Four Golden Rules of Regional Growth. Based on this framework, this section then identifies Century’s strengths and opportunities for economic development.

**Four Golden Rules of Regional Growth**

A substantial body of research has been developed over the course of the last century as it relates to regional economic development. Economic geographers, often referred to as regional scientists, have examined the spatial economic relationship between regions in the hopes of determining why some regions accumulate wealth while others suffer in poverty (Polese, 2009). Although a thorough examination of the theoretical underpinnings of regional development is beyond the scope of this report, a brief explanation of Polese’s Four Rules is presented here only to provide context for the SWOT analysis that follows.

Regional economic development occurs for many complex reasons; however, economic geographers have distilled these reasons into what is referred to as the Four Golden Rules of Regional Growth (Polese, 2009):

1) Size Matters
2) Location Matters
3) Costs Matter
4) Exceptions Abound
The size (Rule 1) of a region (nation, state, county, MSA, city, town, etc.) matters because higher levels of economic density, or what economic geographers refer to as agglomeration, tend to increase the productivity of labor, whereby generating wage gains and production efficiencies (Polese, 2009). These productivity gains then attract further investment seeking to capture future profits, thus generating further economic growth. Simply put, larger regions tend to generate greater levels of economic activity and diversity, whereby providing the smaller regions within their orbit a potential source of income.

The location of a region (Rule 2) in relation to its trading partners also matters as industry must balance its cost of production against its cost of transportation (infrastructure). Meaning, a firm’s decision to relocate, among other factors, is decided based on where its production facilities need to be located in relation to its primary inputs versus the costs of transporting its tradable good to market. These costs varying by industry and infrastructural improvements.

Moreover, the cost (and quality) of its factors of production (land, labor and capital) also matter (Rule 3). Certain industries find it more profitable to locate in urban centers where both land and labor tend to be expensive. These industries typically need smaller facilities but a more highly trained (specialized) workforce, such as Professional and Business Services industries. Other industries find that lower property values and lower labor costs are attractive as they require larger facilities and a workforce with mid to low levels of training, such as Mid-tech Manufacturing industries (Polese, 2009). This is why automobile manufactures, requiring hundreds of thousands of square feet for their plants and relatively cheap labor, have a tendency to relocate to rural areas where both land and labor are relatively inexpensive.

Finally, there are exceptions to every rule (Rule 4), such as a
region’s history and governance, as well as technological change, that may lead to regional growth in areas not predicted by the three previous rules (Polese, 2009). As such, the elements of regional economic development—size, location, and costs—should not be seen as harden fast rules, but rather guidelines as to how regions tend to develop economically (Polese, 2009).

With these elements of regional growth in mind, the following section identifies the Town of Century’s strengths as it pertains to its locational and infrastructural (transportation) assets, as well as suggests potential opportunities for recruiting industry based on these identified strengths.

**Locational and Infrastructural Strengths**

The Town of Century possesses locational factors that are conducive to economic development—its proximity to two urban centers, Mobile and Pensacola MSA. Additionally, the regional infrastructure surrounding the Town creates certain opportunities for growth. These infrastructural advantages include:

- Within 20 miles of Interstate 65 to Mobile and Montgomery, AL (Access via a 4-lane highway, Highway 113)
- Within 40 miles of Interstate 10 to Mobile, Al and Tallahassee, FL (Access via a 4-lane highway, Highway 29)
- Access to CSX rail transport to Mobile, Montgomery and Pensacola MSAs
- Improved Industrial Park
- Recently upgraded and expanded sewer/water infrastructure
- Business Incubator
- Pensacola State College, Century Campus
- Low Wages
- Low Property Values

These locational and infrastructural advantages are Century’s core strengths which may provide opportunities for the Town to attract much needed basic industries. Basic industries are comprised of
businesses that export goods or services, whereby creating an inflow of new capital to the region, thus increasing its economic value by producing employment and generating income. Although location and infrastructure are important, they are not a silver bullet for economic development. Other factors such as quality of the local workforce, factor endowment, capital investment, regulatory issues, quality of life and external demand all have a part in developing a region.

