

# Ann Arbor SPARK Semi-Annual Report

City of Ann Arbor

July 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

**SPARK**  
@nn arbor usa

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<http://annarborusa.org/>

Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing the area as a desired place for business expansion and location... by identifying and meeting the needs of business at every stage, from those that are established to those working to successfully commercialize innovations.

# 2016 Successes - Full Year Overview

**Project Successes** **11**

BitBrew, Curo, Inc. DotSignal, Duo Security, Ithaka, iTiZZiMO Inc., NITS Solutions, NoQ, Inc., Novacoast, TD Ameritrade, Toyota Research Institute of North America

In the next year, companies in Ann Arbor plan to...



Increasing headcount and finding space continue to be areas where companies are in need of assistance. 2016 was a high growth year for Ann Arbor companies.

Projected **New Jobs** - 2016 Projects



City of Ann Arbor Investment \$\$ per Job:  
**\$90/job**

Retained Jobs - 2016 Projects

**351**



**Growth Calls**

**54**



# of full time staff at these companies:

**3,292**

**Total Investment**

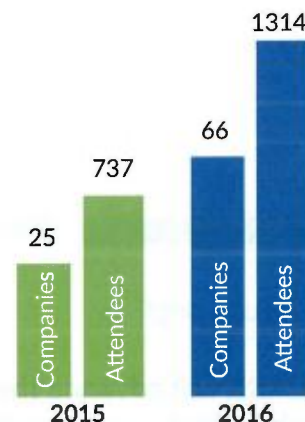
 **8.24 M**

Main sources of investment: TD Ameritrade, Duo Security

City of Ann Arbor ROI:

**\$110 / \$1**  
Private Investment / City Investment

**A2 TechTrek - Continued Success**



Attendees nearly doubled - participating companies nearly tripled - anticipating further growth in 2017

# Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development Mission

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Maximize **job creation** and **capital investment** by **growing** the region's GDP through the **retention** and **expansion** of established driving industry companies that sell goods and services outside the Ann Arbor region, and through the **targeted attraction** domestically and internationally of similar companies that could succeed in our region.

# Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development Metrics in the City of Ann Arbor

COMPANIES ASSISTED	Q3-Q4 2016	Q1-Q2 2016
Number of retention visits	16	35
Number of attraction prospect site visits <sup>1</sup>	4	8
Number of responses to attraction prospect or site consultant requests for proposals <sup>2</sup>	6	12
<b>JOBS - 2016 PROJECTS</b> (see page 7 for more information)		
Projected to be created (over the next 3 years) <sup>3</sup>	33	445
Actual jobs created (in the first 6 months)	19	18
Jobs projected to be retained	1	350
Actual jobs retained	1	350
<b>INVESTMENT</b>		
Taxable value of new private investment	\$0	\$4,117,500
Total value of private investment	\$0	\$8,235,000
City of Ann Arbor Support		(2016 total) \$75,000
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>		
Number and value of investments leveraged through and including federal and state grants and incentives, foundations and other sources that assisted businesses or organizations	None this period	Two State of Michigan incentives totaling up to \$3,000,000
Number of facilitations, advocacy initiatives, and communication efforts by SPARK to address economic development needs and concerns	See Appendix	-
Number of start-up businesses assisted (exclusive of LDFA) <sup>4</sup>	0	-

<sup>1</sup>Number of discreet projects that were physically toured around sites in the City of Ann Arbor.

<sup>2</sup>Number of requests to which SPARK electronically submitted properties located in the City of Ann Arbor.

<sup>3</sup>These jobs are projected to be added over the next three years, we will update the numbers as we interact with the companies and determine progress.

<sup>4</sup>All businesses that are start-ups in the region are assisted by the Business Accelerator division of Ann Arbor SPARK, funded through the LDFA.

