

2024

YEAR IN REVIEW



# REFLECTIONS ON 2024

As we approach TIP's 30th anniversary, it is fitting to reflect on the progress we have made and the connections that have shaped us. This milestone underscores the importance of the people and partnerships that define our work.



Sustaining progress requires more than innovation; it demands building bridges that connect ideas, people, and opportunities to address the issues that matter most.

In 2024, our team's professionalism and adaptability drove exceptional results as we partnered with bold, visionary clients. This included rolling out *All In | 2035* for the Greater Baltimore Committee (Maryland) and an economic development plan for Rancho Cordova, California. We continued to refine our workforce practice—preparing a transportation and logistics report for the JAXUSA Partnership (Florida) and creating employment sector profiles and a customized Job Quality and Accessibility data visualization tool for the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce (Kansas) as part of *OP Talent Now*. We also advanced innovation and tech transfer efforts through the Mississippi Innovation Plan and assisted Jackson State University (Mississippi) with its NSF Regional Innovation Engines development award focused on food security and environmental sustainability.

In addition, our team saw the results of years of dedication, including TIP's work with city leaders to establish the City of Dallas Economic Development Corporation (Texas), which is now fully operationalized with a new CEO on board. In Richland County, South Carolina, our recommendation for a public-private partnership became a reality, while in Chester County, Pennsylvania, the *VISTA 2025* plan led to the launch of an online business and community journal that now has 90,000 subscribers and social media followers.

Even as our firm celebrates these successes, we recognize the challenges ahead. Sustaining progress requires more than innovation; it demands building bridges that connect ideas, people, and opportunities to address the issues that matter most. Looking to the new year, TIP remains focused on partnering with our clients and colleagues to foster meaningful change in the communities they serve. Together, we lay the foundation for lasting impact.

Thank you to our team, clients, and partners for making 2024 a success. Together, we've proven what can be accomplished through shared purpose and thoughtful action. As our firm enters this milestone year, we look forward to building on this momentum.

Here's to an exciting year,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom".



**Tom Stellman**  
CEO & Founder

# THE YEAR AHEAD

TIP principals Tracye McDaniel and Jeff Marcell share the concepts that captured their attention in 2024 along with their thoughts on how these important ideas are likely to impact our thinking in the year ahead.

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In 2024, the word that resonated most with me was *resilience*. This concept reminded us that our ability to adapt and innovate truly defines our success in the face of challenges. At TIP Strategies, resilience has influenced our approach to client engagement and project execution, allowing us to navigate uncertainties confidently. As we move into 2025, TIP's 30th year of operations, I believe it will continue to shape our strategies, empowering us to seize opportunities and drive sustainable growth for our clients and communities.



**Tracye McDaniel**  
*President*

resilience

“ ”

One topic that I spent a great deal of time thinking about in 2024 was what it means to be a high-performing economic development organization. I was fortunate to work with a few of these groups during the year, and TIP Strategies tracks best-in-class organizations to serve as benchmarks and inspiration. Economic development organizations have to achieve results and do what they say they're going to do—now more than ever. Patience for talk without action is thin, and 2025 will require even higher levels of *accountability and implementation*.



**Jeff Marcell**

*Senior Partner*

accountability and  
implementation

# INNOVATION IMPERATIVE

*In October, managing partner Jon Roberts had the opportunity to engage the economic development community in Australia and New Zealand. Over three weeks, he shared in discussions regarding innovation, marketing, and the future of the profession. This experience abroad provided a fresh perspective on what it takes to build and sustain thriving innovation economies.*

Innovation fuels progress and defines the future of economies. Today, more than ever, cultivating an innovation economy is a necessity.

But what is an innovation economy? Is it an entrepreneurial ecosystem? The presence of major tech corporations? Research universities committed to commercialization? Yes, yes, and yes. That said, it is also the commitment of economic development organizations to do what is not intrinsic to these players: to make them sticky. This means ensuring that startups stay in the region, tech companies expand their operations to encourage spinouts, and universities consider where intellectual property lands.

An effective economic development strategy focuses on the talent needs associated with all regional stakeholders. Traditional workforce development models often fall short, as evidenced by the failure of coding boot camps after the advent of AI. The future lies in cultivating analytic and adaptive skills—those that can survive the rapid shifts brought on by new technologies.



