



## CITY OF STANWOOD COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

**ITEM NUMBER:** 9d  
**DATE:** June 13, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Business Retention and Expansion Program (BR&E)  
**CONTACT PERSON:** Jennifer Ferguson, City Administrator  
**ATTACHMENTS:** A – Resolution 2019-09 Authorizing BR&E  
B – Business Retention and Expansion Program Summary

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this agenda item is for Council consideration of the proposed Stanwood Business Retention and Expansion Program and approval of Resolution 2019-09 implementing the business development initiative.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Business Retention and Expansion Program has been recommended for approval by the Economic Development Board, the Community Development Committee and Finance/Personnel Committee; therefore, staff recommends approval of the resolution to implement the program.

### **SUMMARY**

Business retention and expansion is the foundation of effective economic development along with programs that are focused on the support of a community's existing businesses through on-going engagement and information-sharing between the city's economic development professionals and local business owners. Our existing businesses form the foundation for local employment opportunities, stabilize our tax base, and serve as key engines for overall economic growth.

### **DISCUSSION**

Staff has developed a BR&E program that endeavors to foster the retention and expansion of existing local businesses. Our objectives of the program include:

- Ensuring that the City has accurate knowledge of the business community and maintains constant communication.

- Developing a city/business collaboration framework that supports city understanding of existing business needs.
- Address business needs through development of initiatives that coordinate resources, build partnerships, and provide tools for business to be successful.
- Identify early and often new business and align them with opportunities that support their stability, growth and development.
- Align the Stanwood organizational structure and allocate staffing resources that support economic development initiatives and business development programs.

An active BR&E is time and labor intensive, and requires building and maintaining good relationships with existing businesses. The key is responsiveness. The proposed BR&E Program sets city council policy for business development initiatives and lays the guidelines for staff that we are listening to business issues and problems and considering actions to address those problems. The City genuinely appreciate the business community and its contribution to the economic viability of the community. Existing businesses have the most significant impact on job opportunities and future job growth and the City will seek to remove the bureaucratic barriers to doing business.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Because of the time involved with supporting local businesses, staff will be including economic development initiatives and the levels of services needed for supporting the BR&E program as we work on our organizational assessment and staffing analysis study.

There is no direct budget line item associated with the implementation of the BR&E program as the work is provided internally and retrospective costs for staff salary and benefits are built into the budget. At times, when there are specific costs associated with the BR&E Program, staff will highlight the expenditures. The BR&E Program implementation supports the City Council 2019-2020 Budget Theme – Economic Development.

### **CITY COUNCIL OPTIONS**

1. Approval of the resolution, which implements the BR&E Program, would be setting economic development policy and directing staff to initiate business development activities.
2. No approval of the resolution and direct staff to provide additional information

### **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

**I MOVE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2019-09 ADOPTING THE STANWOOD BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM.**

City of Stanwood

RESOLUTION 2019-09

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STANWOOD  
ADOPTING THE STANWOOD BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION  
PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Stanwood Ordinance 1465, adopted by the City Council setting the 2019-2020 biennial budget which included the budget theme for Economic Development initiatives that support the local economy; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council desires to have accurate knowledge of the business community and maintain constant communication; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council desires to develop a city/business collaboration framework that supports the City understanding of existing business needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council plans to develop business initiatives that coordinate resources, build partnerships and provide tools for business to be successful; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council will endeavor to align the city organization and staffing resources that support economic development initiatives and business development programs.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STANWOOD:**

That the Stanwood Business Retention and Expansion Program, a true copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein, is hereby adopted.

Upon the motion duly made and seconded, the foregoing resolution was unanimously passed by the City Council.

**PASSED by the Stanwood City Council this 13th day of June, 2019.**

CITY OF STANWOOD

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leonard Kelley, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
David A. Hammond, City Clerk



# *City of Stanwood*

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## **Business Retention & Expansion Program**

**June 2019**

Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) programs are focused on the support of a community's existing businesses through on-going engagement and information-sharing between the city's economic development professionals and local business owners. The City of Stanwood businesses, as well as, Camano Island businesses form a foundation for local employment opportunities, stabilization of its tax base, and serve as key engines for the City's overall economic growth. As such, the City has established an economic development program that fosters the retention and expansion of existing local businesses. This program will be known as the Stanwood Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP).

