

2023

GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 5-YEAR PLAN



MESSAGE FROM GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



MICHAEL BUSHARDT

Chairman of the Board



KARI PULEO

Executive Director

Dear Greater Utica Business Community,

We are pleased to present our updated Strategic Plan which will guide the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce over the next five years. As the world evolves and changes, so must our Chamber innovate and adapt to best serve your needs. With deep discussions during the strategic planning processes, two major factors rose to the top of the conversation that affect our local business community.

The first is the post-COVID era that we continue to navigate. This brings new challenges to the business landscape with varied issues from supply chain disruptions and remote work, while accelerating prior issues such as labor shortages and cybersecurity that many industries were starting to face prior to 2020.

The second major and much more exciting factor is the revitalization of our region. Billions of public and private dollars are being poured into the Greater Utica area. From a brand new state-of-the-art healthcare campus to the world's first, largest, and only 200-millimeter silicon carbide semiconductor facility at Wolfspeed to the Nexus Center, a sports and recreation complex that will bring millions of dollars of tourism to our area, the transformation of our areas is astounding. And these are only a small piece of the revitalization happening.

It goes without saying we must provide the services and tools necessary to keep that momentum going. We pledge to continue to educate our members on the ever-changing rules and regulations that coincide with a rapidly evolving world of work, as well as the best practices for current issues to help you prepare for what lies ahead. We will remain a steadfast voice for the business community and continue to be strong advocates for our members on legislative issues.

Our plan's main focus areas are:

- **TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION:** *Utilize our new What's Upstate initiative to expand efforts to attract and retain talent by showcasing our region*
- **ADVOCACY:** *Drive business-friendly policies that promote regional growth as the largest pro-business public policy voice*
- **DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:** *Leverage Utica's unique and diverse collective assets to strengthen regional growth, inclusion and quality of life*
- **ENGAGEMENT, GROWTH AND INNOVATION:** *Provide access, education and resources to cultivate business success*

We invite you to look at the plan and share it with others interested in joining this vital work. We believe our future opportunities are strong, and we look forward to partnering with you to help make them a reality!



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THE GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS A NON-PROFIT, MEMBER-BASED, BUSINESS ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROSPEROUS ECONOMIC CLIMATE THAT WILL ENHANCE COMMERCIAL GROWTH AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL WHO RESIDE IN THE UTICA REGION.

**GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MISSION STATEMENT**

GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COUNCILS AT A GLANCE

- **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS:** The Council's goal is to advocate and promote local / state / federal government policies and community decisions that are conducive to a strong regional business climate and support quality economic growth and prosperity. The Chamber engages Member businesses through this Council with roundtable discussions to evaluate the impact of proposed government policies at all levels of government.
- **MEMBERSHIP:** This Council's primary goals are increasing event involvement, recruitment of new members, and membership retention. Membership Council contains our Ambassadors Program. Ambassadors are a strong representation of the Chamber within the community, serving as the goodwill arm of the Chamber, playing an essential role in member communication, appreciation, retention, and level of engagement. The **CATALYST** Young Professional group falls under Membership. If you have employees under the age of 40 that you are looking to get engaged with the Chamber, please connect them with our Catalyst group. Catalyst brings together young, influential people to share their ideas and experiences, network with like-minded individuals, build their careers, and generate business for local merchants.
- **SMALL BUSINESS:** This Council seeks out opportunities and concerns impacting the small businesses in the Greater Utica area. This council hosts discussions of the most important needs currently affecting their business, and assists with educational programming and is focused on making sure all Chamber Member's business develop and flourish as best they can.
- **PUBLICITY AND EVENTS:** This Council is responsible for increasing community awareness of the Chamber, as well as planning and facilitating events and other special activities to provide members with enjoyable networking opportunities.



GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

5 YEAR PLAN - VISIONS & GOALS

This Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 outlines the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce’s essential focus areas and action items for the membership and the region. The Planning Committee [right] met on several occasions over the course of 2022 to review the previous 5-Year plan, and attempted to look into the future to how the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce can best serve all of its stakeholders.

The following visions are outlined below. Fostering partnerships and relationships; campaigning for the business community; providing benefits to members; playing a role in economic development; and promoting this region have been deemed the most important concepts the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce seeks to act upon moving through the next 5 years.

These priorities are the roadmap for the next five years and we encourage you to read more about them in the plan. We know that achieving these goals will require strong leadership, dedication, commitment, and broad collaboration. We will only be successful with your help, as our valued members, our partners, and our collaborators.



To FOSTER partnerships and relationships with other organizations or individuals who wish to meet these opportunities and challenges within the Utica area.



To CAMPAIGN for quality regional government, advocating the positive results that can be obtained through consolidation of elected offices and public services.



To PROVIDE benefits that will assist member businesses in becoming successful economic entities.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

DAN AMADO

Northland Communications

NICHOLAS BRUNO **Committee Chair**

Mohawk Valley EDGE

MICHAEL BUSHARDT

Charles A. Gaetano, a Division of Pike Construction Services

ELIS DELIA, Esq.

S. Delia Corp.

STEVE MCMURRAY

WKTV

JUSTIN MILLER

Universal Bookkeeper

JENNIFER OSIECKI, Esq.

