



2009 Business Plan

Dyersburg/Dyer County Chamber of Commerce
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2009 Board of Directors

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Lloyd Ramer, City Schools Superintendent
Dr. Dwight Hedge, Dyer County Schools Superintendent
David Gregson, Dyer County Fair Board
Jimmy Williamson, Power Board
Eddie Burks, Planning Commission

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Economic Development and Tourism

*David Taylor, Vice Chair
John Lannom, Jimmy Williamson, David Hayes, Don Crews, Allen Hester, Ray Lowrance, York Walker, Eddie Burks*

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.
- ◆ Aggressively pursue targeted industry groups for location in the EXPECT II facility.
- ◆ Increase efforts to retain and grow existing industry by visiting corporate headquarters.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ 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 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 utilizing the photos and text from the new tourism brochure.
- ◆ Continue outdoor advertising campaign with billboards promoting the unique tourism opportunities and quality of life in Dyer County.
- ◆ Post calendar of annual events on our website with a link to the appropriate area.
- ◆ Finish new tourism brochure and distribute to the Welcome Centers and hotels.
- ◆ Create an annual historical walking and/or bus tour with the Dyer County Historical Society, Photography Club and Main Street.
 - Include a short lecture on the history of Dyer County, a tour of the Museum, and dinner at a downtown historic site.
 - Utilize the historical walking and/or bus tour as a fundraiser for the Museum and a photo outing for the Photography Club and incorporate a famous photos program to map out the tour and provide a written guide.
- ◆ Initiate a driving tour with a small fee to include locating the sites of old schoolhouses, stilt homes of the bottom lands, Minglewood, and the history of the Minglewood Blues Moss Island and the Mississippi River.
- ◆ Promote unique local bird watching opportunities by distributing the Birds of

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Dyer County brochure sponsored by the Mississippi River Corridor and the Chamber of Commerce.

Existing Industry Development

Susan Dew, Vice Chair

Tom Sheedy, Larry Rogers, Bill Reffert, Stan Welch, Keith Guthrie, Wendell West, York Walker, Brian Collins, Bob Kirk

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
- ◆ Hold Annual Industry Appreciation Cookout and encourage more participation.
- ◆ Continue Annual Wage and Benefit Survey with guidance from HR Managers.

- ◆ Encourage participation in local SHRM meetings.
- ◆ Be available to assist all local industries whenever issues arise.
- ◆ Plan optional interactive industry meeting to share ideals for surviving in harsh economic times.
- ◆ Present available state programs with a focus on helping existing industry.
- ◆ Discuss impact and management approach to EFCA during industry roundtable meetings.

Educational Development

Dr. Karen Bowyer, Vice Chair

Lloyd Ramer, Dwight Hedge, Scott Self, Jeff Agee, Bill Reffert, Brian Collins, Wendell West, Tom Sheedy, Larry White, Joe Yates

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.
- ◆ Schedule community leaders to make presentations to 8th and 9th graders (including the students in 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.
- ◆ Advocate to local, state, and federal governments for increased funding for P-16.
- ◆ Assess workforce needs of manufacturing and service sectors to develop more training programs for their workers.
- ◆ Support the implementation of a 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

Mike Pennington, David Hayes, David Taylor, John Lannom, Jeff Agee, Tim Orr, Don Crews

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:

- ◆ Continue to execute the Sub-Master Plan as designed by Askew, Hargraves and Harcourt.
- ◆ Seek funding from any and all available sources.

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- ◆ Pursue building a 6' wide x 3" deep, 1/2 mile asphalt walking trail around the river park.
- ◆ Request lighting for the Historic District from Dyersburg Electric System.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Look for grant funding for planning and implementing trails along the North Forked Deer River downtown.
- ◆ Look for grant funding to further develop the Farmers Market.
 - Explore educational opportunities as a basis to solicit funds.
- ◆ Request annual funding from the City of Dyersburg and Dyer County Government.

Transportation

John Ford, Vice Chair

Katie Winchester, Tim Orr, Dwight Hedge, Lloyd Ramer, Jimmy Hester, Stan Welch, John Holden, James Davis, K.W. Dennison

GOALS: 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.
 - Four-laning of 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

- 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

- ◆ Support better maintenance (resurfacing) of city streets

- ◆ Investigate improvements to the Industrial Park turn lane

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Maintain and provide information on truck shipping cost comparisons among Tennessee and neighboring states.

- ◆ Promote the intermodal transportation possibilities due to our proximity to the Mississippi River.

- ◆ 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

Cathy Strawbridge, Walt Bradshaw, Eddie Burks, Ben Edwards, Keith Guthrie, David Gregson

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.

- Target specific areas in which we can make advancements

- ◆ Provide regular business enhancing workshops.

- Continue to partner with TN Small Business Development Center, Baker Donelson, The Centre Group, Dyersburg State Community College, and The Reed Center.

- ◆ Survey members to determine their needs in small business development.

- ◆ Develop focus groups of various business entities.

- ◆ Begin quarterly business roundtables with participation limited to one representative per business classification (i.e. one realtor, one banker, etc.).

- ◆ 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.