# Companies assisted during this semi-annual contract period

July 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

SPARK acts as project manager for both Ann Arbor and the companies it serves. Our project management efforts can be fairly simple, such as conducting data analysis that a company may use in its business planning, or as complex as full project management for significant company expansions. This would include everything from:

- Connecting them to proper resources
- Working with the site selection community to help determine a location for a project
- Fully managing the tax incentive paperwork and the process it may require
- Creating communication plans
- Traveling to company locations outside of the state
- Making presentations to key public and private decision makers
- Talent recruitment efforts

When companies apply for Local or State incentives they fill out applications that require both job creation and investment estimates. SPARK considers these projects a success after it is publicly announced, or when the proper approval process has taken place for the incentive sought by the company. SPARK's jobs and investments numbers are based on these project announcements provided by the companies. SPARK monitors actual job creation and those results are shown in this report.

SPARK supports a company directly or it supports the consultants the company utilizes during its expansion. Whatever role SPARK might play, we capture jobs and investments for projects that we have played an active role in helping a company make a decision to move forward.

**SPARK celebrates all projects that may have an impact on our region. We do not count jobs and investments where SPARK was not directly involved.**

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Jobs (2016-2018)	Actual new jobs (created since beginning of project)	Projected retained jobs	Actual retained jobs as of 12/31/16	Current FTE (As of last contact)
7113*	5	5	NA	NA	5
7783*	8	8	NA	NA	8
7862	14	4	1	1	5
8037*	4	1	NA	NA	1
8047*	2	1	NA	NA	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>

\*Attraction project, company new to the area.

# Companies assisted during previous contract periods

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2016

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Jobs (2016-2018)	Actual new jobs (created since beginning of project)	Projected retained jobs	Actual retained jobs as of 12/31/16	Current FTE (As of last contact)
0513**	NA	15	60	60	75
0704**	NA	0	175	175	175
0794	20	40	180	180	220
0993	50	0	60	60	60
1717	9	5	10	10	15
1838	50	15	0	0	15
3279	1	1	12	12	13
4506	25	30	20	20	50
4507	297	0	154	154	154
5091	5	-11	11	0	0
5510*	35	42	0	0	42
6289	80	33	45	45	78
6523	8	8	2	2	10
6926	75	67	51	51	118
7098	5	18	13	13	31
7152*	85	15	NA	NA	15
7162	1	1	1	1	2
7184*	12	8	NA	NA	8
7341*	2	2	NA	NA	2
7448*	6	6	NA	NA	6
7511*	6	6	NA	NA	6
7612*	7	8	NA	NA	8
7656*	1	3	NA	NA	3
7662*	1	1	NA	NA	1
7687*	2	2	NA	NA	2
7728*	1	4	NA	NA	4
7748*	1	1	NA	NA	1
7869*	20	0	145	145	145
<b>Total</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>1259</b>

\*Attraction project, company new to the area. \*\*Retention project, company considering leaving the area.

# Ann Arbor SPARK Metrics – Investment

July 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

Investments are recorded based on publicly available information of capital expenditures on real property, leasehold improvements, and furniture and fixtures. Companies may make additional capital investments that we are **not aware of**, or they may use alternative methods such as leasing equipment to acquire assets for growth opportunities. Recent changes to property tax law that allow for personal property exemptions make it less likely that a company would record all investment dollars at the time of an expansion or attraction project.

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Investment	Taxable Value	Incentives
7113	\$0	\$0	NA
7862	\$0	\$0	NA
7783	\$0	\$0	NA
8037	\$0	\$0	NA
8047	\$0	\$0	NA
Total	\$0	\$0	NA

The growth projects during this time period were based on growth or attraction projects that involved leases, leasehold improvements, and/or the installation of personal property like computers, furniture, etc. This information is **not** captured in a standard format. These projects did, however, involve the creation of **33** new jobs in the City of Ann Arbor.

## Status of the Economic Health Advisory Group

An element of the City of Ann Arbor's recent contracts is the tasking of SPARK with the convening of a joint city-county committee of elected and appointed officials that would focus on evaluating the economic health of the city, surrounding communities in Washtenaw County and of the county as whole. The remit of the committee would be to identify opportunities to grow the local and regional economy in ways that support the economic health of the units of government and their ability to provide high quality services and capital improvements. No activity has occurred on this topic in the past six months due to changes in the elected and appointed leadership at both the city and county level. SPARK will work with City Manager Lazarus in Q1-Q2 of 2017 to determine next steps in regard to this activity.

