



**Halifax County
Chamber of Commerce
2008-2009 Business Plan**

**LOOKING
AHEAD**

Working Together to Move into the Future

Introduction

This annual Business Plan is designed to outline actions and processes that will be undertaken to meet the Chamber's mission, vision and strategic plan. In looking towards 2008 and 2009, the action plans outlined in this document generate outcomes and accomplishments as designed in the strategic plan. The Chamber's goal is to address the various needs of the Halifax County community. To accomplish this, the Chamber focuses its efforts in four divisions: Business Development, Community Development, Government Affairs/Advocacy and Membership Development & Services. Each division is strategically aligned and composed of programs, products and services to accomplish the Chamber's goals. The following are the Chamber's Vision, Mission and Core Values Statements.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce is to be a proactive business organization with an influential voice dedicated to economic success and quality of life.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce is to serve the interest of its members by providing products, programs and services that are of direct benefit to the members, and by influencing issues that affect the economic vitality of our community.

Core Values

By providing fair and balanced representation of our members...OUR Chamber is the Premier Business Organization.

By focusing on programs and services that contribute to our members' success...OUR Chamber is a Member Driven Organization.

By providing an effective return on members' investment of resources, time and participation...OUR Chamber Understands Value.

By welcoming all opportunities for cooperation and inspiring a community vision...OUR Chamber is a Collaborator.

By being the united voice of the business community...OUR Chamber is THE Business Advocate.

By monitoring membership and community trends...OUR Chamber is Visionary.

By facilitating leadership...OUR Chamber is Considered the Business Community's Leadership Training Ground.

By supporting a strong, dynamic, educated and healthy community...OUR Chamber Contributes to the Quality of Life.

Business Development | A Conduit for *Business and Economic Growth*

A strong business community translates to a better economy and quality of life for Halifax County.

Programs, Products and Services

Business After Hours

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Promote business-to-business networking and sales opportunities for Chamber members through monthly net working events designed for members to meet, establish contacts and build relationships with fellow business people representing all business sizes and sectors.

This program is committee-driven.

Business Expo

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Provide an opportunity for businesses to display their products and services to other businesses, citizens of Halifax County and students within the school system.

This program is committee-driven.

Business Roundtables

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Provide outreach to businesses with similar interests to foster collaborative efforts.

This program is committee-driven.

Chamber Checks

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Encourage “Shop at Home” by actively promoting chamber checks.

Small Business Workshops and Seminars

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Educate Chamber members by providing a series of focused informative work shops on timely and relevant topics based on identified criteria necessary for small business success.
- Partner and collaborate with Economic Development Council, Longwood Small Business Development Center, Industrial Development Authority, Department of Tourism and other regional organizations to proactively address issues that impact the business community and inform members of pertinent issues.

This program is committee-driven.

Partnerships

Workforce Investment Board

- Advocate for a community which retains and expands job opportunities and improves the quality of life for the citizens of Halifax County, Virginia.
- Enhance the availability of qualified workers to reinforce the retention of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the region through workforce development initiatives.
- Advocate for initiatives and policies at the federal, state and local levels that enhance access to affordable education and training thus providing a better educated workforce.

Community Development | *Building Communities Makes Business Sense*

Build and strengthen community involvement and leadership and serve as an advocate for education

Programs, Products and Services

Career Awareness Training

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Partner with local businesses to re-enforce career awareness, knowledge of career opportunities, and career development with an emphasis on the free enterprise system, work ethic and job skills for students in the Halifax County Public School System.

This program is committee-driven.

Leadership Halifax County

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Provide premier leadership development opportunities to emerging community and business leaders and ensure the program is meeting the current needs of the community and business environment.

This program is committee-driven.

Leadership Halifax County Alumni Association

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Engage Leadership Halifax County graduates.
- Provide a message board on the chamber's website for alumni to communicate.

Virginia Cantaloupe Festival

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Publicize a positive community image by providing quality programs beneficial to members and the community at large.

This program is committee-driven.

Young Professionals Network

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Engage and involve young professionals by identifying their wants, needs and expectations to promote increased participation.
- Diversify the Chamber's membership and community leadership by engaging more young professionals.
- Develop a support system for young professionals within the region.

This program is committee-driven.

Partnerships

LEAD Virginia

- Provide leadership on the state leadership program, LEAD Virginia's, steering committee and market the program in the region.

Tourism Board

- Provide representation on Department of Tourism Board of Directors.

Vision 2020

- Promote partnerships to support implementation of the Vision 2020 Community Strategic Plan.

Government Affairs/Advocacy | *The Voice of Business for Strong Communities*

Serve as the leading advocate for business and community.

