

Appendix 4A: Survey Instrument

Wyoming County Business Retention and Expansion Program

Summer 2008 Business Survey

Background

It is our view that the retention and expansion of existing companies is a key to future economic growth. This program is focused on understanding the needs of local businesses through this survey to help them grow.

1. Funding for this project is provided by West Virginia State University through the Rural Business Service of the USDA to the Rural Appalachian Improvement League (RAIL). RAIL is working in a partnership with the Wyoming County Planning Committee and the Wyoming County Economic Development Authority.
2. This is a cooperative effort of volunteers who make up the Business Retention, and Expansion Committee. These volunteers come from local businesses, local government, and educational institutions in Wyoming County.
3. The objectives of this program are the following:
 - a. Demonstrate the appreciation of local businesses in Wyoming County and the positive economic impact that they have.
 - b. Learn about future plans that local businesses have in respect to their expansion and impending needs.
 - c. Allow local businesses to have a stronger voice on the issues that impact their wellbeing.
 - d. Increase the competitiveness of local businesses.
 - e. Establish and implement a strategic plan to focus on the needs of existing businesses.

Confidentiality- Your responses will be summarized with those of other businesses to calculate averages and percentages. Responses will never be individually identified in any report or publication.

The “Skip It” Rule- If there is a question that you feel is best to skip, please let us know. There is no need to explain your reason.

Final Report- All businesses that participate in this survey will receive a copy of the final report when it becomes available in October.

Wyoming County BRE&D Survey

General Company Information:

Business Name:

Mailing Address:

City/State/ZIP:

Physical Address:

City/State/ZIP:

Phone/Fax Numbers:

Name of person completing survey:

Title:

Phone Number:

Please provide us with some thoughts about conducting business in Wyoming County

1. When did this business begin at its current location?
2. How many locations does your company have in West Virginia and nationwide?
(WV: _____) (Nationwide: _____)
- 3a. If you relocated, please indicate where you relocated from (circle one).
Local Area Southern WV Area West Virginia or nearby state Other Location in USA
- 3b. Why did you relocate to Wyoming County?
4. What do think that future holds for the economy of Wyoming County?
5. What is the best thing about operating a business in Wyoming County?
6. Do you find that business and economic assistance is readily available to you?
If no, do you have any suggestions on how to make improvements?

7a. Using the scale below, please rate each of the following from 1 to 5. If you do not know or if the service does not apply to you, select N/A.

City Service	Low	1	2	3	4	5	High	N/A
Building Code Enforcement Process		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Business Fee and Licensing		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Building Permit Process		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
City Access Cable Programming		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Economic Development Programs		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Electrical Services and Rates		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Emergency Medical Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Fire Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Housing and Redevelopment Programs		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Law Enforcement Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Library Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Natural Gas Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Parks and Recreation Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Sewer Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Street Lighting		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Street and Road Drainage		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Street and Sidewalk Maintenance		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Traffic Flow		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Water Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Community Service	Low	1	2	3	4	5	High	N/A
Air Transportation		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Availability of Business Capital		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Cable Television Services		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Cellular Phone Service		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Childcare		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Cost of Availability of Housing		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Educational Opportunities		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Employment and Training Programs		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Health Care		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
High Speed Internet Service		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Highway System		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Landline Telephone Service		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Overall Quality of Life		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Public Transportation (i.e. shuttle service)		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Recreational Opportunities		1	2	3	4	5		N/A

7b. Please provide additional information on any of the services that you rated as a 3 or less.

- 8a. Has your business ever had difficulty in getting access to financial resources (loans, for example)? If so, please explain.
- 8b. Does your business currently need financing assistance? If so, what type of assistance?
9. Over the past two years, have you had any experiences with local government regulations that have negatively impacted your business? If so, please explain.
10. What type of new regulations or government policies would be the most beneficial to your business?
11. Are you a member of a Chamber of Commerce in Wyoming County?
If no, would you be interested in joining a local Chamber of Commerce?
12. Do you have any suggestions on how to increase the health of the Wyoming County economy?
13. What are Wyoming County's **strengths** as a place to do business?
14. What are Wyoming County's **weaknesses** as a place to do business?

