

# VENTURE PORTLAND BENCHMARK GRANT

## APPLICATION BEST PRACTICES

### Excerpt: NE Broadway Business Association – Self-sustaining Signature Event – Spring 2014

#### 1. Describe the project in detail:

- **Project title**
- **Activities**
- **Target audience**
- **Number of customers and/or businesses served (Please include number of businesses in the district and number of current business association members.)**

Answer every part of Question 1!

**Project Title: NE Broadway Summer Super Sale**

#### **Activities:**

*Our unique, three-day, July event combines an intimate sidewalk sale with street fair-type activities that have been highly successful at driving large increases in customer traffic and revenue for businesses. The sale runs Friday through Sunday and occurs both inside businesses and outside on the streets and sidewalks, as merchants offer their best deals of the year. On the activity side, there's a kickoff party on Friday night with live music and neighborhood food/beverage vendors; the block-long Furever Pets pet fair on Saturday and the Irvington Farmer's Market on Sunday.*

Set context with a project summary.

*Participants and sponsors pay fees to help fund the event. To promote the Summer Super Sale and the NE Broadway brand, NEBBA distributes 200 posters and 6000 door hangers to our primary target market consisting of the business district and six surrounding neighborhoods. Expanding outward, we also market ourselves to a middle ring of six other neighborhoods, as well as the greater Portland metro area. Print and online advertising, social media, press releases and lawn signs help increase awareness of the event. Our website serves as a hub for event listings and business specials, with all Sale-related materials and marketing directing viewers to the website.*

Unanswered questions kill apps. Don't leave em' wanting more!

#### **Target Audience:**

*The business district boundaries run along NE Broadway and Weidler Ave from MLK to 33rd Ave bordering six neighborhoods. The City of Portland estimates there are about 50,000 people and 21,000 households in the market area. These constitute our primary current and potential customers, with a secondary audience being those who live outside the area but regularly shop or drive through the district, or visit major attractions such as the Lloyd Center Mall, Convention Center, Rose Quarter and local hotels.*

Assume the reader knows nothing about your district!

#### **Number of Businesses Served:**

*There are approximately 300 businesses in the district, mostly very small to medium in size (1-20 employees), plus some larger businesses such as grocery stores. About 25% are classic retail storefronts; another 25-30% are health-care and wellness related, while restaurants and bars represent another 20%. Banking, finance and real estate are well-represented, and smaller service businesses are abundant. Membership in 2013 was 98 businesses, for a membership penetration of about 33%.*

What's in it for your members?

*The Summer Super Sale primarily serves our retailers, who depend on a revenue-focused event to help make it through the traditionally slower summer months. Secondary benefactors include service businesses and restaurants/bars that attract extra customers, plus other businesses throughout the district that gain from increased marketing exposure and purchasing power thanks to increased foot traffic during the event.*

## Excerpt: Williams Vancouver Business Association – Strong Membership – Fall 2013

### 2. How does this project achieve the chosen benchmark?

- How will you know if the project is successful?
- What quantifiable outcomes will you use to evaluate success? *Provide specific numbers.*
- If this is a first-time project, how will it identify a baseline and define a timeline to achieve benchmark status including benchmark achievement date? OR
- If this is not a first-time project, how will it use prior year experience to guide current goals for success and define a timeline to achieve benchmark status including benchmark achievement date? How will you demonstrate gains and/or progress over prior years?

Answer every part of Question 2!

