



# DEFINING THE FUTURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Garland Chamber of Commerce  
Strategic Plan 2015-2019

# Defining the Future of Economic Development

## Strategic Plan Summary

In a city with more than 225,000 residents, 102,000 jobs and 9,000 businesses, a dedicated effort to economic development is essential to long-term sustainability and growth. Based on extensive research with the business community, and in conjunction with the evaluation of existing data and expectations of local stakeholders, the Garland Chamber of Commerce has compiled a thorough strategic plan to facilitate economic growth in Garland, Texas over the next five years.

Among the various forms of feedback acquired, four primary focus areas were consistently emphasized as priorities: workforce development, small business assistance, business retention and expansion, and marketing and awareness. In accordance with the division of responsibilities formulated by the Garland Economic Development Partnership, these four categories establish a foundation by which the organization will be better able to facilitate an understanding of the value in supporting the growth and success of existing businesses in the Garland community.

This plan presents goals, strategies and objectives for each of the determined priorities over the next five years, accompanied by proposed means of measurement and estimated costs associated with the allocation of additional resources. As the Chamber works to efficiently and effectively connect the Garland business community with the necessary components of sustainable success, the organization will remain true to its vision, "The greater Garland community will enjoy a sustainable high quality of life with a vibrant and varied business environment."



## About the Garland Chamber

**Mission:** As servant leaders and a role model of performance excellence, the Chamber is the trusted unifying force that acts as the catalyst for positive change in the greater Garland community.

**History:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce was originally founded as the Garland Commercial Club in 1895. A small group of residents formed the organization in an effort to get the word out that Garland was a good place to do business. In 1923, the club was renamed the Garland Chamber of Commerce and as the Garland economy has evolved through the years from onion farms to major industry, the Chamber evolved to meet the needs of local businesses in every stage.

When Garland's industrial era began in 1939, the Chamber was largely responsible for the attraction of companies like the Byer-Rolnick Hat Corporation (now known as Hatco) and Southern Aircraft (now General Dynamics). From the organization's inception, the Chamber's staff and board of directors have worked tirelessly to establish a long-standing tradition of facilitating business connections that allow for continuous improvement and long-term success in the Garland economy.

In 1995, the Chamber joined together with the City of Garland and Garland Independent School District to establish the Garland Economic Development Partnership. The three branches of the Partnership work together to attract and retain business in the Garland community. This innovative approach allows the city to provide progressive services to both small and large businesses.

In 2006, the Chamber made huge strides in supporting the needs of the city's broad manufacturing base by establishing the Dallas County Manufacturers' Association, which is a specialized branch of the Chamber focused on facilitating workforce development and advocating on behalf of manufacturers in various local and national issues affecting their sector.

True to its roots, the Chamber is dedicated to supporting businesses of all shapes and sizes, particularly the small businesses that form the foundation of Garland's local economy. In 2011, the Chamber formed yet another monumental partnership, this time with the Dallas Small Business Development Center. The Chamber became the very first Chamber to host a satellite office of the SBDC in order to provide free, in-depth counseling services to start-up companies and existing small businesses.

The Chamber and its staff have a firm grasp on what is necessary to reach the high goals Garland has set to attain. Education, workforce training, leadership skills and business counseling are the fundamental pieces to a successful business environment, and the Chamber is the common thread among all parts. At its core, every resource and connection provided by the Chamber serves the same purpose – to help local businesses grow and continue to be successful. Whether its clients and customers, business services, community information or operational resources you seek, the Garland Chamber of Commerce is your, "Connecting Source."

## The Team

The dedicated professionals on staff at the Garland Chamber of Commerce will work together to accomplish the ambitious goals set forth by the Strategic Plan. Accountability and quantifiable results will be among the highest priorities in determining the success of local economic impact.



