FY2011-2015
Strategic Plan
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

Vision Statement
Strengthen our region as the world’s best location to live, learn, work and play.

Core Values
Leadership ~ Integrity ~ Diversity ~ Innovation ~ Relevance

Mission Statement
Advance our region’s economy, improve our quality of life and enhance our members’ success.

Critical Goals
Advance Region's Economy
Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy.

Improve Quality of Life
Foster a high ranking quality of life for all residents.

Enhance Members’ Success
Provide targeted products, services, events and programs.

Organization Improvement
Position the organization and its staff for long term success.
FY2011-2015
Strategic Plan Priorities
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

Critical Goals

I. Advance Region’s Economy - Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy.

II. Improve Quality of Life - Foster a high ranking quality of life for all residents.

III. Enhance Members’ Success - Provide targeted products, services, events and programs.

IV. Organization Improvement - Position the organization and its staff for long term success.

Top 10 Objectives in Priority Order

II-15. Facilitate a regional transportation plan and solution that encompasses all forms – air, rail (commuter, light and high speed), roads, bridges, port, intracoastal waterways, etc.

I-11. Help foster job creation in the region through Center for Business Research activities, FastTrac entrepreneurial classes, Business Development division activities and Innovation division activities.

I-1. Create a sustainable, world-class workforce for employment, through partnerships with the region's stakeholders.

I-2. Align education priorities with economic priorities.

III-26. Facilitate the growth and success of all businesses.

II-17. Facilitate development of a comprehensive infrastructure to support economic development.

I-4. Integrate the Chamber and The Education Foundation’s Strategic Plans to advance workforce development.

IV- 32. Grow the membership base by attracting and retaining members at all levels.

IV- 44. Maintain the Chamber’s role as the voice of business. Continue to have our opinion/view point sought after.

II-20. Seek adoption of sound public policy to support quality growth.

NOTE: Priority items are in bold on the following pages.
I. Advance Region’s Economy
Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy.

**Education / Workforce Development**

1. **Create a sustainable, world-class workforce for employment, through partnerships with the region’s stakeholders.**
   - Working with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, school districts, colleges and universities, Trident Workforce Investment Board and others, the Chamber and Education Foundation will work to address short-term and long-term workforce needs.
   - **Timeline:** ongoing

2. **Align education priorities with economic priorities.**
   - **Desired/expected outcomes:**
     - Identify priorities for development of nationally certified career academies in the public high schools based on economic needs
       - **Timeline:** FY2011
     - Develop 3-5 nationally certified career academies in partnership with school districts and business leaders by 2014
       - **Timeline:** FY2011
     - Develop long-term strategic vision for workforce needs for the region
       - **Timeline:** FY2012

3. **Create a culture of life-long learning.**
   - **Desired/expected outcomes:**
     - Coordinate Chamber and Foundation program of work goals and strategies
       - **Timeline:** annually
     - Evaluate attainment of coordinated goals; modify goals and strategies for upcoming fiscal year
       - **Timeline:** annually
     - Develop a public awareness campaign on the importance of education
       - **Timeline:** FY2012

4. **Integrate the Chamber and The Education Foundation’s Strategic Plans to advance workforce development.**
   - **Desired/expected outcomes:**
     - Develop an integrated, comprehensive strategy to address K-12 and higher education needs as well as to support adult workforce training needs
       - **Timeline:** FY2011

5. **Create a sustainable workforce.**
   - **Desired/expected outcomes:**
     - Educate businesses on workforce best practices
       - **Timeline:** ongoing
     - Be a resource for labor activities and issues
       - **Timeline:** ongoing
     - Promote legislative action to support workforce needs
       - **Timeline:** ongoing

6. **Maximize effectiveness of talent retention and expansion efforts.**
   - **Desired/expected outcomes:**
     - Provide business connections and professional development opportunities for young professionals
       - **Timeline:** ongoing
• Attract emerging leaders for participation in Leadership Charleston
  ° Timeline: ongoing
• Establish a scholarship fund to help recruit diversity
  ° Timeline: FY2011
• Become the voice and resource for young professionals
  ° Timeline: FY2011

