Public Perception

• Norwich continues to be perceived as a crime area. This discourages businesses moving to the area as well as potential customers.
• Norwich requires an aggressive Public Relations campaign to counter the area’s reputation, which is no longer grounded in fact.
Recommended Areas of Focus

1. Public Perception

2. Community Coordination
Public Perception

Public Relations Campaign

• WEED AND SEED funding
• ‘FIRST SATURDAY’: play off of First Friday but geared around the service nature of the Norwich community businesses
• VOLUNTEER DAYS: school children, area churches, and general public volunteer to clean up the area- painting, cleaning windows, etc.
Public Perception

Publication of Change

- ADVERTISEMENT and word-of-mouth that Norwich is a changing community
- Increased PUBLICATION of police foot patrols, COP classes, and crime initiatives
- Public Works: demolition of dilapidated buildings, cutting grass, clearing trash
Public Perception

Crime: Perception v. Reality

• Actual stats: Publication of crime statistics are required to shift the perception of the Norwich corridor

• Foot Patrols: The increase of foot patrols has worked to decrease crime and should continue.

• Police Availability: Business and police should work together to pinpoint issue areas to best focus police efforts
Governmental Coordination

• Norwich Integrated Taskforce: involve commissioners, Norwich Business Association, Police Department, Archway, Downtown Development Authority, and other city government officials in one room, at one time, to discuss and reach consensus on the actions of the group
  — Coordination Issues
  — Need for mutual understanding of project goals
Resources for government and small businesses
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF FIELD SERVICES

Provides technical assistance and onsite services to aid local governments with the development and implementation of community and economic development projects.

*Application: project assistance for Norwich redevelopment*
REGIONAL ECONOMIC BUSINESS ASSISTANCE (REBA) PROGRAM

Works to enhance Georgia’s competitiveness in attracting significant economic development projects and as a vehicle for significant local, regional, or state-wide initiatives that will have either short or long-term economic development benefits.

Application: Fund acquisition for public infrastructure improvements on Norwich. This includes street improvements such as sidewalk and curb repairs, street repairs, street light placement along Norwich St. REBA could also be used for fund acquisition for public site development. This includes pocket park development (park benches, walkways, lighting, etc).
Focuses on economic development through downtown revitalization, heritage preservation, and restoring a sense of place through a community self-help program. Promotes the Georgia Main Street/Better Hometown program.

**Application:** The DCA ODD could assist Brunswick in the redevelopment of Norwich by providing technical assistance, particularly with regards to streetscape improvements.
CDBG LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM
is an economic and community financing tool
that can be used to finance certain large-scale economic development projects that cannot proceed without loan guarantee assistance.

Application: Norwich has many dilapidated structures that have yet to be torn down. This loan guarantee could assist the Brunswick government in procuring funds to do so.
OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Designation provides Job Tax Credits for expanding businesses, along with several additional opportunities: Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law, Georgia Enterprise Zone, State Job Tax Credit Benefit

Application: Characterizing Norwich as an urban redevelopment zone would give the City of Brunswick additional powers to revitalize the area. The Enterprise Zone designation should be assessed in more depth; if many businesses on Norwich employ 5 or more employees, this designation would serve the redevelopment interests by encouraging existing businesses to expand and new businesses to move to Norwich. The State Job Tax Credit would similarly encourage businesses to expand or move to Norwich, furthering its redevelopment.
DCA OFFICE OF REGIONAL SERVICES

Serves as the Department’s point of contact for local governments for brokering, supporting, and implementing DCA programs and services. Services provided include: community contact (technical assistance), regional advisory councils, Team Georgia/Signature Communities program collaboration, downtown development (technical assistance for Better Hometown and other DCA Downtown Development programs, Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (marketing and implementing housing opportunities and strategies), Georgia Academy for Economic Development (basic economic development and leadership training), affordable housing opportunities, leadership development and project development.

Application: The DCA Office of Regional Services can serve as a liaison between the City of Brunswick and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in order to promote and provide essential linkages for the Norwich redevelopment initiative.
STRATEGIC INDUSTRIES LOAN FUND

Provides loan assistance for the purchase of fixed assets for companies when the company is considering an expansion of their existing Georgia site or a relocation to Georgia from another state. Strategic industries include: aerospace, agribusiness, energy and environmental, healthcare, eldercare, life sciences, logistics and transportation. Additionally, businesses in advanced telecommunications, business and financial services, homeland security, multimedia and software development are potentially eligible for SILF funds.

