



City of Doral Economic Analysis Report II: Strategic Policy Recommendations

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The City of Doral Economic Analysis: Strategic Policy Recommendations is a product of the Florida International University Metropolitan Center.

The **Florida International University Metropolitan Center** is Florida’s leading urban policy think tank and solutions center. Established in 1997, the Center provides economic development, strategic planning, community revitalization, and performance improvement services to public, private and non-profit organizations in South Florida. Its staff and senior researchers are leaders in their respective fields, and bring extensive research, practical, and professional experience to each project. The Center’s research has catalyzed major policy initiatives and projects in housing, economic redevelopment, transportation, social services, and health services throughout South Florida.

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Introduction

The City of Doral engaged the FIU Metropolitan Center to complete a Strategic Economic Development Plan to guide the City's role in shaping Doral's economic future. The Center first completed ***The City of Doral Economic Analysis: Competitive Assessment*** — a data-driven assessment of the key strengths, opportunities and issues regarding Doral's economy, which serves as the knowledge platform for forward-looking new economic development policy.

Drawn from the Competitive Assessment, this document provides a series of strategic policy and program recommendations based on 1) the Center's assessment of Doral's economy, 2) future economic, occupational, workplace, residential and transportation trends, and 3) the Centers understanding of Doral's stated goals and aspirations to be a model family-friendly City in which to live, work and play, and 4) best practices in local strategic economic development policy.

The Center's recommendations are framed by four over-arching conclusions. First, the City of Doral has enjoyed explosive economic growth and population expansion shared by few cities since 2000. Doral has developed into a highly diversified economy, balancing manufacturing, advanced services, transshipment, corporate headquarters and unique merchant retail sectors. In fact, its sector mix, combined with its high household incomes and wages, may be a model for Miami-Dade County.

Second, Doral has also developed as highly preferred place to live. The City's residential development growth has paralleled its jobs growth performance. Over the last eight years, City leaders have had the foresight to balance quality of life issues with economic promoting and funding the development of greater walkability, connectedness, and high quality public spaces and facilities that continue to attract the region's most skilled and educated workers as a place to live. This growth has not come without a price, however, indicated by the City's growing transportation congestion, household housing and transportation costs and shrinking supply of housing affordable for most of its workers. Despite building a solid platform for future growth, failure to aggressively address these issues may threaten Doral's jobs growth and quality of life.

Third, future growth is never guaranteed, as proven by the last recession, which permanently damaged many communities across Florida. Also, the City is now largely built-out. The City's three annexation proposals will add more tax base, but not more vacant land. Combined with changes in how offices are developed and where and how workers actually work each day, future job growth will come almost exclusively from the expansion and formation of small companies employing 50 or less, and not from large-scale mega development projects or headquarters relocations. This means that traditional land development-based economic development practices will become less important, and the focus on enhancing the technological, innovation and knowledge and skills capacity of its network of small business will become much more important.

Lastly, if Doral's last chapter was a story of explosive jobs, residential and population growth, the City's leaders have the opportunity to write its ***next*** chapter by focusing on the ***quality*** of future economic growth, expanding opportunity and incomes, stabilizing the City's economy against recessionary swings and addressing local and regional transportation problems.

Given the importance of Doral's economy to Miami-Dade County, Doral's approach to managing its future growth can be an important model for how the rest of the County handles the pressing issues of job creation, transportation, economic opportunity and affordable housing. As the City of Doral has led economic growth in Miami-Dade, its policy choices can provide leadership and an example for the County's future.

Key Findings of the Competitive Assessment

The Center’s highly detailed analysis of Doral’s economy and housing markets from the **City of Doral Economic Analysis: Competitive Assessment** reached thirteen key conclusions. They are restated below.

1. A Small City with Regional Economic Impact

The City of Doral is one of the County’s most important and significant sub-economies. Although Doral’s population of 51,382 represents only 1.9 percent of the County’s total population, its employment base is a full 7.3 percent of Miami-Dade County’s total jobs base. With a growth rate over 21 percent from 2002 to 2014, Doral’s employment grew 2.6 times faster than the County, making it one of Miami-Dade County’s fastest growing sub-economies over the last decade. ***In fact, the growth of Doral’s total employment — 13,535 jobs since 2002 — represents over 17 percent of all new net jobs created in the County during the same period. Doral’s post-recession employment growth was double the rate for the rest of the County — 16.4 percent versus 8 percent growth for the County. Its post-recession growth also played a significant role in driving total employment in the County — the 9,472 net jobs added in Doral from 2010 to 2014 represent nearly 8 percent of all net job growth in the County.***

The City is home to 6,802 establishments employing 102,235 workers. The total volume of sales revenue from these companies, concentrated in such a small geographic area, represents \$679,634 per worker, or over \$1.35 million per resident making Doral one of South Florida’s and the State’s most productive local economies.

The City of Doral is also a significant, globally interconnected economy. An estimated 83.2 percent of Doral’s businesses employ fewer than 20 people. However, Doral is home to 28 headquarters locations, many of which are global leaders in their respective industries. ***The scale and diversity of its leading companies make Doral a nationally significant small city economy with considerable global reach.***

2. Central Location and Transportation Access

The City of Doral is strategically located in Miami-Dade County with direct highway access to its commercial and industrial corridors with interchanges along SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) to the east; SR 836 (Dolphin Expressway) to the south and the Florida Turnpike to the west. ***Doral is a central location to live and work*** — the combination of the City’s central location and level of transportation access is reflected in the size and composition of businesses – key regional distribution, manufacturing, assembly and service businesses have made the City of Doral a central County business address.

3. A City of Families

The City of Doral has aged slightly since 2007, yet is still a comparatively young municipality. The most significant demographic shifts have been 1) the growth of residents aged 55 and over (73.6 percent increase), 2) growth of residents aged 5 to 17 (46.4 percent increase) and residents aged 35 to 54 (37 percent increase), and 3) a shrinking share of millennials (residents aged 18 to 34).

Significantly, the number of family households in the City has increased by 29.6 percent (2,897 families) since 2007, while non-family households have decreased by 17.6 percent (563 non-family households). In

comparison, Miami-Dade County experienced a less than one percent increase in family households during this period and a 3.6 percent increase in non-family households. This shift in age and family structure has important implications for workplace, job location, quality of life and public amenities policy.

4. The Region's Most Highly Educated Workforce

The City of Doral is one of Miami-Dade County's most educated communities. Doral's proportions of residents with bachelor's and graduate degrees are among the highest in the nation for small and medium sized cities. **According to 2015 ACS estimates, 54.2 percent of the population of Doral 25 years of age and over have a bachelor's degree or higher. This is almost double the rate for Miami-Dade County and 1.8 times the rate of the United States.**

5. A Rapidly Expanding, but Unstable Local Economy

The City of Doral's rapid growth obscures the fact that its economy has been and remains susceptible to wide recessionary swings. Doral experienced a significant and rapid job loss during the last recession, losing 8.6 percent of employment from 2008 through 2010. Additionally, Doral's industrial structure has historically been more concentrated than the County, and has only become more so. Doral's six largest industries currently employ 75.2 percent of all workers, while the County's top six industries employ 59.7 percent of all workers. Additionally, Doral's top ten employers carry only 31.7 percent of jobs in the Doral economy but account for over 72 percent of all establishment sales revenue.

