



# 2017-2021 Strategic Plan

## Mission

*The Chamber will serve our members by being a catalyst for economic growth, workforce and leadership development, and quality of life improvements in our community.*

## Vision

*Greater Dalton will be the first choice to live, work, play, and do business.*

## Organizational Priority

*The Chamber will lead positive community growth.*

## 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 be **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 ensure Member **VALUE** exceeds Member **INVESTMENT**
- **We will be fiscally responsible**
- We will ensure **fulfillment and enjoyment** (fun) in all chamber activities
- We will remain **relevant** through initiating **change to support the mission, vision and organizational priority.**
- We will embrace **collaborative relationships**, respecting and encouraging broad participation in community endeavors

# 2017-2018 Business Plan

October 1, 2017 to  
September 30, 2018

## 2017-2018 Goals and Objectives

### **Economic Development**

Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy by growing and retaining our existing businesses and recruiting new industry into the Greater Dalton area.

- Partner with the JDA and other entities to complete job and investment goals for 2018
- Partner with JDA to resume proactive external marketing of Dalton and Whitfield County amongst site selectors and other industry professionals

### **Education Partnership & Workforce Development**

Create an Education Partnership to align Greater Dalton's talent pipeline. Provide an educated and skilled employee-base for business and industry. Provide partnership opportunities for our residents to re-engage and receive training in high-demand jobs with competitive salaries and benefits through an innovative approach to workforce development.

- Establish an Education Partnership "backbone" entity modeled on a proven collective impact model by bringing together education and training partners, businesses, non-profits, and service providers as outlined in Believe Greater Dalton
- Partner with business and industry and educational institutions to insure educational and training opportunities are relevant and high quality
- 160 students participate in Camp DEM at no expense to campers
- 100 students complete a three day job shadow through the Explore Experience program
- Assist with marketing for the Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy Advanced Manufacturing and Business Academy
- Increase the number of Apprentices to 30
- Increase the number of businesses participating with Great Promise Partnership to 4 and the number of students participating to 40
- Work with the business community, Whitfield County Schools, Georgia Northwestern Technical College, and other partners to articulate engineering curriculum on the Georgia Northwestern Technical College campus

- Work with Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy, Georgia Northwestern Technical College, and Dalton State College to encourage collaboration for Early Childhood Education Programs
- Assist with grant writing as AIS and Northwest Georgia Regional Commission secure
  - Funds for STEM Coaches for area middle and high schools
  - Funds for Advanced Manufacturing Lab equipment and Diesel Trainers for Advanced Manufacturing and Business Academy

## Community & Leadership Development

Serve as the “voice of business” at all levels of government and work with regional partners to promote regional growth. Develop leaders to channel their ideas and experiences toward community resources to help direct the future of Greater Dalton.

- Advocate and support the business community by serving as the “voice of business”
- Assess the relevance and structure of our community leadership development programs and make adjustments as necessary to increase relevance and instill a passion for community engagement in participants
- Share the annual comprehensive public policy position document with elected leaders on all levels of government
- Continue to play an active role in steering the Floor 360 Consortium

## Membership Growth & Retention

Attract new members and increase existing members’ involvement in the Chamber by providing programs, services and benefits that are valued by members as essential to their success.

- Schedule tiered dues calls to top 25 members.
- Continue to tell the Dalton story through targeted, themed messaging in all of the Chamber’s communications

## Organizational Capacity

Enhance financial sustainability, while continuing to enhance the image of the organization, its programs and services. Maintain the two-time award of being named a **FIVE-STAR Accredited Chamber** by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, placing our Chamber in the top ½ of 1 percent of all chambers in the nation.

- Continue to enhance the Chamber’s image as the convener and “go to” organization
- Retain Five Star Accredited Status
- Ensure the Chamber finishes the year within budget and has the resources necessary to accomplish set goals

## Believe Greater Dalton

Work with community stakeholders to implement the Believe Greater Dalton strategic plan.

