

2023 BUSINESS PLAN


BAY COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Est. 1913



110 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP TO BUILD A BETTER BAY

about our organization

Who We Are

Since 1913, the Chamber has served businesses in Callaway, Lynn Haven, Mexico Beach, Panama City, Panama City Beach, Parker, Springfield and unincorporated Bay County. The Chamber works to promote community development and economic growth of the region, while partnering with, and supporting, local military installations. Through extensive relationships, the Chamber works to create a healthy environment in which businesses can grow and prosper.

The Mission

To create superior value for all Chamber members, large and small; to cultivate economic and personal development; to promote and protect a competitive enterprise system of business; and to be a community leader while embracing Bay County's opportunities and challenges.

Officers

Chair, Kyle Shoots; Chair-Elect, Joe Holt; Vice-Chair, Shane Boyett; Treasurer, Allen Armstrong; MAC Chair, Garrett Anderson; Vice-Chair of Communications, Dede Rowan

Board of Directors

Kaydee Albritton, Jeremy Bennett, Tricia Berry, Chris Brooks, Shay Catrett, Arthur Cullen, Brendan D'Isernia, Lindsay Farris, Lisa Felix, Justin Hall, Corbin McCall, Catherine McCloy, Clint Mizell, John Pollman, Zack Sanchez, Mohit Samtani, Chris Stamps, David Taylor, Dave Williams

key objectives

The Chamber constantly works to build a better Bay County.

This Chamber plays a vital role as it serves as an advocate for the business community and the delivery of critical information in a timely manner. Bringing community leaders together to work toward a common goal to make Bay County an even better place to do business is of utmost importance to this organization.

Our community and country continues to battle trying times with workforce housing, workforce development and increasing cost of doing business in our current economic climate. This community still carries scars and challenges from Hurricane Michael and the Covid Pandemic but with all being taken into account, our business community seems to be in a thriving state and has never looked better from a visual stand point and creating a positive visual image.

Below are the 2023 key objectives identified at the Board of Directors Annual Planning Session held in October 2022.

Workforce Development

Recruitment of employees remains top of mind for employers at all levels. Through work that began in 2022, the Chamber will continue its involvement with many other agencies and organizations to develop a campaign to recruit individuals to Bay County. This is a focused effort to recruit talents supporting local industries in need by targeting solicitations towards specific labor skillsets and specific geographical areas of the country. Employers are currently being surveyed to determine their labor needs and breakdowns across those skillsets. Following the compiling of survey data, the results will be used to focus marketing efforts funded through public-private partnerships with local employers.

Affordable Workforce Housing

Affordable housing remains at a critical level and affects more than just those facing poverty; it affects our workforce and is both an economic development and quality of life issue. Although many single-family and multi-family units are opening or under construction, the price point remains an issue. Rising cost of materials and labor along with increased insurance premiums and interest rates present huge challenges. Full funding of the Sadowski State and Local Government Housing Trust Funds need to be permanently protected and augmenting affordable housing funding with supplemental state revenue is imperative. Maintaining and implementing affordable housing programs in Bay County and the state as a whole is crucial to Florida's economy.

Education

Public education remains important for the Chamber. Our 2022 A Better Way for a Brighter Bay Education initiative that encourages the business community's involvement in our public schools continues. The initiative made significant improvement in school-based mentoring programs, recruiting record numbers of new mentors. In addition, the initiative targeted involvement by the business community and commitment to bringing business experience at the school board level.

There is much work to be done, as there is an abundance of needs within the public schools. This organization will further the work of its education initiative. Future efforts will include work towards recruiting business partnerships with each of the schools in coordination with Alignment Bay County ("ABC").

Career Technical Education

It is important to change the narrative for Career Technical Education ("CTE"). Exposing students and their families to the programs, careers and opportunities offered in the community is essential. CTE prepares students for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers and can help bridge the skill gap in the workforce. Exposure to various technical trades will allow students to find a career interest and develop a potential career track with certifications upon graduation. All students need to be made aware of CTE and the opportunities it can provide.



public policy & community development

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

OFFICER: JOE HOLT, CHAIR ELECT

STAFF: AIMEE BRIGHT, VP OF GOVERNMENTAL/MILITARY AFFAIRS

CHAIR: MIKE SMITH

- Address 2023 Legislative Agenda items
- Maintain Chamber representation on Panama City and Bay County Infrastructure Surtax Oversight Committees
- Continue representation and monitoring of all municipal government meetings
- Maintain monthly City/County Managers meetings
- Expand the effort of Better Way for a Brighter Bay initiative

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Business and Economic Development

- Competitive Florida Tax Refund Program
- Enterprise FL Funding
- Home Rule
- Reducing Business Rent Tax
- Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.

