

BARNESVILLE-LAMAR COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BEACON

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 - 2029

*ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
APRIL 2026*



Message from the President

Welcome to the Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce 2026-2029 Strategic Plan.

This plan reflects thoughtful collaboration among our Board of Directors and community stakeholders. Together, we evaluated where we stand today and defined a clear path forward for strengthening our business community and regional impact over the next three years.

Our commitment is straightforward: to lead with clarity, advocate with purpose, expand opportunity, and build sustainable capacity that serves both our members and the broader Barnesville-Lamar County region.

At its core, this strategy is rooted in a simple principle: strong businesses create stable communities. By supporting local enterprise, encouraging workforce alignment, and fostering collaboration among leaders, we reinforce the foundation for long-term prosperity.

This plan also affirms our investment-focused approach to membership. We are dedicated to delivering measurable value while honoring the integrity, relationships, and traditions that define our region.

Implementation begins immediately. Progress will be tracked, shared, and refined to ensure continued alignment with member needs and evolving economic conditions.

We invite you to review the plan and engage with us as we move forward together. The future of Barnesville and Lamar County depends on steady leadership, shared commitment, and disciplined execution.

Thank you for your continued confidence in the Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce.

Bianca Romero
President & CEO
Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce

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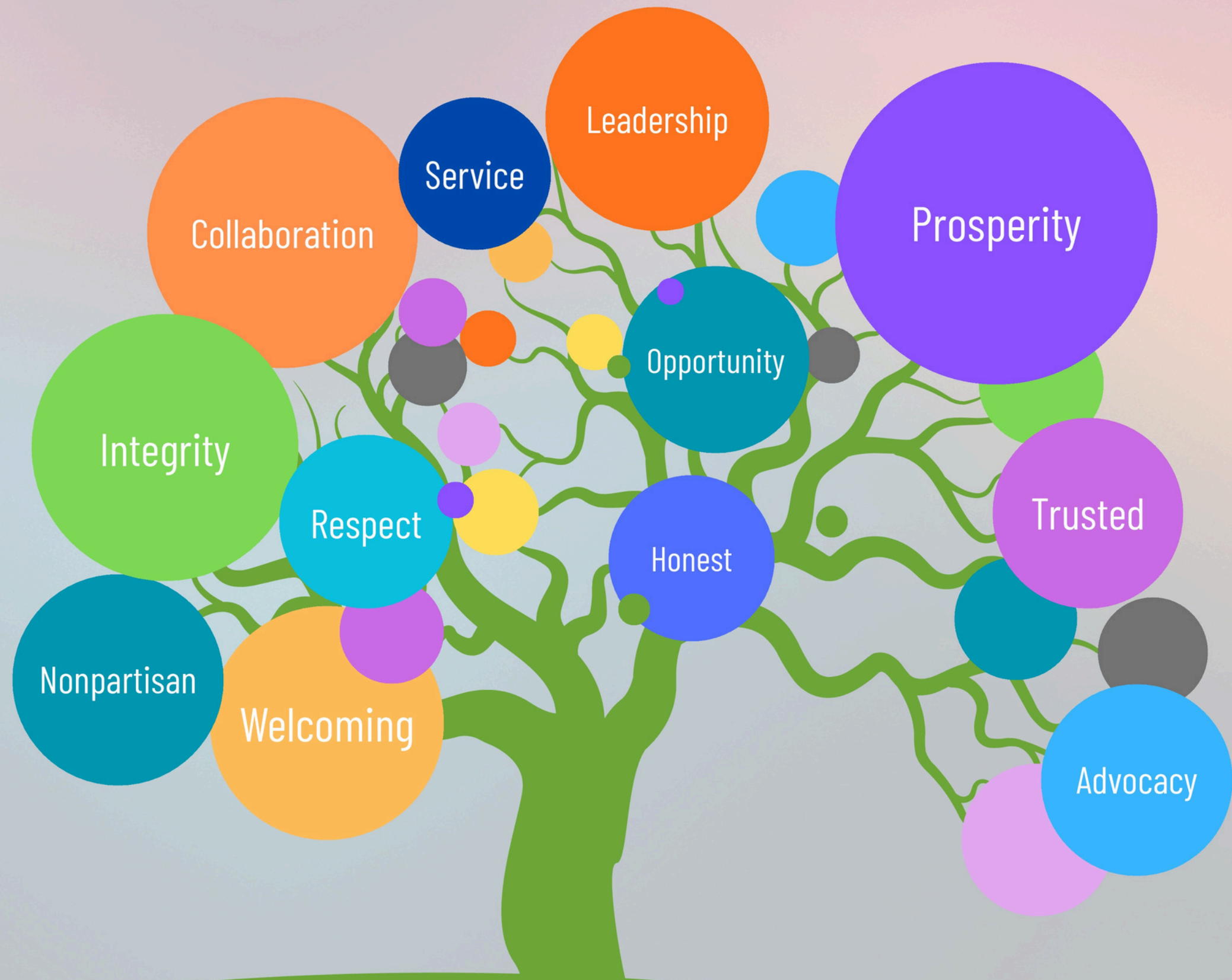
MISSION