**Infrastructure.** Figure 1 presents the major infrastructural assets existing throughout the region. Century is located directly on the
state line and is within 20 miles (30 minute drive time) of Interstate 65, which runs north from Mobile, AL to Gary, IN, and 40 miles (45 minute drive time) from Interstate 10, which runs east-west, connecting Jacksonville, FL with Santa Monica, CA. Moreover, each interstate is accessed using a four-lane highway—Highway 113 to I-65 and Highway 29 to I-10. Finally, the Town is within 50 miles (60 minutes) of the Port of Pensacola—a 50-acre facility offering a Foreign Trade Zone, an Enterprise Zone and stevedoring and marine terminal services.

In addition to the Town’s efficient access to two major interstates and the Port of Pensacola, Century is also ideally situated at a CSX rail interchange, with direct access to the Alger-Sullivan industrial site. These rail lines run north to Montgomery, AL, south to Pensacola, FL, east to Jacksonville, FL, and west to Mobile, AL, with the last three destinations containing sea ports.

To determine the economic opportunities for Century, an analysis of the greater region is necessary. In our report entitled *Regional Market Analysis*, Haas Center staff identified Century’s regional market as consisting of five counties: Escambia, FL, Santa Rosa, FL, Escambia, AL, Baldwin, AL, and Mobile, AL. The following section identifies the opportunities that may exist given Century’s locational and infrastructural advantages identified above.

**Opportunities for Industry Recruitment**

**Proximity to Urban Centers.** Century’s infrastructural advantages compliment its proximity to two urban centers—Mobile and Pensacola MSAs. Being within 70 miles from Century as well as the aforementioned regional infrastructural advantages, it may be feasible for Century to attract basic industries with regional advantages located in either MSA, as well as the greater five-county regional market. A region can be defined has having an economic advantage in a particular industry when that industry is growing faster within the region under examination relative to that industry at the national level.
By utilizing a shift-share analysis for industries within the Pensacola MSA, Mobile MSA and the five-county regional market, we can determine which industries demonstrate regional advantages and thus may qualify as target industries for Century. Tables 1, 2 and 3 on the following pages presents data for all industries in Mobile MSA, Pensacola MSA and the five-county regional market, which are projected to add at least an additional 250 jobs between 2014 and 2019.

In order to understand what the data in each table is indicating, let us look at Table 1, Row 1, Ship and Boat Building as an example. The table contains the following data: NAICS Code, Industry Description, 2014 Jobs, 2019 Jobs, Industry Mix Effect, National Growth Effect, Expected Change, Competitive Effect, Change and Percent Change. The first four columns identify the type of industry, the employment for 2014 and the projected employment in 2019. The final two columns (Change and % Change) represent the total projected job growth between 2014 and 2019, as well as the percent change.

Looking at our example, we see that Ship and Boat Building is projected to grow from 5,300 employees in 2014 to 6,394 employees in 2019, thus leading to a projected job growth of 1,094 over that five-year period, or a 21% increase. The statistics in the middle four columns are what help to determine the regional advantage. Starting with the Industry Mix Effect, this statistic represents how much of the job growth within the Mobile Ship and Boat Building Industry is explained by the growth of that industry at the national level (regional industry job growth X national industry growth rate).

As the table indicates, this statistic is negative suggesting that the Ship and Boat Building Industry at a national level is contracting. The National Growth Effect statistic indicates the portion of the industry’s growth within the Mobile MSA is due to the growth of
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<td>3366</td>
<td>Ship and Boat Building</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>6,394</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6,691</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<td>8121</td>
<td>Religious Organizations</td>
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<td>4,923</td>
<td>-8%</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4,986</td>
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<tr>
<td>5617</td>
<td>Services to Buildings and Grounds</td>
<td>6,995</td>
<td>8,034</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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<td>6211</td>
<td>Offices of Physicians</td>
<td>4,543</td>
<td>5,230</td>
<td>-13%</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5,792</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<td>6213</td>
<td>Offices of Other Health</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4529</td>
<td>Other General Merchandise</td>
<td>3,462</td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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</tr>
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<td>8131</td>
<td>Religious Organizations</td>
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<td>4,923</td>
<td>-8%</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4,986</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<td>6216</td>
<td>Home Health Care Services</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2,168</td>
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<td>5313</td>
<td>Activities Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>2,867</td>
<td>3,197</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3,197</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<td>5415</td>
<td>Computer Systems Design and Related Services</td>
<td>2,989</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5311</td>
<td>Lessors of Real Estate</td>
<td>4,128</td>
<td>4,509</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4,509</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6241</td>
<td>Individual and Family Services</td>
<td>1,785</td>
<td>2,262</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2,262</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5613</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
<td>4,520</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5513</td>
<td>Activity Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>2,867</td>
<td>3,197</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3,197</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5312</td>
<td>Computer Systems Design and Related Services</td>
<td>2,989</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5617</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
<td>4,520</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5311</td>
<td>Lessors of Real Estate</td>
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<td>4,509</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4,509</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6241</td>
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<td>2,262</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2,262</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5613</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
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<td>4,949</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5312</td>
<td>Computer Systems Design and Related Services</td>
<td>2,989</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>2019 Jobs</td>
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Table 1: Regionally Advantageous Industries within Mobile, AL MSA

