



Halifax County CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The 2020-2021 Business Plan is a guide to assist the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce's Executive Committee and Board, staff, and volunteers as they coordinate activities, actions, and events planned throughout the year.

In 2020–2021, the Chamber is positioning our economy for business growth, attract and retain talent, and increased regional opportunities. Working together, we can move Halifax County forward. With committed leadership and collaboration, Halifax County will be stronger and more prosperous for generations to come.



CATALYST
for business growth



CONVENER
of leaders and influencers



CHAMPION
for a stronger Halifax

VISION

The vision of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce is to be a leader and advocate for business, and provide an influential voice dedicated to economic success and quality of life.

MISSION

The mission of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce is to serve the interest of its members, and promote economic prosperity in the region.

CORE VALUES

Member Driven

Our membership is the basis of our strength and we consider their needs in all aspects of our business.

Inclusive

We value the contributions of a geographically and demographically diverse community.

Leadership

We proactively engage in issues and opportunities to move Halifax County forward.

Integrity

We will operate with the highest standards of ethics and honesty, keeping the interests of the chamber and community as a whole as a priority.

Innovation

As a proactive and forward-thinking organization, we create meaningful programs that add value and meet the needs of our members.

Collaboration

We value strong working relationships with other agencies and stakeholders.

Business growth occurs through various opportunities at the Chamber to enhance informal mentorships, to provide exposure and recognition of excellence, meaningful business connections, business resources and savings that result in bottom line dollars for our members.

Objectives:

- Provide educational programs, peer support, recognition, and networking opportunities.
- Support small business development initiatives.
- Provide forums for discussion and the opportunity to take action regarding issues relevant to the business community.
- Promote business growth and the expansion of businesses' customer base.
- Provide opportunities for cost savings to members.
- Provide members access to exclusive exposure opportunities.
- Encourage businesses and community at large to shop local.
- Educate members and the community on products and services provided by Chamber members.

Action Plan:

1. Promote members through direct referrals, and printed and online business directories.
2. Produce a membership directory and quality of life guide that showcases Chamber members.
3. Provide sponsorship opportunities for members.
4. Assist members with ribbon cuttings, open houses, and related public relations activities.
5. Encourage involvement on the Chamber's online member-to-member discount program.
6. Promote business to business and community connections through weekly Chamber Chat video series to include member testimonials.
7. Offer online advertising options to member businesses, including banner and email ads.
8. Explore opportunities to pool small business memberships for group health insurance.

Programming:

Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration (Taskforce)

- Plan and execute the Chamber's 66th Annual Meeting, which celebrates Chamber volunteers and accomplishments of the Chamber.
- Recognize excellence in business through awarding Business, Business Person, and Young Professional of the Year.

Business After Hours (Staff driven)

- Provide networking opportunities, focusing on relationship and business building.

Chamber Check Program (Staff driven)

- Administer and educate members on the Chamber Check program, which keeps approximately \$100,000 annually in the local economy.

Chamber Fall Classic Golf Tournament (Taskforce)

- Host the 7th annual golf tournament, which provides opportunities for businesses to network and receive exposure.

Seminars and Workshops (Committee)

- Educate Chamber members by providing focused, informative workshops on timely and relevant topics based on identified criteria necessary for small business success.

ADVOCACY is our BUSINESS. We serve our members as a convener of businesses with elected officials and government.

Objectives:

- Enhance the Chamber's advocacy efforts on local, state, and federal legislation/regulation that impact the business environment in Halifax County.
- Develop relationships with key local, state, and federal agencies and elected officials to promote a positive legislative and regulatory business environment.
- Advocate on key legislative and regulatory initiatives which align with our "business friendly" agenda and influence public policy by being the 'Voice of Business.'
- Influence and hold local and state government accountable on issues that affect the economic vitality of the community.
- Develop a communications strategy to strengthen and articulate the Chamber's advocacy efforts.