To strengthen economic opportunity and enhance quality of life in Barnesville and Lamar County through business leadership, advocacy, and community collaboration.

VISION

To be a trusted and forward-thinking organization that:

- Supports local businesses through resources, networking, and leadership development
- Champions workforce alignment and educational opportunity
- Fosters collaboration that improves community well-being
- Encourages sustainable growth that benefits businesses and families alike



Chamber Values

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

The Barnesville–Lamar County Chamber of Commerce has adopted a forward-looking three-year strategic framework designed to strengthen business leadership, support community advancement, and enhance long-term economic vitality.

Through a focused planning process, the Board of Directors evaluated current conditions, listened to business leaders and community partners, and identified priorities that will guide the Chamber’s work through 2029. This framework reflects a shared commitment to thoughtful growth, responsible leadership, and collaborative progress. At its core, this plan recognizes that strong businesses and strong communities are interconnected. Economic opportunity fuels quality of life, and quality of life strengthens economic resilience. The Chamber’s strategy is built to support both.

Voice of Business

The Chamber will formalize and strengthen its role as the organized voice of business in Lamar County and the surrounding region. By establishing a structured Government Affairs Committee and enhancing communication with public leadership, the Chamber will ensure that business perspectives are clearly represented in discussions related to infrastructure, development, and fiscal policy. This objective reflects a commitment to thoughtful advocacy. The Chamber will elevate concerns related to infrastructure reliability, commercial space availability, responsible development along key corridors, and long-term tax stability. Through collaboration and measured engagement, the Chamber will help create an environment where businesses can grow with confidence and clarity. Strong advocacy provides stability. Stability encourages investment. Investment strengthens the community.

Advance Community & Workforce Solutions

Recognizing that economic vitality depends on workforce readiness and educational alignment, the Chamber will expand its role as a convener of community solutions.

