



## **WHAT IS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?**

**The El Dorado – Union County Chamber of Commerce is a Non-Profit association of businesses, industries and individuals, working together for the economic growth and quality of life for the El Dorado and Union County area. The Chamber is the community’s “front door” to new businesses, visitors and new residents. Our appearance, attitude and actions are these newcomers’ first impression of the City of El Dorado and Union County. The Chamber is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, who represents most of the economic segments and all of the major public and private institutions in the community. A staff of five professionals work daily to represent the business community in Union County Arkansas and to implement the policies established by the Board. The Chamber of Commerce is headquartered at 111 West Main Street, El Dorado, Arkansas.**

**The Chamber’s goals are as follows:**

- **The City/County’s recruitment, retention and expansion through advocacy for business and industry.**

- **Serving El Dorado and Union County as the visitor and tourism bureau.**
- **A proactive, collective voice for business and free enterprise that allows for a centralized information center for business and the community.**
- **The private sector advocate for community development and civic improvement.**
- **A catalyst for economic growth!**

**The Chamber is not an agency of government, a charitable organization, a booster club, a civic club or a political organization. The Chamber’s annual strategic plan is coordinated by the board of directors, members and staff.**

### **Vision**

**To lead our community to greater prosperity.**

### **Mission**

**To provide valuable services for our members, enhance and sustain the economy, promote the community and serve as the leading voice for business in El Dorado and Union County.**

## **Chamber Action Plan 2017-2020**

**“With a clever strategy, each action is self-reinforcing. Each action creates more options that are mutually beneficial. Each victory is not just for today but for tomorrow.” – Max McKeown**

## **The Chamber Executive Board for 2017-2018**

**Pam Griffin, Chairman**

**Christy Gunter, Chairman Elect**

**Ray Traylor, Treasurer**

**Bill Luther, Secretary**

**Tom Burger, Past Chairman**

**Rob Reynolds**

**Jim Tidwell**

**Carlos Buie**

**Trey Clark**

### **Chamber Staff:**

**Mike Dumas, President/CEO**

**Brandon Barnette, Economic Development Program Manager**

**Stephanie Mitchell, Administrative Assistant**

**Jaren Books, Vice President, Membership**

**Amanda Clemons, Director of Marketing**

### **Chamber Sustainability**

**Goal 1: To sustain the growth of the Chamber we must be relevant to the needs of our membership and provide the highest return possible on their investment. Implementing this strategic plan is a necessary step in accomplishing that goal.**

#### **Actions:**

- **Increase Communication between Members, Chamber Staff, and the Board of Directors.**
- **Develop “Email the President” where members can ask questions, post complaints, concerns, or tell us what we are doing right.**

- **Establish a Retention Plan to strengthen the renewal rate of current membership. Develop a Member Mentoring Program to encourage new or non-active members to attend an event with another member, Ambassador, or staff person.**
- **Expand membership recruitment efforts to build a stronger membership base and increase member visibility in the community.**
- **Visit potential member businesses and explain the benefits of membership; generate a mailing list of potential members for letters of encouragement to join the Chamber sent by the President/CEO.**
- **Enhance new member recognition through member emails, Facebook, newspaper articles to maximize the benefit of membership.**
  - **Provide advertising/sponsorship opportunities to increase member's recognition and visibility.**
  - **Offer membership directory; weekly email blasts; Business After Hours; Networking Luncheons; Ribbon Cuttings; Grand openings and groundbreakings; Economic Outlook luncheons; Annual meeting; Administrative Assistants Luncheon; Small Business Awards Luncheon.**
  - **Present a positive image to the community about the programs, policies and issues supported by the Chamber Board**
  - **Take a leading role in the development of local tourism**
  - **Voice El Dorado and Union County's strengths and successes**
  - **Promote the preservation of our heritage and culture**
  - **Participate in public/private partnership**
  - **Provide an atmosphere where educators and businesses work together to ensure a qualified workforce**
  - **Support ULEAD in the development of future community leaders**

- **Work with local organizations to ensure a clean and healthy community in which to live, work and play**
- **Be an aggressive team player with AEDC, Union County and the cities within Union County**

**Goal 2: The Chamber offers a member the opportunity to structure their membership dues where event sponsorships could be added as “dues”. Example, a Visionary Member’s basic dues are \$1499. The member would also like to be a sponsor for the Golf tournament at the \$2000 level. Annual dues for the member would be invoiced at \$3499. Member would be listed as Visionary member (\$1499) but at the annual golf tournament member would be listed as Title Sponsor with all the benefits thereof.**

## **Economic Development**

**Economic development is a program, group of policies, or activity that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community, by creating and/or retaining jobs that facilitate growth and provide a stable tax base.**

**Goal 1: To serve as the lead economic developer for El Dorado and Union County by coordinating recruitment, expansion and start-up efforts with local and recruited businesses.**