**Paul Mayer, CEO**  
Manages: Overall Strategy, Direction



**Alexander Helgar, Membership Development**  
Manages: Membership Growth, Retention



**Karina Olivares, President**  
Manages: Budget, Organization Governance



**Diane Whitlock, Office Manager**  
Manages: Operational Office Activity



**Jenna McWethy, Vice President**  
Manages: Marketing, Long-Range Planning



**Andrea Tamez, Small Business Program Coordinator**  
Manages: Small Business Assistance and Initiatives



**Liza Cenicerros, Director of Projects**  
Manages: Events, Sponsorships



**Ariel Boone, Business Retention & Workforce Coordinator**  
Manages: Business Retention and Workforce Development

## **The Identified Targets**

### **Partners**

*City, School, DCCCD, Board of Directors*

Our partners' needs are assessed on a one-on-one basis. Whether it's advocating for funding, providing connections to students and employers or assisting in marketing the value of various programs, the Garland Chamber of Commerce is committed to meeting the needs of each of its partners.

### **Membership & Business Community**

*Garland Economic Development Partnership Investors*

Through access to the largest local influencers and up-to-date information on relevant happenings in the area, the Garland Chamber of Commerce provides its GEDP investors with assurance of its commitment to support the growth of the community.

*Manufacturers and DCMA*

As an advocate for sustaining Garland's thriving workforce, the Garland Chamber of Commerce supports local manufacturers by providing valuable certificates of origin and opportunities to make priceless connections in the areas in which they do business.

*Small Businesses*

With a dedicated focus on the success of Garland's small business community, the Garland Chamber of Commerce provides various resources to help owners maintain sustainability. These resources include connections to capital, marketing assistance with the SBDC, advertising opportunities, education and training, and most importantly, quantifiable connections to potential customers.

### **Community**

*Visitors, Residents and Citizens, Ethnic Groups*

The primary vision of the Garland Chamber of Commerce is that greater Garland community will enjoy a sustainable high quality of life with a vibrant and varied business environment. The Chamber supports this statement daily by offering directions and information about Garland to visitors and by supporting local non-profit organizations in various initiatives.

### **Economic Development Specific**

*Brokers, Developers, Site Selectors*

Promoting sustainable community growth remains a high priority for the Garland Chamber of Commerce as the organization provides strategic insights on development opportunities to industries looking to enter the North Texas market. The Chamber guides each prospect through the development process, providing demographic information and valuable connections to area influencers, and advocating for incentives.

# SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- Experienced, Committed Staff
- Support of the Board of Directors and Community Leaders
- Clarity of Direction, Objectives and Accountability Processes
- Long-Standing Community Credibility
- Wealth of Knowledge and Resources Available Through Extensive Network of Connections

## Weaknesses

- All Staff Operating at Maximum Capacity (Little Room for Activity Growth)
- Limited Availability of Additional Office Space
- Inconsistency of Formal Feedback
- Infrequent External and/or Regional Marketing Efforts

## Opportunities

- Large Local Business Community
- Professional Partnerships with Business Influencers and Organizations
- Working Relationship with Garland ISD and Dallas County CCD
- Participation in Well-Known National Initiatives (MFG Day, Small Business Week, etc.)
- Independent Research (Competitive Analysis, Continual Feedback Loop)

## Threats

- Inadequate Funding
- Lack of Public Understanding
- “Buy Local” Philosophy Not Widely Adopted by Community
- Inaccuracy of Business Database Information
- Busy Schedules of Business Owners Inhibits Participation

# 5-Year Goals

Within the four targeted focus areas for the 5-Year Strategic Plan, the Garland Chamber of Commerce staff has set a long-range goal for each, accompanied by segmented strategies and year-to-year objectives.

## Workforce Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will act as a liaison between local employers and educational institutions to facilitate the training and continued education of a qualified workforce.

