



# STRATEGIC PLAN

CONVENER. CHAMPION. CATALYST. | 2018-2021

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2018 & 2019

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*2019 Chair of the Board*  
*Pinehurst, LLC*

Micah Niebauer  
*2018 Chair of the Board*  
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*Mark's Tax Professionals*

Michael Barbera  
*Clicksuasion Labs*

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*Moore County Partners In Progress*

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*Sandhills Law Group*

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*Penick Village, Continuing Care Community*

Gretchen Kelly  
*FirstHealth - Moore Regional Hospital*

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Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area*

Lane West  
*Clean Juice*



## MEMBERS, INVESTORS AND FRIENDS,

The Moore County Chamber's mission is to foster a vibrant business community. This multi-year strategic plan will be our roadmap to strengthen the organization that has served businesses and the community for over half a century.

Through the strength and engagement of employers, as well as the support of community leaders, the Chamber will continue to advance Moore County as a great place to live, work, or visit. The Chamber is an agent for positive change . . . an advocate committed to leading business **and** leading community.

Your ongoing support will ensure continued success of the organization as it helps the region prosper. The Officers, Board of Directors and Staff are pleased to present our strategic plan and we look forward to working with you.

Linda M. Parsons, IOM, CCEC  
*President and CEO*

# CONVENER. CHAMPION. CATALYST.

The Moore County Chamber's mission is to foster a vibrant business community and a prosperous economy.

Through the strength and engagement of employers, as well as the resources of communities, the Chamber will advance Moore County as a great place to live, work, or visit.

The Chamber is an agent for positive change . . . an advocate committed to leading business and leading community.

The Officers, Directors and Staff of this 51 Years young organization welcome your input on this plan. Your ongoing support will help ensure that the aspirations become reality.

## OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The Moore County Chamber is Committed to:

- high quality and continuous improvement
- economic success of member organizations
- cooperation with public & private partners
- accepting responsibility
- representing the course set forth by elected Chamber leaders

## CONTEXT

Our legacy building has been sold, providing the opportunity to think differently about where and how we do our work. The Moore County Chamber is now well-positioned to embrace and address long-standing and new challenges facing our region, communities and employers. Membership loyalty is high, staff is enthusiastic and the Board of Directors is ready to drive the organization forward. We can now envision a wonderful future for the Chamber and the region.

Our region – even beyond the County – is experiencing growth, both in population and prosperity, but not all localities and neighborhoods have enjoyed the same levels of success. Meanwhile, national trends continue to transform the hospitality, leisure, military and agricultural sectors of our economy. Workforce and infrastructure demands will continue to strain current capacity. The Chamber must take an active role in addressing these and other factors that will shape our future, while providing members with the help they need today.

***Are we ready to be the organization we are becoming?*** The new path will require boldness and experimentation, but also improvement of the services, networks and programs already valued by hundreds of members. To achieve our goals as Conveners, Champions and Catalysts, the Chamber must empower a ***chorus of voices . . . including yours!***

In many cases, the Chamber is already heavily engaged in serving these essential roles. As Stephen Covey advised in his mega-million bestseller, even with the processes and services we are most proud of, we must continually **“Sharpen the saw.”** To realize our **“Envisioned Future,”** we must also identify and tackle new aspects of these vital areas of service.



- intentional inclusion
- reasonable compromise
- mutual respect in interactions, both internal & external
- clear & transparent communication between staff and officers
- stewardship of all resources

- appropriate transparency
- personal connection to members
- realistic optimism
- leadership

# CONVENER

The Moore County Chamber brings people together. This seemingly simple role is anything but. Networks nurtured by the Chamber already provide unrivaled group intelligence, powerful introductions, friction-free transactions and precious business friendships. They also foster collective impact on policy and critical decisions. Networks will do even more in the years ahead.