(NAICS: North American Industry Classification System, EMSI: Economic Modeling Inc.)
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<tr>
<td>6231</td>
<td>Nursing Care Facilities</td>
<td>2,650</td>
<td>3,271</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5242</td>
<td>Other General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>3,058</td>
<td>3,621</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
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<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
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<tr>
<td>5614</td>
<td>Services to Buildings and Dwellings</td>
<td>5,787</td>
<td>6,528</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
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<tr>
<td>2382</td>
<td>Building Equipment Contractors</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>3,931</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3,836</td>
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<td>5221</td>
<td>Depository Credit Intermediation</td>
<td>4,409</td>
<td>4,846</td>
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<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
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<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>625</td>
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<tr>
<td>5311</td>
<td>Activities Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>625</td>
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<td>3,580</td>
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<td>5313</td>
<td>Other Financial Investment Activities</td>
<td>1,579</td>
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<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
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<tr>
<td>6211</td>
<td>Offices of Physicians</td>
<td>4,487</td>
<td>4,744</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>358</td>
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<td>3,836</td>
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<td>3,836</td>
<td>3,580</td>
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Table 2: Regionally Advantageous Industries within Pensacola, FL MSA

(Source: EMSI, Inc.)
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3366</td>
<td>Ship and Boat Building</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>2,416</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2,416</td>
<td>884</td>
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<tr>
<td>3311</td>
<td>Iron and Steel Mills and Ferroalloy Manufacturing</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>1,711</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,711</td>
<td>885</td>
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<tr>
<td>4211</td>
<td>Home Health Care Services</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5311</td>
<td>Real Estate Related Services</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3312</td>
<td>Steel Product Manufacturing From Purchased Steel</td>
<td>1,223</td>
<td>2,131</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2,131</td>
<td>1,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3313</td>
<td>Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3314</td>
<td>Aircraft Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>1,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3315</td>
<td>Deep Sea, Coastal, and Great Lakes Water</td>
<td>5,037</td>
<td>8,766</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>8,766</td>
<td>5,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3316</td>
<td>Aircraft Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
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<tr>
<td>3317</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3318</td>
<td>Aviation Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>3319</td>
<td>Automotive Related to Real Estate</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3320</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
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<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3321</td>
<td>Nuclear Power Generation and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3322</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>3323</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
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<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
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<tr>
<td>3324</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>3325</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>3326</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
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<tr>
<td>3327</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3328</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>3329</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3330</td>
<td>Spacecraft and Related Services</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(source: EMSI, Inc.)
the overall national economy (regional industry job growth X national growth rate). By summing these two statistics (-502 + 358), we see that the Expected Change in the Ship and Boat Building Industry is −144 between 2014 and 2019. However, the actual projected employment growth for the Ship and Boat Building Industry within the Mobile MSA is 1,094, suggesting that the Mobile MSA provides the Ship and Boat Building Industry with a regional advantage. This regional advantage is demonstrated by the Competitive Effect statistic, which suggests a total job growth of 1,238 (1,094 - (-144)). Of course, this statistic does not fully explain what these advantages are, instead, it simply suggests that the region may provide advantages to that industry which do not exist relative to the nation as a whole.

Not all industries presented in each table indicate strong regional advantages, however. Furthermore, not all industries are basic industries (export driven), but rather many are non-basic (locally supported), and thus not likely to present an opportunity for Century to recruit. As such, we have highlighted those industries we believe may provide Century with an opportunity to recruit a basic industry.

