

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING

HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ron Leone, Chair

Dan Helix, Committee Member

5:30 p.m., Monday, May 5, 2014

**Building A, Garden Conference Room
1950 Parkside Drive, Concord**

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

1. **CONSIDERATION** – A Proposed Economic Development Marketing Initiative. Report by John Montag, Redevelopment/Housing Manager.
2. **ADJOURNMENT**

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON
HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****TO HONORABLE COMMITTEEMEMBERS:**

DATE: May 5, 2014

SUBJECT: A PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING INITIATIVE**Report in Brief**

The City Council Subcommittee on Housing and Economic Development is requested to provide input and direction on a proposed Economic Development marketing campaign and associated funding. The marketing effort would communicate Concord's strengths to business decision makers using traditional media. The marketing initiative would also promote Concord's quality of life and unique amenities to a broader general audience. The goals of the marketing initiative would be for these businesses to locate their facilities and operations in Concord and to promote Concord's community strengths to the general public. The campaign would use BART station billboards, newspapers, radio, and print media. Some of the advertising would use "special sections" of the newspaper that would feature Concord's business environment and special amenities that make Concord unique in the Bay Area. Economic Development staff would have control over the content and messaging in these special sections. Staff will present examples of these special sections that have been done for other cities or regions for your review at the meeting, as these samples are not available electronically.

The components and associated costs for the proposed marketing effort are as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| • San Francisco Business Times 12 page special section | \$40,000 |
| • San Francisco Chronicle Eight page special section | \$25,000 |
| • Contra Costa Times Eight Page special section | \$26,000 |
| • BART Platform Advertisement | \$16,000 |
| • Radio: KCBS, KYCY and KQED | \$45,000 |
| • Oakland Magazine | <u>\$10,000</u> |

Total Proposed Cost: \$162,000

The proposed funding source would come from the General Fund and would be included in next fiscal year's budget as part of the Economic Development program operating budget, if supported by the Committee and approved by the City Council.

Background

The City of Concord has a 2010 Economic Vitality Strategy (Attachment 1) that provides a long term comprehensive approach to economic development. The first plan was approved in 1997, and updated in 2002 and 2009. The Economic Vitality Strategy helped shape the General Plan's Economic Development element that outlines the General Plan's support for business growth and development.

At the November 13, 2012 City Council meeting, the City Council approved an Economic Development action plan (Attachment 2) to address Economic Development initiatives post Redevelopment Dissolution. The Council was supportive of the Action Plan as it provided a means to continue to advance the City's Economic Development efforts in a strategic and cost effective manner.

One of the items mentioned in the Action Plan was the potential to use traditional advertisement to promote Concord's economic development opportunities to the business community. The use of traditional media outlets was dependent on allocation of additional funding to place targeted advertisements.

Currently, the economic climate in the Bay Area is improving. There has been tremendous growth in the South Bay and San Francisco Bay areas. Growth in the East Bay is generally behind that of the South Bay and San Francisco Bay areas, however, San Francisco office rents continue to climb, which have historically resulted in businesses fleeing to lower cost office/commercial locations in the East Bay.

Concord has experienced recent leasing activity in its office and manufacturing segments with leases recently signed by Asset Mark, Amtrust (consolidated offices from San Francisco and San Ramon) and Fresenius. In addition, Concord's retail commercial market continues to see positive signs with the successful openings of businesses such as Lazy Dog, Uniqlo, and Lucille's Barbeque, and soon to open Hobby Lobby and Ulta.

The City of Concord is well positioned to take advantage of potential business attraction and expansion in the market. Concord is the County's business center and continues to attract businesses to its dynamic office buildings, retail centers and industrial parks. Concord offers attractive and well-appointed Class A office products at a lower cost of doing business. Concord's competitive commercial rents and business friendly local government are also key factors for businesses locating in Concord.

Concord is known as a City that partners with its business community. Concord supports and is actively engaged with the John F. Kennedy University Accelerator Program, which provides business mentoring and education to entrepreneurs and startup businesses and business associations such as the Todos Santos Business Association, Monument Business Network, Concord Small Business Association and the Concord Chamber of Commerce.

The City's Economic Development staff has used traditional advertising in the past through business/local newspapers, national site selection magazines as well as sponsoring regional business events. These types of advertisements along with staff's one-on-one presentations to decision-makers, property owners and real estate professionals have positioned Concord as a strong viable business location in the Bay Area.

Given the improving economy, there now exists an opportunity to be more aggressive in promoting Concord's attributes and in capturing the economic growth being experienced in the Bay Area by increasing Concord's presence in the minds of business leaders looking for new locations or locations where they can expand. Concord can do this by strengthening its marketing efforts as discussed in the following section

Discussion

Implementing a marketing campaign to specific audiences entails executing various strategies to communicate some of the great attributes that Concord has to offer. The proposed plan would focus messaging to the general public, general businesses, entrepreneurs, and real estate professionals. Messaging would also include Concord's superior quality of life including safe and attractive neighborhoods, extensive recreation, parks and trails, as well as popular and unique downtown community events.

To communicate to the general public, staff would use newspaper "Special Sections" to promote Concord's amenities spanning from its popular restaurant options to the popular retail experiences one can have in Concord. It would also allude to the opportunities and timing of the development of the Concord Naval Weapons Station, which will have a regional interest. These Special Sections would also send a clear message that Concord is home to a variety of businesses that are thriving. These marketing pieces would run in the *Contra Costa Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

While "Special Sections" run by other communities mainly focus on food and other related stories, Concord's sections would showcase its high quality of life amenities, its safe and proud neighborhoods while also featuring successful Concord businesses. Concord is the business and job center for Contra Costa County. Businesses locate in Concord to achieve a lower cost of doing business, access to skilled employees, in a central location with a high quality of life in a community that is safe, welcoming and well run. These attributes, as well as others, need to be promoted to potential businesses looking in the market, entrepreneurs looking to start a new business, to real estate professionals who are not familiar with Concord and to existing businesses who are considering expansion opportunities.