## Ann Arbor SPARK growth visit program

**Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development team identifies companies for our growth program based on the following criteria:**

**“** You might be my favorite person right now - I'll be applying for awards like crazy and attending as many meet ups as possible. This is all so helpful for our company and I appreciate all of your help. Can't wait to build these connections!”

- Growth visit client

1. Large Employers
2. Previous Investments
3. All firms from the previous year growth program with indicators of rapid growth (hiring, increased sales)
4. Firms with large infusion of capital or grant funding in the previous two years
5. Companies that were sold, or that are new to Ann Arbor
6. Companies that are having difficulty finding employees
7. Business Accelerator companies that have achieved sales or staff levels that graduate them to Business Development companies

# 16

Between July and December 2016, SPARK held growth visits with 16 companies in the City of Ann Arbor.

### Economic Indicators from Growth Visits 1/1/2016 -12/31/2016

- 63% of visited companies are projecting they will increase headcount
- 30% of visited companies indicate they will invest new capital beyond maintenance
- 61% of visited companies project new sales growth in the next year
- 24% of visited companies are planning to launch a new product or technology in the next year
- 28% of visited companies have difficulty finding new employees



## Growth visit highlights

SPARK held retention visits with 16 companies from July-December 2016. These companies ranged from 4 to 700 employees and encompassed the following industries: Information Technology, Business Services, Education, Defense, Aerospace, Automotive, and Manufacturing.

Company Name	Current FTE (as of retention visit)
Aveopt, Inc.	4
Barracuda Networks, Inc.	270
Duo Security	154
Eberbach Labtools	17
Google AdWords	400
IndustryStar Solutions LLC	9
ISciences L.L.C	13
Lakeside Software R&D	14
LLamasoft	220
Local Orbit, Inc.	9
Merit Networks	100
Quack Media	8
SimuQuest, Inc.	7
Torrent Consulting, LLC	12
Workforce Software - Ann Arbor	17
Zingerman's Family of Businesses	700
<b>Total FTE of all visited companies</b>	<b>1,954</b>

### 1. Google

Google is an important part of Ann Arbor's tech ecosystem and a growing part of the business community, especially with their new facility near Plymouth Road. Our retention call program allows us to connect with their operations, understand Google's strategic direction for Ann Arbor and Michigan, and work to showcase their facility to site consultants and others outside of the region as a demonstration of how great Ann Arbor is to build a business.

### 2. Eberbach Labtools

Located in Ann Arbor since the 1970s, Eberbach is looking to build a new facility. SPARK is actively working with the company to identify options. Company is also interested in finding out more information on export assistance and workforce development programs.

### 3. Torrent Consulting

Torrent Consulting is a fast growth tech company with offices in Ann Arbor, Charlotte (North Carolina), and other areas around the country. They were ranked #164 on the Inc. 5,000 list of the fastest growing companies in the country. Growing significantly in Ann Arbor, they're looking for ways to further connect with the community and Michigan overall. As a result of our retention call program, they have connected with resources at the University of Michigan & EMU, were an active part of A2 Tech Trek, connected with new business partners and are looking at additional paths to grow in Ann Arbor.

## Ann Arbor SPARK Attraction prospect activity

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**When SPARK is contacted by the MEDC, consultants, individual firms, external referrals, and/or site selectors regarding attraction prospects and possible location requests we...**

- Respond with local area information: Demographics, industry sector information, university graduates, other useful information;
- Respond to site requests by searching for buildings, space, and vacant land based on site requirement, using site databases, broker blasts, and our knowledge of local real estate;
- Set up site visits with listing brokers and accompany company representatives on the site tour;
- Make introductions to local municipality officials to discuss the project and possible tax abatement;
- Work closely with MEDC on state incentives;
- Connect the attraction prospect with university, banks, attorneys, and other contacts to assist with integration into the business community.

**Between July 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016, SPARK responded to 8 attraction prospect requests and facilitated 4 attraction prospect site visits in the City of Ann Arbor.**

### Highlights

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**Corporate Innovation Centers:** The second half of 2016 involved a number of attraction prospects from larger businesses that are considering Ann Arbor for innovation centers. These centers are unique in many ways, but generally have similar qualities – namely that they want to tap into Ann Arbor’s tech community and leverage the City as a place to help them recruit students and higher level talent to their organizations. We anticipate that some of these businesses will land in Ann Arbor and will help drive the City as a place where businesses can innovate and tap into our talent population.

