The City of Strongsville

IEDC Annual Conference

September 25, 2016
**STRONGSVILLE COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT**

- **Total Population:** 44,750
- **Size:** 24.64 Square Miles
- **Total Households:** 17,659

86% of General Fund Revenue Derived from Local Income Tax Collections

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**CITY BUSINESS PARKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Park</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>SF of Build-Out</th>
<th>Companies</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongsville Business &amp; Technology Park</td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>3,422,143</td>
<td>Over 70</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dow Circle Research &amp; Development Park</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>972,812</td>
<td>Over 30</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Drive Business Park</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>1,508,326</td>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park 82</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>953,450</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strongsville’s Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Survey Program

In partnership with Ohio State University, the City collects community data through three separate survey programs:

**Manufacturing/High Tech Business Survey**
- Survey of all of the businesses located within the City’s Business Parks
- 150+ businesses surveyed each year
- Average 33% response rate
- Questions focus on
  - Costs of Doing Business
  - Satisfaction Levels in City Services & Amenities
  - Workforce Development/Training
  - Quality of Life
Retail/Professional Services Business Survey
- Survey of businesses located within and surrounding the City’s retail corridors
- Completed in 2009
- 816 businesses surveyed
- 15.5% response rate
- Questions focus on
  - Costs of Doing Business
  - Satisfaction Levels in City Services & Amenities
  - Workforce Development/Training
  - Quality of Life

Residential “Strongsville in Dialogue” Survey
- Survey of every Strongsville household
- Completed in 2005
- Over 16,000 households surveyed
- 36% response rate
- Questions focus on
  - Costs of Living
  - Satisfaction Levels in City Services & Amenities
  - Quality of Life
THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE

BR&E Survey Program

How does the City Use Survey Data to Support BR&E?

1. Address Immediate Business Concerns
   • Schedule and complete follow-up meetings
   • Prioritize time-sensitive concerns from the business community

2. Identify Weaknesses and Act (*when possible/feasible*)

3. Express Partnership with Existing Business Base & a Willingness to Adjust
   • Share compiled results with the Business Community
   • Update the Business Community on the progress made from previous surveys

4. Identify Strengths
   • One of the most powerful Business Attraction tools the City maintains is an effective BR&E Program

5. Compare Previous Surveys for Trends

6. Analyze Results with Stakeholders
   • Other City Departments
   • Utility Providers
   • Educational Institutions
Example of How Data Collection Impacted BR&E Strategy

- Survey results/comments increasing indicated that High Speed Internet Access within the City’s Business Parks was becoming a concern for employers

- Through the collection of this data, the City’s Economic Development & Technology Office began to discuss ways to improve an “Identified Weakness” within our Business Parks

- The City began to discuss the cost of installing fiber optic cable throughout the business parks

- In discussions with Time Warner Cable, the survey data (as well as additional input) was shared and Time Warner Cable who decided to install fiber lines at their expense, instead of sharing City lines with other providers

- Several years later, fiber optic lines run through each business park and the City saved millions of dollars in installation costs

- The data received from the survey guided our attention to a growing weakness within our community and also served as useful documentation to push a public-private partnership with Time Warner Cable
Pitfalls in Using Survey Data for BR&E

1. Data is a snapshot within a changing environment – there is a shelf life to the data collected
   • Balance between updating data vs. burdening your business community with surveys

2. Actively collecting data places a responsibility on a community for follow-up/follow-through
   • If you ask a business to complete a survey/give an opinion, that company deserves a response

3. Data collection does not replace the importance of consistent, personal relationships