



MILL VALLEY

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISITOR CENTER

Strategic Plan 2013-2015

Giving voice and strategic support to Mill Valley's businesses so our town thrives.

Executive Summary

The Chamber enters 2013 with nearly 300 members (up 30% from 2012), a strong Board of Directors and leadership team, a City partnership, healthy balance sheet, and ambitious goals to be an essential voice for Mill Valley's businesses throughout the 94941 ZIP code. The Chamber also seeks to partner with local nonprofits and governments to increase the time and money our residents and local visitors spend in Mill Valley. One such partnership, with the City of Mill Valley, formalizes the Chamber's new role as a Visitor Center as well.

Our 2012 revenue was \$178K. Our revenue goal for 2013 is \$210K with membership growth to 350. Our opportunity and challenge is to provide truly valuable "business to business" and "business to consumer" benefits and services that our members are willing to pay for and which enhance their influence and reach.

This 2013-2015 Strategic Plan lays out our vision for growth and priority goals. Much remains uncertain but not our commitment to innovate, serve our members and the community, and continuously measure, learn and improve while fulfilling our core mission.

Drawing on research, business focus groups and surveys we have distilled four core goals: To Build, Advocate, Connect and Enrich. We have identified a number of strategies within each area and Quarterly priorities for 2013. In September of each year, we will create a similar quarterly roadmap.

We will grow to 500 business and community memberships by 2015 by demonstrating value and service to our members.

March 19, 2013

The Chamber's Mission

- To promote Mill Valley's economic vitality
- To advocate public policy for business; and
- To enhance the quality of life in Mill Valley through partnership

The Chamber's Vision – Why We Exist at All

We believe healthy towns need a vibrant economy, a safe community and great schools. Mill Valley is blessed to have all three.

We believe there are very few towns left in America like Mill Valley, which balance the needs of residents with those of businesses and nonprofits contributing significantly to the financial, cultural, social and physical health and fabric of the community – the "vibrant core." Many beautiful towns like ours have become bedroom communities with little life, few stores and meager services for its residents and local visitors.

We believe the right "balance" doesn't happen by accident. It requires a strong, unifying voice and programs for local businesses that champion and preserve Mill Valley for the greater good.

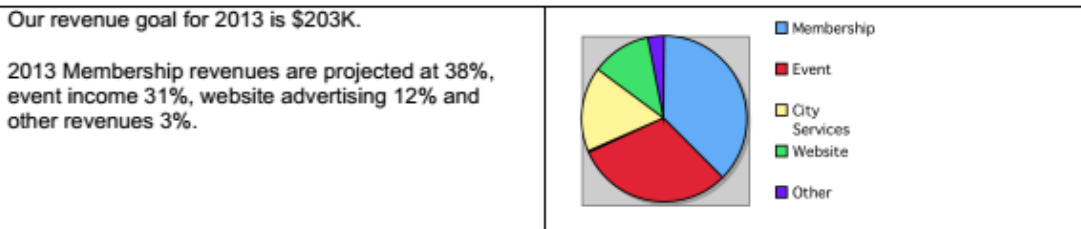
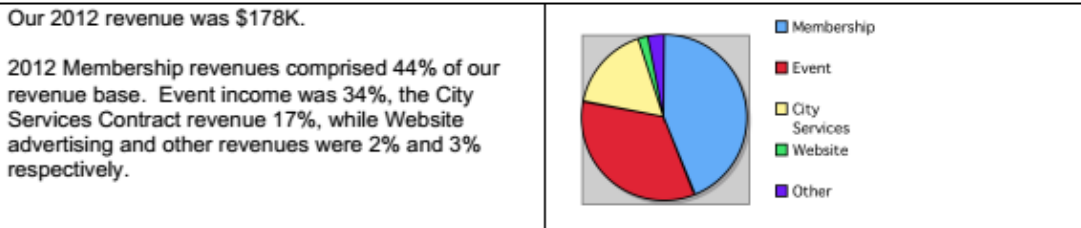
We also believe in the power of partnership with the City of Mill Valley, the County of Marin, local service organizations, iconic institutions and events, such as the Rotary Club, Kiddo!, the Mill Valley Film Festival, 142 Throckmorton Theatre, Sweetwater, the Mountain Play, the Mill Valley Fall Arts Festival, Bloomathon, the Wine and Gourmet Festival, the Memorial Day Parade and the Dipsea Foundation, to increase the cultural vibrancy and economic activity in our town.

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The Chamber's Business Model – How We Exist

The Chamber enters 2013 with nearly 300 members (up 30% from 2012), a strong Board of Directors and leadership team, a City partnership, healthy balance sheet, no debt and ambitious goals to be an essential voice for Mill Valley's businesses throughout the 94941 ZIP code. The Chamber relies on multiple sources of income to fulfill our goals to build our capacity, to advocate for our members, to connect members with customers and each other, and to enrich Mill Valley.

Our opportunity and challenge is to provide truly valuable "business to business" and "business to consumer" benefits and services that our members are willing to pay for and which enhance their influence and reach.



The Chamber's Position in Mill Valley

Mill Valley's reinvigorated Chamber is a 501c6 membership organization representing very diverse 94941 businesses from large service and retail enterprises to independent consultants and individual community members. We are independent of the State and National Chambers of Commerce and develop our own priorities and policies that reflect the needs of our members and community.

Our Chamber team regularly communicates with other healthy Chambers, in Calistoga, San Anselmo, Sausalito, Novato and San Rafael, among others. We have rejoined the Western Association of Chamber Executives to extend out relationships and learn best practices from other successful chambers.