Workforce Development and Education

- Continue Better Way for a Brighter Bay Initiative
- Expansion of programs at Florida State University to meet local needs
- PIPELINE and LINE funds for Gulf Coast State College to support medical profession workforce growth
- Opposition to State Workforce Board Consolidation

Quality of Life

- Affordable Housing
- Funding Panama City Performing Arts and Event Center

Military & Defense

- NSA PC: Barefoot Palms Acquisition, Dive School Pier Repairs, Replace Condemned Barracks, Turning Basin
- Opposition to Offshore Drilling and Wind Energy Areas in Federal Waters in the Gulf of Mexico within or east of the Military Mission Line

Gulf, Bay & Fisheries

- East Pass
- Estuary Program
- Gulf of Mexico Restoration Funding
- Support Science-Based Regulatory Fisheries

Infrastructure and Transportation

- ECP terminal improvements and expansion
- Johnny Reaver Road Extension
- Transportation Priorities

More information on these items can be found at panamacity.org/governmental-affairs/

MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (MAC)

OFFICER: GARRETT ANDERSON, MAC CHAIR

STAFF: AIMEE BRIGHT, VP OF GOVERNMENTAL/MILITARY AFFAIRS

- Support rebuilding of Tyndall Air Force Base and work with Bay Defense Alliance (BDA) to ensure funding
- Partner with BDA on community preparations for Tyndall's F-35A squadrons' bed-down
- Follow up on Coast Guard City Application and cultivate stronger relations with both the USCG Station and the Offshore Patrol Cutter Commands
- Advocate for Naval Surface Warfare Center and Naval Support Activity Panama City infrastructure improvements and continue to work with BDA to support new and existing missions, leveraging the Gulf of Mexico Training Range
- Host socials to honor visiting, new and departing base leadership

OUR SUCCESSES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Over the years, the Bay County Chamber of Commerce has worked tirelessly to build a better Bay through countless projects with numerous partners that have made a positive impact on the community. Some of these projects include:



**PANAMA CITY
BED TAX**



**INFRASTRUCTURE
SURTAX**



NEXTSITE



**BAY DEFENSE
ALLIANCE**



OFFICER: SHANE BOYETT, VICE-CHAIR

STAFF: ELIZABETH SMITH, VP OF EVENTS/FOUNDATION

LISA MOORE, MEMBER SERVICES COORDINATOR

- 2022-2023 Leadership Bay: Chairman, Claire Sherman
- 2023-2024 Leadership Bay: Chairman, Cecily Smith
- 2022-2023 Junior Leadership Bay: Chairman, Kasey Killebrew
- 2023-2024 Junior Leadership Bay: Chairman, Christine Lance
- Bay Young Professionals (BYP): Chairman, Ebony McCauley
- Provide Continuing Education Seminars for members.
- Maintain representation on Bay District Schools Citizens Oversight Committee



ADMINISTRATION

OFFICER: KYLE SHOOTS, CHAIR OF THE BOARD

STAFF: CAROL ROBERTS, PRESIDENT/CEO

DEBI BURDESHAW, VP OF FINANCE

VICTORIA ROUTH, INFORMATION SPECIALIST

- Maintain the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Nominating Committee
- NextSite
- Provide overall support for each department and management of the organization

COMMUNICATIONS

OFFICER: DEDE ROWAN, VICE CHAIR OF COMMUNICATIONS

STAFF: SYDNEY CLIFTON, VP OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Establish and maintain deadlines on all publications
- Continuously update the Chamber's website to keep the public informed about upcoming events and functions of the Chamber
- Increase likes/follows on each social media platform
- Prepare FACP Award applications
- Support all departments to maintain the image of the organization

EVENTS

OFFICER: SHANE BOYETT, VICE CHAIR

STAFF: ELIZABETH SMITH, VP OF EVENTS/FOUNDATION

LISA MOORE, MEMBER SERVICES COORDINATOR

- Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony
- First Friday
- Tourism Appreciation Month: Chairman, David McWhorter
- Industry Appreciation Celebration: Chairman, Corbin McCall
- First Responders Appreciation: Chairman, Brooke Powell
- Research other non-dues, revenue generating events

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

OFFICER: ALLEN ARMSTRONG, TREASURER

STAFF: TAMARA BARNES, VP OF MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

PHILOMENA MARTRAIN, MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

- Member Recruitment
 - Recruit additional Member Account Executives
 - Develop plan to increase membership
 - Increase member renewal
- Ambassadors: Chairman, Amy Rainelli
 - Apple of Our Eye Awards for Chamber Members
 - Deliver New Member Welcome bags
 - Conduct grand openings, groundbreakings, ribbon cuttings and new member orientation.
- Business After Hours
- Continue Bay Business Connections (BBC)
 - BBC 1 Chairman: Lyndsey Blanks
 - BBC 2 Chairman: Chuck Hudson
 - BBC 3 Chairman: Danielle Streichert