



DOWNTOWN
ECONOMICS

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT EVANS SPRING

INTRODUCTION

The potential development of the Evans Spring property in Roanoke has garnered the attention of the entire city and, most pointedly, the neighborhoods surrounding the site. The extensive community engagement effort conducted for this project underscores the fact that there is some reticence by abutting neighbors about the potential impact of development on the neighborhoods. There is also a long-standing concern in some quarters that the neighborhoods were underserved for decades.

We are suggesting the possible creation of an entrepreneurship development program to serve residents in neighborhoods that would be most affected by development at Evans Spring. We have outlined here the need for such a program, as well as information in support of the creation of an entrepreneurship development effort at the Evans Spring property.

Roanoke has a rich history of supporting entrepreneurship and has a highly touted start-up ecosystem. Currently there are numerous programs in Roanoke that provide a sound entrepreneurial substructure. The City's Department of Economic Development is actively engaged in the support of business attraction and creation. There is a robust infrastructure that supports entrepreneurship throughout the Roanoke Region.

In addition to the strong support provided by the City's economic development department, the regional Small Business Development Center provides far-reaching support for new business owners. Start-ups are supported by an innovation hub, and colleges such as Roanoke College and Radford University undergird a growing entrepreneurial support system.

The Advancement Foundation through its highly regarded GAUNTLET program and the regional economic development organization also add to the overall start-up support infrastructure. The Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Community Capital, Startup Virginia, and a host of other entities all lend to the overall culture of entrepreneurship development in Roanoke. In short, there is extensive support for budding entrepreneurs in Roanoke.

The City's commitment to ongoing neighborhood revitalization is evidenced by the adopted Neighborhood Centers Plan coupled with a revitalization plan for the Gainsboro neighborhood. The plans speak to the support for business creation in the many Roanoke neighborhoods. The city's commitment extends to the Melrose-Rugby neighborhood and the Fairland neighborhood, two neighborhoods that border Evans Spring.

Perhaps no entrepreneurship support program in Roanoke aligns with potential local business development at Evans Spring more than NUFOCUS. NUFOCUS currently operates from the Roanoke Higher Education Center in the Gainsboro neighborhood. The program director and founder operated for years in a small office building in Gainsboro and now has a grass roots entrepreneur development program that has drawn regional praise.

It should be noted that an entrepreneur development effort at Evans Spring will call upon the existing support infrastructure but will also be unique in that it is focused on neighborhoods abutting the Evans Spring property.

Considerable time was spent in research to determine the need for an entrepreneur development program and in uncovering the specific needs of the neighborhoods with respect to start-up potential. The research and this program of the overall Evans Spring Master Plan was conducted by the Downtown Economics, LLC, and its allied organization, The Downtown Entrepreneurship Project of Richmond. This plan also calls on the extensive community engagement effort conducted by Downtown Economics, LLC and Community Engagement and Charrette Associates, LLC of Richmond.

ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR AN EVANS SPRING ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

Before recommending the creation of an entrepreneurship development program at the Evans Spring site, a research effort was implemented to determine the overall need and the programmatic recommendations.

The Initial Community Engagement Program

The initial community engagement effort for the Evans Spring Master Plan brought to the fore a desire on many in the surrounding neighborhoods to offer programming for residents. The engagement team heard frequently of the need for local business creation. In fact, this was mentioned several times at the initial public meeting in March of 2023 and again at a public meeting in June of 2023.

The engagement team visited some Fairland residents and heard that residents were interested in starting a business in the neighborhood but did not have the resources or appropriate training. This was also mentioned at many of the focus groups conducted as part of the community engagement effort.

This repeated interest in neighborhood business development led the team to conduct further research to determine the ongoing level of interest in an entrepreneur development program.

Further Research

With the initial idea introduced, the team conducted further research.

Focus Groups:

Four focus groups were held with residents from Fairfield, Gainsboro and Melrose-Rugby to discuss the need for local business creation. The following quotes are direct from the focus groups and received significant follow-up support and are also reflective of similar quotes.

“People from the neighborhood will be hurt by development and deserve a chance to start a business instead of letting a national business move in.”

“The Black community has been left out of starting businesses.”

“The history of urban renewal means this generation should get a hand up to start businesses.”

“We want to buy from people we know and support those businesses.”

