



# 2008 Business Plan

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## Economic Development

*David Taylor, Vice Chair*

### Develop a Marketing Plan for Industrial Recruitment.

*GOAL: Continue to put forth a first class, aggressive effort to recruit new jobs and capital investments in Dyer County.*

#### PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Create a Superfund for Economic Development using Building Bridges Phase II funds as a starting point.
- ◆ Implement Boyette Levy recommendations and continue the targeted industry study to determine the best opportunities for future economic development.
- ◆ Establish benchmarks against peer cities in the region.
- ◆ Create a new set of marketing materials based on the results of the targeted industry survey and peer city comparisons.

#### ACTIONS:

- ◆ Promote the completion of I-69 and the Port at Cates Landing as separate projects, with emphasis on the faster completion of the Port as a working project.
- ◆ Attend more consultant forums around the country to get face-to-face meetings with consultants.
- ◆ Continue participation in the Tennessee Economic Partnership for the purpose of marketing West Tennessee as a business location.
- ◆ Continue advertising in selected publications, including Site Selection, Expansion Management, Area Development, Business Facilities, Memphis Business Journal, and the Tennessee Economic & Community Development Guide.

◆ Continue outdoor advertising campaign with billboards promoting the unique tourism opportunities and quality of life in Dyer County.

◆ Continue to use the results of the Retail Trade Area Study done by Buxton, Inc., to attract national chain retail stores and restaurants.

◆ Upgrade the tourism display at the West Tennessee Heritage Center in Brownsville.

## Existing Industry Development

*Wendell West, Vice Chair*

*GOAL: Improve the competitiveness and cohesiveness of Dyer County industries and remain Union Free.*

#### PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue involvement with Workers Comp issues.
- ◆ Increase our involvement with political issues pertaining to existing industries.
- ◆ Encourage more Industrial Roundtable participation from our local industries.
- ◆ Continue to encourage plant tours of local industry as a component of Roundtable meetings.
- ◆ Work with The Tennessee Chamber on PAC issues.
- ◆ Conduct an assessment of local industries to better understand their present issues and determine how we can assist them.

#### ACTIONS:

- ◆ Bring in speakers to address business issues that affect local industry
- ◆ Improve Annual Appreciation Cookout to encourage more participation.
- ◆ Continue Annual Wage and Benefit Survey with guidance from HR Managers.

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- ◆ Encourage participation in local SHRM meetings.
- ◆ Be available to assist all local industries whenever issues arise.

## Educational Development

*Dr. Karen Bowyer, Vice Chair*

*GOAL: To enhance our local workforce through educational programs in an effort to provide high-tech, high-wage career opportunities.*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Promote the Dual Enrollment program in high school. This will enable students to earn at least 12 hours of college credit as juniors and seniors while in high school.
- ◆ Encourage City and County officials to continue to fund the Dyer County Promise Scholarships for all high school and qualified GED graduates in Dyer County. Expand this opportunity for all GED graduates.
- ◆ Schedule community leaders to make presentations to 9th graders (including the 75 students in the E Academy at Dyersburg High School) to encourage their participation in the Tennessee Scholars Program.
- ◆ Continue to pursue the feasibility of a Boys and Girls Club.
- ◆ Promote the Adult Education Program in Dyer County to encourage adults to complete their GED.
- ◆ Motivate 8 - 12 graders to participate in the TN Scholars program.
- ◆ Advocate to local, state, and federal governments for higher levels of funding for education for P-16.
- ◆ Assess workforce needs of food processing, metal fabrication, and

auto supplier manufacturers in the area and develop more training programs for their workers. (1,000 workers come into Dyer County)

- ◆ Support the implementation of the more stringent set of requirements for high school graduation – Tennessee Diploma Project, Dr. Gary Nixon and John Morgan, Comptroller.
- ◆ Build and promote our health care sector as the best opportunity we have to transition into more service sector jobs with good pay and benefits.

- ◆ Meet with Existing Industry to determine the middle group

## Downtown Development

*Joe Yates, Vice Chair*

*GOAL: Create a sense of place in downtown Dyersburg by using the master design plan to develop a landscape and streetscape plan, bring businesses to the central business district and promote downtown as a place to live, work, shop and play.*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Execute Sub-Master Plan as designed by Askew, Hargraves and Harcourt.
- ◆ Seek funding from any and all available sources.
- ◆ Address the Courtland Square crime issue in South Dyersburg.
- ◆ Develop the River Park and Farmers Market on the Forked Deer River.

### **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Look for grant funding for planning and implementing trails along the North Forked Deer River downtown.

- ◆ Look for further grant funding to develop the Farmers Market. Explore educational opportunities as a basis to solicit funds.

- ◆ Request annual funding from the City of Dyersburg.
- ◆ Request annual funding from Dyer County Government.
- ◆ Explore hiring a professional grant writer.