## NETWORKS

### >>>> SHARPEN THE SAW

- Mission-driven geographic networks and action-oriented subgroups will expand the reach and influence of the Chamber and increase the economic opportunity across the County.
- Bring multiple stakeholders to the table to address issues and challenges and develop quality programming and exchange of information, as judged by the experience of attendees
- The Chamber must carefully examine viable and meaningful avenues for increasing its “reach” across the County. An ideal path is not yet evident.
- Establish a systematic approach to 1-on-1 introductions by combining resources with other entities and providers to fill service and information gaps

## NETWORKS

### >>>> ENVISIONED FUTURE

- Systematic member visitation, by staff and ambassadors aimed at both employer problem solving and membership retention
- Smooth the path for commerce at all levels through high-functioning networks and stronger connections among members
- Convene high functioning topical networks and roundtables each year and partner with college class to produce a white paper following each one.
- Improve leadership training portions of MCLI programming and develop a Chamber-driven mentor program

- Hire administrative talent to enable CEO to connect more with members (2018)
- Convene 2 topical/issue roundtables per year (2019)
- Increase periodic member contact to reduce need for dues “collections” work (2019)

- Personal office visitation by CEO or Chair with members investing >\$1,500 (2020)
- Establish 2 task forces (3-month lifespan) to address top community concerns (2019)



## CRITICAL ACTIONS/CHANGES

- Benchmark MCLI against best-in-class leadership programs across US (2020)
- Structure feedback loops (formal satisfaction surveys and 3rd-party calls) to enable members to evaluate “experience” of MCC (2019)

- Activate structured mentoring program (2020)
- Maximize new HQ as place for convening – intersection of business, government & general public (2020)

# CHAMPION

The Chamber has a tradition of advocating for its members, the economy and the communities it serves. Of all the roles the Chamber plays, the voice of business is its most unique and responsible. Since no one else speaks for employers, the Chamber must continue to innovate and excel in this capacity.

## CHAMPTION FOR MEMBERS

### >>>> SHARPEN THE SAW

- Embrace our role as primary advocate for members and employers. Articulate and educate members and other “influentials” about critical issues facing the county.
- Incorporate policy awareness/education into new communications plan. Establish internal process for “rapid response.” Work with other NC Chambers to identify state issues & monitor legislation.
- Allocate more time to policy work, including 25% of CEO’s time and dedicating time at each board meeting to discuss key policy concerns and opportunities at the local, state and federal levels.
- To serve and “utilize” members better, the Chamber must know more about member needs/desires. Systematic data collection is required to secure this knowledge.
- Develop the leadership that communities and organizations will need in the future.

## CHAMPTION FOR MEMBERS

### >>>> ENVISIONED FUTURE

- In the face of dramatic change, the most vulnerable position may be no position.
- Improve the prospects of individual companies & talented people, through active approaches to the challenges facing under-represented groups.
- Play a significant collaborative role in community/economic development. Work with EDC to determine which roles make sense, e.g. business retention. For the foreseeable future, workforce development and education attainment will require significant chamber attention.
- In the quest for both a favorable business climate and fair attention to the County’s specific needs, empower the staff and committee leaders to take positions
- Because the prospects for employers is linked to success of the community, the Chamber will include critical social and economic issues of the community, as well as businesses, in its advocacy agenda.

- Craft and produce annual Chamber Public Policy Agenda (2019)
- Bolster & curate website & social media presence to inform members on issues (2020)

- Carve out specific role for Chamber in economic development portfolio (2019)
- Benchmark and adopt/adapt best-in-class member data analysis (2021)



## CRITICAL ACTIONS/CHANGES

- Modest & appropriate engagement in each election cycle – including education & Awareness campaign (2020)

- The chamber must play the role of “demanding customer” for companies looking for good employees to fill current and future needs. (2019)

# CATALYST

It is important, but insufficient to address changes affecting the economy and society. The Chamber is determined to imagine and drive change. The Chamber will be a catalyst, tackling workforce gaps, business climate issues, community promotion, and best-in-class programming.

## CATALYST

### >>>> SHARPEN THE SAW

- Articulate the business and community hopes for the future – Identify and promote ideal outcomes and viable plans
- Enhance relationships with other institutions and organizations to promote the need to change and adapt to current and future trends, conditions and generational preferences.
- Use the national chamber network to help innovate the ways the organization is governed, managed and funded
- Work with younger leaders in the community to identify the changes required to ensure the attractiveness of the region to future generations
- Foster an entrepreneurial culture through action, supporting those seeking to launch or expand small businesses
- Chamber is already open to diversity of all kinds, but it will become an active driver & model for economic inclusion of under-represented populations

## CATALYST

### >>>> ENVISIONED FUTURE

- Work with partners in economic development roles to explore the value of a county-wide economic visioning project with the goal of increasing understanding of the region's prospects for growth and prosperity and a path toward that future.
- Anticipate & address challenges facing specific members and critical economic sectors – approach trade associations in the region to gather needed data and specific policy needs facing key industries
- Using contract and/or shared lobbyist, advocate for expanded investments in economic development and infrastructure at the state and county levels
- Establish (re-establish) a forum or platform for increased awareness and understanding between business and government leadership.

