

# Annual REPORT

Fiscal Year. 2012-2013.

ST. JOHNS  
GOOSE HOLLOW  
SWAN ISLAND  
CENTRAL EASTSIDE  
UNIVERSITY PARK  
KENTON  
FOSTER  
N. WILLIAMS  
MONTAVILLA/EAST TABOR  
WOODSTOCK  
PARKROSE  
OCEANOR VILLAGE  
BEAUMONT  
WESTMORELAND  
SULLYWOOD  
MULTNOMAH VILLAGE  
LLOYD  
NOB HILL  
PEARL DISTRICT  
42ND AVE  
BURKINSIDE EAST

**VENTURE PORTLAND**  
Growing Business. Connecting Neighborhoods.

OLD TOWN CHINATOWN  
GATEWAY  
MIDTOWN  
DOWNTOWN  
HARTFORD  
NW INDUSTRIAL  
HOLLYWOOD  
ALBERTA  
PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL  
HILLSDALE  
S. PORTLAND  
COLUMBIA CARRBORO  
NE BROADWAY

**“Venture Portland strengthened business districts;  
between December 2009 and December 2012,  
membership increased 76% and revenue increased  
487% across business districts city wide.”**

# VENTURE PORTLAND annual REPORT

Venture Portland began FY 2012-2013 with strong leadership, including an energized membership, stable Executive Committee and professional staff, and an aggressive work plan focused on building business district capacity, promotion and strengthening the organization's capacity that resulted in major successes for Portland's neighborhood business districts. The following report outlines Venture Portland's FY 2012-2013 accomplishments.

**2012-2013**

**“Venture Portland provided 1,334 hours of training and technical assistance to business district leaders from 46 districts, a 5% increase over FY 2011-2012 and a 54% increase over FY 2010-2011.”**

# BUILD BUSINESS DISTRICT CAPACITY

Working with our partners to align and coordinate resources, Venture Portland implemented a year-long series of capacity building programs including significant training and technical assistance for business district leaders. Representatives from 46 business districts participated in at least one of Venture Portland's capacity building programs, an 18% increase over FY 2011-2012. By addressing every stage of a business district association's lifecycle and all aspects of business district operations from good governance to membership growth over the last three years, Venture Portland strengthened business districts; between 12/31/09 and 12/31/12, membership increased 76% and revenue increased 487% across business districts city wide. Additional achievements are noted below.

## Training and Technical Assistance

Venture Portland hosted 27 capacity building trainings and events that covered everything from the legal responsibilities of business district officers to successfully managing online assets in the changing media environment. The organization continued its successful 'mini-series' training format with a 2-part 'Growing Membership' and 3-part 'Strategically Social' series. After analyzing FY 11-12 technical assistance topics, Venture Portland hosted 'Dr. Doctor: Is Your Business District Healthy' focused on good governance practices and corporate record-keeping; as part of the training, staff produced individualized 'Corporate Documents' binders for participating business districts. And, staff helped 250 neighborhood businesses assess HR policies related to the City's Sick Leave Ordinance. Training toolkits, case studies and resources, including the 'Business District Annual Check-up' and new 'Benchmarking Success' tools, were posted on [ventureportland.org](http://ventureportland.org). Venture Portland also produced 'Design Guidelines' to help business districts better manage and protect their brands. Maintaining all of the significant gains made in this area last year, Venture Portland provided 1,334 hours of training and technical assistance to business district leaders from emerging and established and districts, a 5% increase over FY 2011-2012 and a 54% increase over FY 2010-2011; and 375 business district leaders attended trainings, an 8% increase over FY 2011-2012.