**Goal 2: To assist individual businesses and the entire community with business issues including tax incentives, workforce development, and marketing/promotion and site location. Your Chamber advocates for/against issues that affect the local business community and our economy. Examples include the Essential Air Service subsidy program, Hillsboro Gateway Project, and new programs for SouthArk.**

**Goal 3: To provide administrative support, meeting rooms and/or office space for economic development-focused organizations including the El Dorado Works Board, El Dorado Development Corporation, Union County Industrial Board and El Dorado Festivals & Events.**

**Actions:**

- **Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy by growing and retaining our existing businesses and recruiting new industry into the region.**
- **Explore an aggressive economic development vision for our communities by direct communication and engagement with county, regional and state officials to remain the leading voice for a vibrant local economy.**
- **Create jobs and increase capital investment in the region by recruiting new businesses and helping existing companies to expand.**
- **Identify leads by continuing to cultivate relationships with State project managers, brokers/agents, site selection consultants and direct company contacts.**
- **Develop creative incentive offerings to maximize local, state and federal funding opportunities.**
- **Increase the level of awareness of available programs and resources for the region's small businesses.**
- **Continue to champion workforce development for a highly-skilled and qualified workforce**
- **Assist employers who wish to recruit and retain the best quality employees in a changing labor market.**
- **Educate our chamber members on job training programs available through our educational institutions and agencies.**
- **Continue to serve as a resource partner with the local economic development entities.**

- **Represent the interests of business and industry at the local, state and federal levels. The Chamber will take the lead role as the independent voice of business by maintaining an active, informed presence at the meeting of and with elected officials.**
- **Maintain the highest level of integrity and transparency throughout all of our efforts.**

### **Tourism, Communications & Marketing**

**Goal 1: Coordinate Tourism efforts with other entities to be prepared for the expected dramatic increase in visitors to this community.**

**Actions:**

- **Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber, City and County.**
- **Attend educational seminars and conferences on tourism, marketing and professional development.**
- **Print and distribute quality brochures and marketing pieces that promote El Dorado and Union County.**
- **Continue relationships with the A&P Commission, Downtown Business Association, El Dorado Works Board, Arkansas South, Mainstreet El Dorado, El Dorado Festival and Events, the Smackover Chamber of Commerce, Fifty for the Future, the South Arkansas Historical Preservation Society, etc.**
- **Assist with a variety of events, which showcase the El Dorado - Union County area, contributes to the profit of our businesses and increase tax revenue.**
- **Conduct tours of our community for prospective residents**

## **Community Relations**

**Goal 1: Improve the Quality of Life. Quality of Life is often noted as the number one reason that many organizations, corporations and ultimately, individuals, choose a community to live. Investing in the community includes investing in our businesses, education, recreation, infrastructure and overall beautification.**

### **Actions:**

- **Assemble potential and established leaders in El Dorado Union County and develop their leadership skills through ULEAD.**
- **Activate the ULEAD Alumni Association**
- **Continue to provide the community with opportunities to enhance the quality of life in El Dorado through the Keep El Dorado Beautiful program**
- **Communicate to the El Dorado/Union County area the service and leadership opportunities offered by the El Dorado - Union County Chamber of Commerce**

## **Connecting Business to Opportunity**

**Goal 1: The Chamber will continue the successful networking and educational opportunities already in place and will celebrate new businesses and significant business milestones in the community.**

### **Actions:**

- **Partner more closely with local businesses to leverage opportunities to become a part of the growth taking place in Union.**
- **Engage membership to utilize member marketing tools built in to our web platform.**

## **Overall Strategic Goals**

### **Actions:**

- **Continue to grow and enhance meaningful programs, events, and networking opportunities**
- **Build a Communications program to effectively promote benefits of membership to investors**
- **Increase the Chamber's membership base through new member sales and improved membership retention**
- **Actively engage the business community in programs and events that contribute to the development of a positive business climate**
- **Strengthen the Chamber's profile as an organization committed to the successful growth and development of its members**
- **Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber**
- **Provide a means of communication through which El Dorado and Union County can celebrate local strengths and successes**
- **Increase the number of visitors to El Dorado and Union County**
- **Preserve and maintain the heritage and culture of our community**
- **Ensure the future financial stability of the Chamber as a result of conservative budgeting**
- **Participate in public/private partnerships**
- **Develop future community leaders**
- **Facilitate efforts to ensure a clean and healthy community in which to live, work and play**
- **Work closely with realtors, financial institutions and the City to increase the availability of new affordable housing**

**The President/CEO must keep this strategic planning document relevant and current by continually referencing it on a monthly basis with staff and a bi-monthly basis with the Executive Board to make sure progress is being made on the action items. It is too easy to be sidetracked with day-to-day tasks and to lose sight of the guiding document that is shaping the Chamber's direction for the next three years.**

**Signatures below show the support for this strategic plan. By signing this document, you are agreeing that this is the Chamber's strategic plan for 2017-2020.**

**Executive Board members:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

El Dorado  
ARKANSAS