



Greater Omaha Chamber 2011-2015 Strategic Plan

Overview of the Process

The Greater Omaha Chamber is a nonprofit membership organization representing more than 3,200 businesses that encompass about two thirds of the area's workforce. The Chamber acts as the voice for businesses in the region and is driven by a vision to be the catalyst organization that ensures Greater Omaha is a vibrant place to do business, work and live. The Chamber's mission is to increase business, investment and employment in the Greater Omaha area with actions that are directed by the organization's values of excellence, family, passion and vision.

This strategic plan provides an overall framework for action during a five year span (January 2011 – December 2015) with the intent to supply flexibility through more detailed tactics within each annual program of work. Progress is measured and reported quarterly.

The plan was developed over a nine month period in 2010 using the following guiding principles:

- Clarity. The plan should be designed so that it delivers accountability while being easy to understand, access and report on.
- Inclusivity. It is important to ensure that a variety of voices are heard in the process, including those of leadership, staff, members, volunteers and community partners.
- Relevancy. The plan should reflect Chamber vision, mission and values as well as the desired direction of leadership.

The plan's development process included the following steps:



The information gathering process encompassed the opinions of over 300 people through more than 30 meetings or surveys. Conversations occurred with Chamber staff, volunteers, members and community partners. Other relevant data including past surveys, historical information, benchmarks and best

practices was also examined. Overall, more than 1,000 pieces of data was gathered and hundreds of pages of information reviewed during the information gathering process.

Three common themes resulted from the analysis. Stakeholders believed the Chamber should:

- Build on current momentum, while increasing focus and inclusivity
- Continue to be a catalyst, as well as a connector that collaborates with others
- Remember that small businesses are important

Across the various stakeholder groups there was a feeling of strong positive momentum at the Chamber. The Chamber was expected to be a catalyst on important issues to business and the organization was encouraged to focus on priorities and leverage momentum. There were reminders to be inclusive on a variety of levels and to better document the collaborative role the organization plays. While currently the majority of members and services provided are geared towards small business, the input suggested the organization persist in developing opportunities to further enhance this.

As a result of this information and analysis, six areas of focus were developed which ultimately became these six goals:

- Grow membership by providing exceptional value and service
- Be the catalyst for business development in the Greater Omaha market resulting in \$3 billion in investment over the next five years
- Develop leaders and articulate the Chamber's leadership and collaborative role in accomplishing priorities
- Operate the Chamber with excellence, innovation and efficiency in accordance with our values
- Advocate to improve the competitiveness of Greater Omaha and Nebraska
- Assist small business growth and development

The following pages highlight each of the six goals, measures of success and general strategies for the Chamber's operating focus January 2011 – December 2015. More detailed plans of action will be presented annually in the organization's program of work.

Progress on this strategic plan, as directed by the program of work, is reported quarterly. Each year's 4Q report also summarizes the year and reviews the successes against annual measures and goals. The quarterly reports and annual programs of work can be found at www.omahachamber.org.

Grow membership by providing exceptional value and service

Annual Outcome Measures:

- Membership totals
 - Dues value, with a percentage growth over last year
 - Net number, with a percentage growth over last year
- Progress compared to benchmark chambers
 - Percentage growth in member revenue
 - Percentage growth in membership base
 - Retention rate
 - Market penetration
- Customer engagement and satisfaction
 - Overall member satisfaction
 - Event/program measures (participation and satisfaction)

General Strategies:

- Adjust technology and processes to better understand and deliver on individual member expectations while continuing to focus on developing strong relationships
- Better quantify and articulate the ROI of membership to various categories of businesses
- Communicate information and access to opportunities that meet, and often exceed, member expectations
- Continually assess and improve events to provide networking, knowledge and recognition for members
- Frequently review and market group discount offerings so that participation provides a clear return on a member's investment
- Explore ways to measure and increase customer engagement
- Develop and implement a Chamber marketing effort to generate more interest in membership
- Assess current membership dues and programming structure, making modifications as needed

Quarterly Reporting:

- New and dropped # of members and \$ value against projection
- Participation – number and satisfaction
- A short written report on progress of annual priorities

Be the catalyst for business development in the Greater Omaha market resulting in \$3 billion in investment over the next five years

Annual Outcome Measures:

- Investment value and number of jobs associated with landed projects
 - Total each year towards the end goal of \$3 billion
 - Additional breakout by:
 - Landed economic development projects for the region
 - Specific development landed east of 72nd St.
 - Estimated value of assistance provided to align resources supporting development (workforce grants, public investments, community redevelopment projects, etc.)
- Number of new start-up businesses created
- Greater Omaha development progress compared to a set of communities we benchmark ourselves against (Austin, Charlotte, Denver, Des Moines, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Nashville, Oklahoma City, Raleigh)
 - Percentage net employment growth
 - Percentage personal income growth
 - Private industry output data
 - Number of placements in a set of key annual rankings

General Strategies:

- Embrace and continue to enhance a partnership approach to business development with organizations across the region and community development stakeholders
- Proactive outreach to existing businesses in all areas of the city to support retention and expansion of existing business
- Attraction of national and international companies and military missions through a targeted research-driven recruitment strategy
- Create and implement image campaigns promoting Greater Omaha as a great place to do business and live
- Improve the region's competitive edge through site development, targeted work force strategies and community redevelopment
- Provide high quality data and analysis to support the chamber and business development activities
- Create a supportive environment for the attraction, expansion and start-ups of minority owned businesses
- Continue building an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports high growth start-ups and innovation
- Accelerate community redevelopment through collaborative capacity building, work force, transportation and other efforts