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- ◆ Continue to promote the quarterly Business Network as an opportunity to promote business and network with members.
- ◆ Continue the “Operation Jump Start” Program and develop recognition program for attendees.
- ◆ Investigate Webinars as an effective way to provide small business workshops.
- ◆ Provide PowerPoint presentations on-line for those who cannot attend in person.
- ◆ Investigate the possibility of providing more workshops for CEUs

Community Development

Paul Carson, Vice Chair

Eddie Anderson, Joe Emery, Greg Lowe, Pollyanna McClure, Joe Yates

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

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue the vice chair speaker's bureau.
- ◆ Facilitate an annual meeting with both City and County elected officials to provide an overview of the Chamber's program of work and economic development initiatives.
- ◆ Encourage Adult & Youth Leadership graduates to move into community service and the political process and provide listing of volunteer opportunities with local civic organizations.
- ◆ 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.

- ◆ Continue to support and promote the Vision XXI program.

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.
- ◆ Determine feasibility for enhancement of the pool facilities at Okeena Park with the addition of new water features that provide a “water park” theme.
- ◆ Continue efforts for indoor aquatic center.

Agribusiness

Jimmy Hester, Vice Chair

Eddie Anderson, Richard Hill, David Gregson, Allen Hester

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

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Promote the AG Commission.
- ◆ Encourage local farmers to join the Chamber at a discounted rate.
- ◆ 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 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.

Membership Development

Katie Winchester, Vice Chair

Jeff Agee, Andrew Harrington, Ben Edwards, Michelle Brewer, Joe Enoch, Joe Emery, LaMar Bartlett

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

Enhance Communication Efforts

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Investigate the use of text alerts to provide timely information .
- ◆ Perform regular surveys to determine the needs and expectations of our members.
 - Investigate survey tools such as Survey Monkey and Constant Contact.
- ◆ Utilize testimonials from the Board of Directors and Chamber

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members in marketing and promoting membership in all available media outlets:

- State Gazette
- Member Radio Stations
- Television
- “At Work” News Briefs

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue to produce electronic “At Work” News Briefs twice monthly to keep members informed in a timely manner.
 - Include a section in the “At Work” News Brief for member feedback.

Enhance Membership Benefits

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Investigate a new gift certificate program to promote our member businesses.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue promoting and referring Chamber members through the Chamber’s web site, membership directory, and specific publications.
- ◆ Hold events to update investors on the Chamber’s accomplishments:
 - Annual Membership Banquet
 - Annual Membership Matters Luncheon
 - Monthly 12 @ 12
- ◆ Provide maximum marketing and networking opportunities:
 - Business Expo
 - Quarterly After Hours Networking

- Ribbon Cuttings & Grand Openings
- Publication sponsorships
- ◆ Encourage more Member-To Member broadcast e-mail and faxes.

Increase Retention Efforts

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Conduct focus groups of current members, dropped members, and businesses who have never joined to determine their expectations.
- ◆ Conduct a membership campaign involving board members and diplomats.
- ◆ Involve more at-risk members at monthly events.
- ◆ Increase personal visits to Chamber members.
- ◆ Assign at-risk accounts monthly to the Board of Directors for personal visits and telephone calls.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue monthly public relations calls and visits utilizing the volunteer Diplomats.
- ◆ Continue to promote paying membership by credit card.

Governmental & Legislative

*Bob Kirk, Vice Chair
Richard Hill, K.W. Dennison, Paul Carson, John Holden, James Davis, Joe M. Enoch, Steve Walker, Dwight Hedge, Karen Bowyer, John Ford*

GOALS: To improve communications with government leaders regarding the needs and interests of Chamber members and the community.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Initiate more meetings with elected

officials concerning local and regional 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.

Regional Development

*David Hayes, Vice Chair
Larry Rogers, LaMar Bartlett, Wendell West, Jimmy Williamson, Mike Pennington, Steve Walker, Ray Lowrance, John Ford*

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 a site consultants’ tour for Northwest Tennessee.
- ◆ Educate the local government concerning regional efforts.
- ◆ Support the Workforce Board, P-16, 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.

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- ◆ 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

Retail Development

*Ben Edwards, Vice Chairman
Bob Kirk, David Hayes, David Taylor,
Don Crews, Michelle Brewer, Cathy
Strawbridge, Larry Rogers, Pollyanna
McClure*

GOALS: 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

Healthcare Industry

*Greg Lowe, Vice Chair
Scott Self, Larry White, Allen Hester,
Walt Bradshaw, Andrew Harrington,
Paul Carson, Susan Dew*

GOALS: Enhance and promote area health care assets to increase our standing as the health care hub for Northwest Tennessee.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- ◆ Promote health care assets in Dyer County.
- ◆ Identify and catalog our health related assets in Dyersburg and Dyer County.
- ◆ Promote assets through a marketing effort.
- ◆ Identify health related strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats in Dyersburg and Dyer County.
 - Develop strategies to address weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- ◆ Recruit physicians and health professionals.
 - Use Chamber members in recruitment process. Use Chamber facility for meetings, presentations, etc.
 - Develop videos, podcasts, website, etc., to aid in recruitment process.
- ◆ Enhance education efforts to train health care workers.
 - Catalog current health related education programs.
 - Identify future health related job opportunities and needs.
 - Work with local schools to enhance curriculum and promote health industry jobs.
 - Promote health related career options to local students.

- ◆ Recruit medical-related business and industry.
 - Understand medical device manufacturing sector.
 - Identify our assets with regard to medical manufacturing.
 - Put a plan together to target these companies.

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