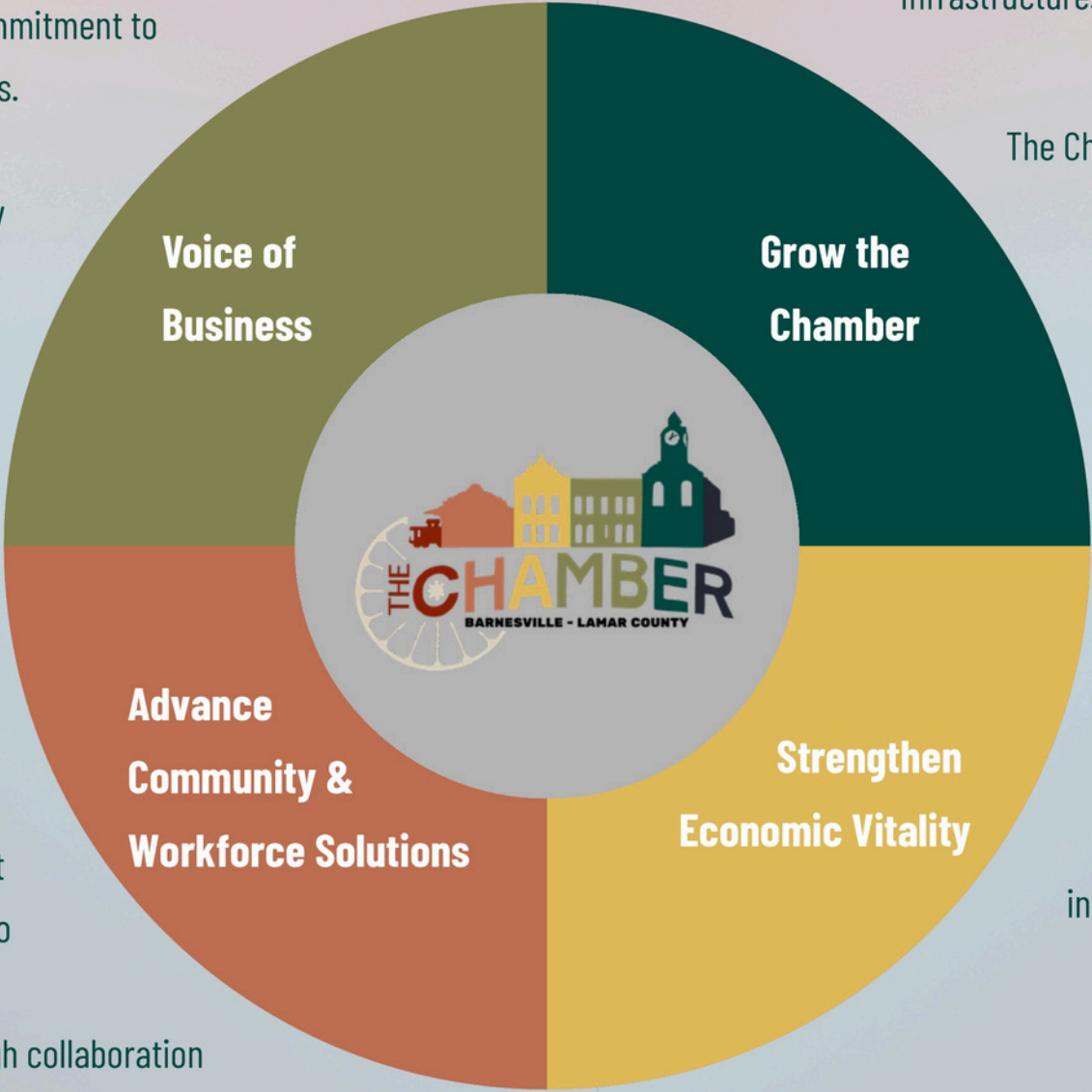
Through the development of the Chamber Foundation, enhanced partnerships with Gordon State College, and leadership initiatives such as Leadership Lamar, the Chamber will support scholarship opportunities, workforce development programs, and education-to-employment pathways. These efforts are designed to retain local talent, strengthen employer pipelines, and improve long-term opportunity for residents. The Chamber will also support conversations around housing availability, student retention, and community vibrancy — acknowledging that sustainable growth requires both economic opportunity and livable infrastructure. When students stay, businesses hire. When businesses hire, families thrive.

Grow the Chamber

The Chamber will strategically expand its membership and influence to strengthen its role as the leading business organization serving Lamar County and the surrounding region. Growth will be intentional and value-driven, focused on increasing impact for member businesses rather than simply increasing numbers. Key priorities include expanding membership across industries and neighboring communities, fully implementing a modern tiered dues structure aligned with business investment levels, and leveraging the region’s economic and tourism strengths to attract and retain businesses. The Chamber will continue to utilize its Ambassador Program to drive engagement and retention while maintaining a clear commitment to inclusion, ethical leadership, and professional governance. A stronger, more connected membership base will enhance advocacy, increase visibility for businesses, and position the Chamber to deliver greater long-term value to the entire region.