*Producing and distributing a walking map of our district will achieve the Strong Membership benchmark by being an engaging advertising and marketing tool that only Williams Vancouver Business Association members can be a part of. By requiring membership from businesses to be included on the map, we will no doubt significantly increase the number of participating businesses because it will be producing a significant benefit for our members. The timing is perfect as we will be able to hand them a piece of professional collateral as the dust settles around all the construction in our district.*

*We would know if the project is successful if we are able to increase membership by 50% by the time of printing. Currently at 50 members, we would project that our map would increase that number to 75 during our membership drive in January 2015 and 100 by January 2016. Another quantifiable outcome would be placing a display of our maps in the top 5 hotels in Portland, the Travel Portland Visitor Information Booth and at least 25% of the 120 storefronts in the district. This would lead to our most desirable outcome of 90% occupancy in district storefronts and better than 18% growth by January 2016, which was the average growth in the last 3 months according to the University of Oregon's Index of Economic Indicators released September 2013.*

*Success would also be marked by sponsorship from at least 2 businesses of over \$1000 with a final goal of \$15,000 in sponsorship proceeds by 2015.*

Get more info in the Benchmark Definitions.

Be specific - numbers, numbers, numbers!

Well thought out projects use multiple measures of success.

## Excerpt: Multnomah Village Business Association – Self-sustaining Signature Event – Fall 2013

### 3. What are the ultimate goals of this project?

- How does this project meet Venture Portland's strategic objectives to build capacity and/or market and promote the business district?

#### Goals:

1. Continue to increase awareness of the local shopping and dining experiences available in Multnomah Village.
2. Continue to expand return visits and dollars spent at our local establishments. 2012 had \$1.25 Million program associated first sales and \$240,000 directly attributed 2nd sales.
3. Create a self-sustaining program associated with the Holidays that endears our customers and delights our business owners. We closed the gap substantially and reduced costs and fully expect the program to be self-sustaining after this year.

Be  
audacious  
and think  
BIG!

#### Venture Portland's Strategic Objectives:

1. Because of the programs success we have been able to add memberships to the business association and more importantly increase volunteer hours supporting our community events.
2. The program is the quintessential marketing and promotion tool for Multnomah Village. It puts our identities and our businesses in most of the street facing store-fronts and gets distributed to our customers driving the always important return business. In total: 2 ad buys, 50 window signs, 50 checkout signs and approximately 32,000 tickets in distribution got the message out.

Put the district in the  
spotlight by  
promoting the event  
in different ways.

How does  
the  
Business  
Association  
benefit?

## Excerpt: Alberta Main Street – District Identity/Place Making – Fall 2013

### 4. When will the project start/finish and where will it occur?

- Provide a detailed timeline of the project including planning, implementation, final accounting and evaluation.

*The Alberta Main Street's Promotions Committee has already started planning the project. Project activities begin Saturday, December 7, 2013 and conclude Sunday, December 22, 2013.*

<b>TIMELINE: 'TIS THE SEASON OF ALBERTA</b>		
<b>CREATE BUDGET</b>		
10/15/13	Expenses	Advertising, Printing, Christmas Tree, Decorations
10/15/13	Income	Sponsorship, Participation Fee, Venture Portland Grant
<b>BUSINESS OUTREACH</b>		
10/1/11	Holiday Tree. Secure host property owner permission	
10/15/13	Develop recruitment flyer content & design	
10/15/13	Distribute business participation sign up	
<b>PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT</b>		
11/1/13	Write press releases for monthly papers	
11/1/13	Design materials/advertising (include VP logo pending notification)	
11/15/13	Print & distribute posters	
11/15/13	Launch online media campaign	
11/15/13	Distribute Press Release #1	
12/1/13	Distribute Press Release #2	
<b>PROJECT PLANNING: Tree Lighting (December 7, 2013)</b>		
10/1/13	Invite Mayor Hales to Tree Lighting Ceremony	
11/1/13	Confirm Santa and others (carolers, etc.) participation	
12/2/13	Install and decorate Christmas Tree	
12/2/13	Secure treats and drinks for Tree Lighting event	
ongoing	Identify volunteer needs & recruit (photographers, event activities, etc.)	
<b>PROJECT PLANNING: Festival of the Gnomes (December 14 &amp; 15, 2013)</b>		
11/22/13	Paint Gnomes at Mimosa Studios	
11/22/13	Create Gnome stamp/sticker card	
11/29/13	Identify/Secure "Grand Prize"	
12/6/13	Distribute Gnomes to participating businesses	
12/15/13	Collect cards & identify winner	
<b>PROJECT PLANNING: Sugar Plum Sweets (December 21 &amp; 22, 2013)</b>		
12/6/13	Create takeaway card to give to customers about the event	
ongoing	Highlight participating businesses	
<b>EVENT EVALUATION</b>		
12/13/13	Review tree lighting attendance tracking	
1/3/14	Distribute survey to participating businesses and attendees for review at the February Promotions meeting	
2/5/14	Evaluate project (at February Promotions Committee meeting)	

