

BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# *Strategic Plan*

**2010-2012**





# overall strategic goals

- Continue to grow and enhance meaningful programs, events, seminars and networking opportunities.
- Create avenues through which members can expand their business.
- Build a Communications program to effectively promote benefits of membership to investors.
- Increase the Chamber's membership base through new member sales and improved membership retention.
- Increase value-added products and services for members.
- Actively engage the business community in programs and events that contribute to the development of a positive business climate.
- Strengthen the Chamber's profile as an organization committed to the successful growth and development of its members.
- Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber.
- Provide a means of communication through which Bristol can celebrate local strengths and successes.
- Position the Chamber as a regional leader.
- Increase the number of visitors to Bristol.
- Facilitate efforts to market Bristol as the official "Birthplace of Country Music" and home of Bristol Motor Speedway.
- Preserve and maintain heritage and culture of Bristol.
- Ensure the future financial stability of the Chamber as a result of conservative budgeting; analyze historical data and aggressively capturing new income streams for all programs.
- Participate in public/private partnerships.
- Provide an environment where educators and businesses work together to ensure a qualified workforce
- Develop future community leaders.
- Create a pro-business environment through informative governmental initiatives.
- Be a leader in building coalitions through the region.
- Serve as a conduit to provide timely information on legislative and governmental issues affecting business.
- Serve as a resource partner with local economic development entities.
- Facilitate efforts to ensure a clean and healthy community in which to live, work and play.
- Protect and conserve natural resources recognizing that the stewardship of the environment is essential to the economy.
- Utilize cutting-edge technology for enhancement of chamber programs and services.
- Make a vital impact through community service related projects.
- Manage the distribution of relocation information through data collection, lead fulfillment and targeted promotional activities.





# mission statement

**The Bristol Chamber of Commerce** is the unified voice of business advocating for a progressive, innovative and sustainable economic climate.

# vision

Develop, support and deliver successful strategies and services designed to inspire economic vitality.

## Core Values

Advocacy

Integrity

Commitment

Unity

Progressive

Innovation

Sustainability

## Key Result Areas

Membership

Business, Industry & Education

Government Relations

Community Relations

Finance & Administration

Marketing & Tourism



# membership



**Strategic Priority:** Promote and expand volunteer and educational opportunities offered to members. **Action Items:** Business & Education Seminars; Post volunteer opportunities on the website and provide an online volunteer form; Develop survey to assess the individual interests of members and engage them in Chamber programs i.e. KBB, Governmental, Leadership, CVB; Promote and increase Ambassador Program.

**Strategic Priority:** Provide advertising/sponsorship opportunities to increase member's recognition and visibility in areas best suited to meet their marketing needs. **Action Items:** New member information packet; Membership Directory; Move To initiative; Quarterly Membership Update; Weekly Email Blast; Bristol Business Resource Center; Chamber Website Banner Ads; Table Sponsorships for First Friday and Annual Awards; M-PAK; Affinity Program; Special Events: Ribbon Cuttings, Network@Noon, So Socials, First Friday Breakfast Briefings, Grand Openings and Ground Breakings, Christmas Parade; Chamber programs such as KBB, LEAD, BYL, Governmental and CVB.

**Strategic Priority:** Identify member needs and expectations in order to provide programming that enhances membership value. **Action Items:** Expand Affinity partnerships with businesses in the region; Develop a more effective referral program; Conduct an annual survey of the entire membership to gather needed input; Conduct a survey at the one-year anniversary of membership to assess the impact of the first year membership.

**Strategic Priority:** Enhance membership recruitment efforts to build a stronger membership base and increase member visibility in the local community. **Action Items:** Visit potential member businesses and communicate the benefits of membership; Implement "Be Our Guest" post card program; Generate mailing list of potential members for letters of encouragement to join the Chamber sent by the President/CEO; Effectively target under-represented segments of the business community to grow membership base and to provide beneficial programs; Develop an online new member referral program; Enhance new member recognition to maximize the benefit of membership; Introduction at the monthly First Friday Business Briefing; Listing in Weekly Email; Listing in Chamber Voice printed and included monthly in the Bristol Herald Courier; Listing in Quarterly Membership Update with the possibility of photo inclusion.

