



## City of Douglas

### Project Description

While Douglas’ employment has grown since 2010, it has seen less than its fair share of housing growth. This housing shortage is a deterrent to recruiting professionals to fill available jobs at large employers, and it has hindered the city’s ability to attract and retain talent and encourage entrepreneurship.

In connection with the Community Foundation of Coffee County and the City of Douglas, the interns will research best practices of other similarly sized cities who have implemented a comprehensive talent-driven economic development strategy that helped the city diversify its economy, recruit high-tech industries and advanced manufacturing, and attract, develop and retain talent.

This research and benchmarking project will also include research such as surveying young people in Douglas about housing, expected amenities, and quality of life, quantifying the available housing options for lease in Douglas, and benchmarking this housing information compared to other similarly sized cities around the southeast. Interns will review all community and economic development plans for Douglas from the last five years to determine which recommendations are still relevant and prioritize potential projects based on available funding and leadership. Ideally, the interns will also identify technology and tools that other cities use to address the challenges of diversifying employment, and growing jobs and housing simultaneously.

The interns’ project may also include working with South Georgia College and other business leaders to research successful innovation centers and entrepreneurship incubators in similarly sized communities.

### Learning Goals

Gain an understanding of the role housing options plays in developing a comprehensive economic development strategy that will help a smaller city attract and retain professionals and talent

Identify how talent analytics programs, or data-driven thinking and infrastructure, are key to business and community growth, especially in smaller cities

Develop research, benchmarking, and written and oral presentation skills

### Desired Skills

The intern should have research skills, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the ability to synthesize data. Ideal candidates should be detail-oriented, critical thinkers with a genuine interest in economic development, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and community engagement in the context of a smaller city.



## Deliverables

The interns will deliver the research findings and make a final presentation to the Community Foundation of Coffee County Board of Directors and City of Douglas leadership.

### About Douglas, Georgia

Douglas is the county seat of Coffee County, Georgia in central South Georgia with a population of approximately 11,500 people (42,000 in the county), according to the 2010 Census. As the center of commercial activity for a multi-county region in South Georgia (approx. 400,000 people), Douglas is home to diverse industries, thriving regional medical facilities, strong higher education institutions, beautiful local and state parks, and a busy and historic downtown.

Founded in 2002, the Community Foundation of Coffee County (CFCC) provides donors in Douglas a simple, and highly personal approach to giving, offers community leadership around important issues, and supports local nonprofits and students through its grantmaking and scholarship programs. CFCC is a key partner in this project and is instrumental in enhancing the quality of life in Coffee County.