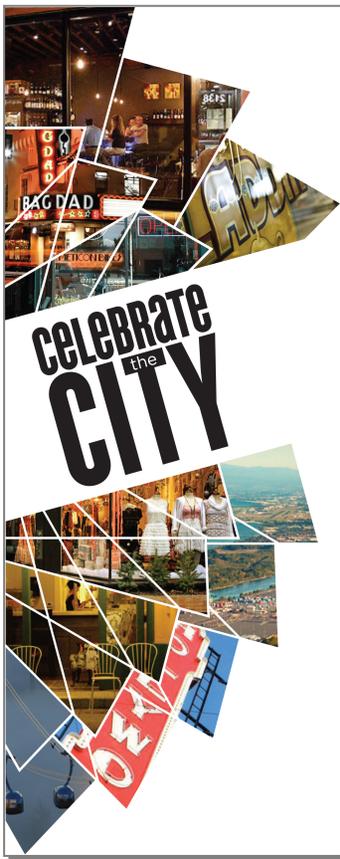
## Best Practices

Recognizing the wealth of expertise in Portland's neighborhood business districts, Venture Portland continued business district sharing by featuring 15 business district case studies at trainings. Venture Portland facilitated 37 'mentoring connections', a 147% increase over FY 11-12, linking leaders from business districts city wide to discuss best practices around district formation, IRS exemption, grants, insurance, banners, membership, personnel, branding, websites and storefront vacancies. Venture Portland brought together leaders from the city's four industrial districts to discuss shared issues and future collaboration and hosted bi-monthly lunches for staffers to increase collective business district staffing skills and connect colleagues across districts, bi-annual discussions for event coordinators and quarterly 'Coffee Talk' conversations for business district officers. Venture Portland continued to use the 'Business District Annual Check-up' to help business districts ensure appropriate governance, membership and financial infrastructure and created additional best practice tools including a sample 'Business District Work Plan and Budget' and 'Benchmarking Success' planning and tracking document.

**“Venture Portland increased visits 212%  
over FY 11-12; new visitors to the site  
increased 24% over the same period.”  
[ventureportland.org](http://ventureportland.org)**

# PROMOTE AND MARKET BUSINESS DISTRICTS

To increase Portlanders' understanding of the value of neighborhood business districts to the city's economy, Venture Portland strengthened partnerships with key opinion leaders and stakeholders. As a result, the organization facilitated 29 media interviews (22 for business district leaders, a 57% increase over FY 11-12) and secured 41 positive media stories with 183 business district mentions, continuing its unprecedented run of media coverage for the organization and neighborhood businesses and business districts. Additional successes are noted below.



## Celebrate the City

Venture Portland hosted Celebrate the City, its first fundraiser, in November. This special event featured exclusive business district auction packages and raised more than \$5,000 for participating business districts. Venture Portland also presented its inaugural 'City Awards' to individuals and organizations that have positively impacted neighborhood business districts.

## Website/Electronic Communications/Social Media

Venture Portland increased visits to [ventureportland.org](http://ventureportland.org) 212% over FY 2011-2012; new visitors to the site increased 24% over the same period. After analyzing social media trends, the organization increased Facebook and Twitter followers 87% over FY 2011-2012 with strategic recruitment and consistent and relevant posts highlighting business district events city wide. Venture Portland distributed seven issues of its newsletters and eight 'breaking news' alerts to more than 1,500 business district leaders and supporters, an 8% increase over FY 2011-2012) and sent an additional.



**“Venture Portland secured a 70% increase in holiday media stories with a 94% increase in business district mentions over 2011, helping cash registers ring during the critical retail season.”**

# PROMOTE AND MARKET BUSINESS DISTRICTS - CONTINUED

## Annual Marketing Campaigns

Venture Portland supported its 'Summer Local' and 'Localize the Season' campaigns with calendars featuring 87 business district events and 13 farmers markets, paid advertising and strategic partnerships. After an in-depth analysis of holiday retail media coverage, Venture Portland secured a 70% increase in holiday media stories over 2011 with a 94% increase in business district mentions for the same period. The inaugural 'I'm a Portland Entrepreneur' campaign in October and second annual 'Portland Celebrates Small' campaign in June in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Small Business Week. Both campaigns featured window signs for neighborhood businesses and strategic social media posts. Working closely with a designer, Venture Portland maintained design standards for campaign collateral to reinforce the organization's brand.

## Partnerships/External Affairs

Venture Portland strengthened relationships with 180 key stakeholders including BES, BPS, City Commissioners, Metro, Neighborhood Notes, ONI, PBOT, PDC, Portland Business Alliance, *Portland Business Journal*, *The Oregonian*, SBAC and Travel Portland to align and coordinate resources.