**Strategic Priority:** Establish a Retention Plan to strengthen the renewal rate of current membership. **Action Items:** Implement Member Mentoring Program to encourage new or non-active members to attend an event with another member, Ambassador, or staff person; Develop "Email the Board" where members can ask questions, post complaints, concerns, or tell us what we are doing right; Thank You notes written by Board Members to new members and Gold Club members; Notes and addresses available at monthly Board meeting; Develop Surveys for Membership; New Member Survey sent at 90 days; General Membership Survey sent annually; Explore the possibility of Automated Voice Reminders; Explore the possibility of WebCam messages from President/CEO at renewal date; Implement business segmented roundtable discussions; Explore "Tiered Dues" or Participation Level Dues Structure.

**Strategic Priority:** Recruit and Retain Gold Club Members/Investors. **Action Items:** Enhance Gold Club brochure to use as a recruitment/retention piece for Gold Club Members/Investors highlighting benefits of investment; Maximize Exposure of Gold Club Members/Investors at events and in publications; Listed in FFBB program; Banner displayed at events and in Chamber lobby; Gold Club table available at FFBB; Highlight individual Gold Club businesses in weekly email; Organize opportunities for annual Gold Club visits by Ambassadors, Board Members, or Staff; Develop target list of potential Gold Club members to be invited to a Gold Club breakfast.

**Strategic Priority:** Increase Communication between Members, Chamber Staff, and Board of Directors. **Action Items:** Develop "Email the President" where members can ask questions, post complaints, concerns, or tell us what we are doing right; Thank You notes written by Board Members to new members and Gold Club members.

Champions: Amy Shuttle, Membership Investment Specialist  
Karen Witcher, Membership Investment Specialist  
David Ring, Vice-Chairman, Member Relations  
Greg Neal, Vice-Chairman, Gold Club



**Strategic Priority:** Promote communication and awareness among area businesses and industries. **Action Items:** Conduct workshops/seminars to discuss, teach and inform attendees on business issues and trends; Identify workshop topics to meet training needs; Explore collaboration that would leverage resources for a healthy workforce.

**Strategic Priority:** Continue to develop the Bristol Business Resource Center (BBRC). **Action Items:** Develop a marketing plan for BBRC; Recruit additional service providers; Collect measurable data for BBRC; Provide services and training opportunities for business owners to ensure viable business climate.

**Strategic Priority:** Assist employers who wish to recruit and retain the best quality employees in a changing labor market. **Action Items:** Educate chamber members on job training programs available through higher education centers; Work collaboratively with regional Workforce Investment Boards and the Alliance for Business and Training to inform; industry of available grants and training for incumbent or displaced workers; Work cooperatively with Technology Councils to support strategies that will result in high-wage jobs, formation of technology-based companies, and insure a technology based workforce; Encourage a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

**Strategic Priority:** Serve as a resource partner with local economic development entities. **Action Items:** Provide referrals and potential prospect contacts to economic development entities; List on chamber's web site information to include demographics, vital economic data and statistics; Participate in economic development functions, visits, calls and meetings as needed; Support competitive tools that positively affect infrastructure, tax policies and regulations, workforce development, a clean environment and technology initiative; Support prudent incentives for business attraction and expansion.

**Strategic Priority:** Promote relationship between business and education. **Action Items:** Work with school systems to increase high school graduation rates and raise test scores; Maintain Workforce Development Program between eighth grade students and local businesses and industries promoting Math, Science & English; Align education goals with those of state and

*federal curriculums, mandates and governance; Support community colleges and technology centers to have the flexibility and funding to provide training programs that meet job demands; Increase business support of K-12; Encourage leadership (schools and business community) to improve performance of at-risk children; Coalescing education and business to achieve a unifying vision for our school systems; Encourage increased collaboration among regions higher education institutions to create effective partnerships in research, innovation and technology; Participate in regional initiatives that address education and workforce results; Develop PIE to provide parents and industries with the latest information on education reform, scholarships and educations assistance programs for students and adults; Coordinating and implementing TN and Commonwealth Scholars programs to develop a more qualified workforce; Encourage post-secondary education to increase number of adult learners and bring the region up to national average.*





# government relations



**Strategic Priority:** Represent the interests of business at the local, state and federal levels. **Action Items:** Visit Richmond and Nashville legislative offices; Focus on long-term permanent issues that affect the business community; Attend Bristol, TN and Bristol, VA City Council meetings; Advocate for pro-business legislation.

**Strategic Priority:** Conduct governmental relations meetings to discuss and review legislative issues that affect Bristol businesses. **Action Items:** Invite legislators and elected officials to attend governmental relations meetings to provide current information of pending legislation.

