

Economic development chamber's top goal

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By Bill Hethcock

Economic development will be the Dallas Regional Chamber's top priority over the next five years, the new chairman of the board told business leaders at the organization's annual meeting Wednesday.

"This region is in better shape than the rest of the country," Mike Baggett, the chamber's 2011 chairman, said at a luncheon at the Fairmont Hotel in downtown Dallas. "We've had more success than just about any other area. We're going to take that and build on it and make it better."

Baggett has served on the chamber's board and as a member of the executive committee for several years and was the chairman and CEO of Winstead from 1992 through 2006.

Baggett and other chamber officials laid out some of the chamber's goals, including:

- Become a top 10 region for Fortune Global 500 headquarters and a top three region for major public and private U.S. headquarters by 2015.
- Add more total jobs than any other U.S. region between 2010 and 2015.
- Be a top five U.S. region for new technology jobs created between 2010 and 2015.
- Improve the Dallas ISD high school graduation rate from the current 67 percent to 80 percent by 2015.
- Increase the percentage of Dallas region residents who hold advanced degrees from the current 10 percent to 15 percent.