Dear Friends,

V Venture Portland began the year with strong leadership, including energized members, a stable Executive Team and aggressive work plan focused on building business district capacity, promotion and infrastructure excellence that resulted in major successes for Portland’s neighborhood business districts. The following report outlines Venture Portland’s FY 2015-2016 accomplishments.

In its 30th year, Venture Portland’s efforts to build organizational and business district capacity resulted in significant, sustained growth. Critical partnerships with key stakeholders and a compelling message about the economic importance of neighborhood businesses resulted in increased recognition of the value of Venture Portland and neighborhood business districts to Portland’s economy. Diverse new leaders guided Venture Portland successfully into the future.

The coming year will be another one of growth for Venture Portland. After six years of significant change, the organization is financially stable with a strong track record of success. Venture Portland begins FY 16-17 with a clear focus on neighborhood economic development and the programs, leadership and infrastructure to successfully continue its partnership with the City of Portland.

Michelle Wood

Venture Portland President
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2015-2016

2,438 hours of individualized technical assistance (23% increase)
487 requests (16% increase)

633 business district leaders from 46 districts attended capacity building programs (42% increase)

583 social media posts highlighting 66 district events and 814 businesses

64% membership and 358% revenue increase in business districts city wide

1,534 volunteer hours contributed by Venture Portland’s Board

$94,120* awarded to 22 districts for 31 projects leveraging $360,523

*largest total awards in grants program history!

182 staff visits to business districts (33% increase)

52 Capacity Building Events

100 large scale business district events attracted more than 1 million visitors

Celebrating 30 Years
SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

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. 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 12/31/15, membership increased 64% and revenue increased 358% across business districts city wide.

Training and Technical Assistance
Venture Portland increased participation in its training and technical assistance program 19% over FY 14-15 with 633 business district leaders (42% increase) attending one of 52 capacity building trainings and interest group events (63% increase) that covered everything from the legal responsibilities of nonprofit officers to business district identity and shopper psychology. The organization continued its successful ‘mini-series’ training format with 2-part ‘Hottest Ticket in Town’ and ‘Members! Members! Members!’ series and added district-requested trainings on Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and trash management in the public right-of-way. New ‘In-District’ trainings provided district-specific content and reached almost 27% of total capacity building attendees.

“633 unique individuals from 46 business districts participated in 52 capacity building events (42% increase).”

“This meeting was fun and engaging! I feel like I gained confidence” – Hail to the Chief Training

“So much to put into use in my business” – Hottest Ticket in Town Training
SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Training and Technical Assistance Continued
Last year’s resource transition to technical assistance continued to pay off as staff addressed 487 individual requests from business districts city wide (16% increase over FY 14-15 and a 52% increase over 24 months) and district leaders’ participation continued to shift from broad-based classroom training to personalized assistance. Venture Portland incentivized district infrastructure improvements this year, leading to a 100% increase in governance TA requests. Staff helped 26 districts (84% members) strengthen governance and add critical infrastructure including assessing and revising bylaws (20 districts; 150% increase), assessing Annual Check-ups (13 districts; 225% increase) and corporate documents (10 districts; 230% increase). Districts also continued to increase their focus on member service and economic development, with 50 more requests for technical assistance in these areas. Due to the complexity of these topics, addressing economic development requests is three times more time intensive than governance or grants assistance. In addition, participation in Venture Portland’s Interest Groups continued to increase, reinforcing district’s desire for sustained, high-touch assistance over time.

Provided 2,438 hours of training and technical assistance to 1,881 business district leaders (23% increase).

Owner, Beanstalk Children’s Resale, Montavilla/East Tabor Business District

Staff provided significant strategic support to 23 districts (74% members), helping associations successfully navigate major transitions and implement significant new member-serving programs. Venture Portland continued start-up support for six districts and helped two additional districts assess formation readiness. In total, Venture Portland provided 2,438.15 hours of training and technical assistance to business district leaders from emerging and established districts, a 23% increase over FY 14-15.