6. A High Skilled, Well Paid Workforce, Despite Slipping Earnings

The City of Doral's educated residents are employed in high-wage occupations, and they are among the highest paid in the county. **Driven by the high percentage of residents employed in higher-skilled occupations, the \$41,104 median wage for residents of Doral far exceeds the County median wage of \$27,142. In fact, wages for Doral residents are significantly higher in every occupation category in comparison to the County. Median wages by industry for Doral residents averaged 132 percent higher than comparable median industry wages across the County.** Doral's median household income is \$72,933 compared to Miami-Dade County's median at \$43,129. The City's median family income of \$75,607 is also significantly higher than the County (\$49,609).

Post-recession employment growth since 2010 has been led by Accommodation and Food Services (2,442 jobs added), and Transportation and Warehousing (2,196 jobs added). High-wage industries also fueled the City's recovery, including Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (1,916 jobs added), Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation (1,267 jobs added), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (995 jobs added), and Management of Companies and Enterprises (329 jobs added). Due largely to the addition of jobs in lower paying sectors, wage growth across industries for Doral residents has been a mixed bag. From 2007 to 2015, mean wages for residents increased in only 14 of 24 industries, while some industries had significant (30 percent or more) declines. **Additionally, Doral's median household income, adjusted for inflation, has declined by 3.2 percent since 2010.**

7. The Advanced Industries Sector in Doral

A third measure of economic diversity, mix, and composition indicates that the City of Doral is a uniquely competitive location for **Advanced Industries**. The **U.S. Advanced Industries Sector** is composed of 50 industries including manufacturing chemicals, pharmaceuticals, advanced metals, industrial machinery, medical equipment manufacture, energy development and distribution, software design, data processing and hosting, and medical and diagnostic labs. Each of the industries in the Advanced Industries Sector has levels of technology, research and development spending that are well above averages for the rest of the economy. The Advanced Industries Sector drives innovation, technology advances, and new service business models to expand and grow. Nine percent of total employment, or 12.3 million workers are in Advanced Industries. The Sector produces \$2.7 trillion in value-added annually, or 17 percent of all U.S. gross domestic product, and is leading the nation’s economic growth.

The City of Doral has an exceptionally high proportion of business firms and establishments in the Advanced Industries Sector. The City is home to 775 establishments and firms within the Advanced Industries Sector. These business locations employ 11,727 workers, or just over 11 percent of the City’s employment base, and generate over \$2 billion in local sales, and more globally. ***Given that Advanced Industries employment represents 9 percent of U.S. employment, and only 3 percent of the state’s total employment, the City of Doral has a growing potential as a leading, high-concentration Florida location for the Advanced Industry Sector.***

8. Target Industry Clusters

Targeting economic development resources on priority industries and industry clusters is a traditional means of strategically allocating assets and effort to support those industries where public and private investment can have the biggest impact on future economic growth. Targeting policy and programs means building on existing local strengths — identifying and applying resources on industries with proven capabilities, infrastructure, and assets on which to grow.

Industry Clusters are a regional concentration of related industries in a particular location. Clusters consist of companies, suppliers, and service providers that provide inputs to each other, or rely on each other for growth. ***Clusters are a central component of economic competitiveness*** — they bring together technology, information, specialized talent, competing companies, academic institutions, and other linkages and organizations in close proximity to yield better market information, pools of specialized talent, and faster deployment of new knowledge. Improving the performance of clusters, not just individual companies, is a central feature of leading economic development policy.

To identify the City’s **Priority Target Industries**, the Center completed a detailed industry cluster analysis, to identify the industries in Doral that are 1) driving current and future economic growth in the City, and 2) have the greatest multiplier, or “ripple” effect on the rest of the local economy. The subsequent strategic policy is built around programs, policies, and directing resources to grow the City’s Priority Target Industries.

Based on a variety of factors including employment size, economic concentration, employment growth rates, wage performance, and advanced industries concentration, the Center has identified 15 target industry clusters, with a particular focus on the high wage and advanced industry segments in each, as the City’s strategic priority target industries.

The strategic policy framework is built around the common needs of the recommended target industry clusters and their high-wage component industries. In our opinion, directing program, resources, support at these clusters and their highest wage industries will 1) Deliver the largest potential economic impact across the rest of the Doral economy, 2) Insure the best use of scarce public resources, and 3) Provide the best range of new employment and income mobility opportunities for Doral’s residents.

The Target clusters are organized into four broad super clusters: 1) Manufacturing, 2) Distribution, 3) Services, and 4) Information, Design and Media. The complete set of target industry clusters is shown below.

City of Doral: Priority Target Industry Clusters
Industry Cluster & Target Sub-Industries

Manufacturing			Establishments	Employees	Services			Establishments	Employees
Information Technology and Analytical Instruments			70	1,721	Business Services			832	9,786
3344	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component	Manufacturing	13	1,031	5413	Architectural, Engineering, and Related	Services	111	4,436
3341	Computer and Peripheral Equipment	Manufacturing	15	297	5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting	Services	246	1,908
5112	Software Publishers		26	238	5182	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related	Services	11	269
Apparel			9	2,870	Financial Services			173	1,490
3152	Cut and Sew Apparel	Manufacturing	5	2,744	5239	Other Financial Investment	Activities	67	480
Aerospace Vehicles and Defense			27	798	Insurance Services			117	1,146
3345	Navigational, Measuring, Electromedical, and Control	Instruments Manufacturing	21	646	5242	Agencies, Brokerages, and Other Insurance Related	Activities	110	1,063
Medical Devices			15	190	Hospitality and Tourism			186	7,560
3391	Medical Equipment and Supplies	Manufacturing	15	190	5615	Travel Arrangement and Reservation	Services	46	3,905
Distribution & Transportation			Establishments	Employees	Information, Design, Media			Establishments	Employees
Distribution and Electronic Commerce			852	16,906	Local Entertainment and Media			15	4,841
4234	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant	Wholesalers	98	2,749	5151	Radio and Television	Broadcasting	15	4,841
4239	Miscellaneous Durable Goods Merchant	Wholesalers	338	2,742	Marketing, Design, and Publishing			154	2,883
4238	Machinery, Equipment, and Supplies Merchant	Wholesalers	113	2,034	5418	Advertising, Public Relations, and Related	Services	96	714
4236	Household Appliances and Electrical and Electronic Goods	Merchant Wholesalers	80	1,456	5414	Specialized Design	Services	31	160
Transportation and Logistics			541	7,997	Performing Arts			42	422
4885	Freight	Transportation Arrangement	354	6,408	7115	Independent Artists, Writers, and	Performers	16	338
4811	Scheduled Air	Transportation	59	470	Education and Knowledge Creation			100	637
4882	Support Activities for Rail	Transportation	17	171	6117	Educational Support	Services	11	53
					6115	Technical and Trade	Schools	7	46
					Video Production and Distribution			17	113
					5121	Motion Picture and Video	Industries	17	113

9. A Resident Worker / Jobs Base Mismatch

The City of Doral is a considerable economy, employing between 73,000 and 77,000 workers. However, despite the size and strength of Doral’s economy, the vast majority of its estimated 23,000 employed residents work elsewhere in the County. Only 4,473 residents or 24.1 percent of workers who live in Doral work in Doral. As such, 93.9 percent of the City’s jobs base is filled by non-residents from outside Doral. Given the high earnings and incomes of Doral residents versus the compensation levels paid by establishments in Doral, it is logical to assume that a high percentage of the working residents leaving Doral each day are in high-skill, high pay occupations and industries. This daily exit of skilled works is a lost opportunity in terms of the tax base that would otherwise be captured in Doral, as well as lost daily secondary and tertiary spending that would otherwise accrue to businesses in Doral. ***This mismatch between Doral’s jobs and its residents’ education and skills exacerbates the City’s traffic problems — each day, over 72,000 workers enter the City, and at the same time, over 14,000 residents leave the City for work outside Doral.***

The presence of highly skilled, well-paid residents creates opportunities for new business development, helps attract companies seeking to locate or grow in Doral and provides a platform for significant entrepreneurial development.

