



Presented at the May 19, 2022 Chamber Board of Directors Meeting.

**The Strategic Plan has a focus on five key initiatives:**

- Continue to pursue membership retention at 650-member level
- Focus on legislative drop-in events after November elections
- Continue joint business information sessions through local educators, Kelley Center, SBA and SCORE
- Continue to grow our community business partnerships with focus on diversity
- Continue to manage expenses in parallel with revenue initiatives

The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce's Strategic Plan is a comprehensive look at five key initiatives to help local businesses achieve their goals. The Plan reinforces the organization's vision, mission, values and strategies that will continue its focus and service to our members and the community, while being more efficient on costs.

**What is Inside?**

This document lists our planned activities for the coming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022. Our staff will work with the Chairman and the Chamber Board on implementing the plan. These actions are a foundation for this year's programming efforts. As usual, we will add events to the work schedule throughout the year with timely and relevant government and legislative programs.

**Greater Florence Executive Board of Directors**

Paul Seward - Chairman  
 Drew Chaplin - Chair-Elect  
 Brian Fast - Past Chair  
 Jamie Carsten - Treasurer

**Division Chairs for Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023**

Keith Buckhouse - Chair of Budget & Finance  
 Lethonia Barnes - Chair of Education & Leadership  
 Mindy Taylor - Chair of Government Affairs

Ed Hoffman - Chair of Member Services  
 Brianna Dennis - Chair of Community Development  
 Jon Weiss - Chair of Communications & Marketing

Report produced by: Michael J. Miller, President  
 Susan Farver, COO

## MEMBER SERVICES

Our goal is to provide informative, quality member-guest programs. Conduct activities, that maximize networking opportunities and enhance member value.

### ***Outlook Luncheon (March 22, 2023)***

The following awards will be presented - The Small Business Person of the Year sponsored by Dedicated Community Bank and the annual Public Servant of the Year sponsored by Francis Marion University. We will have a regional keynote speaker to be announced soon.



### ***Membership Luncheon (September 21, 2022)***

We will host this annual gathering to share current projects as well as future plans, recognize the Chamber's volunteer leadership and acknowledge the Wells Fargo Outstanding Business Person of the Year.



### ***Business-After-Hours (6)***

We will plan and conduct 6 BAH programs this year to provide informative networking opportunities for our membership. BAH attendance is 70 to 110.



### ***Chamber Fall Golf Classic (October 6, 2022)***

We will continue to hold our Golf Classic events and keep them fun and enjoyable using hospitality sponsorship availability throughout the course. We target about 28-30 teams for each of our outings to keep play moving.



### ***Chamber Spring Golf Classic (May 4, 2023)***

The twice-a-year tradition will continue with our excellent golf outing, rotating use of local courses when possible. Again, our events provide a wonderful and enjoyable networking opportunity for our vendors and players.

### ***Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon (April 26, 2023)***

Area member businesses use this event to recognize and reward administrative staff by attending a luncheon offering free gifts and prizes. Normal attendance is 250 to 275 area admin staffers.





## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

A key part of the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce's mission is to promote and enhance a favorable business climate and to make Florence the best community in which to live and operate a business. To that end, we will use our Government Affairs Council, to be a voice in the halls of local and state government. This would include policy issues, regulations and ordinances at all levels of government.

### ***Legislative Update Breakfast (November 4, 2022)***

The Chamber's Fall Legislative Update Breakfast will include government representatives from the federal, state or local level. These sessions will help educate our local businesses on relevant issues that may offer help for Greater Florence business operators.



### ***Legislative / Community Breakfast (February 24, 2023)***

The Chamber's Winter Legislative Breakfast will have a regional representative speaking to an expected group of 225 local business leaders. These sessions will help educate our local businesses on federal, state and local issues.



### ***Columbia Legislative Day (February 22, 2023)***

The Florence County business showcase held in Columbia, SC., as a joint effort of The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce and Florence County Economic Development Partnership. The event starts as a luncheon with state leaders. Attendees include Florence County government, area business leaders and Leadership Florence class. The evening reception hosts our state and local elected officials.



### ***City/Chamber Business of the Quarter (Awarded at the City Council meetings)***

A joint award made possible by the Chamber of Commerce and City of Florence. The award is presented quarterly to a local business recognizing their efforts in keeping downtown Florence prosperous.