Venture Portland Board Members and Staff, Council Chambers, City Hall
SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Best Practices
Recognizing the wealth of expertise in Portland’s neighborhood business districts, Venture Portland continued business district sharing by featuring business district leaders and case studies at trainings. Venture Portland facilitated 33 ‘mentoring connections’, linking leaders from business districts city wide to discuss best practices around district formation, IRS exemption, grants, events, insurance, banners, membership, personnel, branding and websites. Venture Portland brought together leaders from the city’s industrial districts to discuss shared issues and future collaboration and continued refining ‘interest groups’ for business district designers, Presidents and staffers to increase collective leadership skills and connect colleagues across districts. These updated groups saw a 50% increase in participation.

Addressed 487 district-specific requests from business districts city wide (16% increase).

The organization hosted Focus Groups to assess core traits of effective leaders and the unique needs of dual Business/Neighborhood Associations. Finally, Venture Portland assessed training attendee confidence/knowledge: 78% attendees stated increased confidence in all training topics; 88% increased confidence in legal role and governance requirements; 87% in managing membership campaigns; 84% in grant planning/writing/evaluation and 83% taking advantage of the sharing economy.
PROMOTE AND MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Venture Portland continued its run of positive media coverage for the organization and neighborhood business districts. To increase Portlanders’ understanding of the value of business districts to the city’s economy, Venture Portland strengthened partnerships with key opinion leaders and stakeholders. As a result, the organization facilitated 38 media interviews (33 for business district leaders; 27% increase over FY 14-15) and secured 85 positive media stories (93% increase) with 146 business district mentions (80% increase).

30th Anniversary
Venture Portland turned 30 on 1/31/16 and launched a year-long celebration of the organization’s diamond anniversary. In partnership with Commissioner Fish, the organization presented 30 years of success supporting neighborhood business districts to City Council which proclaimed 2/4/16 ‘Venture Portland Day’. The proclamation, and 30th anniversary party, kicked off an 11-week ‘Selfie Challenge’ encouraging Portlanders to post selfies at their favorite neighborhood businesses. To support the campaign, we created four innovative (and viral) ‘How to Selfie’ videos. In total, Venture Portland received 204 selfies from 38 districts and awarded 28 prizes to business owners/customers. Finally, the organization honored all of its previous volunteers and presented ‘Hail to the Chief’ awards to Past Presidents at our 30th anniversary Annual Meeting.
PROMOTE AND MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Annual Marketing Campaigns
Venture Portland supported five annual marketing campaigns: ‘Summer Local’, ‘Fall Into Local’, ‘Localize the Season/#PledgeLocalPDX’, #pdxLOVESsmallbiz and ‘Portland Celebrates Small’ with calendars featuring 116 business district events (15 first-time events), earned media, strategic partnerships and new collateral. The organization launched a #NeighborhoodLove partnership with Uber providing free rides into four business districts over three months, setting international records for participation. Our ongoing relationship with Little Boxes generated 22,500 store visits (23% increase) and $437,000 in holiday retail sales (35% increase) over Black Friday and Small Business Saturday. Additionally, we connected elected officials to neighborhood businesses through six district tours during seasonal events and activities.

Published **583** social media posts promoting **66** district events and **814** businesses (**360%** increase).

Website/Electronic Communications/Social Media
Venture Portland maintained its online calendar featuring more than 1,200 business district events and meetings (50% increase over FY 14-15), rebuilt the interactive business district map after updating boundaries for 27 districts and added responsive functionality and significant new content to ventureportland.org resulting in a 27% increase in site visits. After analyzing social media trends, the organization increased Facebook and Twitter followers 41% and Facebook reach 93% with increased channels, strategic campaigns, consistent posts highlighting business district events city wide (**77%** original content; 40% increase) and a series of educational (and humorous) videos. Venture Portland distributed 17 issues of its newsletters, including three district profiles, to more than 3,000 business district leaders and supporters (**26%** increase over FY 14-15).

**Featured 1,200** business district activities (**50%** increase).
PROMOTE AND MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Brand
Venture Portland continued its sought-after ‘Distinguished Districts’ training series focused on destination marketing and helped 18 districts (58% members) plan and implement district identity projects. Working with a pro-bono designer, Venture Portland maintained design standards for campaign collateral to reinforce its brand and implemented a 30th anniversary logo in recognition of the organization’s exceptional history. Finally, the organization continued to trademark its intellectual property, adding proprietary capacity building tools to its protected portfolio.

