

ATLANTA ECONOMICS CLUB
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS
Meeting 2 of 3 - October 20, 2003

Federal Home Loan Bank
Atlanta, Georgia

Participating: Scott Crooks, Jennifer Crouse, Jennifer Echols, Richard Fritz, John Hudson, Bill Schaffer

Facilitating: Sam Collier

First order of business was to fill in the Audience Matrix. Estimated entry level, mid-level and senior level positions in each part of Metro Atlanta are recorded in the table at the end of this set of notes.

General observations:

Downtown has the majority of Tier I, with Midtown and Buckhead close behind when adding Tiers II and III.

Downtown as a meeting place is difficult. Orbit for luncheons should be the Midtown-to-Buckhead area.

FACTORS to Consider (not necessarily in order)

Access - Ease of Parking

Free Parking

MARTA

Good food

IDEAS

1. A Task Force [needs a leader] will explore several venues for luncheons, including: Maggiano's in Buckhead (near MARTA, private dining room, good food, good facility)

Ruth's Chris Steak House near Lenox Square

Georgian Terrace

Another Midtown establishment, maybe near Colony Square

2. Experiment with a happy hour in various locations, as a way to engage more people, new people, younger people interested in networking, and to engage them closer to their workplace (various venues).

Proposed format: start around 6:00pm, have a 10-12 minute "speech" by a noted speaker, then more networking

3. Joint meetings – Are there other organizations with whom it would make sense to pool resources to occasionally have a higher-profile event?

4. Survey membership on all issues related to venues, locations, new ideas, speakers, topics, etc.

5. Two guiding principles:
 - “Do no harm”. Make sure any changes don’t alienate current members.
 - And appeal to a wider audience.
6. Traditionally, the Vice President determines the fate of speakers, and the operative word is “desperation!” Idea is to draw on a small committee to find speakers.
7. Consider on some occasions springing for an honorarium, allowing for a more prominent speaker. Examples mentioned were Paul Krugman (NYTimes) and Diane Swonk.
8. Cover travel expenses to pull in out-of-town speakers.
9. Splurge early in year (around October) with a high-profile speaker, and promote with paid advertising in Atlanta Business Chronicle.
10. Should there be “themes” for parts or all of a given year? (e.g., corporate governance, international, environmental, social policy, etc.)
11. Should some presentations be in the form of panels, so there could be balance among presenters? 2 or 3 speakers, with a moderator who keeps speaker to their time limits.
12. Sources of speaker leads:
 - NABE – Speakers Roster (Jennifer Crouse will get)
 - Institutes (e.g., Brookings, Cato, etc.)
 - P.R. Agents for Industry Associations (these tend to have high presentation quality) Topic could be “Trends in [their field here]”
13. Appoint Speaker “Advisory Committee” of big wigs so that they could
 - a. Give input,
 - b. Help draw the speaker and
 - c. Recruit more attendees, as well
14. Consider a Big Meeting once a quarter or so, sponsored by a corporation
15. Recruit attendees from other lists, including
 - a. Rajeev Dhawan’s GSU Forecasting Network
 - b. All faculty at colleges

POTENTIAL TOPICS, THEMES AND SPEAKERS

Money Laundering

Economic Consequences of the Patriot Act

Real Estate

Economic Policy - Federal State

The Jobless Recovery

Consequences of the Increase in the National Debt

Consequences of the Increase in the Trade Deficit

Outsourcing

Globalization

The New Director of the Environmental Protection Division, Carol Couch

Limits to Growth – “The Slow Death of Atlanta?”

Case Studies, such as:

The East Point City Council and the City’s Debt

The Atlanta Market – Is it a “weak market city”

Sprawl

- The Real Costs of Sprawl
- “Is Sprawl Good or Bad?”
- Alternative Growth Patterns to Sprawl

Health Care

Social Security

Combine Health Care and Social Security in a program called “Caring for Aging Generations”

Speaker(s) coinciding with major data release

Either a few weeks after the release to be able to analyze what data means, or

The Tuesday before the release, to say what should be covered

Possible release dates to synch with include:

FOMC
Unemployment
Job Growth
GDP
Corporate Profits

The Technology Bubble

The Housing Bubble – NAHB, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae

Deflated Commercial Real Estate market [concave bubble?]

Trends with government-sponsored Housing Lenders – FHLB, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae

Audience Matrix – AEC outreach

Three categories: entry level/ mid-level / senior level

	Downtown (+ GSU, Capitol)	Midtown (+ GA Tech)	Buckhead/ OglethorpeU Mercer U.	Vinings/Cumberland/ Galleria/Marietta/ Kennesaw State U./ Southern Tech.	Perimeter Center	Decatur/ Emory/ CDC	
TOTALS	138	89	75	36	29	31	
I. Business Economists	2/4/6 = 12	2/2/0 = 4	2/2/1 = 5	= 4	2/2/1 = 5	= 2	
I. Academic Economists	0/10/50 = 60	0/0/12 = 12	0/0/8 = 8	= 12	0/6/0 = 6	0/4/10 = 14	
I. Planners & State & Local Econ. Devel.	= 26	= 7	0/2/6 = 8	= 4	None	= 8	
II. Gov't Agencies	10/5/1 = 16	17/5/21 = 43	None	None	None	= 2	
II. Financial Investment Sector	5/5/0 = 10	= 10	15/7/4 = 26	= 6	= 2	None	
II. Real Estate Professionals & Developers	= 4	= 5	= 8	= 2	= 4	None	
III. People who studied Econ. in College	8/2/0 = 10	= 8	14/6/0 = 20	6/2/0 = 8	6/5/1 = 12	= 5	
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Approximately 25 category II and Category III persons were estimated in other areas, like Gwinnett County, Airport area, Peachtree City, etc. Also, farther-flung colleges up to an hours' drive away are a source of participants.