Strengthen Economic Vitality

The Chamber will strengthen economic vitality by building a financially stable, diversified organization capable of delivering measurable value to its members and the region. Through expanded sponsorships, strategic non-dues revenue, the launch of BEACON Magazine, and a structured digital visibility strategy supported by strong analytics, the Chamber will convert its growing regional reach into sustainable economic impact. Financial strength will directly support advocacy, tourism growth, business retention, and expanded services for the membership community.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens...

• 1st Franklin Financial • Ace Hardware • Advanced Roofing and Interiors • Ag South Farm Credit, ACA • Ameritex Dumpsters • AmWaste • Antiques on Atlanta • ARCpoint labs of Barnesville • Arete Canine LLC • Balamo Building Supply • Bankston Lumber Company, Inc. • Bankston's Barber Shop & Salon • Barnesville Buzz • Barnesville Fire Department • Barnesville First United Methodist Church • Barnesville High and Industrial /Booker Schools Alumni Association • Barnesville Housing Authority • Barnesville Kiwanis Club • Barnesville-Lamar Community Foundation • Barnesville Lamar County Chamber of Commerce • Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce • Barnesville-Lamar County Historical Society • Barnesville-Lamar County Industrial Development Authority • Barnesville-Lamar County Library • Barnesville Marble & Granite Company • Barnesville Police Department • Barnesville Rehab Solutions • Barnesville Rentals, LLC. • BARNESVILLE TAX CENTRAL • Bestech Computers • B & H Electric Supply, Inc • Blue Bear Restoration	• Blue Kangaroo Packoutz of Central Georgia • Blue Oak Exterior Solutions • Bouncing Chicken Rentals, LLC • Brown Private Investigations • BuggyTown Auction LLC • Bush Farms, LLC • Caring For A Cause • Carpet Cure • Chappell Mill Trees, LLC • Charles Glass • Circle B Armory LLC • City of Barnesville • City of Milner • CJM Security Consultants • CJs Carpet Cleaning • Classical Conversations • Connie's Furniture • Continental Tire North America, Inc. • Country Oaks Farm & Home Supply • Crimson Productions - Event & Marketing Management • Crimson Skye • Dairy Queen • D-Check Developments, Inc. • Department of Family & Children Services • Dolly Goodpuppy Society • Donovan's Dream • Dorothy Carter • Dr. Eldridge H. Harris • Dr. Woodall, Wilson, & Manley • Dupree's Beauty Supplies and More • Epic Dermis Apothecary • Everything Beautiful	• Excell Construction Services, LLC • Farm Bureau • Farmer's Home Furniture • Farm Supply, LLC. • Ferst Foundation • Flash Dance Company • Flint Building Company, LLC • Fox City Brewing Company • Foxy Craft Company • Full Circle Of Hope, Inc. • Gate City Elks Lodge No. 54 • Geeslin Group LLC • Georgia Hometown Reality-The Sims Team • Georgia Power Company • Georgia Roots Boutique • Georgia Rural Water Association • Georgia South Barbeque • Goggans Florist • Gordon State College • Grace Upon Grace • Graceview Church • Grain Craft • Green Pastures Funyard • Griffin Choral Arts • Harpo Family Youth Association • Heritage Inn of Barnesville Health & Rehabilitation • Hightower Collision Center • Hines Prescription Shop • Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Griffin • Honeywood Farms • Horse Shoe BBQ and Brew • House To Home	• It Takes A Vineyard • Jaco Contracting Inc • Jessica Traylor • Joe & Pat Edwards • John's Truck & Trailer • Jonathan Adams for Superior Court Judge • Judy Patton Tax Preparation & Bookkeeping • KBN-TV • Keck Farm • Kudzu Entertainment, LLC • Lamar Arts, Inc. • Lamar County Animal Services • Lamar County Board of Commissioners • Lamar County Board of Education • Lamar County Democratic Party • Lamar County Family Connection Collaborative • Lamar County Fire Department • Lamar County Health Department • Lamar County NAACP • Lamar County Primary School • Lamar County Recreation Department • Lamar County Sheriff's Office • Lamar Gun & Pawn • Lamar Soil and Water Conservation District • Landmark Materials • Langdale Forest Products • Legacy Environmental Site Solutions • Liberty Hill Enterprises, LLC • Lighthouse Church of Barnesville • Little Children of the World, Inc. • Loan South Finance & Tax Service • Loving Hands Community Development Corp.
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- Lueder, Larkin & Hunter, LLC
- Lynda Frost
- Main Street Advisors Insurance
- MAMA D'S FAMILY FUN & FOOD
- Mangia on Main
- Marilyn McCranie
- Matthew Preston, Realtor - Georgia Hometown Realty
- Mavis tires & brakes
- McIntosh Trail Community Service Board/Lamar County Counseling Center
- McLeRoy Realty
- McLeroy Rentals
- MG Motors
- Middle Georgia Environmental
- Mid-State Mortgage
- Mike Farmer
- Milner Forestry Mulching and Debris Removal
- Miracle Family Food Trailer
- Mitch's Automotive, Inc.
- Morgan Dairy Golf Course
- Mt. Olive Outreach Ministries Inc. South
- Nugget Ice
- Pam's Garden Patch
- Papi's Place
- Peterbilt of Atlanta
- PetroSouth Energy, LLC
- Piedmont Green Power, LLC
- Promo Vision Advertising
- Property Medics of Georgia
- Rainbow Farms
- Ranew's
- Republican Party of Lamar County
- Robert Christopher Heiney Insurance
- Rockhill Castle