Programs, Products and Services

Halifax Forward

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Collect and disseminate, when necessary, objective information on current issues at local, state and federal levels and ascertain information that directly impacts the Chamber membership to submit to the Board of Directors.
- Serve as the advocate on local, state and federal legislation/regulation that impact the business environment in Halifax County.
- Monitor members' legislative priorities and appropriately articulate collective priorities to the local, state and federal governments and manage visible programming areas including transportation, legislative affairs, communications, regionalism, technology and workforce development.
- Identify emerging issues critical to member businesses and advocate on their behalf to ensure prosperity throughout the business community.
- Position Halifax Forward as the major catalyst for pro-business advocacy by providing a forum for interested, like-minded business leaders to unite their time and resources, utilizing their knowledge, creativity and leadership, to identify issues that may affect the business climate and quality of life of Halifax County.
- Present pressing community matters objectively so that members are informed accurately.
- Develop positions on legislation that affects business and communicate those positions to area legislators and work with area chambers of commerce to sponsor the annual conference on legislative issues.
- Provide members with multiple opportunities to interact with public policy leaders on pending legislation and regulations through events such as Government Affairs Breakfasts, Chamber Day at the Capitol, Washington & Richmond trips.
- Aggressively promote the passage of responsible, pro-business initiatives and actively oppose legislation that impedes business development and growth, as identified in the Chamber 2008-2009 legislative agenda.
- Educate public sector as to how certain issues will affect the business climate of the community.
- Host pre- and post-legislation and candidate forums.

This program is committee-driven.

Partnerships

Governing Bodies

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Advocate Chamber positions to Halifax County Board of Supervisors, Town Councils of Halifax and South Boston.

US Chamber of Commerce

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Communicate relevant issues to membership through Voter Voice.

Transportation and Infrastructure

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Staff and support committees that represent the region's transportation priorities, initiatives and projects.

Membership Development & Services | *Growing More Than Business*

Provide value-added programs, services and information designed to retain and grow existing member businesses.

Programs, Products and Services

Ambassadors

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Engage members through involvement and ensure connectivity by assessing their skills sets and evaluating their preferences to assist committees and programming.
- Serve as a liaison between the Chamber and businesses that are Chamber members.
- Identify prospective members and welcome and nurture new Chamber members.

This program is committee-driven.

Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Recognize excellence in business practices and volunteerism throughout the community.
- Celebrate the Chamber's accomplishments and recognize volunteers for their service to the Chamber.

This program is committee-driven.

Excellence in Business Awards

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Recognize and publicize outstanding achievement and excellence in business practices by identifying "Chamber Business of the Year" and "Chamber Member of the Year".

This program is committee-driven.

Lunch 'n Learn

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Communicate Chamber services, networking and volunteer opportunities available to members and promote business-to-business networking during monthly informative meetings.

Membership Directory and Quality of Life Guide

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Market chamber member business and quality of life guide through distribution of the publication.

Membership Recruitment

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Identify potential members and actively promote membership growth.
- Grow membership income by 5%.

Membership Retention

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Evaluate member wants, needs and expectations by continuously assessing member feedback using a variety of vehicles including surveys and “focus groups” and providing value-added programs.
- Communicate value to the membership by providing annual statistics to members on benefits they receive including, but not limited to number of opportunities to network, educational/training workshops/seminars and referrals.
- Maintain market penetration rate of 44%.
- Personally contact every member at least once during the year.

E-News and Newsletter

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Communicate the Chamber’s message.
- Educate Chamber members on products, programs and services.

Ribbon Cuttings

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Provide assistance to members during grand openings.

Sponsorship Packages

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Market chamber member businesses through sponsorship packages.

Website

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Encourage online networking, committee participation and communication through online message boards.
- Serve as the Chamber’s major communication and business resource tools.

Partnerships

US Chamber of Commerce

- Provide Chamber members with the opportunity to gain additional benefits through United States Chamber of Commerce Federation Membership.

The Organization | *Roles and Responsibilities*

Ensure the Chamber is equipped and positioned to successfully implement principles and goals. Address the Chamber's strategic operational needs.

Board of Directors

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Promote the chamber through community involvement with members, prospective members and governing bodies.
- Communicate the chamber's mission to business and community leaders.
- Assist in promoting Halifax County as a destination to live, work and visit.
- Explore all possible partnerships within the community to maximize resources aligning the issues with the appropriate lead agency or organization.
- Meet with members to listen to their priorities and needs.

Chairman of the Board

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Serve as a member of the executive committee
- Appoint nominating committee
- Oversee implementation and execution of the board's strategic plan

Vice Chair

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Assist the Chairman of the Board.
- Oversee implementation and execution of the business plan.
- Evaluate insurance policies, including health, life and general office.
- Ensure policies and procedures are compliant with all labor and law regulations.

Immediate Past Chair

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Serves as Chair of the Nominating Committee.
- Serves as Chair of the Awards Committee.
- Serve as a counselor to the Chairman.

Treasurer

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Serves as Chair of the Budget/Finance Committee.
- Evaluate investment policies.
- Prepare an annual budget and review financial policy and reports to ensure sound decisions are adopted to accomplish the Chamber's mission for the next year's Business Plan.
- Evaluate membership dues structure to ensure members' needs are being met.

2nd Vice Chair

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Chair Halifax Forward, The Business Coalition.
- Provide oversight of the chamber's governmental affairs program.

Vice Chair of Membership

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure the chamber's membership market penetration rate of 44%.
- Ensure the needs of members are being met and the appropriate revenue streams are available to support them.
- Provide the best possible service and programs to members to increase their benefits of membership.
- Provide direct oversight to membership goals.

Vice Chair of Programming

2008-2009 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure all programming is meeting budget requirements.
- Report progress of programming to board of directors.