“If Evans Spring is developed it is time for locals to get something back.”

“We believe in local people buying from local people.”

“Everyone wants big business, but we should have small business owned by folks from the neighborhood.”

“We will be the ones hurt by a big development so we should get a chance to make some money with our own businesses.”

“It is our turn to have businesses.”

“There are so many good ideas that could work with support.”

“People are already selling things from home and online and could use a place here.”

“When neighborhood kids graduate, it would be nice for them to start a business instead of getting a job working for someone else. This gives them security.”

“I have had so many ideas for a business but don’t know where to turn.”

“How can we get a piece of the business pie?”

There was significant support for the creation of a neighborhood business development center at Evans Spring uncovered in the focus groups. This type of qualitative research provides the opportunity to uncover opinions that previously have not been heard.

Home-Based and Online Businesses

Our research indicated that there are plethora home-based businesses in the neighborhoods abutting the Evans Spring property. These businesses do not have appropriate permits, and four that we identified are selling food and food-based products. We also identified nine service businesses that work from home that also do not have permits. Our experience in the home-based business environment leads us to believe that if we could identify those businesses in a short period of time, that there are many more. The focus groups also clearly identified the existence of many home-based businesses.

There are also many people in the neighborhoods that appear to be selling items full-time online in such places as EBAY, ETSY, FACEBOOK MARKETPLACE, POSHMARK, etc. The Downtown Entrepreneurship Project proprietary research approach can delaminate the selling locations to a certain degree. There are people with active online businesses in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Our research clearly indicates that there is significant interest on the part of neighborhood residents in and Evans Spring entrepreneurship effort. There is an obvious sentiment that people in the neighborhood fear that development of the Evans Spring property will be left to large enterprises and preclude opportunities for those near the property.

The desire for an entrepreneurship center among neighborhood residents can be coupled with the strong entrepreneurial climate that has been fostered within Roanoke.

THE APPROACH FOR EVANS SPRING

The Advantages of an Entrepreneurship Program for Evans Spring

As many other programs in the Roanoke region indicate, there are several advantages to an entrepreneurship development program. Here are some, but not all:

Job Creation: Entrepreneurship development programs can help residents start their own businesses, leading to the creation of new job opportunities within the community. This reduces unemployment rates and provides a source of income for residents.

Economic Growth: As these businesses grow, they contribute to the economic growth of the neighborhood. Increased economic activity can attract investments and further development, potentially leading to a ongoing cycle of growth.

Wealth Building: Successful entrepreneurs can accumulate wealth, which can be reinvested in the neighborhood. This helps to build the financial resources needed for further community development.

Community Pride and Identity: Entrepreneurship programs often encourage businesses that reflect the culture and values of the neighborhood. This helps to create a unique identity and fosters a sense of pride among residents.

Reduced Crime: A thriving local economy can reduce crime rates. When people have meaningful employment and economic opportunities, they are less likely to engage in criminal activities.

Community Ownership: Local businesses are more likely to be owned by community members who have a vested interest in the neighborhood's well-being. This can lead to a sense of ownership and responsibility for the community's growth and development.

Increased Access to Goods and Services: New businesses can provide access to products and services that were previously unavailable within the neighborhood. This can improve the overall quality of life for residents.

Skills Development: Entrepreneurship programs often provide training and support for aspiring business owners. This equips community members with valuable skills, fostering self-sufficiency and reducing the need for external assistance.

Networking Opportunities: Entrepreneurship programs can create networks and support systems among local business owners. This can lead to collaboration, knowledge sharing, and mentorship opportunities.

Diverse Economic Base: A well-rounded local economy with a variety of businesses can help buffer the community against economic downturns. It's less reliant on a single industry or employer, making it more resilient.

Sustainability: Many entrepreneurship programs emphasize sustainable business practices, which can have positive environmental and social impacts, aligning with the goals of a healthier and more resilient community.

Attracting Investment: Successful entrepreneurship programs can attract outside investment and philanthropic efforts to support community development, further boosting the neighborhood's growth.

In the neighborhoods of Melrose-Rugby, Fairland and other adjacent areas, these advantages could ensure the ongoing revitalization and contribute to the city's ambitious economic development goals.