The proposed plan also seeks to place a special pullout section in the *San Francisco Business Times* highlighting the advantages Concord has to offer businesses as well as the diverse high quality commercial products available in Concord today that includes Class A office and Research and Development space, as well as life science/laboratory/distribution space.

By using the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Contra Costa Times* and *San Francisco Business Times*, Concord's message would reach essentially the entire San Francisco Bay Area. Extra runs of these special sections would also be obtained for Economic Development staff's use at tradeshows, business events and direct marketing efforts. Staff would coordinate this effort with the City's Community Relations Manager, Leslye Asera, and Visit Concord, the tourism group initiating its own marketing of Concord amenities. Where there are additional opportunities identified to use these media messages, staff will be ready and able to deploy them.

In addition, the plan looks to place advertisements on radio stations such as KCBS, KKDV and KQED to reinforce Concord's messages to the Bay Area. These messages will be short, between 15 to 30 seconds, and would support the print media. The radio spots will drive people to go to the City's Economic

Development web site or to contact staff directly for assistance to those businesses looking to find the right location.

Staff also proposes to use advertising at certain BART stations containing messages that draw businesses and entrepreneurs to Concord. Stations would be selected based upon heavy commute patterns. The messaging would essentially represent Concord as a city that cares about businesses so they can grow and succeed, versus cities that are too big and are often not focused on small businesses.

Staff would create these advertisements after working with key stakeholders to insure the messages and placements are as effective as possible. In particular, staff would partner with Visit Concord marketing consultants Good Creative, key property owners such as Swift Partners, Sierra Pacific Properties, JCM Partners, Sunvalley and Willows Shopping Centers and their respective marketing staff to get their input on how to maximize the proposed marketing campaign.

Staff will use the proposed marketing campaign in part to support the social media efforts currently being developed. In particular, staff has produced Economic Development focused videos for Concord's YouTube and Facebook presence. The advertisements will mention Concord's social media outlets to bolster viewership as well as communicate that the City has an active social media presence.

The desired outcome from the proposed marketing initiative is to increase traffic to Concord's Economic Development web site, increase social media visits, increase business requests for locating in Concord and have Concord uppermost in the business community's and general public's mind in a positive way. Staff will monitor the frequency of web site hits and social media visits as well as obtain anecdotal information from key stakeholders should they hear or observe an increase in business inquiries through the public's general comments.

The use of advertisements and related marketing initiatives to promote Concord is supported by the City's 2010 Economic Vitality Strategy (Attachment 1). The Strategy was developed as a long term approach to economic development to facilitate a stable/healthy business environment, retain, attract and expand businesses, increase the City's tax base in order to ensure long term fiscal stability along with a number of other outcomes as described in the Economic Vitality Strategy.

One of the goals set forth in the strategy is: Develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated Economic Development Marketing Strategy to strengthen Concord's image and brand identity among key target industries. To support this goal, the strategy called for staff to carry out advertising campaigns on radio, television, and other broadcast media that are selected based on their cost-effective ability to reach targeted audiences. Over the years, Staff has implemented marketing initiatives using local and regional media to promote Concord but with the loss of Redevelopment funding, staff has been unable to implement marketing campaigns for approximately the last four years.

Staff will continue to implement its on-going outreach efforts to the business community to facilitate business attraction and business expansion to occur in Concord. In particular, staff will continue to attend industry trade shows and conferences such as the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) - the lead national retail association, Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) - the leading international association for biotechnology/life science businesses and Urban Land Institute (ULI) - the leading association for executives involved with real estate development and land use disciplines. These types of trade shows

generate business leads, provide industry trend information and networks Economic Development staff directly with important key industry decision makers.

Budget

The proposed marketing plan is estimated to cost \$162,000. Staff determined the budget by first looking at various media outlets that would be effective in reaching business people and the general public. Staff then determined the minimum amount of time the message could run to be effective. The marketing plan could be expanded or reduced and would therefore increase or decrease the proposed budget.

The City's Economic Development budget has \$40,000 set-aside for marketing that includes attending certain trade shows, placing advertisements, sponsorship of business events and related items. For next fiscal year, staff would propose requesting an additional \$122,000 for Economic Development marketing to fund the proposed marketing plan. Staff would recommend that if the plan is supported by the Housing and Economic Development Subcommittee and approved by Council, staff would evaluate the plan each year to determine if the plan should continue, be modified or eliminated.

Staff has discussed this request for additional funds for this proposal with Finance staff and the impact it would have on the City's budget. Funds to support the aforementioned advertising activities have not been included in the proposed FY 2014-15 Budget. Should the Housing & Economic Development Committee recommend that the City pursue all or any new marketing activities, members of the Committee may want to address the issue at the upcoming May 13 Budget Workshop. If so directed, staff will amend the Proposed FY 2014-15 Budget prior to the first Budget Hearing, which is scheduled for June 3, 2014. Any request for additional funds would need to be financed by the General Fund.

Time Frame

Marketing plans that convey messaging, branding or related themes tend to be sustained consistently for years in order to be impactful. Messages need to be heard numerous times for the general public/audience to begin to retain the messages. These types of plans can be very expensive to implement and are dependent on a number of factors such as the reach (the estimated number of potential customers that may hear or see the message being promoted), frequency (number of times an advertisement runs) and the length of time a plan is implemented.

The proposed marketing plan would be implemented over a four month period to provide for a concentrated outreach period to take place given the proposed budget. By implementing the marketing plan over a short period of time, the plan would attempt to saturate Concord's messages to increase the potential number of times the audience would hear or see the messages. Staff would propose to implement a similar strategy in future years so Concord's marketing can be effective over the long term. During the period when there is no paid advertising or marketing, staff would implement an aggressive public relations and social media campaign that would support the messaging over time. Staff would also work with partners such as Visit Concord and others to sustain the messaging being proposed.

A PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING INITIATIVE

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Fiscal Impact

In order to implement all of the above marketing initiatives, a total of \$122,000 of new general fund money would be needed within the Economic Development program (\$162,000 total of proposed marketing plan minus \$40,000 total proposed funding in draft FY14-15 budget = \$122,000 of new funding). The current funding for these types of programs in the Economic Development program's FY 13-14 budget is \$40,000.

Public Contact

The Chamber of Commerce, Sunvalley Mall, Willows Shopping Center, Swift, JCM Partners, Sierra Pacific Properties and Visit Concord have received notice of the meeting.

Recommendation for Action

Provide input on the proposed Economic Development marketing plan, and if supported in total or in part, direct staff to prepare a presentation for Council's consideration as part of the upcoming budget hearings.

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Attachment 1. 2010 Economic Vitality Strategy
Attachment 2. Economic Development Action Plan

Economic Vitality Strategy

2010 Update



Community Development Department
1950 Parkside Drive, MS/01B
Concord, CA 94519-2578



CITY OF CONCORD

MISSION:

The City of Concord is an integral part of the business community. The City fosters a premier business location by creating and implementing innovative and flexible strategies that foster business growth and profitability.

VISION:

Concord is a financially stable City that strives to preserve and enhance its strong business climate and the community's high quality of life.

VALUES:

The City of Concord is committed to promoting partnerships among all interests and solving problems creatively. The City anticipates its customers' needs, communicates clearly and consistently, and delivers prompt service.

For more information:

Call the Economic Development Program at 1-800-727-2254
or e-mail economic_development@ci.concord.ca.us
www.concordfirst.com



Gateway Buildings

City of Concord Economic Vitality Strategy

INTRODUCTION

This Economic Vitality Strategy is organized to provide the following: a discussion of Concord's place in the East Bay market, which includes current opportunities and challenges; identification of key industries for business attraction efforts; and descriptions of the primary goals and objectives that will guide the City's economic development efforts throughout the next five years.

The Economic Vitality Strategy sets the vision, goals, and priorities for all City efforts related to economic development. The Strategy is updated every five years, in coordination with the City's General Plan, Redevelopment Plan, and other policy documents.

This 2009 version of the Economic Vitality Strategy was put together with the help of many local business leaders, residents, property owners, and other stakeholders who participated in a series of 14 meetings that were held in April-June 2009. The Strategy also incorporates data and analysis

from the Contra Costa Council, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and other sources.

By taking a long-term, comprehensive approach to economic development, the City of Concord seeks to:

- Enhance Concord's quality of life;
- Facilitate a stable, healthy business environment;
- Retain, attract, and expand businesses in strategic industries;
- Expand the City's tax base to ensure long-term fiscal stability;
- Provide efficient, effective government services to Concord businesses;
- Promote high-quality job opportunities;
- Maintain a highly-skilled, competitive workforce;
- Support entrepreneurship and small business opportunities; and
- Revitalize Downtown and other business districts.

CONCORD'S POSITION IN THE EAST BAY MARKET

Concord is the largest business center in Contra Costa County. It is a destination for innovative and entrepreneurial businesses that require highly skilled labor. Concord offers the infrastructure and amenities that businesses need to succeed. Its vibrant business environment has attracted key firms and created ideal conditions for local businesses to expand. The City's commitment to families and to the business community fosters a high quality of life with attractive residential neighborhoods, excellent public safety and services, convenient mass transit, abundant recreation and entertainment for all ages. Concord is a community of safe and friendly neighborhoods with an excellent park system, convenient shopping, diverse dining opportunities, and large preserves of scenic open space.

Concord has distinguished itself as a premier business destination due to several key advantages:

- A central, convenient location;
- Best value for office/industrial space;
- Access to a tech-skilled workforce; and
- An efficient, responsive, business-friendly government.

Successes & Challenges

This 2009 update of the Vitality Strategy comes at a time when Concord faces several critical challenges and opportunities. On one hand, Concord has achieved some key successes in economic development since 2002, when the Vitality Strategy was last updated. These successes place Concord in an ideal position to significantly expand and upgrade existing businesses and to attract new business. Some of the City's most notable achievements include:

- Opening of Renaissance, Centre Point, Legacy, and other high-end residential projects.
- Completion of John Muir Health's Core Laboratory and 174,000 sq. ft. expansion of John Muir's Concord Campus.
- \$33 million remodel of Clayton Valley Shopping Center.

Bank of America Tech Center



- Attraction of major regional retail tenants to Sunvalley Shopping Center, the Willows, and the Park & Shop Center.
- Attraction of key shops and restaurants to the downtown.
- Construction of NorthPointe Business Park and other office projects in North Concord.
- Increasing attendance of concerts and events at Todos Santos Plaza to more than 200,000 visitors per year, including the Concordstock public art project.
- Attracting key retailers and restaurants, including: Sport Chalet, Lowes, BJ's Brewhouse, 99 Ranch, E.J. Phair's, Seafood City, and others.

Despite these successes, Concord's economy was affected by the 2008 nationwide recession, which resulted in over 10% unemployment and the closure of several financial services businesses. Presently, Concord faces an array of challenges and opportunities for its economy, including:

- Building Concord's image/identity
- The Concord Community Reuse Project (former Concord Naval Weapons Station)
- Opportunities to attract emerging industries (e.g., cleantech, life sciences, etc.)
- Redevelopment of areas in the downtown
- Changes in the regional retail market
- Large development-ready pads in North Concord, Downtown and elsewhere
- Consolidation of auto retail, financial services, and other employment sectors
- Statewide exodus of manufacturing

KEY INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

Over the past 20 years, several industries have driven job growth in Concord (and Contra Costa County in general), such as manufacturing, construction, and information technology. These industries will continue to be important sources of jobs, but in some cases they are not expected to continue the rapid growth that was experienced previously. As a result, the City needs to identify additional industries that offer the potential for job growth in the future.