## Transportation

*John Ford, Vice Chair*

*GOAL: Aggressively promote our transportation corridors and continue to work towards transportation improvements*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Continue to advocate for the following transportation improvements:
  - Promotion of I-69
  - Improve access to the Port at Cates Landing by improving State Route 22, and widening of US Highway 78.
  - Highway 104 to Trenton
  - Seek confirmation of I-69 exit along US Highway 78 and I-155
  - Continue to lend support to Southtown entrance and Downtown Square improvements
    - Downtown parking
    - Support widening of Highway 211 (Newbern to Dyersburg)
- ◆ Continue to seek ways of strengthening local airport services:
  - Licensed mechanic services
  - Additional hangar space
  - Maintain runways
- ◆ Promote rail and water transportation

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## **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Maintain and provide information on truck shipping cost comparisons among Tennessee and neighboring states.
- ◆ Continue to participate in Regional Infrastructure Assessment study and The Regional Logistics Council
- ◆ Be available to assist other committees in gaining funding for transportation related improvement, including streetscapes & parks.
- ◆ Investigate alternative transportation issues such as Nwthra for free rides to work.
- ◆ Be a resource for the community with highway signage issues.
- ◆ Work with TDOT to accommodate prospective industry in the Industrial Park.
- ◆ Provide input to the NWTN – Regional Planning Organization.
- ◆ Continue to stay in direct contact with local and state representatives regarding transportation issues and funding.

## **Business Development**

*Don Crews, Vice Chair*

*GOALS: Provide assistance in the development of new and existing small business through training and resources.*

## **ACTIONS**

- ◆ Continue to enhance efforts to make Dyer County a more “developer friendly” community.
- ◆ Provide regular business enhancing workshops.
- ◆ Partner with Dyersburg State Community College for workshops and seminars.
- ◆ Identify the Best Practices of other Chambers in serving small business members.
- ◆ Continue to promote and market the more unique businesses in the community.

- ◆ Redesign the business expo to provide more opportunities for the public to attend.
- ◆ Begin a quarterly Business Network as an opportunity to promote business and network with members.

## **Community Development**

*Paul Carson, Vice Chair*

*GOALS: Continue to enhance the community's quality of life through active participation and leadership.*

## **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Continue the vice chair speaker's bureau.
- ◆ Encourage Adult & Youth Leadership graduates to move into community service and the political process and provide listing of volunteer opportunities with local civic organizations.
- ◆ Seek opportunities for enhancement of the pool facilities at Okeena Park with the addition of new water features that provide a “water park” theme.
- ◆ Explore grant opportunities for community enhancement projects.
- ◆ Promote advanced medical resources available through local medical facilities and service providers.
- ◆ Continue to promote the importance of community leadership participation in the Governor's Three-Star Program with emphasis on benchmark incentives and needed requirements to achieve each benchmark.
- ◆ Bring the Vision XXI leadership together to assess the program and the current leadership.
- ◆ Continue efforts for indoor aquatic center.

## **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Investigate the needs of persons outside the mainstream of economic vitality in Dyer County.

- ◆ Continue efforts to connect the two existing buildings at the Fairgrounds for use as an enclosed multi-use facility for year around events that will provide both local and regional economic benefits.

## **Agribusiness**

*Jimmy Hester, Vice Chair*

*GOALS: Participate in efforts to promote West Tennessee agriculture and serve as a voice for the farming community.*

## **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Promote the AG Commission.
- ◆ Allow farmers to join the Chamber at a discounted rate.
- ◆ Work to connect the two buildings at the Dyer County Fairgrounds providing a large arena for future events.
- ◆ Stage an outdoors hunting/fishing event surrounding the local Rough Country brand and others in the area. Engage the TWRA, Buck & Bass, Ducks Unlimited, etc. in the effort.

## **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Promote renewable fuels.
- ◆ Promote the Mississippi River Corridor project for Agritourism.
- ◆ Encourage other counties to form an Agribusiness Council of their own.
- ◆ Closely monitor the new US Farm Bill and understand changes in subsidies, etc.
- ◆ Continue the Young Farmers and Ranchers program at the new industrial park and add additional acreage, approximately 35 acres.
- ◆ Build and fill the Agribusiness display in the Lannom Center.
- ◆ Promote and encourage a food processing company to locate in Dyer County.
- ◆ Promote waterfowl hunting in the area.

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## Membership Development

*Katie Winchester, Vice Chair*

**GOALS:** *Communicate the mission of the Chamber, promote the opportunities and benefits for our investors, and provide maximum return on their investment.*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Utilize testimonials from the Board of Directors and Chamber members in marketing and promoting membership.
  - ◆ Continue promoting and referring Chamber members through the Chamber's web site, membership directory, and specific publications.
  - ◆ Hold events to update Chamber investors on the Chamber's accomplishments:
    - Annual Membership Banquet
    - Annual Membership Matters Luncheon
    - Monthly 12 @ 12
  - ◆ Produce electronic "At Work" News Briefs twice monthly to keep members better informed.
  - ◆ Provide maximum marketing and networking opportunities:
    - Business Expo
    - Quarterly After Hours Networking
    - Ribbon Cuttings & Grand Openings
    - Publication sponsorships
  - ◆ Continue to promote the Chamber Certificate Gift Certificate program to encourage members to do business with members.
- ACTIONS:**
- ◆ Investigate electronic transfer of funds
  - ◆ Promote paying membership by credit card
  - ◆ Develop a letter for committee members to put on their business letterhead for 60 days past due accounts.

