

## IEDC

### COVID-19: Rethinking BR&E in the COVID-19 Era Webinar, May 6, 2020

#### Executive Summary

- Previous era stimulus packages were designed to bolster the economy and create confidence
- COVID-19 \$2.3 trillion CARES Act stimulus is designed to “tread water” until recovery comes
- COVID-19 reversed a dynamic and strong economy in 45 days
  - 30 million jobs lost
  - Hospitality, Restaurant and Retail sectors hit hardest
  - Tech companies are “holding on”
- A “V” shaped recovery?
  - 4<sup>th</sup> quarter rebound is too optimistic, likely a 2021 bounce back

#### **Economic developers are problem solvers and communicators**

- Their work is actionable and winnable, with cause and effect
- Educated and immersed in commerce
- COVID-19 disruptions are foreign to economic developers because it is a health-related cause, without a definable end or easy solutions

#### **Traditional Business Retention and Expansion Programs**

- Usually manageable, rational and finite
- Calls/visits are made to companies, with actionable items generated
- An ordered response to the items (labor, utilities, supply chain, taxes, grants, etc.)

#### **Post-COVID-19 Business Retention and Expansion Programs**

- 80-90% of businesses are affected
- Very different scenarios
- Re-Invent Business Retention and Expansion
  - All hands on deck
  - There should be a fixation for the immediate future for economic developers
  - To be relevant, be a consumer of information, related to COVID-19:
    - WHO, OSHA, CDC, AMA, NIH, ADA, FEMA, SBA, Johns Hopkins University
  - Become “close to expert” on health issues
  - Determine how can you provide value-added information to your business community
  - Hear what the businesses are saying, and become their advocate
  - Create buy local campaigns
  - Create matchmaker programs to stir economic activity
  - Source PPE manufacturers in your community
  - Develop procurement initiatives to find local, state, regional and federal opportunities
  - No longer a one-to-one initiative, as virtually all businesses need support

- Eliminate individual calls, emails and visits, and use technology to reach many companies collectively and seek feedback (Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc.)
- Elected officials should participate in “town hall” sessions to be informed

### **COVID-19 Pandemic Outcomes and Priorities**

- This pandemic will accelerate Artificial Intelligence (AI), autonomous vehicles, drones, robotics, etc.
- Antithetical to traditional job creation, we will find ways to socially distance employees
- Require building of a new business structure that creates a foundation for future pandemic impacts
- Hard hit industries:
  - How do you transition workers?
  - Partner with Workforce Services to move abundance of workers to new opportunities in the new economy
  - Working with educational institutions, create quick start entrepreneurial programs
  - Expand your resource partners network to include day care, food banks, community emergency operations, hospitals, mental health, department of health, research institutions

### **In Review**

- Be well versed in pandemic health information
- Be a reliable and consistent source of value-added information
- Think beyond traditional BR&E programs
- Build a robust resource team
- Focus time, money and resources on a strong BR&E program
- Embed disaster preparedness resiliency into the BR&E program

Further information is available at IEDC's [www.restoreyoureconomy.org](http://www.restoreyoureconomy.org)