

# ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION OF CAMDEN COUNTY, GEORGIA

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From May 2005 to September 2005, Georgia Tech's Office of Economic Development & Technology Ventures (EDTV) and Center for Quality Growth & Regional Development (CQGRD) investigated opportunities for economic diversification within Camden County that will enable the community to reduce its dependence upon one economic engine. The Georgia Tech team reviewed Camden County's suitability for economic diversification and issues affecting its potential for sustainable and quality economic development. The following reports have been prepared in concert with this effort.

**Camden County Strategic Plan Recommendations:** Identification of key issues - county wide - affecting Camden's potential for economic diversification and recommendations for strategic goals for addressing the issues. Specific implementation action items for achieving the goals are also recommended. These recommendations are intended to serve as the basis for Camden County's economic diversification strategic plan and are based on findings detailed in the following companion reports:

- **Summary of Interviews with Community Stakeholders:** Results of Georgia Tech's interviews with 93 Camden County stakeholders in May and June 2005.
- **Summary of Interviews with Statewide and Regional Economic Development Partners:** Results of Georgia Tech's interviews with 20 statewide and regional economic developers and related professionals concerning the development potential and marketability of Camden County.
- **Economic Development Report Card:** Georgia Tech's assessment of Camden County's economic development performance according to more than 90 indicators in several key areas: (1) community growth, (2) fiscal capacity, (3) self sufficiency, (4) economic base, (5) youth development, (6) existing workforce, (7) workforce development, (8) civic and social capital, (9) community health, and (10) innovation.
- **Asset Inventory:** Georgia Tech's review of Camden's key assets for business growth and development.
- **Economic Development Program Assessment:** Results of Georgia Tech's review of Camden's economic development organization (EDO) capacity and analysis of the working relationships among the various EDOs and with local government.
- **Business Growth Opportunities:** Results of Georgia Tech's industry cluster and supply chain analyses. This analysis identified potential business sectors for

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future development efforts that have average wages at 20 percent above the current Camden County average.

- **Quality Growth & Development Report:** Georgia Tech’s audit of Camden County’s current tools in place for managing growth and development and identification of issues affecting Camden’s potential for maintaining and enhancing its quality of life.
- **Infrastructure Management Report:** Georgia Tech’s assessment of Camden’s current physical infrastructure (water, wastewater, transportation) as well as its natural resource infrastructure, or “green” infrastructure in terms of how well it can meet the community’s current and future needs.
- **Business Park Site Identification:** Georgia Tech’s study of prospective sites in ‘targeted search areas’ identified by community officials to determine their potential suitability to fit stated criteria for future business park development
- **Workforce Development Assessment:** Results of Georgia Tech’s assessment of workforce development strengths as well as challenges, and Camden’s capacity to address those challenges.
- **Existing Business & Industry Support Assessment:** Results of Georgia Tech’s assessment of the supportive infrastructure for addressing the needs of existing business and industry, including small businesses and entrepreneurs, and Camden’s capacity for addressing unmet needs.
- **Tourism Development Report:** Results of Georgia Tech’s assessment of tourism traffic in Camden County, the community’s key assets for tourism, and issues affecting Camden’s potential to further grow its tourism industry.

**Camden County Marketing Plan Recommendations:** Georgia Tech’s identification of a potential brand strategy for Camden County along with an integration of marketing-related recommendations that are suggested for incorporation into Camden’s strategic plans and others that are relevant based on the results of the various assessments and evaluations listed above.