

Two of Two Part Series

Post COVID-19: Real Ideas From Your Colleagues

“The future starts today,
not tomorrow.”

Pope John Paul II

Post COVID-19

This is the second of a two-part series on what actions your colleagues are taking now to lead their stakeholders and communities through Post COVID-19. For a complete copy of the presentation, visit www.thechasongroup.com.

First and foremost, we must change the questions from why and how COVID-19 hit us?

The new question is -

What, as professionals, will we do immediately to initiate, lead and rebuild from the economic crisis that has just attacked our community, region, state, country and the world?

Post COVID-19

*Joe Henning, IOM, ACE, CAE
President and CEO
Henry County Chamber of Commerce
McDonough, Georgia*

While we continue to respond to immediate needs of the business community, we are focusing on the recovery phase. Much will depend on the timing, but we are working with our partners and businesses to prioritize what role we will play in that recovery. In-person meetings will likely be replaced with technology opportunities – including counseling and consulting as well as educating and informing. Our primary focus will be in getting the community back up: promoting dining options, encouraging travel, re-employing workers, and supporting our educational institutions in returning to campus. It's all a moving target, but we're preparing for that.



Post COVID-19

Paige Green

President and CEO

Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce

Ellijay, Georgia

My hope is that we continue to be the trusted resource for information and the biggest advocate for our businesses. We will work with our businesses to resume operations and to encourage pent up purchases to be made locally and early, if at all possible. We will work with our local media to produce a strong local campaign for not only consumer but business to business spending. As the destination marketing organization (DMO) for Ellijay and Gilmer County, we will encourage travel to resume (when safe).



Post COVID-19

Sean Mikula

CEO

POWER 10 Capital Campaigns

The details are the hard part, but the process is pretty straightforward. Chambers and EDOs should buy or make use of a giant whiteboard. Sketch out and update daily a “battle plan” / roadmap that connects the community from where it is (disaster response) to the “light at the end of the tunnel” (full health and economic recovery). Bring a “fresh eye” to existing economic stimulus opportunities (Opportunity Zones, New Market Tax Credits, etc.) and chase down new / special public and private funding opportunities established to support economic recovery. Seek input from all parts of your constituency. Plan the work, then work the plan.

Chambers & EDOs are the economic development “first responders”
- HERO UP!



Post COVID-19

*Colin Martin
President and CEO
Fayette County Chamber of Commerce
Fayetteville, Georgia*

We plan to do a #BackInBusiness social media campaign, with visits to our small business members featuring stories and videos. We are currently doing Zoom conference calls with members by segment to ask what can the Fayette Chamber do now and in the near future to support their businesses. Most of the suggestions have been promoting spending locally and supporting small businesses in particular, especially restaurants that will remain in business.



Post COVID-19

*Pamela W. Carnes, GCCE
President & CEO
Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce
Canton, Georgia*

During these unprecedented times, there is one thing all chambers need to do – listen to our members.

No matter what size organization, no matter how detrimental the impact is they are facing, some needs will be similar while others will be specific to the member. While keeping lines of communication open with our cities, counties, services providers, etc., reassuring our members that chambers of commerce are *open for business* is crucial as we keep them informed as business eventually returns to normal.

On the flipside, reassuring our communities that our member businesses are *open for business* is also vital. #ShopLocal



Post COVID-19

Bo Gregory

President

Development Authority of Monroe County

Forsyth, Georgia

Create a “Phoenix Plan,” a plan to swiftly move forward to support your local economy getting back on their feet. Here are a few ideas:

Take care of your existing industry now while times are tough, even if this is just calling your local businesses and getting a read on their economic health, as much as they can share. This will allow the developer to recommend any State/Federal programs that might be available to keep business moving now and workers on payroll. This will save a lot of recreation of staff and business infrastructure once the smoke clears.

Prepare/plan now for any workforce needs if the above cannot be achieved. Workforce being the most important aspect of business development right now, preparing to partner with your local chamber or community college to host job fairs to fill positions that might have been eliminated and now are needed to be filled. Tracking business in part one will give you an idea of how many and in what fields of industry to invite to such events so that you can flip the switch and execute as soon as needed.

With unfortunate downtime, at least compared to the normally hectic schedule of economic developers, now is a good time to review your collateral material and website. These tools are how most of the outside world first sees your community and should be updated as much as possible. I encourage all, if you don’t already, to use local web developers and printers for this work. This will help to ensure our local small businesses survive during this difficult time.

Stay in touch with your colleagues. Find out what their plans are, share yours and incorporate those that fit them into your “Phoenix Plan,” so that your local industry and the economy of Georgia can “rise from the ashes” as quickly as feasibly possible



Post COVID-19

*Jeanne Krueger
President/CEO
Rome Floyd Chamber
Rome, Georgia*

The Rome Floyd Chamber of Commerce has set up www.romeomega.com/business-triage.

The staff is calling businesses to connect employers, owners, and managers to resources and information. The chamber is also asking attorneys and accountants to donate one hour of their time at no charge to help answer the more technical questions.



Post COVID-19

Kenny Smiley, GCCE, IOM

Eli Lussiana

Co-Owners

PSP Group

Monroe, Georgia



In light of the recent events facing our communities, our state, our nation and the world, it is more important now than ever to keep a positive message going in your communities. So many chambers of commerce have stepped up to the plate to meet this challenge through specific marketing campaigns, buy local programs as well as local, state and federal business information dissemination. And we at PSP Group applaud you and the various other organizations that are leading this charge throughout your various communities and states.

Just as most businesses and organizations have changed operating procedures and their way of doing things to accommodate and navigate through these unprecedented times, so has PSP Group. For our current customers (chambers), we move forward in helping tell your story through print and digital community publications and collateral. We continue to virtually work with your members and building rapport with them has been successful. For our current and future clients, we are here for you when we all come out on the other side and you are ready or need us. Until then, stay strong and safe and remember that we are all in this together.

Post COVID-19

Ralph Staffins III, CEcD

President & CEO

Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce

Brunswick, Georgia

It is vital for the chamber to be the anchor of the business community during this crisis. Communication is key! Now is the time to exhaust all resources and information to the business community through constant communication. It's time to find advanced modern ways for small businesses to get products to market and in their customers' hands. One thing that we have done and will continue to do is setting up avenues for our locally owned businesses to sell virtually through various online platforms. We can leverage the state economy coming out of this pandemic by injecting immediate revenue and cashflow into the local economy.

In our community, it is essential to work together with our Economic Development Authority and Convention and Visitors Bureau to communicate a cohesive message to our community. The Golden Isles is dependent on tourism guests and we must all be at the table and a part of this new recovery taskforce.

NOW is the time for chambers to lead and be the voice of business!



Post COVID-19

“My philosophy of life is that if we make up our mind what we are going to make of our lives, then work hard toward that goal, we never lose – somehow we win out”

President Ronald Reagan

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Thank you for taking the time to review Post COVID-19 ideas from your colleagues.

The Chason Group Team is prepared to assist your organization through these trying times with our resources, institutional knowledge and coaching. Please call on us at 404.735.0540 or emailing tchason@thechasongroup.com.

For the complete presentation in one document, please visit our website at www.thechasongroup.com.

Tim Chason