Innovation / Entrepreneurship

7. Foster growth of start-up and developing businesses through New Ideas Contest.  
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Provide a mechanism for attracting new product and business ideas
     ° Timeline: annually
   • Facilitate creation of new businesses
     ° Timeline: ongoing

8. Maintain an Entrepreneur Center facility.  
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Become the go-to source for entrepreneurs for information and services
     ° Timeline: FY2012

9. Manage a statewide FastTrac entrepreneurial training program.  
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Train entrepreneurs on starting and growing sustainable businesses
     ° Timeline: ongoing
   • Create customized classes for different business sectors
     ° Timeline: FY2011

10. Deliver a climate for innovation to encourage the growth of all businesses through the 
    Innovation Division activities such as ThinkTEC.  
    **Desired/expected outcomes:**
    • Create collaboration of those in and serving the knowledge-based business community
      ° Timeline: annually
    • Increase application of innovation in business
      ° Timeline: ongoing
    • Expand matches of EXECnetSC executives with early-stage business owners
      ° Timeline: FY2011
    • Be the information source and voice for regional knowledge-based business growth
      ° Timeline: FY2012

11. Help foster job creation in the region through Center for Business Research activities, 
    FastTrac entrepreneurial classes, Business Development division activities and 
    Innovation division activities.  
    **Desired/expected outcomes:**
    • Center for Business Research provides data to support regional economic development efforts
      ° Timeline: ongoing
    • Create new jobs through FastTracSC graduates
      ° Timeline: ongoing
    • Increase number of high wage paying knowledge-based jobs
      ° Timeline: FY2015

Targeted Business Growth

12. Foster global trade.  
    **Desired/expected outcomes:**
    • Activate the World Trade Center
13. Facilitate growth of minority business.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Increase utilization of Chamber resources by minority businesses (i.e. African American, Latino/Hispanic, women-owned)
  - **Timeline:** FY2012
- Support implementation of Minority Business Partnership
  - **Timeline:** FY2013

14. Promote and enhance a vibrant and sustainable economy.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Seize opportunities arising from economic changes in the region by maintaining an Opportunities Fund and creating an adaptable Program of Work
  - **Timeline:** annually
- Be a resource for business retention and expansion needs
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
- Address what is needed to maintain and enhance existing clusters – health/medical, military, defense, aviation, hospitality, creative, technology, energy, manufacturing, government, port. (defined as: target clusters, emerging clusters, economic engines)
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
- Continue to work to help the Port of Charleston expand
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
- Seize opportunities arising from economic changes in the region.
  - **Timeline:** FY2011
- Develop comprehensive strategy for military base retention and expansion, including funding to support the initiative.
  - **Timeline:** FY2011
- Identify and support emerging industries. Work with Charleston Regional Development Alliance on the development of a new regional five year economic development strategy.
  - **Timeline:** FY2011

II. Improve Quality of Life

Foster a high ranking quality of life for all residents.

**Regional Infrastructure Plan / Vision**

15. Facilitate a regional transportation plan and solution that encompasses all forms – air, rail (commuter, light and high speed), roads, bridges, port, intracoastal waterways, etc.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Minimize obstacles to expanding the port. Support harbor deepening.
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
- Secure a low cost air service with a long term commitment.
  - **Timeline:** FY2011
- Explore the possibility of an aeronautical institute of research.

16. Facilitate regional cooperation.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Strengthen existing relationships with organizations in our region (Alliance, CVB, etc.)
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
- Build new coalitions to achieve regional success
  - **Timeline:** ongoing
17. Facilitate development of a comprehensive infrastructure to support economic development.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Work to develop long-term strategic plan for I-26
  - Timeline: FY2011

18. Seek adoption of regional polices to maximize efficiencies of local government.

- Identify and advocate for consolidation of services wherever feasible
  - Timeline: ongoing

**Sound Public Policy / Quality Candidates**

19. Develop a pro-business Legislative Agenda annually.

- Through the Chamber’s grassroots efforts, Public Policy will recommend the local, state and federal legislative agenda an priorities
  - Timeline: annually