• After examining other models, adjust board size, schedule, communications, committees (2019)

• Establish entrepreneur “prize” (shark tank style) & use to explore angel funding option (2020)



## CRITICAL ACTIONS/CHANGES

- Interview community/economy visioning consultants to determine need/value/price (2020)

- Structure meaningful channels of communications between business and governments (2019)

- Increase interaction with minority enterprises and entities (2019)

# CAPACITY & SERVICE

## 1. COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE

- Maximize the Chamber's core value by expanding upon recent upticks in reputation and brand awareness. Dramatically increase use of testimonials and references, creating an inner circle tribe to take chamber messages viral. (2019)
- Develop and introduce communications innovations, adapted from best practices of non-profits across the nation through a new marketing plan. (2019)
- Use contemporary web tools and media platforms to expand reach and impact, but also low-tech/high-touch interactions (community celebration, company promotion, cross-sector dialogue) which can ensure more lasting impressions. (2020)





## 2. MEMBER/INVESTOR VALUE AND RETURN ON ENGAGEMENT

- Reduce non-mission work (casework for non-members, other peoples' worthy causes, unrelated awards/recognition, etc.) to ensure sufficient time to concentrate on the mission of the organization. Keep the main thing the main thing. (2019)
- Create and maintain meaningful, mission-sensitive events. In order to craft and sustain appropriate programs and network interaction, modest, affordable research on preferences and willingness to pay must be undertaken on a regular basis. (2019)
- Test ways to tackle urgent business/policy concerns, to increase value to members at critical times and to inspire greater investor confidence. (2020)
- Develop business model (P&L/ROI) for specific community and business promotional initiatives. Price the value of chamber support/involvement. (2020)
- Build a tribe that can help make membership and investment contagious and expected. Chamber must support and recognize members who are willing and able to connect with other members. (2020)
- Increase the value of Moore County Leadership Institute to larger investors by adapting curriculum (over time) to bolster the leadership training/education aspects of the program. (2021)



### 3. ADMINISTRATION, TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- This multi-year strategic plan will be a nimble, useable instrument, not a static document. Annual work plans will be structured based on feedback loops that identify real and timely needs of members and the community.
- A scoreboard/dashboard to measure progress and performance will be implemented from the best chamber models? This will track financial AND mission success. (2019)
- Talent attraction & retention (GPTW criteria) will ensure strong, stable staffing of the Chamber –additional staffing to ensure performance, not burn-out (5 FTE by 2020)
- Align governance with the plan. Structures and opportunities for more meaningful volunteer and leadership experiences will bolster effectiveness and improve outcomes. (2019)
- To measure progress toward quality and productivity, the Moore County Chamber will undertake the National Chamber Accreditation process within the span of this plan. (4-star minimum by 2021)
- Examine possible methods for increasing automation in membership processes and adopt/adapt those that ease burdens on staff and members

## 4. CAPACITY – THE CHAMBER HOME

### OBJECTIVES:

The chamber's brand and messaging will be multiplied if given a proper platform – a staging area for member and organizational excellence. The new headquarters envisioned for the Chamber will be an embodiment of its impact on the community, economy and employers. It will provide a visible statement about the county's future, but also a welcoming home and resource for the widely dispersed membership. The space may be an address not only for staff, activist members and established employers. It could also welcome and serve aspiring entrepreneurs. Eventually, it is hoped that it becomes a nexus of community and economy.

### PROCESS:

- a. Establish ideal timeline for relocation (current lease, chamber's annual calendar etc.)
- b. With understanding that some functions can and should be done by other entities, carefully evaluate future uses of a headquarters facility (offices, tourist welcome, micro-office rental, small incubator and/or coach's room, meeting space for community, etc.)
- c. Determine which processes & services are most appropriate and helpful for the Moore County Chamber's space (not theoretical)
- d. Develop real estate comparisons and negotiations aiming to find close to ideal



**FirstHealth**  
OF THE CAROLINAS



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