Looking forward to the next 5–20 years, several new industries are becoming increasingly important to Concord’s economy and have the potential to become major drivers in employment. These industries include:

- Health Care
- Financial Services
- Retail
- Engineering
- Green/Clean-Tech/Energy
- Applied Sciences
- Life Sciences / Biotechnology
- Professional & Business Services



Downtown BART Station Plaza



John Muir Health Core Lab

These emerging industries may have special needs with respect to infrastructure, workforce development, Zoning and General Plan issues, and business services. The City will incorporate the needs of these key industries as it works to continuously improve its delivery of efficient, effective business services, and as it continues to update the Zoning Code (scheduled for completion in 2010) and other City policies.

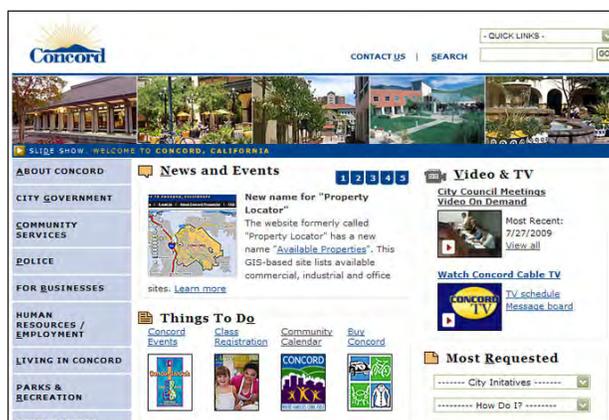
The City’s Economic Development Program will also develop targeted marketing strategies and other initiatives – all in a coordinated effort to facilitate the growth of these industries in Concord. The means to accomplish this is discussed in the following section, which describes the strategic initiatives to be undertaken as part of the Vitality Strategy.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Goal #1: Develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated Economic Development Marketing Strategy to strengthen Concord's image and brand identity among key target industries

Objective 1.1: Develop and carry out an integrated Marketing and Public Information Campaign targeted to prospective new businesses, based on a well-defined branding strategy.

- A. Market Research & Branding Strategy.** The Economic Development Program will conduct marketing research and develop a well-defined branding strategy for the City.
- B. City Website and Internet Marketing.** Economic Development staff will comprehensively update, reorganize, re-brand, and promote the City's Economic Development website. The City's Economic Development Program will carry out Internet advertising campaigns as appropriate. Websites would be selected based on their ability to reach key groups that the City targets for business attraction. In addition, the City's Economic Development Program will consider initiatives to communicate the City's message using well-established community websites, social networking websites, blogs, webzines, and other websites.
- C. Broadcast & Mass-Media Strategies.** As appropriate, Economic Development staff will carry out advertising campaigns on radio, cable television, and other broadcast media that are selected based on their cost-effective ability to reach the geographic and psychographic groups that Concord wishes to target for attracting potential new businesses.
- D. Press & Publicity.** The City's Economic Development Program will develop a 12-month press calendar, which will allow staff to plan in advance to issue press releases and/or media advisories. The goal would be to place positive coverage of Concord in the press at least once per month for an entire year. This would keep Concord active in the public's awareness for a sustained period. Economic Development staff will also develop proactive relationships with journalists and editors of key publications and websites in order to cultivate and pitch favorable story ideas. Public relations efforts would coordinate with the editorial calendars of key weekly/monthly publications, such as Via, Sunset, Southwest In-Flight ("Spirit"), Forbes, Wired, the San Francisco Business Times, Diablo Magazine, and other key publications.



City of Concord Website

E. Brochures & Trade Shows. The City’s Economic Development Program will redesign its line of brochures, maps and other collateral materials that are intended for prospective businesses so that they have up-to-date content and are consistent with the City’s brand strategy. Economic Development staff could also reach existing local businesses using special inserts to the business newsletter and/or annual mailings of business license renewals, which are mailed to all 6,000 business license holders. In partnership with the East Bay Economic Development Administration and other support agencies, Economic Development staff will attend key trade shows and business events and will plan meetings in advance in order to maximize the effectiveness of the attendance.

Objective 1.2: Develop partnerships with businesses and other government agencies to help market the Central Contra Costa region and to leverage the City’s limited marketing funds.

A. Regional Internet Marketing Efforts. The City’s Economic Development Program has started a pilot program to partner with other cities to market central Contra Costa County as a destination for shopping, events, and recreation.

B. Public Service Announcements. The City’s Economic Development Program will partner with BART to display public service announcements in their system to build awareness of Concord. Similarly, the Economic Development staff will explore Public Service Announcements with billboard companies (e.g., ClearChannel, CBS).

C. Partnerships with Regional Retailers and Hotels. The City’s Economic Development Program will partner with Sunvalley Shopping Center, the Willows, local hotels, the auto dealership community, and other major sales tax generators and regional shopping centers to further promote Concord as a shopping and entertainment destination.

Objective 1.3: Integrate the City’s economic development branding strategy into non-advertising efforts throughout the City.

A. Streetscape Image & Identity. Banners on major arterials (Clayton, Concord, Willow Pass, etc.) provide a cost-effective opportunity to promote the new brand image of Concord.

B. Special Events. The City will continue to sponsor downtown promotions and cultural events at Todos Santos Plaza including the Farmer’s Market, Music Series, Halloween parade, holiday events, and other special events.



Downtown Concord

Goal #2: Develop long-term, integrated strategies to target key emerging industries in Concord

Objective 2.1: Develop strategies to facilitate and encourage the development of modern, high-quality office, flex-office, research, and industrial space that can attract and serve the needs of key industry clusters.

