

2009 STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

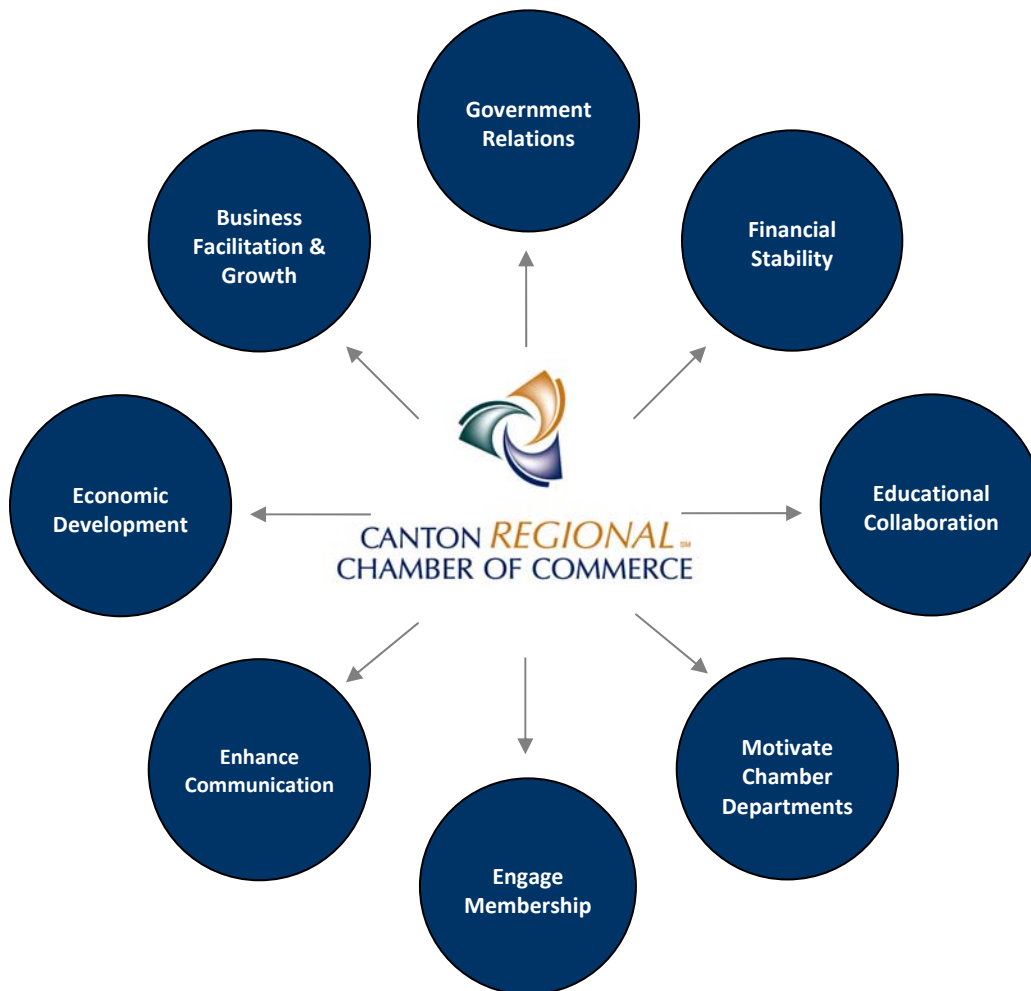
As each new year approaches and I turn my focus to the goals and objectives we need to set for the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, I find myself discovering time and again that our goals and objectives, by and large, do not change from year to year.

Our focus is and always will be *advancing business* and *developing community* for Canton/Stark County. While our goals and objectives may stay the course, it is our strategies – how we will achieve these goals – that are more apt to change.

As we prepare for the coming year, I turn to our professional executive management staff and our four departments for their strategic recommendations on how to work to achieve our simple but considerable objective. In 2009, our 95th year, our vision will continue to lead us toward business and economic growth and developing and enhancing the quality-of-life for the Canton/Stark County community.

We will achieve these goals through economic, community and workforce development efforts, legislative advocacy, membership education and networking opportunities, tourism, regional-minded collaboration and downtown center city development.

The following strategic plan will highlight the path we will take in 2009.



EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Dennis P. Saunier, president & CEO

OVERVIEW FROM EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

My role as president and CEO of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce is to **motivate** and **lead** the Chamber's departments and staff to stimulate organization success *operationally, economically and strategically*.

OUR GOAL

The Chamber's overarching goal has not changed since our inception in 1914 – we have and will continue to deliver on our mission of **advancing business** and **developing community** for Canton and Stark County.

WAYS WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOAL IN 2009

- Align Chamber programs with membership needs
- Oversee the implementation of department goals
- Ensure financial strength of organization
- Drive pro-business economic development for our region
- Strengthen government relations
- Continue development of urban center city
- Collaborate with educational leaders
- Grow communication with business leaders and community
- Seek out business development for Canton/Stark County
- Position community for business expansion and relocation

The following pages of this strategic plan detail the strategies that we will implement in 2009 to perpetuate our goal, our mission.

ADMINISTRATION

Steven J. Katz, senior vice president

OVERVIEW

The administration department oversees Chamber operations to ensure that the organization operates effectively and adheres to solid business practices. This involves assisting the president and CEO with carefully monitoring finances, utilizing current and emerging technology and maximizing human resource development. All of these duties work to ensure the overall success of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce.

GOAL

- Ensure the Chamber's operating systems allow the organization to effectively and efficiently achieve its mission

OBJECTIVES

- Operate the Chamber within the financial parameters established by the 2009 annual budget
- Maximize available human, technological and financial resources
- Oversee ystark!, Leadership Stark County and Stark County Safety Council programs to ensure they accomplish all goals and meet respective budgets
- Oversee the Chamber's event management staff to ensure quality events and programs are achieved on-budget

STRATEGIES

- Manage human resources to assist each Chamber employee to reach their full potential, observing all applicable laws and regulations
- Direct and assist department managers with HR problems that arise within each department
- Work closely with managers and directors of Leadership Stark County, Stark County Safety Council, events, ystark!, accounting and information technology
- Closely monitor internal operating systems and recommend adjustments as needed

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Steven J. Katz, senior vice president

OVERVIEW

The Chamber's government affairs committee maintains strong, positive relationships with the area's elected officials. In addition, the committee actively monitors legislative developments, conducts programs to provide opportunities for members to express their views, and collaborates on issues of mutual concern with other chambers and organizations.

GOAL

- Ensure that public policy and legislation create a positive climate for business growth and capital investment in Canton/Stark County

OBJECTIVE

- Effectively convey the pro-growth business perspective to our elected and public officials on pending legislation and pertinent regulatory issues

STRATEGIES

- Inform Chamber members of important legislation and recommend how to provide appropriate, effective input
- Maintain close and positive working relationships with the area's elected and appointed government officials
- Conduct events that provide members an opportunity to meet area elected officials, understand official's viewpoints and convey personal views
- Seek to maintain positive working relationships with the Mayor of Canton and his cabinet as well as Canton City Council
- Grow our volunteer efforts to effectively accomplish goals
- Meet and begin establishing relationships with newly-elected officials and promote our pro-business perspective

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Steven J. Katz, senior vice president

Tom Cline, manager of business retention and expansion

OVERVIEW

The Chamber's economic development department actively provides assistance to area companies, primarily in the industrial and commercial sectors, as they seek to grow and expand their businesses. The Chamber networks business owners and managers with various resources and incentive programs available in the community and strives to match individual company's needs to available and appropriate resources.

Economic development is a relationship business and as such, the Chamber continually seeks new opportunities for growing business leaders' awareness of our ability to help them grow their operations.

In 2009, the Chamber, in partnership with DeHoff Development, will aggressively pursue development of the Mills Business Park. The business park will further position Canton/Stark County to attract new industrial and commercial development. The park is already being actively marketed to prospects.

Now entering its seventh year, SYNCHRONIST continues to identify individual economic development projects and provides a better understanding of underlying trends and issues impacting the local economy. We will continue to grow the program and plan to extend it to other sectors as well as revisiting the original companies contacted when SYNCHRONIST was first introduced.