The Law Offices of Jennifer Osiecki

TRACY PAGE

TM&S Building Associates, LLC

TINA PAVLOT

M&T Bank

GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VISIONS



To PLAY a significant role in the expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new enterprises that will create jobs and result in economic growth for the area.



To PROMOTE the area enthusiastically with innovation to the residents, as well as nonresidents, championing those assets that many locally take for granted and outsiders may not realize exist.

GOAL #1

BE THE LEADING RESOURCE FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT IN UPSTATE NY

MAINTAIN WHAT'S UPSTATE WEBSITE

- Secure sponsorships to insure sustainability of project. Project should generate \$48,000 in income by Dec. 2023 and \$95,000 by December 2024
- Increase website rankings/SEO to #1 by July 2023; Maintain those rankings
- Increase the amount of cultural diversity, showcase more communities, enhance content
- Add job board to site to generate source of revenue by July 2023
- Add 12 new What's Upstate Ambassadors to provide more options for unique storytelling each year

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO RETAIN TALENT

- Develop a higher education leadership council in 2023 to unify higher education institutions directly with employers to develop and sustain diverse talent pipelines.
- Develop and implement a regional recruitment initiative targeted toward college sophomores and juniors; Host one signature event/initiative during 2023/2024 school year.

EXPAND OFFERINGS OF TALENT ACQUISITION PROGRAMMING

- Conduct and Promote "What's Upstate" relocation tours
 - Partner with area businesses to provide tours for applicantes and new employees
 - Build a network of tour guides that will allow for further customization in guide/individual match
- Develop Community Navigator program to assist businesses in retention of relocated employees
- Engage in initiatives to expand and diversify the community's labor pool



GOAL #2

SERVE AS THE PUBLIC POLICY VOICE FOR OUR REGION'S BUSINESSES, PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND A COLLECTIVE UNIFIED VOICE TO ADVOCATE FOR ISSUES, POLICIES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL PROMOTE REGIONAL GROWTH

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LEAD STATE ADVOCACY EFFORTS FOR OUR LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- Develop a grassroots database segmented by issue interest. Conduct survey in Q1 2023
- Encourage staff and volunteers to provide testimony to a legislative body as a way to enhance the chamber's credibility and more effectively advocate the chamber's legislative issues.
- Continue working to grow our grassroots network and utilize various forms of media to activate the network
- Provide op-ed articles to the media about the chamber's top advocacy priorities. Submit these bi-annually beginning in 2023.

GOAL #3

BE RECOGNIZED AS A CHAMPION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION SUCH THAT MEMBER COMPANIES AND
THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF
OUR REGION

IMPROVE DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION SERVICES

- Increase the diversity of the Chamber's leadership board
- Increase the diversity of Chamber membership:
 - Multiple languages of materials, having the Chamber be more reflective of the community we serve- Identify which documents and languages need to done
 - Review Chamber benefits to increase value to diverse businesses. See what can be strengthened/improved
- Promote the economic benefits of DEI practices, offering workshops/training, providing resources and guidance to advance DEI practices and providing marketing/outreach to attract and retain a diverse workforce
- Establish a program to provide low/no cost Chamber membership for diverse-owned businesses to boost equity allowing for connection to resources, introductions and networking events, educational opportunities and skills-building, and professional development



GOAL #4

ENHANCE GREATER UTICA CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT, GROWTH AND FEEDBACK

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OPTIMIZE ROLE OF CHAMBER BOARD

- Engage board in Chamber pitch. Develop committee in Q1/Q2 2023 and then roll out for use
- Encourage board presence at events

OPTIMIZE ROLE OF CATALYST GROUP

- Engage Steering Committee in Catalyst pitch. Develop committee in Q1/Q2 2023 and then roll out for use
- Create more opportunities for Young Professional trainings
- Encourage cross-participation with Catalyst/ Board meetings and Council meetings

OPTIMIZE ROLE OF CHAMBER COUNCILS

- Formalize Individual Council Strategic Plans by 2022
- Reinvigorate Ambassador Program with 12 new members by the end of 2023
- Increase Attendance at all Councils by generating new members and encourage greater diversity; invite new members to "meet & greet" at Council meetings

STRENGTHEN ROLES WITH PARTNERS

- Meet quarterly with MV EDGE; how to build relationships with community partners
- Connect quarterly with Oneida County Tourism, Community Foundation, Smaller Chambers, CANYS, etc.
- Develop communication plan with Upstate United

INCREASE MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND SPONSORSHIPS

- Create and maintain membership recruitment and onboarding procedure
- Review new business entities list monthly for membership
- Engage Small Business Development Council and ThINCubator in referrals
- Recruit past members to rejoin the Chamber
- Create an inventory to better categorize members
- Increase education of member benefits
- Periodically survey membership to gauge needs and opinions about important pending community and business issues
- Explore new benefit offerings and services such as one-on-one coaching

ESTABLISH A 501C3 CHAMBER SUBSIDIARY

- Research and review process
- Present Pros and Cons to Board
- Acquire Board Approvals and Resolutions
- Commence and Complete Application
- Find Opportunities for grants/Solicit grants and activities

APPENDIX

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