- A. Facilitating Development Planning & Development Approval Process.** The City's Economic Development Program will work with industry contacts to determine the site requirements, building requirements, infrastructure requirements, and other development standards that are needed in order to attract and foster the development of key industrial tenants in Concord. Using this data, Economic Development staff will work internally with Planning, Building, Engineering, Finance, Public Works, and other parts of the City to incorporate the needs of key industry clusters into the development planning and development approval processes.
- B. Targeted Marketing Efforts.** As part of the marketing efforts described in Objective 1.1 above, the City's Economic Development Program will conduct outreach to prominent industry leaders, trade organizations, brokers, developers, and other influential representatives for each of the key industry clusters mentioned above.
- C. Planning for Life Cycle of Company Expansion.** The City will pursue strategies to facilitate the business and real estate needs of emerging industries at different points in their growth. The goal will be for companies to feel confident that Concord is an excellent location to address their needs as they progress from the start-up phase to reaching maturity as a medium- to large-sized business occupying one or multiple facilities. This will require partnerships with local brokers and property owners, partnerships with the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center, East Bay EDA and other organizations serving small businesses, incorporating the long-term growth needs of key industries into planning for the Concord Community Reuse Plan, and other related efforts.
- D. Retail Attraction.** The City's Economic Development Program will seek opportunities to attract retail to key commercial areas and to promote a diversified mix of retail uses, including business-to-business retail, non-traditional retail, as well as more standard consumer-based retail such as restaurants, grocery, and specialty retail.

Objective 2.2: Enhance Educational and Workforce Development Opportunities

- A. Program Assessment and Facilitation.** The City's Economic Development Program will continue to support the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, and EastBayWorks along with the Contra Costa Workforce Development Board, California Employment Development Department, California State East Bay – Concord, and other educational institutions in their effort to link the business community to local educational resources.
- B. Community Training.** The City's Economic Development Program will work with Local, Regional and State Agencies who are focused on building a diversified training and retraining program to meet the rapidly changing technical and professional needs of the business community. The City's Economic Development Program will promote partnerships and support of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, Diablo Valley College, EastBayWorks, Contra Costa Small Business Development Center, Workforce Development Board, and other agencies in promoting their training programs and referral services.



Clayton Road

Goal #3: District Strategies

The City’s Economic Development Program will continue to implement its downtown revitalization strategy, and will begin developing comprehensive district strategies for all business districts in Concord. The key business districts to be focused upon initially will include:

- Clayton Road
- West Concord (bound roughly by Concord Ave., I-680 and Highway 242)
- Monument Boulevard
- Other districts as time and resources are available



West Concord

Objective 3.1: Develop district strategies for Concord’s key Districts

The City’s Economic Development Program will develop and implement comprehensive district strategies for Clayton Road, West Concord, Monument Boulevard, and other Districts as time and resources provide. These strategies will incorporate the unique characteristics of each business area, promote the businesses currently operating in these areas, and encourage reinvestment and development opportunities for business attraction efforts.

Objective 3.2: Continue Downtown Revitalization Efforts

A. Downtown Management & Merchant Organization. The City’s Economic Development Program will continue to support the activities of the Todos Santos Business Association in order to strengthen relationships between the City and the business community. Where possible, the City’s Economic Development Program will develop programs to address the needs raised by this association in a proactive manner. In addition, the City will execute a comprehensive Downtown Management Program that addresses issues related to appearance, maintenance, safety, and parking.



Monument Boulevard

B. Special Events. The City will continue to sponsor promotions and cultural events at Todos Santos Plaza including the Farmer’s Market, Music Series, car shows, Halloween parade, and holiday events. The City will review opportunities to co-sponsor and/or present new special events in the downtown area that promote the downtown businesses, community identity, the arts, and are consistent with the businesses in the downtown.

Goal #4: Retain, Expand, Develop and Attract Business

Objective 4.1: Strengthen the positive business climate that supports the growth, development, and prosperity of Concord's business community.

- A. Annual Business Survey.** The City's Economic Development Program will continue to seek the input of businesses on an annual basis through a business survey. The survey will gather information about existing firms, evaluate the business climate and identify business problems, business opportunities, and expanding or relocating firms.
- B. Customer Service.** The City of Concord will continue to provide the highest level of customer service to further expedite permit decisions, coordinate inter-jurisdictional permit reviews, speed, clarify, and ease communication between applicants and permitting agencies and provide training and support to further implement improvements to customer service.
- C. Ombudsman and Information Services.** Economic Development staff will continue to serve as an ombudsman and information resource to existing businesses, providing information, direction, advice and documents on all issues pertaining to doing business in Concord and Contra Costa County.
- D. Business Communications.** The City's Economic Development Program will continue to regularly communicate with residents, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders and partners using electronic media, print sources, flyers, advertisements, radio, television, e-mail notifications, and other appropriate avenues to ensure information of interest is provided to Concord's residential and business community.
- E. Business Recognition Award Program.** In cooperation with the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, the City will continue to honor throughout the year companies that have shown significant growth or innovation, have longevity in Concord, support Concord's community, are major employers, or are major revenue generators.
- F. Welcome Letters.** The City's Economic Development Program will continue to send welcome letters, signed by the Mayor and City Manager, to targeted new businesses in Concord in order to make them feel welcome, promote cooperation with City Hall, and provide a City contact when issues arise that affect the success of the business.



Business Recognition Award Recipients with the Chamber of Commerce

Objective 4.2: Provide assistance to attract, retain, and expand businesses in Concord.

A. Goodwill Visits. The City’s Economic Development Program will continue to conduct goodwill visits to major employers and sales tax generators to build strong, long-term relationships, improve communication between the City and the business community, demonstrate Concord’s concern for its existing major businesses, and to encourage these businesses to remain and expand in Concord.



Concord Small Business Seminar

B. Business Retention Visits. The City’s Economic Development Program will continue to conduct business retention/expansion/welcome visits to small businesses that are expanding, new to the community, or in a growth sector. These efforts build rapport with the business community, encourage communication between the public and private sectors and encourages these businesses to remain and expand in Concord.

C. Participation in business events and community building activities. The City’s Economic Development Program will support local business organizations’ efforts that encourage business leaders to contribute to the community by having staff serve on appropriate task forces and special committees, contribute to projects, and sponsor events.

