



Graham County Chamber of Commerce Action Plan 2020-2023

Background

The Arizona Rural Development Council was engaged by the Graham County Chamber of Commerce to create a 3-year Action Plan that would identify strategic pillars, goals, objectives and metrics in an effort to guide the direction of the Chamber and provide tangible value to its membership. The following document outlines the 2020-2023 Graham County Chamber of Commerce Action Plan.

Organizational [Structure]

- a. MISSION
- b. VISION
- c. VALUES

Strategic Pillar Overview

COLLABORATION, LOCALISM AND TOURISM

In early 2019, a large group of stakeholders from across Graham County participated in a facilitated discussion around the role of the Chamber of Commerce and their vision for its future purpose. Organizations represented in this discussion included Graham County, City of Safford, Town of Thatcher, Town of Pima, Freeport McMoRan, United Way of Graham & Greenlee County, Bureau of Land Management, OneAZ Credit Union, Safford Public Library, CMI, Valley Telecom, and La Paloma Restaurant. As a group, attendees agreed upon three (3) strategic pillars that they felt were the responsibility of the Graham County Chamber of Commerce. These pillars will be used to further outline the programs, committees, initiatives and funding of the Graham County Chamber of Commerce.

Pillar 1: COLLABORATION

Rural communities, especially ones where multiple cities/towns exist across a small region, require a centralized organization to connect resources and encourage collaboration amongst community partners. Graham County Chamber of Commerce has the ability to become this centralized resource, elevating the work of existing community partners and connecting stakeholders to the resources that will help move the needle on their goals and objectives.

GOAL: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS FOR ALL COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Action 1: Connect with Community Partners

1. Identify all community partners and organizations doing work in Graham County
2. Coordinate a series of face-to-face meetings to better understand partner goals and how the chamber can help accomplish them.

Action 2: Create a Collaboration Committee

1. Outline Mission of Committee
2. Recruit community partner members
3. Determine operations of committee
4. Meeting recurrence
5. Dates/times
6. Committee positions (if required)
7. Agenda Outline

Action 3: Develop themed mixer strategy to highlight partner organizations

1. Work with Collaboration Committee to develop mixer strategy
2. Recruit community partners to host mixers to shine a light on their work

Action 4: Create & activate a Business Retention & Expansion Program (BRE)

1. Recruit Task Force
2. Develop Survey
3. Identify Target Businesses (including home-based businesses)
4. Conduct Survey and Report on Results
5. Develop BRE Program
6. Supplier Gap Analysis

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

1. Community partners perceived value of Chamber relationship
2. Members' perceived value of mixers
3. Attendance at mixers
4. Members' perceived value of BRE program

Pillar 2: LOCALISM

A community is only as strong as the strength of its connection to place. Connection to place is cultivated through initiatives that develop community pride, create health and wellness, engage local youth, promote local entrepreneurs and inspire future leaders.

GOAL: CREATE A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ACTIVITIES THAT INSPIRE CONNECTION TO PLACE AND BOLSTER COMMUNITY RESILIENCY.

Action 1: Create a Localism Committee

1. Outline Mission of Committee
2. Recruit community partner members
3. Determine operations of committee
4. Meeting recurrence
5. Dates/times
6. Committee positions (if required)
7. Agenda Outline

Action 2: Organize engaging community events that emphasize County identity and inspire community connection to place (*subject to change*)

1. Pima Palooza
2. Great Thatcher Bake-Off
3. Salsa Fest
4. Safford Wine Festival

Action 3: Inspire and support Localism campaign to bolster local entrepreneurs and connection to place

1. Brand Localism Campaign
2. Develop Localism Program
3. Buy Local Events
4. Independents Week
5. Holiday Passports
6. First Friday
7. Small Wonders Maps
8. Mythbusters Social Media Campaign
9. Engage Public
10. Non-profit/municipal presentations
11. Social media campaign

Pillar 2: LOCALISM (cont.)

Action 4: Enhance community economic and nutritional health by elevating local food growers and producers.

1. Develop Gila Valley Good Food Program
2. Partner on development of community Farmers Market
3. Develop access point for community to purchase healthy, local foods
 - a. Evaluate market options
 - i. Co-op Market
 - ii. Co-op Mail Order
 - iii. Online
 - iv. CSA
4. Coordinate Farm to Table Events
5. Youth events/programs
 - a. Farm to School Partnership (Dept of Agriculture)
6. Food Producer Support Workshop Series
 - a. Marketing
 - b. Connecting to Marketplace
 - c. Funding & Capital
 - d. Agritourism

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

1. Event attendance
 2. Event revenue
 3. Map revenue
 4. Members' perceived value of Localism program
 5. Members' perceived value of Good Food program
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Pillar 3: TOURISM

To embark on a tourism initiative, it is critical that a destination have a fully developed promise of an experience and a system that supports visitors' expectations. Historically, Graham County has touted community assets as their tourism message without a fully developed understanding of their unique community proposition or strategy for audience targeting and measurement.

GOAL: BUILD STATEWIDE AWARENESS OF THE GILA VALLEY TO INCREASE TOURISM

Action 1: Execute a fully-developed tourism strategy with measurable goals that will enhance community prosperity.

1. Develop brand for Graham County region
2. Develop Tourism & Marketing Plan
3. Primary messaging
 - a. Audience
 - b. Social Media Strategy
 - c. Advertising Plan
 - d. Conduct a visitor survey
4. AoT Visitors Center Certification
5. Prepare an inventory of adventure tourism and cultural assets within the County.
 - a. Solicit the assistance of the Graham County Chamber and volunteers to compile the information.
 - b. Based on the outcome, identify key demand generators, and develop and plan for their use.
 - c. Utilize the information to set the stage for:
 - i. Destination-level itinerary building
 - ii. Long-term planning for the protection of all assets
 - iii. Product development for tour operators
 - iv. Targeted marketing campaigns
 - d. Begin tracking visitation statistics.

Action 2: Launch tourism marketing campaign

1. Identify marketing agency partner for graphic design, ad management and reporting of initiatives outlined in the marketing plan
2. Develop reporting benchmarks and identify reporting resources
3. Develop annual community events calendar for promotion within and outside of the community
4. Develop website and app that engage user and provide simple tools for easier access to tourism assets (trail maps, lodging, equipment rentals, etc)

Pillar 3: TOURISM (cont.)

Action 3: Engage membership in hospitality training

1. Conduct Collaborative Marketing training to inspire businesses to educate visitors on the community and refer to other local businesses in town
2. Conduct Online Review training to increase Yelp, Google, Facebook and Trip Advisor reviews
3. Conduct Customer Service Training workshops for members' staff that aids with the basics of customer service and tourism marketing

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

1. Bed Tax Revenue
2. # Visitors through Visitors Center
3. StarReport Increase of heads in beds

Action Plan Developed By:



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