

Olivette

...in the center of it all

City of Olivette Business Communications Plan



Olivette Communication Plan for Business

Initiative Background

Small and large businesses play a critical role in fostering the economic vitality of a community, generating both jobs for residents and revenue for a city. It is important for city leaders to understand effective strategies for supporting and encouraging business development within their community. Whether it's creating space for innovation, cutting red tape or proactively engaging the business community, there are many successful approaches that can be adopted by the City of Olivette.

Olivette wants to foster a climate that encourages all businesses to involve themselves in the community, to grow and strive for success. A plethora of businesses create community resiliency and more successful businesses create a greater tax base to foster community functions and services. Unique and niche businesses lend character to our community. Small and mission-oriented businesses create organic rapport with residents and local amenities also contribute to the city's uniqueness and vitality – restaurants, stores, mom and pop shops shape Olivette's streetscapes and create an environment that make the City a desirable place for residents, workers, and tourists. **Live. Work. Play.** Our businesses sponsor and support the *Boo Bash, Turkey Trot, Parties in the Park*, and other events and functions held by the City.

Businesses play an essential role in the growth and development of cities worldwide. Today, *"the most forward-looking cities are actually reaching out to businesses with data, expert knowledge and partnership, rather than just words."*¹

Why Support Businesses?

Olivette's business engagement initiative will demonstrate the City's support for the business community and uncover opportunities to improve the business climate, find benefits for existing businesses and a means for the City to establish a meaningful and productive relationship with local businesses. Olivette is growing before our eyes. We want to be able to support a thriving business economy, to enhance neighborhood vibrancy, and to foster economic and social inclusion and equity.

According to a policy brief produced by the *Institute for Local Self-Reliance*, ²*"locally owned businesses play a central role in healthy communities and are among the best engines that cities and towns have for advancing economic opportunity. [They] are also linked to higher rates of job creation, less income inequality, and stronger social networks."*

¹ <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/how-cities-can-help-small-businesses-grow-and-thrive/>

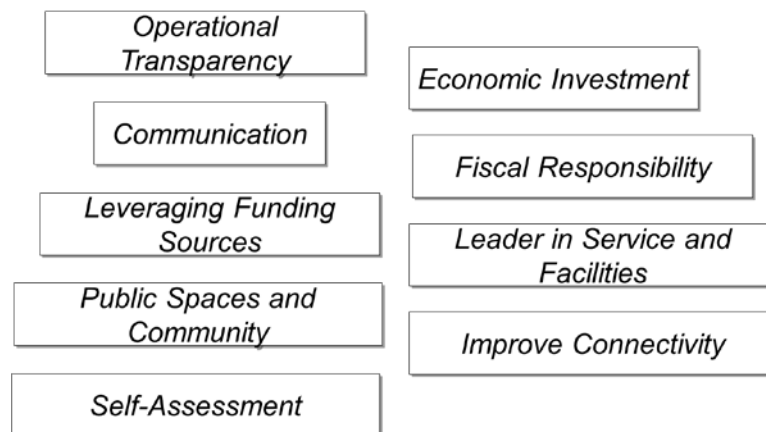
² <https://ilsr.org/8-policy-strategies-cities-can-use-to-support-local-businesses/>

³Connecting effectively and consistently with local businesses presents several benefits for the City Council.

- **it displays a commitment to involvement in the community, as well as to community empowerment and improvement.**
- **It plays a vital role in creating or building economic benefits for the entire community.**
- **It plays a vital role in creating and building social benefits in the community.**
- **It helps the community – and particularly community groups and their members – to become empowered. Because of this empowerment, and the knowledge gained, it means the community has more of a chance to find creative and worthwhile solutions to problems or issues that may be raised.**
- **It improves the community's perceptions of the City Council and raises the Council's profile across a wider area.**

City Council Goals and Objectives

This document proposes steps to foster a high-quality, efficient support system for all businesses; to develop tools, programs, and systems to address specific gaps that are vital to the City's economic growth; and to enhance community engagement and partnerships.

