

Community Focus Statement D: Provide a thriving and vibrant local small business environment.

Action Statement D.4: Establish a marketing plan with incentives to encourage home-based businesses.

D4

Benchmark: Create a marketing plan with strategies and resources for home-based businesses.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: \$300



Bakeries are examples of home based businesses that face difficult start-up challenges. Photo source: [meim](#)

Even following recovery from the Great Recession, trends toward working at home have continued. While over half of at-home workers are telecommuters, a growing number are small business start-ups and freelancers. The latter are typically in higher wage and high-skill professions. Business start-ups and freelancers see many advantages of a home-based business including decreased commuting costs, lower overhead costs, tax advantages, more time with family, and lower child-care costs. Home-based businesses also benefit individuals by supplying second incomes. Although most home-based businesses rarely result in substantial job growth, many successful companies, including Apple and Mary Kay

Cosmetics, got their start from the home. Although advantageous to workers, , home-based businesses can have an impact on surrounding neighbors. Balanced regulations are important in fostering entrepreneurship while ensuring harmony with surrounding neighbors and properties.

Fostering Entrepreneurship

Home-based businesses have the ability to act as individual incubators for small businesses by removing a substantial cost for start-ups—the cost of office space. Especially with service and professional jobs that create intellectual or digital content, the financial barriers to entry are lower. Even occupations that are part-time and provide supplemental income often improve overall disposable income and spending power within the community.

Capital is an important piece of any support system for start-ups. Pairing entrepreneurs with venture capital and local small business loans can help improve a business’s financial situation and access to capital. It is important that any financial assistance programs recognize that the failure rate of new businesses is extremely high. Programs should be developed to ensure participants have business acumen, an understanding of market potential, and a

strong business plan. Local incentive programs should act more like venture capital programs and ensure public dollars are invested wisely.

Improving the Business Climate for Home-Based Businesses

A community can do a number of things to improve the business climate for home-based businesses, including:

- Working with the County to ensure zoning regulations focus more on a business's impact on its neighbors and not the use itself. Flexibility is important.
- Developing small business training programs with experienced executives to help provide support and guidance.
- Working with incumbent telecommunications and cable providers to expand broadband access, which is key to many professionally oriented businesses.
- Offering information on local banks and venture capital sources for capital financing.



Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Hold a meeting to create a committee	Champion	Month 1	Crestline/Lake Gregory Chamber of Commerce http://www.crestlinechamber.net/ San Bernardino County EDA, Local Business Resources http://www.sbcountyadvantage.com/For-Local-Business.aspx Inland Empire Small Business Development Center http://www.iesmallbusiness.com/resources/ SCORE https://www.score.org/home-based-business-resources US Small Business Administration https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/oed/resources/148091
2. Appoint a member of the Chamber of Commerce to coordinate with County Economic Development Agency (EDA).	Champion with Chamber of Commerce	Month 1	
3. Compile existing resources from the County EDA website and other resources.	Committee	Months 2 – 3	
4. Organize a focus group of home-based business owners to ascertain issues and opportunities to help them grow.	Committee	Month 3	
5. Meet with local telecommuters and create providers to drive issues and needs in home-based businesses	Committee	Month 4	
6. Draft an initial marketing plan with compiled resources.	Committee	Months 3 – 6	
7. Review the draft plan with local stakeholders, including community leaders, business owners, and residents.	Committee with Chamber of Commerce	Months 6 – 8	
8. Finalize the marketing plan.	Committee with Chamber of Commerce	Months 8 – 12	
9. Adopt and implement the marketing plan and revisit yearly to make adjustments.	Chamber of Commerce	Month 12, on-going	
10. Share Plan with San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency	Chamber of Commerce	On-going	