Venture Portland's Executive Team represented the organization on several business support and city-facilitated groups and consistently appeared before City Council and other legislative bodies. In partnership with PBA and SBAC, Venture Portland co-hosted two 'City Business' leadership events. Venture Portland worked closely with PDC to support neighborhood economic development activities and BPS to ensure neighborhood economic development and business districts were well represented in the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, Venture Portland represented neighborhood businesses and business districts during City Council's debate over the Sick Leave Ordinance and successfully advocated for full restoration of City funding for neighborhood business districts.

A green rectangular graphic with white text. The text reads: "PORTLAND Entrepreneurs help make Portland PORTLAND. LOCAL BUSINESSES create unique NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS and contribute to the livability of OUR CITY." Below the text is the website "ventureportland.org".

**PORTLAND**  
Entrepreneurs  
help make Portland  
**PORTLAND.**  
LOCAL BUSINESSES **create**  
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BUSINESS DISTRICTS  
and contribute to the livability  
of **OUR CITY.**  
ventureportland.org



**“From July 2012 to June 2013, Venture Portland awarded \$85,825 in grants to fund 32 projects in 23 business districts.”**

# FUND BUSINESS DISTRICT economic development

Venture Portland maintained its robust grantmaking portfolio with biannual Benchmark, annual Economic Development and as-needed Start-up Support grants. Representatives from 36 business districts, a 6% increase over FY 2011-2012, attended the Grant Certification Training which highlighted successful grant case studies from five districts. Staff provided 145 hours of technical assistance to business districts over 18 days of dedicated 'grants office hours', helping 28 business districts plan and draft grants, a 22% increase over FY 2011-2012. Business districts received 30 Benchmark grants in one of eight categories designated as components of a successful and self-sustaining business district and one Economic Development grant focused on job and business retention and creation and neighborhood business revenue growth. Staff discussed Start-up Support grants with eight emerging districts and awarded funds to Williams/Vancouver Business Association. Venture Portland staff attended 25 grant-funded events and maintained formal variance and evaluation processes to ensure appropriate stewardship of grant funds and increase transparent oversight of the organization's investments in business districts. In total, Venture Portland awarded \$85,825 to fund 32 projects in 23 business districts, leveraging an additional \$338,728 in private investment, a 4-to-1 match and a 6% increase over FY 2011-2012 and 146% increase over FY 2010-2011.

GRANTS LEVERAGED AN  
ADDITIONAL

\$338,728

IN PRIVATE INVESTMENT



THAT ADDS UP TO A

4-to-1  
match

**“Venture Portland’s dedicated leaders contributed 1,742.5 volunteer hours, a 39% increase over FY 2011-2012. These hours, equal to .84 FTE or 33.5 hours/week were in addition to their work in their own business and business district.”**

# STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY

After two years focused on infrastructure implementation, Venture Portland continued to refine its internal systems and used its successful operations as a best practice model for business districts. The organization is financially stable with a strong track record of successful program and brand implementation. As a result, significant positive results were achieved as noted below.

## Membership

For the fourth year in a row, Venture Portland set a membership record, ending the year with 37 members, a 19% increase over 2012 and a 61% increase over 2009. Based on individual district membership and revenue growth, 16% of Venture Portland's business district members increased a membership level (moving from small to medium or medium to large) contributing to a 25% increase in membership revenue over 2012 and 228% increase over 2009. Staff met with seven emerging districts and all six NPI projects – providing significant technical assistance on association structure and formation, membership building, events and identifying new business district leaders – bringing member prospects into the Venture Portland fold.

## Strategic Priorities

**Fund Business  
District Economic  
Development**

**Build Business  
District Capacity**

**Market and Promote  
Business Districts**

**Strengthen Venture  
Portland Capacity**

**“Venture Portland staff visited business districts 135 times, increasing understanding of each district’s unique character, issues, businesses and volunteers to better deliver services and share best practices.”**

# STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY – CONTINUED

## Governance

At the organization's 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Venture Portland's membership elected 34 delegates, bringing diverse business district leaders from across the city together on the largest Board in the organization's history. Of those elected, 37.5% were new to the Board, adding fresh perspectives to Venture Portland's leadership. Venture Portland maintained 100% Board participation on a Committee and the diversity of its Board increased significantly. Venture Portland's dedicated leaders came together for 40 meetings (more than 3 per month); contributing 1,742.5 volunteer hours, a 39% increase over last year, to build organizational and business district capacity and market and promote business districts. These volunteer hours, equal to .84 FTE or 33.5 hours/week were in addition to each Board member's work in their own business and business district. The Board amended its bylaws to formalize the role of the Marketing Committee and expand the size of the Executive Committee.