- Work with the Implementation Committee to raise the financial resources necessary to implement the 5 year Believe Greater Dalton strategic plan
- Provide adequate staffing to support the plan's work groups in the six key initiatives
- Create performance metrics and track success

# 2017-2018 Strategic Plan & Action Steps

## Economic Development

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Carl Campbell, Ali Harp

**Partnering with the Joint Development Authority, promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy by growing and retaining our existing businesses and recruiting new industry into the Greater Dalton area.**

***Goal: providing/promoting assistance resources to existing and new business prospects. Overall job and investment yearly goal: 250 jobs, \$62.5 million investment***

### **Action Steps:**

- Maintain a formal business retention and expansion (BRE) program to help local firms thrive
- Position Greater Dalton to attract new businesses and investment
- Develop research capacity to inform community and economic development efforts
- Advocate for policies that support economic development and strategic priorities
- Inventory underutilized industrial properties to aid redevelopment and blight reduction efforts
- Manufacturing recruitment
- Community marketing to targeted industries – State/National/Global
- County-wide Development Team Coordinator – First responder to all new business to provide seamless approach to “One-Stop Shop”

- Continue to facilitate Rapid Response Team conversations
- Continue implementation of existing industry outreach/troubleshooting/assistance with expansions
- Continue to be a resource for small business, entrepreneurial assistance, retail development and recruitment
- Plan and execute an international business recruitment trip
- Continue to represent Dalton-Whitfield County in state and national organizations (Georgia Economic Development Association, International Asset Management Council, Etc.)
- Continue marketing Carbondale Business Park
- Continue to serve as the main point of contact for Murray-Whitfield County Joint Development Authority and provide administrative oversight
- Locate, plan and execute a mega site partnership through the Murray-Whitfield County Joint Development Authority
- Incorporate Local Impact Project Analysis of major projects (LOCI-GA Tech software)
- Continue to evaluate Freeport exemption in the City of Dalton
- Conduct Intercity Visit (site TBD)

### **Community Marketing:**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Maintain/enhance website and social media programs
- Maintain monthly communications to economic developer stakeholders
- Increase statewide/national marketing initiatives (print and electronic)
- Provide written columns and advertisement to local, regional and state publications regarding economic development in Greater Dalton/Whitfield County etc.

## **Education Partnership & Workforce Development**

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Barbara Ward, Education Partnership Director

**Create an Education Partnership to align Greater Dalton's talent pipeline. Provide an educated and skilled employee-base for business and industry and opportunities for our citizens to re-engage and receive training in high demand jobs with competitive salaries and benefits through an innovative approach to workforce development.**

***Goal: Create an education partnership dedicated to raising educational attainment and skill levels. Create a sustainable and globally competitive workforce for advanced manufacturing in Greater Dalton.***

### **Action Steps:**

- Establish an Education Partnership “backbone” entity modeled on a proven collective impact model by bringing together education and training partners, businesses, non-profits, and service providers as outlined in Believe Greater Dalton
- Develop focus areas and initiatives that enhance and align the pipeline
- Collect and analyze student data to optimize programming and measure progress while safeguarding privacy
- Improve skill and educational attainment levels, which will result in producing and retaining “homegrown” talent
- Research/Perform competitiveness analysis of education rankings, education attainment of existing workforce, utilizing both public and private data and establish a baseline for measuring performance
- Support higher education through Dalton State College and Georgia Northwestern Technical College to meet the workforce needs of local industry
- Continue to support the Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy as the Advanced Manufacturing and Business Academy begins its second year with 400 students enrolled in the program
- Link K-12 education programs to the future needs of existing businesses
  - Promote “positives” about public schools within the Greater Dalton community
  - Provide career experiences for late elementary/early middle school grades to instill awareness of the need for post-secondary training
  - Continue Explore Experience, which provides high school juniors an opportunity to job shadow for three days
  - Continue Camp DEM (Design, Engineering and Manufacturing) for middle school aged students
- As an on-going program, engage the education community with opportunities for tours of industry, such as the recent Manufacturing Day Tour for high school and middle school principals and counselors
- As a result of the Advanced Manufacturing Designation for northwest Georgia through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), continue to work with Georgia Tech and the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission to explore opportunities available to the region
- 100 students complete a three day job shadow through the Explore Experience program
- Assist with marketing for the Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy Advanced Manufacturing and Business Academy
- Increase the number of Apprentices to 30
- Increase the number of businesses participating with Great Promise Partnership to 4 and the number of students participating to 40