- Rock Springs Christian Academy, Inc.
- Rooks, Waltz, Jackson, & Esary, Inc.
- Rotary Club of Barnesville
- Sandra Puckett - LegalShield Senior Mgr- Independent Contractor
- Sapphire Hills LLC
- SCB Video TV Marketing
- Shannon Ramey
- Simply BOLD Graphic Design
- SIPM Roofing
- Southern Crescent Technical College Foundation
- Southern Nursery Products, Inc.
- Southern Professional Concrete Construction, LLC
- Southern Rivers Energy
- Southside Treasures
- State Farm Insurance
- St. George's Episcopal School
- Sugar Shack Weddings & Events, LLC
- Sunny Grove, LLC.
- Superior Property Solutions
- Team One Real Estate
- The Barber Chair
- The best little hair house
- The City of Barnesville
- The Goth Gardener LLC
- The Herald-Gazette
- The Sellers Law Firm, LLC
- Thompson Veterinary Services
- Thousand Hills Cattle Ranch
- Three Rivers Regional Commission
- Tim Brown for Sheriff
- Towaliga Accountability Courts, Inc.
- Towaliga CASA
- Towaliga Judicial Circuit

- Town of Aldora
- Tri-Copy Office Equipment, Inc
- Turf Maintenance, Inc.
- Two Moos Frost and Fizz
- UGA Extension/Lamar County
- United Bank
- University of Georgia-Griffin Campus
- Upson Regional Medical Center
- Village Photography
- Volunteers of America of Georgia
- Vulcan Materials Company
- Waffle House
- Walters Farms
- Wellstar Health System
- WestCare Guidance Center
- William D. Lindsey, Attorney
- William S. Cherry Jr.
- Woodsmith, Inc.
- WTGA / Fun 101.1 FM
- Yoga with Kileen
- ZOe Pediatrics Foundation

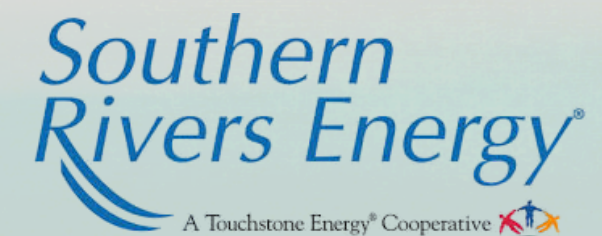
TOGETHER, *We Build Community.*

Our free community events, festivals, movie nights,
and programs are made possible through the generosity
of businesses that believe in Barnesville-Lamar County.