# Ann Arbor SPARK Attraction prospect activity - continued

**Commercial Real Estate:** SPARK works to communicate effectively about the double-edged sword of downtown vacancy rates. Depending on the origin of an attraction company, the price of real estate can elicit polar opposite reactions. Downtown Ann Arbor is often attractive to a certain type of company, but not to all. We work diligently to learn as much as we can about the company's needs to communicate each site effectively. As part of this effort, we published a blog post (excerpted below) outlining the 2016 Swisher Vacancy Report:

## The Swisher Vacancy Report 2016 - 5 Takeaways:

- Overall, demand for office lease is growing (up 10% from 2015).
- Downtown vacancy rates are still very low, but have held steady at 2.1%, while the North Office Area's vacancy rate is decreasing.
- The change in vacancy rates (increase or decrease) in South Office, South Flex, and West Office Areas are mostly due to one or two large buildings either becoming vacant or being sold/leased. The majority of space in these areas remains stable. The change in % can therefore be deceiving.
- Prices per square foot are not included in the Swisher report, but vary widely across all sections of the city; not everything is as expensive as downtown.
- The picture painted by the report is one of a healthy commercial real estate market in Ann Arbor, indicating a vital, growing economy.

## What are the most common reasons for a company to decide **not** to locate in Ann Arbor?



Price point of real estate too high relative to where they're coming from



Found more suitable space somewhere else (either in MI or wider U.S.)



Project on hold - no response from company



Can't find the right talent (usually C level)

# The American Center for Mobility

## Willow Run's Connected and Automated Vehicle Center Overview

In January 2016, Governor Snyder announced the State of Michigan's intention to assist in the development of the former General Motors facility at Willow Run into the nation's connected and automated vehicle center. The Governor's announcement builds on years of involvement by Ann Arbor SPARK, Ypsilanti Township, elected officials, the University of Michigan, and numerous other partners to bring this project to the site.

Below are some of the activities and efforts related to this project, beginning in 2013. Note that this project is a key strategic project for the organization and this list cannot capture all of the activity and work that has been conducted over the past several months.

### Key Timeline Activities:

- In 2013, Ann Arbor SPARK released "Ahead by a Century: The Future of Automotive Technology" outlining how the Willow Run site could be utilized as a connected and automated vehicle testing center.
- In February 2015, TASS International completed "The Willow-Run Automated and Connected Car Test Site: A Technical and Business Assessment," which outlined the site plan and key elements of Willow Run as a test center.
- In March 2015, SPARK staff began a series of meetings with key officials at the federal and legislative levels, briefing them on the importance of the project to the region, and to the state. Meetings included: Regular calls and meetings with the Michigan Congressional Delegation, including Representative Dingell, Senator Peters, and Senator Stabenow, as well as other members of the Michigan delegation. Briefings in Washington, DC with officials from the Department of Energy, Department of Transportation, Department of Commerce and the White House. Briefings with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Transportation, University of Michigan, Ypsilanti Township and other community partners.
- In the spring of 2015, Ann Arbor SPARK, TASS International and Walbridge conducted a focus group to refine industry preferences for the site, and further refine industry's interest in the site. In addition, direct outreach to industry partners and groups was ongoing to discern the level of interest in the site.
- In May 2015, Ann Arbor SPARK and Walbridge were awarded a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to conduct a feasibility study for the former manufacturing site to serve as a national center for connected and automated vehicle (CAV) research, testing, product development, validation and certification facility.
- In June 2015, a working group was designated to continue work on the study, including the Center for Automotive Research, the Detroit Regional Chamber, Business Leaders for Michigan, MEDC, MDOT, Walbridge, the University of Michigan. The working group met several times over the course of 2015 to provide direction, develop materials and work on next steps for the site.

