

Strategic Plan
2011-2012 Performance Measurements

Promote business: The Chamber serves as a primary marketing organization and promotes its membership in the community, state, nation and global marketplace. The Chamber also provides numerous opportunities for local businesses to promote themselves to visitors, residents and other businesses. The Chamber will serve as a regional community portal and primary driver of connections among business, community, not-for-profits and government.

Objective:

- To connect with and provide marketing venues that increase Members' bottom line and broadens their customer base; FY2010 and forthcoming years as measured by marketing revenue spent with the Chamber of Commerce, website visits and Member referrals, using prior fiscal year end statistics as a benchmark.

Action Items:

- On an ongoing basis, create partnerships with other businesses and like regional organizations, expanding the network and resources available to our Members.
- Develop multi-sponsor customized packages for Members.
- By increasing use of technology, increase the brand of the Chamber and its Members.
- Present relevant speakers on marketing, at three major Chamber events;
- Increase brand awareness and credibility of Membership through partnerships with DGEDC, DG Downtown Management, IL Chamber, US Chamber, ACCE and other business organizations.
- Increase revenue streams for both the Chamber and our Members utilizing available technology.
- Further the marketing plan that communicates the *return on investment* of Chamber membership, encourage economic opportunity for Chamber Members ensuring the Chamber achieves its vision, mission and strategic priority; to include but not limited to:
 1. Further promote the BUY CHAMBER and B CHAMBER programs, requesting all Membership challenge their vendors, suppliers and colleagues to join the Chamber, strengthening the Chamber while encouraging participation;
 2. Promote the value proposition that recognizes Members most valuable asset is their time citing the Chamber works for its Members 24/7. Increase participation and promotion of Members' Only discount and affinity programs as a benefit of Membership;
 3. Continue to include impactful testimonials in newsletters, e-weeklys, social media outlets, etc.
 4. Increase consumer activity of downersgrove.org created in 11/12 by furthering programs such as Ask the Expert, Community Calendar, Volunteer Connections, Job Bank and others.
 5. Further enhance opportunities for the Not-for-Profit sector, continue Commerce-in-Kind program, Volunteer Connection, gift giving and programs that engage the various communities in the Downers Grove area.

Protect business: The Chamber is a results oriented organization, proactively assessing Members' needs, collaborating and resolving issues impacting Member businesses. The Chamber seeks to influence legislation and regulation by local, state and federal governments in a proactive manner, supporting legislation that benefits businesses and when necessary, opposing legislation that unnecessarily inhibits businesses. The Chamber will educate Members and elected officials on key policy issues affecting business.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness, education and engagement of legislative activities; measured by various participation and website activity, using prior fiscal year statistics as a baseline;
- Provide educational leadership opportunities such as regional hearings, forums addressing current issues and interaction with legislators, etc., measured by participation, using FY10/12 as a benchmark.

Action Items

- Send updated annual legislative platform to every elected official applicable to Downers Grove, serving the local, regional, state and federal levels of government; as the Assemblies commence;
- Drive website visitors to the Legislative page, serving as a resource of information.
- Continue the Springfield Business Advocacy Day.
- Notify Members when applicable legislation directly affects their business and when or if the Chamber will address the issue.
- Offer Voter Registration services to the community.
- Continue to provide a unified voice for the unique corridors of the Membership (i.e., Ellsworth Park, Ogden Ave. Alliance) addressing workforce development issues, local ordinances, state programs, etc. as applicable and aligned with the strategic plan and mission of the Chamber;
- Host candidate forums; as applicable and partner with like organizations when applicable;
- Present relevant speakers at three annual business advocacy events
- Communicate the voice of business message and action items as designated by the Board of Directors, through advocacy newsletters, press releases, letters to elected officials.
- Publish and post a relevant vote tracker of all applicable elected officials
- Create a technology based grassroots network and database.
- Create a Political Action Committee; FY 2015.

Enhance Business: The Chamber offers a multitude of professional development and networking through programs and services using diverse and innovative methods that assist businesses and individuals. It will serve its Members' needs in uncovering, explaining and leveraging the expanding global business opportunities and linkages in our region; developing quality partnerships, attracting non-members and dispersing pertinent information and knowledge to Members, consistently communicating the return on Chamber investment.

Objectives:

- To create a viable and lasting economic impact on the Downers Grove region by helping Member businesses build sustainable and profitable enterprises measured annually by attraction and retention data, using prior fiscal year statistics as a benchmark.
- Enhance the programming and events calendar, ensuring the overall professional development needs and requests of the Membership are considered, consistent with the strategic plan and mission of the Chamber; measured annually by engagement and attendance data, using prior fiscal year statistics as a benchmark.

Action Items:

- Explore a new membership category, addressing succession planning of the Chamber.
- Continue to develop strategic partners [DG EDC, Downtown Mgt, School Districts, Workforce Development, etc. in the community of the Downers Grove area; ongoing.
- Continue offering a variety of professional development events, ensuring alignment with the mission, strategic priorities and feedback from Members; ongoing. Explore a series of seminars to enhance Members' success.
- Continue developing Referral Groups or Owners' Groups as deemed necessary to meet the needs and demands of the Membership.
- Further the Education Connection opportunities to connect the future workforce with employers, developing leadership, knowledge and skills of imminent Chamber Members; FY2010.
- The Programming & Events Board TEAM, along with staff, will explore and evaluate:
 - Marketing, programming and display of Member commercials.
 - A second Business Owners Roundtable
 - A fourth Referral Group
 - Virtual programming
 - A series of seminars, i.e., Chamber Business Academy: Profit-Ability; Motivating Others, etc.
- The Programming & Events Board TEAM will review the Committee/Network and Groups' purpose statements, goals, objectives, plan of work and FY calendars to ensure alignment with the mission and to avoid duplication; ongoing.
- Utilize the Board of Directors for attraction and retention efforts
- Utilize the Board for new member engagement (i.e., invite to luncheons).
- Utilize the Expansion and Retention TEAM to increase prospecting lists.

Business excellence: The Chamber will employ stringent business practices designed to produce positive year-end balances, reviewed annually by a business certified public accountant and in accordance with the standards set by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce 5-Star Accreditation model. The Board of Directors' structure and policies reflect the diversity of membership and continuity of leadership. On an ongoing basis, the Chamber will explore evolving, innovative and creative ways of doing business.

Objectives:

- Achieve financial objectives set forth in the performance measurements.
- Increase non-dues revenue.
- Increase membership numbers in FY 11/12, positioning to increase in size in forthcoming years by providing enhanced value while addressing the unique needs of business;
- Achieve a US Chamber 5 Star Accreditation in 2016.

Action Items:

- Develop and implement an amortization schedule to achieve financial objectives.
- Increase revenue from affinity programs.
- Fundraising activities aimed to directly reduce debt, segregated from general budget.
- The Financial Opportunities TEAM will review the financial well-being of the Chamber and participate in the annual budgeting process;
- The Financial Opportunities TEAM will continue to meet on a regular basis to explore new and innovative financial opportunities to create a culture that will embrace evolving, innovative and creative ways of doing business; exploring opportunities, making recommendations.
- Develop a model(s) for Chamber expansion.
- The Executive Board will conduct a bi-annual examination of bylaws, Practices & Policies document and Guiding Principles and Beliefs.
- The full Board will be engaged through the ongoing work of the four strategic areas of this Plan through the Board TEAMS. Each TEAM may engage Members at large, ensuring leadership succession in future years.
- The entire Board of Directors will work with all the TEAMS and staff to ensure continued alignment with the accreditation process; ongoing.