



News Release

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Opportunity Austin Unveils New Strategy to Continue Strong Economic Development Growth in Central Texas

December 12, 2012 [AUSTIN, TX] – The Greater Austin Chamber unveiled the next 5 year phase of its Opportunity Austin strategy, 2014-2018. Business and community leaders joined the Chamber and its regional partners as it announced the new program of work and funding campaign to support it during a luncheon which included remarks from Speaker Joe Straus, Texas House of Representatives, today.

The Opportunity Austin business initiative, launched in 2004, is aimed at fostering job-creating investment in Central Texas. The next strategic phase of Opportunity Austin will focus on initiatives for the economy, talent, and place.

Mac Holladay, CEO and Founder of Market Street Services, presented the Opportunity Austin 3.0 strategy at the luncheon. Top priorities for 3.0 include boosting economic diversification to proactively strengthen the economy, deepening the talent pool through development and attraction, and keeping the Greater Austin region attractive to entrepreneurs, business leaders and site selectors through expanded advocacy on issues such as a comprehensive regional transportation system and regional collaboration.

“When we started Opportunity Austin, we were in a downward spiral and responding to crisis. Over the past nine years, we have worked hard and now we lead the country in job growth,” said Farmer. “Being in a position of strength, we are able to focus on community issues that make a difference in our region—poverty, transportation, education, wages,” he said. “If we can maintain an environment that embraces economic development, then-- and only then—are we in a position to achieve these community goals.”

Since 2004, there has been 254 corporate relocation or expansion announcements including Apple, Facebook, Hanger Orthopedic, Legal Zoom, Samsung, HID Global and Visa. The number of prospects visiting the Austin region were also well above expectations, with 1,115 in the last eight years.

Since 2004, there has been a 30% increase in college enrollment after implementing the regions’ first college enrollment initiative. There have been 13,000 Central Texas high school students in attendance at our Skill point/College Career Expo. From 2008 to 2010, the percentage of college-ready students in AISD increased from 38% to 55%.

Since 2009, Opportunity Austin has successfully advocated for: the passage of local bonds to plan and fund short and medium term improvements along the IH 35 corridor; the creation of a regional express lanes network beginning with new Mopac lanes in 2016; and the development of a vision for regional multimodal public transportation with funding priorities through the Transit Working Group.

The Chamber and its regional partners will continue to execute on the existing Opportunity Austin plan through 2013.

About Opportunity Austin

Opportunity Austin is the Austin Chamber of Commerce's five-year economic development initiative to foster sustainable growth through the creation of new jobs and increased payroll in the Central Texas region.

Visit opportunityaustin.com.

About the Austin Chamber of Commerce

The Austin Chamber of Commerce is a private, non-profit, membership-driven organization comprised of 2,500 business enterprises, civic organizations, education institutions and individuals. Its mission is to provide leadership that will help create regional economic prosperity and success for its members in Central Texas.

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