



Strategic Plan

Impacting the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
Annual Plans of Action
2021-2023

The Chamber's Vision

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce will be the leading catalyst for economic expansion in the Mobile area, building more opportunity and an enhanced quality of life for all citizens.

The Chamber's Mission

To serve as a progressive advocate for business needs to promote the Mobile area's economic well-being.

Strategic Goals

Jobs

Retain, expand and recruit businesses, investment and jobs in the Mobile area.

Advocacy

Create an environment that promotes business and community growth, and diversity, equity and inclusion.

Value

Provide value, services, opportunities and recognition for our members.

Excellence

Operate the Chamber with excellence, innovation and efficiency.

Strategic Goal: Jobs

Retain, expand and recruit businesses, investment and jobs in the Mobile area.

PRIORITY ONE: Refine/enhance Economic Development's Lead Generation efforts (especially domestically during COVID).

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Identify and pursue specific companies in targeted business segments that are/are not currently a primary focus.
- Proactively pursue targeted home-office relationships with companies that have operations in South Alabama.
- Invest in and utilize data and analytics to formulate plans for prospecting efforts.
- Continue to network with site selectors, attorneys, engineering firms, utility partners, State of Alabama, EDPA, etc. for lead generation efforts.
- Continue to be strategic in our approach to supply chain needs from various companies in the area (Airbus, Austal, AM/NS Calvert, Evonik, etc.).
- Research the businesses and types of businesses that are looking to relocate. Target the businesses in cities that are experiencing mass exodus.
- Build a master list of businesses to pursue.
- Take our campaign we have used internationally and adapt it for these opportunities. We should be able to measure success against the list of viable companies we are able to attract.

PRIORITY TWO: Pursue front office companies to relocate their operations to Mobile. This could be headquarters, regional headquarters, or just separate company functions that could operate out of Mobile.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Identify companies that could relocate their front office functions to Mobile.
- Review existing companies already in Mobile area that could benefit from additional corporate operations being located locally.
- Identify sectors to pursue and develop marketing strategy that shows benefits of pro-business environment, workforce labor costs, real estate costs, cost of living, etc.
- Goal – locate two new front office operations to Mobile.

PRIORITY THREE: Implement a comprehensive talent attraction program.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Establish a program to keep targeted graduates from Alabama universities and colleges in south Alabama after graduation (targeted based on needed skills).
- Recruit targeted alumni from Alabama universities and colleges back to south Alabama (targeted based on needed skills).
- Establish a formal network of communities with talent attraction efforts in south Alabama.
- Capitalize on the COVID impact and how we can think through a strategy to get a younger generation that is interested in working remote.
- Recruit a talented workforce from outside of Mobile in targeted communities or metros.

PRIORITY FOUR: Development of new marketable industrial sites and/or parks.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Work with willing landowners and developers to identify and market suitable property for future growth opportunities.
- Develop a complete inventory of sites and understand the infrastructure needed to make the site(s) truly marketable. Understand cost associated in doing so and determine possible funding sources.
- Goal – have three new industrial sites/future parks fit the above criteria.

PRIORITY FIVE: Nurture local, state and national partnerships to address our challenges and opportunities, achieve legislative success and improve our region's economic success.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Conduct an active investor relations program with Partners for Growth investors.
- Prepare for and implement Partners for Growth V, 2023-2027.

Strategic Goal: Advocacy

Create an environment that promotes business and community growth.

PRIORITY ONE: Support transformational projects that foster continued growth in the local economy (Port Development, Tourism, Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley Development, Large Residential and Redevelopment Projects, etc.)

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Continue support of airport relocation and additional carriers.
- Continue support of major Port and inland waterway projects.
- Continue support on I-10 bridge (construction plan and utilization).
- Continue support of western annexation.
- Continue support of tourism growth, especially in downtown Mobile.
- Continue support of USA Medical school.
- Identify opportunities to help revitalize and support major redevelopments in the Mobile market (such as Railroad Park in Birmingham).
- Identify a development that could be a large catalyst for future commercial and residential growth in Mobile.
- Identify and market areas (to the local community and outside of Mobile) such as New Market Tax Credit areas, Opportunity Zones, etc.
- Find new ways to collaborate with all partners involved to find solutions to these transformative projects.

Strategic Goal: Value

Provide value, services, opportunities and recognition for our members.

PRIORITY ONE: Create and develop an expanded array of educational resources for entrepreneurs and small business on how to open and operate a business, in collaboration and through partnerships with the City of Mobile, the Innovation Portal, local universities and colleges.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Link Chamber website on Business Resources with City's newly-launched checklist detailing requirements on how to legally open a business.
- Survey membership and community-at-large quarterly to identify specific needs for new programming on how to operate a business.
- Invest in training and technologies to facilitate the Chamber's ability to sponsor and produce the programming needs identified.
- Assemble and develop a library of current and new programming to create a "Chamber U" for future usage by members and non-members.
- Research and identify opportunities to provide valuable training on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).
- Monetize the Chamber U Business library.
- Revise the current Chamber publication "Business Resource Guide" to include new programming offerings to increase awareness of Chamber programs.
- Launch new programming (classes, training and workshops) identified in surveys.
- Deliver the region's best opportunities for business recognition and networking.
- As evidence of an accepting community, give consideration to creating a senior staff position at the Chamber to oversee Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives within the organization and in Chamber programming.

