

# **GASTON COUNTY CLT AIRPORT ECONOMIC POSITIONING STRATEGY**

## **CONCEPT OVERVIEW**

November 29, 2016

### **CONCEPT**

Form collaborative public-private approach to development of an Economic Positioning Strategy for Gaston County designed to take maximum advantage of the County's proximity and access to Charlotte-Douglas International Airport (CLT).

### **OPPORTUNITY**

With CLT scheduled to complete its own airport area strategic development plan in December, Gaston has a unique opportunity to utilize the comprehensive and current data and analyses developed by CLT and to engage the same consultant team to prepare a synergistic economic development strategy for Gaston.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The project would be overseen by a Steering Committee with senior representatives of the major stakeholders and CLT. Due to the technical nature of the project, a Technical Coordinating Committee would also be formed.

The GGDC would coordinate the necessary Gaston stakeholders, and provide contracting, financial and contract management services, as it has for the Gaston Outside Image Campaign.

Estimates are that it would take between 6 and 8 months to prepare the Gaston Positioning Strategy, from the date of contracting with the development strategy firm.

### **FUNDING**

Preliminary Cost Estimates for the project put the cost at approximately \$230,000, to be secured 50% from private sources and 50% from government sources. Proposed cost shares are as follows: Private sector (GGDC members) - \$115,000; Gaston County - \$45,000; Gastonia - \$35,000; Belmont - \$17,500; Mount Holly - \$17,500; and smaller municipalities will be recruited at \$3,500 per municipality (for each smaller municipality recruited, there will be a proportionate reduction in the amount allocated to the County and the larger 3 municipalities).

### **THE OBJECTIVES**

The Positioning Strategy would provide a roadmap and action plan to shape Gaston's future as CLT continues to drive national and international connectivity, job growth, and economic success.

The Positioning Strategy should integrate into and inform the land use and development plans and strategies for Gaston County and its primary municipalities, better positioning Gaston County to capture desired and targeted airport-related economic growth rather than reacting to random unplanned opportunities.

It would be a valuable and timely marketing and recruitment tool for use by the Gaston County Economic Development Commission staff and a wide range of other stakeholders in the County and region.

It would integrate Gaston County into the CLT economic development strategy and marketing efforts, placing Gaston County uniquely "on the map" when CLT is being promoted.