

Innovation Ecosystem Assessment – Fannin County Development Authority

Location: Fannin County, GA

Status of County: Rural

Project Timeframe: June 2019 – January 2020

Type of Assistance: Applied Research



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The Georgia Tech (GT) Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center (UC) team worked with the Fannin County Development Authority (GA) in assessing Fannin County's innovation ecosystem. The study provided a comprehensive review of the Fannin County's innovation ecosystem by conducting an in-depth analysis of the county's economic, demographic and innovation characteristics. The goal was to determine:

1. A critical mass of entrepreneurs to support innovation and entrepreneurship programs
2. Community assets and liabilities for sustainable entrepreneurship programs
3. Level of stakeholder involvement necessary to design, implement and grow a viable program based on the community's needs and its supporting infrastructure.

In order to complete the in-depth analysis, the EDA UC team conducted interviews with entrepreneurs and community stakeholders.

After the interviews, the project team conducted an in-depth analysis of the primary and secondary data, highlighting the innovation ecosystem's main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Based on the findings of

the SWOT analysis, the team identified key recommendations that could assist the county's leadership in devising a strategy to support of entrepreneurs' needs and to further enhance the region's innovation ecosystem. The analysis was completed in December 2020 and the report findings were presented to the Fannin County Development Authority leadership in January 2020.