As a cautionary note, however, more research is needed to determine if each highlighted industry is suitable for relocating to Century. Each industry has its own factor (land, labor, capital and technological) requirements; as such, fully understanding each industry’s unique requirements is necessary before any recruitment plan is undertaken. We mention them here simply as industries that indicate this region may provide them with certain advantages, and thus worthy of pursuing, either as individual industries or industries within clusters identified as having strong linkages to the region.

Chart 1 (on the following page) more closely examines the highlighted industries for the Mobile MSA (see Table 1). The figure presents the average earnings per worker along the Y axis, while
the X axis presents the competitiveness rating for each industry. The competitiveness rating (competitive effect/actual job growth) is simply a measure of how strong the regional advantage is for a given industry. A rating greater than 100% indicates that at least all of the regional job growth for the given industry may be attributed to some type of regional advantage. Moreover, the size of each bubble indicates the level of job growth projected to occur between 2014-2019—the larger the bubble, the faster the industry is projected to grow.

As Chart 1 indicates, the Mobile MSA provides the Ship and Boat Building, Iron & Steel Mills & Ferroalloy Manufacturing and the Steel Product Manufacturing from Purchased Steel industries with a competitiveness rate of 113%, 104% and 81%, respectively. Furthermore, these industries provide higher rates of pay, on average, than those found in the rest of the Mobile MSA.
Chart 2 (on the following page) provides the competiveness ratings for the highlighted industries (see Table 3) located throughout the five-county region (Escambia, FL, Santa Rosa, FL, Escambia, AL, Baldwin, AL, Mobile, AL). It is important to keep in mind that the five-county region contains the Mobile MSA, and, therefore, three of the six industries represented are presented here again. In addition to these industries, regional job growth patterns for the Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing, Oil and Gas Extraction, and Deep Sea, Coastal, and Great Lakes Water Transportation industries all suggest this region provides each industry with some degree of regional advantage. Each industry, with the exception of Oil and Gas Extraction, maintains higher earnings per worker than the rest of the region, on average.

Furthermore, while agriculture at the 2-digit NAICS level is projected to increase by only 2% over the next five years, Century may find opportunities for development in Support Activities for...
Crop Production and Support Activates for Animal Production industries, which both are projected to grow by 13% and 19%, respectively. However, these industries present only limited opportunities as the average wage for both are well below the regional average at $29,096 and $23,315, respectively.

Absent from this discussion are industries located within the Pensacola MSA. Upon our examination, the only export based industry to demonstrate a regional advantage was Oil and Gas Extraction; for the sake of clarity, we included it in Chart 2. However, Century may have an opportunity to capture some of the tourism dollars that Pensacola attracts every year by developing its historical and heritage tourism industry.

**Future Land Use—Mixed Use/Commercial/Industrial.** The Town of Century’s strategy for future commercial growth will incorporate mixed-use, infill and redevelopment principles. The Town’s strategy will be directed to the appropriate areas with public facilities and services that may support proposed development. In particular, Century expects this infill or intensification to occur along the U.S. Highway 29 Corridor between State Road 4 and County Road 4. This area has functioned as their commercial center since the area’s development, and will be reinforced as a mixed-use center with a balanced mix of high quality commercial, office, institutional and residential uses.

The 2025 Future Land Use Map provides for 214.93 acres of commercial use as a percentage of the mixed-use and commercial future land use categories. Based on the 2010 population (1,698), the current ratio is 126.58 commercial acres per 1,000 residents. This ratio includes the commercial development included within mixed-use areas.

Based on the developable vacant land analysis, as depicted in the data and analysis section of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, there are 82.13 acres of vacant mixed-use and 11.75 acres of vacant
commercial land, for a total of 93.88 vacant acres available for mixed-use/commercial development.

The 2025 Future Land Use Map provides for 140.76 acres of industrial use, including land within the Century Industrial Park and miscellaneous parcels located throughout the Town. Developable vacant land for industrial development includes 85.18 acres. As such, the Town’s Future Land Use policy, as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, provides the Town with opportunities for economic development.

