

Economic Development Division Goals:

I. Recruit and Retain a High Quality Workforce

1. Host two NWA Job Fairs to connect employers and workers. Events incorporate workforce readiness components such as resume writing, mock interviews, professional dress and career path changes.
2. Maintain job bank, job seeker resume file and employment resources to connect job seekers with area employers.
3. Supplement quality workforce recruitment with up-to-date relocation materials (DVDs, publications) designed to maximize workforce recruitment and orientation efforts.
4. Offer candidate community tours on an as-needed basis to employers throughout northwest Arkansas, assisting them in their efforts to recruit and retain a competitive workforce.
5. Support local employers through timely seminars, speakers and customized outreach on an as-needed basis throughout the year.
6. Represent and advocate for workforce issues by partnering with and ensuring representation within local workforce boards and committees.

II. Engage in Small Business Outreach

1. Assist new business start-ups, franchisees and existing businesses by providing information, publications, resources and connections to meet the unique needs of small businesses.
2. Inform, educate and connect entrepreneurs and small business people through professional development and continuing education opportunities. Seminars such as the FYI Brown Bag Lunch series will expand, and will focus on growing business in a tough economy. Featured during the first quarter of 2010 will be a four-part series on social media and marketing.
3. Provide high-caliber, affordable and accessible training and resources through the small-business track of the NWA Business Conference.
4. Encourage small businesses by recognizing success through the “Small Business of the Month” and “Small Business of the Year” award program.

III. Encourage New Business Development and Existing Business Expansion

1. Attract and encourage entrepreneurs by hosting the first NWA Startup Weekend, an intensive 54-hour event held in cities worldwide to incubate business propositions and startup projects.
2. Respond aggressively to inquiries regarding new economic development opportunities representing quality, growth and opportunity for our community and region.
3. Provide information, data, demographics, resources and flexible, accommodating support to new, existing and expanding businesses. Orchestrate partnerships and opportunities for local business alliances.
4. Support target industries such as childcare centers or retail tax drivers and pursue appropriate investment in key emerging areas such as redevelopment in historic downtown Rogers, expansion of the tax base for the city of Lowell and rejuvenation of threatened areas.

IV. Lead Progressive Business Development Initiatives

1. In partnership with the Northwest Arkansas Business Journal, host the region's highest-caliber business event, the Northwest Arkansas Business Conference and Expo. Provide resources ranging from small business tactics to entrepreneurial solutions to advance small and medium businesses throughout northwest Arkansas.
2. Promote the BuyNWA program, which encourages the residents and businesses to purchase goods and services in northwest Arkansas. Support for program components such as member-to-member coupons, e-coupons and the BusinessConnect online request tool positively affect consumer confidence and stimulate the local economy.
3. Encourage members to take a leadership role in sustainability through the Green Plus certification program. An affordable education program, Green Plus offers participating small and medium enterprises an achievable, step-by-step process to move toward responsible and sustainable operations.
4. Align Chamber resources with key partners including the Arkansas World Trade Center, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., Tyson Foods, Inc., and J.B. Hunt Transport, Inc., and consumer product companies (suppliers) to improve the local economic climate.
5. Expand delivery of information to newcomers through innovative communication and outreach efforts with key partners.
6. Partner with the Rogers Public School District, regional health-care providers, employers and area realtors to promote the competitiveness of public schools, promote the delivery of world-class, destination health care and proactively market the community to potential new residents.

V. Serve as the Voice of the Diverse, Multicultural Business Community

1. Provide personal assistance and tools to promote the successful development of minority-owned businesses by supporting business owners in all aspects of business development, including assistance in understanding regulations required for operating a small business.
2. Assist the diverse community with job placement and employer recruiting efforts.
3. Offer resources and educational opportunities for minority business owners, specifically, professional development seminars on business topics in English and Spanish.
4. Encourage engagement and community-building to connect individuals and highlight community resources.
5. Offer diversity celebrations and business-building events reflecting the diverse and inclusive nature of the northwest Arkansas community.
6. Serve as the communication hub for the diverse business community.
7. Create and maintain a list of woman- and minority-owned businesses in northwest Arkansas to offer as a procurement resource and in multicultural business outreach efforts.
8. Produce the "Northwest Arkansas Diversity Guide" to serve as a resource for the community, including information on the diverse cultural resources, ethnic organizations, and cultures in the community.
9. Offer business programming for women featuring informative training on the basics of starting a business in northwest Arkansas.