## Finances

Venture Portland successfully completed its third external financial review, objectively confirming that business district dues and the City's funds were well-managed and modeling GAAP best practices for business districts. After three years focused on improving Venture Portland's fiscal position, our financial foundation is strong. During the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Strategy Summit, Venture Portland's Board identified revenue generation strategies and opportunities for growth. And, Venture Portland reached its financial goal of a six-month operating reserve and generated more than \$32,000 in private revenue, a 149% increase over 2012 and a 200% increase over 2009.

## Personnel

Despite a vacancy at mid-year, Venture Portland's staff maintained full programming all year; restructured staffing will better meet the needs of the organization and business districts. Venture Portland continued to leverage staff's expertise with outside consultants. Staff took advantage of professional development training opportunities and gained valuable skills in nonprofit management, change management, grants administration, the changing media environment, legislative advocacy and supervision. Finally, staff visited business districts 135 times, a 34% increase over FY 11-12, increasing understanding of each district's unique character, issues and volunteers to better deliver services and share best practices.

## Office/Operations

Staff continued to streamline files, protecting the organization's archives and strengthening office record-keeping. Staff utilized 'year start' and 'year-end' in-service periods to thoroughly launch and analyze programs, laying the foundation for ongoing success. And, increases in operations efficiency allowed the organization to prioritize building business district capacity and expand external affairs.

**“Venture Portland begins FY 13-14 with a clear focus on neighborhood economic development.”**

# CONCLUSION

Venture Portland ended FY 2012-2013 a much stronger organization than when the year began. After four years of strategic change, Venture Portland's efforts to build organizational and business district capacity resulted in significant, sustained growth city wide. Critical partnerships with key stakeholders and a compelling message about the economic importance of neighborhood businesses resulted in increased recognition for the value of Venture Portland and neighborhood business districts to Portland's economy. And, diverse new leaders continued to guide Venture Portland successfully into the future.

The coming year will be one of refinement for Venture Portland. After the significant changes of the last four years, the organization is financially stable with a strong track record of success. Venture Portland begins FY 13-14 with a clear focus on neighborhood economic development and the infrastructure, programs and leadership to successfully continue growing business and connecting neighborhoods to ensure a healthy, prosperous and equitable city.

Venture Portland and neighborhood  
**business districts** work together to  
**grow** Portland's **economy**

## About Venture Portland

Venture Portland means business. Through grants, trainings and technical assistance the organization invests in the smart, strategic growth of Portland's unique neighborhood business districts. Together, Portland's neighborhood business districts contain 19,000 businesses and 250,000 jobs. Venture Portland's board leadership comes from the diverse business districts city wide that collectively represent local, regional, national, and international demand for goods and services. For more information visit [ventureportland.org](http://ventureportland.org).

# OUR MEMBERS

42nd Avenue Business Association

82nd Avenue of Roses Business Association

Alberta Main Street

Alberta Street Business Association

Beaumont Business Association

Belmont Area Business Association

Burnside East Business Association

Central Eastside Industrial Council

Columbia Corridor Association

Cully Boulevard Alliance

Division/Clinton Business Association

Division Midway Alliance

Foster Area Business Association

Gateway Area Business Association

Greater Brooklyn Business Association

Hawthorne Blvd. Business Association

Hayden Island Business Alliance

Hillsdale Main Street

Historic Mississippi Avenue Business Association

Hollywood Boosters Business Association

Kenton Business Association

Lloyd District Community Association

Midway Business Association

Montavilla/East Tabor Business Association

Multnomah Village Business Association

NE Broadway Business Association

North/Northeast Business Association

NW Industrial Neighborhood Association

Parkrose Business Association

Pearl District Business Association

Raleigh Hills Business Association

South Portland Business Association

St. Johns Main Street Coalition

Swan Island Business Association

University Park Business District

Williams-Vancouver Business Association

Woodstock Community Business Association