



“Seizing the Opportunity”

## PARTNERS FOR GROWTH

*A Five-Year Community & Economic Development Initiative  
to Continue the Economic Momentum in Mobile from 2008 to 2012*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### I. WHAT IS THE PLAN?

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce’s “Partners for Growth” is an aggressive, economic development business expansion and attraction plan. *Partners for Growth* has input and support from the private and public sectors within the City of Mobile and Mobile County. The Chamber’s *Partners for Growth initiative* is designed to raise the necessary funds to develop and implement the Chamber’s economic development initiatives for the next five years.

In partnership with local governments, community organizations and businesses, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce will build a cooperative vision for achieving the five-year measurable goals outlined in its economic development initiatives. The *key* areas of implementation include:

- Existing Business Retention and Expansion
- New Business Development
- Workforce Development
- Infrastructure Advancement

#### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE CHAMBER’S PARTNERS FOR GROWTH (2008-2012) INITIATIVES

##### Existing Business Retention and Expansion

The area’s existing businesses offer an opportunity for significant job creation. In fact, 80 percent of job growth will come from existing firms. The role of the Chamber’s Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program is to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between the business community and the Chamber’s economic development team for the purpose of addressing business challenges.

The Chamber will continue to help area companies increase their export and import capabilities through the efforts of our International Trade Department.

A strategic approach to providing small business assistance will be a vital component in developing the Mobile area’s economic infrastructure. The goal is to reach more than 8,000 budding local entrepreneurs and offer them training and business development programs.

##### New Business Development

Recruiting new industry investment in the Mobile area will be a top priority. Recruiting efforts will target specific environmentally-responsible sectors that capitalize on the area’s natural resources, core industries, growth industries and existing infrastructure.

##### Workforce Development

In the Mobile Bay region, a highly-motivated, well-trained workforce is critical to continued economic growth and prosperity and enhanced quality of life. The Chamber’s workforce development program brings business and services together to address the region’s workforce needs.

##### Infrastructure Advancement

A well-rounded community provides its citizens with jobs, a stable economy and opportunities for growth. To accomplish this, a community must have the necessary infrastructure coupled with a positive business climate.

In support of the community’s continued growth, the Chamber’s legislative, advocacy and lobbying efforts will continue to build the necessary private/public partnerships to secure specific infrastructure needs.

Regional and national partnerships will be developed to create a “master plan” producing decision-making that balances our growth opportunities with quality of life. *Envision Coastal Alabama* is a two-county partnership that fosters a business-friendly climate supporting quality regional growth.

## II. HOW WILL PARTNERS FOR GROWTH BE IMPLEMENTED?

As a five-year economic development program of aggressive business expansion and attraction, *Partners for Growth “Seizing the Opportunity”* will have tremendous impact on the Mobile region. Funding for the strengthened program will be sought from an expanded base of business and professional firms realizing the potential for improving their own market share, visibility and supporting the economic prosperity of the Mobile area.

The measurable goals and objectives for Partners for Growth have been crafted through a process that involved many investors and community leaders. This process ensures that the Chamber’s goals for this economic development initiative mirror the needs of the business community, public sector officials and other area leaders in the Mobile region.

Once the fundraising campaign is over, tapping the expertise of our investors will be an integral piece of the Partners for Growth initiative. Our investors will benefit from an enhanced reporting system that will benchmark the Chamber’s economic development efforts. Full financial disclosure and accountability will continue throughout the Partners for Growth initiative. Additionally, the Chamber will continually develop opportunities for investor involvement in the program’s execution and implementation.

## III. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Over the past four years, the \$8.6 million private and public investment in Partners for Growth has helped attract \$5.18 billion in new capital investment within the region, representing more than 7,300 new jobs with average annual wages of more than \$47,000. In comparison, objectives for the plan were to recruit 1,100 jobs per year with average annual wages of \$32,500, and capital investment of \$1.75 billion over five years.

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce commits to a program of work with dramatic impacts for the City of Mobile and Mobile County over the next five years. In addition to increased global awareness of the Mobile area, our key economic development goals for 2008 to 2012 are:

Number of Primary Jobs to be Created:	3,750 over five years
Targeted Annual Salaries:	\$38,500
Capital Investment Generated:	\$1 billion

The targeted annual salary of \$38,500 represents an 18% increase over the previous initiative’s goal which was targeted at \$32,500. This salary goal is significantly higher than both the state of Alabama’s and the region’s average annual wages of \$33,440 and \$32,940, respectively, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## IV. HOW WILL YOUR INVESTMENT BE SPENT?

The five-year cost for *Partners for Growth “Seizing the Opportunity”* is \$10 million invested and supported by both the private and public sectors of the City of Mobile and Mobile County. The region’s businesses, individuals, local governments, institutions, civic groups and foundations will be asked to invest in this economic development program. Each investment request will be based on the individual investor’s stake in the community, *Partners for Growth’s* components, the projected return on investment and the projected community and economic development enhancements that accrue to the region because of the program.

INVESTMENT SPENDING 2008-2012	
<b>PARTNERS FOR GROWTH FIVE-YEAR BUDGET</b>	
Existing Business Retention and Expansion	\$3,500,000
New Business Development	\$3,500,000
Workforce Development	\$1,500,000
Infrastructure Advancement	\$1,500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,000,000 five-year budget</b>

*The Chamber’s economic development activities are periodically reviewed and revised based on economic trends, successes and yearly work programs.*



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