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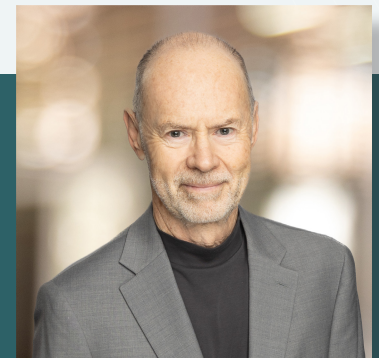




The insight that talent is paramount was further sharpened by my recent travels to Australia and New Zealand. In Melbourne, I joined IEDC's CEO Nathan Ohle at Australia's National Economic Development Conference to explore "The Power of Place," with Austin's tech boom as a case study. Nathan and I then traveled to New Zealand where we presented at their national conference before I continued to my final stop, Queenstown. At the invitation of Peter Harris, economic development manager of the Queenstown Lakes District Council, I dove deeper into how New Zealand can build a tech economy. Despite its small population, the challenges are strikingly like those we face in the US: how do you find the talent pool which tech growth requires?

The trip culminated in a workshop organized by one of New Zealand's top business leaders, Roger Sharp. This event underscored the critical role of talent in innovation economies—particularly in specialized fields like cybersecurity. Promising steps, such as the University of Otago's upcoming campus in Queenstown and growing interest from Australian firms, demonstrate how aligning talent development with economic strategies can pave the way for growth.

Having helped hundreds of clients across the US build innovation economies, this trip reaffirmed my contention that some assets are non-negotiable, whether you are a big player or small. Namely, to ensure the supply of talent that tech growth requires, a community must offer a quality of place that makes it a desirable homebase, have broadband, and provide accessibility in terms of air travel, transportation, and other vital forms of infrastructure. Looking ahead to 2025, these non-negotiables will be top of mind as TIP collaborates with a diverse group of clients to build innovation-focused, future-ready economic development strategies.



**Jon Roberts**  
*Managing Partner*

2024







# IN THE FIELD

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WHERE WE SUCCESSFULLY  
COMPLETED ENGAGEMENTS

# OUT & ABOUT

From sharing our thought leadership on stage to gathering takeaways as part of the audience, TIP made its mark at leading events. Here are a few highlights from our 2024 calendar.

## MAY

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**

*40th Annual Conference*  
**San Antonio, Texas**

### **UIDP**

*San Antonio 2024: Driving Research and  
Development through Partnerships*  
**San Antonio, Texas**

## SEPTEMBER

### **INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

*Annual Conference: Championing  
Economic Development Superheroes*  
**Denver, Colorado**

## DECEMBER

### **STATE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE**

*2024 Annual Conference*  
**Phoenix, Arizona**

## FEBRUARY

### **INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

*2024 Leadership Summit*  
**Phoenix, Arizona**

## OCTOBER

### **PHILANTHROPY SOUTHWEST**

*National Economic Development  
Conference 2024: The Power of Place*  
**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA**

*National Economic Development  
Conference 2024: The Power of Place*  
**Melbourne, Australia**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEW ZEALAND**

*2024 Conference | Tech-led Economic  
Development: Enhancing Productivity for  
New Zealand's Future.*  
**Dunedin, New Zealand**

In addition to our stateside events, managing partner Jon Roberts traveled to Australia and New Zealand in 2024 to share his expertise with economic development leaders. Hosted by multiple prominent organizations, his tech-themed presentations and discussions centered on the innovation economy.



**ASSET BASE**

- ▶ Tourism and recreation
- ▶ Institutional Support
- ▶ Capital resources
- ▶ Housing and wraparound services

## TECH CLUSTER ASSETS

*“Not all assets are created equal. Some are non-negotiable.”*

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**TECHNOLOGY**

WITH AND WITHOUT YOU

STRATEGIES

JON ROBERTS | OCTOBER 2024

## THE TECH TALENT CHALLENGE

*“What is the human value of any job we perform?”*

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**Cyberattack cost MGM Resorts about \$100 million, Las Vegas company says**

*The company said it deliberately shut down a number of services “to mitigate risk to customer information” after the hack last month.*

By Kevin Collier  
October 5, 2023

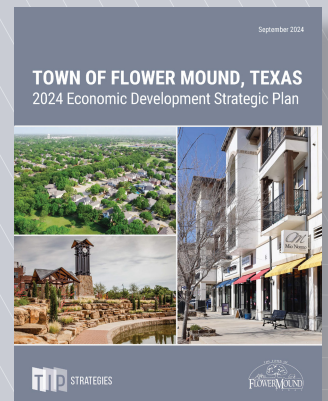
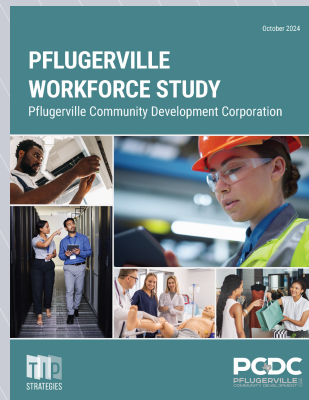
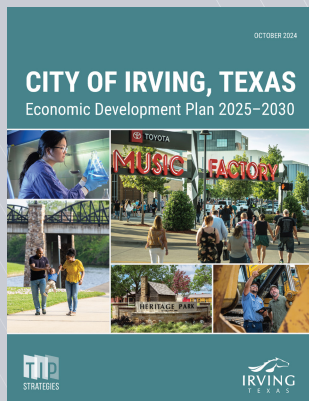
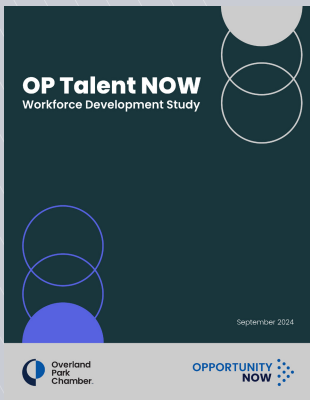
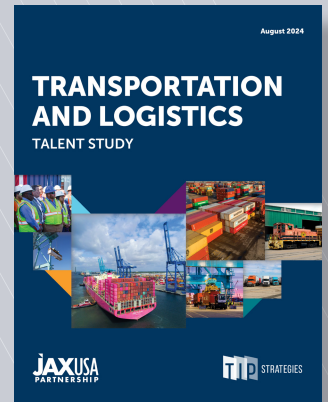
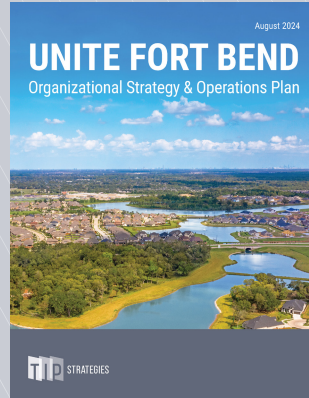
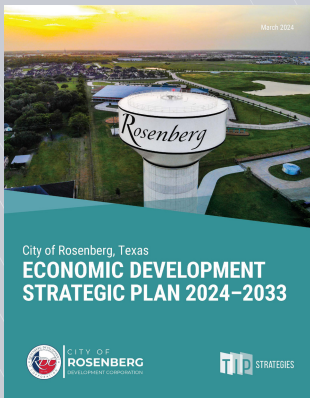
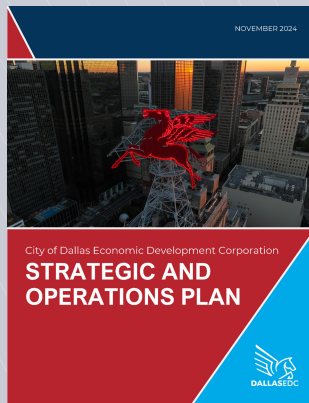
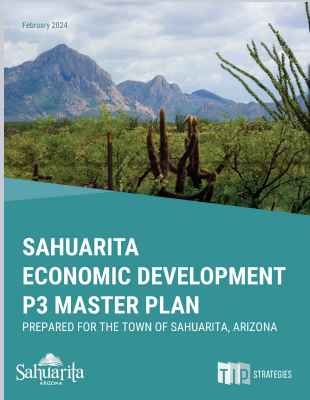
NBC NEWS