## Small Business Plan

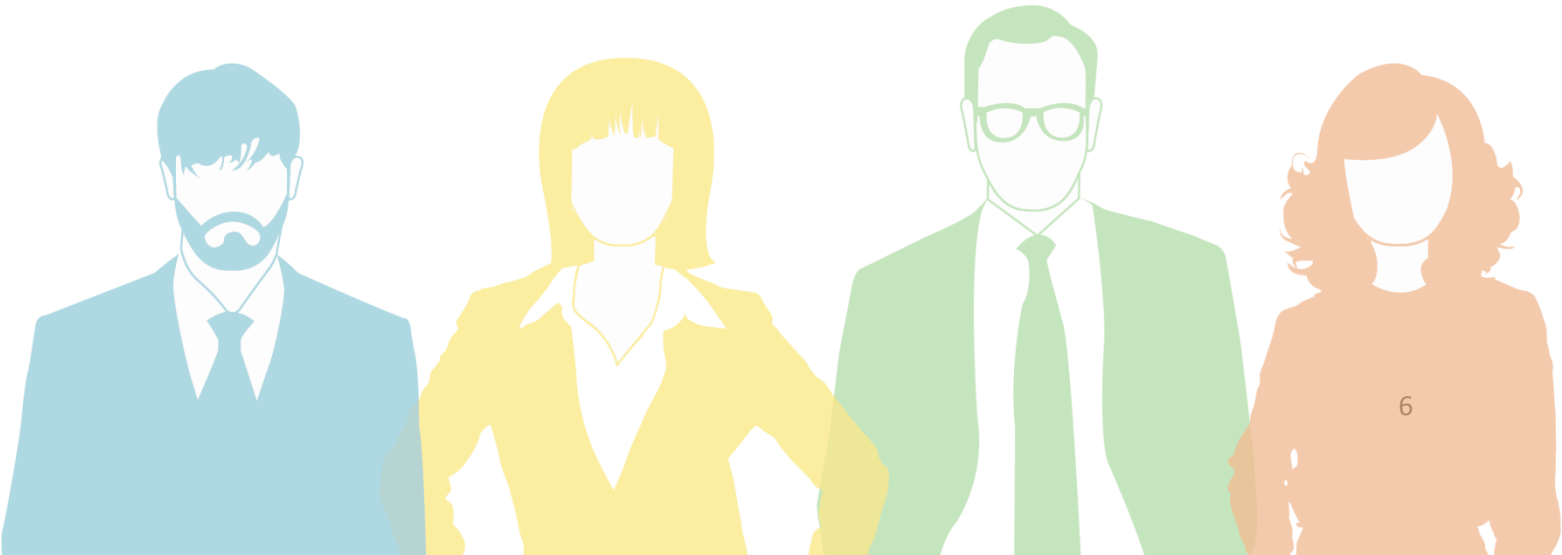
**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will drive local small business owners to specialized resources and programming focused on long-term growth and sustainability.

## Business Retention Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will work to maintain a clear understanding of manufacturers' needs and facilitate growth opportunities through efficient business practices.

## Marketing Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will be the trusted source of timely, relevant information regarding opportunities for involvement and growth in the local business community.



## Workforce Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will act as a liaison between local employers and educational institutions to facilitate the training and continued education of a qualified workforce.

**Skilled Employees Strategy:** Introduce local professionals into GISD and DCCCD classroom curriculum to inform and demonstrate practical applications of academic subjects.

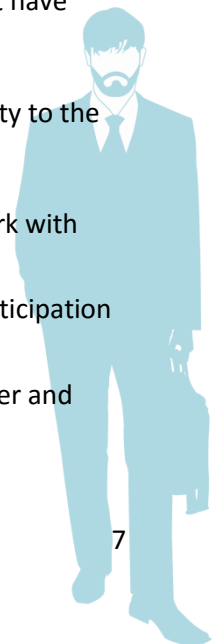
- **2015 Objective:** Collaborate with Garland ISD CTE instructors to encourage internships and develop programs that promote job skills training, including Job Match/Shadow Day in fall 2015.
- **2016 Objective:** Create a forum within the Dallas County Manufacturers' Association for employers to discuss workforce issues and serve as a focus group to test prospective initiatives.
- **2017 Objective:** Expand Job Match/Shadow Day to include all high school campuses within Garland ISD and invite Richland College Garland Campus students to participate.
- **2018 Objective:** Collaborate with Richland and Eastfield Colleges to engage a greater number of employers in grant-funded training opportunities, utilizing completed manufacturers list.
- **2019 Objective:** Implement a system for direct employer-student feedback to alert students of preparedness shortcomings, opportunities for improvement, and potential employment.

