



## GETTING ON TASK

### OUR MISSION

The **mission** of the **Greater Starkville Development Partnership (GSDP)** is to promote a healthy and sustainable Starkville and Oktibbeha County by enhancing the quality of life for all citizens through

- an aggressive and diversified approach for business growth and job creation
- enhanced tourism and retirement opportunities
- involvement in progressive educational and other community initiatives

**GREATER STARKVILLE  
 DEVELOPMENT  
 PARTNERSHIP**

200 East Main Street  
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**starkville.org**

### GOAL ONE

#### IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION WITH INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Search for means of communication currently not being utilized to disseminate information to the GSDP membership.
  - Explore doing a regular column in a local newspaper informing the membership and the Starkville community about the happenings of the Partnership.
- Promote means of communication currently being utilized and strive for higher usage and reception of those means.
  - Continue to annually update email addresses in the weekly E-View e-newsletter to ensure accurate information for member
  - Ensure that content in the E-View is timely, relevant, and current information so time is well spent reading the piece.
  - Aim to increase the open rate of E-View by 3% annually
- Assess membership for how best they receive information and use data to plan accordingly

### GOAL TWO

#### ACT AS A LEADER IN THE COMMUNITY FOR THE SHARING OF INFORMATION AND CREATE PLATFORMS BY WHICH THE PUBLIC CAN BE INFORMED ON COMMUNITY ISSUES

- Annually compile a list of topics that are current and meaningful to the community and its businesses and organize platforms for information to be shared on said topics.
  - The Partnership should act as a moderator and bring professionals and advocates from both sides of the topic together for the purpose of informing the coMmunity and Partnership members.
  - These platforms for sharing information may include large forums, small meetings, digital publications, or surveys to better understand the membership's level of understanding on said topics.

### GOAL THREE

#### ORGANIZE AND DISTRIBUTE AN ANNUAL VISION AS IT RELATES TO LOCAL AND STATEWIDE POLICY

- Annually compile a local and state legislative agenda that outlines pro-business ideals that the Partnership will promote and advocate for.
  - Utilize member surveys to assist with the compilation of these agendas and distribute them early in the calendar year to both delegations.
  - Example agenda items: 2% Tax Renewal, School Consolidation
  - TASK FORCE: Form a task force of Partnership members to assist the GSDP with the compilation of these agendas and to lobby both local and state elected officials for agenda items at the appropriate time.

# GOAL FOUR

## STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND THE GSDP MEMBERSHIP

- The GSDP currently enjoys a membership of over 450 members. Focus on retaining existing members and recruiting new members for longevity.
  - Continue to provide education to new members through New Member Breakfasts about the vast array of member benefits.
  - Better utilize Ambassadors to visit members who have dropped, may not have joined or that have recently renewed.
  - Encourage attendance of GSDP Board members at Blue Ribbon Business Resource Series events such as Lunch and Learns, Power Breakfasts, and Business After Hours.
  - Continue to reach out to members individually and provide education about how the Partnership is positively affecting the community.
  - Incorporate a Membership Appreciation Week to extend thanks to our members for their investment in our organization and community.
  - Develop an organized annual Membership Drive to focus on recruiting new members during a definite period of time.
- Streamline the membership concept throughout the Partnership, including the Visitors & Convention Council.
  - Revamp tourism website to list only restaurants, hotels, and retailers that are GSDP members. This will allow all entities of the GSDP to uniformly promote members and provide them with more visible benefits.
- Cultivate diversity as it relates to the GSDP membership, governing bodies, and staff.
  - Empower current minority members to consider leadership positions within the Partnership such as serving on any applicable board, committee, or task force.
  - TASK FORCE: Form a task force of Partnership members to assist the GSDP with achieving this recommendation.

# GOAL FIVE

## PROVIDE AN ORGANIZED FOCUS TO PROMOTE MEMBER BUSINESSES OUTSIDE OF THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

- Provide education to member businesses and the general community about how the Main Street program is funded and operated.
- Consider creating a Business Improvement District on Highway 12 corridor to generate funds for infrastructure improvements to one of the main gateways to our community.
- TASK FORCE: Form a task force of Highway 12 merchants and other non-Downtown merchants to assist the GSDP with achieving this goal.
  - Evaluate viability of a Business Improvement District for Highway 12 and if so, lobbying for, creating, and managing funding.
  - Collect feedback from member merchants on ideas for promotion or needs for fulfillment.

# GOAL SIX

## CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON PROMOTING COMMERCE AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN STARKVILLE

- Explore ways to improve inventory of public greenways, recreational trails, and paths.
- Work with the City of Starkville to develop a retail recruitment plan.
- Continue to promote Starkville as a restaurant destination through events such as Starkville Restaurant Week and others.
- Stay engaged with local elected officials and understand their goals and missions.
- Align with staff at Mississippi State University to continue to improve the “town and gown” relationship.
- Stay focused with our marketing strategies of promoting Starkville as a tourist destination and consider merging some of our means of communication for a more unified message.
  - Explore the possibility of merging the GSDP and Starkville Insider blogs and some of our social media channels for a unified message for Starkville residents and visitors alike.
  - Refresh the GSDP website and consider adding pages such as an Ambassadors page and others for those considering relocation.
- Promote shopping and doing business locally and with GSDP members through our Chamber and VCC channels of communication.

## 2014-2015 TASK FORCES

Watch eView for details on how to get involve!

**MINORITY  
RELATIONS**

**LEGISLATIVE  
AFFAIRS**

**HIGHWAY 12  
PROMOTIONS**

**G S  
D P** **G R E A T E R  
S T A R K V I L L E  
D E V E L O P M E N T  
P A R T N E R S H I P**