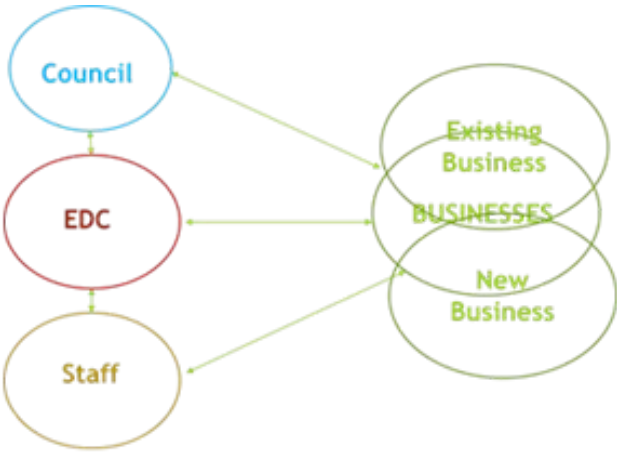


Goal 5: Create opportunities for economic development and retain and improve existing businesses

Objective: Development of a communication plan for exchanging information with businesses—to include EDC and/or staff meetings with business owners.

³ https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/business/view_help_sheet.jsp?articleId=1383

Target Audiences



What does Olivette want from Businesses?

1. *How we help them build?*
2. *How we can provide more information from City?*
3. *Why did they choose Olivette?*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure they stay in Olivette (or help them find another home) Understand their growth and challenges Develop funding potential Celebrate Success
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make them aware of Olivette Low Vacancy Highest and Best use of land/buildings Olivette stays relevant (new forms of businesses)

What do Businesses want from Olivette?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be left alone Advertising/Marketing of business Increased sales Low Crime City Good Customer Service Information on City events??
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A "deal" for coming to the City Straightforward and easy permitting process Ready workforce Low Crime City Good Customer Service

Proactively Engaging the Business Community: What Are Other Cities Doing?

New York City – Webpage and Starter Guides to the City

The City of New York created a webpage for new and existing businesses.

The City offers “**Starter Guides**,” - entrepreneurs can find easily accessible information regarding the specific business that they intend to open, and the laws that are directly applicable to their work. By making this information user-friendly, New York has lowered the barriers to starting a business, thereby creating a culture of opportunity for all.

Cincinnati – *Small Business Committee*

Establishing a city with a culture of supporting small businesses and innovation requires the business community having a voice at the table. In Cincinnati, the **Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC)**, which includes representation from small business owners in the community, was developed to serve as a counsel to the Mayor, City Council and other local leaders on issues that impact small businesses.

Maryland, Minneapolis and San Francisco – *Small Business Offices and Navigator*

⁴ Cities can create a position within city government to guide business owners through local permitting requirements, and to serve as a liaison between small businesses and policymakers. Models include a Small Business Navigator office such as those in **Montgomery County, Md.**, and **Minneapolis**, or a Small Business Commission, such as the one in **San Francisco**.

Detroit – *Business Directory*

⁵ The City of Detroit wanted to make business services and resources more assessible. The City created a comprehensive directory, called **BizGrid**, to help business owners find out about funding opportunities, legal assistance, office space, manufacturing facilities and business planning and marketing resources available to them. The tool is available online and distributed by 50 organizations in the city.

Seattle- *On-site Business Consulting*

⁶ Seattle provides on-site business consulting. Seattle's economic development office launched a program called **GrowSeattle** that consults small businesses on everything from getting financing to licensing and taxes to environmental sustainability. The program's Citywide Business Advocacy Team aims to visit at least 500 Seattle small businesses every year and consults on everything from getting financing to expanding a business to licensing and taxes to environmental sustainability.