Community Development Division Goals:

- I. Develop Future Community Leaders and Improve the Quality of Life in the Region**
 1. Increase involvement of new and existing talent in the NWA Emerging Leaders program. Build a substantive program for dedicated professionals who seek to be actively engaged in the community. Tackle issues and projects of relevance through active workgroups. Groom individuals to serve and lead in the community.
 2. Promote and develop dynamic community leaders for Benton County through Leadership Benton County. Provide class members with opportunities to learn, enhance and apply leadership skills to community needs and concerns.
 3. Offer training in leadership skills, desired employee attributes and life skills to high-school students through the First Leadership program.
 4. Direct volunteer efforts to promote recreational trails in the area.
 5. Collaborate with Main Street Rogers and others interested in the historic downtown district to address priorities for the area identified in “Vision 2025.”
 6. Establish communication and support for nonprofit members of the Chamber. Inform, educate and connect nonprofit members of the Chamber through business programming.

- II. Support Education.** Promote and support programs between businesses and schools that serve as education and recruitment tools to enable businesses to compete in an ever-changing economy.
 1. Recognize the academic accomplishments of students through Academic Awards, SMILE Awards, and the Rogers Students/Graduates With Promise program.
 2. Honor outstanding achievements by teachers through the “Educator of the Year” awards, the “Educator Hall of Fame” and the Tillery Grant Program.
 3. Provide businesses with opportunities for recognition for their support of schools through the “Business Partner of the Year” award, and at the Chamber Night at School Board event.
 4. Coordinate the Rogers Students/Graduates With Promise credentialing program that promotes high-school student achievement to support district and business initiatives.
 5. Support the higher-education goals of Rogers students through the Community-Based Scholarship Program.
 6. Demonstrate appreciation for area faculty and staff by hosting the annual Teacher Appreciation Breakfast and Education Fair, which offers local businesses an opportunity to showcase products and services.
 7. Promote the Chamber as a resource for Rogers High School and Heritage High School academies through publicity and recruitment of Chamber members to meet school needs.

III. Promote Healthy Communities

1. Tobacco Prevention Grant 2010
 - Conduct a comprehensive media campaign increasing the knowledge of the harmful effects of tobacco and second-hand smoke.
 - Educate the community on the *Arkansas Child Protection Act of 2006*.
 - Promote area cessation resources along with the Quit Line.
 - Conduct the Annual Operation Storefront project with area youth.
 - Conduct educational presentations to youth and the community.
 - Conduct a Tobacco Retailer Education program.
2. Underage Drinking Prevention Grant 2010
 - Conduct a county-wide comprehensive media campaign to reduce underage drinking in Benton County.
 - Conduct educational presentations for the community.
 - Conduct a “Responsible Beverage Server Training” program.
 - Implement “Talk It Out” nights for area families.
 - Conduct a Prom Campaign and a Graduation Campaign targeting high-school students.
3. Drug Free Communities Grant 2010
 - Targeted Substances: Tobacco, Prescription Drug Abuse, Methamphetamine, and Cocaine.
 - Conduct a county-wide comprehensive media campaign to prevent and/or reduce the use of the substances listed above.
 - Conduct the 7th annual Methamphetamine Awareness Month.
 - Organize the 2nd annual Medicine Abuse Awareness Month.
 - Conduct educational presentations to youth and the community.
 - Promote Drug Free Workplace policies in area businesses.
 - Conduct a Merchant Flyer Education Program.
4. Communicate with members and the public.
 - Translate the Drug Free Rogers-Lowell Coalition Web site, www.ioit2me.com, into Spanish.

Convention & Visitors Bureau Division Goals:

- I. Generate Overnight Visitors.** Produce room nights for Rogers' hotels/motels and business for our attractions, restaurants, retailers, etc. Focus sales efforts on new/repeat multi-hotel business that utilizes the convention center as well as groups needing 350 rooms or less.
 1. Develop a minimum of 60 quantifiable and qualified leads.
 2. Target Sports, Medical, Educational, Religious and Fraternal (SMERF) groups as well as group travel and reunion groups.

- II. Create Awareness in the Local Business Community.** Work through the CVB to bring meetings/conventions to Rogers.
 1. Identify networking opportunities and utilize local resources and foster relationships with key local contacts through social media opportunities, the CVB Web site, e-blasts and participation in the Chamber's B2B Luncheons.
 2. Create opportunities for the RCVB and our hospitality partners to make sales calls on potential clients in all target markets.