_Housing._ According to the 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the Town has a total of 814 housing units with 699 units occupied and 115 units vacant. Of the 814 total housing units, 643 units were constructed prior to 1999. One hundred ninety-five (195) housing units, or 24.0%, are 50 years old or older. Of the 699 occupied units, 456 units are owner-occupied and 243 are renter-occupied. The median monthly payment for those housing units with a mortgage is $933.00 while the median gross monthly rental payment is $349.00. Furthermore, 65% of the houses in Century are valued at less than $100,000.

Century faces two primary issues with its current stock of housing units. First, many mobile and permanent dwellings are in a state of disrepair and in need of refurbishments. Second, locating suitable housing units within Century would be difficult if the Town were to attract manufacturing or other industries that would bring in-house employees within the town limits.

However, the Town’s Future Land Use Map shows there are 589.94 acres of vacant land in the Town within Future Land Use categories that allow some percentage of residential uses. The acreage of vacant land available for residential use in each land use category was calculated then converted to potential residential units using the maximum density allowed in each district, based on the maximum allowable percentage. Century would be able to
accommodate 1,095 additional housing units by 2025, in the case that densities are maximized. The Town forecasts additional dense mixed-use areas as a result of economic development.

Analysis of Century’s Weaknesses and Threats to Economic Growth

In considering Century’s challenges, it’s useful to assess the Town in terms of its capacity. Community capacity can be considered the interaction of human capital, organizational resources and social capital that is leveraged to solve a community’s collective problems or improve their well-being (Marre and Weber, 2007). This capacity is a dynamic process that may change as conditions or resources fluctuate. It evaluates economic indicators, like entrepreneurship and the business environment, alongside the community’s relationships with associations, bureaucracy and the market. In using community capacity as a framework for discussion, we can assess the weaknesses of the Town of Century as a function of its efforts to further develop both its community and economy.

Community Weaknesses

Population Decline. The Town of Century has experienced a slow, steady decline in its population; since 1990, Century has declined in population by 25%. At that time, their population was near 2,000 but had declined to approximately 1,500 residents by 2010. The Town’s population is projected to decline by another 100 residents by 2018.

This population exodus has caused a pattern of declining economic conditions for Century. These shifts in population have reduced Century’s working age population, those aged 20-64, to slightly over half its total population (53%). Many of the surrounding counties, including Escambia County, FL, have working age populations of approximately 60%. Century’s working age residents are projected to decline by nearly 2% over the next five
Weaknesses and Threats

years. Century’s aging population, nearly 20% of which is 65+, puts even greater demands on the existing workforce. This demographic is projected to increase over 2% by 2018. As Table 4 (on the previous page) indicates, the working age population for both the ZIP code surrounding Century and for Escambia County, FL is also projected to decrease .82% and 1.36%, respectively.

**High Poverty Levels.** The declining population, coupled with a period of economic recession, did little to stop Century’s growing poverty issue. The poverty level for all individuals within the Town increased from 30% in 2000 to 46.8% in 2010. Similar patterns occurred across every poverty-related statistic regarding the Town. The number of families below the poverty level increased from...
24.5% to 43.3% over the decade. The median household income declined in this period by more than $3,500. However, the group hit hardest was overwhelmingly single, female head of households. Their poverty rate has more than doubled since 2000. In 2010, the Census Bureau reported that 80.2% of single mothers within Century lived below the poverty line. The problem has become so pervasive in Century that the area is not eligible for certain types of income-dependent aid, like Habitat for Humanity’s home owners program. Unfortunately, due to income requirements, there are too few residents of Century that qualify for the program.

**No Basic Industries.** The Town’s economy has struggled to attract basic industries, which are defined as those that export most of its product. Attracting this type of industry is necessary to bring new capital to Century’s local economy. Alternatively, an influx of non-basic industries, or support services, would only create a readjustment of income and spending patterns already present within Century. The Town’s main employers are retail trade, health care, accommodation and food services, and public administration. For every one worker commuting into the town, one worker commutes outside of the Town. Taken in contrast with nearby Pensacola’s three-to-one commuter ratio, it’s apparent that the economic activity of Century is idle.

