

Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County **2008: YEAR IN REVIEW**

The Chamber of Commerce
of Huntsville/Madison County

is an organization
of business professionals
and local leaders working
to ensure a sustainable and
sound economic future for
the Huntsville region.

The Chamber's mission is
to prepare, develop and
promote our community
for economic growth.

Meeting goals and objectives
is made possible through
the investment of private
and public sector partners,
as well as the dedicated
efforts of Chamber
volunteers, community
leaders and Chamber staff.



Benchmarking Community Success

2008 Organizational Highlights

- Provided personalized assistance to more than 20,000 businesses, individuals and families in 2008 to help with information and relocation needs. The Chamber's community information package, containing the Chamber's official annual guide, as well as information on Chamber member businesses, was distributed to thousands of families considering locating to the Huntsville/Madison County community.
- Attracted more than 70,000 visits to ASmartPlace.com, the Chamber's community recruitment site.
- Increased the Chamber's communications outreach to members and reported more news about members by 75 percent over 2007.
- Participated in more than 50 marketing trips, giving presentations to site location consultants, corporate executives, state and regional economic development officials and potential workforce associated with the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure activity and other high-tech jobs available in the Huntsville/Madison County community.
- Delivered the "Smart Place to live, work and play" message to more than 13,000 job seekers at targeted national career fairs and on college campuses.
- Reached more than 200 co-ops, interns and recent college graduates through the NASA Summer Student program and the Chamber's Bridges program designed to help members retain their young professionals.
- Brought 300 10th graders together with 20 employers and four colleges and universities to learn about high-growth careers in Huntsville/Madison County.
- Set a new Total Resource Campaign record at more than \$1.5 million – a 15 percent increase over the former record established in 2007.
- Worked with community leaders to help establish the 2008 State agenda, which focused on the important steps that the State can take to help our region better prepare for the current and future growth. Key areas include workforce recruitment and development, education, infrastructure, biotechnology and economic development policy.
- Led an effort to host the entire Alabama Legislature and members of the Governor's Cabinet. Legislators received briefings on key issues facing the community as a result of extensive new and expanding job growth. The group also toured Redstone Arsenal, Marshall Space Flight Center, the cities of Huntsville and Madison and Madison County. Legislative tours on Redstone also included: Blackhawk helicopter flight; live viewing of unmanned aerial vehicles flight exercises; demonstration of NASA's next generation space vehicle development; live missile test firings; the FBI's bomb school campus; and DNA extraction experiments at the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology.
- Held the week-long Armed Forces Celebration which included a Proclamation Signing Ceremony; NCO/Soldier of the Year Award Luncheon; Armed Forces Concert in the Park featuring the 389th Army Band (Army Materiel Command's own); three performances of the U.S. Army Soldier Show; a Community Covenant signing ceremony which included the Army's declaration of Huntsville as a Community of Excellence with the U.S. Army; the Armed Forces Salute Luncheon; Army Community Service Open House; and an Air Show featuring performances by the Army's Golden Knights and Navy's Blue Angels at the Huntsville International Airport. The Armed Forces Celebration Luncheon featured Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Cody.

The Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative

Helping Foster Economic Growth

Huntsville's continued growth and focus on improving the local economy has been the result of the commitment of past and present community and business leaders having the foresight to prepare for tomorrow and the persistence to make that vision a reality.

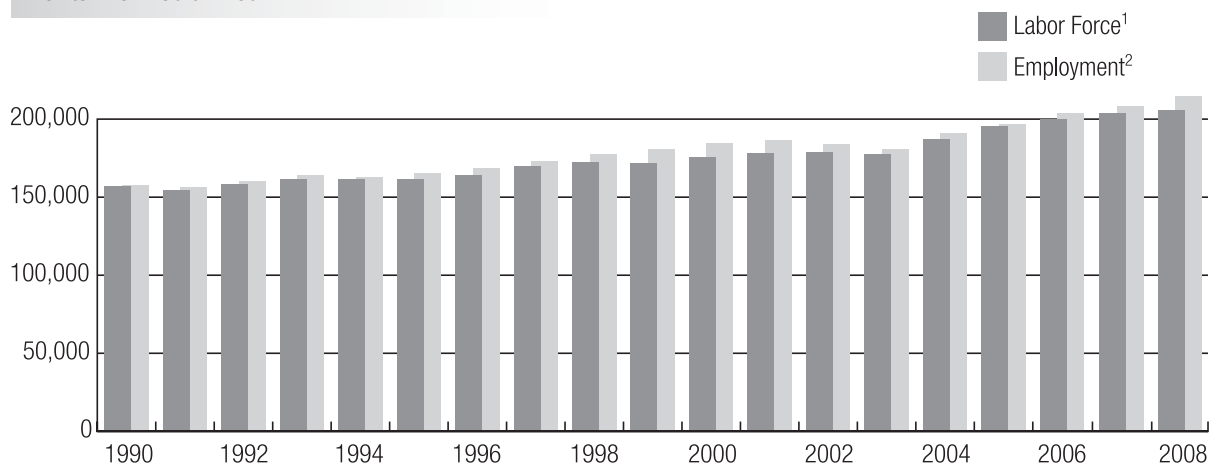
Although the focus of this targeted growth has evolved over the years from canning and cotton factories in the late 19th century to aerospace, defense, life sciences and advanced manufacturing in the early 21st century, the constant has been the Chamber's commitment to strategic economic growth.