Application: The SILF could be used to aid in the development of an eldercare facility on Norwich or for the expansion of existing healthcare services on Norwich.
GOVERNOR’S ENTREPRENEUR AND SMALL BUSINESS OFFICE (ESBO) manages the Entrepreneur and Small Business (ESB) Coordinating Network, a working team of state and federal ESB resource-providers that coordinate statewide efforts for entrepreneurs and small businesses. These efforts include advocacy, policy, entrepreneur education, access to capital and resource awareness. ESBO facilitates strategic planning for “Entrepreneur Friendly” communities, houses the Governor’s Mentor Protégé Program and partners with Georgia’s minority communities.
ENTREPRENEUR AND SMALL BUSINESS REGIONAL PROGRAM conducts the “Entrepreneur Friendly” Initiative that helps communities build an entrepreneur culture and sustainable programs through a set of methods that encourage entrepreneur and small business growth. The 10 Regional Managers also call on companies with less than 20 employees to bring resources, assist with market research, global outreach.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY OFFICE is the business development arm for innovation and technology companies, exposing them to resources and technical assistance.

Application: The Small Business and Innovation Division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development can serve as a valuable resource center for small businesses on Norwich seeking to expand or improve their services and for businesses considering a move to Norwich.
GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITIES AUTHORITY (GEFA) Assists local governments in constructing and rehabilitating water, sewer, and solid-waste facilities necessary for public purpose and for commercial, residential, and industrial development.

Application: GEFA’s Georgia Fund Program and the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund could be used by the City of Brunswick to repair and replace the sewer system in the Norwich Corridor.
U.S. Small Business Administration

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: SBA places special emphasis on improving the management ability of small business owners and managers. The Business Development program includes free individual counseling, courses, conferences, workshops, problem clinics, and a wide range of publications.

SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives): SCORE volunteers help current and prospective small business owners solve their business problems and make long range plans by providing free counseling and conducting low cost workshops and seminars.
U.S. Small Business Administration

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER(SBDC): SBDC provides free managerial and technical assistance, management training programs, research studies, and other types of specialized assistance to small businesses.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS AREA: SBA makes special efforts to help Veterans, Women, and minorities to get into business and become successful business owners and managers.

Application: The resources of SBA are useful assets for small business owners currently in Norwich or looking to open small businesses in Norwich. These resources can help provide the capital and assistance needed to create successful businesses in the Norwich district.
U.S. Small Business Administration

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC) provides assistance to small business owners and prospective small business owners. Examples of the kind of assistance provided includes: business plan development, market research, record keeping and accounting, cash flow analysis, financing alternatives and international trade. The University of Georgia system also provides specialized information and assistance to businesses on topics ranging from agriculture to industrial engineering.

Application: The SBDC could take an active role in the promotion and support of small businesses in the Norwich Corridor. The SBDC should serve as a resource center and point-of-contact for existing and prospective business owners. The role of the SBDC and the services it provides should be more publicized to ensure potential business owners in the area understand the resources available to them.
NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT PROGRAM
Permits taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs).

Application: If businesses in Norwich meet the following qualification: Under section 45D(d)(2), a qualified active low-income community business is any corporation (including a nonprofit corporation) or partnership if for such year, among other requirements, (i) at least 50 percent of the total gross income of the entity is derived from the active conduct of a qualified business within any low-income community, (ii) a substantial portion of the use of the tangible property of the entity (whether owned or leased) is within any low-income community, and (iii) a substantial portion of the services performed for the entity by its employees are performed in any low-income community, then Norwich is a candidate for investment by the CDEs listed above.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS FUND (CDFI)

Promotes economic revitalization and community development through investment in and assistance to community development financial institutions (CDFIs). CDFIs are specialized financial institutions that work in market niches that have not been adequately served by traditional financial institutions. These CDFIs provide a wide range of financial products and services, including mortgage financing for first-time home-buyers, financing for needed community facilities, commercial loans and investments to start or expand small businesses, loans to rehabilitate rental housing, and financial services needed by low-income households and local businesses. In addition, these institutions provide services that help ensure that credit is used effectively, such as technical assistance to small businesses and credit counseling to consumers. CDFIs include community development banks, credit unions, loan funds, venture capital funds, and micro enterprise loan funds, among others.

Application: The CDFI and associated programs could serve as a source of financing for the Norwich redevelopment.
Conclusions

• Greatest Challenges:
  – Public Perception
  – Community Coordination

• Steps can be taken now to address these issues
  – Public Relations Campaign
  – Publication and communication of reality (crime stats, cleaner image, etc)
  – Improved community coordination and communication through a Norwich Integrated Taskforce