

Plan of Action 2005-2006

Mission Statement

To lead, inform, advocate, and advance business interests for members;
and to promote a healthy community and a growing economy.

Chamber Priority – PUBLIC POLICY

Government Affairs

Actions:

- Present the findings of the Budget Review Task Force to the City Council
- Publicly address county and city officials during the 2006 budget process
- Urge the state legislature to pass Chamber's 2006 Legislative Priorities
- Continue to monitor and research city, county, and school district initiatives
- Assist in the creation of a pro growth, pro jobs community advocacy group made up of business leaders in the Rochester area.

Measure(s):

- Monitor the burden of excessive taxation on Chamber members
- Chamber issues and initiatives are passed in the 2006 state legislative session.
- Show a dollar figure value on return on investment to members from advocacy efforts

Government Forums

Actions:

- Connect with other organizations to sponsor and participate in our events (i.e. Rochester Area Builders, Downtown Business Association, etc.)
- Expand and grow Rochester on Tour Event
- Continue to rotate moderators at public policy events
- Telecast/cablecast government forums events

Measure(s):

- Sponsorship of Eggs & Issues, Local Leaders Lunches, Candidate Forums, Rochester on Tour, and other Government Forums events by Rochester Area Builders, SE MN Association of Realtors, and other community partners
- At least 75% of legislators participate in Rochester Chamber "Adopt-a-Legislator" Program in conjunction with ROT event
- Increase number of public policy events broadcast on local access channel from 2 Eggs & Issues to all Eggs & Issues events, Candidate Forums, Local Leaders Luncheons, and other events as they arise.

Transportation

Actions:

- Monitor the DM&E Railroad expansion project as it is appealed through the court system

- Maintain the positive working relationship and open communication with ZRC and MnDOT officials as the ROC52 project comes to a close
- Assist in the coordination of the ROC 52 end-of-construction celebration
- Continue to advocate for the extension of the current 1/2% local sales tax authority for local roadway projects

Measure(s):

- Obtain extension of 1/2% sales tax authority for local roadway projects

High Speed Rail Task Force

Actions:

- Continue to advocate for high speed rail linking our community to Chicago through the Midwest Rail initiative
- Advocate alternative and integrated transportation systems

Measure(s):

- Engage membership in dialogue on rail issues

Hospitality First

NEW Initiative - education and advocacy initiative for the entire hospitality industry in Rochester. Committee formed and program design and implementation are underway.

Chamber Priority – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: HEALTH CARE/DIVERSITY/ EDUCATION

Business Solutions Committee:

Actions:

- Offer 10 - 2 hour seminars that reach across industries
- Offer twice yearly half- or full-day, premier, educational seminars that reach across industries and serve the Rochester area
- Create a process for marketing the Business Solutions programs
- Participant and volunteer satisfaction (would participate again) in all programs offered
- Realize a net profit on all programs

Measure(s):

- Satisfaction measured by achieving scores of 3.5 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) on program evaluations
- Programs generate revenue
- Attendance for seminars maintained at 15 or more participants per event
- Attendance for premier seminars reaches 100 participants per event
- Marketing enhanced through: direct mail brochures, blast email and faxes, website, newspaper, radio

Diversity / Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast:

Actions:

- Secure a speaker at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast that promotes the business case for diversity
- Plan a program agenda at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast to meet timeframe (start and end on time)

Measure(s):

- Make business case for diversity
- Sell 300 tickets for the event

Executive Leadership Summit

Actions:

- Keynote address to provide information on how the *Minnesota Business Partnership* functions to synergize the public and private sector while focusing on how the Rochester area can proactively address challenges and enhance its impact on the overall state economy
- Respected experts will conduct presentations on key economic drivers, significant employer trends, and the roles of education and government as they affect our economy and area businesses
- Participants will be encouraged to provide input during collaborative de-briefing sessions. This outcome-oriented session will be facilitated by Mike Felmler, CEO of the Prouty Project
- Enhance marketing of program

Measure(s):

- Collectively, the executives will develop a plan to assist the community in moving to the next level. Tasks, goals, and timelines for implementing the plan will be the final outcome. Follow up meetings will be scheduled

- Marketing enhanced through: direct mail brochures, blast email and faxes, website, newspaper, radio

Health Care Committee:

Actions:

- Search for new plan options for our membership (i.e. HSAs)
- Fourth Annual Health Care Summit scheduled for November

Measure(s):

- Provide members with HSA information
- Provide members with information to lower their health care costs

Leadership Greater Rochester

Actions:

- Educate participants on community needs and problems while identifying methods of and tools for affecting change
- Promote the development of communication networks among existing and emerging leaders through interactive site visits and panel presentations
- Provide training in leadership skills that will maximize contributions to employers, organizations, and the community through providing 1 hour of "hands-on" leadership training during each session
- Motivate participants to increase their individual involvement within the community as leaders through participation in the BoardMatch program and Board report assignments
- Enhance marketing of program
- Participants will design and deliver a community impact project
- Track community involvement of graduates

Measure(s):

- 35 students will graduate from the course
- A viable, meaningful community impact project will be implemented
- Marketing enhanced through: direct mail brochures, blast email and faxes, website, newspaper, radio
- The Alumni Association will create a program to a) increase alumni participation and b) produce revenue for tuition assistance
- The Alumni Association will record alumni involvement on area boards and with area projects to evaluate the ongoing community impact of the program

Preparing Workforce

Actions:

- Offer a 3-day Educators in the Workplace Institute; coordinate participation of Chamber member businesses through panels, demonstrations, and tours to show area educators the skill-sets required in today's workforce
- Coordinate student internships and educator externships throughout the year to promote a greater awareness between business and education
- Support the public school DECA program by securing judges or event coordinators
- Promote participation in the "Principal for the Day" program
- Serve on the "Lamp of Knowledge Award" selection committee
- Enhance marketing of programs

Measure(s):

- 65 educators will attend the Institute
- 45 different Chamber member businesses will be involved in the Institute through hosting a tour or participating on a panel
- Educators will be involved in an action plan that would require them to make business connections between the student and the business throughout the year
- Marketing enhanced through: direct mail brochures, blast email and faxes, website, newspaper, radio

Chamber Priority – MEMBERSHIP

Goal: Recruit 200 new members for a total of \$68,000 in new member revenue. Maintain a membership retention rate of 90% by providing more value for membership investment.

AM Espresso

Actions:

- Offer six events to serve member's networking needs
- Promote the event in the *Southeast Business Journal* and in Chamber marketing venues; utilize member testimonials in marketing pieces; create a marketing postcard to be mailed to all members promoting the event
- Secure a corporate sponsor

Measure(s):

- Offer six events
- Maintain attendance of 50 members per event
- Cultivate a waiting list for the event

Business After Hours (BAH)

Actions:

- Offer 11 monthly events to serve member's networking needs
- Continue to promote the event in the *Southeast Business Journal* and in Chamber marketing venues; utilize member testimonials in marketing; send reminder postcards to member businesses to attend each of the events

Measure(s):

- Maintain consistent attendance of 175 people per BAH Event.
- Continue to host 11 monthly events.

Business After Hours EXTRA!

Actions:

- Offer one event for 80 exhibitors
- Continue to create activities at the event that promote exhibitor interaction and networking among participants
- Continue to promote the event in the *Southeast Business Journal* and in Chamber marketing venues; utilize member testimonials in marketing; send personal invitations to member businesses to attend the EXTRA!

Measure(s):

- Sell-out the event
- Attendance of 425 people.

Chamber Annual Golf Outing

Actions:

- Continue to set and enforce sponsor guidelines
- Continue to utilize golf rangers at the event
- Transportation provided if necessary

Measure(s):

- Increased satisfaction as measured by participant surveys

Chamber Annual Member Celebration

Actions:

- Start reception earlier for more networking time
- Maintain celebration emphasis
- Transportation provided if necessary

Measure(s):

- Increased participation, increased satisfaction as indicated by follow-up survey

Member Outreach Program

Actions:

- Make face-to-face contact with all new members 3 times per year to obtain feedback, ensure their needs are being met, and address any concerns
- Organize a New Member check-in booth at Business After Hours to provide information on the Chamber and provide a Business After Hours "Buddy" (a committee member). Buddies will escort the new member during the event and make introductions to other Chamber members
- Increase member retention by communicating with all members

Measure(s):

- Membership retention of new members at or above 70% (in number of members)

Member Visit Survey

Actions:

- Ambassadors will complete 300 surveys per year of companies who have been Chamber members two years and longer

Measure(s):

- 300 surveys completed

New Member Reception

Actions:

- Provide an opportunity for new members to meet other new members
- Thank new members by providing lunch and networking activities at no cost
- Ensure new members are aware of Chamber events
- Obtain food, facility, and 2 corporate sponsors

Measure(s):

- Attendance by new members is 45 or more per event.
- 90% sponsorship of food and facility expense

Power Lunch

Actions:

- Offer four Power Networking lunch events in November, February, May and August.
- Assist in the coordination of each event through securing sponsors, participants, speakers.
- Attendance of 60 people per event.
- Enhance marketing of program

Measure(s):

- Maintain 60 participants per event
- Increase participation by 10% over 2004-2005 (consistent attendance of 45 people)
- Continue to conduct network expert education presentations
- Marketing enhanced through: direct mail brochures, blast email and faxes, website, newspaper, radio

Chamber Priority – COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

Consistent marketing plan for all events to include web site, *Advantage*, blast fax/email, press releases to all surrounding area media, SE area Chambers, and utilize the MN Chamber link.

Chamber Advantage Newsletter

Actions:

- Continue changing sections to meet Chamber needs
- Increase revenue through ad sales

Measure(s):

- Newsletter generates a profit

Chamber Radio Show

Actions:

- Broadcast a monthly radio show to inform the public of actions the Chamber is taking on behalf of the community
- Have a special guest speaker present at each show
- Promote Chamber events and benefits at the end of each show
- Promote Chamber Radio Show on the web site and in the Advantage

Chamber Advertising

Actions:

- Communicate Chamber benefits to out of town "Big Box" retailers
- Communicate to members that Chamber benefits are available for ALL employees to utilize
- Use a speaking out piece in the Post-Bulletin to communicate how the Chamber benefits business
- Conduct an image campaign through print materials and TV
- Co-advertise with the Rochester Downtown Alliance and the Convention & Visitors Bureau

Membership Directory

Actions:

- Create a complete listing of all Chamber members in alphabetical order and by business category
- Provide information about Rochester and the surrounding community
- Provide a marketing piece for member advertising

Web Site

Actions:

- Place member-to-member promotion coupons on the website on a monthly basis
- Provide online registration for select events
- Provide banner ad space as a member benefit

Measure(s):

- 10% increase in web site visits.