2019 Business Plan

PUTNAM COUNTY CHAMBER MISSION STATEMENT

The Putnam County Chamber of Commerce is the principle leader in the promotion of commerce. Our mission is to be a creative force that promotes excellence in leadership, coordination and orderly development of business enterprise.

VISION: To promote an improved standard of living throughout Putnam County by implementing a focused approach to business development to attract new competitive wage paying companies and create new employment opportunities through the retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the location of new businesses in a way that enhances Putnam County’s image as a progressive and business-friendly place.

CRITICAL GOALS:
Advance our economy – promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy
Improve the quality of life for all residents
Position the organization for long-term success.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/BUSINESS CLIMATE

Vice Chair: Robert Mills, Riverside Wealth Advisors

GOAL: Make Putnam County’s business climate more competitive. Diversify our economy to create high-wage jobs. Prepare local infrastructure for future growth.

Putnam County Economic Development Council:
Focus on creation of an environment conducive to job creation and retention. Solicit private sector donations to build a stronger economic development program. Grow the number and dues investment of the Putnam County Economic Development Council by at least 4 new PCEDC members and upgrade four members to a higher level of investment.

Business-friendly Regulatory Environment:
Create a business-friendly climate and streamline regulations across all cities that protects community interests without overly restricting businesses.
1. Encourage investments in technology for upgrades to automate permitting processes, such as the ability of inspectors to use mobile devices on site to enter inspection results.
2. Work with governmental entities to ensure all key information and forms are available online.
3. Motivate and encourage all government entities to become “an easy place to do business”.

**Business Expansion & Assistance:**
Begin by visiting local businesses and industries to gain information on barriers and assets to conducting business. Employ necessary resources for retention and expansion of existing companies.

**Product Development:**
1. Work with local public works and planning departments to extend water and wastewater systems
2. Identify and inventory industrial and commercial sites with the most potential in Putnam County.
3. Identify priority investments and upgrades needed to enhance sites, such as roadway improvement, site preparation and utility development.
4. Work with City and County partners to develop overall county comprehensive plans for zoning and water/wastewater extensions.

**Attraction/Recruitment:**
Work to build relationships within targeted sectors identified in both the Elevate Northeast Florida Sub-Cluster Industry and Rural Florida studies.
- Innovate: Aircraft & Aviation Components, Back Office Services and Call Centers, Clean Transportation (Fuels & Technologies), Data Centers, Food Processing, Heavy Equipment Manufacturing, Tool & Die Machining.

**COMMUNITY/SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
Vice Chair: Wayne McClain, Beck Auto Group
**Goal:** Provide the resources and supportive environment to help local businesses grow.

**Small Business Support:**
Conduct regular visits to local businesses to ensure their needs are being met and connect them with the resources needed to grow and/or be successful.

**Community Outreach:**
Offer leadership for the west and south Putnam area businesses by addressing economic and community issues impacting their individual community.
ADVOCACY
Vice Chair: Derek Hembree, Clay Electric
GOAL: Be a strong voice and take actions on public policy and community initiatives that impact economic prosperity. Coordinate actions to create and protect a healthy business environment.

Represent Business Interests:
1. Understand and act upon business issues
   - Collaborate with members to identify priorities
   - Communicate clear reasons to support or oppose issues
   - Rally business community to take action
3. Be an active voice of behalf of the business community.
4. Monitor and take actions on local, state and federal issues that impact the economy of Putnam County.
5. Develop and support the Chamber’s Legislative Agenda items and other issues approved by Chamber.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/TALENT SUPPLY
Vice Chair: Jini Robbins, Bates, Hewett & Floyd Insurance
GOAL: Close talent gap by improving educational opportunities.

Increase student success:
1. Explore best practices for high-quality early learning
   - Target reading programs (K-3)
   - Support efforts to increase kindergarten preparedness
2. Work with partners for solutions to increase high school graduation rates.