- In the fall of 2015, continued outreach to stakeholders in Washington, DC and at the state level continued, as well as further development of the site plan and operating model.
- In the winter of 2015, work began to organize a non-profit entity that would operate the American Center for Mobility, as well as begin the due diligence process for development of the site, which is currently owned by RACER Trust. In addition, outreach to industry partners continued.
- In January 2016, Governor Snyder announced the State's intention to develop the site in his State of the State address. The American Center for Mobility was officially launched in January of 2016, ACM is a joint initiative among the State of Michigan – including the Michigan Department of Transportation and MEDC, the University of Michigan, Business Leaders for Michigan and Ann Arbor SPARK. The board of directors includes representatives from the university, BLM, SPARK, which initiated the project and will play a key role in economic development tied to the center. Automotive industry and community advisory boards will also be established. CEO Paul Krutko serves as Treasurer of ACM and Ann ARBOR SPARK provides back of the house administrative and managerial support to ACM.
- On July 26, 2016 the Michigan Strategic Fund approved a \$17 million investment for the finalization of the acquisition of land at Willow Run, operations, and to facilitate the design and construction of phase one of a state-of-the-art global center for research, development and testing for automated vehicles.
- On November 21, 2016 Gov. Rick Snyder joined state officials and automotive technology leaders to celebrate the official groundbreaking of the American Center for Mobility at Willow Run in Ypsilanti Township. Earlier in November, Willow Run Arsenal of Democracy (WRAD) Landholdings Limited Partnership completed the purchase of the property from RACER Properties LLC, which paved the way for construction of the new facility. The property at Willow Run was acquired from Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response (RACER) Trust following a \$1.2 million purchase agreement that was reached in July with WRAD, which will then lease the property to the American Center for Mobility.
- In the winter of 2016, the American Center for Mobility reached an agreement with AT&T as an exclusive cellular network provider until 2020 - teaming up with the Center, car companies and tech start-ups to test automated and connected vehicles. AT&T will also provide network service to allow the cars to talk to infrastructure, pedestrians and also to another car. The current partnership will now essentially provide the center with a lot more data.
- Also in the winter of 2016, ACM competed with dozens of sites around the U.S. to receive federal designation, announced in January of 2017: **"American Center for Mobility designated by US Department of Transportation as national automated vehicle proving ground"**. The solicitation of proposals for the designation of the Automated Vehicle Proving Grounds Pilot program was announced in late November by the USDOT and 10 facilities were selected. More than 60 organizations applied to receive the designation.



<http://www.acmwillowrun.org/>

Work continues on the project, which involves continued engagement with numerous stakeholders, including the federal government, industry and other partners.

## Press releases - City of Ann Arbor - 2016

**SPARK and Amy Cell Team Up to Address Region's High Tech Talent Needs:** Ann Arbor SPARK and Amy Cell, LLC have teamed up to address the opportunity to create a more robust, sustainable high tech talent pipeline in the Ann Arbor region. Its four service levels include customized programs, consultations with Amy Cell, LLC, targeted job programs, and a variety of training options to support new hires. The collaboration between Ann Arbor SPARK and Amy Cell, LLC also includes the innovative Software Talent Attraction and Retention (STAR) program. STAR includes an internship and mentoring program, placement of recent graduates, and connecting employers to available, experienced talent.

**Duo Security, Inc. expanding in Ann Arbor, adding jobs:** Duo Security, with locations in Michigan, California, London, and Austin, plans to expand its existing operations in Ann Arbor, growing its team of sales, engineering, security and product development professionals. Duo Security established its Ann Arbor technology facility in 2009. Citing the flourishing technology environment, attractive business climate, and highly qualified talent pool, the company chose to invest in its Ann Arbor headquarter operations over competing sites in technology heavy-hitters like Silicon Valley. The project is expected to generate nearly \$2.5 million in total investment and support the creation of up to 300 direct Michigan jobs over the next three years. Michigan Strategic Fund approved a \$2.5 million Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. Ann Arbor SPARK provided direct support to Duo in working with the state on its application for incentives. Going forward, SPARK will assist with talent recruitment and attraction.

**TD Ameritrade to invest \$5.75 million, create 75 jobs in Ann Arbor:** ThinkTech, Inc., a technology subsidiary of TD Ameritrade Holding Corporation is expanding in Ann Arbor with support from the Michigan Strategic Fund and Ann Arbor SPARK. The project will generate a total capital investment of \$5.75 million and create 75 new jobs.