D. Home Based Businesses. The City will continue to support the development of entrepreneurs in home based businesses by administering business licenses and home based business permits to these businesses and supporting their expansion into storefronts and offices.

E. Small Business Seminars. Economic Development staff will continue to facilitate small business seminars and other programs with its partners such as the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center, Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Development Board, Todos Santos Business Association, The Federal Technology Center, and the Small Business Administration. These seminars provide new information and resources on marketing, planning, management, financing, and other topics of interest to Concord’s small business community. These events also promote local business-to-business transactions and the City’s “Buy Concord” initiatives.

F. Business Attraction. The City’s Economic Development Program will continue to pursue attraction efforts by identifying sites and available space that would be appropriate for businesses in all sectors. The City’s Economic Development Program will aggressively work with brokers, realtors, site selectors, the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, and the Todos Santos Business Association to evaluate and encourage opportunities for new businesses that enhance our economic base. The City’s Economic Development Program will also continue to work with brokers and property owners on land assembly opportunities for larger development projects.

The initiatives in this document will further develop the City’s economic vitality and ensure Concord’s position as a premier business location.



For more information:

Call the Economic Development Program at 1-800-727-2254
or e-mail economic_development@ci.concord.ca.us
www.concordfirst.com

Economic Development Action Plan

1. Advertise and Target New Businesses. Use social media, web based technologies and traditional advertisements targeted to site selectors, corporate real estate professionals, and business owners to communicate Concord's strength as a business location and identify specific available properties where a business can locate and thrive.

- a. *Update and re-launch Concord's Economic Development (www.Concordfirst.com) website incorporating latest technologies, graphics and demographic information.*

The City currently has an economic development property locator website that provides a searchable data base of available properties to interested businesses looking to locate or expand. This website also provides demographic and business statistics to users. This website has been a great resource over the years to businesses and real estate professionals. City staff also use this website to assist customers in the Permit Center to quickly locate their properties and look up zoning and General Plan information. Staff is currently working with the website provider to update the website using the latest technology such as Google Maps/Street Views, drive time data, and graphics to make the site more robust and user friendly. The website is scheduled to be updated by October 31, 2012, and at that time staff will re-launch the site to real estate professionals, media, and City staff. The cost is \$10,000 for updating and for hosting the web site and there are adequate funds in the budget for this effort. Implementation would be FY 12/13.

- b. *Use social media such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn to market Concord's economic development website and Concord's economic assets to decision makers.*

Staff is researching the best approaches to use social media for economic development purposes. One key area is to use social media to promote available properties and key Concord business happenings. YouTube could be used to run economic development vignettes, and staff is currently preparing 45 to 90 second commercials to promote Concord's business community, downtown Concord, and Concord's popular and diverse restaurants. Staff proposes to use \$2,000 from its existing Economic Development budget to fund this project. Implementation would be FY 12/13.

- c. *Use Google Adworks to market the City to decision makers.*

Staff is pursuing using Google advertising to market Concord to those searching for locations to start a business. Google Adworks could be a new means to market the City of Concord to those individuals who are looking to start or relocate their businesses to the San Francisco Bay Area. Using key word search terms, the City's economic web page would be prominently featured on the search page

thereby directly reaching potential businesses looking to relocate or expand. Staff has spoken with a Google representative and they are not aware of another Bay Area city using Google in this capacity. Using Google could provide an innovative and cost effective way to place Concord front and center to business decision makers who may not know about Concord's business opportunities. The expense associated with this activity is based on a "per click" basis and can be capped by the advertiser at a certain amount. Staff proposes to use \$3,000 from its existing Economic Development budget to fund this project. Implementation would be FY 12/13.

- d. *Use traditional advertising channels to keep Concord top in mind with the Bay Area business community.*

Staff has investigated creating a 30 minute infomercial promoting Concord as a premier business location to run on a Bay Area television station. The infomercial would be produced and anchored by local news talent promoting Concord business opportunities and key business advantages. The infomercial would relaunch Concord's branding campaign of "Concord Home to Business." Once created, the program could be used at tradeshow and included in marketing packages to developers and businesses to stimulate interest in key Concord sites and the Concord Community Reuse Project area. The cost of this effort is approximately \$10,000 and includes the production and airing of the program on KRON Channel 4. The City could seek local businesses partners to help fund this effort as well as focus promotion of their specific businesses. Staff is proposing to fund this effort from its existing Economic Development budget. Implementation would be FY 12/13.

- e. *Other traditional advertising opportunities that have proven effective in the past include BART and radio advertisements.*

These types of efforts provide an overall branding opportunity but are more costly. Based on staff's past experience using traditional advertising, in order to have an impact, marketing campaigns need to be done over long periods of time (one to three months). An advertising budget of approximately \$40,000 would be needed to be effective using these types of media channels. Currently this amount is not available in the Economic Development program operating budget. No funds are allocated to this effort from this fiscal year's Economic Development division budget. If funds are made available next fiscal year, a more traditional marketing program could be implemented.

2. Facilitate and create funding sources to spur economic development, support Downtown vitality and promote Concord's hospitality Sector.

a. Facilitate the formation of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

Staff is currently assisting in the establishment of two Business Improvement Districts: (1) a BID for the downtown area near Todos Santos Plaza, called a Property-based Business Improvement District (P-BID) and (2) a BID that would promote Concord's hotel industry, known as a Tourism-based Business Improvement District (TBID).

A Business Improvement District is a special benefit assessment district which allows for an assessment on property or business within a defined geographic area or land use type. Revenues from this assessment are directed back to the defined area to finance a variety of enhanced services, including security, maintenance, marketing, economic development, tourism promotion, parking, and special events. BIDs are formed with the consent of and active participation from property and business owners.