### ***Private Key Legislator Drop-Ins (Twice a Year)***

These events will be by invitation only to members and associates to meet in a small setting at the Chamber.



# COMMUNITY & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The activities of this division encompass community and local business outreach. It has at its core, programs that focus on community betterment and local business opportunities for companies, small business and minority business operators.

## **Promoting the Inclusion of Small and Minority Businesses (PRISM)**

A committee focused on developing action plans, events and programs focused on the inclusion of small and minority businesses.

Programs Include:

- Business over Breakfast
- Emerging Leaders Program
- Business Expo/Showcase
- BMW Supplier Diversity Conference in Greenville
- SC Sessions With the SBA:
  - Doing Business With Local Government
  - How to Start & Grow a Business
- Business of the Quarter
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summits



## **Kickin' Chicken Wing & Chili Fest (October 21, 2022)**

This event is an opportunity for the Chamber to provide a community wide, family friendly, event that promotes the Chamber, its members and downtown Florence. This is our seventh year to hold the festival that has attracted more than 2,250 people to the downtown festival for the wings and chili cook-off.



## **CEO Breakfast Roundtable (March, June, Sept. Dec.)**

The leadership gathering is hosted by Willcox, Buyck & Williams Law Firm. The breakfast is an informational exchange with key business executives and is held quarterly at Florence Country Club supported by HopeHealth. Attendees include 32 to 35 local CEO's or business leaders from businesses around the region.



## **Business Mentorship Program - SCORE**

The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce works in partnership with Grand Strand SCORE organization to support the Pee Dee Branch for the SCORE mentorship program. The partnership offers resources for small businesses in our Pee Dee communities.



## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Walk (January 12, 2023)**

A joint program collaboration with Francis Marion University to highlight Dr. King's impact during the civil rights era.





## EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP

The Chamber believes strong educational opportunity is a key factor in the development of our local economy. Excellence in schools, colleges and universities is critical to building a modern and durable economy. The Florence Chamber will focus on expanding learning and workforce programs, which will enhance regional development.

### ***Leadership Florence (September 2022 - May 2023)***

One of the Chamber's signature programs that develops effective leaders while strengthening and transforming our community. The class of up to 40 participants reflects the diversity of our community. It is a hands-on program that includes team building experiences and allows interaction with local business, industry, medical services, media, government and education. This program has been a successful program for 34 years.



### ***Building Bridges - Diversity & Leadership Summit (March 20, 2023)***

This program helps engage our community by addressing racial and cultural diversity. It helps to change attitudes and minds with emphasis on the workplace environment.



### ***The Young Professionals of Florence***

The Young Professionals group has experienced higher membership over the years. The YP of Florence operates with support from the Florence Chamber. The group offers social and business networking around the Greater Florence area with more than 60 members and great monthly socials. The organization helps support our regional business community.



### ***Junior Leadership Florence County (September 2022 - April 2023)***

The JLFC Program is a partnership program for all Florence County high school sophomores and juniors. The program is conducted through cooperation with FMU and Florence Co. 4-H. Each year 26 students will be selected to participate. These students will spend 9 months experiencing a curriculum designed to broaden their leadership horizons.



### ***Emerging Leaders Institute (June 2023)***

A five-week summer program designed to enhance leadership skills within the small and minority business community of professionals. This program will help share effective leadership opportunities at a small cost level.

### ***Fellows in Education (September 2022 - May 2023)***

The Fellows program is designed to give local leaders a unique, behind-the-scenes look into Florence 1 Schools. Over the course of eight months, leaders will hear about seismic shifts in student needs and the additional state and federal requirements now placed on schools, teachers and administrators.



## BUDGET & FINANCE

This division oversees the administrative and financial planning, procedures and policies of the Chamber. It will provide guidance in the administration of staff duties, manage facilities and equipment as well as manage the membership dues and retention efforts of our members.

### *Budgeting & Business Planning*

Develop and manage the year's budget and ensure sound financial management practices for the Chamber (501-C6) and Pee Dee Visions Foundation (501-C3).

- Develop the annual budget and submit it to the Chamber Board for adoption during our May meeting.
- Review the financial status of the Chamber on a monthly basis and review the CPA firm's year-end financial audit and will also review the management letter in September to ensure implementation of approved recommendations.