**LawnGuru Closes \$1 Million Seed Round, Moves to Ann Arbor:** LawnGuru, the on-demand marketplace for lawn mowing and snow removal services, today announced that it closed a \$1 million seed funding round, led by Sierra Wasatch Capital. Other participants included Canyon Creek Capital, Briggs and Stratton and Sequoia Capital's scout program. LawnGuru will use the investment to support its national growth and expansion while continuing the research and development of the company's technology. Ann Arbor SPARK assisted LawnGuru with local talent, internship opportunities, and helping to build its presence in the Ann Arbor and Detroit tech community. Going forward, we'll continue to provide support for LawnGuru's talent and business development needs. In addition to closing its seed round, LawnGuru has grown its revenue by over 1100 percent since 2015. In April it moved headquarters to a new office in downtown Ann Arbor.

**Australia-based Curo Technologies Launches U.S. Operations from Ann Arbor SPARK Central Innovation Center:** Curo Technologies, a health tech startup company, recently opened its first operations outside of Australia at the SPARK Central Innovation Center. Located on the business accelerator's fourth floor, Curo made the strategic decision to build its U.S. team from Ann Arbor, where it will hire software developers as well as a business development support team. Curo is the second international company to use the SPARK Central Innovation Center as a location for a 'soft landing' in the U.S. Curo plans to add six to eight to its team in Ann Arbor. The company will also begin aggressive sales activities to health care providers throughout the U.S.

# Appendix

## Facilitations, advocacy initiatives, and communication efforts by SPARK to address economic development needs and concerns

- Ann Arbor SPARK leads the Greater Ann Arbor Region initiative, a six county economic development effort that is focused on regional opportunities and leveraging our region's combined assets to pitch opportunities for national and international projects. These efforts include specific marketing materials and social media channels. Our efforts have resulted in the region's ability to respond to new project opportunities.
- Ann Arbor SPARK partnered with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and Pure Michigan Business Connect (PMBC) as well as our economic development partners in the greater six-county Ann Arbor region, to host a "match making summit" to connect suppliers from across the State of Michigan (with a focus on the Greater Ann Arbor Region) to our leading companies in the Greater Ann Arbor Region. In total, over 50 companies participated in the event and where connected to University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Zingerman's and Washtenaw Community College. The initiative is designed to connect Ann Arbor companies with opportunities to help them grow and expand. <http://annarborusa.org/PMBC>
- Fam Tour: The Greater Ann Arbor Region hosted a Familiarization Tour (Fam Tour) for site selectors in Michigan's Prosperity Region 9 September 15-17, 2016. Site selectors are professionals that work with businesses on new location decisions. They produce roughly 30% of the leads for companies that are interested in relocating to or expanding in our region. The 3 day event was like a series of conference events, stakeholder meetings and community tours wrapped into one big event. Site Selectors came from Dallas, Texas; Atlanta, GA; Greenville, South Carolina; Cleveland, Ohio and Metropolitan Detroit. Over 60 different organizations representing the Greater Ann Arbor Region participated in the event. Partnering organizations included area universities, utility companies, business leaders, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Ann Arbor Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), as well as the 6 economic development organizations representing the 6 county Greater Ann Arbor Region. Highlights of the event included a tour of Google AdWords headquarters in Ann Arbor as well as a lively discussion on the future of autonomous and connected vehicles as part of a tour of Mcity and overview of the American Center for Mobility. Site selectors connected with business leaders to share best practices and challenges regarding locating a business in Michigan. The success of the event will be measured by increased interaction between site selectors and economic development partners and the number of new projects that site selectors bring to the Greater Ann Arbor region in the form of jobs and investment.
- Ann Arbor SPARK hosted international delegations from France, Pakistan, and Belarus at SPARK Central in the second quarter of 2016. The delegation from France was made up of French companies in the connected car and mobility industries, and the Belarusian and Pakistani delegations primarily consisted of young entrepreneurs. Each group received a tailored presentation on "Why Ann Arbor?" advocating the advantages of the region for international business expansion. As a result of their visit to Washtenaw County, Navya (a French mobility company) decided to test their autonomous bus at Mcity, and may consider business expansion into Michigan.







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