The downtown P-BID process has been underway since April 2012. A consultant has been retained to work on the P-BID, meetings with downtown property and businesses have taken place, and a draft scope of work to be funded by the P-BID including downtown events, clean and safe services, and economic development marketing has been developed. The proposed P-BID budget totals \$380,000, to be collected through assessments on properties in the District. The assessed funds would promote the downtown as the community gathering place by funding music and community events and marketing the downtown as a retail, commercial and dining destination. The City has already allocated \$20,000 for consultant services and \$5,000 was contributed by downtown property owners for the formation work being done by the consultants.

The City, Concord Hilton, Crowne Plaza, and Concord Chamber of Commerce have formed a working group to investigate forming a TBID. A TBID is a financial mechanism whereby hotel businesses elect to form an assessment district for marketing efforts designed to increase occupancy and room rates for lodging businesses. Funds are raised through a small assessment on lodging stays. The assessed funds are used to provide services desired by and directly benefitting the hospitality businesses that form the district. The working group has determined that it wants to pursue forming a TBID. The first step would be to retain a consultant to assist in forming the TBID. The Chamber of Commerce, hotel representatives, and staff are discussing the possibility of each organization agreeing to fund 33 percent of the cost for retaining the consultant, not to exceed \$30,000 in total (\$10,000 each). The Chamber would be the lead organization to engage the consultant. Funds provided by each organization would be in the form of a loan to be repaid over time from proceeds from the TBID. Staff is proposing

to use \$10,000 from its existing Economic Development budget to fund this important effort this fiscal year.

- b. *Reinstate the not-for-profit Concord Economic Development Corporation to facilitate economic development initiatives/programs*

The City of Concord and the Concord Chamber of Commerce formed a 501 c 6 nonprofit entity called the Concord Economic Development Corporation in 1990. This nonprofit was established to implement economic development initiatives to improve Concord's business climate. According to the Secretary of State, the Concord Economic Development Corporation went dormant in 1995 and can be reestablished by filing a "Statement" with the Secretary of State and paying a nominal fee. Staff, working with the Chamber, would initiate this process to reinstate the Concord Economic Development Corporation to assist with attracting funds to support economic development, citywide revitalization projects/programs, downtown events and to attract private investment into the community. These types of nonprofits are being created in a number of communities to provide an additional tool for implementing economic development initiatives. Most of these Economic Development Corporations are 501 C 3 to be able to obtain a wider variety of grants and donations. Staff is reviewing the best means for moving forward on this item and staff will returned to the City Council for its review and consideration on this matter.

3. **Key Business Sector Initiatives.** Develop collaborative marketing initiatives with key retail stakeholders (Sunvalley Mall, Willows, Park and Shop, Clayton Valley Shopping Center, and Auto Dealerships) to strengthen key retailers and cross promote Concord as a retail destination.

- a. *Facilitate Shopping Center and Auto Dealership cross promotions.*

Concord is fortunate to have multiple successful regional retail centers in its community. Concord shopping centers and Concord's auto dealers are two areas where Concord shines in the region as a retail destination. The City has collaborated over the years with its auto dealers and retail centers to support their businesses. Staff proposes to work with each group to investigate ways for joint promotion and marketing programs where they can find areas they could work together. One possibility is a customer appreciation event where car buyers and retail shoppers can receive special incentives for shopping at each other's locations or have dealerships drop customers at Sunvalley Mall or the Willows Shopping Center to shop while their cars are being serviced. The customers could receive special discounts or incentives to use while they are shopping. These are just a few ways that Concord's auto dealerships and shopping centers could work together in the future, and many more can be explored. No funds are proposed at this time for this effort. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- b. *Facilitate a Voluntary Dealership Marketing Program.*

Through the efforts of Mayor Leone, new auto dealerships in Concord have expressed their desire to investigate working together to fund branding campaigns to promote all of the dealerships in joint advertising and other ways. One idea is to more broadly market Concord as the “Car Capital of the East Bay.” The dealers initially voiced support for a voluntary method versus an assessment (BID) to test how the dealerships can work together cooperatively. Staff will continue to facilitate this effort with the dealerships to seek agreement on a methodology for funding cooperative campaigns. No funds are proposed at this time for this effort. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- c. *Create and develop a short infomercial(s) on Concord’s retail, restaurant, and hospitality offerings to run on public access channels.*

As stated earlier, videos could be produced and aired on YouTube or public access channels focusing on Concord’s retail, restaurant, and hospitality offerings. These videos would be five to ten minute features that would communicate the diverse and regional retail offering in Concord. Staff is proposing to use \$1,000 from its existing Economic Development budget to fund this important effort. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- d. *Attend retail conference International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and outreach to targeted retail site selectors.*

Economic Development staff is involved with ICSC at a local and regional level. Due to the downturn in the economy, the retail sector has retrenched to the point where retail expansion was essentially on hold except for projects that were already in the pipeline/approved for expansion. Retailers are now active again and staff will be attending the ICSC Western Division Conference in Southern California in September 2012. Staff hopes to better understand emerging retail trends and specific expansion plans for targeted retailers, participate in local ICSC activities, to network with site selectors and target retailers to locate in Concord. The Economic Development budget includes \$1,500 to send staff to retail oriented conferences. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- 4. Target Office and R&D/Manufacturing Business Attraction.** Develop and implement business attraction strategies that position Concord as a high-profile office and R&D/manufacturing destination targeting key sectors such as the Engineering, Life Science, and Health Care industries.

- a. *Host a business event in spring 2013 that brings potential office users and R&D/ manufacturers to Concord for a presentation on why Concord is a great business destination and offer attendees with tours of Concord’s commercial projects.*

Staff would coordinate this effort with Concord’s major office and industrial owners such as Swift Plaza (owns 1.6 million square feet of office in downtown

Concord) and Sierra Pacific Properties (owns almost 1 million square feet in Concord). The event could feature testimonials from successful Concord businesses on why they choose to locate to Concord, as well as discuss the City's advantages. Staff is proposing to use \$5,000 from its existing Economic Development budget to fund this important effort. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- b. Outreach to key corporate site selectors and brokerage houses to present Concord's business advantages.*

Staff would visit and schedule meetings with commercial real estate offices to communicate Concord's interest in working with their business clients to find ways that the City can assist in attracting office users to Concord. This could be an expedited permit processes, city assistance and leveraging State and county programs to provide financing or employment services to businesses locating to Concord. This type of outreach has proven to be highly useful to both the brokers and staff as information is mutually exchanged. Staff would also use this opportunity to communicate the Concord Community Reuse Project status, which is of great interest to brokers. No funds are required to implement this action item. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- 5. Market Former RDA Properties.** Develop and implement disposition strategies (working within the framework of AB1x26 and recently passed law) for the four former RDA properties to maximize the development opportunity value of each property.

