



2012-2014 Strategic Plan

Mission

To serve as the unified voice of business, to promote the economic prosperity of the region and to build partnerships and leadership that improves the quality of life while delivering superior member services.

Vision

The Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce will provide the leadership necessary to leverage community resources and build partnerships that are focused on positive community growth.

Organizational Priority

Strengthen our ability to marshal the resources necessary to achieve positive community growth by focusing on three core areas: economic development, leadership development, and community development. Core area success achieved through proactive and deliberate member service delivery.

Values

In executing our mission, we will adhere to and respect the following values:

- We will be **accountable** to all stakeholders yet remain free to **experiment / innovate**
- We will have **integrity** in all that we do and **diplomatic** in our candor
- We will demonstrate **leadership** – strong, respected, and forward-thinking
- We will work for **quality growth** yet **preserve** what we hold dear
- We will **humbly** serve our team and our members **confident** in our abilities
- We will strengthen our **relationships** while completing our assigned **tasks**
- We will work to strengthen the **team** and our **individual** associates equally
- We will **walk the talk** and **talk the walk**
- We will ensure Member **VALUE** exceeds Member **INVESTMENT**
- **We will be fiscally responsible and deliver**
- We will ensure **fulfillment and enjoyment** (fun) in all chamber activities
- We will remain **relevant** through initiating **change**
- We will embrace **collaborative relationships**, respecting and encouraging broad participation in community endeavors

Critical Goals

I. Enhance Economic Development Success of Community

Initiative Champions: Brian Anderson, Elyse Cochran, Alex Stall, Andrew Carnes, Barbara Ward

Accelerate job creation and economic growth by providing/promoting assistance resources to existing and new business prospects. Overall job creation goal: 500

- Manufacturing Recruitment
- Community Marketing to Targeted Industries – State/ National/Global
- Countywide Development Team Coordinator – First responder to all new businesses to provide seamless approach to “One-Stop” Shop
- Continue Implementation of Existing Industry Outreach/Troubleshooting/Assistance with Expansions
- Develop Existing Industry Appreciation Event
- Create Small Business/Entrepreneurial Assistance Resource Center
- Retail Development and Recruitment
- Appoint Market Street Renovations Coordinator
- Develop Connector 3 Redevelopment Plan
- Utilization of Tax Allocation Districts for retail development and multi-family and mid-tier housing development

Work with industry and education leaders to create a sustainable and globally competitive workforce

- Link K-12 Education Programs to emerging workforce and educators to existing businesses
 - Promote “positives” about public schools within Greater Dalton Community
 - Provide career experiences for late elementary / early middle school grades to instill awareness of the need for post-secondary training
- Support Higher Education – Dalton State College and Georgia NW Technical College
 - Coordinate/support GNWT College and Career Expo for four high schools
- Research / Perform competitiveness analysis of education rankings, education attainment of existing workforce, utilizing both public and private data to establish a baseline for measuring performance
- Link K-12 education programs to the future needs of existing businesses
 - Develop / Implement Camp DEM (Design, Engineering and Manufacturing) for middle school aged students
 - In collaboration with the Archway Partnership, Whitfield County Schools, Dalton Public Schools, and the business community

- launch a new community wide literacy initiative with the goal of having every child on reading grade level by the third grade.
 - Research / collaborate with the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, both school districts, and the business community to implement the “Leader in Me” initiative
- Work with post-secondary education entities, the Georgia Dept. of Labor, and the Workforce Investment Board to secure short-term gap training to transition existing / dislocated workers into high-skilled and high-demand employment

Community marketing, public relations and promotions related to new job growth

- Maintain / enhance website and social media programs
- Complete inaugural economic development marketing magazine with online version
- Maintain monthly communications to economic developer stakeholders
- Maintain statewide/national marketing initiatives
 - Print
 - Electronic
- Provide written columns to local, regional and state publications regarding economic development in Whitfield County, best practices, etc.

Accountability/Performance to Economic Development Stakeholders

- Provide electronic and face-to-face economic development updates to board, elected officials, Grow Greater Dalton investors and other economic development stakeholders as needed
- Conduct Quarterly GGD Investor Council Meetings
 - Provide GGD mid-year and annual written reports
- Conduct ROI Analysis on E.D. job creation outcomes, to include specifically GGD benchmarks
- Produce JDA Annual Report
- Present results to elected officials

Economic Development Competitiveness

- Apply for Opportunity Zones and Redevelopment Powers
- Incorporate Local Impact Project Analysis of Major Projects (LOCI – Georgia Tech Software)
- Seek Freeport Exemption within City of Dalton
- Conduct Intercity Visits – Chattanooga, TN and Cleveland, TN

Economic Development Sustainability

- Launch Grow Greater Dalton 2.0 (Resource Development Campaign)
- Maintain ongoing communications with public / private sector funding sources throughout 2012