Successful Entrepreneurship Programs in Underserved Communities

Below are some successful entrepreneurship development programs that provide entrepreneurship development service to underserved communities throughout the United States. While these programs are in large cities, they serve specific neighborhoods with demographics that mirror those neighborhoods mostly likely to be impacted by development at the Evans Spring property.

The Corner - Detroit, Michigan

The Corner is a neighborhood-based entrepreneurship hub in Detroit that provides training, resources, and mentorship to aspiring entrepreneurs in underserved communities. It offers workshops, networking events, and access to capital.

Rising Tide Capital - Jersey City, New Jersey

Rising Tide Capital offers the Community Business Academy, a 12-week entrepreneurship training program, in underserved neighborhoods in Jersey City. Participants receive business education and ongoing support to launch and grow their businesses.

ENCLAVE for Entrepreneurs - Chicago, Illinois

ENCLAVE is an entrepreneurship support organization in Chicago. They offer training programs, mentorship, and resources to help entrepreneurs succeed, with a focus on serving underrepresented communities.

START-UP NY - New York, New York

START-UP NY is a program that partners with universities and colleges across New York City to provide tax incentives and support for new businesses. While not exclusive to underserved neighborhoods, it encourages business growth and innovation throughout the state.

Roxbury Innovation Center - Boston, Massachusetts

Located in the Roxbury neighborhood, this center offers resources, workshops, and events to support local entrepreneurs. It aims to foster innovation and economic growth in an underserved area.

Westside Business Improvement District (BID) - Atlanta, Georgia

The Westside BID in Atlanta focuses on supporting businesses and entrepreneurs on the city's Westside, an underserved area. They provide training, grants, and assistance to local businesses.

Oakland Business Assistance Center - Oakland, California

The Oakland Business Assistance Center offers workshops, consulting, and access to capital to entrepreneurs in Oakland, with an emphasis on helping minority-owned and disadvantaged businesses.

Start Co. - Memphis, Tennessee

Start Co. is an organization in Memphis that supports startups and entrepreneurs. They have various programs, including ones aimed at fostering entrepreneurship in underserved communities.

Then there are actual incubators and accelerators in underserved neighborhood from around the country.:

New York City, New York - Harlem Garage (Harlem)

Los Angeles, California - Grid110 (South Los Angeles)

Chicago, Illinois - BLUE1647 (Englewood)

Detroit, Michigan - TechTown Detroit (Various underserved neighborhoods)

New Orleans, Louisiana - Propeller Incubator (Broadmoor)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - The Enterprise Center (Mantua)

Atlanta, Georgia - Goodie Nation (Various underserved neighborhoods)

Houston, Texas - The Ion (Various underserved areas in the city)

Miami, Florida - The Idea Center at Miami Dade College (Various underserved neighborhoods in Miami)

Oakland, California - Kapor Center (Various underserved neighborhoods in Oakland)

Within the Commonwealth of Virginia there is a wonderful example that can easily be replicated in Evans Spring. That is the Jackson Ward Foundation in Richmond. That is an organization dedicated to Black entrepreneurship.

Recommended Step One Approach at Evans Spring

After reviewing the research and the needs assessment, the following is recommended for the Evans Spring site.

- 1) Establish a Non-Profit Community Development Corporation.** This 501(c)(3) organization will serve as the umbrella organization to drive the development of an entrepreneurship center at Evans Spring.
- 2) Hire a Director.** In the absence of a Director, the City Economic Development Department can fill this role. The Director will be responsible for planning, programmatic development, and overall management.
- 3) Replicate a Program.** The NUFOCUS program at the Higher Education Building mentioned earlier would be a good point of departure, but any of the programs listed in this report would work well.
- 4) Decide on Real Estate.** There are three approaches: (a) develop a stand-alone building on the site; (b) rent space on the site initially; or (c) develop a program for training in the neighborhood.

It is recommended that rather than a specific theme such as food, crafts, emerging technology, or retail, the approach be as inclusive as possible. Working with the Small Business Development Center, we would recommend the development of a curriculum for those who will participate in the entrepreneurship program.

Retail Incubation

If a theme such as retailing is desired, we recommend the development of a retail incubator. The best example of a retail incubator is The Garages in Wichita. This program attracts neighborhood people with a retail idea, trains them in a single site, and allow the participants to learn the retail business and eventually “hatch” into the community. This would require the development of space at the Evans Spring property. This would have the advantage of not only training entrepreneurs, but also creating businesses to serve the neighborhood.