- ◆ Update the membership software to provide more opportunities for members to interact, update their business information, register and pay on-line for events, receive automatic e-mail reminders for event registration, etc.
- ◆ Better utilize the services of our local media to promote our organization and opportunities for members.
- ◆ Provide discounts for early pay.
- ◆ Investigate Tiered Dues Schedule.
- ◆ Conduct focus groups of current members, dropped members, and businesses who have never joined to determine their expectations.
- ◆ Investigate additional affinity programs.

## Governmental & Legislative

*Bob Kirk, Vice Chair*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Initiate more meetings with elected officials concerning local and area concerns.
- ◆ Attend monthly meetings of City and County government officials to educate them on the Chamber's activities and goals for the region.

### **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Schedule monthly meetings with state representatives.
- ◆ Be more aggressive in pursuing legislation.
- ◆ Urge Chamber members to contact elected officials.
- ◆ Continue efforts with other organizations that engage in legislative affairs.
- ◆ Hold Legislative Candidate Forum for Primary and General Elections

## Regional Development

*David Hayes, Vice Chair*

**GOALS:** *Enhance efforts to position Dyersburg/Dyer County as a regional leader in economic development and develop long-range plans.*

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Create and articulate our regional vision to other communities and develop additional partnerships to assist in our efforts.
- ◆ Lead the efforts for an Orange Carpet Tour for Northwest Tennessee.
- ◆ Educate the local government concerning regional efforts.
- ◆ Support the Workforce Board, P16, and other regional educational initiatives.
- ◆ Work with regional organizations to bring programs to the community.

### **ACTIONS:**

- ◆ Develop a regional major outdoor event that embraces the active lifestyle of our region and Dyer County.
- ◆ Identify regional legislative issues and take positions that will enhance the growth of Northwest Tennessee.
- ◆ Continue to support the Port Project.
- ◆ Support the value of the two Interstates, I-69/I-55, and additional regional road projects.
- ◆ Support the Workforce Board on regional initiatives.
- ◆ Participate in regional recreational projects.
- ◆ Reconvene Vision XXI to identify long-range goals

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## Retail Development

*Ben Edwards, Vice Chairman*

*GOALS: To promote a community-wide effort to attract, retain and grow our regional retail and restaurant base.*

### ACTIONS:

- ◆ Work with the Dyersburg Planning commission to identify zoning for desirable sites for commercial activities.
- ◆ Encourage city and county governments to investigate incentives for retail development.
- ◆ Work to streamline the permitting and approval process.

- ◆ Gather, maintain and update relevant retail information on the Chamber website and in printed documents which are readily available for prospects.

### ACTIONS:

- ◆ Create a positive business environment for retail development.
- ◆ Understand retailers' special vocabulary and site evaluation criteria.
- ◆ Continue to participate in International Council of Shopping Centers, TVA Consumer Connection, West Tennessee Retail Alliance, and other regional efforts to attract retail development

## The Value of Your Investment

### *A return on your investment*

Do you want Dyer County to grow and prosper? Do you want your business to grow? Do you want a better workforce? Better roads? Better schools? More recreational and cultural amenities? A thriving Downtown area that is attractive to visitors? Do you want local and state government to be more responsive to business needs?

*You probably do!*

Do you have time to leave your business every day and work on these things?

*Odds are you probably don't!*

So, the question becomes, who can do that for you in the most efficient manner?

*Your Chamber of Commerce can do that.*

#### **WHAT IS THE CHAMBER?**

The Chamber is a private, not-for-profit business trade organization dedicated to creating new jobs, keeping existing jobs, and creating a favorable business climate for its members. By coordinating the community's efforts to enhance business, the Chamber serves as the most professional, credible and capable agency dedicated to working in partnership with local government to recruit industry, build a

better workforce, and create a livable community that is attractive to outside visitors and investors.

#### **WHAT THE CHAMBER IS NOT**

The Chamber is not a government bureaucracy. Local governments are investors in the Chamber, and the Chamber in turn provides services to local government by planning, funding and delivering specific economic and community development programs with measurable results.

#### **WHAT IS THE CHAMBER'S VALUE PROPOSITION?**

It's simple, really: Directly or indirectly, the work of the Chamber helps everyone in Dyer County by raising the level of economic opportunity for all.

#### **HOW?**

By attracting new industry jobs, keeping existing industry jobs, and helping small business grow. The Chamber keeps payroll dollars and sales tax dollars flowing to local business and government. When a new industry comes to town, those payroll dollars turn over many times as they pass through the local economy. This affects retailers, grocery stores, auto dealers, realtors, and service industries like insurance companies, banks, and law firms.

*Now that's a return on your investment!*