



# WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

DATE: November 5, 2014

SUBJECT: Briefing and Post-City Council Briefing Agenda for November 10, 2014

PREPARED BY: J. Brent McFall, City Manager

Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council briefings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these briefings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.

Looking ahead to Monday night's Briefing and Post-City Council meeting briefing, the following schedule has been prepared:

Dinner (*Please note earlier time*) 5:30 P.M.  
**Dinner to include the Westminster 303 Class in the Multi-Purpose Room**

Council Briefing (*The public is welcome to attend.*) 6:30 P.M.

POST BRIEFING (*The public is welcome to attend.*)

### PRESENTATIONS

1. City Council Involvement with Business Retention Visits

### CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

None at this time.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

None at this time.

### INFORMATION ONLY

None at this time.

Items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the post-briefing schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

**NOTE:** Persons needing an accommodation must notify the City Manager's Office no later than noon the Thursday prior to the scheduled Study Session to allow adequate time to make arrangements. You can call [303-658-2161](tel:303-658-2161) /TTY 711 or State Relay) or write to [mbarajas@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:mbarajas@cityofwestminster.us) to make a reasonable accommodation request.



WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

Post City Council Meeting  
November 10, 2014



**SUBJECT:** City Council Involvement with Business Retention Visits

**PREPARED BY:** Ryan Johnson, Economic Development Specialist

### **Recommended City Council Action**

Provide Economic Development Staff with direction as to how City Council would like to participate in the City's Business Visitation Program.

### **Summary Statement**

- A key component of any Economic Development effort is staying in touch with existing businesses.
- The City's Business Services Program is a broad based multi-pronged effort to interact with as many of the City's businesses; and, the Business visitations is one component of the overall Business Services Program.
- In previous years, City Council has been partnered with members of the Management Team to conduct formal business retention visits.
- The primary objective of the visits is to build loyalty in the City's business community so the businesses will desire to stay and grow in Westminster.
- Information gathered from these visits is aggregated with information gathered from other business contacts and visits and presented in the annual Business Retention Report.
- Attached is the 2014 Business Retention Questionnaire.

**Expenditure Required:** \$0

**Source of Funds:** N/A

## **Policy Issue**

How does City Council want to interface with the Business Visitation Program?

## **Alternatives**

- 1.) City Council could choose to visit with businesses on their own as individual schedules permit. This alternative is not recommended as City Staff thoughtfully selects the businesses to visit each year in order to further understand the local economy as well as changing trends of which the City Staff need to be aware. Teaming up with a City Staff volunteer provides access to additional resources and support during these visits.
- 2.) City Council could defer to City Staff to carry out the Business Visitation Program without City Council participation and report back the findings annually in the first quarter of the year. This alternative is not recommended as having City Council interaction with the business community is a key element in building loyalty and enhancing the quality of the relationships with the City's business community. There is great value in being able to include City Council in meeting with Westminster's key businesses in key industry sectors.

## **Background Information**

The City initiated the Business Visitation Program in 1990. This program was created to keep an open dialogue between the City and the business community. The retention visits are only one aspect of the City's overall Business Services Program which also includes grants & scholarships for city businesses as well as access to other business resources. A City's strong relationships with the business community can lead to economic development success and more effective economic development and planning strategies. Studies have shown that as much as 80% of new jobs in a community are generated by the growth and expansion of existing businesses.

Currently, the Business Visitation Program has three major components:

1. Visits conducted by the Fire Department during the course of business inspections that are completed throughout the year.
2. Visits conducted by the Economic Development Office (EDO) throughout the year based on prospects the City is working with, as requested by the business community, as requested by another department, and as needed by the EDO to better understand the City's business community or industry sectors.
3. Visits conducted by selected City Staff in cooperation with City Council

## **Structure of Formal Retention Visits with City Staff and City Council**

The City currently uses a structured program in order to be able to execute and complete a number of retention visits with selected City Staff partnered with City Council members. These visits take place with companies that are pre-selected by the Economic Development Office. The visits occur with both large and small companies; and, the companies generally are part of one or more targeted industries for the City. The Retention Visits consist of four parts:

## **1. Selection of Companies and Setting Appointments**

On an ongoing basis, Economic Development Staff keeps track of those basic employers who have been visited, when they were visited and any other key notes for these companies. Staff also adds new companies to the list as new businesses locate to Westminster. Typically, nearly 50 companies are selected for visitation by City Staff and City Councilor's.

Staff then begins the process of initially contacting the identified companies to ensure that our contacts are still current and to begin arranging visits.

## **2. Council Communication**

Once the visit has been set up with the company and the City Staff members, City Manager's Office Staff sends out a message to the City Council seeking attendance for that company visit. The first City Councilor who responds has typically been the person who would accompany the City Staff person to that visit. Visitation teams are limited to one City Councilor and one City Staff member so that the business representative doesn't feel overwhelmed.

## **3. Conducting the Visit**

The Staff volunteer and the City Councilor meet and go into the visit together.

These visits are most effective when they are conversational rather than 'interview' style. The attached questionnaire is provided to serve as a guide and is not intended to be a mandatory list of everything that must be discussed during the visit.