GOALS

- Facilitate new capital investment and the resulting economic growth for Canton and the surrounding region
- Provide existing and prospective businesses with pertinent information regarding the region's assets, resources and benefits in the area of sustainability and environmentally-friendly operations

OBJECTIVES

- Assist local, established companies in growing their operations in Canton/Stark County
- Promote Canton/Stark County to businesses outside of our region who are looking to expand or relocate
- Prepare Mills Business Park and actively market parcels and support the development of other area industrial properties
- Position Canton/Stark County as a sustainability-minded region for business development

STRATEGIES

Economic Development

- Work with our partners: Ohio Department of Development, Stark Development Board, City of Canton, MAGNET, Jumpstart and TeamNEO, to support existing businesses and attract new projects and capital investment
- Promote annexations, CETAs and cooperative arrangements through a synergy between local governments where in the best interests of all involved parties
- Upgrade and enhance the online presence for Advantage Canton
- Promote Chamber economic development services through local and regional media
- Oversee final site grading of Mills Business Park and work with DeHoff to promote the sale of parcels
- Bring additional state and federal resources to the community to support commercial and industrial development

SYNCHRONIST Program

- Expand the SYNCHRONIST program beyond manufacturing
- Complete 145 SYNCHRONIST interviews with manufacturing and industrial businesses
- Develop skills within Chamber staff to fully utilize the SYNCHRONIST system capabilities
- Generate 12 – 15 new Chamber members from base of existing and new manufacturing and industrial businesses
- Leverage information from SYNCHRONIST into education and workforce development actions

Market Canton's Sustainability Position

- Collect, analyze and present pertinent facts regarding sustainability to appropriate city and regional entities
- Develop audience, content and marketing plan to effectively market Canton/Stark County as a sustainability-minded region for business development

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

David C. Kaminski, director of business development and strategic projects

OVERVIEW

In 2009, the department of business development and strategic projects at the chamber will be focused upon the connection between education and economic development, and the connection between good government and economic development. The Chamber sees an opportunity to provide creative and effective business leadership in these two areas that enhance and sustain an environment for business growth.

GOALS

- Advance business development through education
- Make an impact on the statewide debate over public school funding and education reform
- Develop and execute a communications plan for Stark County education and economic development
- Advance the cause of local government reform and collaboration

OBJECTIVES

- Become the education community's premier business partner in advancing education and workforce development
- Use the Chamber's education committee as the hub for business partnership efforts
- Become familiar with the objectives of Stark County education leaders and determine which objectives the business community can support
- Focus an effort to exert Stark County influence on education reform
- Help the entire community understand the link between education and economic development
- Seek committed, contributing partners willing to tell a good, honest story about challenges and accomplishments in Stark County
- Develop the means to effectively and continuously tell this story
- Work with a steering committee of other Chambers of Commerce in Stark County to help create a home for a permanent government-collaboration effort

STRATEGIES

- Create more successful programs with MAGNET to help educate manufacturers about growth opportunities
- Deepen ties with Stark County Career Tech Prep Consortium, which brings business and education together for the benefit of developing a future workforce
- Use the education committee as a forum for understanding the connection between business and education
- Use the education committee as the point of origin for new business-education initiatives
- Study data that describes public education's needs and opportunities, beginning with the recently completed School Funding Task Force report
- Participate in dialogues with school officials about their best strategies for improving funding and educational performance
- Conduct meeting with business and education leaders to identify goals that business can support
- Meet with state legislators and education officials to advocate those goals
- Evaluate progress and decide how to proceed from there
- Gain a clear understanding of any data that links educational attainment to economic prosperity
- Recruit business leaders who will encourage peers to tell the story of business challenges and growth in Stark County in an ongoing manner

- Assemble a team to figure out how to best convey these stories to the public and what tools and vehicles will best deliver the story
- Determine funding and manpower needs, and satisfy those needs
- With help from the steering committee, attempt to persuade Stark Development Board to take on this work
- Provide appropriate staff support to help SDB launch and sustain this effort

ACCOUNTING

Kathy Irwin, director

OVERVIEW

The accounting department is responsible for financial reporting of the core Chamber and all four Chamber departments. Additionally, accounting services are also provided to the Canton Development Partnership partnering organizations, including Downtown Canton Special Improvement District, Downtown Canton Land Bank and Canton Tomorrow Inc. Among the accounting department's responsibilities are accounts payable and receivable, membership and event invoicing, payroll and preparation of the annual budget.

