A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Venture Portland started 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 2018-2019 accomplishments.

In its 33rd year, Venture Portland’s efforts to build organizational and business district capacity resulted in new leaders and 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.

The coming year will be another one of growth for Venture Portland. After nine years of significant change, the organization is financially stable with a strong track record of success. Venture Portland begins FY 19-20 with a clear focus on neighborhood economic development and the programs, leadership and infrastructure to successfully continue its partnership with the City of Portland.

Matthew Mičetić

Venture Portland President

Commissioner Nick Fish and Matthew Mičetić
Executive Summary 2018-2019

- 3,198 hours of technical assistance
- 1,060 volunteer hours contributed by Venture Portland’s Board
- 620 requests
- $117,168* awarded to 16 districts for 29 projects leveraging $401,149
  *largest total awards in grants program history!
- 593 business district leaders from 30 districts attended capacity building programs
- 275 staff visits to business districts (36% increase)
- 475 social media posts highlighting
- 61 Capacity Building Events
- 64 district events & 863 businesses
- 100 large scale business district events attracted more than 1 million visitors
- 150 positive media stories (25% increase)
- 193 business district mentions (18% increase)
SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Working with our partners to align and coordinate resources, Venture Portland implemented a year-long series of capacity building programs providing significant training and technical assistance to business district leaders. Representatives from 30 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, Venture Portland strengthened business districts.

**Training and Technical Assistance**
Venture Portland increased participation in its training and technical assistance (TA) program with 593 business district leaders attending one of 61 capacity building trainings and interest group events (10% increase) that covered everything from the legal responsibilities of nonprofit officers to shopper psychology, sidewalk activation and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) best practices. We hosted 9 public trainings (90-minute introductions to Benchmark topics) and 9 'In-District' trainings which reached 21% (75% increase) of total capacity building attendees. After five straight years of absorbing double-digit increases in technical assistance requests, primarily by increasing staff efficiency through creation of recurring topic tools, Venture Portland addressed 620 individual requests from business districts city wide. Requests were significantly more complicated in FY 18-19 than previous years, with a nearly 500% increase in staff time required for nearly 1/3 of all responses.

“Your input and counsel is wonderful and will be very helpful with expanding our membership”

“In-district Training, Midway Business District”

“Great to hear stories about different small business experiences”
Training and Technical Assistance Continued
Technical assistance instances increased 20% per participant, signaling deeper engagement by fewer leaders. District leaders’ participation continued to shift from general classroom training (29% decrease) to personalized assistance (21% increase) including significant utilization of expanded Fee-for-Service Consulting. Staff provided significant strategic support to 20 districts (75% members), helping associations successfully navigate major transitions and implement significant new member-serving programs. Districts also continued to increase their focus on member service/economic development with a 19% increase in requests for event assistance. District identity remained the most requested support with 94 requests for technical assistance. And, participation in Venture Portland’s Interest Groups was stable, reinforcing district’s desire for sustained, high-touch assistance over time. In total, Venture Portland provided 3,197.75 hours of training and technical assistance to business district leaders from emerging and established districts.

Provided **3,197.75** hours of training and technical assistance to **593** business district leaders.
Best Practices
Recognizing the wealth of expertise in Portland’s neighborhood business districts, Venture Portland continued business district sharing by featuring district leaders and case studies at training and interest group gatherings for Presidents, Treasurers and Staffers. We added 13 new tools on ‘recurring topics’ to our catalog and continued to facilitate ‘mentoring connections’ that linked leaders from business districts city wide. Finally, Venture Portland assessed training attendee confidence/knowledge: 81% attendees stated increased confidence in all training topics.

Addressed 620 district-specific requests from business districts city wide.

Commissioner Fish at Queen Bee, Williams District

Distributed 625 samples and tools to 63% of members.

Mayor Wheeler tours Alberta
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 and implemented six annual marketing campaigns: ‘Summer Local’, ‘Fall Into Local’, ‘Localize the Season/#PledgeLocalPDX’, #pdxLOVESsmallbiz and ‘Portland Celebrates Small’ with calendars featuring 91 business district events (5% increase), earned media, strategic partnerships and new collateral. It worked – the organization secured 150 positive media stories (25% increase) with 193 business district mentions (18% increase).
PROMOTE AND MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Website/Electronic Communications/Social Media
Venture Portland maintained its online calendar featuring more than 1,200 business district events and meetings and expanded its online Best Practices Library. The organization once again increased social media followers 13% with more than 475 posts highlighting neighborhood businesses (863), business districts (28) and district events (64) city wide (96% engagement). Venture Portland distributed 13 issues of its newsletters, including three district profiles, to more than 3,000 business district leaders and supporters (11% increase with a 23% increase in ‘open rate’).