II. Improve the Quality of Life of Community

Initiative Champions: Brian Anderson, Phyllis Stephens, Alex Stall, Barbara Ward

Support Community Visioning Process

- The Archway Partnership, a program of the University of Georgia, launched a new community wide literacy initiative with the goal of having every child on reading grade level by the third grade. This initiative is being supported by the local governments, the school districts, higher education, and many others. Support county/municipal planning and community betterment initiatives
- Facilitate and incubate organization of Young Professionals Group
- Develop / Implement Readers 2 Leaders, a new literacy initiative
- Archway is focusing on three main community priorities: education, economy and the environment
 - Education
 - Advocate for Dalton State College to be a premier, four-year higher education institution;
 - Advocate for Georgia NW Technical College to be a model environment for technical education and learning;
 - Facilitate community engagement and understanding across the birth to work continuum
 - Create a culture of life-long learning
 - Economy
 - Create Successful, sustainable industries;
 - Create a diverse, forward thinking economy
 - Become a hub for knowledge-based innovation.
 - Environment
 - Create a vibrant downtown that provides entertainment and shopping options for all ages
 - Develop a progressive transportation infrastructure that meets the economic and personal needs of residents
 - Advocate for expanded greenways, parks, and trails
 - Develop transformational arts and cultural opportunities
 - Develop a plan for Market Street Shops to become an inviting interstate destination

Facilitate / Participate in Regional Collaboration Initiative

- Participate in Thrive 2055 fifteen county regional growth initiative
- Serve as member of the Coordinating Committee in developing the process, the governance structure, and the selection of a leading consultant
- Nominate / recruit additional representatives from the northwest Georgia counties to serve

Be the Voice of Business at all levels of Government

- Develop an annual pro-business Legislative Agenda
- Position the Chamber to be identified with issues, not political parties or candidates. Position Chamber as the non-partisan pro-business advocate
- Utilize Legislative Action Committee, Annual Dalton Day at the Capitol, and continuous communication of legislative priorities throughout the Georgia legislative session
- Collaborate with the Carpet and Rug Institute and GACCE for Washington Fly-ins to communicate federal legislative priorities
- Facilitate key conversations with all four taxing authorities at the local level enabling better unity and collaboration on key community issues

Develop / Implement Community Leadership Development

- Equip leaders to become involved in addressing and solving economic, governmental, community, and cultural issues
- Conduct the Leadership Dalton-Whitfield Program annually targeting 35-40 community leaders
- Conduct Emerging Leaders program annually targeting 25-30 Young Professionals
- Increase diverse membership for all leadership programs
- Coordinate the efforts of Leadership Dalton-Whitfield Alumni

III. Enhance the Success of our Member Businesses

Initiative Champions: Brian Anderson, Beth Morrison

Enhance Member Success by providing targeted products, services, events, and programs

- Develop / conduct Good Morning Dalton series
- Develop / conduct Wake-up Whitfield sessions
- Conduct monthly Business After and Business Before Hours
- Conduct Annual Business Expo
- Conduct Annual Chamber Golf Classic
- Recognize the Business of the Week through social media
- Continue to develop the Ambassador Relations program
- Conduct monthly Chamber Connections as a networking opportunity to members

Create / Expand programs / services that save members money / increase business knowledge

- Offer convenient / low cost business education classes
- Offer International travel opportunities
- Offer the Drugs Don't Work Program
- Continue partnering / offering members new affinity programs that fit member needs
- Be the "Go To" source for social media

IV. Build Organizational Capability and Capacity

Initiative Champions: Brian Anderson, Phyllis Stephens, Judy Sawyer, Beth Morrison

Align staff / resources with organizational Priorities

- Insure Chamber staff is aligned with economic development efforts, leadership development efforts, member / marketing services, and community development efforts
- Research bringing all advertising sales in-house
 - Analyze all Medium
 - Conduct income opportunities
 - Hire appropriate staff to execute
- Reconsider adding full-time, commission-based sales account executive for new member sales and retention efforts
- Continue Chamber Intern program allowing for workplace experience and talent identification

Elevate Chamber's Image through new branding

- Continue utilization of new branding in multiple mediums
- Seek feedback from members on branding effectiveness
- Continually seek new advertising / marketing opportunities that are cutting edge yet affordable
- Launch new website with new branding and continuously add / update content

Elevate Chamber's Image through new location in renovated historical facility in downtown location

- Work with the City of Dalton in trading properties and renovating office space in the downtown business district
- Design office space needed in selected property to maximize organizational effectiveness and insure adequate space for mission
- Build into office design updated technology
- Enhance organizational image through combined new office location and new branding

Enhance Financial Sustainability

- Grow membership base targeting member businesses of all sizes in number of members and investment levels
 - New member 2014 Target = 1150 (+10%)
 - New member Investment 2014 Target = \$410,000 (+17%)
- Continue to add and grow non-dues revenue programs
 - Grow number and investment dollars of Chamber Champions / Sponsors
 - 2014 Target = \$50,000 (+16%)
 - International Travel Program
 - Provide for two trips annually
 - Increase non-dues revenue to 40% of annual revenue
- Increase market penetration from 30.9% to 35% by 2014
- Improve member retention from 80% to 85%
 - Develop a stronger / more active retention plan
- Maintain financial contribution from Grow Greater Dalton by executing GGD 2.0 and contracting for economic development funding through 2014
- Align employee compensation and benefits with those provided by member companies and in relation to peer Chambers
- Research and plan to implement a Tiered Investment Program by 2014

Utilize technology to enhance Chamber's ability to nimbly and efficiently serve our members

- Identify technology needs / enhancements
- Ensure training for new technology available as needed
- Insure needs are incorporated into annual budget

Ensure Continuity of Operations

- Review / Update Emergency Operations Plan annually

Maintain Five-Star Status from US Chamber

- Reapply for re-accreditation in 2012
- Review recommendations from US Chamber annually until all are complete in order to reapply in 2017