20. Seek adoption of sound public policy to support quality growth.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Politics 101 classes
  - Timeline: annually
- Educate members on electing quality candidates and elected officials’ actions on Chamber positions
  - Timeline: ongoing
- Work to ensure elected officials are aligned with the Chamber’s objectives
  - Timeline: ongoing

21. Take an active role in advancing the Chamber’s positions.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Secure a full-time lobbyist to help advance the Chamber’s agenda
  - Timeline: FY2011

22. Establish a collective sense of regionalism.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Work with other key economic development organizations in the region on regional issues
  - Timeline: ongoing

**Balanced Growth**

23. Encourage regional sustainable development as a growth strategy to improve the economy, environment and quality of life.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Launch a Green/Sustainable Initiative to help educate business on how to adopt sustainable practices
  - Timeline: 2010
- Through the Environmental Committee, continue to work to ensure regulatory issues are not over burdensome for business.
  - Timeline: ongoing

24. Foster work-life balance.

**Desired/expected outcomes:**
- Work to ensure cultural diversity
  - Timeline: ongoing
- Provide educational opportunities for arts organizations
  - Timeline: ongoing
• Ensure half-cent sales tax funding is used as intended - recreational and parks environments
  ° Timeline: ongoing

III. Enhance Members’ Success

Provide targeted products, services, events and programs.

**Leadership**

25. Focus on developing leadership in the region.
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Increase diversity in chamber’s leadership roles
     ° Timeline: FY2012
   • Increase professional development opportunities for young professionals
     ° Timeline: FY2012

**Program Development**

26. Facilitate the growth and success of all businesses.
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Increase member knowledge of program offerings for all business stages
     ° Timeline: ongoing
   • Promote the Chamber Affinity Program
     ° Timeline:

27. Expand programs to save members’ money.
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Identify new Affinity Program partners to help members save money
     ° Timeline:

   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Complimentary services and products
     ° Timeline: ongoing
   • Involvement opportunities
     ° Timeline: ongoing
   • Extend reach into member companies

**Business Connections**

29. Continue to facilitate business relationships.
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
   • Business card exchange opportunities / networking
     ° Timeline: FY 2011
   • Provide opportunities to meet new clients
     ° Timeline: FY 2011
   • Reorganize Area Business Councils and Business After Hours to better serve desires of members and increase attendance.
     ° Timeline: FY 2011
   • Expand on Executive Circle event to broaden attendance
     ° Timeline: FY2012

**Customized Delivery**

30. Customize delivery of products and services.
   **Desired/expected outcomes:**
• Maximize the tools we already have - member research, expectations, feedback (i.e. WebLink can help demonstrate ROI)
  ° Timeline: annual
° Address generational differences with everything we do
  ° Timeline:
° Institute targeted marketing based on geographic location, business size or interest area
  ° Timeline stages
° Provide value to positively impact member retention. Expand role in working with resource development to impact retention; Work to develop and executive member retention plan
  ° Timeline: FY 2011

Professional Development

31. Provide opportunities for member employees’ improvement and growth.

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Be a resource for increasing business knowledge
    ° Timeline: ongoing

IV. Organization Improvement
Position the organization and its staff for long term success.

Revenue Enhancement

32. Grow the membership base by attracting and retaining members at all levels.

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Extend reach into new niches each year, for example medical, international, manufacturing
    ° Timeline: FY2015

33. Grow the number and dues investment of Board of Advisor/Lead Investor members.

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Increase number of Board of Advisor/Lead Investor members each year from 201 in FY2010 to 251 in FY2015 – a 25% increase, 5% per year.
  • Increase dues investment of Board of Advisor/Lead Investor members each year from $1,189,281 in FY2010 to $1,486,601 in FY2015 – a 25% increase, 5% per year
    ° Timeline: FY2015

34. Grow the membership in terms of total number of members and total dues investment.

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Increase total number of members each year from 1,990 members in FY2010 to 2,487 members in FY2015 – a 25% increase, 5% per year.
  • Increase total dues investment of all members each year from $1,505,000 in FY2010 to $1,881,250 in FY2015 – a 25% increase, 5% per year.
    ° Timeline: FY2015