We exist to provide a compelling portfolio of benefits and services that serve the business community of greater Mill Valley.

Our sustained success depends on growing and serving our membership, who in the past decade opted to "go it alone." With nearly 70 new members in the past six months, and strong partnerships with local non-profits and government, we have reversed this trend.

As we consolidate our position in Mill Valley, we will explore new ways to keep Mill Valley economically vital, including Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) which business communities in San Rafael, San Francisco and Berkeley have created to leverage their chamber engagement.

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What Chamber Members Want

Since 2008 many City-appointed groups have studied and compiled valuable information on what our community wants. To summarize, both residents and businesses need and want each other. The primary customer for local businesses is residents and employees, followed by local visitors. For some members, customers coming from the Greater Bay Area and beyond are also essential. This same research and experience tells us that our local businesses and members want:

Advocacy:

Local businesses want to be kept informed of issues and consequences and want to have an advocate representing their interests

Visibility/Marketing:

Local businesses are looking to the Chamber to help them aggregate and leverage their own customer marketing through marketing partnerships. Members want residents and local visitors to know they exist and to spend more time and money locally.

Beautification and Maintenance:

Local businesses believe it's paramount to keep a well-maintained and beautiful Mill Valley

Business-to-Business Services:

Different businesses value different business services. While independent consultants and small businesses value Chamber networking events, other clients see greater value in marketing services that promote their businesses and greater Mill Valley to potential customers.

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The Chamber's Values

- Be welcoming: Once you are here, you are local
- Be inclusive: Reach out to all 94941 and respect individuality and geography
- Be energetic: Encourage participation in the social and economic vitality of our community
- Be everywhere: Reach people where they are
- Be innovative: Take risks. Dream "big"
- Be transparent: Share knowledge to improve results
- Be passionate: Love what we do
- Be relevant: Be indispensable to local businesses and nonprofits

The Chamber's Leadership Team

We have a diverse and engaged eleven-member Board of Directors, a full time Executive Director and part-time Office Coordinator. We engage project resources as needed. Our "Ambassadors Team" mentors and introduces new businesses and builds attendance at networking events. The Chamber's bylaws permit a board up to 20 members.

2013 Chamber Board of Directors

- Paula Reynolds, Board Chair, Community Member
- Ann Aversa, Board Vice Chair, La Ginestra
- Ron Vidal, Board Treasurer, Community Member
- Clifford Wedlock, Board Secretary, Community Member
- Ken Brooks, GreenHome 5
- Victoria Cressman, Pacific Union Real Estate International
- Doug Canepa, Mill Valley Market
- Rob Hansen, Woodlands Pet Food & Treats
- Paolo Petrone, Piazza D'Angelo, Mill Valley Inn and Hotel Acqua
- Linda Rosso, Strategic Marketing Consultant and Artist
- Scott Rubin, Mathnasium
- Garry Lion, Mill Valley City Council, Ex-Officio member

2013 Chamber Staff

- Daniel Escalzo, Executive Director
- Carrie Knight, Office Coordinator

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The Chamber's Goals and Strategies for 2013-2015

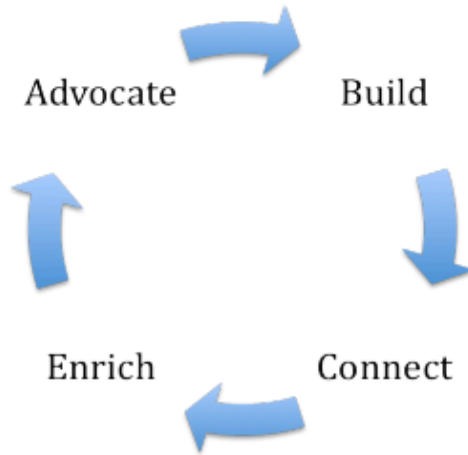
We have distilled four goals for Mill Valley's Chamber. The first is very internal and necessary for our survival. The other three are focused on our membership and community, reflecting both our mission and expressed business needs.

BUILD: Grow and sustain a healthy membership organization

CONNECT: Provide marketing, visibility and networking opportunities for our members

ENRICH: Enhance the quality of life in Mill Valley

ADVOCATE: Give voice to our members' interests



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	What we plan to accomplish	How we will do it
<p>BUILD</p> <p>Grow and sustain a healthy membership organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 500 business and community memberships by 2015 ▪ 94941 representation ▪ A 15-strong active and representative Board of Directors with succession planning ▪ Excellent executive leadership, staff and "just in time" resources ▪ Best business practices and policies ▪ A culture of continuous learning, measurement and improvement ▪ Diversified income streams to support operations and marketing programs ▪ 90% member retention ▪ 15% Budget Reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal Board and ED outreach to member prospects ▪ Demonstrate early visible impact with 2013 successes and testimonials ▪ Expand benefits by audience ▪ Grow "fee for service," sponsorships, advertising, event, mixer and product sales revenues. ▪ Expand City services contract revenues and deliverables. ▪ Consistent "touch" program with members

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	What we plan to accomplish	How we will do it
<p>ADVOCATE</p> <p>Give voice to our members' interests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mill Valley is perceived by the business community as a business-friendly place to do business ▪ Members are educated and mobilized to participate in critical issues and decisions ▪ There exists regular two-way communication on important local issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Seat at the Table" on commercial zoning changes ▪ Chamber member representation on City committees and task forces ▪ 2013 Business Customer Satisfaction Survey ▪ Regular "Advocacy Alerts" ▪ Engage new "Chamber Advisory Council" CAC ▪ Participate in and organize around issues as they arise

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