Various- *Business Diversity Ordinance*

⁷A Business Diversity Ordinance can ensure that independent, neighborhood-serving businesses don't get crowded out by chains. Municipalities around the country, from

⁴ <https://ilsr.org/8-policy-strategies-cities-can-use-to-support-local-businesses/>

⁵ <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/4-ways-cities-can-help-small-business-owners-succeed/>

⁶ <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/4-ways-cities-can-help-small-business-owners-succeed/>

⁷ <https://ilsr.org/8-policy-strategies-cities-can-use-to-support-local-businesses/>

Fredericksburg, Texas, to Jersey City, have used this tool effectively. San Francisco's 12-year-old policy is one of the most comprehensive. It requires a "formula" business to apply for a special use permit and meet criteria in order to locate in any of the city's neighborhood commercial districts.

Communication Approach

City Council Objectives and Key Messages:

- Develop mutually beneficial partnerships
- Share our individual and joint successes with the world
- Create and build a stronger community
- Create a communication strategy that streamlines the **sharing of information**, tells our **success stories** locally and regionally, and creates and **strengthens relationships** between the City and businesses.

Retention and Expansion

⁸Today most communities are stepping up their efforts to retain and expand businesses in their local economy. Business retention and expansion has become key to economic development strategies with the goal of building and keeping successful businesses that will have a sustainable economic impact on the community. Marketing and communications efforts and strategies will adjust depending on potential and current businesses. It is imperative to keep current businesses in the public eye by praising its contributions, while providing ease in services from the City. Branding and pitch are important for generating interest in Olivette as a place and community businesses want to be in. ⁹Cities that can provide businesses with good, concise information about relevant factors – economic performance, wellbeing of the population and where entrepreneurs are located, for example – will be the ones that attract investment

- 1. What are the identified marketing tactics to retain?*
- 2. What are the identified marketing tactics to expand?*

Branding

One of the challenges that the City of Olivette may encounter is the reputation of the City as a historically difficult place to work with.

Prior to fully implementing the recommendations outlined in this business communication plan, the City should take into consideration how the function of marketing should operate and be managed with leveraging interactions with potential and current businesses. A dedicated and centralized effort to controlling the accuracy, consistency and frequency of the City's marketing will be most effective in reshaping the City's image for LIVE WORK and PLAY.

⁸ <https://www.buxtonco.com/blog/what-not-to-do-to-retain-business-in-your-community>

⁹ <https://www.granthornton.global/en/insights/growthiq/five-ways-to-attract-business-investment-to-your-city/>

Recommendation: Bridge the gap between the City's external reputation and its internal reality; the external perception of the City is out of sync with what the City and community see as reality.

- Define mission and vision of City
- With new developments underway, this is a primary time to reshape the image and brand of Olivette.
- Ensure accuracy, consistency, and frequency in all internal and external communication efforts.
- Increase awareness of Olivette's position to develop credibility, trust and transparency.
- Know Olivette community's culture and BUILD. How is Olivette described by people on the outside looking in? How do residents feel about themselves? Managing the messaging around culture is an important part of showcasing a community for potential business.

Media Relations

By focusing on establishing relationships with regional media, Olivette can generate positive news exposure about its development potential, increase coverage around new City programs or services, or showcase the regional benefits to potential businesses and residents that are considering relocating.

¹⁰*"The biggest challenge that many places face is taking control of their identity and reputation which have been unmanaged for a long time."*

Bill Baker, Destination Branding for Small Cities, 2012

Current Business Engagement Structures

Olivette prides itself on being business friendly and proactive in attracting new developments that will grow our local economy. This section identifies some of the main business engagement structures already in place and supported by the City Council. However once established, most of the engagement comes in the form of donations and vendor partnerships with businesses. It is imperative collaborations between cities and business hold out the promise of significant progress in improving long-term economic growth, resilience and quality of life.

The Planning and Community Development Department

The Planning and Community Development Department oversees and communicates the development, construction and logistical side to businesses, residential and nonresidential properties including building code requirements, building permitting, land use permitting.

The department also provides support for businesses through the [Business Guide](#), [Dining Guide](#) and [walking and bike map](#).