10. The Changing Workplace and New Trends in Office Development

The office sector was the hardest hit commercial real estate sector in the last recession and has been the slowest to recover. New office and mixed-use development incorporating office development may play a critical role in Doral's economic future, but will require creative thinking to execute profitably. Office development is experiencing a series of challenges, including:

- Finding ways to shrink and share office space, and outsourcing non-core functions, such as IT, accounting, human resources, marketing and legal to lower cost providers;
- Aggressively shrinking the amount of square footage per employee;
- Adopting **workshift** strategies, placing talent closer to their customers and away from the central office, using telecommuting, more informal office space, moving satellite offices into neighborhoods, and shared office space; and
- The development and growth of co-working office space, used by small and large businesses.

The development of significant co-working projects in Doral indicates that conventional office development will proceed at a much slower pace and these changing workplace strategies will play an important role in new jobs development and business growth in the City. Using these strategies can also be an important part of a comprehensive transportation strategy aimed at reducing work trips each day and taking cars off the road.

11. A Looming Housing Affordability Crisis

While the City of Doral's housing market is generally healthy — only 0.1 percent of homes with negative equity and 0.0 percent mortgage delinquencies — **the current median home value of \$325,800 is out of reach for Doral households earning under 150 percent of the City's median annual household income (\$109,399)**. According to Zillow estimates, the median list price per square foot in Doral is \$222, which is higher than the Miami-Fort Lauderdale Metro average of \$205. The median price of homes currently listed in the City of Doral is \$398,000. According to Zillow, the median rent price in Doral is \$2,200, which is significantly higher than the Miami-Fort Lauderdale Metro median of \$1,900.

According to 2015 ACS estimates, 57 percent of renters in Doral are cost-burdened (>30 percent of household income on housing costs) and 27.5 percent "severely" cost-burdened (>50 percent of household income on housing costs). Additionally, an estimated 34.1 percent of the City's owner households are cost-burdened and 18.5 percent are "severely" cost-burdened.

The median value of an owner-occupied housing unit in the City of Doral is \$310,700 compared to \$203,300 in Miami-Dade County. The City's median gross rent is \$1,751 compared to \$1,112 in Miami-Dade County. **The median value of units constructed since 2010 is \$615,900, which is nearly double the City's median value. Likewise, the median gross rent of units constructed since 2000 and 2010 is significantly higher than the City's overall median gross rent.**

The City of Doral's Housing and Transportation Affordability Index (H+T Index) developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) combines housing and transportation costs and sets the benchmark at no more than 45 percent of household income. **According to CNT's 2016 estimates, the H&T Index for the City of Doral is 77 percent compared to 62 percent for Miami-Dade County.** The H&T Index for the City of Doral is composed 53 percent by housing costs and 24 percent by transportation costs.

Housing costs may be playing an important role in the City's shrinking millennial population and finding ways to provide housing within reach of workers and households earning up to 150 percent of the City's median household income may be a critical component in 1) sustaining and improving Doral's economy, 2) improving the City's quality of life and 3) reducing transportation congestion.

12. Traffic and Transportation

Doral is in many ways a victim of its own success. This study has noted that the significant mismatch between worker inflow and resident worker outflow, in addition to increasing truck traffic, is driving Doral's congestion problems. Doral's transportation issues are a function of land use, employment location, and limited roadway capacity. **Unfortunately, Doral's wildly successful economic growth has created traffic congestion problems that, if not addressed, may grind the City's transportation to a halt, and threaten its future economic growth. Failure to significantly reduce increasing traffic congestion will also threaten the quality of life it offers to its residents.**

The mismatch between Doral's workforce and employment opportunities has resulted in a significant daily commute trip flow entering and leaving Doral: about 73,000 non-resident workers flood in Doral every day and about 15,000 Doral residents commute to other places. This huge demand has been a significant contributor to the congestion problems in and around Doral, and if the current trend continues, traffic gridlock is likely to get much worse.

Much of the regional focus on alleviating commuter transportation congestion has focused on building new road and rail capacity serving East-West travel to and from Doral. However, a significant portion of Doral's commuter traffic is generated by workers who live to the north and south of Doral.

The City's update to the Transportation element of the City's Comprehensive Plan proposes the significant addition of new road lanes. Unfortunately, Doral has almost no space for new road lanes, will find large-scale, major transportation infrastructure investments challenging to finance, and is looking at reduced transportation funding from the state and federal governments.

However, the same update to the City's Transportation element found that:

Increasing multimodal capacity has been the goal of the City to achieve a balance in the community. Notably, a 5% modal shift towards alternative modes will reduce most of the need for roadway widening on all but one roadway segment in 2025 projects, and a 30% modal shift will reduce the need to widen 80% of the projected roadways requiring additional capacity.

In this environment, traditional transportation solutions stressing the building of additional capacity — either road or mass transit — may not be possible in the near or mid-term. Doral will need to consider more creative alternatives aimed at reducing the number of daily trips and the number of vehicles on the road, including land use strategies, new technology, ride-sharing, housing, and disciplined job development strategies to solve its transportation issues.

13. Doral's Evolving Economy: What are the New Sources of Growth?

The City of Doral has the platform for sustained jobs growth — an advanced industry sector mix, highly educated and skilled resident workforce, and skilled local leadership. Yet its future growth is not guaranteed. Doral has grown based on the availability of land, its key central location, transportation access, proximity to major regional assets and employers, and supportive government services (including taxes), growth, and development policy. Over the next two decades, however, the patterns, structure, and types of new economic growth and job creation in the City will change significantly.

Doral is an unusually successful local economy. It is however, constrained by limited developable land, limited and currently over-burdened transportation capacity, and a regional labor force skills base that has not kept pace with the needs of highly innovative and hi-tech industries. The most significant local limits to growth are the City's shrinking inventory of undeveloped land. Like the rest of the County, Doral is approaching full build-out of its commercial and industrial land area, and even less vacant land is available for new residential development. The City's planned annexations will add built-out land with established industry and office uses.

Only 205 acres of vacant industrial/commercial zoned property remains in the City of Doral, the bulk of which is contained in the 175-acre Buck-Lemon property fronting NW 141st Street (the fate of the 162-acre former SouthCom property on NW 25th Street is unknown at the time of this writing). If developed entirely as industrial or office parks, the City's vacant acreage inventory could provide at most between 17,000 and 32,000 new jobs, a 17 to 32 percent increase in Doral's jobs base.

This means that the age of large jobs producing projects, or large-scale re-locations is over and will occur infrequently. ***Most importantly, new employment growth will be less dependent on large land, building and infrastructure, and will rely on improving the competitiveness, productivity, innovative capacity of its local businesses, and the skills, education, and wages of the labor force of the City's leading industry clusters.*** Simple, traditional measures of the **quantity** of jobs created is not enough. Doral's future growth will be driven by:

- The expansion of existing, small businesses employing less than 50 people;
- Growth of existing companies through innovation and improving competitiveness through investments in new technology, productivity, and more skilled labor;
- Growth through acquisition of existing businesses;
- New small business creation and entrepreneurship; and
- The conversion and/or demolition of outdated existing buildings to new uses.