*Thank you to our corporate partners for
investing in the people, places, and future
of our community.*



• THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS •



GORDON
STATE COLLEGE



A Competitive Business Climate Requires Leadership.

Over the next three years, the Chamber will formalize its role as the structured, disciplined voice of business in Lamar County. Through policy engagement, infrastructure advocacy, responsible growth strategy, and fiscal stewardship, we will help ensure a stable environment for investment and long-term prosperity.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I

VOICE OF BUSINESS

Champion Business & Policy Leadership

The Chamber will formalize and strengthen its role as the organized, professional voice of business in Lamar County and the surrounding region. Through structured engagement, thoughtful advocacy, and disciplined policy review, the Chamber will help create a stable and competitive environment for economic growth.

Government Affairs & Policy Engagement

To ensure consistent representation of business interests, the Chamber will establish a standing Government Affairs Committee comprised of 15–20 business and civic stakeholders.

This committee will:

- Monitor local policy developments impacting business and economic stability
- Facilitate structured dialogue between business leaders and elected officials
- Gather member input through surveys, roundtables, and issue-specific discussions
- Develop nonpartisan, business-focused policy recommendations for consideration

This framework will mirror best practices utilized by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and will provide a transparent, member-driven process for policy engagement.

Infrastructure & Economic Readiness

Reliable infrastructure is foundational to business confidence and community growth. The Chamber will elevate concerns and advocate for improvements related to:

- Water system reliability
- Sewer capacity and maintenance
- Roadway conditions and transportation access
- Capital improvement prioritization

By engaging collaboratively with public leadership, the Chamber will support long-term infrastructure planning that strengthens economic readiness.

Commercial Development & Corridor Strategy

Strategic growth requires appropriate commercial inventory and responsible land use planning.

The Chamber will:

- Assess gaps in available commercial space
- Support development aligned with the County Comprehensive Plan
- Encourage responsible growth along the Highway 341 corridor
- Advocate for development that broadens the tax base while maintaining community character

Balanced growth strengthens both business opportunity and fiscal stability.

Responsible Fiscal Policy

The Chamber will engage in discussions related to property tax policy and long-term fiscal sustainability.

The objective is to:

- Advocate for responsible tax policy
- Encourage diversified economic growth to broaden the tax base
- Support strategies that reduce overreliance on property tax revenue

A stable and predictable fiscal environment encourages investment and protects long-term community prosperity.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE II

ADVANCE COMMUNITY & WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

Economic growth does not happen in isolation. It is built on strong schools, prepared workers, engaged leadership, and communities where people choose to live, work, and invest. Through collaborative partnerships and the Chamber Foundation, we will advance practical, long-term solutions that strengthen both workforce readiness and overall quality of life in Lamar County and the surrounding region.

Chamber Foundation & Community Investment

The Chamber Foundation will serve as a catalyst for educational advancement, leadership development, and workforce alignment. By expanding access to grants and philanthropic partnerships, the Foundation will allow the Chamber to broaden its impact beyond traditional programming.

Priority initiatives include:

- Expanding Leadership Lamar to cultivate future community leaders
- Establishing scholarship opportunities for local students
- Supporting workforce training and certification programs
- Pursuing grant funding that enhances economic competitiveness

The Foundation elevates the Chamber from event-based programming to long-term community investment.

Workforce Alignment & Gordon State College Partnership

A competitive region requires strong coordination between employers and education providers.