**Employee Retention Strategy:** Formalize the pilot program of the DCMA Leadership Academy to invest in leadership skills and professional growth of the existing workforce.

- **2015 Objective:** Review results and feedback from the pilot program. Open participation to all HR Subcommittee participants and the DCMA Steering Committee.
- **2016 Objective:** Publicize the Academy to full DCMA membership and expand participation to Richland's capacity of 18 participants.
- **2017 Objective:** Begin publicizing the Academy as a DCMA membership benefit for prospect companies. Add a second class of 18 additional participants.
- **2018 Objective:** Co-brand the Academy with Richland College and create promotional testimonial videos to generate additional interest and demonstrate success.
- **2019 Objective:** Add an advanced, Part II course made optional to participants that have successfully completed Part I of the Leadership Academy program.

**Awareness Strategy:** Design and execute programs that will expose the Garland community to the manufacturing industry and increase the appeal of a vocational track.

- **2015 Objective:** Invite local manufacturers to participate in national MFG Day. Work with GISD administrators to encourage student tour field trips.
- **2016 Objective:** Work with Garland ISD to promote, participate and encourage participation in the District's Principal for a Day program.
- **2017 Objective:** Build a "Manufacturing Week" around national MFG Day in October and promote to local professionals as well as students.





- **2018 Objective:** Expand GISD Career Expo to include 50 businesses. Consider appropriate means to include parents before or during the event.
- **2019 Objective:** Engage local and regional manufacturing companies to provide virtual tours that can be shared online and used in classrooms to celebrate MFG Day.

**Communication Strategy:** Create a functional system of communication processes to grant businesses direct access to the job matching and training resources they need.

- **2015 Objective:** Engage Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas as a partner with the Chamber and develop a cooperative job matching relationship for employers and employees.
- **2016 Objective:** Facilitate a bi-annual meeting between employers and local educational institutions to align course curriculum with expected future professional needs.
- **2017 Objective:** Invite experienced HR professionals to host the welcome workshop preceding the Garland ISD Student Career Expo to discuss employer expectations with students.
- **2018 Objective:** Partner with Garland ISD, the DCCCD and local staffing agencies to conduct a strategic career fair, inviting candidates with specific certifications needed by employers.
- **2019 Objective:** Provide employer HR departments with bi-annual curriculum changes and available courses to refer new hires to local training.

**Resources Required:** In order to develop specific tactics to execute the strategies and achieve the goal of the workforce plan, the following resources will be required.

- A Full-time Workforce Development Professional
- Job Matching Software and/or License for Use
- Video Filming and Editing Equipment
- Promotional Advertisements

**Means of Measurement:** Success of the workforce plan as outlined above will be assessed based on the following metrics.

- Number of People Employed
- Annual Number of Employees Placed by Job Matching System
- Graduate Assessments of the DCMA Leadership Academy
- Community Participation in MFG Day



## Small Business Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will drive local small business owners to specialized resources and programming focused on long-term growth and sustainability.

**Awareness Strategy:** Execute a series of marketing campaigns that demonstrate the full scope of resources available to small businesses through the Garland Chamber of Commerce.

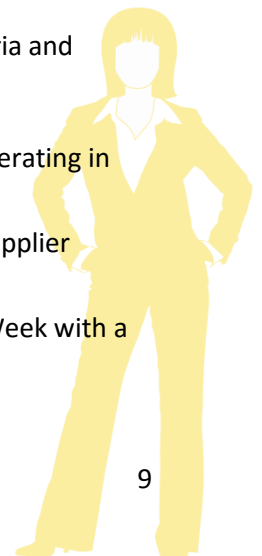
- **2015 Objective:** Design a brief, small business testimonial campaign about Chamber services to be launched during National Small Business Week in May.
- **2016 Objective:** Expand the small business campaign to include Chamber partner services such as Small Business Development Center counseling.
- **2017 Objective:** Design and launch a three-month campaign for March-May to include purchased ad space and a “Buy Local” initiative.
- **2018 Objective:** Engage GISD high school classes to help create videos, giving production students experience and exposing their peers to the Chamber’s message of business success.
- **2019 Objective:** Use additional marketing to communicate the uniquely supportive framework of City services that help small businesses thrive in this community.