A table makes a complicated timeline easy to follow and understand.

Don't forget to take time to evaluate your success!

## Excerpt: Pearl District Business Association – Collateral/Map/Newsletter – Spring 2014

5. How will Venture Portland's grant funds/sponsorship be recognized? Please note that all materials recognizing Venture Portland must be approved prior to production.

Venture Portland's logo will be on the map as a sponsor. We will also recognize Venture Portland's contribution verbally at our member meeting and through the PDBA website/member newsletter. We will also credit Venture Portland for the assistance in the press release of the map for the local media. Finally, we will credit Venture Portland's assistance in our magazine, *Explore the Pearl*.

Don't forget to get the 'OK' from Venture Portland staff!

## Excerpt: Multnomah Village Business Association – Self-sustaining Signature Event – Fall 2013

6. Describe how the district's current programs and assets help leverage the work of the project.

- How will you leverage additional community resources for this project?
- How will you collaborate with partners?

Answer every part of Question 6!

While the Golden Ticket program starts more than 2 weeks prior to our signature Holiday Gala, it starts setting the tone for the shopping season. The Holiday Gala is the major kick-off for the Village and is more than noted in the exponential growth in ticket distribution and redemption.

### Current Programs & Assets

We leverage our First Friday events by hosting the Holiday Gala as our signature kick-off to the Holiday shopping season. We provide horse drawn carriage rides, hot chocolate, carolers and a tree lighting ceremony.

Residents and member businesses help with the decoration installation and entertainment for the Village during this time. While not directly related to the shop local program it does add to the ambience for the Holiday's keeping people in the spirit of the Holiday season and keeping them local.

What else is going on? How does it benefit this project?

### Leveraged community resources

This program is a partnership between Multnomah Village and Hillsdale and has been from inception. Our two business associations are closely tied together and complement each others offerings with little cross-over.

Work together! You probably have everything you need right in your district.

In keeping with the Holiday spirit we also use this as a fundraising opportunity for three of our local charities: Neighborhood House, Multnomah Village Bloc's Initiative and Hillsdale Main Street. Neighborhood House provides a large chunk of our volunteer services to our combined many hosted events. This is a thank you to them for their efforts during the year. Multnomah Village Bloc's initiative along with Hillsdale Main Street's program runs the shop local program and works on safety and accessibility issues within the Business Districts boundaries. While not the most productive in generating funds yet, the opportunity is there and growing year over year.

Engage businesses, residents, community and government partners for maximum impact!

### Collaboration with Partners

All participating businesses are partners. They direct their customers to other stores and restaurants that are participating in the program. The premise of the program is to drive multiple purchases within the business district keeping more purchasing dollars local.

## Excerpt: Division/Clinton – Strong Membership – Spring 2013

### 7. How many volunteers will work on the project? Provide detail on number of volunteers, hours contributed and type of work.

*Between project planning, implementation and evaluation, we estimate that 20 different volunteers will donate 177 total hours to the project.*

Start with a short and sweet summary...

...and then break down who did what and for how long.

The clock keeps ticking even after the event ends!