The Chamber will deepen collaboration with Gordon State College to:

- Align workforce training with local industry needs
- Strengthen internship and job placement pathways
- Encourage student engagement within the local business community
- Increase student retention within Lamar County

Students who build connections locally are more likely to stay, work, and invest here.

Employer Retention & Economic Readiness

Sustaining economic stability requires retaining existing employers while positioning the region for responsible growth. The Chamber will:

- Support employer retention conversations
- Partner with development authorities to assess recruitment opportunities
- Explore grant and incentive strategies that improve competitiveness
- Advocate for policies that strengthen business confidence

Retaining existing employers is equally as important as recruiting new ones. Economic readiness is built through preparation, coordination, and clear communication.

Housing & Quality of Life

Workforce development and economic growth are directly tied to housing availability and community vibrancy. The Chamber will engage in discussions and partnerships that address:

- Workforce housing needs
- Student housing considerations
- Residential growth aligned with long-term planning
- Downtown vitality and walkability

Thoughtful housing strategy supports workforce retention, student engagement, and long-term economic sustainability. A community that supports residents at every stage of life strengthens its economic foundation.

Anticipated Outcomes

Through these coordinated efforts, the Chamber will strengthen the leadership pipeline, improve workforce alignment, enhance employer stability, and elevate overall quality of life across Lamar County and the surrounding region.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE III

GROW THE CHAMBER

The Chamber will strengthen its membership base, expand engagement, and increase organizational capacity in order to better serve businesses and the broader community. Growth is not an end in itself. It is a tool to increase impact, visibility, and value for our members.

Increase Membership

The Chamber will pursue intentional membership growth across business sizes, industries, and communities within our regional footprint.

Efforts will focus on:

- Recruiting new businesses that benefit from Chamber visibility and advocacy
- Strengthening retention through consistent communication and value delivery
- Expanding outreach to entrepreneurs, emerging industries, and established employers
- Ensuring businesses understand the measurable return on investment of membership

Membership growth increases advocacy strength, networking depth, and economic influence.

Implement & Leverage Tiered Dues

The Chamber has implemented a modern tiered dues structure aligned with business size and engagement level.

This framework:

- Creates equitable investment levels
- Encourages businesses to engage at higher impact tiers
- Aligns benefits with value received
- Supports long-term financial sustainability

Tiered investment ensures growth happens responsibly and transparently.

Attraction Through Regional Strength

The Chamber will leverage the unique assets of Lamar County and its surrounding communities to attract businesses seeking visibility, collaboration, and growth.

This includes:

- Promoting the region as a tourism and event destination
- Highlighting quality-of-life advantages
- Showcasing regional economic opportunity
- Positioning the Chamber as a connector across business communities

The goal is not expansion for control, but partnership for mutual benefit.

Inclusion & Ethical Leadership

The Chamber is committed to representing businesses from all backgrounds, industries, and perspectives.

We will:

- Foster a welcoming and inclusive membership culture
- Maintain professional, nonpartisan engagement
- Uphold transparent governance practices
- Ensure ethical leadership in all advocacy and programming

A diverse and principled membership base strengthens credibility and trust.

Ambassador Program & Engagement Strategy

The Chamber will continue utilizing its active Ambassador Program to:

- Welcome and mentor new members
- Strengthen peer-to-peer connections
- Increase event participation
- Support member visibility and retention

Ambassadors serve as the relationship backbone of Chamber growth.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE IV

STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Chamber will strengthen both its own financial foundation and the broader economic vitality of Lamar County and the surrounding region through diversified, strategic, and mission-aligned revenue development. A financially stable Chamber is better positioned to advocate effectively, expand programming, support local businesses, and respond to emerging opportunities. Economic vitality requires disciplined strategy and forward-thinking investment. A financially strong Chamber is better positioned to lead during times of uncertainty and accelerate opportunity during times of growth. Strengthening our internal capacity directly strengthens the businesses and communities we serve.