**Early Assistance and Planning Strategy:** Utilize small business entry points to access new owners and provide resources in early stages to engage them on a long-term pathway for sustainability.

- **2015 Objective:** Collaborate with the City’s building inspection department to provide collateral materials regarding the Chamber’s resources for business owners to C/O applicants.
- **2016 Objective:** Use the certificates of occupancy listings to follow up with new businesses in the city and expose them to resources available through Chamber, SBDC and TMAC services.
- **2017 Objective:** Engage professional service providers such as banks, lawyers, CPAs, commercial realtors and attorneys to promote available services to small business clients.
- **2018 Objective:** Entice small business owners to utilize resources with a branded suite of consulting and assistance programs varied by industry and life cycle stage.
- **2019 Objective:** Work with the Small Business Development Center to host a quarterly seminar or webinar on topics such as succession planning for business start-ups.

**Manufacturing Interaction Strategy:** Educate small business owners about the criteria and process required in order to work with larger companies and connect them with prospects.

- **2015 Objective:** Complete a full, accurate list of all manufacturing companies operating in Garland to include contact information and an industry category.
- **2016 Objective:** Collaborate with local manufacturers to develop a formalized supplier matchmaking system to connect local companies with opportunities.
- **2017 Objective:** Launch a supplier matchmaking system during Manufacturing Week with a brief workshop about how companies can utilize the resource.



- **2018 Objective:** Add a manufacturing supply chain element to the “Buy Local” initiative marketing campaign and highlight local partnerships for well-known products.
- **2019 Objective:** Host an annual supply chain appreciation event for all DCMA member manufacturers and suppliers.

**Specialized Programming Strategy:** Considering the diverse needs of small business owners, create program variances that allow for increased participation in services.

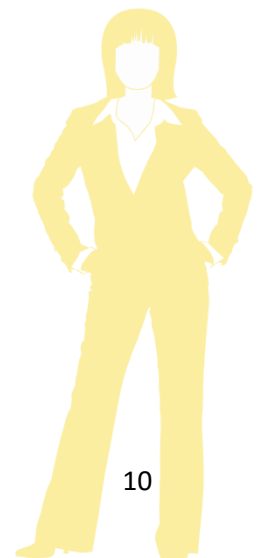
- **2015 Objective:** Research available online solutions for a log-in based video library to be hosted at garlandchamber.com, accessible to members only.
- **2016 Objective:** Promote online video library as a resource, to be launched with a minimum of four educational workshop videos and a plan to add at least one per quarter moving forward.
- **2017 Objective:** Solicit Chamber members for additional webinar content. Based on assessed need, add content in alternative languages such as Spanish and Vietnamese.
- **2018 Objective:** Develop a system of peer-to-peer counseling to give small business owners an additional point of contact within the Chamber.
- **2019 Objective:** Launch peer counselor pairing program to be executed with incoming members only, existing members by request.

**Resources Required:** In order to develop specific tactics to execute the strategies and achieve the goal of the small business plan, the following resources will be required.

- A Full-time Small Business Specialist
- Additional Website Functionality
- Video Filming and Editing Equipment
- Promotional Advertisements

**Means of Measurement:** Success of the small business plan as outlined above will be assessed based on the following metrics.

- Small Business Development Center Economic Impact Report
- Engagement with Web-Based Video Workshops
- Garland Chamber of Commerce Retention Rate
- Tax Base Statistics



## Business Retention Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will work to maintain a clear understanding of manufacturers' needs and facilitate growth opportunities through efficient business practices.

**Awareness Strategy:** Disseminate targeted communication regarding relevant resources and illustrating support of business priorities.