Partnerships/External Affairs/Special Events
Venture Portland hosted a 30th anniversary party, ‘Celebrate Our City’, highlighting neighborhood businesses, business districts and the organization’s diamond anniversary. The organization produced ‘Then and Now’ boards highlighting district history by quadrant and ‘Local’ lapel pins as party favors. Venture Portland strengthened relationships with key stakeholders including Airbnb, City Bureaus, City Council, Craft3, EcoDistrict Incubator, Elders in Action, First Stop Portland, Metro Council, Multnomah County Commission, Neighborhood Notes, Oregon Solutions, Port of Portland, Portland Business Alliance, Portland Development Commission, Portland Underground Graduate School, SBA, SBDC, Travel Oregon, Travel Portland, TriMet, US Congressional Delegation and Uber to align and coordinate resources. Venture Portland’s Executive Team continued to represent the organization on several business support and city-facilitated groups and consistently appeared before City Council and other legislative bodies, including receiving a 30th anniversary proclamation supporting ‘Venture Portland Day’. Venture Portland worked closely with PDC to support neighborhood economic development activities, BPS to ensure neighborhood economic development and business districts were well represented in the Comprehensive Plan and PBOT to streamline the street closure permit process and secure business district feedback on the transportation system plan. In partnership with City Commissioners, staff helped neighborhood businesses and business districts mitigate the effect of Bureau construction and permit costs, understand the proposed Business License Tax increase and prepare to implement ‘Removing Barriers to Employment’.

Celebrate Our City, Melody Ballroom, Central Eastside Industrial District
IMPLEMENT BI-ANNUAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Venture Portland continued its robust grantmaking portfolio with biannual Benchmark, annual Economic Development and as-needed Start-up Support grants; using privately raised funds, the organization also helped districts take advantage of the World Indoor Track and Field Championships with one-time Catalytic grants. Representatives from 33 business districts attended the Grant Certification Training where they received district-specific benchmark progress reports. Staff provided 325.5 hours of technical assistance to business districts over 15 days of dedicated ‘Grants Office Hours’, helping 25 business districts plan and execute grants. Seven districts (30% of applicants) used a first-time grant writer and four districts (18% of funded applicants) were funded for the first time since 2011. Business districts received 22 Benchmark grants in one of seven categories designated as components of a successful and self-sustaining business district, one Economic Development grant focused on job and business retention/creation and neighborhood business revenue growth, two Catalytic Track and Field grants and six Pilot Project grants. Staff also discussed Start-up Support grants with three emerging districts. In total, Venture Portland awarded $94,120 (single largest award sum since program launch in 1995) to fund 31 projects in 22 business districts, leveraging an additional $360,523 in private investment (39% increase), an almost 4-to-1 match. Venture Portland maintained formal variance and evaluation processes, including attending 95 grant-funded meetings and events, to ensure appropriate stewardship of grant funds and increase transparent Grants Committee oversight across grant cycles.

Beaumont Dash to Doughnuts, Grant Funded

Jade Night Market, Grant Funded
STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY

After five years of infrastructure improvement, Venture Portland continued to refine its internal systems and used its successful operations as best practice models for business districts. The organization is financially stable with a strong track record of successful program and brand implementation. In addition, the launch of the Pilot Project provided critical resources that enabled the organization to invest in additional staffing and development of new resources, tools and templates. As a result, significant positive results were achieved.

City Council Liaison
Venture Portland continued its strong relationship with Commissioner Fish and his team. Commissioner Fish spoke at Venture Portland’s 30th anniversary party and Annual Meeting. He co-hosted several crime prevention and business support meetings (Central Eastside), was the featured speaker at ‘Business for Happy Hour’ (Midway, 5/11) and toured Kenton, Montavilla, NE Broadway and West End business districts. The Commissioner’s office once again facilitated a meeting for Venture Portland with all Street Fair Permitting Bureaus to ensure neighborhood business districts were represented in City planning and support districts’ large summer events. Commissioner Fish proclaimed ‘Venture Portland Day’ in recognition of the organization’s 30th anniversary.

