

Community Focus Statement B: Encourage commercial and light industrial uses in Phelan Piñon Hills.

B

Action Statement B.1: Encourage coordination between the San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency (EDA) and the Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce to link communications with existing businesses to the County’s business retention and expansion program.

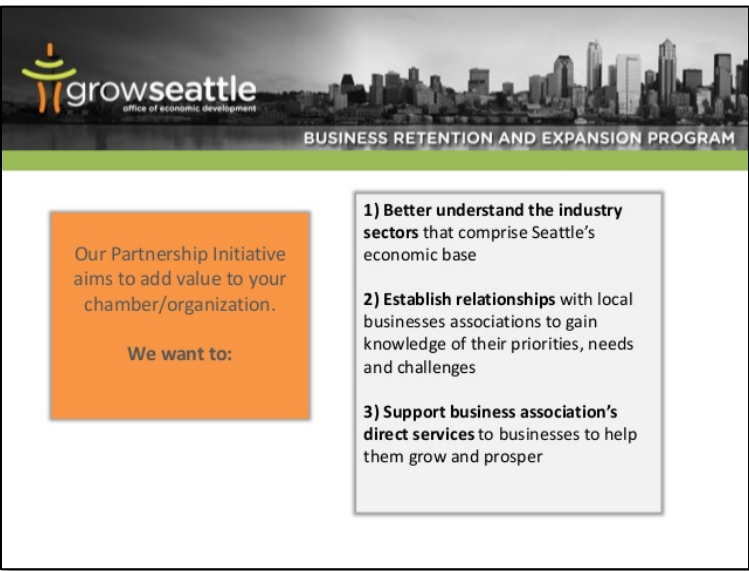
Benchmark: Quarterly conference calls between the San Bernardino County EDA and representatives from both Chambers of Commerce, in addition to encouraging a representative from the San Bernardino County EDA to attend one business owner focused public meeting annually.

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

Estimated Cost: Volunteer time.

Strengthening business relations and communication between business owners and the local chambers of commerce, like the Phelan Chamber of Commerce and the Pinon Hills Chamber of Commerce, can improve the business climate and accelerate job growth. The San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency has an existing Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program that can be brought to the community level to focus on developing the businesses currently in the community.

A BR&E program works to focus local economic development efforts on improving relationships with existing businesses, develops a working partnership with these businesses, and helps to connect businesses with available local and state resources.



This BR&E survey performed by GrowSeattle (located in Seattle, Washington) lets business owners give feedback to local officials and allows them to get a sense of how businesses are doing on a broader scale.

A BR&E program places the chamber of commerce in the position of liaison between businesses and local government and can open the door to potential incentives, workforce training opportunities, capital sources, or business coaching. An effective BR&E program works to:

- Show existing local businesses that they are appreciated and their value to the local economy is recognized.
- Where resources are available, assist in solving problems that local businesses face.
- Match businesses with educational opportunities and technical assistance programs to improve their competitiveness.

- A good BR&E program should have the following components:
 - An economic development official who is specifically focused on the needs of existing businesses.
 - A formal visitation program that includes face-to-face meetings between the economic development official and business owners to build trust.
 - An annual survey program to reach all business owners and discover problems linking across businesses.
 - A follow-up visit to ensure solutions are working effectively and address additional problems if necessary.

Because of the time and resources required to successfully implement a BR&E program, it is often necessary to bring in a group of community volunteers who have business experience to assist in outreach efforts. Surveys, as mentioned above, also help to track trends from year to year and make further outreach possible when resources are limited.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Designate one person from each Chamber of Commerce to serve as the county liaison to coordinate with a representative from the County EDA.	Champion with Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce	Month 1	Phelan Chamber of Commerce http://www.phelanchamber.info/
2. Schedule quarterly conference calls between the liaisons and the County EDA representative.	Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce	Month 2	Piñon Hills Chamber of Commerce https://www.facebook.com/Piñon-Hills-Chamber-of-Commerce-142718772459648/
3. Schedule biannual meetings combined of both chambers with a County EDA representative in attendance.	Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce	Month 2	San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency http://www.sbcountyadvantage.com/home.aspx
4. Monitor progress of the community coordination and collect feedback to improve coordination.	Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce	On-going	On Regional Economic Development https://onregionalecdev.com/tag/business-retention/
5. Expand coordination with County EDA if warranted	Phelan and Piñon Hills Chambers of Commerce	On-going	