### **Program Objectives**

The key objectives of the Stanwood Business Retention and Expansion Program are to:

1. Ensure that the City has accurate knowledge of the business community and maintains constant communication.
2. Develop a city/business collaboration framework that supports city understanding of existing business needs.
3. Address business needs through development of initiatives that coordinate resources, build partnerships, and provide tools for business to be successful.
4. Identify early and often new business and align them with opportunities that support their stability, growth and development.
5. Align the Stanwood organizational structure and allocate staffing resources that support economic development initiatives and business development programs.

### **Program Initiatives**

#### ***Business Surveys***

- A major business survey will be conducted to understand existing business issues, needs and opportunities and to collect information for the business inventory
  - Follow up or mini surveys may be conducted every two years and visitation surveys are conducted during BR&E Ambassador visits

#### ***Business Inventory***

- A database of local businesses information will be maintained with accurate business information from surveys and visitations. Business financial, commercial, and proprietary information is kept confidential per RCW 42.56.270

### ***Stanwood Business Webpage***

- Located on the City Website – “Doing Business” webpages will be created and maintained and will serve as the primary location for the all business resources, information and a business events calendar
  - City Hall will host Business kiosk where resources for business will be available in print form
- As part of the Stanwood Tourism and Destination Marketing Initiatives, the Discover Stanwood Camano website offers a “Places” feature for businesses to register business directory information.
  - The city will include “Google My Business” training for business to be found on the DSC website.

### ***Business newsletter***

- The City will provide a business newsletter on a bi-monthly cycle and include business related topics, resource information, and notice of business events

### ***BR&E Ambassadors & Visitation***

- Ambassadors will be a select group of community business members or economic development board members, who are trained or certified in BR&E best practices and city business retention practices.
  - Business visitation schedule will encourage a three-year cycle and conduct a physical business visits
  - All businesses will be included: Corporate, retail, restaurants, industry and service
  - BR&E Ambassador will be required to attend routine training and adhere to confidential reporting and adherence to RCW 42.56.270. Certification may be required.
- Visits are centered on an interview with the business owner, president or other lead staff to learn how the city might assist. Visits are conducted using questions similar to business surveys and the discussion will seek to understand and identify issues of importance to the business, obstacles to their success and opportunities for assistance.
  - Follow up and documentation of the visit and update to the business database are required.

### ***Financial Resources***

- A consortium of local banks who commit to support of the BR&E program will be listed on the City’s website and included as a resource in the Stanwood Business Newsletter
- Local Investment Opportunities Network (LIONS)
  - A LION connects local investors with local business owners who need capital. It is not a bank, investment club or financial institution. *Further discovery is in progress to determine the city’s ability to start a LION. This*

*section of the retention program is reserved for future initiatives associated with the development of a LION*

- Profit Mastery Program is a financial and management training program to assist business owners with overcoming the greatest business knowledge gap. *Further discovery is in progress to determine the city's ability to offer Profit Mastery workshops to business owners.*

### **Zoning, Sites & Permitting Resources**

- Business development related services are available to help businesses with expansion of current sites and facilities, assistance in identifying and preparing sites for expansion that requires relocation, and assistance with regulations and permits related to planning, zoning and building.
  - A member of the Economic Development staff is assigned as liaison for every major development project, ensuring a single point of contact to deal with all municipal and developmental issues.

### **Workshops and Events**

The City may host a variety of business workshops and events to connect with business owners. Those events may include, but not be limited to:

#### **Business Fairs**

- Full or half day workshops may be planned and include regional resource providers, lenders, business guest speakers, training and educational topics. Business workshops will provide face-to-face connections with business owners and provide them with resources and opportunities to succeed.
  - Frequency of workshops and special events will be at times/dates are flexible to all types of businesses

#### **Business roundtables**

- The Stanwood Mayor may host periodic Business Breakfast meetings or other roundtable events at alternate times of the year so as to reach as many business owners as possible.