



Strategic Plan

2022-2024



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are pleased to present the next 3-year strategic plan for our chamber of commerce. As always, we do not take the work of planning for our future success lightly. We encourage businesses to think, plan, execute and measure the work they do, and we hold ourselves to the same standards.

This new plan is the culmination of work done by a strong, active committee of 20 volunteers and staff and facilitated by industry expert Josh Torres. We began our work in the Spring of 2021 by surveying our members and community stakeholders. We then compiled the data and engaged in many hours of thought and discussion. As a result, we were able to identify three key areas of focus that are important to the region and align with our Chamber's resources and sphere of influence.

Our three areas of focus for 2022-2024 are Business Impact, Diversity & Inclusion, and Advocacy. Underpinning these strategic priorities are the core competencies of Connectivity and Organizational Excellence. These priorities are the roadmap for the next three years and we encourage you to read more about them in the plan. Now the real work begins. We will translate this document into yearly business plans that we can implement, measure, and for which we will be held accountable. We will only be successful with your help, as our valued members, our partners, and our collaborators.

Mission

The mission of the Chamber is to strengthen our business community through collaboration, engagement, and strategic partnerships.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Connectivity

Foster networks, connections, and relationships to increase the success and exposure of our members and the community.



- Provide our members a sense of belonging.
- Leverage collective strength to benefit members and the business community.
- Create opportunities for member businesses and their employees to interact and expand their networks.

- Serve as a conduit to direct member businesses/employees to the opportunities, information, and resources within the area.
- Collaborate with local, regional, and state partners on common initiatives.

Organizational Excellence

Ensure we are the best association we can be for staff, members, stakeholders, and the community.

- Anticipate needs to ensure highest value for all members.
- Be responsive and flexible to members and community.
- Ensure excellent stewardship of members' investments and trust.
- Maintain and develop quality staff, volunteer leadership and partners.
- Develop a cohesive brand identity to leverage chamber program and initiative reach.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1

Business Impact

Be the gateway to the business support ecosystem by demonstrating value and creating a passion for our business community and chamber.

Action Steps:

1. Create and maintain membership recruitment and onboarding procedure.
2. Share our business community and chamber story including business storytelling, member testimonials, and education around chamber programming.
3. Identify existing economic ecosystem to develop and maintain a centralized and comprehensive program.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

Diversity & Inclusion

Create and encourage a diverse and inclusive chamber reflective of the communities we serve.

Action Steps:

1. Create DE&I Policy.
2. Support minority & international business owners.
3. Serve and engage beyond city limits.
4. Support the entire business community.
5. Collaborate with economic development partners and utilize shared resources.
6. Create and recruit a diverse chamber Board of Directors reflective of our community.



2019 Athens Area Women's Summit

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

Business Advocacy

Become the public policy voice for our area's business community.

Action Steps:

1. Create a public policy committee and program.
2. Connect public policy with existing networks.
3. Increase communication to members and business community on issues.
4. Regularly identify needs and issues in the business community.



OUTCOMES

1. Chamber will be viewed as the area's business expert.
2. Chamber members will be proud to be part of the most trusted and influential business organization in the Athens area.
3. Member businesses will benefit from increased engagement in the chamber and its resources.
4. The chamber's strong brand identity will enhance its visibility in the community.
5. Members will derive a deeper value and collective sense of purpose from their chamber memberships beyond traditional benefits.
6. Executive leadership in the region will be more inclusive and demographically representative.
7. Young professionals will have access to enhanced career and leadership development opportunities.
8. The chamber will be the area's leader in local and regional public policy advocacy.

OUTCOMES, continued

9. Business leadership will be maximized to achieve community goals.
10. Increased opportunities for connection will help our members get ahead.
11. The chamber will increase its overall market penetration and maintain a retention rate in the top quartile of its peers.
12. The chamber's value to members will be maximized through sound fiscal management.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

David Mott, **Mollica, Gall, Sloan & Sillery** – Chair, Board of Directors
Dani Underhill, **Athens Area Chamber of Commerce** – Pres. & Exec. Director
Josh "JT" Torres, **Chamber of Commerce Executives of Ohio** – Facilitator
Lindsay Barnett, **Hampton Inn by Hilton**
Jon Dailey, **Quidel**
Tara Gilts, **OhioHealth**
Lissa Jollick, **Small Business Development Center**
Kristi Kinnard, **Career Connections**
Andrea Lewis, **The Post**
Laurie McKnight, **Area 14 Workforce Development Board**
Kurt Montle, **Uptown Realty Group TAM Construction**
Kate Perani, **Athens County Economic Development Center**
Donna Russell, **Ohio University Credit Union**
Kristin Slemmer, **Athens Area Chamber of Commerce**
Stacy Strauss, **Innovation Center**
Dan Stroh, **Snider, Fuller & Stroh**
Natalie Tevis, **Airclaws**
Jessica Thomas, **Brenen's Coffee Café**
Boone Troyer, **Athens County Convention & Visitor's Bureau**
Shawna Wolfe, **Ohio University**
Dawn Worley-Sims, **Athens Area Chamber of Commerce**

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