The key to business vitality is having a strong, locally-owned business base that has the capacity to endure and grow in today’s rapidly changing economy. While every rural business faces unique challenges, there are proactive and proven economic development strategies that can help existing businesses recognize their full potential. RDI’s Business Vitality services will help you retain and expand local businesses so that your community can achieve the following objectives:

- Keep or increase local jobs;
- Preserve or increase the local tax base;
- Increase local property values;
- Enhance community image and business climate;
- Maintain or diversify the economic base.

RDI’s specially trained and certified economic development practitioners will work hand-in-hand with local leaders in designing and delivering customized business retention and expansion services that address your community’s unique business needs. We follow an outlined process that will help you complete the following:

1. Assess local business climate and needs
   - Identify businesses with a commitment to resolving issues that affect their long-term success.
   - Assess the condition of local businesses and the type and extent of assistance needed by using a customized outreach and visitation process that emphasizes relationship and trust building between program delivery partners and the business community.

2. Develop business outreach and visitation processes including:
   - Organizing and training a local task force to conduct business visitations.
   - Recruit and visit pre-determined firms.
   - Develop immediate follow-up assistance strategies.
   - Review and synthesize gathered business information.
   - Formulate and implement strategies to address business needs.

3. Leverage and deliver existing local and regional resources to businesses and connect to outside expertise including:
   - Brokering public and private sector resources to small businesses in your community.
   - Helping business owners obtain business planning assistance.
   - Connecting businesses to capital providers or other technical expertise.
   - Help businesses apply for financing.
   - Identify specific aspects of management or operations where business owners may be deficient and help them find appropriate assistance.

80% of new job growth comes from local, established, existing businesses.

RDI is ready to engage two communities or regions with our Business Vitality Service.

Would you like to increase Business Vitality in your community? Please contact us for an Application Form!

RDI helps rural leaders take action to reach their economic vitality goals.

RDI works with your community to proactively create a unified economic vision.

Contact Us!
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Business Vitality Fast Facts

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About RDI

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How can RDI help you start a Business Vitality Initiative?
If you’re considering launching a Business Vitality initiative, are confident in your ability to implement a long-term economic development strategy, and are looking for guidance and support, we are here to help! Below is a summary of how RDI can help you build and sustain a Business Vitality Initiative.

1. Provide information and support outreach efforts to communities, businesses, and organizations about Business Vitality opportunities.

2. Help advise and build program infrastructure that may include:
   - Organizing, assembling, and training business visitation teams
   - Reviewing strategies for engaging businesses
   - Developing information collecting methods and processes for review
   - Creating a business follow-up strategy
   - Help target and develop business vitality funding plan

3. Help target and design priority projects to meet business needs

4. Connect businesses with capital providers and technical expertise where appropriate

5. Provide guidance on Business Vitality summary reports (if completed)

What does RDI’s assistance look like?
Typically, Business Vitality Initiatives take six months to launch. During this time, RDI can provide on-the-ground support from one of our technically trained professionals. As the initiative launches and is implemented, RDI can provide ongoing coaching and support. Direct support may include;

- Up to four day-long, in-person visits with Business Vitality professional over a six-month period
- Up to 200 hours of virtual coaching over a 12-month period – this includes helping conduct secondary research and analysis as business needs arise
- Access to business financing expertise and counsel
- Up to four hours of program evaluation expertise

Getting Started:
RDI has a simple two-step application process in getting you started.
1. Review the Business Vitality Program Summary Sheet
2. Complete the Business Vitality Application Form

Please direct questions and return the application form to Michael Held at mheld@rdiinc.org, 541.684.9077 ext. 22