



Strongsville Economic Development Department publishes small business guide

By Amanda Garrett, Sun Star-Courier

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STRONGSVILLE -- City economic development officials have designed a new small business guide to help local entrepreneurs start and maintain thriving businesses.

Ward 1 Councilman Michael Daymut announced at the Oct. 5 City Council meeting that the Economic Development and Technology Committee had completed its "Startup and Management Guide for Small Businesses." Daymut is chairman of the committee.

The guide, which is available at strongsville.org, is designed for a wide variety of entrepreneurs, said Richard Pinkerton, who was chairman of the subcommittee who developed the guide.

"This guide is for anyone contemplating starting a business or those who have already started a business. This guide is for everyone from the small companies that lease space in our strip malls to the dentist and doctor's office around town," Pinkerton said. "Even an independent State Farm Insurance agent could benefit from the guide." Pinkerton is a professor emeritus in logistics and marketing from California State University, Fresno.

"The lifeblood of American business is the small business community," he said. "We're thankful for the Parker Hannifan's and Eaton's of the world, but most companies will never reach the size of those giants."

Pinkerton's subcommittee was formed earlier this year, after the entire committee received the results from a retail and professional survey they conducted.

"We received many comments from business people asking for help in running their businesses and marketing," Pinkerton said.

Pinkerton, Mayor Thomas Perciak, Daymut, Economic Development Director Gene Magocky, Assistant Economic Development Director Brent Painter and Kelly Web, an assistant professor of technical writing and composition at the University of Akron are members of the subcommittee.

Before the group was satisfied with the guide they worked through four or five drafts. The entire committee approved the final copy at a Sept. 28 meeting.

"This is one of the most comprehensive guides I've ever seen," Daymut said. "We included information not only about Strongsville, but information about county, state and federal resources for business owners."

The nine-page guide includes an in-depth questionnaire that assesses an entrepreneur's readiness to start a business and several small business planning resources. There is information about available property in Strongsville, city tax incentives, a corporate relocation guide and city demographics.

Also included is information about state and county financing programs from the Ohio Department of Development, the Ohio treasurer and The Cuyahoga County Department of Development. There is also information about business incubators throughout northeast Ohio.

The Economic Development Department is making the guide available to Strongsville Chamber of Commerce

members, Painter said. The department is also e-mailing Strongsville business owners to let them know about the guide.

Entrepreneurs who have already seen the document have had a positive reaction, according to Daymut.

"Everyone I've talked to has been favorably impressed," he said.

A benefit of having the document on the Internet is that the subcommittee can add to it anytime, the councilman added. "It's an evolving document. If there's a new tax break or a new program sponsored by the Ohio Department of Development we can add it in," Daymut said.

*To view the guide, visit **strongsville.org** and click on the economic development link. Hard copies are also available by calling the Economic Development Department at (440) 580-3115.*

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