

ADVANTAGE COASTAL ALABAMA

Investing In Our Future

Coastal Alabama, blessed with natural beauty and resources that connect the region and the world, must continue to position its strengths, opportunities and resiliency by enabling businesses, the community and environment to prosper.

Advantage Coastal Alabama is a Five-Year Strategic initiative that encompasses the vital deliverables for our economy to have progressive sustainability.

This initiative addresses the fundamental and visionary mechanisms that support and expand business, serve as a catalyst to enhance transportation and infrastructure needs, enhances education and workforce development, celebrates our crucial environment and promotes advocacy for Coastal Alabama to assure our destiny.

Every initiative needs resources and commitment to achieve continued prosperity. **Advantage Coastal Alabama**, by partnering and working together with others, solidifies our future.

SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY FOR EXISTING BUSINESS

Protecting and nurturing our most valuable asset, Coastal Alabama's existing business and industry, is one of the Chamber's most important economic development priorities. Every year, a significant majority of the region's new jobs and capital development is generated by the expansion of our existing business and industry. The Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will continue to offer proactive nurturing support to existing Gulf Shores and Orange Beach businesses through partnerships with government, business, and education leaders and provide access to market information and workforce development services. Over the next five years, the Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will:

Five-Year Objectives:

1. Create and implement new services (i.e., demographic and economic research, advocacy) to support small businesses in Coastal Alabama and the region
2. Develop, expand and support tourism through event, product and infrastructure development
3. Develop and implement a strategy to expand workforce development in support of the healthcare industry in Coastal Alabama
4. Assist a minimum of 25 small businesses annually with their business development needs
5. Advocate on behalf of marine trades at local, state and national levels
6. Assist the coastal cities to advocate and market activity / destination districts as a place for new businesses to start
7. Develop and implement an ongoing education program for small businesses in the region
8. Collaborate with local, regional and state agencies / organizations for the development of a state lodge and conference center in Coastal Alabama
9. Expand efforts to inform and educate Chamber members on local, state and federal issues and opportunities that affect Coastal Alabama businesses
10. Hire a Communications Professional to staff governmental affairs and business advocacy

Annual Cost: \$100,000

Five-Year Cost: \$500,000

A Five-Year Initiative of the Coastal Alabama Business Chamber

NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

For Coastal Alabama to realize its full potential, our community must expand its economic development efforts. The Coastal Alabama Business Chamber in collaboration with the City of Gulf Shores, the City of Orange Beach, the CVB, BCEDA and EDAA must develop and implement a program to recruit new targeted business and industry sectors compatible with our existing business and industry...assist our existing businesses to grow and succeed...and forge strong alliances among our local, state and federal government agencies to promote Coastal Alabama's economic well-being. Through this five year initiative, the Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will:

Five-Year Objectives:

1. Hire an Economic Development professional and staff as needed to recruit new business to Coastal Alabama and our region
2. Establish a task force to craft the five-year Master Plan for Economic Development in Coastal Alabama
3. Create and implement a branding strategy to promote Economic Development in Coastal Alabama and our region
4. Research and develop a list of targeted business sectors to recruit to Coastal Alabama that are balanced economically and diverse geographically
5. Create and maintain a database of available buildings and commercial sites in the Coastal Alabama area
6. Create stabilized and year-round positive growth in jobs from new and existing businesses in Coastal Alabama
7. Establish an ongoing effort to expand the technology infrastructure in our area by hosting an annual technology summit conference and meeting regularly with IT managers in the region
8. Support and market the Aviation Business Park as an Alabama Advantage Site

Annual Cost: \$140,000

Five-Year Cost: \$700,000

EDUCATION / WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Coastal Alabama business leaders must work closely with our Education Partners to enable our residents to develop their talents and become productive members of the Coastal Alabama workforce. Having a highly qualified workforce enables us to recruit new quality jobs. This same well-trained workforce is equally important to the success of our existing business and industry. The Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will work closely with employers throughout Gulf Shores and Orange Beach to ensure that their future labor needs are met in a timely manner. The Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will:

Five-Year Objectives:

1. Establish business partnerships with our schools to include a clearinghouse for mentoring, shadowing and internships to benefit local students for seasonal labor and to expand their career opportunities
2. Establish a Chamber Youth Leadership program
3. Collaborate with our Education Partners to proactively improve area schools and help prepare our students for college and career
4. Host a Roundtable of HR Directors and business leaders to meet regularly and address evolving Coastal Alabama labor needs
5. Recruit skilled, unskilled and seasonal workforce and middle management labor to match seasonal needs in Coastal Alabama
6. Address appropriate lodging and residential diversification to recruit necessary labor to meet seasonal and fulltime workforce demands
7. Host an annual Coastal Alabama Jobs Fair and Workforce Development Summit
8. Collaborate with the CVB to provide training to the region's hospitality workforce

Annual Cost: \$60,000

Five-Year Cost: \$300,000

TRANSPORTATION / INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation will continue to be a critical component of the Coastal Alabama economy over the next five years. Developing and maintaining an effective transportation infrastructure to move residents, workers and visitors around and through our community will have an impact on current and future businesses in Gulf Shores and Orange Beach. Our ability to attract new business, to promote existing business and to enhance our tourism industry will depend heavily on our transportation system. Over the next five years, the coastal Alabama Business Chamber will:

Five-Year Objectives:

1. Assist in the development and implementation of a marketing plan to increase the utilization of the Jack Edwards National Airport
2. Advocate for the extension of the Beach Express to Interstate 65 and to the beach highway
3. Advocate the development of a new bridge to connect Orange Beach to the region
4. Advocate the Tourism and Residential Transit Master Plan for Coastal Alabama
5. Support the improvements to the Interstate 10 corridor and the Mobile Bay Bridge to improve access to Coastal Alabama and the region
6. Promote the use of mass transit to connect the region for seasonal and year-round tourists and workers
7. Advocate the development of waterway districts and public water access points in Coastal Alabama and the region

Annual Cost: \$60,000

Five-Year Cost: \$300,000

ENVIRONMENTAL

A responsible program of economic and community development must also address Coastal Alabama's ongoing environmental needs. Improving the Coastal Alabama workplace need not come at the expense of the natural environment we inhabit. We are blessed to live and work in an area of significant beauty and this program will seek to improve and expand our good fortune. The Coastal Alabama Business Chamber will collaborate with local and regional environmental organizations to:

Five-Year Objectives:

1. Develop and implement an ongoing beautification, clean up and restoration program for Coastal Alabama beaches, bays, estuaries and waterfront resources
2. Advocate the development of a minimum of three new parks / green spaces in Coastal Alabama over the next five years
3. Collaborate with the cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach and Baldwin County to implement a recycling program for businesses and condominiums in the area
4. Expand the development of the signature recreational reef program through the Alabama Gulf Coast Reef and Restoration Foundation

Annual Cost: \$ 40,000
Five-Year Cost: \$ 200,000

Total Annual Cost: \$ 400,000
Total Five-Year Cost: \$2,000,000