- **2015 Objective:** Invite local manufacturers to participate in national MFG Day and host a full-day tour for local elected officials.
- **2016 Objective:** Using the developed manufacturing directory to recruit participants, complete a third party needs assessment survey.
- **2017 Objective:** Work with the City of Garland to examine existing ordinances and find opportunities to advocate reinvestment incentives for local manufacturers.
- **2018 Objective:** Include products that are manufactured in-part or in-whole in Garland as an expansion to the Chamber's "Buy Local" initiative.
- **2019 Objective:** Conduct an independent competitive analysis study to gauge the success and shortcomings of local retention efforts versus those being carried out regionally.

**Access and Growth Strategy:** Increase connectivity among local suppliers and service providers to facilitate network growth and process efficiency.

- **2015 Objective:** Complete a full, accurate list of all manufacturing companies operating in Garland to include contact information and an industry category.
- **2016 Objective:** Collaborate with local manufacturers to develop a formalized supplier matchmaking system to connect local companies with opportunities.
- **2017 Objective:** Launch a supplier matchmaking system during Manufacturing Week with a brief workshop about how companies can utilize the resource.
- **2018 Objective:** Work with the City of Garland to support local bond programs and capital improvement programs that will further facilitate simplicity of local supplier relationships.
- **2019 Objective:** Evaluate and share results from workforce initiatives within the past five years to demonstrate support of workforce development.

**Regulatory Environment Strategy:** Leverage Garland's historical success in supporting the manufacturing industry to remain competitive on critical location decision factors.

- **2015 Objective:** Create a formal DCMA resource guide to include processes to follow for common issues and a contact list for relevant departments.
- **2016 Objective:** Launch a campaign highlighting regulatory support of common business issues and the quick response time of government entities.
- **2017 Objective:** Research and write a series of Manufacturers' Association success stories that illustrate the full range of resources available through affiliation.



- **2018 Objective:** Launch a campaign highlighting companies who have successfully utilized DCMA capabilities and resources in business functions.
- **2019 Objective:** Engage Chamber Legislative Affairs committee to actively support maintaining competitive business tax and utility rates in Garland.

**Resources Required:** In order to develop specific tactics to execute the strategies and achieve the goal of the business retention plan, the following resources will be required.

- Third Party Market Research Firm
- Video Filming and Editing Equipment
- Promotional Advertisements

**Means of Measurement:** Success of the business retention plan as outlined above will be assessed based on the following metrics.

- GDP Tax Value Added
- Business Retention Rate
- Supplier Matchmaking Participation and Conversion
- DCMA Affiliation Growth



## Marketing Plan

**Goal:** The Garland Chamber of Commerce will be the trusted source of timely, relevant information regarding opportunities for involvement and growth in the local business community.

**Awareness Strategy:** Create and maintain a systematic communication approach that fosters a functional feedback loop for an elevated, consistent understanding of business needs.

- **2015 Objective:** Create a clearly-organized system to input and monitor information submitted in membership needs profiles as new members join.
- **2016 Objective:** Evaluate commonly appearing needs from existing members and assess the effectiveness of programs already in place. Make adjustments as needed.
- **2017 Objective:** Implement an accountability structure to monitor efforts being made in correlation to the members' assessed needs.
- **2018 Objective:** Conduct interviews with each new member on the business's first anniversary to determine whether Chamber efforts have met the communicated needs.
- **2019 Objective:** Work with web developer to develop and launch an editable, anonymous website polling module to continually gauge satisfaction and test potential program ideas.

**Increased Organization Affiliation Strategy:** Demonstrate the value of membership by establishing specific business benefits acquired through relevant resources.

- **2015 Objective:** Analyze the characteristics of existing members in the three Chamber organizations and develop a clear target prospect profile for each.
- **2016 Objective:** Implement a progressive direct mailing strategy for businesses that meet one or more of the target prospect profiles.
- **2017 Objective:** Create and share video testimonials from local business owners affiliated at each level that have received specific, significant benefits from organization involvement.
- **2018 Objective:** Evaluate and quantify the value of benefits received at each level of affiliation and publicize the results in conjunction with testimonial content.
- **2019 Objective:** Film and promote a web-based commercial about the activity and purpose of each organization under the Chamber umbrella.