PRIORITY TWO: Hold more small group, Thought Team discussions, like Board of Advisor "small breakfast" gatherings. These types of events are more exclusive and enable members to better connect and network. Also provides Chamber staff better direction for planning purposes. Perhaps break into peer groups, such as the manufacturing group.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Hold at least bi-monthly BOA and "fair share dues" member gatherings.
- Develop a "buddy" system for new members
- Create and hold monthly small group sessions for members to build relationships.
- Create a Microsoft Teams Site or Portal for Members to participate, communicate, access services remotely post COVID.
- In collaboration with Chamber members, reach all new senior management for invitation into *MobileConnect*.

PRIORITY THREE: Stake the Chamber's place as the leader of leaders. Prove that the Chamber is critical, involved, and informed. Share the knowledge, use it to promote the Chambers relevancy as an organization to the community-at-large and to Chamber members.

Develop programs that share the activities and information and/or include updates as a part of other programs and marketing efforts.

- Showcase the various groups and roundtables - what are they working on, what impact has it had on the participating members, and what impact has it had for the greater community?
- Share info when the Chamber is involved with city and state-wide initiatives.
- Share info and impact of policy advocacy - what's being championed, what's the status, what's the impact?

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Survey community awareness of the Chamber's activities and influence.
- Keep members informed, then they can pass on the information to others and know why their membership is valuable to them and the community.

PRIORITY FOUR: Provide B2B “match maker” events to introduce procurement agents from large companies to Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) owners. Host MBE networking events with invited procurement representatives to provide networking opportunities for MBEs to meet purchasing agents and potential customers.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Host four B2Bs per year.
- Host four networking events per year with at least three procurement representatives attending each session.

PRIORITY FIVE: Develop an online minority business directory for the Mobile Bay region. MBEs to be classified in three categories i.e. Small, Medium and Large. This will help manage the expectations of potential users of the online directory.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Develop an online MBE directory.

PRIORITY SIX: Every quarter, advertise a minority member using the Chamber’s social media channels. Members are selected during a social media event.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Feature a business on social media quarterly.

PRIORITY SEVEN: The Chamber should tie Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) goals to tax incentive packages when legally possible. Before tax incentives or abatements are given to companies expanding or moving into the area, they must provide a DEI plan as part of their application for incentives. Incentives may be withheld or reduced if they do not meet their DEI goals. Hire local entities whenever possible.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Text added to the IDA and IDB tax incentive application.
- More “local” MBEs employed in local projects.

PRIORITY EIGHT: Create a council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to meet quarterly to share best practices.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Quarterly meetings scheduled and held.
- Add to each Department's Plan of Action – “Actively support the Chamber's policies and programs as it relates to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.”

PRIORITY NINE: Enhance onboarding of new Board of Advisors and create customized level of mentorship.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Establish a “buddy system” so new members feel welcome and are introduced to others.
- Establish a BOA Advocate/Welcoming Committee to, on a quarterly basis, “onboard” new BOA members to the Board.

PRIORITY TEN: Stabilize existing industry in a COVID environment, understand the risks and impact to current jobs and salaries.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Collect data on the impact of COVID to the local economy, business, and employees.
- Put measures in place to facilitate growth opportunities for these companies effected.

Strategic Goal: Excellence

Operate the Chamber with excellence, innovation and efficiency.

PRIORITY ONE: Create a Building Task Force.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Discuss the building status with the Board chair of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation.
- Selection of individuals and establishment of the committee.
- Budget up to \$100,000 to be spent from reserves on consultants and professionals to develop various scenarios for the future use of the facilities.

PRIORITY TWO: The Building Task Force will conduct all research and engage appropriate consultants to create a pro-forma analysis on the highest and best use of the Chamber Foundation's two properties, as it relates to the Chamber's physical needs to meet its' mission.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Engage a commercial realtor regarding the market value of both Chamber Foundation properties.
- Secure necessary repair estimates of the current building.
- Implement a Request for Proposal process to select a firm to complete a space usage/design plan for the Chamber to fulfill its' mission in a modernized facility.
- Analyze the cost and benefit of modernizing and/or expansion of the existing facilities, to include closing some "open air" aspects of the Atrium. This may include the leasing of some unused areas at market rates.
- Analyze the sale of one or both of the existing Chamber facilities and leverage the proceeds to procure or build (CCD or other lot) more modern facilities.
- Analyze the leasing of new facilities. Retain and lease the current facilities to subsidize the new lease payments.
- Finalize appropriate next steps regarding future Chamber facilities.

PRIORITY THREE: Select Chamber staff should have "blue sky" discussions with potential partners regarding their interest and capability of occupying a common space.

Measurement(s) of Success:

- Complete initial conversations with Alabama State Port Authority, Visit Mobile, Mobile Downtown Alliance, Innovation Portal, Three Mile Creek, SBA, SBDC, The Black Mobile Chamber of Commerce, City of Mobile, etc.