### *Ambassadors Committee*

To foster goodwill and better communication, the Chamber uses its' Chamber Ambassadors to welcome new members and celebrate business milestones. The Ambassador's group is made up of 65 area business leaders that represent the Chamber at a variety of area events as well as provide support to the Chamber with new members and ribbon cuttings. The Ambassador of the Year will be announced in January 2023 and will be recognized again at the Chamber's Annual Outlook Luncheon in March 2023.



### *Board of Directors Meetings*

The Board of Directors meeting are held quarterly. The full year dates are announced in July 2022. There is one additional meeting held in June as an appreciation luncheon for outgoing board members and new incoming members.

### *Chamber Affinity Programs*

The companies that are listed as Chamber Affiliates are companies that have been chosen by the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce as excellent business partners who will guarantee our members special discounts on their products and services. Current programs involve Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC and Office Depot.



**Office  
DEPOT**





# COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

The Chamber continues its focus on enhancing the image and brand of the Chamber by providing top quality information to area newcomers, current residents, local businesses and our membership. We are committed to improving our member relations and ensure better retention programs. We also remain focused on our member communication through our digital and printed products.

## Membership Directory and Newcomers Guide

The Chamber will publish our fifth annual Membership Directory and Newcomer's Guide in 2023. These products reflect the flourishing community we work in, while making a great first impression and excellent information resource for those relocating to the area. Our businesses, medical centers, manufacturers and real estate agents use the Newcomer's Relocation Guide for local information, while local businesses use the Membership Guide as a useful reference tool.



## Enhanced Digital Presence

The high traffic of the Chamber's website has enabled greater advertiser recruitment along with its improved navigation and detailed content for those researching the Greater Florence region. Typical annual Pageviews are around 68,000. Much of the traffic is from individuals and businesses looking to relocate to the community through company transfers, business opportunities or retirement life.

## Weekly Member Business & Event Updates

The Chamber offers members the most networking opportunities available and will continue keeping the membership informed about local events and news that may affect their business using weekly Chamber Updates.

## Weekly Member Radio Show

Each week the Chamber hosts a half-hour radio show on Sunday's from 12:00 - 12:30pm on LIVE 95.3FM featuring one of our Chamber members and share our upcoming programming events.



## Social Media Program & Community Updates

The Chamber has put significant effort into growing its' social media presence through daily engagement with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Social media interaction has helped the promotion of area programs and events. The Chamber's Facebook page is very healthy and has a following envied by most Chambers of Commerce throughout the state of South Carolina.

Facebook	9,300 Followers
Twitter	1,750 Followers
Instagram	1,700 Followers



## Monthly Digital Membership Newsletter

The ChamberLink newsletter is now published digitally each month. You will find features and stories about the month's Chamber events as well as key information about local business concerns. Currently, there are 2,200 local members and associates that subscribe to this email monthly newsletter.



## Florence Chamber Breakfast to Focus on Florence County

By Matthew Christian  
Courtesy of the Morning News

Florence County will be the focus of the 2020 Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast.

Newly elected Florence County Council Chairman Willard Dorriety, Jr. will be keynote speaker at the event. Dorriety was elected Chairman of the Council in January.

The hour-long program will feature updates on current and upcoming Florence County projects and programs, including progress in economic development, infrastructure enhancement and other critical efforts to grow the county.

"As always, we are expecting a very large crowd of business and community leaders to attend,"

said Chamber President, Michael Miller. "This program has been popular because it offers timely and insightful updates on a broad array of important issues for Florence County businesses and residents."

The mission of the Florence Chamber is to "promote and enhance a favorable business climate and improve the quality of life to make Florence the best community in which to live and operate a business."

The breakfast is scheduled for Friday, February 28 at the Florence Center. Doors will open for the breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and the program will start around 7:50 a.m.

The breakfast is open to the public. All those attending must register prior to the event. Room seating is limited.

Tickets are \$20 each and tables are also available by calling the chamber offices at (843)666-0515 or by going to flochamber.com.



MICHAEL J. MILLER, PRESIDENT  
GREATER FLORENCE  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



"We want to thank its members for their investment as we continue to provide opportunities to connect members and make business."



WILLARD DORRIETY, JR., CHAIRMAN  
FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL

# **Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce 2022 - 2023 BUDGET RE-CAP**