Published 475 social media posts promoting 64 district events and 863 businesses.

Venture Portland Board Members and Staff, #PledgeLocalPDX

Venture Portland Staff, Portland Celebrates Small

Congresswoman Bonamici tours Northwest District
PROMOTE AND MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

City Council Liaison/Partnerships/External Affairs
Venture Portland continued its strong relationship with Commissioner Fish and his team. Venture Portland also strengthened relationships with key stakeholders including City Bureaus, City Council, Elders in Action, Portland Business Alliance, Prosper Portland, SBA, SBDC and Travel Portland to align and coordinate resources. Venture Portland’s ED represented the organization on business support and city-facilitated groups and consistently appeared before City Council. In partnership with City Commissioners, staff helped neighborhood businesses and business districts mitigate the effect of Bureau construction and permit costs. In partnership with the Portland and Multnomah County Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Elders in Action, Venture Portland created the Age-Friendly Business Awards. This effort culminated in the inaugural Age-Friendly Business Awards Ceremony at City Hall which recognized 11 neighborhood businesses who employ and welcome people of all ages. Commissioner Fish was the keynote speakers at the ceremony and Mayoral Wheeler proclaimed 10/31/18 ‘Age-Friendly Business Day’. Last but not least, Venture Portland helped Central Eastside secure unanimous City Council approval for a new Enhanced Services District (ESD), the first in Portland in nearly two decades.

Matthew Mićetić with Age-Friendly Business Award Winners
Mayor Wheeler speaks at the inaugural Age-Friendly Business Awards
IMPLEMENT BI-ANNUAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Venture Portland continued its robust grantmaking portfolio, adding new Destination Investment Grants to its biannual Benchmark, Infrastructure and Staffing, annual Catalytic Investment Initiative and Economic Development and as-needed Start-up Support grants. Representatives from 24 business districts attended the Grant Certification Training where they received district-specific benchmark progress reports. Staff provided 14 days of dedicated ‘Grants Office Hours’, helping 21 business districts plan and execute grants. Business districts received 16 Benchmark grants in one of six categories designated as components of a successful and self-sustaining business district, five Destination Investment, 1 Economic Development and seven Catalytic Investment Initiative grants. In total, Venture Portland awarded $117,168 (single largest award sum since program launch in 1995) to fund 29 projects in 16 business districts, leveraging an additional $401,149 in private investment, a 3.5-to-1 match. Venture Portland maintained formal variance and evaluation processes, including attending 23 grant-funded meetings and events, to ensure appropriate stewardship of grant funds and increase transparent Grants Committee oversight across grant cycles.

Awarded

$117,168 to fund

29 projects in 16

business districts

The largest total

awards in grant

program history!
STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY

After eight 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. Expansion of the Catalytic Investment Initiative (CII) and ‘Fee-for-Service Consulting’ programs enabled the organization to invest in development of new resources, tools and templates to better serve business districts.

Governance and Membership
Venture Portland’s membership elected a 20% larger Board, bringing together diverse business district leaders from across the city. Of those elected, 17% were people of color and 32% were new to the Board, adding fresh perspectives to Venture Portland’s leadership while maintaining leadership stability. After adopting a new governance structure including quarterly meetings and revamped committees, Venture Portland’s dedicated leaders came together for 19 meetings and contributed 1,060.5 volunteer hours to build organizational and business district capacity and market and promote business districts. These volunteer hours, equal to .51 FTE or 20 hours/week were in addition to each Board member’s work in their own business and business district. For the seventh year, 100% of Board members served on a Committee and the organization completed its annual governance audit, ensuring infrastructure excellence and modeling governance best practices. Finally, Venture Portland ended the year with 27 members (97% retention rate), including 3 ‘Sustaining’ members (50% increase) and 5 upgrades (19% members).

Board members contributed **1,060**

volunteer hours equal to **20 hours** per week.

Venture Portland’s Board of Directors
STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY

Financial Stability
Venture Portland successfully completed its 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 eight 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 successfully defeated two proposed budget cuts. The organization also generated $132,000 in private revenue (23% increase) which, combined with business district grant award matching funds, brings Venture Portland’s total contract leverage to $533,149, a 1-to-1 match. However, when taking into account the additional $1.1 million in private business district revenue generated by districts city wide as a result of Venture Portland’s non-grant capacity building programs, that match increases to $1.6 million, a 3-to-1 match.