**Targeted Communication Strategy:** Utilize categorical segmentation to productively and proactively disseminate information applicable to specific audiences.

- **2015 Objective:** Evaluate and simplify existing membership categories to allow for more efficient directory searching and segmentation.
- **2016 Objective:** Implement a progressive direct mailing strategy for new business owners in the area using C/O applications to develop a contact list.
- **2017 Objective:** Replace the traditional e-newsletters with industry segmented Monthly Memos and re-introduce e-communication sponsorships.



- **2018 Objective:** Engage the media with local business success stories and demonstrated results of Chamber efforts in the Garland community.
- **2019 Objective:** Allocate funds to place targeted advertisements in business publications that match the Monthly Memo segments.

**Utilization of Resources Strategy:** Clearly communicate the full value and scope of organization programs and activities in order to draw attention and create interest.

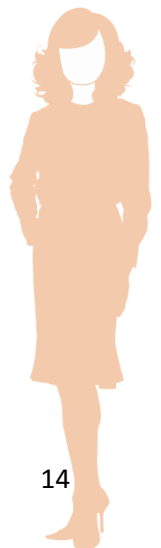
- **2015 Objective:** Develop and launch an SBDC “Hall of Fame” campaign to show small business owners the types of businesses using the services and growth as a result.
- **2016 Objective:** Film and produce local SBDC success stories to accompany the Chamber testimonial campaign along with traditional media materials to add recognizable credibility.
- **2017 Objective:** Create promotional program commercials that demonstrate the format and convey the purpose and results of Chamber initiatives.
- **2018 Objective:** Conduct third party research to determine community awareness and participant satisfaction of available resources.
- **2019 Objective:** Review effectiveness and implement suggested program modifications based on conducted research and participant feedback.

**Resources Required:** In order to develop specific tactics to execute the strategies and achieve the goal of the marketing plan, the following resources will be required.

- Additional Website Functionality
- Promotional Advertisements
- Third-Party Market Research
- Film Production Equipment

**Means of Measurement:** Success of the marketing plan as outlined above will be assessed based on the following metrics.

- SBDC Economic Impact Report
- Chamber Membership Dues Paid
- Participation in Chamber-Hosted Initiatives
- Market Research Feedback



## Financial Projections

In order to accomplish the goals, strategies and objectives outlined in the strategic plan, the Garland Chamber of Commerce will need to acquire additional resources and funding. See the information below to review the estimated costs of items needed in order to execute the plan.

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Funding per Capita</b>
Current Contribution:	\$465,397	228,350	\$2.03
Proposed Contribution:	\$721,414	225,222	\$3.20

<b>Category Description:</b>	<b>Amount:</b>
<b>WORKFORCE</b>	<b>\$ 71,050</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Hire Workforce Development Specialist/Benefits</li> <li>Equipment</li> <li>Benchmarking (conference/travel)</li> </ul>	\$65,696 \$854 \$4,500
<b>SMALL BUSINESS</b>	<b>\$ 68,618</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Hire Small Business Specialist/Benefits</li> <li>Equipment</li> <li>Benchmarking (conference/travel)</li> </ul>	\$63,264 \$854 \$4,500
<b>RETENTION</b>	<b>\$ 79,210</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personnel Realignment</li> <li>Consulting, Research, Competitive Analysis - Third Party and ongoing projects</li> </ul>	\$44,210 \$35,000
<b>MARKETING</b>	<b>\$ 35,883</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filming Equipment / Editing Software</li> <li>Promotional Ad Placements (Print/Web)</li> <li>Printing / Mailing for Direct Mail Campaigns</li> <li>Website Functionality Upgrades</li> <li>Personnel Realignment</li> </ul>	\$250 \$12,120 \$2,738 \$5,756 \$16,275
<b>Total Projections:</b>	<b>\$ 256,017</b>