



2011
BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES
The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama

The following are 2011 business plan priority strategies as identified through the strategic planning process of The Chamber. These are not listed in any particular order.

1. Expand the Chamber's partnership and involvement with K-12 school systems to support educational excellence, increased graduation rates, and additional offerings of technical training. **(Education and Workforce Development Division)**
2. Establish a judicial study commission for Tuscaloosa County to review and make recommendations relative to a) expansion of a drug court, b) creation of a mental health court, c) establishment of a fifth circuit court, and d) evaluation of the community corrections division. **(Governmental Affairs Division)**
3. Advocate a formal alliance to promote increased cooperation and coordination and alignment of strategic planning with other organizations in the community including, but not limited to, the Tuscaloosa County IDA, Visit Tuscaloosa, Region 3 Workforce Development Council, municipal commercial development departments, University of Alabama, Shelton State Community College, Stillman College, the Productivity Center, West Alabama Regional Planning Commission, and ATN. **(Economic Development Division)**
4. Develop and begin implementation of a multi-year, sustainable economic development marketing initiative to promote the region as a quality business and career destination for economic investment, commercial and retail expansion, residential growth, and job creation. **(Economic Development Division)**
5. Develop a specific action plan to market and communicate the area's livability and report annual progress on the established "livability scorecard." Provide proactive leadership to encourage public and private sectors to pursue cleaner and more attractive community gateways. **(Community Development Division)**
6. Implement and sustain aggressive recruitment, marketing, and advertising to increase member retention and to expand the membership base and Chamber Champion resources. **(Organizational Development Division)**
7. Conduct a national search and select a competent, highly qualified Executive Director for the organization.

2011 Business Plan

The following outlines ongoing programs, strategies and initiatives of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama for the 2011 business plan based on the adopted long-range business plan:

Organizational Development

Pam Smith, Vice Chair

1. Mobilize the board of directors to become more engaged in the development & support of The Chamber's membership and resource development.
2. Maintain aggressive marketing and advertising to expand membership base, increase retention, enhance visibility and expand public awareness of the Chamber.
3. Sustain membership recruitment year-round by meeting an annual goal utilizing staff, volunteers and commission sales representatives.
4. Implement campaign to upgrade existing membership accounts that are at minimum dues to an appropriate membership investment level (fair share) in line with size of firm.
5. Sustain & grow annual Chamber Champions resource campaign to meet or exceed annual goal.
6. Maintain an acceptable retention level of existing members, which exceeds that of our peers.
7. Sustain consistent member communications through utilization of technology and online capabilities in order to communicate the value of The Chamber's goals & results.
8. Implement quarterly member-feedback system to monitor needs, issues and interests of members through email and regular online surveys and polls, and consistently report results.
9. Sustain active Ambassadors program with emphasis on personal membership contacts, networking, mentoring and effective member relations.
10. Hold scheduled networking and membership activities that provide a quality, enjoyable environment for fellowship, membership relations and expanded participation.
11. Sustain development, promotion and expansion of The Chamber's website as a value-added tool and essential benefit for Chamber members as well as the community and as a revenue source.
12. Facilitate online communications for specific identified Chamber leadership groups, such as governmental and legislative affairs; economic indicators, trend and ongoing issues.

Ambassadors

Young Professionals of Tuscaloosa

Economic Development

Bryan Winter, Vice Chair

1. Advocate and engage the public and private sector to provide cohesive, cooperative and coordinated marketing initiatives for Tuscaloosa County and the West Alabama region.
2. Promote and support the creation of a regional brand that informs prospects and the community as to “who we are” and “where we are going”.
3. Develop and implement multi-year marketing plan that includes a community and/or regional identity, public relations component and advertising program that expands awareness as a quality business and career destination and that attracts investment and employment to the region
4. Secure sustainable, long-term funding for a community wide, coordinated and cohesive economic development and marketing initiative.
5. Advocate and support development of a coordinated retail and commercial marketing and recruitment initiative among the public and private sectors, and provide retail gap analysis and strategic plan.
6. Promote and advocate economic development through interdependent partnerships with all economic development organizations serving the Tuscaloosa County metro area to insure and sustain a unified, cohesive, seamless delivery of information and support services in the West Alabama region.
7. Expand and sustain The Chamber’s web site and technology as a viable source of reliable economic, community and demographic information for business prospects, existing firms, commercial, retail and residential development.
8. Encourage innovation, entrepreneurial development and growth through small business programs, networking and recognition opportunities.
9. Develop and deliver a series of brief, high-impact training sessions for members to communicate measures that can be taken to realize cost savings, increase efficiencies and productivity, expand markets, cope with changing regulations and legislation, and prepare for the new emerging economy.
10. Work to enhance application of technology in area firms and the region and provide member support services through programs, technology and business training.
11. Manage and maintain the physical and online “one stop” business resource center as a viable source for small business services and information through technology as well as a center for counseling.
12. Coordinate and encourage programs which enhance the awareness and growth opportunities of business such as ‘entrepreneurs of the year’, women in business and others.
13. Encourage “shopping at home” to enhance the vitality and viability of the area economy.