15. Are there any barriers to growth in Wyoming County?
If so, what are they?

Please provide us with information about your company's products or services. (Some questions may not be applicable to your business. Try to answer all the questions, but use "N/A" for those not applicable).

16. What are the main products and/or services that you provide? (Top four in order of importance)

A.

B.

C.

D.

17. Which of the following industries most closely matches your business? (circle one)

Manufacturing

Service

Retail

Technology

Other

18. Why do your customers buy from you instead of from your competitors?

19. At what stage in its life cycle is your business' primary product/service? (circle one)

Emerging

Growing

Maturing

Declining

20. During the last 5 years, has your business introduced new products/services/capabilities?

21. During the next 2 years, will you introduce any new products/services/capabilities?

22. Will your company's primary product, or how it is produced, be substantially changed by the introduction of new technology during the next 5 years?

If so, please explain.

Please provide us with some information about your business' market. (Some questions may not be applicable to your business. Try to answer all the questions, but use "N/A" for those not applicable).

23. Is your business' primary market (circle one):

Local Regional National International

24. Are total business sales (circle one):

Increasing Stable Decreasing

25. Does the company plan to expand in the next 3 years?

If yes, estimate dollar investment / estimated number of jobs to be created / estimated facility size increase / estimated date of expansion

Please provide us with information about changes in your business. (Some questions may not be applicable to your business. Try to answer all the questions, but use "N/A" for those not applicable).

26. In the last year, has the company's top management changed, or is it expected to change in the next 18 months?

If yes, please explain.

27. Please indicate whether the following projected utility needs for your facility will be increasing, stable or decreasing by marking the box that corresponds to your needs. (circle one for each type)

Type of Utility	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Data	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Electric	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Gas	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Sewer	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Telephone	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing
Water	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing

If increasing or decreasing, please explain why.

Please provide us with information regarding your business workforce. (Some questions may not be applicable to your business. Try to answer all the questions, but use “N/A” for those not applicable).

27. How many employees work at this business?

(Full Time: _____) (Part Time: _____)

28. How many employees are residents of West Virginia?

(Full Time: _____) (Part Time: _____)

29. How many employees have been laid off in the past 12 months?

(Full Time: _____) (Part Time: _____)

30. What is the average entry level wage (salary and hourly) at your company?

31. What is the average company wage (salary and hourly) at your company?

32. What is the average value of health benefits (salary and hourly) at your company?

33. Using a scale from 1 to 5, please rate the following. If you do not know or if the service does not apply, please select “N/A.”

	Low	1	2	3	4	5	High	N/A
Availability of workers		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Quality of workforce		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Stability of workforce		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Workforce training opportunities		1	2	3	4	5		N/A

34. Do you find that the number of positions you have open but cannot fill is: (circle one)

Increasing Stable Decreasing

35. Does your company have difficulty finding employees in any of the following groups (circle all that apply):

Skilled Trades (specify):	Plant operator	Machinery operator
Unskilled Labor (specify):	Farm Laborer	Computer Technology
Other (specify):	Clerical	Sales
Business Administration	Marketing	

36. What type of local employee training, if any, would you like to see offered?

37. Please list any local, state or federally-funded training programs your company has participated in over the last 2 years.

38. How many total current employees need to be trained?

39. How many of the following types of employees need training?
(Recent Hires: _____) (WV Residents: _____)
(Pre-Employment Trainees: _____)

40. Do you expect employment at your business to expand, contract, or stay the same in the **next year**?
(circle one)
Expand (by # _____) Contract (by # _____) Stay the same

41. Do you expect employment at your business to expand, contract, or stay the same in the **next five years**? (circle one)
Expand (by # _____) Contract (by # _____) Stay the same

Finally,

42. Are there any questions that you think we should have asked on this survey but were not included?

43. Is there anything else you would like to comment on in response to this survey?