

Business Retention and Expansion Program Veneta, Oregon



The key to business vitality is having a strong, locally-owned business base that has the capacity to endure and grow in today's rapidly changing economy. While every rural business faces unique challenges, there are proactive and proven economic development strategies that can help existing businesses recognize their full potential. To this end, Veneta, Oregon is partnering with Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) to develop and deliver a Business Retention and Expansion Program beginning January 2016. Alongside countless partners, the City of Veneta, RDI, and the newly formed Veneta Economic Development Committee (EDC) aim to assess business needs, connect direct assistance, and develop long-term strategies to support the local business base.



RDI's specially trained and certified economic development practitioners will work hand-in-hand with local leaders in designing and delivering customized business retention and expansion services that address a community's unique business needs. Below is an outline highlighting key activities:

1. Assess local business climate and needs
2. Develop business outreach and visitation processes
3. Leverage and deliver existing local and regional resources to businesses and connect to outside expertise

Project Timeline

Typically, a BR&E program takes six months to launch and implement. During this time, RDI, the City of Veneta, and the EDC will reach out to community members, resource providers, and other key stakeholders to build capacity and coordinate resources. The project is slated to begin January 2016 and wrap up by June 2016.

Program Goals

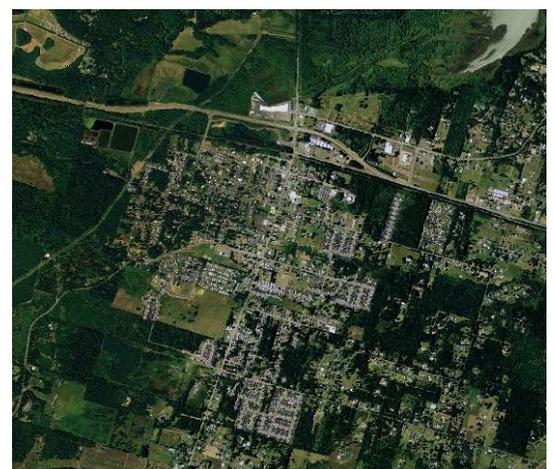
- Interview 25 businesses between February-March 2016
- Connect, provide, and deliver technical assistance and capital to Veneta businesses
- Create a long-term outreach strategy that involves locally trained and skilled leaders
- Better connect local businesses with public and private resources

Questions?

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“Veneta is very excited to have RDI's expertise in developing and launching the Business Retention and Expansion program. This will set the stage for long-term economic vitality in our community, stable jobs for our region, and a good quality of life for our residents and business owners.” Ric Ingham, Veneta City Administrator



Attention! Upcoming Community Events!

We welcome you to two upcoming events for the Veneta Business Retention and Expansion Program:

- January 14: Open House at the Fern Ridge Library from 6:00-8:00 p.m. to introduce the Economic Development Committee to the business community
- January 28: Kick-Off Event from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Our Daily Bread

How can you get involved?

The deliberate cultivation of relationships is the heart of every successful Business Retention and Expansion program and requires significant investment from community members. **This is where we need your help!** A true relationship between the private sector and community is critical to understanding the “who, what, when, and how” dynamics impacting these wealth and job generators. **To this end, Veneta needs your help and support to better understand business needs and foster strategic relationships by joining our Business Visitation Teams.**

Visitation Team Commitment and Qualifications

RDI and the City of Veneta are looking to recruit up to 18 volunteers to help support the Business Retention and Expansion Program by serving as members on Business Visitation Teams. Below are highlights of tasks, responsibilities, and qualifications for participating members.

- Two-person teams
- Visit 2-4 businesses each
- Commit up to 20 hours of volunteer time over 3 months
- Be respectful, open, and communicative with the ability to listen
- Be open to training other visitors in the future
- Attend up to 3 trainings (mandatory)
- Be willing to engage businesses quarterly for 1 year
- Refrain from bringing a personal agenda or “baggage” to business interviews
- Must be highly confidential and agree to sign confidentiality statements

What do the Visitation Team Trainings entail?

Each Visitation Team volunteer must attend mandatory trainings. The trainings include a framework for the entire visitation process, desired outcomes, and reality-based deliverables. This includes things like explanation of the purpose/intent of the BR&E program, description of participating organizations, and the resources they represent as well as anticipated outcomes for the subject business and community as a whole. Typically, trainings will be conducted over two or three “building block” sessions. Training times and dates are flexible to reflect the dynamic scheduling needs of every day workers.

If you have any questions, or are interested in learning more, please contact Claudia at 541-935-2191 ext 312 or email cdenton@ci.veneta.or.us.