- III. Meet and Exceed Visitor Needs and Expectations.** Enhancing visitors' experiences will encourage repeat visits to Rogers and northwest Arkansas.
 1. Establish a competitive advantage by providing exceptional services for all groups serviced by the CVB as it relates to each group.

- III. Market Rogers and Northwest Arkansas as a Premiere Destination for Meetings, Events and Group Travel.**
 1. Proactively determine the most cost-effective strategies in order to maximize exposure for Rogers and northwest Arkansas as a meetings, event and group travel destination.

- IV. Foster Close Working Relationships with All Area Hotels.**
 1. Partner with the local hotel community to provide additional sales and service support.

Membership Services Division Goals:

I. Attract New Members

1. Attract 350 new members in 2010 to support goal of 2,100 Chamber members.

II. Retain Current Members

1. Continue retention plan which specifically targets member renewals.
2. Encourage member involvement and participation through increased communication from staff and volunteers.

III. Promote the Value of Chamber Membership

1. Host professional development programs, such as the NWA Business Conference, FYI Brown Bag Lunch seminars, and Legislative Forums, which offer education to members on topics of interest to businesses.
2. Host business events for members and the community such as Job Fairs, NWA Business Conference, Annual Teacher Appreciation Breakfast & Education Fair and the NWACC Appreciation Luncheon.
3. Provide member networking opportunities which allow them to grow their business by making new contacts, developing existing business relationships, growing their professional network and generating business leads at events such as Business After Hours, Business-to-Business Connection Luncheons, Fiesta de Negocios, Coffee Connection and the Morning Mixer in Lowell.
4. Engage new members through New Member Receptions and survey current members to gather feedback on effectiveness of events.
5. Engage Ambassador Committee members to promote Chamber membership growth, event participation and membership retention by functioning as proactive goodwill extension of the Chamber.

Government Affairs Division Goals:

I. Focus on Local Issues that Can Have a Positive Influence on Business

1. Identify and prioritize issues that are important to our membership.
2. Advocate for infrastructure improvements; identify, monitor and support projects of regional and local significance including the Bella Vista Bypass, Springdale Northern Bypass, I-540 upgrades, and Western Beltway.
3. Support the Northwest Arkansas Regional Mobility Authority. The establishment and support of this regional transportation agency allows work to begin in putting together financing and implementation/construction plans for regional transportation projects like the Bella Vista Bypass, Springdale Northern Bypass, Western Beltway and I-540 upgrades.

II. Monitor Issues that can be Costly and Unfriendly to Business and Work toward their Elimination and Defeat

1. Identify and prioritize issues that are important to our membership.
2. Work closely with the Arkansas Legislature by attending appropriate committee meetings and brief legislators on the issues that are important to our membership.
3. Work closely with the State Chamber and U.S. Chamber in monitoring state and national issues as they relate back to the membership.

III. Work with Federal, State and Local Government

1. Continue to cultivate existing relationships with federal, state and local government officials along with creating new relationships.
2. Attend appropriate government public meetings.
3. Work closely with the U.S. Congressional Delegation.
4. Advocate the Northwest Arkansas Legislative Agenda for the 2010 Fiscal Session of the 87th General Assembly: pursue funds for regional infrastructure projects, increased transportation funding, higher education funding, and general issues in conjunction with the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce's Arkansas Legislative Agenda.

IV. Help Guide the Business Community as We Continue to Grow

1. Work with construction and developer companies to address issues regarding construction and development in the Rogers-Lowell area by hosting the annual Developers Conference.
2. Provide staff and resource support to the Northwest Arkansas Chambers and Northwest Arkansas Council.

V. Get and Keep Members Engaged and Informed in a Timely Manner

1. Send regularly scheduled communication.
2. Schedule and facilitate Government Affairs Committee meetings, and host Legislative Forums and Candidate Forums to educate members and the public.
3. Create a state-of-the-art grassroots network that engages and mobilizes Chamber members. Provide information often and in a timely manner that helps us, working together, influence legislative and policy change that accomplishes the end result and provides measurable benefit to our new and existing members.

VI. Create a World-Class School System with Development and Implementation of a Strategic Plan

1. Assist consultants in their work with the community and the school community to create a strategic plan.