Strengthen Talent Supply:
1. Support work through the Putnam Chamber Education Foundation to identify the training and development needs of the existing and future workforce while supporting the development of programs to address those needs.
2. Improve awareness and support of multiple education pathways to meet hanging economy (e.g., vocation school, certification programs).
3. Prepare informational materials about various career pathways, including job descriptions, average salaries, education needed, and available jobs in Putnam County. Share these materials with career counselors, teachers, and students.

TOURISM
Vice Chair: Greg Bacon, City Shippers/Papa John’s Pizza
GOAL: Ensure Putnam County is nationally recognized as a premier tourist destination to visit.
Market Putnam County:
1. Develop annual advertising and marketing campaigns to promote Putnam County as a tourist destination.
   • Build Awareness: Promote Putnam County as a destination to targeted travel markets.
   • Increase awareness of Putnam County’s outdoor recreation amenities
2. Solicit large-scale events – both televised and national.
3. Work with partner agencies to create welcoming environment for event coordinators and participants.
4. Provide information on attractions and activities for visitors to Putnam County.
5. Fulfill all visitor inquiries.
6. Administer the Putnam County Tourist Development Council activities.

Support existing and new special events:
1. Coordinate activities surrounding the BASS Elite Tournament (Feb 7-10, 2019) and recruit and assign volunteers needed for the event
2. Continue to administer the Putnam County Tourism Development Council grant program for festivals, events and cultural activities.
3. Continue to encourage and support sporting events including fishing, softball, bicycling, baseball, golf, motocross, mud bogging and sailing.
4. Continue development of the countywide calendar that includes all tourism and community events.

PUBLIC RELATIONS
Vice Chair: Derek Hembree, Clay Electric
GOAL: Build a robust marketing toolkit that clearly communicates chamber accomplishments, county and regional assets and opportunities.

Marketing & Communications:
1. Continue to support efforts to enhance community and Chamber image.
2. Maintain the Chamber’s role as the voice of business and market ourselves as one of the top chambers in the county with a 5-star status of Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber and two-time winner of America’s #1 Chamber.

Obtain Resources.
1. The Chamber and other partners will have to identify additional resources to effectively promote Putnam County’s assets internally (residents) and around the state and nation as the Putnam County Chamber currently does not have the staff or financial resources to implement an image/public relations campaign.
2. Reserve limited marketing resources for high ROI activities, such as maintaining a digital presence, rather than expensive tools such as advertising or print collateral.
3. Market not just what is within Putnam County, but assets all around the region, such as schools, housing options, and quality of life amenities.
4. Share press releases that showcase Putnam County’s economic development wins with local media, regional partners, and target industry trade publications.
5. Invest in a few key printed collateral pieces, such as one-pagers about each target industry. Include links to download these on the website and use in direct sales meetings and presentations.
6. For each target industry, share major employers and suppliers; a map or list of supporting assets; links to sites and buildings that are a good fit for the industry; success stories and local business testimonials; a link to a printable PDF document about the industry; and industry-specific talent demographics and education programs.

**ORGANIZATION**

Vice Chair: **Taylor Douglas**, Roland Pacetti Realty

**GOAL:** Position the organization for long term success.

**Recruitment, Retention & Engagement:**
1. Grow the membership base by attracting 40 new members and retaining 90% of current members.
2. Provide desirable and appropriate benefits for all levels of membership. Increase and diversify revenue.

**Networking & Fund Raising:**
Generate non-dues income, provide beneficial services and networking opportunities for members. Conduct 10 Business After Hours events and the Fund Raiser/Annual Meeting.

**Administrative & Finance Division**
Chairman of the Board: **Steve Overturf**, Johnson-Overturf Funeral Homes

Goal: Encompass all issues that may arise during the year, along with the goals assigned below.

**Financial Review Task Force:** Chair **Janette Wagner**, Treasurer, and members **Steve Overturf**, **Charlie Douglas**, **Dana Jones**, and **CRI representative** (resource). Review and monitor the annual budget and make recommendations if needed.

**Organization & Administration:** Chair **Steve Overturf**, Johnson-Overturf Funeral Home, and Chair elect **Charlie Douglas**, Douglas Law Firm