Revenue Diversification & Financial Stability

To reduce reliance on event-based funding and create long-term sustainability, the Chamber will:

- Expand structured sponsorship partnerships tied to measurable visibility and impact
- Develop new non-dues revenue programs aligned with member value
- Leverage grants and philanthropic opportunities through the Chamber Foundation
- Invest strategically in marketing and outreach capacity to increase regional reach

Financial strength will allow the Chamber to serve as a stable economic leader for the community.

Digital Visibility & Media Strategy

The Chamber will intentionally leverage its strong and growing digital presence as a structured, ethical non-dues revenue stream that benefits members and strengthens the regional economy.

With current multi-million annual impressions and expanding regional reach, the Chamber will:

- Develop formal visibility packages for member businesses
- Offer structured spotlight and promotional opportunities
- Integrate digital exposure into sponsorship tiers and event partnerships
- Use analytics-driven insights to demonstrate measurable value

This strategy ensures digital growth translates into real economic opportunity while maintaining the Chamber’s credibility and community voice.

BEACON Magazine & Regional Visibility Strategy

BEACON will operate as both a revenue initiative and a long-term regional marketing platform designed to increase visibility, tourism traffic, and business exposure.

Each issue will include:

- 500 high-quality hard copies strategically distributed throughout Lamar County and surrounding communities
- A fully accessible digital edition hosted on the Chamber website
- Archived online access to all past and future issues to build a growing regional content library

To extend reach beyond traditional print distribution, the Chamber will implement:

- Dedicated QR codes in every issue linking directly to the digital version
- Branded tent cards with QR codes placed in customer-facing businesses, welcome centers, event venues, and high-traffic locations
- Durable plastic QR signage for outdoor placement where appropriate

This layered distribution model ensures BEACON is not just a publication, but a year-round marketing asset that continuously drives traffic to Chamber members and the regional business community. By combining print credibility, digital accessibility, and strategic physical placement, BEACON becomes a scalable visibility engine for the region.

Long-Term Regional Growth & Tourism Leadership

The Chamber will pursue collaborative partnerships across surrounding counties to expand economic opportunity beyond traditional geographic boundaries.

Regional cooperation strengthens:

- Shared tourism promotion
- Business-to-business networks
- Workforce mobility
- Cross-county investment

A coordinated regional strategy enhances competitiveness and increases outside capital flowing into the area.

A portrait of Robert Heiney, a man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a suit and a red tie with a small pattern. He is smiling slightly. The background is a solid light blue color.

Message from the Chairman

These are exciting times for our community and I am privileged to serve our Chamber members along with a very dedicated Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer.

In an effort to allocate the Chamber's resources as productively as possible, our Board and CEO have invested a great deal of time to identify areas where the Chamber can focus its efforts to increase the benefits to our membership.

Over the course of several weeks that included a Board Retreat, the Board of Directors established a list of priorities in an effort to guide the Chamber's efforts over the next three years. This work has culminated in a Three Year Strategic Plan where we set forth our strategy for implementing the Board's vision for an exceptional Chamber of Commerce that meets, and exceeds, the expectations of our members.

Working with the Board of Director's to produce this Three Year Strategic Plan has been an enriching experience. I look forward to seeing our members take advantage of, and prosper from, the benefits of the Board's efforts.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Heiney

Chairman of the Board



2026

BARNESVILLE-LAMAR COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Chad Bankston, Vice Chair
Jasmine Copeland, Secretary
Travis Graham, Treasurer
Matthew Preston, Past Chair

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Christopher Cox
Stephanie Thomas
Tim Jackson
Allie Andrews
Donald Green
Derek Petty
Lynda Frost

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Bianca Romero, President/CEO
Cathy Turner, Operations Manager

THANK YOU

The Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the members of the chamber, the Board of Directors, Chamber Staff, and the community leaders who contributed to this effort.



Barnesville-Lamar County Chamber of Commerce

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BarnesvilleChamber



YouTube BarnesvilleLamarCoC



Barnesville_lamar_CC



TikTok buggytownlife

This plan was adopted 4/16/2026