The objectives during these visits include:

- Thank the business for choosing to locate in Westminster.
- Learn about the company's business operations and industry.
- Listen to the company talk about what's going well and how the City may be helpful in assisting the company.
- Building relationships with the business community.
- Promote the various programs that the City has to offer that may benefit the company.

## **4. Follow Up**

After the visit has concluded, the Staff volunteer will report their feedback via an internal database used to track all existing businesses. Any follow up items are noted and assigned out to the appropriate department. A thank you note is prepared by the Staff volunteer and sent to the company.

Although nearly 50 companies are often selected for visitation, some will decline the opportunity to visit and some will simply have a phone conversation with City Staff and provide the information they feel necessary. Rarely do 50 actual visits take place with the City Council and the Staff volunteers.

## **Conclusion**

Continuing to support the business retention program for the City and participating in a portion of these visits supports Council's Strategic Plan Goals of providing a "Dynamic, Diverse Economy" and "Excellence in City Services" by engaging the business community and learning where the City is strong and also by identifying opportunities for improvement. Utilizing City Staff as volunteers functions to introduce various City Staff to the business community over time, thus enhancing the quality of the relationships the business community has with City Staff. City Council's participation in the Business Visitation Program is key and serves to build relationships with the City's business community and also communicates the City's commitment to the business community.

Staff will be present at Monday night's post meeting to receive input on City Council involvement in the City's Business Retention Program.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachment - 2014 Business Retention Visit Questionnaire

**WESTMINSTER ONE VIEW**  
**2014 BUSINESS RETENTION VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE**

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Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview:

Individuals interviewed with titles:

City Interview Team:

Summary of Interview:

Description of Business:

**STATE OF THE BUSINESS**

1. What is the company's main product or service?
  
2. What is the company's greatest achievement in the last three years?
  
3. Future product developments planned?
  
4. Positive Sales/Performance \_\_\_\_\_ Negative Sales Performance \_\_\_\_\_ No Change \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Has the company grown or retracted in the last year in terms of:  
Revenue: Growing \_\_\_\_\_ Retracting \_\_\_\_\_ No Change \_\_\_\_\_  
Physical Space: Growing \_\_\_\_\_ Retracting \_\_\_\_\_ No Change \_\_\_\_\_  
Employees: Growing \_\_\_\_\_ Retracting \_\_\_\_\_ No Change \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Does the business lease or own their space?
  - a. If leasing, when does lease expire?
  
  - b. How many square feet does company occupy?

7. What is the company's primary competition? Where are they located?
8. Is the business exporting/importing, managing operations, or part of an entity outside of the United States?
9. Where are the export/import markets?
10. Are export sales as a percentage of total sales:  
Increasing \_\_\_ Stable \_\_\_ Decreasing \_\_\_ No Exports \_\_\_
11. Is the percentage of products/components imported by the company:  
Increasing \_\_\_ Stable \_\_\_ Decreasing \_\_\_ No Imports \_\_\_
12. Has there been any recent change in ownership or management in the company? Yes\_\_ No\_\_  
Comments:
13. Positive or negative trends occurring that may affect the business locally or beyond Westminster:
14. Has the business customer base changed in recent years?
15. Identify the top issues that are most important to the success of the company:
16. Is there new technology emerging that will substantially change the company's primary product/service or how it is produced?

### **Labor & Employees**

1. Is the company experiencing recruitment problems with any employee positions or specific skills? If yes, what problems? What positions? What skills?
2. Current average number of FTE employees:
3. The top 3 cities where most employees live:

**Relocation, Expansion, Contraction Plans**

1. Plans to expand or contract in the next 24 months?      Yes \_\_\_\_      No \_\_\_\_
2. Expansion/contraction plans:

**Business Environment**

1. What are the City’s strengths as a place to do business?
2. What are the City’s weaknesses as a place to do business?
3. Are there any barriers to growth in the City, County, or State?
4. What types of companies would benefit and/or compliment your business operation in the City?
5. Suggested capital improvements in the City of Westminster (i.e. road improvements, bridge work, park improvements):
6. Please rate the following:

	low					high		
	1	2	3	4	5			
A) Water								DNA
B) Sewage								DNA
C) Natural Gas								DNA
D) Internet Access								DNA
E) Telecom								DNA
F) Cellular Service								DNA
G) Traffic Control								DNA
H) Cable								DNA
I) Other								DNA

If low rating, please provide explanation of concern:

**Contacts with the City**

1. What services within the City does the business have contact?

Have them rate the quality of the service provided by the community on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being high.

	low					high		
	1	2	3	4	5			
A) Police Protection								DNA
B) Fire Protection								DNA
C) Sales & Use Tax								DNA
D) Planning & Permitting Process								DNA
E) Libraries								DNA
F) Public Transportation								DNA
G) Traffic Control								DNA
H) Streets and Roads (local)								DNA
I) Highways (state & federal)								DNA
J) Parks, Recreation & Trails								DNA
K) Other								DNA

If low rating, please provide explanation of concern.

2. Would you be interested in receiving electronic notifications with information on business resources? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow Up (Internal Use)**

1. Is there any reason to believe this company is at risk of leaving the community?

2. Does this company support Westminster as a place to do business?

3. Follow-up Actions/Steps Required:

4. Person(s) assigned and date assigned:

5. Follow-up outcomes/responses: