



Strategic Action Plan

2021

VISION

To foster a culture and climate of opportunity through robust economic growth and dynamic job creation.

MISSION

To achieve our vision, we serve as the principal advocate for business in partnership with the community; support and assist existing businesses; act as the primary catalyst in promoting the economic health of the Springfield area, stimulating jobs and improving the quality of life.

EXPECTATIONS

In pursuit of our vision and mission, our members and our community rightly expect us to be a:

- Honest Broker
- Trusted Convener
- Astute Analyst
- Prudent Filter
- Representative Voice
- Energetic Promoter
- Reliable Source
- Inclusive Engager
- Responsible Guardian
- Leading Catalyst
- Successful Closer
- And a Consistent Provider of "World-Class Chamber of the Year" Standard of Excellence in every encounter

STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

- Advocating for Business (Public Affairs)
- Growing Your Business (Membership)
- Creating Jobs & Investment (Economic Development)
- Developing Our Workforce (Workforce Development)

ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

This strategic action plan is a summary of consensus priorities identified by the Chamber board of directors. The plan sets priority objectives for 2021, but is not meant to be an exhaustive index of the entire Chamber work product. Existing and ongoing programs are constantly evaluated for consistency with the Chamber's strategic areas of focus.

ADVOCATING FOR BUSINESS (PUBLIC AFFAIRS)

ADVOCATE | Responsible Guardian, Representative Voice

- Leverage Chamber's earned trust to advocate regularly in the state Capitol on behalf of job creators and educate elected officials on legislative and regulatory issues.
- Through Voice of Business Committee, monitor all aspects of Springfield City Council governance and weigh in as appropriate on matters impacting business community, including streamlining the process for development.
- Utilize business and industry expertise to communicate Chamber legislative priorities and business community issues with local and state lawmakers.
- Capitalize on the unique asset of united priorities through regional coalitions, such as the Springfield Metro Partnership, and the statewide business community such as, the Missouri Major Metro coalition, comprised of the four largest chambers in the state.
- Track bills filed in state Capitol during legislative session and provide regular legislative updates on status of key priorities to all Chamber members.
- Connect business leaders with state and federal agencies to provide feedback on regulatory administrative rulemaking.
- Review and update Chamber local policy agenda to address policies that impact structural challenges to city leadership and governance.

CONNECT | Trusted Convener, Inclusive Engager, Honest Broker

- Host the Public Policy Speaker Series to connect Chamber members with key elected officials and decision makers.
- Host the 4th annual State of the State event to provide Chamber members with an update from a high-ranking state official, such as the Missouri Governor, on state issues, challenges and successes.
- Hold two installments of the new Inside the Issues event to provide an in-depth look into specific policy-related topics.
- Build on the existing relationship between Fort Leonard Wood and the Springfield business community through leadership opportunities and the 2021 Ft. Leonard Wood visit.
- Serve as host for relevant programming on international business-related topics.
- Support programs that foster mutual respect and trust among diverse segments of the community.
- Continue to engage the business community in efforts and programming that build social capital, strengthen community partnerships and foster diversity and inclusion in the community.
- Encourage continued volunteer engagement and participation through several industry-specific committees, including the Transportation Committee and revamped Non-Profit Roundtable.
- Foster strategic conversations with private and public sector partners to identify challenges and key areas of improvement in development processes to ensure progress and accountability.

EQUIP | Leading Catalyst, Astute Analyst

- Educate Chamber members on requirements to serve in public office to encourage thoughtful candidates.
- Provide and connect members with timely and thorough resources and programming to meet the needs of businesses as they work to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.
- Equip Chamber members to lead strategic conversations about policy issues and ballot initiatives and their impact on economic vitality and job creation.
- Execute the annual Community Leadership Visit to connect Springfield business and community leaders with one another, while studying best practices and ideas that will benefit the region.
- Lead targeted and strategic advocacy days at the Capitol with stakeholders on various issues.
- Increase effectiveness of Springfield City Council and Springfield Public Schools Board of Education by developing a pipeline of proven leaders.
- Support Chamber-endorsed candidates for Springfield Public Schools Board of Education and Springfield Good Government Committee-endorsed City Council candidates in the 2021 election.
- Serve as a resource on business community issues and economic development to candidates seeking public office.

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS (MEMBERSHIP)

DEVELOP | Leading Catalyst, Successful Closer

- Implement sales training techniques and create tracking system for prospecting activities.
- Connect with at least 250 prospective members to discuss goals, opportunities, and benefits of Chamber investment.
- Refine messaging of Chamber's value proposition to include direct business support, educational resources, advocacy, economic and workforce development, and networking opportunities.
- Promote the Chamber Benefit Plan to increase the attractiveness of Chamber investment among small businesses in the Springfield area.
- Grow membership by engaging business leaders through The Champions committee, leveraging existing relationships where possible and communicating the Chamber's value proposition.
- Enhance new member orientation process with appropriate communications and host three Maximize Your Membership events.

ENGAGE | Energetic Promoter, Inclusive Engager

- Create and implement an improved member onboarding process with appropriate communications and materials.
- Formalize retention outreach efforts, broadening member understanding of the Chamber's mission and value proposition.
- Strengthen Chamber leadership connections with C-level decision-makers of major employers and large member institutions.
- Obtain member feedback to determine the value of Chamber membership and the effectiveness of events, programs, and communications.
- Create tracking system for members utilizing the Chamber Benefit Plan and provide letters of good standing to brokers for insurance renewals.
- Report monthly and year-to-date progress on new member sales, member retention and canceled member activity to the Chamber Board of Directors and Membership Vice-Chair.
- Organize physical and video ribbon cuttings to create positive promotion for new and growing members on the Chamber's social media channels.
- Recognize new and renewed Chamber members each month online and through social media and congratulate members for positive press by utilizing Meltwater and local media sources.
- Provide business education for small business members by hosting six Expert Edge events.
- Provide networking opportunities for members by hosting nine Business After Hours events and two Biz Blitz events.
- Manage the annual Small Business Award application process to recognize small business success among the Chamber's membership.
- Review paused activities due to the pandemic/staff restructuring and re-evaluate for the future. Activities not planned for 2021 include six 60 Minutes to Success series lunch events, February Business After Hours, four Surprise Patrol events, and a reduced ribbon cutting schedule.
- Refine REACH inventory to provide opportunities that meet the needs of Chamber members at all levels.