Strategic Economic Development Recommendations

Writing Doral's Next Chapter: 21st Century Economic Competitiveness

The Metropolitan Center performs economic development competitiveness studies across Florida, and maintains a comprehensive review of best practices, policy, and new program development across the United States. Based on our consulting work and research, the regional and municipal economic competitiveness landscape across the nation is evolving quickly. Cities large and small are adapting quickly to a competitive environment in which they increasingly compete locally, nationally and globally to create opportunity and prosperity for their residents.

In our experience, simple measures and development objectives based on the quantity of jobs is not enough anymore. High-performing, competitive cities and regions are separating themselves from the also-rans by embracing a new economic competitiveness framework. Local economic competitiveness is defined by the following principles:

- **Stable Long-Term Growth:** Support diversified employment, industry, and occupational growth that is less susceptible to business cycle fluctuations, so that household wealth and income is protected during national economic downturns;
- **Economic Opportunity:** An expanding supply (pipeline) of higher wage job opportunities, and occupations paying competitive wages and incomes that increase rapidly with improved skills and experience;
- **Economic Mobility:** Successful regions monitor and support upward mobility of its resident households, developing policy that actively supports the ideal that regardless of where one starts on the economic ladder, through hard work, education, and perseverance, a family can improve its economic conditions and build wealth for successive generations
- **Equity:** A prosperous local economy has widespread growth whose benefits are shared by residents across the income spectrum. Successful regions are growing opportunity and reducing social costs by supporting increasing household incomes across the income spectrum, and reducing income disparity between the top and bottom of the income ladder;
- **Growing Local Innovation and Global Competitiveness:** Successful regions support local business ability to innovate, adopt new technology, even in traditional industries, to improve performance and global competitiveness;
- **Building Local Human Capital:** Human capital, or the collective knowledge and skills of a regional labor force, is a distinguishing feature of high performing economies. Successful regions are building a *local* labor force with the skills, education and brainpower to support globally competitive businesses, and obtain higher-wage, high-skilled employment opportunities, rather than seeking to import high-skilled labor. They then leverage the quality of their labor force to improve productivity, competitiveness, and drive new business creation;
- **Growing Local Innovation and Business Development Networks:** Converting local human capital and brainpower into new jobs, opportunity and entrepreneurship is significantly strengthened through the growth of effective business development, information and innovation sharing networks;

- **Efficiently Allocating Resources to Stimulate New Economic Growth:** In an era of shrinking federal and state funding, leaders in high performing local economies a) focus and target investments in their local strengths, b) take a disciplined and targeted approach to investments in physical assets, real estate, and infrastructure, and c) focus on high-wage job creation in leading local industries before attempting to create jobs in entirely new industries;
- **Addressing Housing Market Imbalances:** Provide equitable solutions to address housing market imbalances that erode incomes, dampen wealth building, and hamper the retention of younger workers;
- **Support Building Wealth through Asset Ownership Opportunities:** Support broader access to home and business ownership, as a way to both grow new jobs, and grow family wealth. Owning a business is one of the best ways to grow family wealth and provide employment opportunities for the community, but is still out of reach for too many families;
- **Invest in Quality Place-Making:** Develop high quality public places and multiple transportation modes that enhance quality of life, productivity, and inter and intra-city connectedness; and
- **Seek Effective Collaboration and Partnerships:** Successful regions actively engage in strong civic collaboration, and grow leaders who are able to collaborate and partner with businesses and other governments both large and small.

Strategic Economic Development Program and Policy Recommendations

Doral's unprecedented growth has been based on a number of the elements of this competitiveness framework. However, over the last 15 years the City's economic growth has been based on traditional economic competitiveness factors. ***Doral historically has grown based on the availability of land, its key central location, transportation access, proximity to major regional assets and employers, and supportive government services (including taxes), growth, and development policy.*** The City has the platform for sustained jobs growth — an advanced industry sector mix, highly educated and skilled resident workforce, and skilled local leadership — yet its future growth is not guaranteed.

The *Strategic Economic Policy Recommendations* that follow reflect:

- Building on Doral's economic strengths and addressing its weaknesses, detailed in the *Competitive Assessment*;
- The advantages of prioritizing economic development policy and resources into the City's highest value, highest impact **Target Industry** Clusters;
- The new sources of economic growth in the City, and shaping policy to take advantage of those forces; and
- Responding to the new landscape of local economic competitiveness.

These policy and program recommendations have four characteristics:

- The recommendations listed here recognize that some of the elements of competitiveness listed above are being addressed in the City's update of its comprehensive plan — these recommendations therefore focus on economic competitiveness;

- Based on the new realities of local economic competitiveness, the City's key economic development strategies will need to shift from large capital and land development investments to targeted incentives, responsive support services, better, timely information, business network building, a high quality local labor pool, and technological and business practice innovation;
- Overall, because of the shift in policy, land, and competitive requirements, outside of our housing recommendations, the elements of this strategic plan are implementable within a two-year time frame; and
- These program and policy recommendations (except housing policy) are also generally low cost. In fact, much of the cost for many of these strategies can be raised at no expense to the City, through grants and public private partnerships.

Specific program and policy recommendations, organized under 12 policy areas, are as follows.

1. Adopt New Growth Objectives and Performance Metrics

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Complete the ***Doral Economic Performance Metrics Dashboard***

Program Details

Adopting and regularly monitoring clear performance metrics is a feature of all good government. Adopting the economic development competitiveness framework detailed above as the City's ruler for economic performance, and investing in real-time measurement of these performance standards would have numerous advantages, including:

- Shifting City's economic development policy and program focus from traditional measures of the number of jobs and square feet developed to standards that stress improving the economic health of its businesses and resident families.
- The means for measuring the success of the City's Economic Development Strategies;
- A guide for future policy and program development, and course corrections as conditions change;
- A platform for quickly responding to requests for information from businesses looking to expand or invest in Doral; and
- A communication platform to receive reviews, complaints, and information from client business in the City.

We recommend the City develop a simple, clear and concise ***Economic Performance Metrics Dashboard***, posted on the City's web site. The data can be collected from County and federal (census) data, and we also recommend purchasing a private database of all businesses in the City annually, available from a variety of third-party providers. The Economic Performance Dashboard would collect at a minimum the following economic statistics, updated according to the indicated time frequency:

- Population growth, by age group and household income (annual);
- A complete, current database of all City businesses, with contact information, updated bi-annually;



- Median wages, by industry and occupation, compared to the County and US (annual);
- Median household income, by distribution and year-over year performance (annual);
- New business establishment and firm creation and employment growth, by establishment size, across the City's economy, by industry sector and occupation, including target clusters, industries and niche sectors (bi-annual);
- Employment, labor participation, and unemployment rate (quarterly);
- Educational attainment and age group population trends, especially in the young and mid-worker age segments (20-44, and 45-55 years old, annually);
- Increase in tax revenue (quarterly);
- Measuring return on investment from public expenditures in the City (monetary and non-monetary, including job creation, bi-annual); and
- Land values, and identifying underperforming properties, high crime and distressed properties (bi-annual).