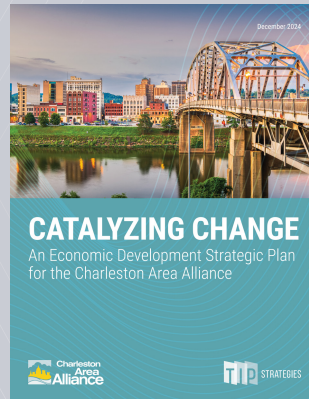
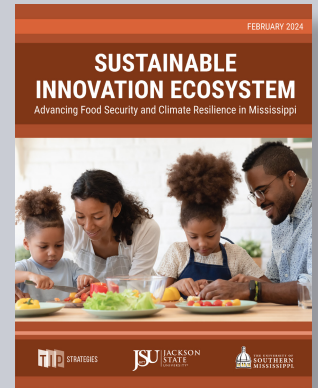
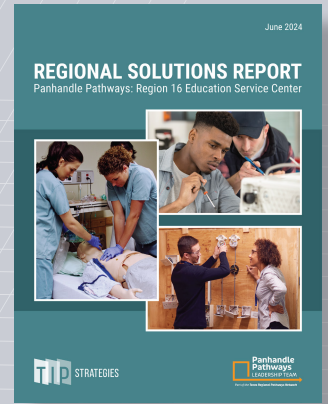
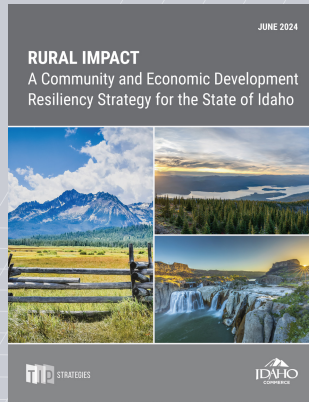
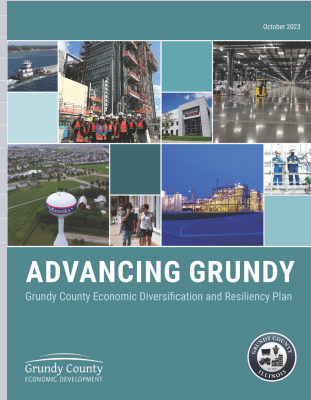
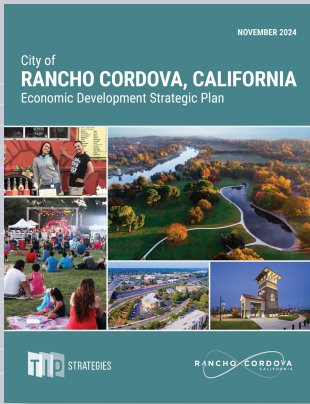
## CYBERSECURITY

*“What if we thought about an offensive approach to cybersecurity, instead of concentrating on defense?”*

# 2024 CLIENTS & BEYOND

Here is a selection of key client engagements successfully completed in 2024. These examples showcase TIP's commitment to delivering customized strategies that are community- and data-driven. To explore more about our past projects, visit [our interactive portfolio](#).





**2025 PIPELINE**

This map showcases the locations where TIP will be working in 2025, with new projects planned throughout the year. Stay tuned for more updates on our website and social media.



2024



The background is a complex, abstract composition of blue and orange geometric shapes, including lines, circles, and rectangles, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors are primarily shades of blue, with accents of orange and white. The overall effect is that of a digital or data-driven environment.