**Strategic Priority:** Effectively communicate governmental issues to membership base. **Action Items:** Distribute governmental related e-mails from the U. S. Chamber, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Virginia Chamber of Commerce to members of the Governmental Relations Council and Board of Directors; Continue an annual legislative agenda with general public policies to improve the response time to pending legislation; Provide governmental up-dates at First Friday Business Briefings.

**Strategic Priority:** Maintain communications with elected officials. **Action Items:** Utilize conference calls and legislative visits to stay abreast of current issues and concerns; Coordinate and host candidate forums and events to provide the community and chamber membership with current legislative information; Effectively voice the chamber's position on legislative issues, needs, and concerns to elected officials; Involve Board of Directors in discussion of issues that may be influenced by government entities; Participate with other chambers in regional legislative events; Poll members on legislation pertinent to business; Position the chamber as a leader in building consensus and mobilizing resources for the purpose of strengthening businesses' influence on public policy.

**Strategic Priority:** Educate membership on the governmental process. **Action Items:** Host Government 101 annually; Promote advancement of regional issues; Identify common goals between city and county government and business sector to ensure a proactive approach at the local level.



Champions: Tiffany Ramsey, Program Director  
Lisa Meadows, President/CEO  
Israel O'Quinn, Government Relations Chair



**Strategic Priority:** Assemble potential and established leaders in the Bristol community and develop their leadership skills through LEAD Bristol! and Bristol Youth Leadership. **Action Items:** Identify, educate and motivate emerging community and business leaders about the various facets of the region; Partner with regional higher education institutes and community colleges to engage participants in further educational and professional development; Create opportunities for class participants to seek solutions for current community needs through service projects; Develop networking opportunities for class participants through involvement with other community leaders and program alumni; Build upon current relationships with high school administrators; Evaluate each class session of LEAD Bristol! and BYL and implement any changes necessary to improve the programs.

**Strategic Priority:** Activate the Leadership Alumni Association. **Action Items:** Conduct a successful BYL Alumni Program for second year BYL students and evaluate the program including legislative visits annually; Enlist support of alumni to help secure financial sponsorship for LEAD Bristol!; Recruit graduates to serve on the LEAD Bristol! and BYL Steering Committees; Develop a LEAD Bristol! and BYL Alumni online database.

**Strategic Priority:** Utilize BYL and LEAD Bristol! Steering Committees. **Action Items:** Plan each class session and set principles for each class focus; Select qualified class participants from applications; Select community service project for each class; Explore new and relevant components to emphasize value of leadership training.

**Strategic Priority:** Continue to provide the community with opportunities to enhance the quality of life in Bristol through the Keep Bristol Beautiful program. **Action Items:** Achieve the financial goals of the Keep Bristol Beautiful program by maintaining membership base, obtaining event sponsors, soliciting businesses for in-kind contributions, and monitoring expenses; Implement strategy to recruit environmentally conscious board members; Develop partnerships that will improve and

protect the environment while balancing those with the needs of the business community; Identify best practices for Green Initiatives; Monitor legislation that impacts the environment; Encourage local governments to invest and plan for infrastructure improvements as well as green space.

**Strategic Priority:** Coordinate annual Keep Bristol Beautiful events. **Action Items:** America Recycles Day; Beautification Awards; Beaver Creek Cleanup; Great American Cleanup; Earth Day Celebration; East TN Environmental Conference; Special Event Recycling; Environmental Awareness; Household Hazardous Waste Collection; Litter Index; Regional Public Lands Day; South Holston Lake & River Cleanup; Telephone Directory Recycling; Sullivan County Conservation Camp; Cigarette Litter Prevention; Green Cities Initiatives; Community Outreach and Education

**Strategic Priority:** Prepare accurate and timely KBB reports for Keep America Beautiful (KAB), Keep Tennessee Beautiful, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. Measure results of KBB program by comparing results for this year against reports from previous years and to KAB reports from similar communities. **Action Items:** Implement an environmental education program in local schools; Continue a downtown community enhancement plan; Develop a more concise and informative KBB section of the website.

**Strategic Priority:** Communicate to the Bristol community the service and leadership opportunities offered by the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. **Action Items:** Distribute informational brochures for the Bristol Youth Leadership, LEAD Bristol!, and KBB programs; Use local & regional media and public services announcements to convey to the community the services offered by Bristol Youth Leadership, LEAD Bristol! and KBB programs; Present the LEAD Bristol! and BYL community service project results to civic, professional and community organizations.

Champions: Paula Hurt, Vice-President, Finance & Administration  
Tiffany Ramsey, Program Director  
Genette Patton, Keep Bristol Beautiful Director  
Donna Felty, Vice-Chairman, Community, Governmental & Leadership Development



# tourism, communications & marketing

**Strategic Priority:** Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber and CVB. **Action Items:** *Develop an aggressive initiative that promotes Bristol to regional and national media, targeting corporate and tourism markets; Further develop and strengthen relationships with the media; Maintain a comprehensive set of graphic standards, which supports the branding of materials, publications, web site and all documents of the Chamber programs; Continue a PR campaign of the importance of the CVB to the community.*

**Strategic Priority:** Attend educational seminars and conferences on tourism, marketing and professional development. **Action Items:** *Represent Bristol and attend educational seminars at the Tennessee Governor's Conference, Virginia Governor's Conference, Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and Tennessee Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Participate with regional tourism agencies, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia's Crooked Road, Mountain South and Round the Mountain, in various educational tourism and marketing initiatives; Attend state-level professional development conferences through the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation.*

**Strategic Priority:** Print and distribute quality brochures and marketing pieces that promote Bristol. **Action Items:** *Produce Media Kit, Bristol TN/VA Visitor Guide, Meeting & Group Planner's Guide/CD-ROM, CVB Services Guide, DVD, and Historic Walking Tour; Contract with Print Distribution, a brochure distribution service covering 160 sites along I-81 and I-26 throughout Tennessee and Virginia; Provide brochures for Welcome Centers and Visitors Center across Tennessee and Virginia; Explore avenues for niche marketing to showcase Bristol's unique attractions; Utilize web technology to offer all publications online and capture mail addresses for future visitor recruitment; Provide a monthly opt-in e-newsletter of hotel and travel incentives, sent to potential visitors.*

**Strategic Priority:** Exhibit and attend trade and travel shows that market to the leisure, motor coach and meeting planner markets. **Action Items:** *Promote Bristol via trade and travel shows through cooperatives like the Tri-Cities TN Travel Connection and Virginia's Crooked Road group initiative; Participate in other travel and trade shows by sending promotional materials of Bristol to shows attended by representatives of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia's Crooked Road, Tri-Cities Tennessee Travel Connection, and Mountain South International Cooperation.*

**Strategic Priority:** Advertise in national publications, host familiarizations tours and provide information to journalists to maximize Bristol's exposure on a national and international basis. **Action Items:** *Host media familiarization tours in cooperation with the regional and state tourism offices; Advertise to the leisure travel market, convention and meeting planners, and group tour operators through a variety of publications; Apply for cooperative marketing/advertising grant funds; Participate in regional marketing/advertising opportunities to capitalize on interstate traffic; Attend media trade shows; Develop a password protected on-line media download center.*

**Strategic Priority:** Continue relationships with local, regional and state organizations and participate in cooperative projects. **Action Items:** *Serving on the Board of Directors and Marketing Committees of the Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia's Crooked Road, Tennessee Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Round the Mountain, Wilderness Road and Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Partner with "Tourism Day on the Hill."*

**Strategic Priority:** Assist with a variety of events, which showcase the Bristol community, contribute to the profit of Bristol businesses and increase tax revenue. **Action Items:** *Partner with the City of Bristol TN and Bristol VA in hosting events; Identify and explore the possibilities of attracting new sporting events to Bristol through partnerships; Partner with area convention and visitors bureaus in hosting sporting events that benefit the entire region; Assist area-sporting associations with events and special projects; Promote events such as Rhythm & Roots and Speedway in Lights that enhance the quality of life in our community; Integrate tourism for future of economic development, recruitment and relocation; Provide relocation page within Visitor Guide and online relocation section; Advocate with local and state legislators minimum levels of CVB funding from lodging and meal taxes collected.*



**Strategic Priority:** Develop a comprehensive funding plan. **Action Items:** Present an annual proposal to Bristol TN and Bristol VA for funding; Identify other revenue streams; Continue dialog with cities concerning their goals for tourism; Enhance online revenue sources through online hotel bookings, souvenir store, and banner ads; Continue Bristol merchandising plan.

**Strategic Priority:** Market and sustain a comprehensive relocation program “MoveTo Bristol.” **Action Items:** Create supplemental marketing materials; Maintain “MoveTo Bristol” Website; Partner to with Return to Roots (VA) and Retire Tennessee programs; Attend relocation and retirement tradeshow; Coordinate distribution of relocation packet with Customer Service Representatives; Develop measures to quantify relocation results.



