

# Economic Development - 2014 End of Year Highlights



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

### BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

1. Established the Office of Economic Development as a **Business Liaison**
  - **Assisted** over 60 businesses with relocation, financial, expansion, location and permit assistance
  - Reduced **vacant commercial properties** by approximately 8%
  - **Expansion Assistance** - \$7.9 million expansion and the addition of 76 jobs. Received a DECD loan of \$2.7 million.
2. Developed a **Guide to Starting a Business in Bethel**
3. Developed a **Welcome Packet** for new and prospective businesses

### COMMUNICATION

1. Published two issues of an **Economic Development Newsletter**
2. Developed a **facebook** and **linkedin** account
3. Developed an **Economic Development website**

### EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

1. Hosted **27** Educational Workshops

### DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Developed the requirements for the next phase of planning for **Transit Oriented Development**
2. Created a **Downtown Improvement Plan**
3. Developed the requirements for the next phase of planning for an **Expansion of Clarke Business Park**

### GRANTS

1. Applied for **\$1,192,808.00** in grants, awarded **\$390,149**, and waiting for notification on \$802,659. Includes downtown improvements, expansion of Clarke Business Park, Transit Oriented Development, and bus shelters.

### INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

1. Completed an **initial analysis** of other programs in the surrounding area



## MARKETING & PROMOTION

### MARKETING MATERIALS

1. Developed a **Bethel brochure**
2. Developed a **town video** for the website

### WEBSITE

1. Developed an **economic development website**
  - Over 1,800 views of the website, approximately 150 per month
2. Developed the requirements for a **community website**

### PUBLICITY & ADVERTISING

1. Published over **30** press releases

### SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Facebook and LinkedIn
  - Over **170** facebook followers
  - Posted over **80** communications



## **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

### **BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS**

1. Met with over 150 Bethel businesses

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

1. Developed a Clarke Park and a Downtown Advisory Committee
  - Downtown - Implemented **13** of the 19 suggested initiatives/projects
  - Clarke Park – Implemented **7** of the 11 suggested initiatives/projects

### **BETHEL ARTS**

1. Created a Non-Profit **Arts Organization** focused on Economic Development
  - Hosted **5** downtown events
  - Held **3** public art shows in vacant commercial property windows in downtown
  - Created an active art studio in a downtown vacant space

### **COMMERCIAL BROKERS ALLIANCE**

1. Joined as a member

### **HOUSATONIC INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

1. Joined as a member

### **BETHEL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

1. Supported the **Mentor and Internship Program** at Bethel High School
2. Assisted in the developed of an **Art Internship Program** for Bethel High School with Bethel Arts

### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

1. Jointly hosted **24** educational workshops, developed an RFP for the Community Website, and formed the non-profit Bethel Arts

### **DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

1. Hosted a **luncheon** with DECD Commissioner as guest speaker
2. Worked with to plan for **expansion of Clarke Business Park, Transit Oriented Development, and business expansion assistance**

### **CERC**

1. Hosted a town workshop on the Fundamentals of **Economic Community Development**

### **WCEDA**

1. Developed a regional economic development plan and a RFP for a **regional website**



## PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

### ACCESSIBILITY, WALK-ABILITY AND SAFETY

1. Created a **Downtown Improvement Plan**
  - Applied for two grants for funding
2. **Bus Shelters** – Applied for a grant for two shelters

### APPEAL

1. Maintenance
  - Improved plowing, frequency of mowing and sign landscape maintenance to **Clarke Business Park**
  - Developed a plan for replacement of **missing streetscape trees** and maintenance of **light posts** in downtown
2. Expand Streetscape
  - Developed a **Downtown Improvement Plan** that extends streetscape and applied for two grants for funding
3. Public Art
  - Bethel Arts hosted **3 public art shows** in vacant commercial property windows in downtown
4. Parking
  - Developed a plan for **parking signage** in downtown and applied for a grant

### BUILDING APPEARANCE AND INTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

1. Façade Improvements
  - Applied for a **façade improvement grant**
  - **Empty Storefront Initiative:** Worked with property owners and brokers to help identify potential solutions to fill vacant properties. Resulted in a decrease of vacant commercial properties.