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### **Chamber details strategic direction through 2013**

Fairfield (IOWA) - The Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce on Friday released to its membership a strategic plan designated to inform the strategic direction of non-profit business advocacy organization for the next three years. "Strategic Plan 2013", which was ratified and adopted by the Chamber Board of Directors on December 9, sets forth bold membership, programmatic and policy priorities for the organization as well as issues a new vision statement and revised mission statement.

"It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we set upon the course this new plan charts for our organization, one filled with bold but measurable ambitions and goals which, upon attainment, will position the Fairfield Chamber as the premier and preeminent business advocacy and services membership organization in the region," said Brent Willett, Chamber Executive Director.

The product of a year-long planning process, the 2013 plan sets forth a series of ambitions designated by the Chamber Board of Directors as representative and imperative to the ongoing improvement of the 83-year old organization, said Jane Anne Harl, Chamber President.

"By unequivocally aligning the Fairfield Chamber with a challenging roster of goals to achieve in less than 36 months I think speaks to the tremendous confidence the Board of Directors has in the organizational capacity of our Chamber: a robust membership, sound fiscal position, invested and engaged board and capable staff," Harl, whose term as president ends December 31, said. "This is no status quo plan. It calls for big things, and I have every confidence they'll be achieved on time and with excellence."

Containing a series of goals, objectives and strategies in five areas of discipline including "Membership"; "Economic Development"; "Community Betterment"; "Advocacy" and "Communications, Business Support and Governance", the plan calls for, among other things,

- The establishment of a “Fairfield Leadership Institute” to “prepare and nurture the capabilities of individuals from diverse segments of the area to serve as lifelong effective volunteers and facilitative leaders,
- The development of innovative communications programming designed to engage the age 18-30 demographic in Chamber and community activities and initiatives,
- The supplement of existing programming with “entrepreneurial support and development” programming to better serve the needs of start-up endeavors in the Fairfield area,
- The creation in 2011 of an annual member engagement program which would charge members of the board of directors with engaging in person visits to Chamber member businesses throughout the year, and
- The achievement of a regional “Career Academy” workforce preparedness program in partnership with the Fairfield Community School District, Indian Hills Community College and several surrounding school districts.

“The 2013 plan creates a series of challenging decrees calculated to represent excellence in each facet of our operation, including member services, economic and community development, customer service and leadership development,” said Fred McElwee, Chamber President-Elect.

“This working document will truly provide guidance and be a strong framework for the Chamber,” he added.

McElwee, Director of Auxiliary Services with the Fairfield Community School District, chaired the committee which directed the nearly year-long strategic planning process, which featured a day-long Board retreat and facilitation by the University of Northern Iowa’s Institute for Decision Making. He said that the Chamber surveyed its members extensively and the findings of those surveys informed the board’s strategic decision-making more than any other piece of influence.

A copy of the plan is available for download at [FairfieldIowa.com](http://FairfieldIowa.com). For questions about the plan or other Chamber-related information, contact Willett at 641-472-2111 or [bwillett@fairfieldiowa.com](mailto:bwillett@fairfieldiowa.com).

The Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advocacy of its more than 375 member partners. The Chamber produces dozens of community events year-round and works with local, state, regional and national partners to improve the Fairfield’s business environment and quality of life. The Chamber’s 204 West Broadway offices also house the offices of the Fairfield Economic Development Association.

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