



ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

June 17, 2021
Economic Development

TITLE: DISCUSSION REGARDING EXPANDING PLEASANTON'S LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

In 2013, the City Council adopted the current Economic Development Strategic Plan, which the Economic Vitality Committee uses as the foundation for its work. The plan comprises three focus areas:

- Priority Area A: Business Development and Communication
- Priority Area B: Built Environment and Workforce
- Priority Area C: Economic Health and Resilience

As noted for **Priority Area A: Business Development and Communication**, the goal is to conduct business development activities with particular focus on businesses that drive innovation in their sectors, and to expand communications, outreach, and technical assistance program to retain and expand existing firms.

As identified in the strategic plan, there are several implementation actions related to this discussion, including:

- A3. Solicit ongoing feedback from innovation-focused businesses in targeted high-technology industries.**
- A4. Collaborate with regional organizations on economic development initiatives focused on cultivating innovative businesses in high-technology industries and attracting the related workforce.**
- A8. Communicate attributes of Pleasanton as a business location, targeted to businesses likely to consider locating in Pleasanton.**

DISCUSSION

Pleasanton has continued to develop a strong base of specialized firms that drive innovation in sectors including information technology, biomedical research, and advanced manufacturing of medical devices. In addition to established life sciences and medical diagnostics companies like Roche Molecular, Bio-Rad Labs and Abbott, there have also been newer and fast-growing firms making Pleasanton their home that make critical hardware, software and technology, including 10X Genomics, Veeva Systems, Apton Biosystems, and Unchained Labs. Pleasanton's growth has garnered attention as noted in a recent *San Francisco Business Times* article included as Attachment 1 and past coverage in the *Pleasanton Weekly* included as Attachment 2 and *San Francisco Chronicle* as Attachment 3.

According to the *2020 Mirador Review*, more venture capital dollars were invested in life sciences companies in 2019 than in any other sector (37% of the total). The largest deal that year was 10X Genomics \$35 million Series D1, which was raised in preparation for its September IPO, valuing the company at \$13 billion. Pleasanton-based Apton Biosystems CEO Ellen Beasley noted its decision to locate in Pleasanton was primarily due to the life sciences critical mass in the Tri-Valley, which promotes key collaboration and access to industry specific talent. As well, Pleasanton's low cost of commercial space, compared to other Bay Area locations, allows for future expansion. See Attachment 4, excerpt from the *Mirador Review 2020*. In the last five years, Pleasanton has led the region in life science investments with seven companies raising over \$240 million, where 98% of life science deals in 2018 were in medical devices. See Attachment 5, excerpt from the *Mirador Review 2019*.

At its January 21, 2021, discussion regarding priority projects for the City Council Work Plan, the EVC recommended to retain *Expand Pleasanton's Life Sciences Sector* among its recommendations. The City Council included the priority in the new two-year Work Plan for FY2021/2022 and FY2022/2023. As described, the priority consists of preparing and implementing a program designed to support and expand the life sciences industry sector in Pleasanton.

A panel discussion will provide an opportunity for the EVC members to have an interactive discussion on the opportunities and challenges in expanding Pleasanton's life sciences industry sector and the prospective tasks, actions and/or policies to work toward this goal. Participants on the panel:

- Andy Blidy, life sciences practitioner will provide his perspective on growing the life sciences sector in Pleasanton.
- Brandon Cardwell, Executive Director for i-Gate Innovation Hub/Daybreak Labs will offer his expertise in creating the integral ecosystem necessary and current initiatives to grow life sciences companies.
- Commercial Real Estate/R&D Sales and Leasing Advisor Brian Wilson will add to the discussion by sharing current commercial real estate activity and how Pleasanton's environment fosters, or inhibits, the ability to attract and retain life sciences companies.

EVC Input

The EVC is invited to ask questions of the panel and exchange comments, ideas or suggestions on activities, tools or policies that the City might consider to support and expand the life sciences sector in Pleasanton. Below are some questions to help initiate the discussion:

1. What advantages or disadvantages does Pleasanton have compared to other Bay Area locations?
2. Is there a role for the City in capitalizing on the advantages or addressing the disadvantages?
3. How might the City's policies or processes be amended or enhanced to allow for the expansion of life sciences companies?

4. What are key next steps to support life sciences sector growth in Pleasanton?

ACTION: PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON DISCUSSION REGARDING PLEASANTON'S LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

Attachment 1 – *Pleasanton is creating an ecosystem for biotechs big and small*, San Francisco Business Times, May 28, 2021

Attachment 2 – *Bio businesses booming: Life science companies (small and large) thriving in Pleasanton*, Pleasanton Weekly, January 31, 2019

Attachment 3 – *Biotech startups find 'relatively' affordable home amid Tri-Valley job boom*, San Francisco Chronicle, September 20, 2018

Attachment 4 – [*The Mirador Review 2020 Charting a Path Forward*](#), pages 34-36

Attachment 5 – [*The Mirador Review 2019 The Intersection of Talent & Technology*](#), page 23