## Community & Leadership Development

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Phyllis Stephens

**Serve as the “voice of business” at all levels of government and work with regional partners to promote regional growth. Develop leaders to channel their ideas and experiences toward community resources to help direct the future of Greater Dalton.**

***Goal: Advocate on behalf of the business community to support a business-friendly legislative climate. Develop community leaders that will become involved in addressing community issues and opportunities.***

### **Voice of Business**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Develop an annual pro-business Legislative Agenda, comprehensive public policy document
- Position the Chamber to be identified with issues, not political parties or candidates. The Chamber will be the non-partisan pro-business advocate
- The Public Policy Committee, Annual Dalton Day at the Capitol, and continuous communication of legislative priorities throughout the Georgia Legislative session to ensure a strong voice for Dalton
- Utilize an appropriate mix of Washington Fly-Ins and in-district meetings with the members of the Congressional Delegation. Continue strong working relationships with the Congressional staff aides
- Annually conduct a Campaign Academy as an education tool for those that wish to run for an elected position or work in a political campaign
- Facilitate key conversations with all four taxing authorities at the local level enabling better unity and collaboration on key community issues
- Collaborate with regional chambers to develop a unified legislative agenda and work on issues that are key to the area’s regional growth

### **Community Leadership Development**

#### **Action Steps:**

- 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 the Emerging Leaders Institute annually targeting 20-25 young professionals to develop their leadership skills
- Increase diverse membership for all leadership programs
- Coordinate the efforts of Leadership Dalton-Whitfield Alumni
- Market the Leadership Passport program to LDW Alumni



- Participate in Thrive 2055, Sixteen county Regional Growth Initiative

## Membership Growth & Retention

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Beth Morrison

**Attract new members and increase existing members' involvement in the Chamber by providing programs, services and benefits that are valued by members as essential to their success.**

***Goal: Increase membership growth, retain members and enhance the success of our member businesses. Provide targeted products, services, events and programs. Create/expand programs and services that save members money/increase business knowledge.***

### **Action Steps:**

- Develop/conduct community educational/informational events
- Conduct monthly Member Mixers
- Evaluate A.M. Connect series for viability
- Conduct Annual Business Expo
- Offer educational class for 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
- Re-envision the President's Council
- Offer convenient/low cost business education classes
- Offer the Drugs Don't Work Program
- Be the "Go to" source for social media
- Provide excellent exposure opportunities through sponsorships
- Continue to promote our sustainable companies best practices each month
- Offer publications which are a value to our membership
- Continue to work toward more segmented communication plan
- Continue to grow the Hispanic Advisory Council to serve this section of the community and forge relationships which will acquire new members with in the Latino market segment.
- Continue "Let's do Lunch" new member welcome luncheons
- Continue and enhance Diplomat program through additional exposure
- Develop a community event/ and or communications video series to keep our positive Dalton messaging on the forefront.
- Market and grow Office Depot affinity program



## Organizational Capacity

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Phyllis Stephens, Judy Sawyer, Beth Morrison

**Enhance financial sustainability, while continuing to enhance the image of the organization, its programs and services. Maintain the two-time award of being named a FIVE-STAR Accredited Chamber by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, placing our Chamber in the top ½ of 1 percent of all chambers in the nation.**

***Goal: Align staff/resources with organizational priorities and enhance financial sustainability, while continuing to enhance the Chamber's image and maintaining the Five-Star Accreditation status.***

### **Align staff/resources with organizational priorities**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Insure Chamber staff is aligned with economic development, education and workforce development efforts; community and leadership development efforts; and membership growth and retention
- Continue Chamber Intern program allowing for workplace experience and talent identification

### **Financial Sustainability**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Grow membership base targeting member businesses of all sizes in number of members and investment levels
  - 2017 \$380,000
- Continue to add and grow non-dues revenue programs
- Grow number and investment dollars of Sponsors
  - 2017-18 Target = \$45,000
  - Research other non-dues revenue streams
- Work with the Believe Greater Dalton Implementation committee to raise the financial resources necessary to implement the community strategic plan
- Align employee compensation and benefits with those provided by member companies and in relation to peer Chambers
- Grow the Tiered Investment Program for 2017 by upselling 25 existing members.