GOAL

- Oversee and ensure the Chamber's financial soundness and accuracy

OBJECTIVES

- Oversee development of Chamber's annual budget and individual department budgets
- Prepare accurate, timely monthly financial reports
- Monitor financial soundness of individual Chamber departments
- Oversee annual audit process
- Monitor Chamber investments

STRATEGIES

- Maintain accurate and comprehensive financial records
- Work closely with the CEO and management staff to develop annual budgets
- Review and analyze financial strength of individual departments and review with management
- Prepare annual audit work papers and monitor accounting policy and procedure guidelines in accordance with annual audits by CPA firms

CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP & SALES

Denise Burton, director

OVERVIEW

The Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce membership and sales department is the point of entry for unmatched business education, networking and volunteer opportunities for more than 1,600 business and individual members. Membership in the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce drives the core organization, which in turn, provides benefits member businesses cannot get elsewhere, as well as alternative revenue streams for the Chamber.

As Chamber members, businesses can participate in members-only programs and realize savings on workers' compensation and healthcare insurance. The membership sales department also makes possible a variety of advertising opportunities for Chamber members – including online banner ads and ads in newsletters and directories.

GOALS

- Recruit and retain Chamber members through direct membership sales
- Develop new ways to engage and communicate with existing members through programs, events and membership benefits

OBJECTIVES

Membership Sales & Retention

- Recruit 25 new members per month totaling 300 for 2009
- Overall budget for drops is estimated at 10% for 2009

Chamber WebLink

- Income for advertising/sponsorship sales, including 2008 renewals and 2009 new advertising/sponsorship, is \$80,000 for 2009

Buyer's Guide

- Income for sale of advertising is \$40,880 for 2009
- Income over expenses is \$15,248 for 2009

Action Newsletter

- Income for advertising sales is \$3,850 monthly totaling \$46,200 for 2009

Downtown Developments Newsletter

- Income for advertising sales is \$200 bi-monthly totaling \$1,200 for 2009

Business After Hours Tabletops

- Average of four tabletops per year is \$250 monthly totaling \$1,000 for 2009

STRATEGIES

- Continue recruitment of new members at a greater rate versus loss of members, resulting in increased membership overall for 2009
- Continue exploring and developing new membership benefits within Chamber WebLink, including site and sponsorship development
- Continue to evaluate the Chamber/Affinity provider relationships. Determine if the current providers are benefiting the membership, generating new enrollments or aiding membership recruitment
- Develop strategies to strengthen these areas and market these programs to the entire community and develop new affinity programs as needed
- Continue to utilize Natural Commerce database in tracking member/non-member participation
- Increase fields of information in database to better utilize Chamber WebLink capabilities
- Continue growth of email database and segment member communications to increase relevance

CHAMBER EVENTS

Nancy Leffler and Marci Saling, event managers

OVERVIEW

With the assistance of hundreds of volunteers and committee members, the Chamber events department produces more than 70 events annually. These events range from large-scale, downtown Canton community street festivals to pro-business, networking events and member-engaging programs. The Chamber events department is a hub of year-round activity, and acts as one of the chief catalysts for succeeding in our mission, “Advancing Business. Developing Community.”

GOAL

- Provide professional, unparalleled community and business events for Canton/Stark County

OBJECTIVES

Downtown Community Events

- Increase attendance at each downtown event by 15% in 2009
- Increase efficiency in planning downtown events
- Continue to build the Chamber’s reputation for producing quality downtown events
- Increase the value of marketing dollars being spent to promote each festival
- Increase the value of the event sponsorship opportunities and packages
- Strengthen the relationship of the events department with the Mayor’s office and the Canton Development Partnership

Member and Business Events

- Increase attendance at all business events and concentrate sales efforts on the sale of season passes
- Increase efficiency in planning and budgeting all business events
- Continue to build the Chamber’s reputation for producing essential, business-advancing programs
- Increase the value of marketing dollars being spent to promote each respective event or program
- Increase the value of specific event sponsorship opportunities and packages

STRATEGIES

Downtown Community Events

- Deliver on the Chamber’s mission of “*Developing Community*” by demonstrating the economic and experiential benefits to the Canton/Stark County community and residents
- Better utilize volunteer committees to perform tasks and equip the committee chairperson to delegate tasks and projects to committee members
- Work closely with the marketing department to develop and utilize a solid marketing plan that increases event awareness throughout the Northeast Ohio region by reviewing current tactics and developing new ideas
- Implement marketing efforts in a more timely manner and work to identify and reach the target audience for each event to maximize the effectiveness of the marketing plan
- Work with the sponsorship manager to develop a strategy that better tends to the needs of sponsors and works to create a value “above” what is expected
- Communicate the positive economic advantages associated with the CRCC hosting the downtown events and strengthen the partnership with the Canton Development Partnership and the City of Canton