- a. Staff is currently investigating how to navigate through the State process for selling former redevelopment properties.*

The State now requires that before land can be sold or transferred, each Successor Agency must receive a finding of completion. A finding of completion can only be obtained once the Successor Agency has been found by the Department of Finance to have paid/transferred and met all aspects of the dissolution act. Also, the Successor Agency must submit a property management plan that specifies how the Successor Agency plans to dispose of the property. This plan also needs to be approved by the Department of Finance. Once approved, the Successor Agency may move forward with its disposition process. The law states that the earliest this process could be completed is by spring 2013.

Staff is currently analyzing the market place to determine the most likely type of development product that would yield the highest overall value to the City in the long term for its former RDA-owned properties. Also, the input and direction provided through the upcoming Downtown Specific Plan process will help craft the type of future development that can occur in key downtown properties. No funds are allocated at this time for this effort. Implementation would be FY12-13.

6. Market to Start-up Businesses. Promote Concord as a highly desirable and supportive business destination to entrepreneurs and business start-ups.

a. Work with existing business organizations and community partners.

Staff will continue to work with business partners such as the Chamber, Contra Costa Economic Partnership, Todos Santos Business Association and John F. Kennedy University (JFKU) to see how best to cultivate small businesses and start-up businesses. The collaboration established with JFKU's Business Accelerator Center is a good example of how to leverage existing programs and partnerships to attract and retain start-ups and encourage entrepreneurs to locate their businesses in Concord. No funds are required to implement this action item. Implementation would be FY13-14.

b. Host a venture capital seminar in Concord to attract additional start-up companies and other entrepreneurs, as well as angel investors and lending organizations to Concord.

Staff is working with JFKU and to hold an event bringing angel investors, investment groups such as Keiretsu Forum and entrepreneurs to Concord. These events can be informal but focused on mutual topics of interest that are timely and relevant to investors and start-up businesses. Staff will work with JFKU to hold an event of this nature. Funds for this effort may be necessary, but have not been identified. It would be implemented next fiscal year, FY12-13.

7. Improve On-Line Access to the Permit Center. Use the City's existing web platforms to enhance the Permit Center customer experience by providing better information and tools to expedite flow of information.

a. Create simple and user friendly applications for permit customers.

For example, building fees could be instantly generated on-line with a building permit fee calculator where the developer/business enters information about their project and a building fee estimate would be generated. This information is critical for developers and businesses to know cost associated with their project.

b. Create a web page for new businesses

Economic Development staff would also provide a comprehensive business start-up web page outlining local, regional, and State resources for small businesses where businesses receive pertinent information on how to start a business. No

funds are required to implement this action item. Implementation would be FY12-13.

- 8. Market the Development of the Concord Community Reuse Project.** Develop a cost effective outreach and marketing effort to communicate the timing and development opportunities of the Concord Community Reuse Project Area (CCRP) to major employers, site selectors, and institutions to locate a catalyst project on the Community Reuse Project Area.
 - a. Staff is currently outreaching and discussing the CCRP with various interested parties as well as featuring the CCRP in Urban Land Institute magazines and conferences. Economic Development staff will work with Michael Wright, Executive Director, Local Reuse Authority, and the Concord Reuse team to develop appropriate marketing materials and conveyance timelines to attract catalyst type uses to the base. Staff will use its contacts with site selectors and firms that specialize in institutional relocations efforts such as Deloitte, Studley, research/education institutions, and corporations to market the CCRP in order to attract one or two catalyst uses to spur the development of the area. No funds have been identified to implement this action this year. Staff, along with CCRP team, will continue to identify and advocate for resources from outside the City (Federal, State and Regional grants) to ensure the CCRP stays on track and high profile in the greater Bay Area.

- 9. Train all City staff to be Economic Developers.** Provide Citywide Economic Development training to City employees, City Council, Board and Commission members, and volunteers to gain an understanding on how they can support and promote the City's economic vitality.
 - a. Staff believes that an opportunity exists to offer training to staff on their role as economic developers. Staff plans to hold two Economic Development workshops a year on the City's Economic Development programs to encourage all City staff and stakeholders to facilitate economic development. This workshop would provide an understanding to attendees of how they influence and contribute to the City's economic vitality. Staff would attend department meetings to promote these training workshops as well as develop a modified version to be provided to the police department during their lineup/morning briefings. No funds are required to implement this action item. It would be initiated next fiscal year, FY13-14.

10. Expand our Business Partnerships. Leverage local and regional business partners to access knowledge, expertise and resources to facilitate business attraction and expansion.

- a. The City has long viewed partnerships with the business community as a way to maximize resources with the goal of achieving economic vitality for the City and the region. Staff, in its budget for this fiscal year, has allocated funds to rejoin the Contra Costa Economic Partnership (CCEP), Chamber of Commerce, Contra Costa Council, and Todos Santos Business Association. The cost of these memberships varies from \$150 to \$10,000 per year. By joining these organizations, the City shows its support of the local and region's business community as well as retains a voice with each group's plans and programs. CCEP, for example, provides studies on the County economy and how best to leverage the region's assets. Each of these organizations has an important role in advocating for business. Having a seat at each organization's table allows the City to have a voice within each of these organizations. A total of \$12,810 has been budgeted to join various local and State organizations and is currently being implemented.
