1. **Mission & Objective**

The City of Vidalia envisions The Hub and its programs to be used as a means to increase business activity, job creation and e-commerce; and to provide services that advance economic diversity, foster an entrepreneurial and innovation climate, and accelerates market engagement and competitiveness originating from the region.

Micro and small businesses will be targeted, as self-employment is ideal for diversification at the grassroots foundations of our local economy. Often, which appropriate training, small business can be adaptable and flexible in relation to changing economic markets. To fit with the physical and programming offerings of the space, start-ups and early venture firms will be technology-based and/or employ e-commerce for enhanced or traded sector activity. No credible, non-retail ventures will be turned away, however, the Advisory Council will be charged with pre-screening applicant clients for tenant-eligibility, so as best to assure a complementary, business-culture fit amongst tenant peers. Business services will be provided to clients that are members of The Hub and to non-members of The Hub in order to provide support for businesses at any growth stage.

1. **Organizational Structure**

The City of Vidalia will provide for the operation and management of The Hub and its programs. The Co-Directors of this function of the City shall be the Director of Marketing and the Director of Economic Development. An advisory committee, of which the Co-Directors shall be members, will provide guidance to the Co-Directors to deliver the services of The Hub and its programs. The Co-Directors will work with its economic development partners at the local, regional and state levels to properly deliver business services.

1. **Advisory Council**

The Advisory Council will provide board oversight for the programming and services of The Hub. Members shall include a panel of persons of appropriate experience and engagement in which to shape policy and to contribute toward both the ongoing assessment of clients and the periodic assessment of the facility’s function for the City of Vidalia.

The advisory council, appointed by the Mayor, will comprise of seven members from the community and private business plus the Co-Directors (Vidalia’s Marketing Director and Economic Development Director). Two Ex-Officio members to include Kisatchie Delta Planning & Development District Director and Central Louisiana Technical & Community College, Ferriday Campus Dean.

Members of the advisory council will serve a 4-year term except for the first terms (beginning 2017), where 2 members shall serve 5 years, 3 members shall serve 4 years and 2 members shall serve 3 years. Following the first term each member shall serve a 4-year term.

The City of Vidalia expects this council to be very interactive with the clients of The Hub; therefore, participation is key to the success of this program. The advisory council members shall participate in 80% of the council meetings and mentor meetings, or the council will recommend that the Mayor remove them from the council. Unexcused absences will be counted as non-participation. The council members are also expected to participate in trainings, in addition to counseling sessions with their mentees. Such activities will include establishment and periodic assessment of client entry and exit criteria, training and ‘maintenance’ assessments, and development or access to additional support services and tools for entrepreneurial development. Client assessments will generally be done by a panel of no less than three advisory council members.

The Co-Directors will conduct and facilitate Advisory Council activities and will maintain records on all clients that utilize the facility and its programs.

1. **Services and Programs**

OPTION 1 –

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Membership | Allowable Uses of The Hub | Required Training | Fee |
| Tier I | Flexible space  Monday – Friday  8:00 am – 6:00 pm | Entrepreneur Academy | $150.00/mo  + $25.00 Ent Ac |
| Tier II | Flexible space  24 hours a day  7 days a week | Entrepreneur Academy | $250.00 / mo  + $25.00 Ent Ac |
| Tier III | Dedicated space  24 hours a day  7 days a week | Entrepreneur Academy  Incubator Program | $500.00/mo |
| Affiliate Member | No space | Entrepreneur Academy  Incubator Program | $50/mo |
| Walk In | Flexible space  Monday – Friday  8:30 am – 4:30 pm  Max of 4 hrs / day  Max of 10 visits / year | N/A | $10.00/day |

\*\*Charges will apply for each additional individual employed by the company who will utilize the space at a rate of 50% of the fees listed. If the company wants an additional table an additional membership fee is required.

Client/Member services shall include:

* Furnished co-working office space with utilities including Internet and Power. Telephone will be provided for an additional fee.
* Use of shared conference room with multi-media capabilities
* Use of shared kitchen and lounge area
* Shared receptionist/administrative services
* Shared printers, scanners and copiers
* Shared shipping/mail room
* Support from mentors to include marketing, PR, accounting, finance, Human Resources, business planning, tax credits and other state and local incentives
* IT support from the City of Vidalia staff
* 24/7 building security
* Coffee service in the shared kitchen
* Networking events and educational workshops

Businesses will be attracted to the professional setting offered by The Hub, the presence of support systems, and the competitive edge available with the offerings of affordable rent and the latest, greatest in broadband connectivity.

All clients will be required to register with basic contact and business information and to log their attendance at the space. Clients enrolled in the Incubator program will be required to meet with their mentor per their incubation plan and report out to their mentor and advisory council on a schedule set by their incubation plan.

Partner services will supplement the incubator and entrepreneurship development services directly available at the space. Client engagement with these partners and their programs will be considered as eligible for credit when documenting the required training criteria as set by the incubation plan. Identified partners include:

* Concordia Economic & Industrial Development
* Concordia Chamber of Commerce
* Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning & Development District
* Louisiana Small Business Development Center
* Central Louisiana Community and Technical College
* Northwestern State University and/or University of Louisiana at Monroe (SBDC)
* Business Services affiliated with WIB, Area 60
* Natchez, Inc.
* Alcorn State University

Memberships will be offered in 30-day increments via an online membership program.

1. **Client Application, Selection Process, and Graduation**

The advisory council will be charged with pre-screening members for tenant and program eligibility, so as to best assure a complementary, business-culture fit amongst tenant peers.

To qualify for membership at The Hub, the applicant must:

* Provide business license
* Agree to a background check
* Hold business liability insurance policy
* Agree to enter the Entrepreneur Academy
* Agree to the terms and conditions of the facility’s user agreement

To qualify for Incubator program, the applicant must agree to the above, plus:

* Provide a business plan for review of the advisory council
* Make a formal presentation to the advisory council
* Agree to a customized incubation plan
* Work with a designated mentor per the customized incubation plan
* Provide a minimum of one progress report of business active per quarter