Champions: Matt Bolas, Vice President, Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Jennifer Molley Wilson, Communication & Events Coordinator  
Kimberly Leonard, Marketing & Sales Director  
Jack Dempsey, Vice-Chairman, Convention & Visitors Bureau



**Strategic Priority:** Ensure the future financial stability of the Chamber as a result of conservative budgeting for all programs. **Action Items:** *Serve as a catalyst for successful programming, through budgeting; Develop a comprehensive plan to implement a reserve fund; Encourage the staff toward achieving increased revenue and decreased expenses within the budget process; Work with management staff on process for accurate forecasting and budgeting; Prepare and present clear and concise monthly financial statements and all related worksheets; Review internal operations and procedures and update accordingly; Develop a long-term financial plan.*

**Strategic Priority:** Provide all information to ensure an unqualified opinion is obtained from an independent audit firm for the Chamber and the Foundation. **Action Items:** *Prepare all financial materials for the audit team; Act as a liaison between the audit team and the organization; Insure only a limited amount of items appear on the management letter; Insure that Income Tax Returns are filed in a timely manner by the auditor.*

**Strategic Priority:** Continue to maintain and monitor the accounts payable and deposit systems. **Action Items:** *Ensure that all deposits are made on a timely basis and that correct accounts are posted; Utilize the purchase order system to track and monitor budgeted expenses verses actual expenses.*

**Strategic Priority:** Work with the Membership team on Retention System. **Action Items:** *Review list of monthly delinquent accounts, President/CEO and membership staff; Investigate the possibility of ACH payments.*



**Strategic Priority:** Maintain quality management's controls and achieve a 5-star rating. **Action Items:** Coordinate the Reaccreditations process, at five-year intervals, for the Bristol Chamber of Commerce; Work closely with the management team to ensure that Tennessee Quality Awards criteria are practiced throughout the organization; Encourage staff to keep important items to be utilized for reaccreditation; Encourage staff to look for methods, programs and communication opportunities to prepare for next reaccreditation process.

**Strategic Priority:** Provide comprehensive coverage in the Human Resource Arena. **Action Items:** Provide effective training to the staff on matters that pertain directly to the working environment of the Chamber; Ensure that the present Employee Handbook is kept up-to-date and that all personnel have a current copy; Implement an orientation plan for new employees; Evaluate and select available Chamber Executive educational courses to most efficiently use the funds in the training budget.

**Strategic Priority:** Effectively monitor and determine appropriate salary levels, employee benefits, policies and procedures to parallel other comparable Chambers of Commerce. **Action Items:** Evaluate the medical, dental and optional life insurance programs to provide the greatest benefits to the staff at the most reasonable possible pricing for the Chamber; Constantly strive to evaluate policies and procedures to ensure that they provide the needed direction; Review and evaluate information obtained from the U. S. Chamber of Commerce to compare all employee benefits.

**Strategic Priority:** Organize and maintain the physical appearance and maintenance of the building and grounds. **Action Items:** Evaluate improvements to the Chamber's facilities which best utilize the Gold Club funds; Plan and implement corner development and gateway project; Plan and execute improvements as necessary.

**Strategic Priority:** Maintain the quality of the Chamber's daily office equipment.

**Strategic Priority:** Maintain a Crisis Communication Plan. **Action Items:** Tailor the plans to the needs of the local business community; Work with Sullivan County EMS to incorporate their Crisis Community Plan

**Strategic Priority:** Utilize a technology plan for the Chamber. **Action Items:** Implement a rotation system for new computers to be installed; Out-dated computer equipment to be recycled; Keep abreast of technological innovations and work towards implementing these as needed.

**Strategic Priority:** Create Chamber Internship Program. **Action Items:** Develop an intern qualification list to provide to colleges for interns; Develop intern job structure agreement.

**Strategic Priority:** Provide quality customer service. **Action Items:** Develop and train staff to fulfill customer needs with a positive attitude; Collect comprehensive demographic information about Bristol; Investigate feasibility of a relocation fulfillment piece; Provide relocation information to customers.

**Strategic Priority:** Provide community outreach through the Bristol Christmas Parade. **Action Items:** Enhance sponsorship levels; Enhance marketing materials and timely distribution of materials; Develop parade evaluations for participants; Assess organizational materials for parade and continue to refine processes used.





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