Membership
Venture Portland ended the year with 31 members (92% retention rate), including 1 new member. Based on individual district membership and revenue growth, 13% of Venture Portland’s business district members increased a membership level contributing to an 8% revenue increase over 2015. Staff worked with six emerging districts – providing significant technical assistance on association structure and formation, membership, revenue generation and budgeting, events and leadership development – bringing member prospects into Venture Portland. And, Venture Portland continued its ‘Affiliates’ Program, including like-minded business support entities in the organization.

Facilitated permit requests for 24 district events including first-ever Montavilla Street Fair street closure.

Commissioner Fish (left), Salvage Works, Kenton Business District
Strengthen Venture Portland Capacity

Governance
At the organization’s 30th Annual Meeting Venture Portland’s membership elected 26 delegates, bringing together diverse business district leaders from across the city. Of those elected, 17% were new to the Board, adding fresh perspectives to Venture Portland’s leadership while maintaining leadership stability. In May, the Board elected a new President, VP and Secretary, increasing the diversity of the Executive Committee (geographic, racial and business type). Venture Portland’s dedicated leaders came together for 38 meetings (more than 3 per month); contributing 1,534 volunteer hours to build organizational and business district capacity and market and promote business districts. These volunteer hours, equal to .74 FTE or 30 hours/week were in addition to each Board member’s work in their own business and business district. Results of the organization’s second annual Board survey show Board members contribute an additional 289 volunteer hours/year (almost six times the US average) to 76 other organizations. For the fifth year, 100% of Board members served on a Committee and signed Anti-Harassment, Confidentiality/Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower policies and the organization completed its annual governance audit or ‘Check-up’, ensuring infrastructure excellence and modeling governance best practices for neighborhood business districts.

Board members contributed 1,534 volunteer hours equal to 30 hours/week.

Finances
Venture Portland successfully completed its sixth 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 six years focused on improving Venture Portland’s fiscal position, the organization’s financial foundation is strong. Venture Portland maintained its six-month operating reserve, a non-profit best practice, and generated $39,000 in private revenue. This revenue, combined with business district grant award matching funds, brings Venture Portland’s total contract leverage to $450,000, a more than 1-to-1 match.
**STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY**

**Personnel**
Despite a vacancy, Venture Portland’s staff maintained full programming all year. The vacancy, and the Pilot Project, added personnel and provided an opportunity to restructure staffing to better meet the evolving needs of neighborhood business districts. Staff took advantage of professional development opportunities and gained valuable skills in nonprofit, business district and financial management, grants administration, message/brand development, change management, video production, graphic design and legislative advocacy, and each employee received an annual performance review. Venture Portland continued to leverage staff’s expertise with outside consultants. Finally, staff visited business districts 182 times (33% increase), attending 74 events and 108 meetings (including 95 that were grant funded), increasing understanding of each district’s unique character, issues and volunteers to better deliver services and share best practices.

**Office/Operations**
Venture Portland launched new member benefits including secure mail delivery service and low-cost equipment rental. The organization also made its space available to business districts, City partners and other stakeholders, hosting 18 no-cost meetings. Using the Board-approved Document Retention and Destruction policy, 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. Continued increases in operations efficiency allowed the organization to prioritize building business district capacity and expand external affairs and promotional efforts.

**Staff visited business districts 182 times (33% increase), including attending 95 grant funded events and meetings.**
EAST PORTLAND PILOT PROJECT: YEAR 1

Results:

• **117** NEW Members; **231** Current Members (**51%** new)
• **22** NEW Board Members (**58%** increase)
• **$73,627** NEW Revenue (**80%** increase)
• **62** EVENTS Attracted **3,000+** Attendees
• **6** NEW Websites
• **3** NEW Presidents

*Business District Organizers, East Portland Pilot Project*
PILOT PROJECT: 82ND AVENUE OF ROSES

- **NEW** ‘Around the World in 82 Dishes’ event with **45** participating businesses
- **Increased** membership 32%
- **Added** 5 new board members

82nd Avenue of Roses District Organizer

82nd Avenue of Roses Board Members
PILOT PROJECT: FOSTER AREA

- **NEW** Tree Lighting with **200** attendees
- **NEW** ‘Tasting Tour’ generated **$2,000** in business revenue in 4 hours
- **Increased** membership **171%**
- **Added** 4 new board members