Member and Business Event Goals

- Deliver on the Chamber’s mission of “*Advancing Business*” by providing relevant, timely and educational programs alongside networking opportunities to expand Stark County’s pro-business environment
- Strategize ways to improve Chamber-member value through ongoing business events and annual awards programs
- Collaborate with the Marketing department to deliver new advertising ideas, marketing vehicles, design elements and content for each event or campaign promotion
- Bring in top-quality speakers and entertainers to generate buzz about upcoming events and to increase attendance
- Facilitate networking opportunities for Chamber members to promote intra-regional business interaction

OVERVIEW

The marketing department directs and implements all marketing strategies, public and media relations activities and advertising campaigns for the Chamber and its departments. The department provides in-house creative concepting and graphic design work, copywriting, media relations, strategic brand management and offline and online marketing tactics.

The marketing department is in the unique position to interact, collaborate and impact each of the Chamber's departments and events, and the marketing team works to align all advertising, marketing and PR essentials to support the Chamber's mission and goals.

GOALS

- Increase brand awareness and design continuity for the Chamber and its departments
- Work with each department on an ongoing basis to determine needed marketing strategy and execution
- Execute marketing campaigns and promotions that ignite action – be it to grow event attendance, increase membership sales, promote business relocation, or to increase brand awareness locally and regionally
- Stay on top of the latest marketing trends and tactics and make strategic investment recommendations as encountered

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Chamber Brand Management

Creatively align all Chamber communications

- Develop a comprehensive Chamber marketing plan
- Develop campaign around the Chamber's 95th Anniversary and infuse the milestone into marketing in 2009
- Continuously evaluate and update Chamber materials to ensure effectiveness
- Identify and recommend marketing channels to highlight the Chamber's business and economic development efforts and to market Canton/Stark County and as a highly viable business environment
- Develop brand standards guidelines for the Chamber and its departments to share with all partners, sponsors, media and vendors

Event and Departmental Marketing

Support each department of the Chamber to ensure full marketing support and development

- Assess individual department and event marketing needs and develop timely, detailed marketing plans for review with event and department managers
- Develop materials, promotions and elements to support all of the Chamber's 70+ events and four departments
- Begin quantitative and qualitative measurement process to assess which communications tactics are achieving the Chamber's various calls-to-action

Membership Marketing

Work with the membership and sales department to strengthen and add continuity to membership sales materials

- Develop new membership sales kit and relevant documents to assist membership and sales department with membership growth and advertising sales
- Continue to work closely with each department to provide well-written, relevant and timely content for the two Chamber publications, *ACTION* and *Downtown Developments Newsletter*

Online Marketing

Update and restructure the Chamber's most valuable marketing asset – cantonchamber.org

- Review and revise all website copy to ensure that it achieves the highest level of search engine optimization
- Develop titles and keyword phrases for each page of the website
- Test all site links and pages for functionality and accuracy, make timely content updates
- Implement the recommended email marketing platform and begin audience segmentation efforts
- Provide Chamber management with recommendations on structural and navigational changes to be made to the existing site to increase site navigation and accessibility
- Make formal, comprehensive recommendations in mid-to-late 2009 for the development of a new Chamber website
- Digitize relevant Chamber newsletter articles and place on Chamber site and add Share Links
- Add Google Analytics Tracking to the Chamber website and all affinity sites for more comprehensive accountability

Media Relations

Build relationships and the Chamber's reputation locally and regionally

- Research and update media contacts and outlets on existing media list and search for new online media outlets and blogs
- Continue to cultivate relationships with local and regional media
- Work with the Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival and Pro Football Hall of Fame to streamline media relations practices pertaining to the 2009 Enshrinement Festival and make cost-effective recommendations for improvement of the media relations process
- Identify and target online newswires for pertinent regional and national release delivery
- Implement the recommended email marketing platform for use with news releases, media advisories and digital press kit
- Develop both an online and offline press kit for the Chamber, complete with fact sheets, Chamber backgrounder, key staff bios, Canton/Stark County assets and economic development information, image library and other relevant press documents
- Develop news room at cantonchamber.org and add Share Links

YSTARK! YOUNG PROFESSIONAL INITIATIVE

Aimee B. Belden, director

OVERVIEW

ystark! young professionals (YPs) collaborate with government leaders, the business community and education organizations to attract and retain vibrant, energetic and diverse young professionals in Stark County. The organization is dedicated to engaging and empowering YPs through networking, social and cultural events, community involvement and professional development. These efforts will help to root YPs into the community and therefore retain them as productive citizens.