14. Provide relevant, current and accurate economic analysis and information for the public and private sectors to keep businesses aware of trends, assets and opportunities in the local marketplace.

Economic Development Marketing Task Force

Entrepreneur of the Year

Women in Business Council

Business Training/Workshops

'One Stop' Resource Center

Technology Council

Community Development

Jason Walker, Vice Chair

1. Maintain active Northport Advisory Council that assists with identification of specific issues and needs in Northport and provides a forum to address and implement solutions.
2. Aggressively use Northport Advisory Council to expand membership and active participation of Northport-based businesses in The Chamber.
3. Provide coordination of annual Northport Citizen of the Year program, with expanded nominations, awareness, promotion and participation.
4. Provide advocacy for the Phase I refurbishing of the Rosedale Housing Complex and provide assistance to the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority in securing local and Federal government funding.
5. Maintain annual scorecard to measure and report results and progress of "culture builds."
6. Provide opportunities to engage public and private sector leadership in visiting and learning from identified "peer communities" that are successfully modeling effective cultural and livability strategies.
7. Establish and advocate goal of achieving status as one of America's "Top Ten" most livable communities.
8. Develop specific action plan to market and communicate the area's livability.
9. Monitor and report annual progress for the established "livability scorecard".
10. Implement marketing and communications strategies, resources, and tools that support and contribute to raising awareness, promoting livability and enhancing image.
11. Provide proactive leadership to encourage public and private sectors to pursue a fresher, cleaner and more attractive physical image, especially community 'gateways.'
12. In cooperation with the cities of Tuscaloosa and Northport, review and provide comments/suggested changes to existing signage and landscape ordinances.

Leadership Tuscaloosa
Northport Advisory Council
Northport Citizens of the Year
Civic Hall of Fame
Livability Task Force

Education & Workforce Development
Gary Phillips, Vice Chair

1. Provide support to the Region 3 Workforce Development Council in implementing its adopted strategic plan. Continue advocacy for establishment of full-time management, communication strategies, increased regional coordination and authority, integration of regional workforce programs, and marketing initiatives that support meeting workforce needs for new and existing firms in Tuscaloosa County & West Alabama.
2. Maintain effective management and coordination of adopt-a-school program as a source for connecting business and education with a sustained emphasis on career preparation.
3. Provide support and facilitation of the Career Tech Council in an effort to expand and enhance the quality and relevance of technical education in area high schools.
4. Develop and establish business-based education benchmarks to gauge educational quality, measure progress in area schools and hold educational systems accountable

Adopt-A-School
State of the Schools Breakfast
Career Tech Council

Governmental Affairs
Roy Clem, Vice Chair

1. Sustain active public affairs council as the primary coordination point for The Chamber's issues management, communications and governmental relations initiatives.
2. Apply cutting-edge technology to The Chamber's communications network to keep members consistently informed and to engage business involvement in identifying public policy issues, legislation and public sector leadership.
3. Maintain regular, consistent communications with elected officials at all levels of government to build productive relationships, to sustain advocacy role for business and The Chamber, and to contribute to accountability.

4. Expand and enhance visibility and presence of The Chamber in Montgomery and Washington through regular visits and use of networking with Chamber members, including 'Chamber in Session', Washington Fly In and Montgomery Drive In programs.
5. Actively advocate implementation among all public and private sector "stakeholders" for the development of a common vision, alignment of strategies and unified voice for Tuscaloosa County.
6. Sustain proactive coordination of environmental issues through the environmental task force, including monitoring, assessment and initiatives related to regulatory and public policy, environmental issues, appropriate strategies to avoid designation as an EPA non-attainment area, and efforts to improve overall environmental quality.

Chamber in Session

Washington Fly In

Montgomery Drive In(s)

Public Affairs Council

State of the Community Breakfast

Environmental Task Force