2. Develop Incentives and Programs that Aggressively Reward Innovation

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Implement innovation grant and/or loan program focusing on target industry clusters

Program Details

Continuous innovation, even in mature industries, is a hallmark of local economic competitiveness. Innovation even at the small business level is critical, separating business winners from losers. According to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), innovation is a central component of economic competitiveness for all businesses:

Innovation...is fundamental for building prosperity today and in the future... One of the most important keys to a strong economy is continuous innovation. Having the ability to create new ideas, products, and services is a critical element in economic development, at the local, regional, and state levels. In today's connected world, innovation can take place anywhere; it is not limited to large metropolitan areas. [U.S. EDA]

However, innovation is not just the province of high-tech companies. The City of Doral has a strong mix of knowledge-based, Advanced Industry and "mature" sector companies. A strong local culture and innovation support networks benefit all businesses. Companies that compete in high knowledge-based industries stay at the leading competitive edge, and businesses offering traditionally lower-value services and products can significantly raise the value of the products and services through new technology and practice innovation. Increasingly, mature industries are forced to adopt new technology and new business practice to compete.

For example, given Doral's concentration of warehousing, distribution, and transshipment businesses, supporting and incentivizing new information, warehousing, and distribution strategies could have a major impact on critical local business sectors. Driven by intense cost competition, the growth of e-commerce, higher rents, last mile delivery and fulfillment strategies, the warehousing, distribution, and

businesses who depend on warehousing larger inventories of materials or products, are increasingly adopting three critical strategies:

- Sophisticated information technology to store, track, retrieve and deliver goods of all kinds;
- Sophisticated storage and handling technology inside the warehouse, including robotic storage, placement and retrieval of materials and goods;
- Using offsite, centralized, shared, multi-tenant warehouses to store products, operated by third parties, rather than building, owning, or operating a warehouse.

These strategies are changing many traditional industries, and increasing the value and knowledge content of the distribution sector. In fact, multi-tenant warehousing is the fastest and most profitable segment of the industrial real estate market across the United States.

In Doral, supporting the use of multi-tenant warehousing could have tremendous positive impacts on the profitability of its distribution and transshipment businesses, and provide a key stimulus to the profitability, stability and expansion of the **Doral Design District**. Multi-tenant warehouse facilities promote more intensive and efficient use of buildings and equipment. They also save capital investment, operating expense, and space for small businesses. The Design District, as well as Doral's manufacturing base, represent unique regional economic assets. However, they both face the threat of rapidly rising real estate prices and competition from housing developers for scarce land. Supporting the expanded use of off-site and shared warehousing saves expense, and allows these businesses to focus on the improvement of their showroom and factory space, which are more productive, revenue-generating investments.

The City would be well advised to establish grant and/or loan programs to help underwrite the cost of investments in new technology, especially for small firms. The monies can be raised from a variety of sources. Even a total amount of \$500,000 per year could have far-reaching impacts on the development and growth of small businesses in Doral.

3. Drive New Business Creation

Policy and Program Recommendations

Support Creation of 50,000 SF of new accelerator space, focusing on target industry clusters through:

- a. Revise local zoning through density bonuses or parking relief to incentivize accelerator spaces
- b. Develop loan, grant, participate financially, or donate space for development of new accelerator(s)

Program Details

The City of Doral's future job growth and industry mix will increasingly rely on the expansion and creation of its small businesses. The City can develop programs, facilities and incentives to support and drive that growth, which is also easier, less costly and lower risk than pursuing large employment generating projects.

The private investment market has determined that Doral is an excellent location for accelerators, as evidenced by its growing segment of co-working spaces and co-working accelerators. The Center recommends the City further drive the expansion of local incubators and accelerators to grow a larger pipeline of new small businesses in Doral each year.

Doral is extremely well-positioned to become a major location within the County for new business creation:

- The City's large and diverse mix of exiting business provide a strong range and depth of local customers on which to start a new small business, providing local scale-up opportunities; and
- Doral has a very strong local culture of self-employment — 16.1 percent of its workers are self-employed, compared to 9 percent nationally. Also, the skills, education, and high wage base of Doral's working residents provides a ready-made population of potential entrepreneurs.

By partnering with local universities, institutions, venture capital and experienced accelerator and incubator operators, the City should aim for the development of 50,000 square feet of new incubator and accelerator space in Doral, targeting residents and local entrepreneurs.

Also, business accelerators function more effectively when they 1) focus on a limited set of industry specializations, and 2) focus on industries with quantifiable *local* strengths. Here, the target industry clusters are a useful tool to develop the focus of a Doral-based accelerator system. By focusing its accelerator programs on new businesses either entering or *servicing* the target industry clusters, Doral will increase the growth and survival rate of companies "graduating" from these incubator/accelerators, promote small businesses that grow local cluster capabilities and competitiveness, and/or provide valuable services, technology, or innovation for Doral's key businesses.

4. Incorporate the Elements of an Innovation District in New Development

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Revise zoning to create specific Innovation District, or Innovation District overlay, with density, parking, and other benefits
- b. Solicit institutional partners to participate in development of innovation district (Universities, research institutes, accelerator operators, or venture capital investors)
- c. Solicit private developers specializing in Innovation Districts

Program Details

According to the Brookings Institution, ***Innovation Districts*** are "Geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators. They are also physically compact, transit-accessible, and technically-wired and offer mixed-use housing, office, and retail."

Innovation Districts are increasingly being developed in public-private partnerships in former commercial areas, industrial areas, and downtowns as a way to drive innovation, start-up formation, and residential development at a single location. ***Doral may be one of the best-suited communities in South Florida for the development of a focused innovation district, or incorporating elements of an innovation district in its new downtown mixed-use development projects.*** Partnerships with institutions and private development is key, and provides new economic opportunity sometimes overlooked by traditional developers. The City would be well-advised to promote the development of even small-scale innovation district elements in yet undeveloped proposed residential communities, as part of the City Place, or included in a formal re-zoning of its larger remaining undeveloped properties.

5. Expand Small Business Ownership Opportunities

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Implement **legacy business** acquisition program. Partner with expert provider of legacy business acquisition services to fund and run program.

Program Details

Although start-ups and new small businesses are an important component of job growth and innovation, the fastest and lowest risk route to small business growth is to acquire an existing business. Increasingly, acquiring **legacy** businesses — businesses whose owner wants to retire, but has no plan for succession — is seen as a valuable way to expand access to small business ownership to families at the lower end of the income ladder.

Formal legacy business acquisition support programs also help stabilize local employment. New local owners are significantly more likely to keep a business in place. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has targeted legacy small business acquisition as an important program, supported through its local Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). The Miami SBDC, run through FIU, has rapidly grown its legacy small business program, matching qualified business buyers with small business acquisition opportunities, funding, training, technical support and customers.

Expanding access to small business acquisitions can be an important way to grow family wealth, expand and grow a business that otherwise may close, protecting the City's employment base.

6. Invest in an Ultra-High-Speed Internet Backbone for the City

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Solicit service providers to develop high-speed backbone in Doral. A marketing package including new data from the **Competitive Assessment** will help sell viability of high-speed service in Doral.

Program Details

Investing in an “ultra-high-speed Internet backbone” would also be an important and critical business infrastructure investment. Affordable, widely used Gigabit and higher speed internet service has been slow to emerge in Miami-Dade. Supporting, subsidizing, investing in, or partnering to provide this backbone would provide an immediate small business development and growth incentive allowing access to super high speed at costs businesses can afford. It would also support the growth of numerous tech sector industries, most notably strong local clusters including digital animation, telecommunications, live data services, software development, and streaming media.