As the community's lead organization for economic development, the Chamber of Commerce continues to focus its programs and resources on the best methods for growing and improving the economy through the attraction of new targeted businesses, local business expansions, and programs to support and stimulate key federal government activities.

Today, the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County facilitates this vision for the community through the Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative. Through its HREGI strategic plan, the Chamber is creating and sustaining programs that prepare the community to compete in a global economy and support strong and continuous economic expansion. This plan for economic growth puts into practice the vision of our community and business leaders from yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Labor Force & Employment Growth

Huntsville Metro Area



Source: Alabama Dept. of Industrial Relations, Annual Averages; ¹Place of Residence; ²Place of Work; includes Madison & Limestone counties

Strategy for Economic Growth

The Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative (HREGI)

The Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative, under the stewardship of the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County, works to establish Huntsville/Madison County as a stronger and more visible community in the nationwide competition for economic growth opportunities. Investors and participants in the Chamber's plan measure the community's economic performance against industry-accepted economic development criteria to achieve a relevant return on investment. The initiative positions the Huntsville area as one of the leading economic growth centers in the Southeast. During 2008, the plan was updated by a strategic planning committee led by then chair-elect Irma Tudor.

HREGI Strategies:

#1 Grow & Preserve the Huntsville Region's Existing Economic Base, Business Climate and Business Culture

- Initiate Chamber economic development volunteer program.
- Work with local companies to support local expansion.
- Recognize local employer successes/achievements.
- Emphasize the critical role of small business to our economy.
- Identify entrepreneurial venture opportunities and support efforts.
- Work in partnership with local, state and federal elected officials to remove barriers to business development.
- Partner with local research universities to promote regional technology-based reputation.
- Support the growth of university research capabilities.

#2 Recruit Targeted Businesses

- Regionalism – Develop and implement a strategy of regional partnership in pursuit of economic development opportunities.
- Continue the marketing campaign for business location consultants and update each February.

- Implement a strong prospect generation plan updated by January of each year.
- Increase business relocation and expansion project interest and opportunities.
- Update business plan to market our research and industrial parks, coordinating with other business and industrial properties beginning in January of each year.
- Work in partnership with local, state and federal elected officials to facilitate business development.
- Engage universities and colleges in the Chamber's mission of economic development.

#3 Grow the Community's Defense & Space Industries & Assets

- Help protect and grow the roles and missions of local federal activities.
- Work with members of the congressional delegation, Tennessee Valley communities and affected military operations to successfully implement BRAC 2005 Redstone realignments.
- Position Redstone Arsenal as critical to the DoD's transformation initiatives by leveraging existing capabilities and competencies, and by building on that baseline with new and related activities for the future.
- Leverage NASA Marshall Space Flight Center people and facilities to expand the roles and missions of the Center in the execution of the space exploration program.
- Position our community as a key resource and/or location for the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Science and Technology.
- Develop an annual Chamber of Commerce Federal Agenda which details the community's space and defense priorities as determined by a National Government committee. Formally present the Federal Agenda to the Congressional delegation.

#4 Support efforts to ensure there is adequate quality and quantity of workforce to meet employer needs

- Assist local companies in attracting employees with needed skills to work in Huntsville/Madison County.
- Support the expansion of young professionals in Huntsville/Madison County that will aid in recruiting and retaining this demographic sector.

- Continue the Chamber's comprehensive workforce development program to ensure a steady pipeline of workers for our community's high-growth careers.
- Continue to support Tennessee Valley BRAC workforce efforts.
- Support the expansion of the available technology workforce.

#5 Enhance the Community's Image

- Complete and implement a full image promotion strategy updated annually.
- Conduct annual survey with targeted prospect groups to determine perception of key aspects of the Huntsville region.
- Increase frequency of inclusion of Huntsville in industry studies of technology-based communities.
- Review marketing campaign to ensure that it accurately reflects community strengths.
- Continue marketing efforts which include branding Huntsville/Madison County as "A smart place to live, work and play". Reinforce the slogan "The Sky is not the limit".

#6 Develop the Community's Capacity for New & Sustained Economic Growth

- Maintain a model for optimum year-by-year funding of economic development programs and activities through both public and private sources.
- Develop a Chamber endowment as a long-term solution to fund the economic development responsibilities of the Chamber.
- Integrate key elements of the HREGI investment strategy into the annual Chamber program of work and budget to be approved by the Chamber Board of Directors.
- Work with local, state, regional and federal economic development allies to develop and communicate a partnership for political advocacy.
- Act as a conduit of information, facilitation, and accountability for those identified tasks that are assigned to Partners.
- Work to maintain a constant state of review and evaluation of our community's infrastructure (land availability, transportation, education, healthcare, etc.) to ensure readiness and responsiveness for successful economic development.