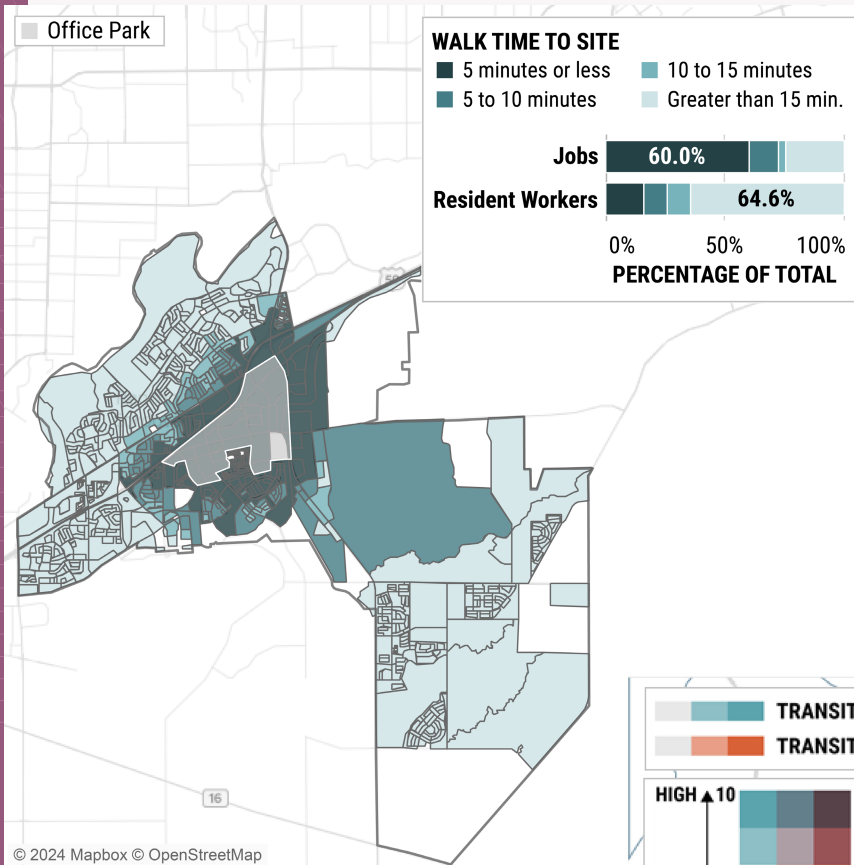
# BEHIND THE SCENES

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HOW WE INVIGORATED OUR  
ENGAGEMENTS

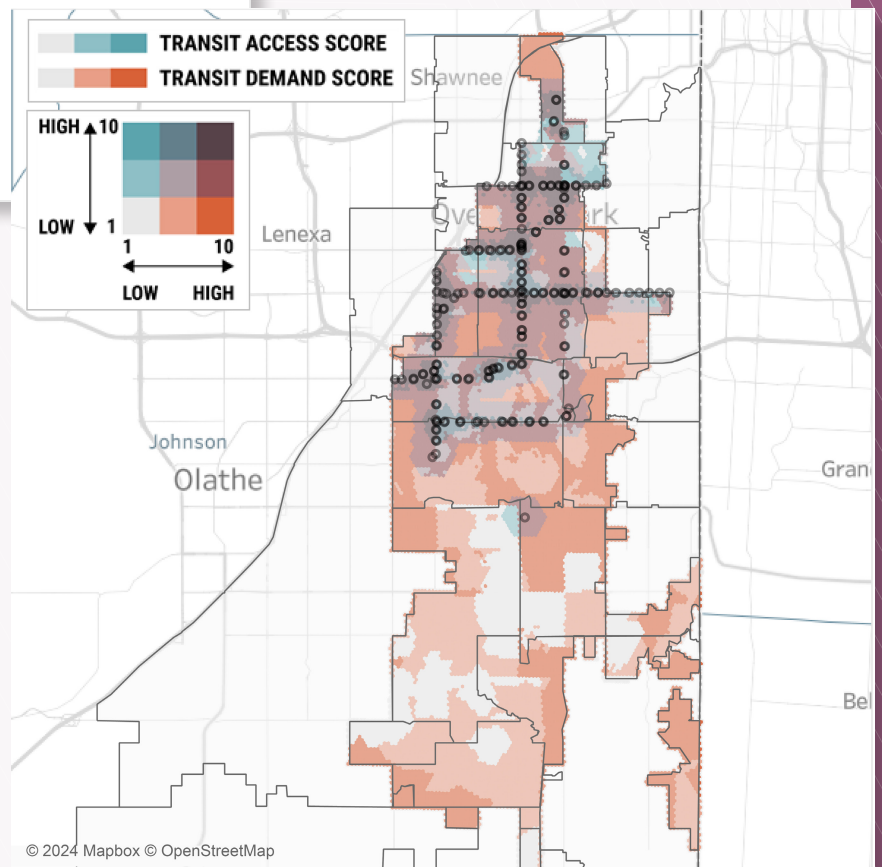
# RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

TIP's R&D team works behind the scenes of the firm's engagements, building data-driven products with visually engaging interfaces. These two projects were among our favorites of 2024.



## RANCHO CORDOVA, CALIFORNIA *Pedestrian Access Map*

A relatively new city just east of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova supports a large daytime population with a low-density footprint. TIP's task was to craft a strategic plan for economic development with careful sensitivity to the city's placemaking efforts.