7. Priority Transportation Strategies

Policy and Program Recommendations:

Develop New Premium Express Bus Service for Worker Commute Routes

- a. Develop Express Bus Service and bus terminal locations to/from target communities to Doral (predominately South and North of Doral)
- b. Aggressively expand the **Doral Bus Passport** program

Intra-City Circulation Improvements

- a. Incorporate complete streets design that includes alternative modes - biking and walking
- b. Implement satellite parking combined with free shuttle services, or on-demand services such as Lyft, Uber, and ZipCars
- c. Enhance intra-city bus services with a focus on improving the level of service. Increase number of buses at rush hour
- d. Consider eliminating or reducing transit fare, introducing youth pass programs, and commuter challenge programs to increase transit ridership
- e. Create Doral-focused access guide that includes maps, schedules, contact numbers, and other information on how to reach a particular destination by public transit

Program Details

As noted, the mismatch between Doral workforce and employment opportunities has resulted in a significant daily commute trip flow entering and leaving Doral: about 73,000 non-resident workers flood in Doral every day and about 15,000 Doral residents commute to other places. This huge demand has been a significant contributor to the congestion problems in and around Doral. If current trend continues, the situation is going to get much worse in the future. According to the Southeast Regional Planning Model (SERPM), by year 2040 about 29,000 Doral workers would need to leave Doral for job opportunities, with another 76,700 non-resident workers commute into Doral every day (shown in the table below).

As detailed in the City's Draft update to the Transportation Element of the City Comprehensive Plan, **a 5% modal shift towards alternative modes will reduce most of the need for roadway widening on all but one roadway segment in 2025 projects, and a 30% modal shift will reduce the need to widen 80% of the projected roadways requiring additional capacity.**

The bulk of Doral's vehicular traffic demand is from adjacent communities to the north and south of Doral. Based on this fact and the condition of the City's internal transportation network, commuting patterns, and land use patterns, the Center recommends aggressively pursuing two low-cost transportation strategies to immediately alleviate its road congestion issues.

First, aiming at improving the connectivity between Doral and the County, express bus services connecting major origins of Doral's non-resident workers will provide a more efficient commute and reduce congestion. Express bus service can be established quickly, operate on existing roadways, and begin with little or no cost to the City. The key to the success of express bus services includes:

- Coordinating with the County and identify high demand locations for the express bus services. At the outer end, the buses may circulate among high-demand neighborhoods to pick up passengers. Then they should operate non-stop to Doral. The top potential candidate cities for consideration of introducing express bus services include Hialeah, Tamiami, Kendall, Kendale Lakes, Miami, and Miami Beach;
- At the Doral end, stations can be placed on the edges of Doral, with free connecting services into the center of Doral. This would avoid unnecessary pressure on Doral’s internal traffic;
- The service should provide competitive travel time and speed with the usage of express lanes and highways whenever possible. Dedicated bus lanes, and transit signal priority (TSP) are other strategies that may be considered;
- The program should provide premium services with free high-speed wireless internet access, use larger vehicles (such as coaches and articulated buses), with more comfort and amenities, such as plush seats, overhead storage, arm rest, foot rest, and restroom facilities;
- Bus stops and stations should be located to maximize ridership potential and provide direct and safe access to/from surrounding land uses; consider regional transit centers, and existing park & ride facilities;
- Branding the service as premium commuter services and provide real-time traveler information systems and phone apps to drive demand; and
- Aggressively expanding the **Doral Bus Passport** program, which provides discounted fares and incentives for employers to subsidize employee transit costs.

Such service has demonstrated positive results in numerous regions including Toronto and other large metro areas.

Second, in terms of internal circulation issues, the following strategies may be considered:

- Incorporating complete streets design considerations that promote alternative modes, such as biking and walking, and improve walkability;
- Encouraging satellite parking combined with free shuttle services, or incorporating emerging on-demand services such as Lyft, Uber, and ZipCars;
- Enhancing intra-city bus services with a focus on improving the level of service. May also consider eliminating or reducing transit fare, introducing youth pass programs, and commuter challenge program, etc., to encourage the usage of transit; and
- Create an access guide that includes maps, schedules, contact numbers, and other information on how to reach a particular destination by public transit.

8. Support Workshifting and New Workplace Location Strategies in Doral

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Develop incentive programs that encourage employers to implement telecommuting programs
- b. Develop targeted marketing program to large downtown employers about the benefits of workshifting to Doral
- c. Revise local zoning through density bonuses or parking relief to incentivize co-working spaces
- d. Develop financial grants or incentives for the development of co-working space
- e. Revise zoning - parking and density bonuses - to incentivize live-work housing units and live-work communities
- f. Develop, and provide grants to access affordable ultra-high-speed internet connectivity, especially for small businesses

Program Details

The practice of moving workers out of a Central office on a daily basis and either structuring telecommuting or moving satellite offices closer to where their employees live is known as **workshifting**. Workshifting and telecommuting are a hybrid of workplace and office cost-reducing, land use, and transportation strategies to not just move workers into mass transit, but quantifiably reduce the number of commuter trips workers need to make for work each week.

Co-working, shared, home office, and off-site office space are playing a rapidly growing role in the future of the workplace. Large, Triple-A rent office space has been the slowest performing real estate sector in the region as employers increasingly use smaller office space per employee, regular telecommuting, and off-site office space as ways to save cost and improve worker productivity. The City of Doral has proven to be a competitive location for co-working space, demonstrated by the development of HUBB, Co-work Doral, Palletized, Quest Offices, Xoffices and Pipeline Doral in or near Doral.

Workshifting is gaining ground across many US cities as a way to reduce commute times, take commuters off the road, reduce traffic volume, and increase worker productivity by reducing or eliminating travel times. Telecommuting has the potential to save employers \$10,000 per employee per year, due to increased productivity, reduced real estate and facility costs, and reduced turnover, etc., according to a report developed by the Telework Research Network based on an analysis of over 250 case studies, research papers, books, and other documents.¹ Other benefits include reduced driving cost and time savings for employees, energy savings, reduced congestion, and environmental benefits to the society. Flexible work arrangements are also essential to attract and retain the new generation of labor force.

Given Doral's high percentage of residents who commute in and out of the City, supporting workshifting or adopting formal workshifting incentive programs could have high appeal and significant benefits including reducing traffic and keeping daily spending by workers in the City. A workshifting program support program could include:

- Targeted marketing information supplied to large downtown employers about the benefits of workshifting to Doral;

¹ Kate Lister & Tom Harnish, 2010. Workshifting Benefits: The Bottom Line. TeleworkResearchNetwork.com.

- Adjustments to zoning through density bonuses or parking relief to co-working spaces;
- Financial grants or incentives for the development of co-working space;
- More favorable zoning to incentivize live-work housing units and live-work communities;
- Access to affordable ultra-high-speed internet connectivity; and
- Incentive programs that encourage employers to develop and implement telecommuting programs that allow employees to work remotely instead of commute to the central office daily.

9. Housing Choice Expansion

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Develop an Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- b. Partner with or Create a Community Land Trust (CLT)
- c. Create or Direct a City Department or Agency to Compete for Housing Grants and Financing
- d. Select and Provide Funding Assistance to a Short List of Nonprofit Housing Developers
- e. Provide Zoning Incentives Such as Density Bonuses to Developers of Affordable Housing
- f. Reduce Parking Requirements

Program Details

The *Competitive Assessment* highlighted 1) the mismatch between Doral’s jobs base and its residents, 2) City traffic issues driven largely by the size of its economy versus the number of available housing units (the City is home to more jobs than residents and housing units to support them), and 3) traffic congestion, truck traffic, and increasing commute times as issues that may impede Doral’s future economic development.

