



# **Business Retention and Expansion Program Strategic Plan**

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## Business Retention & Expansion Program Overview

A Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) is a community-based program used to open lines of communication and build relationships with local business. Its goals are a healthy local economy and an improved business climate. The program promotes job growth by helping communities identify concerns and barriers in the survival and growth of local businesses. The approach focuses on existing businesses because studies show that up to eighty percent of new job growth comes from existing businesses, rather than new firms that have been attracted to the area. In addition, business attraction efforts are also more likely to be successful when existing businesses are happy with the local business climate.

## Program Objectives

### Short Term

- Provide community support for local businesses
- Solve immediate individual business concerns
- Compile an inventory of existing businesses with contact information

### Long Term

- Improve the competitiveness of local businesses
- Establish and implement a strategic plan of action for business growth and economic development

## Program Structure

\*Please see *Attachment A – Timeline* for dates that are referred to in the description.

### 1) BREP Roll-Out

An integral step in the BREP strategic plan is going to be the introduction to the community. Because it is the community leaders who will be involved in the plan, the more they know about it, the more successful it will be. It is also important for businesses to know that the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will be contacting them so they know to expect it. This will increase the response we are able to receive.

#### a) Approval from EDC Board and City Council

Upon approval by the City Manager, the BREP strategic plan will be presented to the EDC Board of Directors for edits. After all changes have been made, it will be presented again for final approval.

#### b) Presentation to City Council

When the final draft is completed and approved, the plan will be presented to the City Council during their pre-council briefing. The presentation will serve to not only educate them on the plan, but help them serve as advocates for it in the community. This will also be the official “roll-out” of the plan.

#### c) News & Community Coverage

The week prior to the City Council Briefing, a press release will be developed and distributed, inviting the community to the roll-out of the new BREP plan. An exclusive “sneak peak” at the plan will be given to the *Today* paper, and a notification will be sent out to Chamber members.

- d) Establish team  
Along with the introduction of the plan to the community, potential team members will be contacted concerning their participation. Members from the City Council, EDC Board and Chamber Board will be considered key team members when making contact with businesses, going on site visits and any needed follow-up communication. They will be trained on the process and will be called upon as needed during the implementation of the BREP plan.
- 2) Business Visits  
The key factors in a BREP strategic plan are the visits made to as many area businesses as possible. These visits are meant to build a relationship between business leaders and the EDC, so that as problems or obstacles arise, they are able to turn to the EDC for assistance.
    - a) Introductory Contact  
Initial contact with the businesses will be made by going to the business (when appropriate) and making introductions. From there, a separate meeting will be scheduled to discuss the needs of the business.
    - b) Visit Schedule  
A goal of two to four businesses per week will be set. The first businesses to be interviewed will be the major employers and key stakeholders in the community. As other needs from businesses arise, or new businesses come into town, they will be put into the visit schedule as well.
    - c) Survey Form  
A generic survey (please see *Attachment B – Business Survey*) will be used when performing site visits. The survey's main objective is to track the businesses that have been contacted and their major concerns. It is not meant to be restrictive, which will allow the visits to be laid-back and conversational.
    - d) Cedar Hill EDC Give-Away  
A token of appreciation will be given to each person interviewed by the EDC.
  - 3) Follow Up
    - a) Record Information Gathered  
There are several options for software that can be used in BREP plans. For the first year, intentions are to develop a contact list with information gathered in Microsoft Excel, then re-evaluate needs at the end of the year.
    - b) Send Thank You  
A "thank you" card will be sent to each person interviewed after the meeting, and a follow-up will be done on any additional information needed.
    - c) Additional Follow-Up  
If concerns are brought up during the initial interview, they will be addressed afterward with the appropriate persons, and actions taken will be relayed to the business. When needed, an additional visit will be made with appropriate representatives from the BREP team to address the issues.

4) Evaluate Business Needs

After the BREP plan has been active for six months, the information gathered will be evaluated for general needs the businesses may have. Then, other programs can be developed to address these needs. For example, if a general need by the community businesses is workforce training, the EDC can work with the community college to develop training programs to fit their needs.

5) Long Term

In addition to the business visits, there are other factors to the BREP plan that will be added.

a) Management Welcome Receptions

When a new manager comes to a business in Cedar Hill, the EDC Board of Directors will host a welcome reception to introduce him to community leaders and peers in his industry. The reception will serve as immediate contact with the manager and develop a relationship with him from the beginning of his time in Cedar Hill. The frequency of the welcome receptions will be determined according to need.

b) CHARM & CHMA

The Cedar Hill Association of Retail Management (CHARM) and the Cedar Hill Manufacturers Association (CHMA) will be re-established by the EDC to provide industry-specific forums for business leaders to discuss trends and issues with peers in their industry. This will also serve as a way to make contact with additional businesses to schedule site visits.

Each committee will meet quarterly during the lunch hour with a small, industry-specific program, followed by an open forum for discussion. Staff will organize the committee, but a chairman for each committee may also be named out of the group. Invitations/flyers will be sent out in advance of the first meetings, informing members that the group is re-established and reminding them of the goals.

CHARM will meet the second Wednesday of the first month of each quarter. CHMA will meet the second Wednesday of the second month of each quarter.

c) CHAMP

In addition, an association for medical offices will be researched and formed if the need is apparent in the community. It will be named the Cedar Hill Association of Medical Professionals (CHAMP).

*Attachment A – Timeline*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>
September 2, 2008	Present plan to City Manager Alan Sims for approval.
September 8, 2008	Present draft plan to EDC Board for input and edits.
November 3, 2008	Present plan to the EDC Board of Directors for final approval.
November 4, 2008	Begin visiting area businesses to discuss needs and build relationships.
February 2-6, 2009	Develop press release and meet with press representatives to line up coverage at the City Council meeting. Coordinate email invitation with the Cedar Hill Chamber.
February 10, 2009	ROLL-OUT – Present plan to the City Council with press and interested businesses present.
November 4, 2008	Begin visiting area businesses to discuss needs and build relationships.
May 11-15, 2009	Evaluate Business Needs and begin developing additional programs
January 14, 2009	CHMA meeting
February 11, 2009	CHARM meeting
April 8, 2009	CHMA meeting
May 13, 2009	CHARM meeting
July 8, 2009	CHMA meeting
August 12, 2009	CHARM meeting
November 9, 2009	Re-evaluate information management system.

\*Dates are tentative and subject to change.



*Attachment B – Business Survey*

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Company:** Manufacturing Distribution Professional Retail Service Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Employees:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Interested In:** CHMA CHARM

**Attendees:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow Up:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How is your business doing?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you see in the future for your business?** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**