Action Items:

1. Solicit member input on key legislative and regulatory issues that impact Chamber members through forums and survey tools.
2. Develop and present legislative priorities and recommendations at the local and state levels.
3. Organize events and forums for Chamber members to directly interact with local, state, and federal officials to facilitate more effective communication.
4. Partner with regional chambers of commerce and the Virginia Chamber on key issues.
5. Act as a resource for elected officials for information to assist with decision-making.
6. Connect members with elected and other governmental leaders.
7. Increase interaction with the media at all levels to provide the business perspective on key issues.
8. Channel information from the VA Chamber that affect local businesses and update members on key legislation during the Virginia General Assembly session.
9. Create community awareness on voting issues and elections by hosting candidate forums and 'Get Out to Vote' campaigns.
10. Host Pre- and Post-Legislative events to inform the business community of potential changes that could affect them.
11. Incorporate an advocacy center on the Chamber's website that will include board resolutions/position statements, and research advocacy platforms.
12. Use Chamber Day at the Capitol as an opportunity to speak with legislators and other decision-makers.
13. Communicate and build community consensus around a plan for modern high school facilities.

Programming:

Government Affairs (Committee)

- Serves as the major catalyst for pro-business advocacy by providing a forum for interested, like-minded business leaders to unite their time and resources.
- Identify issues that may affect the business climate and quality of life of Halifax County.
- Develop 2021 Legislative Agenda
- Host seminars to increase awareness regarding running for public office.
- Meet with local and state elected officials to discuss issues that affect the business community.

Leadership Team

- Group of community leaders identifying and resolving problematic issues for the business climate.
- Serve as the core planning team of the Halifax County Community Strategic Plan.

The Chamber is a champion for a strong and vibrant community.

Objectives:

- Lead the implementation of the community strategic plan.
- Collaborate with partners on regional economic development priorities, business attraction, and job creation.
- Provide community leadership development and volunteer involvement opportunities.
- Publicize a positive community image by providing quality programs beneficial to the region.
- Support and promote tourism initiatives as an economic driver.
- Support economic and community development efforts throughout the region.
- Attract and retain young professionals to the community, and provide a support system for them.
- Promote and support workforce development initiatives to enhance the availability of qualified workers to reinforce the retention of existing businesses, attract new businesses to the region, and address workforce development issues.
- Champion business perspective in educational attainment initiatives (including pre-k).
- Continue the development of a regional talent pipeline from ages 5-24 to include career development planning and work-based learning experiences.
- Leverage collaborations with K12, higher education, and economic development partners to meet employer needs.

Action Plan:

1. Provide a professional staff for the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.
2. Explore opportunities for grant funding through GO Virginia and other avenues to use in community advancement.
3. Promote, develop, and continue to offer a leadership program.
4. Grow and utilize Leadership Halifax County alumni.
5. Serve as a participating host of the Virginia Economic Summit.
6. Partner with the Towns of Halifax and South Boston and small businesses to promote 'Small Business Saturday.'
7. Provide representation on the Halifax County Department of Tourism Advisory Board.
8. Support the initiatives of the Dan River Region Collaborative and provide representation on the steering committee.
9. Work with existing partners to meet with key local employers as a part of a well-planned BRE program.
10. Support ongoing efforts of Mid-Atlantic Broadband, Mecklenburg Electric, SCS Broadband Internet Services, and others to expand broadband access in Halifax County.
11. Host community forums to discuss issues relevant to the community.
12. Build a social media campaign to share community success stories and better brand our community.
13. Continue to drive and support the Certified Work Ready Community effort.
14. Convene community partners around a formal initiative for college and career readiness.
15. Identify workforce needs by meeting with employers on a one-on-one basis and group meetings, and communicate findings to partners, workforce training providers, and other appropriate sources.
16. Coordinate local and regional meetings of manufacturers to discuss and/or address training needs, policy issues, capacity needs, and/or system changes.
17. Develop a program designed to align businesses with opportunities for classroom speakers, interview days, job shadowing, leadership development, and teacher and counselor engagement.
18. Co-sponsor the regional 'career expo' to expose middle and high school students to career paths and opportunities.

Programming:

Community Strategic Plan Steering Committee: The Chamber president will serve as a member of the core planning team for the Community Strategic Plan and provide support for implementation. Work Groups include:

- College and Career Readiness
- Quality of Place
- Small Business and Entrepreneurs

Community Conversations (Committee)

- Host at least 2 public forums a year to highlight pertinent community issues/needs (i.e. diversity and inclusion, community strategic planning efforts, healthcare, state of the community, young professionals, etc.)

Halifax County Chamber Senior Executive Roundtable *HCCSER* (Committee)

- Provide outreach to major employers in Halifax County and surrounding areas to offer a forum for networking and discussion of issues relevant to them.
- Work with the school system and business partners to ensure the composition of a new high school is relevant to the community's future workforce needs.

