

Who: Petaluma Hispanic businesses and workers, including retailers, artists, specialty food processors, hoteliers, restaurants and non-profits.

What: Petaluma Hispanic Business Strategy Focus Group Meeting

When: Tuesday, Feb. 23 @ 6PM to 9PM

Where: Petaluma Community Center, 320 N. McDowell Blvd in the Crafts Room #1

Why: Address the needs of Hispanic businesses and workers in Petaluma and the North Bay.

The focus group will be facilitated by Ms. Kathryn Studwell, Senior Associate with Applied Development Economics, Inc. Ms. Studwell has nearly 30 years experience working with business and community leaders to re-invigorate local and regional economies.

Some of the topics to be discussed:

- What are some examples of Hispanic-owned businesses in Petaluma?
- How competitive are these businesses?
- What do they need to be successful and to expand?
- Is Petaluma a good place to run a business?
- What 2 or 3 things can the City do to support expansion of Hispanic companies?
- What industries do Petaluma Hispanics work in?
- What occupations?
- What do workers need to advance in their careers or occupations?

At the request of the City Council, Petaluma hired Applied Development Economics (ADE) to prepare an economic development strategy. As part of its research, ADE is conducting a series of group interviews and public focus groups with business and industry. The purpose of these interviews and focus groups is to inform the process of developing an action plan for the City's economic development program. We want to better understand opportunities for business growth and expansion and how public policies can support that growth.