#7 Be Accountable to Our Investors

- Collect relevant financial, commercial and industrial real estate and demographic data for the Huntsville/Madison County region and identified benchmark cities.
- Announce a minimum of 400 new primary jobs each year from new employers. Announce a minimum of 2,100 high profile jobs from expanding employers.
- Demonstrate per capita income growth trend line sufficient to result in Huntsville leading peer cities within 10 years (by 2015).
- Demonstrate Metro Product Growth trend line sufficient to result in leading our peer cities within 10 years (by 2015).
- Demonstrate Commercial Capital Investment growth trend line sufficient to achieve \$150 million a year in 5 years (by 2010). Measure by increases in property tax revenues and announced capital investments.
- Increase industrial and technology-based capital investment to \$150 million per year in the region.
- Conduct 120 local member calls each year and achieve 12 announced expansion plans by local employers each year.
- Create a balanced industry mix which consists of primary target business sectors for new and expanding companies including: aerospace and defense, distribution and logistics, life sciences and administrative offices.
- Create a scorecard of the trended data listed above for report to the Board of Directors and the HREGI Investors, and conduct periodic review meetings with the Board and investors.
- Workforce growth rate should exceed the number of new jobs announced.
- Population growth rate should match or exceed technology-based cities.
- Employment growth rate should match or exceed technology-based cities.
- Develop an integrated Investors accountability and communications plan to be updated the first quarter of each year.



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In the News

Headlines in print and across the World Wide Web

Madison County named the country's Best Place to Live to weather the economy
Forbes.com, November 2008

Huntsville named one of the Top 50 Best Places to raise children in the U.S.
Business Week, November 2008

Huntsville named one of the Top 5 locations in the U.S. for aerospace companies
Expansion Solutions, October/November 2008

Huntsville named one of America's Top 5 Cities for Job Opportunities
SmartMoney.com, September 2008

Huntsville named one of the Top 5 Best Performing Cities in the Country
Milken Institute, September 2008

Huntsville named the #1 Mid-market in the South
Southern Business & Development, August 2008

Huntsville named one of the country's Top 5 Engineering and Design Markets
Staffing Industry Analysts, Inc., July 2008

Huntsville named one of America's Top 5 Mid-Sized Cities for Doing Business
Inc.com, July 2008

Huntsville is one of the country's Top 10 Technology Cities,
ranking 3rd in the country for concentration of technology workers
Cybercities, June 2008

Huntsville named one of Forbes Leading Cities for Business
Forbes.com, May 2008

Huntsville named one of the country's Top 10 Places to Live
Relocate-America.com, May 2008

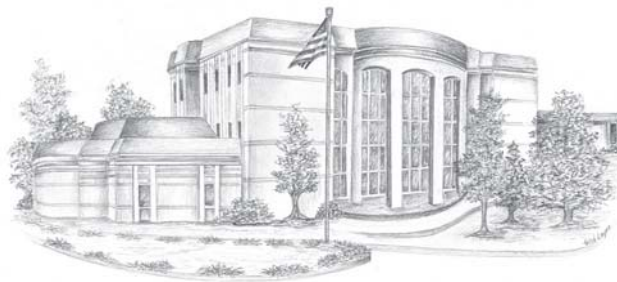
Huntsville named one of America's Leading Greenest Cities
Popular Science, March 2008

Forbes projects Huntsville to be one of the fastest growing metros in the country
Forbes Magazine, January 2008

Your Chamber working for you

In 2008 the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County hosted more than 50 events for a combined attendance of more than 35,000 business and community leaders.

- *The Chamber's 2008 Washington D.C. Trip drew 175 registrants – the highest number of any community in the state and one of the top Chamber-participant trips in the nation*
- *A record of more than 100 registered for the Montgomery trip, which featured a luncheon address from Gov. Bob Riley and presentations from key members of his administration and the legislature*
- *Hosted Senator Richard Shelby's Washington Update Breakfast attended by more than 1,100*
- *A record attendance of more than 1,100 for Sen. Jeff Sessions' Washington Update Breakfast*
- *A record attendance of 1,200 for Gov. Bob Riley's annual Alabama Update luncheon*
- *Hosted Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle's first-ever State of the City luncheon, attended by more than 1,200*
- *Hosted Annual Outing for Team Redstone at Ditto Landing attended by more than 350*
- *Sold out attendance for the Small Business Awards Celebration and Annual Membership Meeting with more than 1,200 at each event*
- *Coordinated and participated in town hall meetings, including one in the Washington D.C. area for the Missile Defense Agency*
- *Coordinated the Tennessee Valley BRAC Committee "BRAC to the Future" event with more than 800 attendees*



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