As previously noted, the City of Doral must be careful to consider different objectives, especially the quality of development, and more importantly, the relationship and balance between job creating development uses and the City’s inventory of residential units. ***In essence, the City’s future development planning, policy, and decision-making needs to consider economic development regulation and housing policy simultaneously and of equal importance. The current trend of the City losing Millennials and potentially other critical working segments of the population will continue if mixed-income housing development is not produced to meet unmet and growing demand.***

The City of Doral’s Housing Choice Expansion Strategy should include the goal of promoting Doral as a highly livable City with a strong, diverse economy and a spectrum of housing choice and opportunity. The underpinnings of Doral’s “Housing Strategies” should include:

- Doral’s resident workforce
- Doral’s incoming workforce
- Mixed-use/mixed-income development
- Live/work opportunities
- Developer incentives

Develop an Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Creating a local, dedicated source of funds for affordable housing development is essential. The need is particularly acute at present given the paucity of federal and state funding for affordable housing. Established by state, county, or city governments, housing trust funds provide dedicated sources of funding that support the creation and preservation of affordable housing. These funds are becoming more popular, in part because the model is flexible and revenue streams are not tied to annual budget allocations, thus ensuring a sustained and focused effort to make housing accessible. They are also effective, bringing in millions of dollars for affordable housing that will be here for years to come.

Dedicated revenue for a local affordable housing trust fund can come from a number of sources. For example, most major cities generate significant revenue through hotel taxes due to tourism and convention business. Hotels generate a significant amount of lower-paying jobs and many cities lack housing that is affordable or acceptable to these workers. Other revenue sources used by cities include TIF district funding, additions to the General Fund revenue from an increase in business license fees, and a real estate transfer tax for transactions involving all properties valued at \$1 million and above.

Partner with or Create a Community Land Trust (CLT)

A community land trust (CLT) is a proven mechanism for ensuring long-term affordable housing while also ensuring public investments in affordable housing will last a lifetime. A CLT is a private non-profit corporation created to acquire and hold land to meet the housing needs of residents least served by the prevailing market. CLTs essentially serve as the “steward” for a community’s long-term affordable housing supply. CLTs can be an effective tool for making housing affordable in the face of the increasingly widening gap between income and housing costs.

The CLT model works by purchasing land and holding it in trust in perpetuity. The CLT can purchase vacant land and develop it, or purchase existing properties for rental or owner-occupied housing and mixed-use projects. For development of owner-occupied housing, the CLT sells the housing unit to a purchaser, but retains ownership of the land, entering into a ground lease with the new owner. The CLT thereby takes the cost of the land out of the purchase price, and/or applies other subsidies to bring the purchase price in line with local affordability guidelines.

The homeowner retains the rights to privacy, exclusive use of the property, and the right to bequeath the property and the lease. The CLT has the right to purchase the house when and if the owner wants to sell. If the buyer chooses to sell, the CLT retains the right to re-purchase the structures for an agreed-upon formula giving the buyer partial equity. The remaining equity stays with the CLT, and the structure is re-sold to a new buyer at a below-market affordable rate. The cost of the land is forever retained within the trust.

Create or Direct a City Department or Agency to Compete for Housing Grants and Financing

While the City of Doral does not qualify as a HUD-Entitlement Community, there are sources of federal, state and local funding for affordable housing activities. Having a city department or agency in place to apply for funding assistance and to assist local affordable housing developers can be advantageous as most funding assistance is highly competitive and in need of strong government support. Cities can also be pro-active in supporting affordable housing developer applications under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, the LIHTC gives states the authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation and/or new construction of rental housing targeted to

low-income households. The LIHTC program is one of the primary means of directing private capital toward the creation of affordable rental housing. The tax credits provide investors of affordable rental housing with a benefit that is used to offset a portion of their federal tax liability in exchange for the production of affordable rental housing. The value associated with the tax credits allows residences in LIHTC developments to be leased at below market rate rents. The LIHTC program is the most popular method by which state Housing Finance Agencies (HFAs) connect affordable housing and transportation. LIHTC is typically used in multi-family housing developments, and the equity created by the sale of tax credits allows a reduction of the property's mortgage. This, in turn, allows the property owner to lower rents, making the property affordable to low-income households.

Select and Provide Funding Assistance to a Short List of Nonprofit Housing Developers

Non-profit housing developers, such as community development corporations (CDCs), can serve as an excellent partner for cities in providing smaller-scale, urban infill type projects (typically under 50 units) that most private developers do not consider. They anchor capital in communities by developing residential and commercial property, ranging from affordable housing to shopping centers and even businesses. CDCs are also able to generate grants and other financial assistance from non-traditional funding sources such as corporate and community foundations. CDCs can also provide underwriting assistance and homebuyer counseling to prospective buyers.

Provide Zoning Incentives Such as Density Bonuses to Developers of Affordable Housing

Density bonuses are a tool offered to developers that allows for increased floor space, taller buildings, or more housing units than the traditional zoning code permits, in exchange for contributing to the community's vision by providing a defined public benefit. The public benefit can range from affordable housing units to senior care facilities to energy conservation features to maximizing the use of public transit to providing open spaces and recreation facilities.

Density bonuses encourage housing development and incentivize the addition of affordable housing units by granting projects in which the developer includes a certain number of affordable housing units the ability to construct a greater number of market rate units than would otherwise be allowed. Density bonuses are frequently tied to community goals of increased affordable housing and can be effective in driving larger quantities of units supplied through new construction. The State of California requires its local governments to grant a density bonus and concession or development incentive, if requested, for developments of five or more units including minimum portions of affordable housing or for senior housing.

Reduced Parking Requirements

Local zoning codes often require developers of new housing units to provide a specified number of parking spaces for area residents and for workers and customers of area businesses. These parking spaces typically increase the amount of land required, reduce the number of units that can be built on a given parcel, and/or increase the costs of construction, which often are passed on to the homebuyer or renter in the form of higher home purchase prices or rents. At the same time, as public transit use increases, communities tend to need fewer parking spaces than they needed in previous decades. By reducing parking requirements for developments that include affordable housing, localities can decrease production costs, allowing the developments to provide more affordable housing. This may be particularly useful in dense, high-cost cities where land prices are very high and account for a large proportion of a development's overall costs.

Parking requirements generally impose an undue burden on housing development, particularly for transit-oriented or affordable housing. When transit-oriented developments are intended to help reduce automobile dependence, parking requirements can undermine that goal by inducing new residents to drive, thereby counteracting city goals for increased use of public transit, walking and biking. Such requirements can also waste developable land, and reduce the potential for other amenities to be included; a recent Urban Land Institute study found that minimum parking requirements were the most noted barrier to housing development in the course of their research. By reducing parking and designing more connected, walkable developments, cities can reduce pollution, traffic congestion and improve economic development. Businesses that can be accessed without a car can see increased revenue, increased use of alternative modes of transportation, and improved health outcomes for residents. These requirements have a disproportionate impact on housing for low-income households because these families tend to own fewer vehicles but are nonetheless burdened by the extra cost of parking's inclusion in the development. The significant cost of developing parking – from \$5,000 per surface parking spot to \$60,000 underground – is incorporated at the start of the project, which can impede the viability and affordability of the construction.