Halifax Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs *HYPE* (Committee)

- Attract and retain young talent through innovative events, speakers, and activities for young professionals and entrepreneurs who live or work in Halifax County.
- Create opportunities to connect young professionals with current high level executives and community leaders.

Human Resources Peer Group (Committee)

- Provide a forum for human resource professionals to discuss workforce issues and best practices.

Leadership Halifax County (Committee)

- Coordinate the premier leadership development program that offers opportunities to build and strengthen community involvement and leadership.
- Research leadership alumni programs (OR establish leadership alumni mentor program by Sept 2020)

Virginia Cantaloupe Festival (Taskforce)

- Coordinate the major fundraiser for the Chamber.
- Communicate the economic impact of the Virginia Cantaloupe Festival to businesses, community leaders, and residents.

CORE COMPETENCIES *ensure long-term sustainability to meet the needs of our members and community*

Objectives:

- Strengthen the Chamber's brand and communicate our impact.
- Increase diversity within the Chamber's membership.
- Expand volunteer base and seek diverse leadership that will ensure all voices in community are represented. Maintain a focus on innovation, resources, and effectiveness for long-term sustainability.
- Collaborate with strategic organizations and stakeholders.
- Benchmark best practices of peer organizations.
- Be a go-to source for business connections and information.
- Sponsor fundraising activities to provide financial resources to support Chamber programs.
- Maintain financial stability.
- Develop and monitor an annual budget that supports the business plan.
- Maintain the Chamber's value and influence by developing new and retaining existing members.
- Create a targeted member recruitment strategy.
- Ensure a focus on the value of inclusion in all aspects of the Chamber.
- Build a strong and engaged membership through involvement, networking, and relationship-building.

Action Plan:

1. Tell our story and raise Chamber visibility through our website, press releases, media relationships, newsletters, emails, and consistent messaging.
2. Update website to reflect Chamber's story.
3. Leverage website and social media to provide higher levels of visibility for members online.
4. Research a value-based tiered dues structure for possible implementation.
5. Continue to drive traffic to the Chamber's website through calendar submissions, event registration, job listings, and hot deals.
6. Communicate programming and services through the Chamber's monthly newsletter, "Chamber Connection."
7. Continuously enhance effective use of social media communications.
8. Continue implementation of a 501c3.

9. Continue staff professional development activities.
10. Develop a recruitment plan that supports a realistic, attainable size membership without adversely impacting existing members.
11. Develop an extensive list of prospects based on former members, businesses in Halifax County, and personal contacts from board and staff members.
12. Update and effectively implement the retention plan.
13. Continue to make personal visits with members.
14. Educate members about Chamber benefits and partnerships through New Member Orientations.
15. Solicit member input through surveys and one-on-one visits and use it to align program offerings and delivery.
16. Develop an annual report to show progress to members, community leaders, and citizens.

Programming:

Ambassadors (Committee):

- Identify and recruit prospective members to the Chamber.
- Identify and engage the low or non-engaged members.
- Recruit volunteer leadership.
- Serve as hosts at events.
- Participate in weekly Chamber Chat.
- Increase attendance at all Chamber events and volunteer participation in committees through phone calls and visits.

Board of Directors: The Board of Directors is the elected policy body of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce. Its members represent the business and professional leadership of the community.

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairman of the Board, the Chair-Elect, President & CEO, Treasurer, and Vice Chairs as well as the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to act for and on behalf of the Board of Directors in emergency situations where it is impossible or impractical to convene the full board. This committee also serves as the finance and nominating committee.

Board of Directors

Dr. Betty Adams, Chair
Southern Virginia Higher Education Center

Petrina Carter
Tri-County Community Action Agency

Tom Raab, Vice Chair
Town of South Boston

Katherine Bane, Treasurer
American National Bank & Trust Co

Ryland Clark
ABB

Janet Collins
Fairfield Inn & Suites

Ned Covington
The Covington Law Firm

Mike Lyon
Brooks Lyon Funeral Home

Dr. Mark Lineburg
Halifax County Public Schools

Sandy McPherson
Hunting Creek Vineyards

Heather Satterfield
Gateway Health Alliance

Liz Smith
Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities
Corporation

Jessica Walters
Sentara Woodview

Ex-Officio
Virginia Cantaloupe Festival Chair
Lauren Davis, Edward Jones

Staff

Mitzi T. McCormick
President and CEO

Kate Bane
Director of Membership

Josie Turcotte
Office and Event Coordinator

connect engage prosper

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