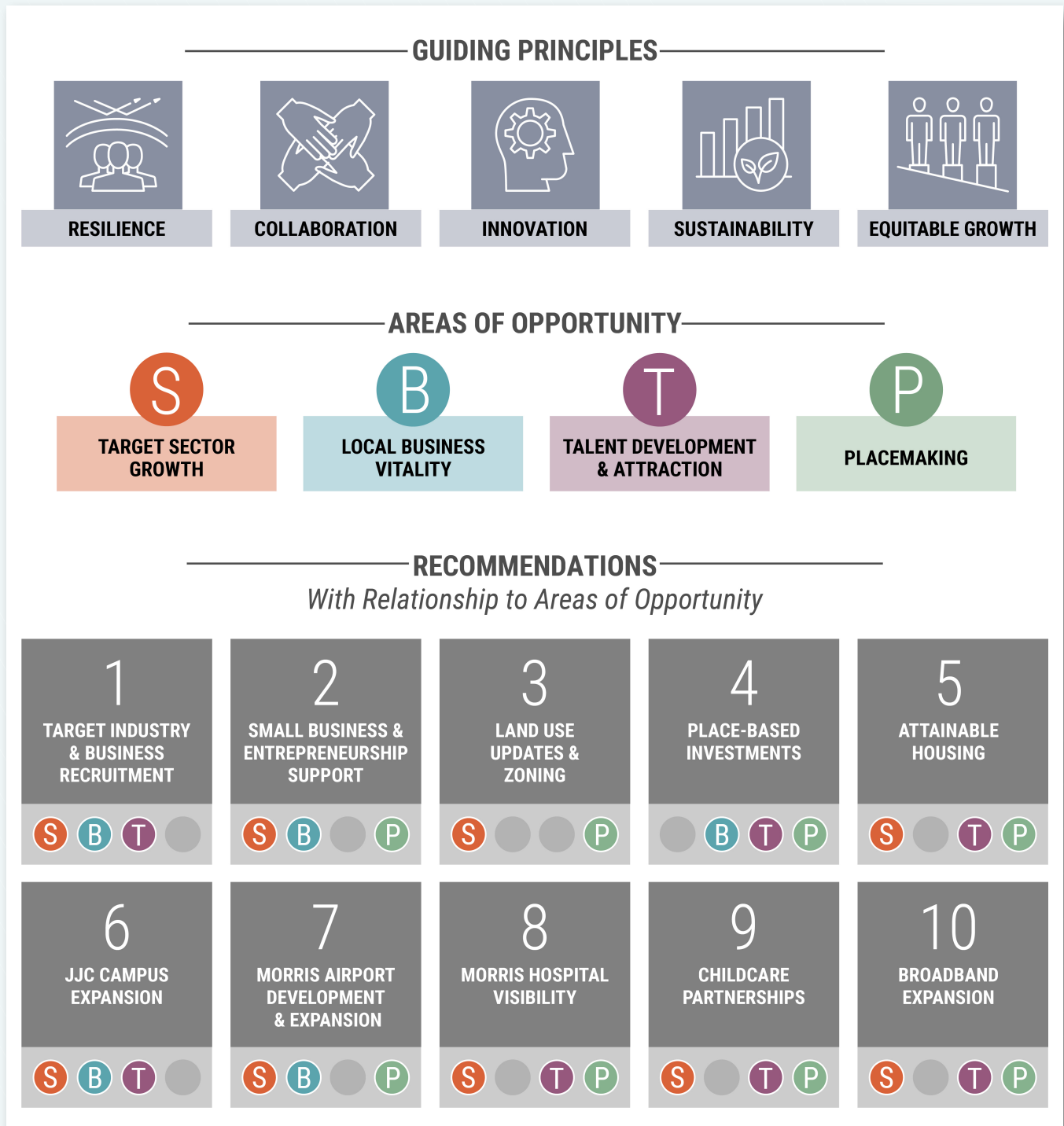
## OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS *Transit Access and Demand Map*

In 2024, the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce engaged TIP in an innovative initiative to address the workforce challenges of the city's employers. As part of the effort, TIP mapped mismatches in transit availability and demand to illustrate employer concerns about the difficulties of accessing and using public transportation.