Generated $132,000 in private revenue (12% increase).

Commissioner Fritz at Gateway Discovery Park

Staff at Fremont Holiday Fest

Midway Holiday Party
STRENGTHEN VENTURE PORTLAND CAPACITY

Personnel/Office
Despite multiple vacancies, six new hires and an increase of .5 FTE, Venture Portland maintained full programming all year. Staff took advantage of professional development opportunities, attending 16 external trainings (7 on diversity, equity and inclusion best practices) and gained valuable skills in nonprofit, business district and financial management; message/brand development; urban planning and diversity, equity and inclusion. Finally, staff visited business districts 275 times (36% increase), attending 23 events and 193 meetings, increasing understanding of each district. The organization also made its space available to business districts, City partners and other stakeholders, hosting 31 no-cost meetings (63% increase). Venture Portland signed on as a Portland Means Progress ‘Early Adopter’ and committed to providing job opportunities for underserved youth, diversifying its vendors (50% increase in caterers; 24% owned by women, 21% owned by POC) and ensuring a diverse, welcoming and inclusive culture.

Staff visited business districts **275** times, including attending **23** events and **193** meetings.

Staff at Around the World in 82 Dishes

Celebrating Gateway International Winter Festival
CATALYTIC INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Venture Portland continued its successful Catalytic Investment Initiative (CII), supporting seven East/North Portland Districts (82nd Avenue, Foster Area, Gateway Area, Kenton, Midway, St. Johns and Williams) and five privately-funded districts (Beaumont, Division/Clinton, Lloyd, NE Broadway, Nob Hill). By focusing on three quantifiable goals (increase membership, volunteers and revenue 10-20%) and hiring professional Business District Organizers, participating districts achieved significant positive results.

Increase Membership
Initiative participants broke their large districts into targeted ‘nodes’ of commercial concentration and focused efforts in those areas. Utilizing new ‘Diversity Prospects’ tools, district leaders analyzed current members against nine diversity parameters (3,992 data points) and set ‘diversity benchmarks’ targeting member prospects by business type, location and ownership. In addition, participants added 8 new member benefits and strengthened 49 existing benefits to better meet the needs of district businesses. Finally, Organizers helped all districts implement formal membership campaigns resulting in 187 new members.

Gateway District Clean-up

Kenton Street Fair

Organizers helped all districts implement formal membership campaigns resulting in 187 new members.
CATALYTIC INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Increase Volunteers
Participants also set ‘diversity benchmarks’ for Board leaders, adding 31 new Board members (94 total leaders, 33% new) and generated 10,774 volunteer hours. Notably, 23% of East/North Board members are now people of color. In addition, four districts elected new Presidents and VPs and two elected new Secretaries and Treasurers. These new leaders helped add governance infrastructure and expertise; the average number of district participants in Venture Portland’s Catalytic Investment Initiative capacity building programs is 2.25 times the average for non-CII districts.

Increase Revenue
New members brought significant new revenue to both the participating associations and their member businesses. In total, CII districts generated an additional $331,643 in new association revenue. And, by hosting 35 revenue generating events (28% new), made cash registers ring through districts as businesses set sales records.
CONCLUSION

Once again, Venture Portland ended the year a much stronger organization than when it began. In its 33rd year, Venture Portland’s efforts to build organizational and business district capacity resulted in new leaders and 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.

The coming year will be another one of growth for Venture Portland. After nine years of significant change, the organization is financially stable with a strong track record of success. Venture Portland begins FY19-20 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.
to make more out of the neighborhood business districts we call home.
## OUR MEMBERS

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>82nd Avenue of Roses Business Association</td>
<td>Hillsdale Business and Professional Association</td>
<td>Northwest Business Association</td>
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<td>Beaumont Business Association</td>
<td>Historic Parkrose</td>
<td>NW Industrial Business Association</td>
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<td>Belmont Area Business Association</td>
<td>Kenton Business Association</td>
<td>Old Town Community Association</td>
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<td>Central Eastside Industrial Council</td>
<td>Lents Grown Business Association</td>
<td>Pearl District Business Association</td>
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<td>Division/Clinton Business Association</td>
<td>Lloyd Community Association</td>
<td>Sellwood Moreland Business Association</td>
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<td>Foster Area Business Association</td>
<td>Midway Business Association</td>
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<td>Multnomah Village Business Association</td>
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<td>Hawthorne Blvd. Business Association</td>
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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.