

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Partnership for Community Growth & Development

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Business Retention Report is Available

The Partnership for Community Growth & Development partnered with Aquila and the City of Liberty to purchase and implement a business retention software and system called Synchronist. "Business retention is a critical component of successful economic development programs. We are working to retain businesses in Liberty, which benefits the community by maintaining jobs, encouraging expansion investments and consequently growing the tax base," said Partnership executive director, Alicia Stephens. The one-on-one business visits completed by the Partnership were part of the contract for services with the City of Liberty.

"The Synchronist report will provide valuable information to the City Council and staff," said Liberty Mayor Robert Steinkamp. "Coupled with detailed information that will be gleaned from the Partnership's follow-up meetings with respondents, it is one of many tools that we and the Partnership can use, independently and collectively, to foster strong and lasting relationships with Liberty's business community."

The Synchronist survey tool asked questions about market, workforce, expansion and growth plans, just to name a few. During the interview, there is an opportunity for general comments. 30 of the 32 businesses interviewed provided feedback about the community in general.

Community weaknesses noted included:

- A need to improve planning was mentioned most frequently (18). Half of those (9) said it was getting better and have high hopes for improvement.
- The next most common comment was regarding traffic (12) noting that congestion on 152 and 291 was bad. Many noted that the South Liberty Parkway and the future Flintlock overpass will alleviate some of the problem.
- Another comment heard often was regulatory enforcement (11) with those believing it is not objective, is too restrictive, lacks common sense or is inconsistent.

Community strengths noted were:

- Quality of life is tied to other high ranking factors such as Liberty's location in the metro area, excellent emergency services provided by the City and the Liberty school district which received high marks with the business community.

- Ten businesses praised Liberty's processes, provision for community input and current leadership.
- Liberty is seen as an excellent physical location for business with good accessibility to I-35, I-435 and Highways 152, 291 and 69.
- The business community is pleased with its workforce, giving it high marks in productivity and quality.

Aquila Manager of Economic Development, John Engelmann, said, "Aquila is committed to supporting economic development efforts in Liberty. We do our best to partner with our communities in ways that assist them in business development." Engelmann also serves as chairman of the Partnership.

The full report is available on the Partnership website: www.thinklibertymo.com click on News and then Business Retention Report.

If you have questions about the report or if you are a Liberty business that would like to participate, contact the Partnership at 816/407-9242.

The Partnership for Community Growth & Development is a not-for-profit organization which is funded by private and public dollars.