*Business Owner Photos, Fosterarea.com*
PILOT PROJECT: GATEWAY AREA

• NEW ‘Gateway Celebrates Small’ Passport generated 143 purchases and $3,600
• NEW ‘Taking Care of Business’ district clean-up
• Increased membership 10%
• Added 2 new board members
PILOT PROJECT: MIDWAY

• **NEW** website: ‘Targeted Node’ strategy uncovered district digital divide
• **NEW** ‘Midway Money Book’ with coupons from **15** district businesses
• **Increased** membership **95%**
• **Added 5** new board members
PILOT PROJECT: MONTAVILLA/EAST TABOR

• **NEW** district brand and website with business owner photos
• **Generated $26,000** in business district association revenue
• **Increased** membership **64%**
• **Added 5** new board members

*Business Owners, The Green Seed*
PILOT PROJECT: PARKROSE

- **NEW** ‘Trunk or Treat’ with **700** attendees
- **NEW** ‘Merry & Bright: Parkrose for the Holidays’ partnership with The Grotto reached **55,000** customers
- **Increased** membership **10%**
- **Added** 1 new board member

*Trunk or Treat*
1986-2016

What a Long, Successful Trip It's Been...

665 Board and Committee Meetings

8,793 Hours of Training and Technical Assistance

15,177 Volunteer Hours

$1.24 Million Grant Awards Leveraged

$4.20 Million, a 3.3-to-1 match
Once again, Venture Portland ended the year a much stronger organization than when it began. In its 30th year, Venture Portland’s efforts to build organizational and business district capacity resulted in significant, sustained growth. Critical partnerships with key stakeholders and a compelling message about the economic importance of neighborhood businesses resulted in increased recognition of the value of Venture Portland and neighborhood business districts to Portland’s economy. Diverse new leaders guided Venture Portland successfully into the future.

The coming year will be another one of growth for Venture Portland. After six years of significant change, the organization is financially stable with a strong track record of success. Venture Portland begins FY 16-17 with a clear focus on neighborhood economic development and the programs, leadership and infrastructure to successfully continue its partnership with the City of Portland.

Venture Portland and neighborhood business districts worked together to grow Portland’s economy
The business of Portland is about more than business.
It’s about people, neighborhoods and culture. It’s about finding the right space. Raising capital. Creating jobs. And being flexible. It’s about passion. And dedication. And starting something because you believe your idea is THE IDEA.

It’s about a vision for our city.
One that business owners, residents and government officials share. A vision that celebrates the individualism and distinct flavor that makes Portland Portland. The knowledge that our diverse neighborhoods and unique views make up the very fabric that binds our city together.

The business of Portland is about a lot more than just business.
It’s about building capacity to build the city. Growing the economy to grow prosperity. And connecting capital, creativity and community.

It’s about growing business and connecting neighborhoods.
Like the pioneers who forged the Oregon Trail, Portlanders explore – we seek new experiences and find the next big thing. We innovate. Incubate. And get involved. With an eye to the future we leverage seed money into success, and make more out of the neighborhood business districts we call home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>82nd Avenue of Roses Business Association</th>
<th>Historic Mississippi Ave Business Association</th>
<th>North/Northeast Business Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont Business Association</td>
<td>Historic Parkrose</td>
<td>NW Industrial Neighborhood Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belmont Area Business Association</td>
<td>Jade District</td>
<td>Old Town/Chinatown Community Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Eastside Industrial Council</td>
<td>Kenton Business Association</td>
<td>Parkrose Business Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division/Clinton Business Association</td>
<td>Lloyd District Community Association</td>
<td>Pearl District Business Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Midway Alliance</td>
<td>Midway Business Association</td>
<td>Stadium District Business Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Area Business Association</td>
<td>Montavilla/East Tabor Business Association</td>
<td>St. Johns Boosters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway Area Business Association</td>
<td>Multnomah Village Business Association</td>
<td>Swan Island Business Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Brooklyn Business Association</td>
<td>NE Broadway Business Association</td>
<td>Williams Vancouver Business Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorne Blvd. Business Association</td>
<td>Nob Hill Business Association</td>
<td>Woodstock Community Business Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About Venture Portland

Venture Portland means business. Through grants, training 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 19,200 businesses and provide 267,000 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.