10. Aggressively Expand Local Networking and B-2-B Programs

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Build Complete on-line Doral business directory
- b. Develop social media platform dedicated to Doral business-to-business networking, communication, and marketing
- c. Consider adding new economic development position focused exclusively on supporting existing local business expansion
- d. Implement preferred purchasing program for Doral businesses as part of every public contract in Doral

Program Details

Doral's leading strength supporting new growth is that it has such a rich mix of large and small business in diverse industries, serving local, national and international customer markets. Such a vibrant local economy provides the ideal platform for starting and growing new small businesses.

The Chamber of Commerce does an outstanding job sponsoring events and business-to-business (B2B) communications and interactions. The Center recommends taking these efforts to the next level, making investments in technology and personnel to develop event and educational programs and a social media communications platform, with the goal of reaching and/or engaging every business in the City. Given the total amounts of spending and revenue generated by City businesses, these seemingly mundane programs can have measurably beneficial results.

11. Consider Re-Zoning the Bon-Lemon Property for Mixed Use Planned Unit Development

Policy and Program Recommendations:

The Bon-Lemon property is the last large vacant property in the City – 175 acres, currently zoned industrial. Given the City’s needs, the Center recommends considering the re-zoning of the property to provide higher density, mixed uses, affordable housing, and embody development principles to encourage workshifting and/or innovation district development.

The Center is aware of the City’s annexation applications. However, in the context of the major problem issues created by the City’s economic dynamics, choices relative to the development of the City’s now precious remaining land inventory must be made with extreme care in order not to exacerbate problems which may damage the quality of life that has made Doral such a popular choice for residents and businesses. Embodying these principles, the City should provide mixed-income housing with new office and co-working or home-work opportunities of at least 1.5 jobs per housing unit.

12. Package the Doral Brand More Effectively

Policy and Program Recommendations:

- a. Complete an updated Doral multi-media marketing and information package, using the findings of the **Competitive Assessment**

Program Details

Establishing local brand identity is a critical part of building new business creation. However, Doral’s existing marketing information does not include the most important parts of its story — the strength of its leading local economy. The **City of Doral Economic Analysis: Competitive Assessment** provides the source material for the previously little-known details of Doral’s surprising economic diversity and its leading and central role in the regional economy. The city needs to produce a much more focused set of marketing products incorporating the strengths of Doral’s business mix, skilled labor and quality of life.

Index of Recommended Strategic Programs & Projects

Index of Strategic Policy Recommendations		
Program	Completion Date	Projected Cost
1. Adopt New Growth Objectives and Performance Metrics		
a. Complete the <i>Doral Economic Performance Metrics Dashboard</i>	Q2 2018	\$80,000
2. Develop Incentives and Programs that Aggressively Reward Innovation		
a. Implement annual innovation grant and/or loan program focusing on target industry clusters	Q1 2018	\$500,000
3. Drive New Business Creation		
Support Creation of 50,000 SF of new accelerator space, focusing on target industry clusters through:		
a. Revise local zoning through density bonuses or parking relief to incentivize accelerator spaces	Q2 2018	\$0
b. Develop loan, grant, participate financially, or donate space for development of new accelerator(s)	Q2 2018	\$500,000
4. Incorporate the Elements of an Innovation District in New Development		
a. Revise Zoning to create specific Innovation District, or Innovation District overlay, with density, parking, and other benefits	Q2 2018	\$0
b. Solicit Institutional Partners to participate in development of innovation district (Universities, research institutes, accelerator operators, or venture capital investors)	Q4 2018	\$15,000
c. Solicit Private Developers Specializing in Innovation Districts	Q2 2019	\$20,000
5. Expand Small Business Ownership Opportunities		
a. Implement <i>legacy business</i> acquisition program. Partner with expert provider of legacy business acquisition services to fund and run program.	Q1 2018	\$0
6. Invest in an Ultra-High-Speed Internet Backbone for the City		
a. Solicit service provider to develop high-speed backbone in Doral. A Marketing package including new data from the <i>Competitive Assessment</i> will help sell viability of high-speed service in Doral	Q3 2018	\$10,000
7. Priority Transportation Strategies		
<i>Develop New Premium Express Bus Service for Worker Commute Routes</i>		
a. Develop Express Bus Service and bus terminal locations to/from target communities to Doral (predominately South and North of Doral)	Q2 2019	\$500,000
b. Aggressively expand the <i>Doral Bus Passport</i> program	Q3 2018	\$250,000
<i>Intra-City Circulation Improvements</i>		
a. Incorporate complete street design that includes alternative modes - biking and walking	Q4 2019	\$0
b. Encourage satellite parking combined with free shuttle services, or on-demand services such as Lyft, Uber, and ZipCars	Q2 2019	\$0
c. Enhance intra-city bus services with a focus on improving the level of service. Increase number of buses at rush hour	Q4 2018	\$0
d. Consider eliminating or reducing transit fare, introducing youth pass programs, and commuter challenge programs to increase transit ridership	Q4 2018	\$75,000
e. Create Doral-focused access guide that includes maps, schedules, contact numbers, and other information on how to reach a particular destination by public transit	Q3 2018	\$30,000
8. Support Workshifting and New Workplace Location Strategies in Doral		
a. Develop incentive programs that encourage employers to implement telecommuting programs	Q4 2018	\$150,000
b. Develop targeted marketing program to large downtown employers about the benefits of workshifting to Doral	Q2 2018	\$15,000
c. Revise local zoning through density bonuses or parking relief to incentivize co-working spaces	Q4 2018	\$0
d. Develop financial grants or incentives for the development of co-working space	Q4 2018	\$250,000
e. Revise zoning - parking and density bonuses - to incentivize live-work housing units and live-work communities	Q4 2018	\$0
f. Develop, and provide grants to access affordable ultra-high-speed internet connectivity, especially for small businesses	Q3 2018	\$150,000
9. Housing Choice Expansion		
a. Develop an Affordable Housing Trust Fund	Q4 2019	\$1,000,000
b. Partner with or Create a Community Land Trust (CLT)	Q3 2018	\$0
c. Create or Direct a City Department or Agency to Compete for Housing Grants and Financing	Q4 2018	\$0
d. Select and Provide Funding Assistance to a Short List of Nonprofit Housing Developers	Q3 2018	\$25,000
e. Provide Zoning Incentives Such as Density Bonuses to Developers of Affordable Housing	Q4 2018	\$0
f. Reduced Parking Requirements	Q4 2018	\$0
10. Aggressively Expand Local Networking and B-2-B Programs		
a. Build Complete on-line Doral business directory	Q2 2018	\$40,000
b. Develop social media platform dedicated to Doral business-to-business networking, communication, and marketing	Q3 2018	\$50,000
c. Consider adding new position focused exclusively on supporting existing local business expansion	Q4 2018	\$100,000
d. Implement preferred purchasing program for Doral businesses as part of every public contract in Doral	Q1 2018	\$0
11. Consider Re-Zoning the Bon-Lemon Property for Mixed Use Planned Unit Development		
	Q4 2018	\$50,000
12. Package the Doral Brand More Effectively		
a. Complete an updated Doral multi-media marketing and information package, using the findings of the <i>Competitive Assessment</i>	Q2 2018	\$100,000

Source: List and calculations developed by the FIU Metropolitan Center