**Low Educational Attainment.** In a focus group facilitated by the Haas Center, many of the representatives from local businesses expressed that many local job applicants often needed more marketable skills and training. Of those aged 25 or older in Century, approximately 27% have less than a high school
education. Only 13% of these adults have at least an Associates degree, (7% A.A., 5% B.A. or B.S., 1% Graduate level). Another 18% have some college education but no degree, which means that at least a third of Century’s adults have some college education. This data may not accurately capture all of those who have completed certification or training programs. However, the county at large has almost twice as many adults with some college. The education gap highlights Century’s disadvantage in the area. A continued lack of workforce skills and education, widespread poverty and a declining population may have created major hurdles in attracting basic industry to the Town.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Educational Attainment by Region</th>
<th>Century 2013</th>
<th>Zip Code 32535</th>
<th>Escambia County, FL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population Age 25+</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>4,739</td>
<td>198,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade K - 9</td>
<td>10.32%</td>
<td>7.39%</td>
<td>3.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 - 12</td>
<td>16.98%</td>
<td>25.90%</td>
<td>9.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>37.59%</td>
<td>33.97%</td>
<td>28.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates Degree</td>
<td>7.37%</td>
<td>5.08%</td>
<td>9.98%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
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<td>8.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No Degree</td>
<td>18.27%</td>
<td>16.94%</td>
<td>25.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Loss of a Community Symbol. It seems the closure of Century’s last public school, Carver/Century K-8, in 2009 has adversely affected the Town’s sense of community. Many of the residents were upset their children spent an increased amount of time traveling to school’s outside of the area, but, seemingly, the effect on the community has been more complex and widespread. Without the school’s presence, after-school activities and youth sports participation have decreased. In our resident focus group, members of the community remarked that they had lost a symbol the entire community could rally behind. Century’s loss of this public institution has created a challenge in fostering new community pride and connectivity.

Threats to Community Economic Development

Many external threats exist to Century’s development. Primarily these concern the Town’s access to capital and resources. Many of
the Town’s strategic goals are resource-dependent, which may be threatened by tight budgetary environments. The ultimate challenge for Century will be to find and obtain supplemental or substitutions in funding. However, many internal threats also exist regarding Century’s community development, which is increasingly being viewed as a vital component to economic development.

**Community Disengagement.** Throughout the strategic planning process, the Haas Center facilitated several focus groups and Steering Committee meetings to solicit feedback from stakeholders regarding the Town’s economic and community development issues. The meetings were designed to generate input from the Town’s stakeholders, including residents, local businesses and regional economic development organizations. To that end, the act of strategic planning should be considered an act of social entrepreneurship.

As defined by Vanessa Ratten and Isabell Welpe, social entrepreneurship is “the process of bringing together resources to address a social need” (Ratten and Welpe, 2011). This process allows the community to come together and form symbiotic relationships in order to achieve a social goal. Social entrepreneurship is a ground-up approach that fosters collaborative behavior among different people and organizations that benefit the community as a whole. Ideally, strategic planning would give members of the community a resource and a platform to provide input into the development process.

Asset-based community development, as described by Suzanne Morse, focuses on the capacities of people as a resource for potential change (Morse, 2011). This form of development debunks the idea that “people who are poor and live in poor neighborhoods are only clients to be served and not resourceful community members.” Social entrepreneurship and asset-based community development work together hand-in-hand to constitute a successful community team who are vested in, and
excited to implement the final plan.

While certain community stakeholders have actively participated in the planning process, a general sense of community disengagement has been observed. While the community meetings attracted varying amounts of participation, the Steering Committee, assembled to help devise the plan and consisting of a diverse set of community stakeholders, held a series of planning meetings which were focused on shaping the vision, goals, and objectives of the strategic plan. However, these were only attended by the Town’s consultants, economic development professionals, leaders in education, and the Mayor. None of the residents who agreed to sit on the committee attended these planning meetings, despite their invitations and regular outreach via e-mail. While involvement in the planning process was a clear priority for certain stakeholders, the lack of community participation presents a challenge for the plan’s implementation.

Any act of social entrepreneurship, like the strategic planning process, ideally involves diverse members of the community actively participating in the development and implementation of solutions to community problems. As such, the strategic planning process was a chance to build social capital (i.e. trust) between groups in a community that seems divided by larger social issues. In our opinion, community disengagement presents a very real threat to the Town’s economic and social development.