¹⁰ <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/b2005056/files/uploaded/Place%20Branding%20Excerpt.pdf>

Established Business Engagement Structures

1. Turkey Trot
2. Parks and Recreation events (Movies in the Park, Parties in the Park, Harvest Fest & Boo Bash)
3. Coffee with the Mayor
 - a. Business edition with *Really Big Coloring Books Inc. & Pedal the Cause* 9/18/2019
 - b. 39 North will be the Coffee with the Mayor guest on 2/12/2019
4. Coffee with a Cop
 - a. Olivette Diner 9/7/2019, Banducci McDonald's 10/2/2019, Fallon's 12/15/2019
5. Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening Ceremony
 - a. Kickin' Crab 9/26/2019
6. Improved Wayfinding Signage
 - a. Highlighting businesses and the growing business district and Olivette corridor.
 - b. Coordinate resources and ease burdensome regulations by mapping and making more accessible the resources that already exist.

Requirements for a Business Engagement Strategy

A priority for the City Council and is to develop a better understanding of business priorities for growth and infrastructure development. The City Council also has an important role in supporting the sharing of information and networking within the business community.

The City of Olivette can employ several different tactics to achieve its communication approach.

Olivette Life

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special section on doing business in Olivette • Highlight business's anniversary, milestones • Recognize awards or designations • Feature on New businesses in Olivette • Feature stories on low-crime, housing stock, school district, local events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding the stories (BizJournal and STLToday news-watch) • Finding a contact

Olivette Website

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve content in the “Doing Business” section • Feature news articles about local businesses • Create an “available space” section on the website on which landlords/property owners can advertise • Feature stories on low-crime, school district, housing local events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping information updated and relevant (Allow businesses to submit stories and information through a link) <p>Example: Claytonmo.com</p>

Creve Coeur Olivette Chamber of Commerce

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise events/updates on CCOCC website • Attend events where City business will be in attendance • Hold Chamber events at the City Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time (Make attendance at events a priority)

Survey

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a survey(s) to identify business satisfaction with City services/staff/policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to create a “solid” survey (hire professional for assistance) • Participation – (so up-front work to prepare businesses for survey) • Identifying the individual within the business most appropriate to respond (professional assistance or ?)

Local and Regional Print, Radio, Trade outlets

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase interest stories in local publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase interest stories in local publications

Social Media (FB, Instagram, Twitter, Next Door):

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with local businesses • Highlight business’s anniversary, milestones • Recognize awards or designations • Tell success City’s stories – new or existing businesses share their experience working with City Council/staff/departments/commissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting information from businesses – may need to use other sources (BizJournal, STLToday, Business FB pages) • Establishing a contact (Introduction of Communications Mgr to local businesses)

Recommendations

Below is a list of recommendations the Council can discuss, consider and implement as next steps. The strategies and recommendations captured in this report will lay the foundation for a rich business communication plan that can expand and mature.

New Businesses

1. Outline a streamlined process when new businesses arrive to Olivette (Planning and Community Development)

For business owners, it can be easy to think of the City process as a hassle. Olivette wants a clear process from start to finish to ensure we efficiently support business and foster growth.

- a. Identify a contact person at the City Center for new and existing businesses. This trained professional will be the primary contact to support interested parties, businesses owners and business service organizations. This person will also connect businesses with the appropriate Olivette staff member for further engagement.
- b. Identify all City employees who interact with businesses to serve as additional business navigators.
- c. Create a new business e-mail address.

Existing Businesses

2. Expand awareness and gain insight of the City's position and vision by engaging with key businesses through informal drop-ins. (City Staff, Council, EDC)

Tasks:

- Identify and select businesses
- Create calendar of visits

Questions:

- a. *What is the City doing well?*
- b. *How has business been?*
- c. *What could the City do better?*

Desired Outcomes:

- Recruit successful Olivette businesses and develop as brand ambassadors
- Educate regional leaders and industry partners on the City's positioning and messaging
- Target businesses across multiple industries and develop testimonials to publish on Olivette's website

Business Support & Acknowledgment

3. Create a Business page on Website (City Manager, Communications Manager)

With the website redesign, launch a new web portal to integrate and publicize existing resources for businesses and offer a variety of new tools and resources for small businesses.