A retail incubator requires a mentor and a full-time director. We suggest replicating The Garages approach. There are also some larger retail incubators than can serve as resources if desired:

Macy's Market @ Macy's: Macy's, one of the largest department store chains in the United States, established this incubator program to support emerging brands. Selected brands are given the opportunity to set up shop within Macy's stores, offering them exposure to a large customer base and valuable retail space.

Target Takeoff: Target's incubator program, Target Takeoff, focuses on helping startups in the consumer product goods space. They provide mentorship, funding, and workspace for selected companies, with a specific focus on retail-related innovation.

The Shops at Columbus Circle - The LAB: Located in the Time Warner Center in New York City, The LAB is a retail incubator that provides emerging brands with short-term retail space within

the high-traffic mall. This allows brands to gain exposure and test their products in a prime retail location.

Walmart's Store No. 8: Walmart's Store No. 8 is an innovation incubator focused on identifying and nurturing the development of cutting-edge technologies and retail concepts. It works to accelerate the growth of emerging retail technology companies.

Techstars Retail Accelerator with Target: Techstars is a well-known global startup accelerator, and their partnership with Target focused on retail innovation. Startups chosen for this program receive mentorship, funding, and access to Target's extensive network and resources.

Made in NY Fashion Incubator: This incubator, located in New York City, specifically caters to fashion-related startups. It provides resources such as workspace, mentorship, and connections to the fashion industry to support the growth of emerging fashion brands.

Chicago Fashion Incubator: Located in Chicago, this program is dedicated to nurturing emerging fashion designers. It offers resources and support to help designers develop their brands and launch their products successfully.

Philadelphia Fashion Incubator: Like the Chicago Fashion Incubator, this program provides support to emerging fashion designers in the Philadelphia area. It offers workspace, mentorship, and connections within the fashion industry.

It is recommended that in addition to contacting The Garages that either Walmart or Target be contacted to seek technical assistance if a retail incubator is the choice.

Community Kitchen

Given that there are already neighborhood residents selling food products, another approach is a community kitchen at the Evans Spring site. A community kitchen provides a common kitchen for use by people looking to gain entry to food related businesses. These types of kitchens around the United States have proved to be excellent catalysts for neighborhood entrepreneurship and overall revitalization.

There is already a wonderful local example in the Local Environmental Agricultural Project (LEAP) in Roanoke which is a functioning community kitchen (see entry in section below). LEAP could easily partner on an Evans Spring site. If a community kitchen is an approach favored by local leadership, we highly recommend engaging LEAP management.

There is another good example in the Commonwealth in the Hatch Kitchen in Richmond. That has been a successful community kitchen for several years now.

There are other community kitchens that can provide technical expertise. Here is a list of community kitchens in the Commonwealth with LEAP included.

FeedMore Community Kitchen (Richmond, VA): FeedMore is a non-profit organization in Richmond that operates a community kitchen. They prepare meals for children, seniors, and families in need while also offering culinary job training programs.

Here is a list of community kitchens in the Commonwealth of Virginia:

Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP) Kitchen (Roanoke, VA): LEAP Kitchen is a shared commercial kitchen space in Roanoke that provides resources and support for local food entrepreneurs and small-scale producers to grow their businesses.

Community Food Collaborative Kitchen (Charlottesville, VA): This community kitchen in Charlottesville is dedicated to promoting local food initiatives and offers a space for culinary entrepreneurs and community members to create and collaborate.

The Table at St. George's (Fredericksburg, VA): The Table is a community kitchen that operates within St. George's Episcopal Church. They provide free community meals and work to combat food insecurity in the Fredericksburg area.

The Culinary Arts Center at the Downtown Mall (Charlottesville, VA): This is a culinary training facility where aspiring chefs receive education and job training. It's part of the nonprofit organization, CATEC (Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center).

Bridges to Independence (Arlington, VA): While not a traditional community kitchen, Bridges to Independence is an organization in Arlington that offers transitional housing and support services to homeless families. They have a communal kitchen where residents can cook and share meals.

Community Kitchens at Whole Foods Market (Various Locations): Some Whole Foods Market locations in Virginia have community kitchens where they offer cooking classes and workshops, promoting culinary education and community engagement.

Virginia Tech Food Science and Technology Pilot Plant (Blacksburg, VA): This facility at Virginia Tech is used for research and development, but it's also open to the community for use. It's a great resource for food startups and entrepreneurs.

Virginia Peninsula Foodbank Community Kitchen (Hampton, VA): The Virginia Peninsula Foodbank operates a community kitchen that helps prepare and distribute meals to those in need and provides culinary job training.

Grace Network Community Kitchen (Winchester, VA): The Grace Network operates a community kitchen that serves meals to individuals and families facing food insecurity in the Winchester area.

A General Incubator

As mentioned previously, the most inclusive for a neighborhood entrepreneurship effort would be a generalized incubation program where residents would bring their business idea, receive training, receive access to capital, and then launch into the community.

An incubator would allow residents access to inexpensive space, technical expertise, and shared expenses. In addition, the camaraderie present at an incubator provides ongoing support for participants.

An accelerator moves participants through at a faster rate than an incubator but operates on the same general principles. Here are the generally accepted advantages of an incubator:

Job Creation: Small business incubators help create new jobs in the community, reducing unemployment and increasing local income levels. This, in turn, can lead to a higher standard of living for residents.

Entrepreneurship Support: Incubators provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the resources, mentorship, and guidance they need to start and grow their businesses. This support is especially valuable in underserved neighborhoods where access to business education and funding can be limited.

Economic Diversification: By fostering a variety of businesses, incubators contribute to economic diversification. A diverse business ecosystem can help stabilize the local economy, making it less vulnerable to economic downturns in specific industries.

Access to Funding: Incubators often offer connections to investors, grants, and other funding sources that might not be readily available in underserved neighborhoods. This increases the chances of business success.

Networking Opportunities: Entrepreneurs in an incubator can connect with one another and with established businesses. These networking opportunities can lead to collaborations, partnerships, and valuable market insights.

Infrastructure and Resources: Incubators typically provide shared office space, equipment, and administrative support, reducing startup costs. This is especially important in underserved neighborhoods where entrepreneurs may not have the capital to invest in these resources.

Mentorship and Training: Incubators often have experienced mentors and advisors who can help entrepreneurs navigate the challenges of starting and running a business. This guidance is essential for those who may be new to entrepreneurship.

Increased Success Rates: Businesses that graduate from an incubator program tend to have a higher survival rate than those that start independently. This success not only benefits the individual businesses but also contributes to the overall economic health of the neighborhood.

Community Engagement: Incubators can become hubs of community activity, drawing residents into the business development process, and encouraging them to support local businesses. This engagement can foster a sense of pride and ownership in the neighborhood.

Innovation and Creativity: Small business incubators are often hotbeds of innovation, where diverse entrepreneurs come together to exchange ideas and develop new solutions to local and broader challenges.

Reduced Risk: With the support and resources provided by incubators, the risk of business failure is reduced. This encourages more people to take the entrepreneurial leap in underserved neighborhoods.

Long-term Sustainability: Successful businesses that graduate from incubators can become anchors in the community, providing stable employment and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the neighborhood.

In summary, small business incubators offer a range of advantages that are particularly beneficial in underserved neighborhoods. They stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and provide essential support and resources that can help entrepreneurs succeed where they might otherwise face significant barriers. These advantages not only benefit individual entrepreneurs but also contribute to the overall health and vitality of the community.

There are countless small business incubators across the United States. Of course, there are incubators in the Roanoke region with a biotech incubator on the way. However, for the Evans Spring property a small-scale diverse incubator would be the most sensible approach.

Here are the skills which would be typically taught in an incubator.

Business Planning:

- Creating a solid business plan that outlines your mission, vision, goals, and strategies
- Market research and analysis to identify target markets and customer segments
- Financial planning and forecasting, including budgeting and cash flow management

Marketing and Sales:

- Marketing strategies and tactics to reach and attract customers
- Sales techniques, including lead generation and closing deals
- Branding and positioning to differentiate your business in the market

Financial Management:

- Fundraising strategies and access to investment opportunities
- Accounting and bookkeeping
- Understanding and managing financial statements

Legal and Regulatory:

- Intellectual property protection (patents, trademarks, copyrights)
- Business registration and compliance with local and national regulations
- Contracts and agreements

Product Development:

- Product design and development processes
- Prototyping and testing
- Iterative product improvement

