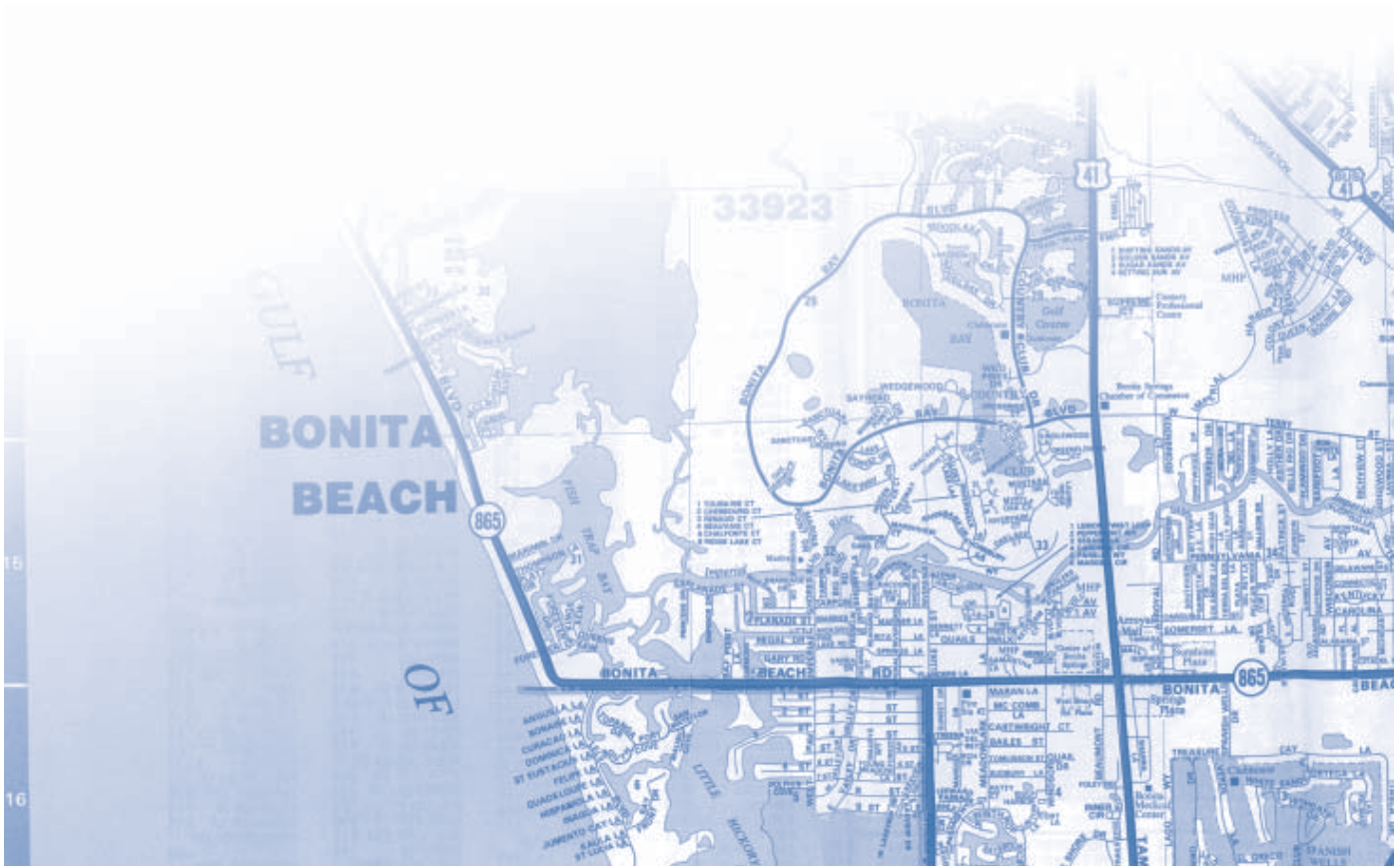




Bonita Springs Area
Chamber Of Commerce

STRATEGIC PLAN 2004 - 2008

*“a road map
for moving ahead”*



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As with all businesses, **strategic, long-term planning** is critical. The Chamber is no exception to this rule. Thus, as authorized by the Board of Directors, the Chamber, guided by the Strategic Planning Committee and assisted by numerous member and non-member volunteers and Chamber Staff, engaged in an 18-month strategic planning process which resulted in the development of a 5 to 10 Year Strategic Plan for the Chamber's future.

Through this extensive process, the Key Issues vital to the future, growth, prosperity and benefit of the Chamber, its Members and our Community were identified.

THESE KEY ISSUES BEING

- Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances
- Business Environment
- Environment & Infrastructure
- Government
- Workforce Housing

These Key issues were then extensively evaluated and analyzed. The result was the development of a defined delineation of the goals to be achieved and the methods necessary to obtain these goals in these specific areas. This Strategic Plan is the compilation of this process. This Strategic Plan presents a "Road Map" for moving forward with the implementation of the concepts; programs and ideas developed in this process; serves as a reference for accountability; and, will provide guidance for future Chamber Leaders as they each take their respective roles as Committee Chairs, Directors and/or Executive Officers. This Strategic Plan is designed to be reflective of our Business Environment and Community - evolving and changing while keeping an advanced vision to the future, meeting challenges and opportunities with a proactive mindset.

PROCESS SUMMARY

In December 2002, the Chamber began the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the organization. As a result of the Board planning retreat earlier in the year it was discussed that the Chamber needed to prepare a plan to take the organization to the next level. Unlike the three-year Strategic Plan that was developed in 2000 that focused on the Chamber's growth and its internal issues, this plan would be developed to look at broader community issues and would focus on a longer term and include a more visionary approach. A committee of approximately 12 people began to meet to set the background for this plan.

The Chamber's Mission Statement was reviewed and it was felt that it was still relevant for the work of the Chamber. Several meetings were conducted as the team discussed the strength's, weaknesses, opportunities & threats of the Chamber. After conducting the SWOT analysis, the committee began defining dozens of issues that the chamber and community could be facing over the next 5-10 years. These issues were re-defined down to 13 issues and a questionnaire was developed for distribution to the membership.

A survey was developed and sent to various groups of people including the Board of Directors, graduates of the Leadership Bonita program, past leaders of the organization and select community leaders. This group of over 100 individuals generated a response rate of 33%. In addition, the membership at large also received the survey via e-mail with an on-line survey form. Of the approximately 900 e-mail addresses, we

received a 15% return rate of this larger group. The information from both survey groups was then presented to the Strategic Planning Committee who determined the priorities as outlined by the survey responses and narrowed the Chamber's focus to six issues. Eventually, two of the issues were merged leaving the Chamber with 5 key issue areas.

These issues were then presented to the Board of Directors at their annual planning meeting and breakout groups of the Board were conducted on each of the issue areas. In addition, a series of focus groups were held, one on each of the issues. Attendance ranged from approximately 10-18 for each of these sessions. The information gathered from these sessions was presented to the committee.

At this time, the Strategic Planning Committee set up additional working task force groups for each issue area to determine the action steps for the Chamber as it relates to each of the issue areas. Approximately 50 business and community leaders participated in this stage of the process.

All of this information gathering, membership outreach and 130 hours of committee time have contributed to the completion of the Chamber's Strategic Plan. Attached you will find background information, and details on the issue areas along with key success measures to monitor the success of this plan. This document will serve as a guideline for the Chamber as it prepares its annual business plan and budget for the next several years.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce is to:

- Serve our members
- Promote an environment where business can grow and prosper
- Enhance the quality of life of the Bonita Springs area

STAKEHOLDERS

It was determined that the following were the key stakeholders (in order of importance) to the Chamber.

- Members (Clients)
- Employees
- Community
- Governments

Additional stakeholders discussed were non-member businesses, media, and tourists.

KEY ISSUES

The key issues were developed through extensive interaction with the membership and community leaders as outlined in the Executive Summary. The group focused in on the five issue areas relating to **Attracting High Level Leaders and Forming Alliances; Business Environment; City Government; Environment and Infrastructure; and Workforce Housing**. As indicated in the planning process these have been developed into “Need” statements and play a critical role in the completion of the plan.

BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & ACTION PLANS

The original Strategic Planning Committee members each facilitated one of the issue areas as we increased the participation in the completion of the plan. An additional 40 members and community leaders took us through the final steps. As part of the process each area developed a concise background summary and an anticipated outcome along with an actual action plan, specific strategies and a cost and benefits analysis.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

There are different measures of success depending on the action item that is being evaluated. We have established some overall success measures for the organization as a whole that inadvertently tie into the success of the programs outlined in this Strategic Plan.

1. Number of Members in Good Standing
2. Number of Individuals Involved on Chamber committees
3. Number of Participants in Leadership Programs
4. Completion and Distribution of new Demographics publications
5. Number of people using Business Resource Center

KEY ISSUE DEFINITIONS

1. ATTRACTING HIGH LEVEL LEADERS/BUILDING ALLIANCES

The need to create an environment at the Chamber where diverse community leaders make serving at the Chamber their first choice and see the Chamber as being a benefit to them, their business, and the community.

The need to create and strengthen alliances with economic development agencies, educational institutions, businesses, other chambers and organizations, to identify and resolve issues and promote unity among the organizations.

2. BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The need to provide a strong support system that serves as a foundation, and educational resource for business to thrive and flourish.

3. ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

The need to educate the community concerning the environment to facilitate stewardship and ensure the future quality of life.

The need to facilitate proactive management of the local infrastructure to ensure responsible growth and future quality of life.

4. GOVERNMENT

The need to maintain an ongoing dialogue between Chamber members and local government while contributing the expertise and opinions of our members on issues of interest to the business community.

5. WORKFORCE HOUSING

The need to address the availability of workforce housing with affordability based on the economic needs and abilities of our members, their employees, and benefit to the community as a whole. The creation of a coalition should serve as a catalyst for public and private interests that will create and implement such a plan.

BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & ACTION PLANS

ATTRACTING HIGH LEVEL LEADERS

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Based upon the high number of Chambers, charity, social service and business organizations in the area there is a significant demand for active leaders. The Chamber leadership suffers “burn out” over time, as well as attrition for other reasons; a pool of potential leaders must be developed for replacement. As the community grows more leaders will be needed.

Many companies have a policy for their employees to participate in community-based activities. Many of these same companies are unaware of the dual goals served by having employees serving as leaders in the Chamber. The goal of business interest of the company will be served along with the goal of community service through the numerous Chamber programs, which address the needs of the community.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The existence of a continually growing pool of a sufficient number of active leaders to fulfill the goals and growth needs of the Chamber for the benefit of its members.

BUILDING ALLIANCES

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The Florida Chamber & SWFTI are, each, prime examples of the accomplishments that can be achieved through unified voices. The synergistic effect of alliances cannot be ignored. Common goals and issues have developed with the growth of the SWFL area. Being geographically located, as we are within the region, especially lying within two counties, the need is even more prevalent.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

A team approach to problem solving addressing concerns using the collective clout of these alliances.

ACTION ITEMS

- Develop an Advanced Leadership Program (2006)
- Develop a Youth Leadership Program (2008)

- Develop a CEO Roundtable Program (2006)
- Develop a condensed “Leadership in a Day” Program (2005)
- Identify businesses that have specific needs in the community; identify their leaders and ask for input (2006)
- Create a Leader/Mentoring program or event (2006)

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The Bonita Springs area has changed significantly over the past 30 years; agriculture to residential development to a service-oriented industry. With this changing business environment, there is a shift from locally owned businesses to national companies. While we recognize this shift, it's also important to note that 91% of the current membership is small business (less than 20 employees).

ACTION ITEMS

- Develop a Business Resource Center at the Chamber where businesses can access important information on demographics, growth and training (2006)
- Develop a concise publication with specific demographics on the Bonita Springs area as it relates to population, statistics, workforce, business and other pertinent information (2006)
- Develop a Succession Plan at all levels including staff, Board, committees and volunteers (2005)
- Identify agencies and Boards that affect business, have a maintained list to link qualified and willing members who might be interested to serve (ongoing)

OUTCOME STATEMENT

That every business, local and national in Bonita Springs, Florida is successful, profitable and contributing to the quality of life in the community.

ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The natural environment is the foundation for all things in Bonita Springs and maintaining a healthy natural environment is essential to all business in our region. Growth and prosperity has come to this region because of our unique natural environment and the many natural resources it provides.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Our natural environment is protected and enhanced so as to continue to be the main driver of prosperity for Bonita Springs.

ACTION ITEMS

- Identify environmental issues that impact local businesses. Define the Chamber's role (2005)
- Co-facilitate a visioning session with Crew Land and Trust on the public use of the Crew lands in East Bonita and the 20/20 properties (2005)

GOVERNMENT

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Historically, the Chamber has been involved in a variety of government issues. This involvement was born partly out of necessity, having no city government, and partly due to the desire of a talented and diverse membership to become involved in its community. With Bonita Springs now represented by its own City government, this should result in a change in the Chamber's role in communicating with the City on local business issues. As the voice of local business, the Chamber should be proactive in

addressing issues of importance to the business community, as well as fulfilling its obligation in responding to local business issues being addressed by the City.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The Chamber is a valuable resource that assists the City in its decision-making.

ACTION ITEMS

- Appoint specific members to be the contact with elected officials based on affiliation and expertise (2005)
- Develop an education process for future elected officials (2007)
- Develop a report card on the votes of elected officials and make it available to the public. (2006)
- Actively solicit candidates for public office who are business friendly (2006)

INFRASTRUCTURE

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Bonita Springs was historically a rural community with infrastructure that would only accommodate limited growth. Its' location midway between two growing communities, plus the creation of large planned communities in Bonita Springs resulted in explosive growth not anticipated. This is clearly evident with the strain on the roads and also the impact on power, water and sewer.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

With the Chamber's proactive involvement with business, government and utilities the strain on our infrastructure will decrease. Funding decisions will be fiscally sound.

ACTION ITEMS

- Identify infrastructure issues that impact local businesses. Define the Chamber's role (2005)

WORKFORCE HOUSING

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The growth in the Bonita Springs community has led to rising real property costs. These rising costs have motivated low to moderate income working people to seek housing outside of the community. At the same time, there is an ever-increasing need for quality, affordable housing to support the rising workforce population. Past professional reports, prepared by the City of Bonita Springs, Florida Gulf Coast University and Lee County provide objective evidence of the pressing need for quality workforce housing located within our community.

The viability of an expanding and diverse economic base requires an adequate workforce to support this growth. Without affordable, quality housing for the workforce, economic growth will be impeded.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The Chamber becomes an active participant in existing or future coalitions of public and private interests that will address and make a material impact upon the availability of quality workforce housing. There will be a stable growing workforce, adequately housed, to support the needs of local businesses.

This will result in an increased tax base and reduced infrastructure demands. It will also impact ongoing economic development adequately supported by a quality workforce.

ACTION ITEMS

- Develop a coalition of community leaders and groups to address workforce housing issues and strategies and report progress to the membership. (2005)

Action Items

The following action items were agreed upon by full committee. Several additional program ideas were discussed and will be included in this report under "other programs to be considered as part of Chamber's annual business plan"

Action Item	Area Responsible	Time Frame	Resources
Develop an Advance Leadership Program <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	Leadership Bonita Alumni	Begin Planning 2006	Program Self-Sustaining
Develop a Youth Leadership Program <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	Leadership Bonita Steering Committee	Begin Planning 2007	Private Sector Funding
Develop a CEO Roundtable Program <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	New Task Force	Summer 2006	Program Self-Sustaining
Develop a condensed "Leadership in a Day" Program <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	Leadership Bonita Alumni	Begin Planning 2005	Program Self-Sustaining
Identify businesses that have specific needs in the community; identify their leaders and ask for input <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	Leadership Bonita Alumni	Summer 2006	No cost
Create a Leader/Mentoring Program or event <i>(Attracting High Level Leaders/Building Alliances)</i>	Board of Directors	Fall 2006	Minimal
Develop a Business Resource Center at the Chamber where businesses can access important information on demographics, growth and training. <i>(Business Environment)</i>	Staff/University Intern	2006-2007	Grant
Develop a concise publication with specific demographics on the Bonita Springs area as it relates to population statistics, workforce, business and other pertinent information <i>(Business Environment)</i>	Staff/University Intern	2006 and ongoing after	Work with local educational institutions. Final publication costs tbd.
Develop a Succession Plan at all levels including staff, Board, committee and volunteers <i>(Business Environment)</i>	Executive Board	2005 and ongoing after	No cost
Identify agencies and Boards that affect business, have a maintained list to link qualified and willing members who might be interested in serving <i>(Business Environment)</i>	Staff	Ongoing	Minimal
Identify environmental and infrastructure issues that impact local businesses. Define Chamber's role <i>(Environment & Infrastructure)</i>	Government Affairs	2005	Minimal
Co-facilitate a visioning session with Crew Land and Trust on the public use of the Crew Lands in East Bonita and the 20/20 properties <i>(Environment & Infrastructure)</i>	Government Affairs	Fall 2005	Minimal
Appoint specific members to be the contact with elected officials based on affiliation and expertise <i>(Government)</i>	Government Affairs	2005 and ongoing after	Minimal
Develop an education process for future elected officials <i>(Government)</i>	Government Affairs	2007	Self-Sustaining Use Consultant
Develop a report card on the votes of elected officials and make it available to the public <i>(Government)</i>	Government Affairs	2006	State Chamber <i>Cost of designing, printing and distributing not included</i>
Actively solicit candidates for public office who are business friendly <i>(Government)</i>	Government Affairs	2006	Minimal
Develop a coalition of community leaders and groups to address workforce housing issues and strategies and report progress to the membership <i>(Workforce Housing)</i>	Workforce Housing Coalition (New)	2005	Minimal

Notes: While programs have been targeted as "self-sustaining", meaning that fees will be charged to off-set the costs of the programs, there needs to be an assessment of staff availability to get these programs up and running. This is also true with all programs, including those that have no costs associated.

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