A Reliance on Grants. Century has found success in recent years with acquiring grant funding through state and federal channels; however, as both sources of funding are dependent upon the budgetary conditions of the day, they need to be considered as supplemental capital. A serious threat to Century’s development is its perceived reliance on grant and loan funding. These types of funds should still be pursued for designated projects, but the Town must explore other strategies of generating revenue and attracting capital. Of course, the strategic plan currently under development...
will assist with this problem; but until basic industries are recruited to the area, the Town’s reliance on grants will continue to pose a threat to economic development.

**Declining County Services.** Century has also struggled with declining county services in the area, both perceived and actual. As previously mentioned, the Town’s primary school, Carver/Century K-8, was closed in 2009. Those students were transferred to Bratt Elementary and Ernest Ward Middle School. In our resident focus group, many participants reported to us that this change created extra stress and travel time for their families.

In the same year, the Escambia County Tax Collector closed their offices within the Billy G. Ward Courthouse complex. The Clerk of the Court office, also in that building, has been considered for closure more than once. In 2011, the only hurricane shelter within the Town was transferred to Northview High School, nine miles away. Additionally, the area’s county health department has relocated and the dental clinic was merged with the Molino branch. Many of these changes consolidated Century’s services with others located in Northern Escambia County.

County officials reported that if they kept offices and schools open in Century, they would have been placing scarce resources in locations that would be under-utilized and over-funded. The population decline has created a vicious circle of problems for the Town. As the population declines, services become under-utilized and funds are redirected. While the reallocation of county services away from the Town was a decision based on fiscal realities, the loss of these services presents a threat to a community that already suffers from high levels of poverty.

**Irregular Public Transportation.** As County services continue to relocate, the lack of regular public transportation places an additional burden on the Town’s residents who may not have access to reliable transportation to these new locations. The Molino office of the tax collector, for example, is 20 miles away from the heart of Century. The ECAT, Escambia County Area
Transit, system only provides three stops within Century: at approximately 6 am, 12 pm and 6 pm. This makes the location of county services all the more inconvenient for Century’s resident’s.

**Limited Broadband Access.** The loss of county services is exacerbated by unreliable broadband Internet access. Many residents and business leaders reported in our focus groups that they either had no access or very limited access to the Internet. Although many of the county’s services can also be utilized via the Internet, the broadband footprint may not be sufficient to solve the problem left behind by the county’s declining presence. It seems promising that this issue may not remain a challenge for long. Pensacola State College, Century Campus recently reported connecting to the Southern Light Fiber network, which suggests that the access and footprint in the area is growing. Nonetheless, the distance between Century and other locations still presents a challenge for those residents that may never adapt to using the Internet for e-government services.

Furthermore, while Brighthouse provides DSL Internet access to Century, the lack of a modern broadband infrastructure may be an obstacle in recruiting certain industries. Although, Southern Light Fiber is at Century’s doorstep, continued expansion of its fiber footprint may need to be encouraged to assist in industry recruitment efforts.

**Funding for Staff Positions.** The lack of resources may pose another threat if the Town loses current funding for its economic development staff position. In 2013, Century obtained a grant to hire a part-time economic development agent. However, the Town could lose the funding for this position just as the agent would ramp up implementation of the Town’s strategic plan. Staffing, in general, remains a challenge for the Town. Achieving the strategic plan’s goals without additional staff could put a heavy burden on current fiscal and human resources.
Conclusion

This report has detailed the findings from our SWOT analysis. The Town of Century has several key elements of infrastructure already in place that may assist with economic development. The Town is ideally placed near highways, the Interstate system, a rail line, and marine ports. The community has invested heavily in an Industrial Park and expanded its sewer and water infrastructure. Our analysis has identified several key basic industries that have a competitive advantage in the region. Century’s greatest potential for economic development lies in its ability to leverage both its regional assets and its proximity to nearby urban centers.

However, Century still has many challenges to overcome. In tandem with its population decline, the Town has experienced many demographic problems including high poverty, a declining labor force population, low levels of education and declining county services. Century’s demographics, coupled with irregular public transportation, a limited broadband footprint, a seemingly disengaged populace and severely limited resources suggest that community development, in conjunction with economic development, must be a priority for the Town.
References


