BR&E Innovations from Minnesota

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Our BR&E Strategies Program Context
Business Retention & Expansion Strategies (BR&E) Program

FLOW CHART

IMPLEMENT Step 3
- Work on project teams (continuous)
- Sustain Leadership Team
- Update on projects – 1st quarter Task Force
- Update on projects – 2nd quarter Task Force
- Update on projects & plan to sustain BR&E – 3rd quarter Task Force
- Evaluate results
- Prepare evaluation report(s)
- Update on projects – 4th quarter Task Force
- Sustain or conclude BR&E

PRIORITIZE Step 2
- Review warning flags
- Respond to individual concerns
- Analyze survey data
- Write research report
- Retreat to set priorities on systemic issues
- Design priority projects
- Write summary report
- Commence to implementation

RESEARCH Step 1
- Inform community about BR&E
- Organize the Leadership Team
- Organize the Task Force
- Practice visiting businesses
- Finalize the survey instrument
- Train visitors
- Visit businesses
- Tabulate survey data
Special BRE issue of *Community Development Journal of the Community Development Society* in 2017
Guest Editors: Michael Darger, Alan Barefield And Brent Hales

Research:
1. Business Succession with Baby Boomer businesses
2. Clusters and BRE
3. Workforce and BRE
4. Defining success in BRE

Case Studies & Innovation:
1. Nine American Cities
2. Energy projects and BRE
3. Entrepreneurship and BRE
4. BRE techniques and transportation planning

BR&E Programs & Process:
1. Community Driven BRE (a university program)
2. State Chamber BRE
3. The Art of Inquiry – rethinking survey questions
4. Assisting rural communities (Canadian province)
EVALUATING BR&E OUTCOMES

- Need evidence of BR&E outcomes for:
  - U.M. Extension
  - “Leave-behind” for the community
- I.D. outcomes & impacts
- Process should be
  - Motivating
  - Easy to do
Ripple Mapping Your BR&E Results
EVALUATING OUTCOMES WITH EACH BR&E INITIATIVE?

How does Ripple Effect Mapping work?

BR&E in a MN Community

Outcome 1
Outcome 2
Outcome 3
Outcome 4
MENAHGA -- THE LITTLE TOWN THAT COULD

The spirit of St. Urho

BR&E Inputs/Outputs

- 2012 - Visited 53 businesses
- Went thru our whole program
- Menahga was ready: they went thru 3 other Community Vitality Extension programs
Menahga Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program

- City of Menahga (the sponsor of the BR&E)
- Menahga Music Nights (priority project #1)
- Business Networking/Roundtable (priority project #2)
- Assist Business Owners with Business Succession (priority project #3)
- New Retail and Lodging (priority project #4)
- $4,700 arts grant from 5 wings group
- Concert series planned 2014
- Individual skills & attitudes
- Career Exposition Fair (priority project #5)
Menahga Music Nights (priority project #1)

- $4,700 arts grant from 5 wings group
- 5 Concerts held - The Sounds of Spirit Lake

150 to 800 attendees each event

- Grants are not guaranteed
  - Grants have continued
  - Civic & Commerce, nonprofits, & businesses contributing $$$ now
- Positive support from community
- More gas sales
- Gives economical entertainment
- Frequent compliments from outsiders, guests, neighboring towns
- 30% increase in one restaurant's sales per concert night
- More food vendors possible this summer
- Methodist food vendor does well and returns funds to community
- Contribute to new motel success
- Sound system is used by other community groups
- More awareness of our small town
- Families moving back with their children
- Developing Event
  - Secured for 2016 concerts
- Possible church services, weddings, etc.
- Ideas
  - Musicals, other performances
  - Events for kids

- Eval. Survey results were strong
  - Donut, root beer, other vendors
  - Cafe saw huge volume pre-concert
  - Burger night at VFW did well
  - Neighboring community folks attended
  - One attendee was a former resident
  - He moved back and opened a barber shop (partial credit)

Concert series planned 2014
- 5 concerts planned
- Future growth based on success?
  - Third series held in 2015
  - Fourth series planned for 2016

Sound stage planned
- Seasonal bandshell to be complete by July 15th, 2016

Project was designed to boost cultural amenities
- Many new musical genres introduced to our residents
- World class groups that are Grammy winners or nominees
FOR MORE INFO.


- Web page at extension.umn.edu
  - (search for ripple effect mapping)

- Watch for the BRE special issue of Community Development

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