

Strategic Growth



The leaders of the Hanover Chamber met recently for a Strategic Planning Retreat. During the retreat, 10 board and staff members explored five areas of progress. Groups identified the existing successes and needs in each area. We then looked ahead and envisioned what our chamber might look like in each area over the next 3 years. Through dynamic discussion, we developed a great framework for continued progress...

What are we working towards?

Membership: Our Chamber has seen strong growth and retention in recent years. However, we don't want our members to renew just because they always have. We want them to see the benefits of participating, having an active voice and encouraging coworkers and/or industry peers to join as well.

Goals: 1) spur member involvement 2) deepen member benefit 3) encourage existing members to invite prospective members and 4) grow by 50 new companies each year.

Programing: Currently, the Hanover Chamber offers an assortment of networking opportunities, business building workshops and community updates totaling 23 events annually. Our programs need to provide not only a social aspect for our members but always something of value. That value is different for small businesses than it will be for larger ones and we are continuing to tweak offerings for both.

Goals: 1) continue balancing events to 1-3 per month 2) stronger 'onboarding' program to assist businesses in staying connected and 3) increase variety of event hosts and locations.

Partnerships: We work diligently at strengthening and expanding our relationships with local and regional organizations and public officials. As we continue to do so, we'll also expand our outreach by rotating event invitations to area partners who regularly interact with business owners.

Goals: 1) increase member opportunities to meet with local partners 2) create space for multiple member voices and 3) serve as an educator of local/regional issues to our members.

Communications: We want to tell our story – and our members' stories – more effectively. This means improving our footprint in social media and encouraging face-to-face connections. We want to continually improve our communications methods, maintain our positive image and promote our community well.

Goals: 1) stronger social media presence and 2) dynamic, relevant communications and 3) encourage non-board members to participate in committees.

Financial: Our organization is currently fully self-funded (through memberships and events). As our chamber continues to see participation growth, we will see income growth. We want to manage this change responsibly, always putting our members' needs first. We have been able to achieve a lot with a team of two staff and a volunteer board, but there is so much more to be accomplished!

Focus: Increasing office staff hours and positions to better serve our members, matching the funds donated for our High School scholarship program to give more to graduates, increasing member promotion and hosting more community service events or projects.

Our planning session was very timely, as our county continues to grow and more companies are choosing to do business in Hanover. Our role is to continue championing responsible growth and build a strong business community. **Join us, it's going to be exciting!**