### **Elevate Chamber's Image**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Research and produce marketing collateral that is Chamber centric, but inclusive of multiple roles
- Continue utilization of branding in multiple mediums

- Continually seek new advertising/marketing opportunities that are cutting edge yet affordable
- Develop and implement a plan to update the Chamber's website.

### **Utilize/Enhance Technology**

#### **Action Steps:**

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

### **Ensure Continuity of Operations**

#### **Action Step:**

- Review/update Emergency Operations Plan bi-annually

### **Maintain Five-Year Accreditation Status**

#### **Action Steps:**

- Apply for re-accreditation in 2021
- Review recommendations from the U. S. Chamber annually until all are complete in order to re-apply in 2021

## **Believe Greater Dalton**

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Phyllis Stephens, Implementation Coordinator

**Work with the Believe Greater Dalton Implementation committee to advance efforts, review capacity and funding, and develop performance metrics that the community can use to track progress.**

***Goal: Launch and implement the Believe Greater Dalton capital campaign to raise the financial resources to implement the plan.***

#### **Action Steps:**

Raise the financial resources and capital needed to engage the community in the six key initiatives

- Create an education partnership to align Greater Dalton's talent pipeline
- Sustain a best-practice economic development program
- Create a scalable physical hub for entrepreneurship in downtown Dalton
- Pursue a competitive and diverse housing stock

- Establish downtown Dalton as a “Destination District”
- Launch a campaign to enhance community pride

## Entrepreneurship

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Entrepreneurship Work Group

**Work with Dalton State College, Georgia Northwestern Technical College and other partners to create a scalable physical hub for entrepreneurship in downtown Dalton.**

***Goal: Create a scalable physical hub for entrepreneurship in downtown Dalton.***

### **Action Steps:**

- Inventory existing programs and capacity
- Establish a range of desired initial programming and potential opportunities for expansion
- Assess physical space and resource needs
- Identify potential locations and examine options to purchase, lease, or assume control of the space
- Develop an initial budget
- Determine partner commitments and create a resource development strategy
- Examine possibilities to expand entrepreneurship programming to drive more rapid job growth

## Housing

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Housing Work Group

**Pursue a competitive and diverse housing stock that would aid in talent attraction, retention efforts and enhance quality of place.**

***Goal: Advance efforts that improve the local housing stock.***

**Action Steps:**

- Commission a housing market study to establish current conditions, future demand and next steps
- Work collaboratively to improve the quality, diversity, and affordability of the local housing stock
- Consider public incentives or tools that can be utilized for new developments

## Downtown Dalton

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Downtown Council Work Group

**Establish downtown Dalton as a “destination district”.**

***Goal: Work with the Downtown Dalton Development Authority to create a vibrant downtown.***

**Action Steps:**

- Catalyze development through the Downtown Dalton Development Authority (DDDA)
- Create a downtown council to complement the DDDA and support a vibrant downtown Dalton
- Develop an action plan to establish a dynamic vision for downtown Dalton and guide actions
- Expand and promote event programming in downtown Dalton
- Utilize the new Tax Allocation District for downtown redevelopment
  - Assist Dalton State College as they evaluate the small business incubator
  - Develop a mechanism to incentivize apartments/lofts downtown targeting Dalton State students and young professionals (DDDA)
  - Develop a mechanism to incentivize restaurants and entertainment venues downtown (DDDA)

## Community Pride

Initiative Champions: Rob Bradham, Community Pride Work Group

**Improve community self-image through citizen engagement and pride campaign.**

***Goal: Launch a campaign to enhance community pride.***

**Action Steps:**

- Create a multi-platform strategy to communicate positive developments and news in Greater Dalton
- Engage young professionals in Greater Dalton with leadership, volunteer, and social opportunities
- Create a volunteer initiative focused on community beautification
- Develop a grassroots community brand identity to serve as a focal point of community pride

Approved by the Chamber's Executive Board  
9/28/17