Volunteers	Hours	Time	Task
10	1	10	Initial planning
1	12	12	Write and edit grant
3	4	12	Creating survey and outlining subjects for discussion
3	1	3	Select session facilitator/survey system
3	1	3	Plan and schedule 3 business sessions
6	2	12	Invite businesses to sessions
10	3	30	10 businesses attend each session
6	2	12	Attend sessions – take notes
5	2	10	Survey during street fair
3	10	30	Coordinating results and writing reports
10	1	10	Presentation of session results
10	1	10	Presentation of survey results
10	2	20	Board decision on next steps
1	3	3	Project evaluation
<b>81 volunteers (20 individual) and 177 total hours</b>			

Make it easy! Don't forget the totals!

## Excerpt: Parkrose Business Association – Strong Membership – Fall 2013

### 8. Is the entire business district and its leadership invested in the project? • How will the project succeed in the event of the loss of the grant coordinator or change in leadership?

Always have a backup plan!

*The Business Association's board created the idea for the project and the Executive Committee has reviewed and approved the grant application. They are completely committed to its success and the Board President, who is continuing in office, has been a champion of the project since its inception.*

*Our members are also in support of the project. In a recent survey of our membership, 80% of responses said they thought the project would be beneficial for the district.*

*In the event of the loss of the Grant Coordinator or change in leadership, the Business Association Board will continue to carry out and finish the project. At the present time, both the Treasurer and Vice President serve on the Grant Committee.*

Earn their confidence! A project with support is more competitive.

## Excerpt: Beaumont Business Association – Web/Social Media Presence – Spring 2014

9. Describe the business district's track record of success to demonstrate ability to effectively implement this project. If applicable, list other benchmark achievements and use as examples of experience, ability, lessons learned and success.

Question 9 is the bragging question!

*Although the Beaumont Business Association was challenged due to leadership changes in 2013, the district overcame that challenge and accomplished a great deal last year. Early in the year the BBA board worked with its membership to define those qualities that make the business district unique. A tag line – “Charming, Friendly, Convenient – Your Village on Fremont,” – was developed for use in our branding/marketing efforts.*

*Through the hard work of our volunteer board members, the BBA applied for and received a Venture Portland grant for the design, production and distribution of a Neighborhood Business Guide. This project required the BBA to rally volunteers to reach out to every district business. The guide exceeded our expectations, and the feedback we have received has been tremendous.*

Highlight challenges the district has overcome.

Money well spent! Talk about success with previous grants.

*In 2013 we also invested time defining our annual events. We now have three annual events: Fremont Fest – our signature event – as well as Hip Hop Into the Shop and Fremont Holiday Fest.*

*Fremont Fest, with 150 vendors and attendance between 13,000 and 17,000, is heading into its 30th year. Volunteer coordination and community support and participation are critical for the success of this large-scale event. Additionally, many businesses have also participated in Feast on Fremont, an auction package put together for the annual Venture Portland Auction. Every dollar raised for that package goes directly back into our business district.*

Impress them with statistics and positive feedback.

*Most recently (the last few months) the BBA has put energy into kicking up its social media effort, adding links and promoting district businesses through the BBA Facebook page. Those efforts have resulted in a 30% increase in the number of BBA Facebook page followers. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and with an enhanced Web site we expect even greater results.*

There is no such thing as bragging too much!

*In short, the BBA has the experience and capacity for a successful project outcome. It is well-positioned at this time to garner volunteer support and gain membership input and feedback, and manage the work of the Web designer/developer to insure an enhanced Web site meets the needs of district members, and effectively ties all BBA branding and marketing to work together for positive results.*

# STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

**Venture Portland strongly recommends taking advantage of Grants Office Hours and Final Draft Review!** Staff are available for appointments and drop-ins at Venture Portland's office during the grant cycle to assess business district readiness and to provide support and assistance during the early stages of your grant application. Applicants are encouraged to write grants during office hours using one of the workstations at Venture Portland's computer bar. Staff are available the week grants are due to review final drafts.

To schedule an appointment contact Jacob at 503.477.9648 or [jacob@ventureportland.org](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org)

More resources available online at [ventureportland.org/grants](http://ventureportland.org/grants)