35. Provide desirable and appropriate benefits at all levels of membership.

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Increase base member dues to $500
    ° Timeline: FY2012
  • Establish a dues investment level for start-up businesses.
    ° Timeline: FY2012

36. Continue to increase the market penetration each year of number of member companies compared to total businesses in the region

  Desired/expected outcomes:
  • Increase market penetration to at least 15%.
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° Timeline: FY2015
- In 2009 Charleston Metro Chamber market penetration equals 12.2% (2,012 members compared to 16,500 businesses in the region)
- Charleston Metro Chamber is 12.2% compared to 10.6% reported by our peer group chambers according to the 2009 ACCE (American Chamber of Commerce Executives) national survey results.

37. Improve member retention rate each year in terms of both number of member companies and in dues investment levels

Desired/expected outcomes:
• Increase member retention to at least 80% in number of members
  ° Timeline: FY2015
    - In 2009 Charleston Metro Chamber member retention in number of members was 73.9% compared to 79.7% reported by our peer group chambers according to the 2009 ACCE (American Chamber of Commerce Executives) national survey results.
• Increase retention of member dues investment to at least 86%
  ° Timeline: FY2015
    - In 2009 Charleston Metro Chamber member dues investment retention was 83.6% compared to 84.0% reported by our peer group chambers according to the 2009 ACCE (American Chamber of Commerce Executives) national survey results.

38. Restore the budget to at least $4.5 million (FY2008 highpoint) vs. $3.5 million (FY2010).

Desired/expected outcomes:
• Annual budget exceeds $4.5 million
  ° Timeline: FY2015

39. Conduct a Strategic Funding Campaign that will enhance the Chamber’s activities and provide sustainable funding for a five year period.

Desired/expected outcomes:
• Funding for Strategic activities as identified in feasibility analysis
  ° Timeline: feasibility study in FY2011 / campaign completed by FY2012

40. Increase and diversify revenue.

Desired/expected outcomes:
• Increase other sources of non-dues revenue each year to exceed 50% of total budget.
  Total budgeted membership revenue in FY2010 is $1,823,500 compared to a total FY2010 revenue budget of $3,613,346 (FY2010 dues = 50.5%)
  ° Timeline: FY2015

Internal Operations Improvement

41. Align staff and resources with priorities.

Desired/expected outcomes:
• The right people in the right jobs achieving the vision and mission through growing the skill levels of employees (i.e. sales, technology, public speaking, etc.), enhanced internal communications, strengthen internal controls.
  ° Timeline: ongoing

42. Update the Chamber’s business continuity plan.

Desired/expected outcomes:
• A business continuity plan to that sets direction for action in an emergency
  ° Timeline: FY2011

43. Be a technology leader to enhance efficiencies.

Desired/expected outcomes:
• Chamber operating at maximum efficiency - both in funds and time - as a model for business
  ° Timeline: ongoing
Image Enhancement

44. Maintain the Chamber’s role as the voice of business. Continue to have our opinion/view point sought after.

*Desired/expected outcomes:*
- Continue Chamber Image Campaign - update messaging as times, issues change
  ° *Timeline: ongoing*
- Keep the Chamber in front of media sources – expand sources
  ° *Timeline: ongoing*

45. Increase the profile of the Chamber among elected officials.

*Desired/expected outcomes:*
- Institute a new lobbyist program of activity
  ° *Timeline: FY 2011*
- Annual Legislative Reception
  ° *Timeline: annual*
- D.C. Fly-in
  ° *Timeline: annual*

46. Secure reaccreditation and maintain five star status from the United States Chamber of Commerce.

*Desired/expected outcomes:*
- Five Star Accreditation
  ° *Timeline: FY2011*

47. Ensure that diversity, innovation and customer service are part of our DNA.

*Desired/expected outcomes:*
- Chamber employees embracing/demonstrating the Chamber's core values
  ° *Timeline: ongoing*