CREATING JOBS & BUSINESS INVESTMENT (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

LOCATE | Astute Analyst, Successful Closer

- Actively manage more than 12 economic development projects at any point throughout the year and generate and respond to more than 50 project leads.
- Conduct 120 Business Visits focused on businesses that display growth potential or need assistance. Gather intel on the overall climate of companies in the region.
- Meet one-on-one with 100 site selection consultants to sell the Springfield region and understand the changing site selection criteria.
- Realign target industry marketing messages to better reflect key industries and future opportunities.

BUILD | Leading Catalyst, Trusted Convener

- Continue to work with public sector leadership to streamline the development process, create a development-friendly culture, and strengthen the Growth & Development Advisory Council's impact.
- Work with Regional Partners to establish more "readiness" for economic development projects by certifying three additional sites/parks.
- Continue to advance the viability of approximately 10-20 community development projects through the Community Visioning effort including a Convention Center and further development of Jordan Valley Park/ Idea Commons.
- Work with public-sector partners to continue to encourage significant involvement by the business community in the Forward SGF comprehensive planning process.

DEVELOPING OUR WORKFORCE (WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT)

EDUCATE | Trusted Convener, Leading Catalyst

- Continue to provide opportunities for teachers to engage through in-person and virtual programming, such as the Teacher Externship program, in order to connect 100 teachers each year to business experiences.
- Work closely with higher education partners to encourage significant use of the new Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant by residents for jobs in high-demand fields in our region.
- Collaborate with public sector partners to streamline new and existing advisory groups that utilize business leaders to connect the tangible work of business to academic content.

MESSAGE | Leading Catalyst, Energetic Promoter

- Pivot the proactive marketing efforts and continue SEO efforts to drive traffic to the redesigned talent attraction website.
- Expand the Talent Attraction Initiative video series with new video testimonials.
- Facilitate 1,000 connections virtually and in-person with students attending universities and colleges in the region to encourage them to seek employment in the region or consider returning at some point in their future career.
- Distribute CampuSGF, an insider guide to Springfield for college students to 3,000 students.
- Targeted outreach to 650 GO CAPS alumni to encourage students to return to or remain in the region as they enter the workforce by way of a direct mailing and video content distributed via social media outlets and email.

The Springfield Business Development Corporation (SBDC) is the economic development arm of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. We work to create jobs and investment, grow our workforce, and promote economic growth in the 10-county Springfield region. With the support of SBDC Investors and under the guidance of the SBDC Board of Directors, economic development staff has developed this action plan to highlight new initiatives we will be focusing on in 2021.

Existing programs and tasks essential to our economic development work are not detailed here but will of course continue to move forward. Our aim to remain at the forefront of economic development has created a progression of our scope of work to support placemaking initiatives. We hold to the belief that done correctly, creating a quality place will attract even more talent and increase our population growth rate. This is necessary to bring more workers to fill the jobs created by employers in our region.



Organizational Development

- › Solicit additional public-sector investment into the SBDC to bolster talent marketing and placemaking efforts.

Real Estate Development

- › Continue to work with public sectors leadership to streamline the development process, create a development-friendly culture, and strengthen the Growth & Development Advisory Council’s impact.
- › Work with Regional Partners to establish more “readiness” for economic development projects by certifying 3 additional sites/parks.

Business Development

- › Actively manage more than 12 economic development projects at any point throughout the year and generate and respond to more than 50 project leads.
- › Conduct 120 Business Visits focused on businesses that display growth potential or need assistance. Gather intel on the overall climate of companies in the region.
- › Meet one-on-one with 100 site selection consultants to sell the Springfield region and understand the changing site selection criteria.
- › Realign target industry marketing messages to better reflect key industries and future opportunities.



Placemaking

- › Continue to advance the viability of approximately a dozen community development projects identified through the Community Visioning effort.
- › Work with public-sector partners to continue to encourage significant involvement by the business community in the Forward SGF comprehensive planning process.
- › Ensure the messaging around placemaking and its direct tie to talent attraction/retention and ultimately to quality job creation is continually communicated to Chamber members and the community at-large.

Messaging

- › Pivot the proactive marketing efforts and continue SEO efforts to drive traffic to the redesigned talent attraction website.
- › Expand the Talent Attraction Initiative video series with new video testimonials.
- › Facilitate 1,000 connections virtually and in-person with students attending universities and colleges in the region to encourage them to seek employment in the region or consider returning at some point in their future.
- › Distribute CampuSGF, an insider guide to Springfield for college students to 3,000 students.
- › Targeted outreach to 650 GO CAPS alumni to encourage students to return to or remain in the region as they enter the workforce by way of a direct mailing and video content distributed via social media outlets and email.

Talent Pipeline

- › Continue to provide opportunities for teachers to engage through in-person and virtual programming, such as the Teacher Externship program, in order to connect 100 teachers each year to business experiences.
- › Work closely with higher education partners to encourage significant use of the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant for jobs in high-demand fields in our region.
- › Collaborate with public sector partners to streamline new and existing advisory groups that utilize business leaders to connect the tangible work of business to academic content.