Quarterly Reporting:

- Landed projects
 - Number
 - Investment value
 - Jobs
- Prospect pipeline
 - Number of prospect visits
 - Number of new files opened
 - Impressions generated by various marketing efforts (editorial placements, electronic viewership, advertising, etc.)
- A short written report on progress of annual priorities

Develop leaders and articulate the Chamber's leadership and collaborative role in accomplishing priorities

Annual Outcome Measures:

- Chamber leadership program graduate participation on key community boards
- Number of participants in leadership development offerings
 - Leadership Omaha
 - Executive Institute
 - Ready2Serve.org
 - Young Professionals
- Number of participants in staff- and volunteer-development offerings

General Strategies:

- Develop strong community leaders through the continual assessment and improvement of Leadership Omaha, Omaha Executive Institute and Young Professional programs
- Cultivate interest and readiness in civic and political leadership opportunities through www.ready2serve.org and various other community partnerships and training opportunities
- Continue to find congruence between Chamber and Young Professional activities and support efforts to enhance the community leadership role of the Omaha Young Professionals program
- Create and utilize a project management model across the organization that articulates our leadership level, capacity-building opportunities, inclusivity and collaboration on key organizational activities
- Regularly assess the Chamber's collaborative relationships and the outcomes of these relationships
- Execute staff development and mentoring programs that cover basic skill sets as well as provide individual paths for professional growth
- Assist members in increasing their leadership knowledge and connections through the Business Owners Success Series (BOSS) and other small business programming
- Annually review how the organization uses volunteer assistance and develop opportunities for the board of directors and councils that directly tie to current areas of focus
- Provide all Chamber volunteers a meaningful volunteer experience that promotes their growth while accomplishing organizational priorities
- Build a succession strategy for critical internal and external positions

Quarterly Reporting:

- A short written report on progress of annual priorities

Operate the Chamber with excellence, innovation, and efficiency in accordance with our values

Annual Outcome Measures:

Financial Sustainability

- Average operating reserves as a percentage of operating revenue
- Actual revenue compared to projected for each major revenue source (dues, affinity, event, GO!, community development, grants, other misc.)
- ACCE benchmarks
 - Revenue per FTE
 - Total personnel expense/total expenses

Human Capital and Infrastructure Sustainability

- Q12 scores and report on action plan progress on “off” years
- ACCE benchmark of occupancy expense/total
- Report progress on the annual cross-functional plans: communication/marketing; events calendar; facilities; fundraising; information management/technology

General Strategies:

- Build the reserves and fund depreciation
- Continue to examine revenue stream enhancements and potential diversification opportunities, while closely monitoring expense patterns
- Remain committed to employee engagement as a means to improve service and productivity through communication, collaboration and development opportunities
- Incorporate more cross-functional teams and planning in key annual outcomes
- Continue to use the organization’s vision, mission and values to provide individual and organizational focus
- Clearly demonstrate the financial and human capital linkage in the annual program of work
- Focus on enhancing technology, communication and information management tools and practices
- Manage the Chamber’s brand and reputation
- Assess and plan for future building needs

Quarterly Reporting:

- A short written report on progress of annual priorities

Advocate to improve the competitiveness of Greater Omaha and Nebraska

Annual Outcome Measures:

- Cost of doing business (continue the measurement from Moody's economy.com with the goal of staying at least 10 percent below national metro average)
- Total tax burden (continue to measure state progress per Tax Foundation with the goal being in the better half)
- Report progress of annual public policy priorities

General Strategies:

- Research and understand state and local competitiveness issues
- Monitor external state and local competitiveness data; possibly developing an index to measure progress against comparable communities
- Provide appropriate educational/informational research to elected officials to make the competitiveness case as needed
- Engage members in developing annual legislative agenda and provide opportunities for members to network with elected officials
- Implement annual proactive legislative process, gathering information from a variety of business segments the Chamber represents
- Measure outcomes of legislative initiatives
- Provide information and educational opportunities to members
- Identify, keep informed on and address, as needed, priority issues over the next five years.
 - Federal issues: health care reform, cap and trade, EFCA, highway and transportation funding, environment and energy regulations, immigration reform, other regulations
 - State issues: taxes and spending, transportation funding, education, CIR, city/county merger, business development incentives, other regulations
 - Local issues: taxes and spending, education gap, utility infrastructure, other regulations
- Identify, recruit and educate potential pro-business public officials
- Collaborate with various local, state, regional and national groups as appropriate

Quarterly Reporting:

- Number of input sessions with members and number of members participating
- A short written report on progress of the annual priorities

Assist small business growth and development

Annual Outcome Measures:

- Measurement of local small business climate (growth by revenue, employees, SBIR grants, SBA loans)
- Service usage report (how many businesses did we help)
 - Web site traffic
 - Internal service (clients we assisted and referrals to partners)

General Strategies:

- Formalize relationships with external subject matter experts and organizational partners to develop a more robust source of information, services and programming for small business
- Continue to act as a connector of resources for small businesses and enhance the available tools such as the Web site and a community wide menu of educational offerings
- Develop and execute a marketing strategy targeted at small business development
- Focus on enhancing Chamber small business programming including the Business Owners Success Series, entrepreneurship, information and educational offerings, procurement connections and general networking events
- Regularly review, and change as necessary, Chamber awards and events that provide recognition for small business members
- Proactively look for connections across all Chamber programs to leverage opportunities and benefits for small business clients
- Create broad acceptance of Small Business Council as primary voice for small business in Greater Omaha

Quarterly Reporting:

- Service usage report
- A short written report on progress of the annual priorities



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