# GRAPHIC DESIGN

In 2024, TIP's designers continued to explore simple ways to visually communicate the complexities of our client's priorities. Created for Grundy County, Illinois, the graphic below illustrates the framework of their economic development plan while also cross-walking TIP's recommendations to client-defined areas of opportunity.



# 2024





# ISSUES THAT MATTER

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WHY OUR CLIENTS' VALUES  
INSPIRED OUR THINKING



# INNOVATION

## THE INSPIRATION

The building blocks for a strong innovation economy continued to be top of mind in 2024 as TIP finalized a strategic plan for a consortium of research universities in Mississippi. Team members reflected on strategies for optimizing the catalytic potential of anchor institutions, bolstering R&D-focused small businesses, and leveraging EV market growth.

## FROM OUR BLOG

- ◆ [\*Building an Innovation Economy: Lessons from Texas and Mississippi\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Leveraging EV Market Momentum to Drive Local Economic Impact\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Accessible Innovation Capital: SBIR & STTR Programs\*](#)



“

*Higher education assets are crucial to driving robust innovation economies. [U]niversities must be closely integrated with economic development initiatives for communities and regions to flourish. Intentional planning and strong partnerships are critical to R&D that simultaneously spurs economic growth at the community-level and ensures competitiveness in the global innovation economy.*

”

**-John Karras**

*Building an Innovation Economy: Lessons from Texas and Mississippi*

# TALENT



## THE INSPIRATION

As part of our robust workforce practice, TIP helped clients make data-driven decisions to expand talent pipelines for employers and to connect workers with quality career pathways for greater economic mobility.

## FROM OUR BLOG

- ◆ [Measuring Job Quality and Access](#)
- ◆ [Workforce Opportunity, Representation, and Participation](#)
- ◆ [Triptychs: Work-Based Learning Models](#)
- ◆ [Supporting Shorter, More Affordable Pathways to Quality Jobs](#)
- ◆ [Quality and Access: The Blueprint for Effective Internships](#)

“

*[C]onnecting workers to job opportunities and longer-term career paths is a critical component of sustainable economic growth, but supportive policymaking is hampered by a lack of information sharing and coordination among organizations. [TIP's] Job Quality and Access tool provides multi-dimensional workforce data that can be used to help identify higher quality and more accessible jobs across geographies.*

**-Evan Johnston**

*Measuring Job Quality and Access*

”





# PLACEMAKING

## THE INSPIRATION

Intentional placemaking emerged as a key theme this year, with our thought leaders highlighting how fostering inclusive spaces and connections among people, resources, and networks can strengthen economic vitality and innovation.

## FROM OUR BLOG

- ◆ [Placemaking for Innovation](#)
- ◆ [Policy Tools to Increase Housing Supply and Improve Affordability](#)
- ◆ [Placemaking Through Open Streets](#)
- ◆ [Creating Place-based Economic Impacts Through Adaptive Reuse](#)
- ◆ [Microtransit for Rural America](#)
- ◆ [Intent, Impact, Outcomes, and Placemaking](#)



“

*The rapid deployment of technologies like autonomous robotics, additive manufacturing, and generative AI, coupled with a surge in federal funding, has highlighted the importance of regional innovation ecosystems. Yet, placemaking's role in connecting innovation assets, encouraging interactions, and enhancing collaboration is a critical piece of the puzzle that is often overlooked.*

**-Erica Colston**  
*Placemaking for Innovation*

”



## THE INSPIRATION

Our experience assisting clients such as the Dallas Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Baltimore Committee generated key insights into what drives the successful implementation of strategic plans.

## FROM OUR BLOG

- ◆ [\*Beyond the Blueprint: Real World Strategies for Implementation\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Equity-Driven Implementation: Insights from the Baltimore Region\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Global Connections, Local Impact: Harnessing International Partnerships\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Tracking Active Transportation Improvements with GIS\*](#)

“

*When a plan is approved, many stakeholders cannot yet articulate what is in the plan or how it will make a difference. As an economic development organization, it is your charge to gain support for the plan, advocate for the necessary resources, and make the plan vision relevant to a diverse audience. Ensure potential partners and supporters understand what will be different because of your efforts.*

**-Jenn Todd-Goynes, CNU-A**

*Beyond the Blueprint: Real World Strategies for Implementation*

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