



## STRATEGIC PLAN

2011 THRU 2012



## **Brand Essence (Position Statement)**

Advancing Regional Economic Prosperity

## **Vision Statement**

To be a vibrant region in a competitive world

## **Mission Statement**

To be a catalyst for growth and prosperity for our members and community.

## **Core Values**

Collaboration

Inclusion

Integrity

Member Satisfaction

The Chamber of Commerce of St. Joseph County is the community's catalyst organization to advance regional economic prosperity. We achieve this by creating powerful partnerships and leveraging the talents and resources of member businesses to create an environment for growth and success. The Chamber offers leadership, advocacy, programs and resources, all geared to build community vitality.

## **PREFACE**

The scope of this strategic plan is 2011-2012 and follows on the successes of the 2004-2009 strategic plan titled *Accelerating Business Growth*. The purpose of this plan is to identify an operating framework to ensure The Chamber's relevancy to the membership it serves and produce measurable and sustainable results.

This planning process started with a half-day board retreat, during which The Chamber's Board of Directors and senior staff members began strategizing and prioritizing goals. Since then, senior staff members have been meeting routinely to engage in lengthy discussion relative to the goals identified and to develop strategies and tactics to implement toward achievement of the following goals:

- Provide leadership toward growing existing businesses, attracting new businesses and helping new businesses start up within our community.
- Strengthen The Chamber's role and effectiveness in the public policy arena.
- Improve educational outcomes throughout St. Joseph County.

The strategic directions of this plan have been developed with the recognition that our members and the business community at-large are not only competing within our region but also with regions around the nation and with businesses around the world.

Through the strategies outlined in this document and the strong leadership of The Chamber working with collaborative partners, we will strengthen the regional economy and be recognized as a center of economic activity and innovation.

This plan was approved by The Chamber's Board of Directors on June 20, 2011.

## **GOAL #1**

**Provide leadership toward growing existing businesses, attracting new businesses and helping new businesses start up within our community.**

### **STRATEGY ONE**

Serve as the region's leading voice for business.

#### TACTIC 1

Strengthen PR/promotional efforts for Chamber's involvement in business growth and attraction through increased visibility.

#### TACTIC 2

Market the community as a destination for the visiting publics.

### **STRATEGY TWO**

Form effective partnerships with other key economic development stakeholders.

#### TACTIC 1

The Chamber should play a greater role in business attraction by marketing the community, actively soliciting new business and following up on leads.

#### TACTIC 2

Meet regularly with state, regional, and local economic development allies to form common vision for growth of the region.

#### TACTIC 3

Be the one-stop information center for local businesses, visitors, site selectors and relocation managers.

#### TACTIC 4

Create a high-level task force to articulate measurable business growth goals and otherwise support community and economic development in our region.

### **STRATEGY THREE**

Assist existing businesses by providing connections to resources that will help businesses thrive in a challenging economic environment.

#### **TACTIC 1**

Serve as a liaison between existing companies and public officials in resolving barriers to growth and supporting expansion.

#### **TACTIC 2**

Intensify matchmaking between existing companies and international markets to help local companies “go global.”

#### **TACTIC 3**

Proactively develop strong business relationships with new startup ventures working in research and development technologies at Innovation Park and The University of Notre Dame.

#### **TACTIC 4**

Expand efforts to capture and analyze information on the area’s business environment in order to better anticipate and respond to business opportunities and challenges.

#### **TACTIC 5**

Work with existing industries to set an annual public policy agenda.

### **STRATEGY FOUR**

Promote and support entrepreneurial initiatives.

#### **TACTIC 1**

1. Connect entrepreneurs in the region with resources and other like minds for further entrepreneurial development.
2. Identify and celebrate high-growth and innovative businesses in the region and develop relevant programming to meet their unique needs.

### **STRATEGY FIVE**

Work to develop, connect, empower and retain young professionals through increased opportunities and resources to enhance their professional development and business success within the region.

#### **TACTIC 1**

Financially support the efforts of the Young Professionals Network to develop, connect and empower young professionals.

## **GOAL #2**

**Strengthen The Chamber's role and effectiveness in the public policy arena.**

### **STRATEGY ONE**

Monitor members' legislative priorities and appropriately articulate collective priorities to our local, state and federal representatives while also identifying emerging issues critical to future business success.

#### **TACTIC 1**

Continue to develop and support the Legislative Affairs Council and its sub-committees.

#### **TACTIC 2**

Collaborate with other chambers of commerce to develop a collective sense of regionalism and form consensus on key regional issues.

#### **TACTIC 3**

Strengthen the grassroots network of businesses and individuals lobbying on key Chamber issues.

#### **TACTIC 4**

Provide members with multiple opportunities to interact with elected officials.

#### **TACTIC 5**

Host and convene an annual Governors' Summit on Regional Economic Growth.

#### **TACTIC 6**

Provide funding through ChamberPAC for issues or candidates that affect The Chamber's Strategic Plan.

#### **TACTIC 7**

Communicate and publicize all Chamber legislative positions and activities.

### **GOAL #3**

**Improve educational outcomes throughout St. Joseph County.**

#### **STRATEGY ONE**

Work collaboratively with public and private school systems, higher education organizations, business and industry and community agencies in an effort to represent the issues, interests and concerns of the business community in helping to develop a highly skilled work force within the region.

##### **TACTIC 1**

Create a high-level task force to articulate measurable community K-12 educational goals and otherwise support education reform and achievement.

##### **TACTIC 2**

Develop and implement a communication plan to increase community awareness of the educational and work force readiness issues within St. Joseph County

##### **TACTIC 3**

Recruit and support qualified individuals to serve in leadership roles in key areas of education policy development such as area school boards and an influential Chamber Education Task Force.

##### **TACTIC 4**

Convene a Superintendents Forum to provide an opportunity for superintendents to interact with the business community, coordinate legislative issues and collaborate on various programs within the districts.

##### **TACTIC 5**

Explore the possibility of starting a "Leadership Program" specifically designed for and aimed at K-12 teachers.