Networking and Mentorship:

- Building a network of advisors, mentors, and potential collaborators
- Access to industry experts and experienced entrepreneurs for guidance and feedback

Team Building and Leadership:

- Recruiting and managing a team
- Leadership and management skills
- Creating a positive and productive work culture

Pitching and Presentation:

- Crafting a compelling pitch or presentation for investors, partners, and customers
- Public speaking and communication skills

Digital and Technology:

- Digital marketing and online presence
- Technology tools and platforms relevant to your industry
- Data analysis and technology adoption strategies

The Options and the Bottom Line

As noted, there are several options for the development of an Evans Spring entrepreneurship approach. All of these assume a Director, Curriculum Development, Marketing, Legal Expenses, General Organizational Expenses and Miscellaneous Expenses. All figures are based on current market conditions and rooted in examples from regional programs.

- First Year Fixed Expenses for All Approaches: \$225,000
- Ongoing Fixed Expenses Per Annum: \$125,000

- 1) A Small-Scale General Incubator in Rental Space on Site at the Evans Spring Property.** This approach is the least expensive and assumes taking space in a yet to be developed mixed-use building on the Evans Spring Property. This assumes 4,500 square feet. In addition to the fixed expenses, an additional \$75,000 annually would be required.
- 2) A Retail Incubator Rental in a First Floor.** This approach assumes a retail incubator on the first floor of a yet-to-be developed building on site. This assumes 10,000 square feet. In addition to fixed expenses, an additional \$105,000 would be required annually and an additional \$90,000 in year one.
- 3) A Community Kitchen in Rental Space at the Evans Spring Property.** This assumes a community kitchen of 7,500 square feet. In addition to fixed expense this would be an additional \$65,000 annually and additional \$125,000 in year one.
- 4) A General Small Business Incubator in a Developed Property Owned by the Incubator.** This would be prohibitively expensive and dependent upon real estate development costs.

The approach and type of incubator will be determined by local officials, neighborhood leaders and of course Evans Spring developers should development occur.

THE RECOMMENDED STEPS

It is obvious there is interest in the Evans Spring neighboring community to have an approach to development that includes entrepreneurship resulting in training and locally owned businesses.

Here are suggested steps to bringing an Evans Spring Entrepreneurship Program to fruition.

Hire a Director

As noted earlier, a Director should be engaged to manage the process of developing a full-scale neighborhood entrepreneurship program. In the absence of an independent Director, a city staff person could fill that role. It should be a full-time position.

Create a Non Profit Community Development Corporation

As previously mentioned, a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) nonprofit should be established to serve as the governing organization. This should happen even if a city staff person oversees the project.

Establish a Board of Directors

A Board of Directors is essential to the long-term success of the program. The Board should be composed of neighborhood residents, two city representatives, an elected official, several local business owners and a representative from the Small Business Development Center

Engage the Community

It is essential to engage the community, especially the neighborhood abutting the property. There should be a robust engagement effort established that includes ongoing surveys, civic association meetings, focus groups, etc. It is essential that this be seen as a neighborhood/community effort.

Choose a Theme

The type of program should be established. Based on community input, available funds, development expenses and community need the type of program should emerge. Is this a general training program, a retail incubator, a community kitchen, a small rental incubator. This will require research and engagement. It would seem at this juncture that a general training program for neighborhood residents makes the most sense. This could take place in a rental space.

Seek out Home-Based Businesses

As noted, there are several home-based businesses in the neighborhood around Evans Spring. They should be offered a place in the program but also provided amnesty from fines for their current ongoing enterprises.

Reach out to Expertise

There is tremendous expertise in the Roanoke Region. We have identified them previously. All the organizations that are engaged in entrepreneurship regionally should be sought out and, if possible, placed on an Advisory Board. There are also statewide organizations that the Small Business Development Center and the City's Economic Development Department can bring to bear. Also, the International Business Innovation Association, an organization representing incubators and similar organizations, should be brought into the process at this juncture. Their experience and expertise are unrivaled.

CONCLUSION

We have set forth a great deal of information on the development of a potential Evans Spring entrepreneurship program. There is an obvious desire for the neighborhood to be involved and to be engaged. Entrepreneurship is an important economic development and community development tool that can ensure the vitality of a neighborhood for generations.