- a. The up- to-date business section on the website will provide information about additional programs and support, service organizations, vacant commercial space, online permitting, business directory, licensing and zoning tools, events calendar and checklist for new business starters.

4. Highlight Businesses in Olivette Life and on Social Media (Communications Manager)

- a. Push the #OlivetteStrong hashtag on social media platforms
- b. Write and Pitch Articles on Local Businesses; Highlight on Social Media (Previous articles/highlights: Really Big Coloring Books, Pedal the Cause, Kickin' Crab, Fallon's, Turkey Trot Sponsors)

5. Send updates to the Creve Coeur Olivette Chamber of Commerce (Communications Manager)

6. Build Relationships with Organizations in the Surrounding Area: (*i.e.* innovative working sessions, support and partnerships.)

- a. Communications Manager Kiana Fleming will attend and promote Venture Cafés at the Danforth Plant Science Center.
- b. Communications Manager Kiana Fleming was asked to join the marketing committee of 39 North by Karla J. Roeber Vice President Public and Government Affairs at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center on 10/21/2019.
- c. Communications Manager Kiana Fleming will continue to build working relationships, opportunity zones, and partnerships with:
 - i. Karla J. Roeber; Vice President Public and Government Affairs at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center
 - ii. Janet Wilding; Vice President of Major Projects and 39N
 - iii. Julie Goddard Marketing Manager of Banducci Enterprises, Inc. - McDonald's

1. City staff attended the Ronald McDonald Charity event on 12/18/2019

7. Continue to have available parking, appropriate lighting, orderly trash pick-up, low crime and beautification of Olivette. (Public Works)

Bruce Katz, of the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution stated:

¹¹"If you ask a particular citizen or business located in Boston or a suburb of Boston why they stay, they'll tell you they want clean streets, they want safe streets, they want good schools, they want fluid traffic and transport options, they want a government that's actually transparent."

Community Engagement

8. Invitations to Coffee with the Mayor (Mayor, Communications Manager)

9. Host Coffee with a Cop at Local Businesses (Chief of Police, Communications Manager)

10. Olivette Restaurant Night Out (City Staff, Council, EDC)

- a. Could Olivette support a day called "Olivette Restaurant Night Out" when the City declares one day of the year to dine out locally?
 - i. Turkey Trot eve

11. Create and encourage to shop local campaigns (Communications Manager TBD)

- a. Olivette Life coupons for local businesses

12. Continue to use Olivette businesses as sponsors for Citywide events

Evaluation

The City of Olivette will monitor to evaluate whether the objectives have been achieved.

Examples:

- *Media monitoring – check newspapers for stories, mentions*
- *Analytics- Website and Social media hits and views for stories on local businesses*
- *Feedback (formal and informal)– from survey*
- *Event statistics - attendance (numbers) at networking event*

¹¹ <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/how-cities-can-help-small-businesses-grow-and-thrive/>

Conclusion: Businesses and the City of Olivette

The principles addressed through the Olivette Business Communications Plan will support with a level of aspiration improved relationships between Olivette and the businesses we serve. Olivette's business efforts are divided across many departments which have direct responsibility for activities and relationship building. As part of this plan, the City will work to integrate the leadership, strategy, delivery, and marketing of programs and activities. Improved citywide partnerships and networks will strengthen the City's business environment, while increasing accessibility, connectivity and community.

Businesses thrive when they are surrounded by a robust ecosystem of resources and opportunities— and when they can feel at home in the City in which they reside. At the core of this plan is a commitment by the City of Olivette to play an integrative role in achieving this vision and to invest in both proven and innovative recommendations to help businesses succeed. In turn, this support will strengthen Olivette's economy, drive transparency and community, and enhance neighborhood vibrancy throughout the city.

Business Communications Plan Reviewed

First Draft: November 5th, City Council Work Session

Second Draft: November 12th, City Council Meeting

Second Draft: January 6th, EDC Meeting

Third Draft: February 4th, City Council Work Session

Third Draft: February 11th, City Council Meeting