GOAL

- Ensure ystark! mission and objectives are fulfilled in order to support economic growth of Stark County

OBJECTIVES

- Promote Stark County as a desirable location for young professionals to live, work and play
- Support and promote initiatives that attract new businesses and employment opportunities to Stark County
- Provide young professionals with opportunities to develop professionally and to network with area colleagues and mentors
- Develop an engaged membership base of active, involved YPs
- Facilitate communication and collaboration between all of our region's young professional organizations

STRATEGIES

- Implement and evaluate *ystark! Fellowship Program*, a career development opportunity for recent college graduates
- Provide a variety of activities and programs in which YPs can learn about the enormous potential of our region, network and enjoy a social atmosphere
- Reach out to the education community to "sell" the opportunities in the area
- Develop a Diversity Action Plan to ensure that we are encouraging and assisting the growth and involvement of diverse individuals
- Proactively target businesses to communicate our mission/vision
- Help companies recruit YPs to the area as part of their hiring process
- Execute a successful *Twenty under 40!* event to highlight diverse young leaders in our community
- Utilize effective marketing communication tactics to inform and educate members and the community
- Offer opportunities for members to serve on our committees and volunteer as leaders in other community organizations
- Seek out other local organizations and develop a plan for sharing knowledge and communicating about our respective activities

LEADERSHIP STARK COUNTY

Fran Wells, director

OVERVIEW

Through training in leadership skills and education about the community, Leadership Stark County (LSC) develops a core of motivated leaders, with lifelong commitment to community trusteeship.

LSC programs include:

- Leadership Signature Program – 10-month program for a diverse group of participants that aims to enhance leadership skills and identifies local and regional issues, assets and resources
- Government Leadership Academy – 6-week course that offers elected officials and aspiring candidates leadership development and education about local and regional government
- Spotlight Stark County – an after-work personal and professional development program and community engagement for young professionals
- Encounter Bus Tour – one-day program designed for professionals or residents who are new to the area, it highlights historic, economic and cultural assets of Stark County and provides opportunities for volunteer involvement

GOAL

- Develop motivated leaders with a lifelong commitment to community trusteeship

OBJECTIVES

- Prepare, position and challenge class participants and alumni to address Stark County's issues and needs through networking, service and educational programming
- Broaden marketing efforts to educate area leaders and community-minded individuals on the nature and value of the Leadership program
- Pursue participation from all community segments in leadership training opportunities.

STRATEGIES

- Develop marketing strategies to broaden impact and contact with the outlying geographic regions of Stark County
- Increase contact with the business community to involve all segments of the community in program support and participation
- Promote full utilization of LSC website
- Meet fundraising and sponsorship goals
- Market the Spotlight and Government Academy to ensure diversity of participants
- Develop regional program opportunities and partnerships for alumni
- Seize marketing opportunities to offer programs to business & professional organizations

PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME ENSHRINEMENT FESTIVAL

Joanne K. Murray, director

OVERVIEW

The Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival consists of 15 events over a ten-day period, enjoyed by nearly 700,000 people. The annual celebration surrounding the enshrinement of football heroes into the Pro Football Hall of Fame is the culmination of a year-long planning process by the professional staffs of the Enshrinement Festival department of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Pro Football Hall of Fame, along with a team of more than 4,200 volunteers who receive outstanding support from sponsors, community leaders, government entities, other Chamber departments, local citizens and visiting guests.

We are strongly committed to assuring safe and successful Enshrinement Festival events that produce a positive social and economic impact and bring national recognition to our community, and to encouraging year-round enjoyment of the Pro Football Hall of Fame and our other numerous community assets.

GOAL

- Stage world-class events showcasing the induction of new Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinees

OBJECTIVES

- Stage Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival
- Encourage support for the Pro Football Hall of Fame Museum
- Provide a positive economic impact
- Promote the spirit of our community and its people

STRATEGIES

Develop and adhere to a responsible budget in order to assure the financial success of the Enshrinement Festival

- Share approved budget with Enshrinement Festival committee leadership and monitor throughout the planning process to assure compliance
- Develop a more efficient method to track payables and receivables in a timely manner
- Meet the challenges of securing quality musical acts for the Ribs Burnoff in a fiscally-responsible manner

Conduct a successful cash and in-kind sponsorship campaign

- 2009 cash goal: \$975,000
- Enter into multi-year sponsorship agreements where feasible
- More fully and effectively utilize the Web site relative to event and sponsor promotion, blast e-mail function, and increased on-line ticket sales capabilities
- Maintain open communication with The Timken Company relative to their title sponsorship of the Grand Parade
- Utilize the sponsorship manager's dual role with the traditional Chamber sponsorship campaign to package sponsorships that benefit the Chamber as a whole
- Increase efforts to secure joint sponsorships with the Pro Football Hall of Fame, especially on a national level
- Enhance the internal tracking procedure for fulfillment of sponsor promotional benefits via an invoicing program

Continue to monitor the direction and viability of all events with emphasis on several

- Monitor contestant and sponsor support of the Queen Pageant and determine if it remains a viable activity that adds value
- Remain diligent in monitoring all aspects of the Ribs Burnoff, including location, finances, safety and attendance

Strengthen committee structure

- Encourage increased attendance at committee meetings
- Hold committee leadership orientation sessions to share policies, procedures, challenges and opportunities
- Mentor veteran and new volunteers to prepare them for leadership roles
- Strive for increased diversity in committees

Maintain and enhance the team spirit and close working relationship with the staff and volunteers of the Pro Football Hall of Fame

- Build on the synergies developed in 2008 as the result of the name change and 45th anniversary celebration
- Facilitate regular communication and interaction between Chamber and Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival committee chairmen
- Convene the Joint Coordinating Committee as prudent in order to share information, issues and opportunities in a proactive manner
- Encourage open communication and sharing of information in order to meet the needs of all partners relative to fan packages and tour group opportunities

Expand promotional opportunities to showcase the Enshrinement Festival and the community and encourage year-round visitors

- Complete the annual brochure earlier so that it is ready for distribution no later than April 1
- Work in cooperation with the Chamber's marketing department to capitalize on marketing and media opportunities
- Utilize billboards and television commercials through trade opportunities
- Communicate more directly with Time Warner and PYEcom to assure more professional and complete coverage of events
- Maintain consistent effort to brand the Enshrinement Festival as a "One of a Kind Celebration"
- Partner with the Pro Football Hall of Fame to expand national media coverage and streamline media relations

Maintain strong partnerships with various entities that directly and indirectly affect the Enshrinement Festival

- Pro Football Hall of Fame
- Volunteers
- Sponsors
- City of Canton and other government entities
- Jackson-Belden Chamber of Commerce
- Other Chamber departments
- Media

Utilize available funds and tools to assure the future growth of the Enshrinement Festival and viability of the community

- Consider short- and long-range plans for appropriate expenditure of net profits and board-designated improvement funds, if available
- Continue to utilize the results of the 2005 economic impact study as a tool to secure greater support, to recruit and retain sponsors, and to educate the public and private sectors regarding the significant impact the Enshrinement Festival has on our community, region and state
- Begin to plan for another economic impact study during the 2010 Enshrinement Festival
- Develop a plan and receive approval from the Department of Administrative Services for the expenditure of the remaining \$100,000 in State of Ohio capital funds

CANTON/STARK COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS' BUREAU

John R. Kiste, executive director

OVERVIEW

The mission of the Canton/Stark County Convention & Visitors' Bureau (CVB) is to attract, orient and serve visitors, to educate local residents and to initiate projects and programs that promote and grow tourism in Canton/Stark County. It is the policy of the CVB to ensure professional, countywide representation of tourism entities to convention organizations, sporting events and motor coach tour companies, and to the individual leisure traveler.

GOALS

- Utilize the CVB's strategic plan and board leadership to continue a coherent sales and marketing program designed to secure convention-holding organizations, sporting events, and motor coach tours for the Stark County area
- Exceed customer service expectations of these organizations, ensuring the desire to return to our community

OBJECTIVES

- Host a minimum of 300 conventions, conferences, trade shows, reunions, seminars and sporting events to generate over \$70 million dollars for the Stark County area
- Schedule a minimum of 180 future conventions, conferences, trade shows, reunions, seminars and sporting events to generate at least \$40 million
- Host more than 2,200 motor coaches to generate in excess of \$5 million for the local economy

STRATEGIES

- Continue to work with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) to host the State Football Championships at Fawcett Stadium in Canton and Paul Brown Tiger Stadium in Massillon and the OHSAA Swimming & Diving Championships at the C.T. Branin Natatorium
- Promote Stark County as a sporting event destination, utilizing the numerous existing sports complexes throughout Stark County for events such as the upcoming Summer 2009 USA Football Junior World Championships
- Continue to develop a regional sports consortium with surrounding counties to enable larger sporting events to be hosted throughout the region
- Continue emphasis on sales calls in the Cleveland, Columbus, and Pittsburgh markets, using a strong relationship with the Canton Memorial Civic Center for larger groups and with the Kent State University Stark Campus Professional Education & Conference Center as a state-of-the-art meeting venue for mid-sized groups
- Create a first-class Tourist Information Center at our new Fulton Drive location
- Continue to work with the increasingly vibrant Stark County arts community to attract travelers to the area for events such as KIMONO, the Canton Blues Festival and the Polar Express
- Communicate with local and state legislators to continue demonstrating the benefits of travel and tourism to the county and state economies
- Cultivate relationships with all area tourism partners
- Examine Bureau reserves policy and update investment strategy as needed (if lodging tax receipts are strong through the first half of the year, utilize excess reserves dollars for a 2009 Tourism Partnership Program, similar to the successful 2003-2008 programs)

CANTON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Michael P. Gill, director

OVERVIEW

Canton Development Partnership (CDP) is a coalition of area development organizations and city government that shares an interest in downtown Canton's continuous improvement, revitalization, image and quality of life for its citizens.

The CDP's mission is to support and coordinate the activities and programs of its partnering organizations in order to encourage and sustain community and economic development in downtown Canton.

The partnering organizations include Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Canton Special Improvement District Inc. (SID), Downtown Canton Land Bank Corp. (DCLB), Canton Tomorrow Inc. (CTI), and City of Canton.

GOALS

- Sustain community and economic development in downtown Canton
- Support and coordinate the activities and programs of partnering organizations

OBJECTIVES

Downtown Canton Special Improvement District Inc. (SID)

- Continuously improve downtown aesthetics
- Market and promote downtown Canton
- Retain and expand downtown business and attract new businesses to the downtown area

Downtown Canton Land Bank Corp. (DCLB)

- Manage owned properties
- Eliminate downtown blight through the purchase of distressed properties
- Identify, acquire and develop strategic downtown real estate

Canton Tomorrow Inc. (CTI)

- Implement the CTI strategic plan that considers goals and initiatives of SID and DCLB

STRATEGIES

Downtown Aesthetic Initiatives

- "Color Downtown" – enhance street plantings
- Banner and flag program – assist with scheduling the display of flags and banners in the downtown area
- Provide additional security for the central business district
- Architectural Review Board and Design Guidelines – assure that exterior improvements blend with the fabric of downtown
- Improve arts in downtown – develop art projects that enhance the downtown landscape

Downtown Marketing Initiatives

- Way finding – develop signage and recommend traffic flow changes
- Events – conduct high quality targeted events to generate activity downtown
- Farmers Market – continue and expand market potential
- Develop park link, bike/walking path within downtown

- Marketing campaign – continue downtown marketing plan
- Master plan – implement master plan recommendations
- Safe and clean – ensure that downtown meets expectations of downtown employees and visitors
- Develop successful art events/programs that stimulate activity downtown

Economic Development Initiatives

- Utilize a comprehensive catalog of occupied and available space downtown as an information source for potential buyers/tenants
- Attract new businesses – developers/realtor presentations
- Develop statistical gauges or metrics to identify successful programs
- Utilize existing incentives to stimulate economic growth downtown
- Utilize historic designation and tax credits to market downtown investment

Administrative Project Initiatives

- Annex new properties to the SID as opportunities exist
- Housing – coordinate efforts to create new housing downtown
- Implement a housing rehab program
- Develop plan to renew SID in 2010