



ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

May 20, 2021
Economic Development

TITLE: COORDINATED BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM

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 3 focus areas:

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

As identified in the strategic plan there are several actions related to providing business assistance, including ongoing outreach and coordination on issues like property leasing, development, and municipal services; conducting site visits, and regularly scheduled gatherings and events for business leaders; soliciting feedback from businesses regarding concerns and need for improvements via tools such as the regular business survey and various business leader roundtable discussions; communicating the attributes of Pleasanton as a business location; developing a communication program to outreach to Pleasanton businesses; and educating residents of Pleasanton regarding the contributions of businesses to the overall quality of life.

DISCUSSION

Framework

Based on feedback from the EVC at its February 20 meeting, additional strategies and activities have been considered and incorporated into the five pillars of the framework:

Business Support – Small business start-up kit, ombudsman services, local purchasing practices, business support network

Business Engagement – Business needs survey, *Doing Business with the City* guide and workshop, “How Do I...?” video series, Innovation Tri-Valley (ITV) 2040 Vision, business e-newsletter, business visits

Business Promotion – P2P app, business events, economic assets report update, life sciences summit and infographic/map, business highlight video, Tri-Valley recovery marketing campaign, business anniversary recognition, inPleasanton.com

Business Assistance – Business assistance brochure update, Business Support Fund loan program, online zoning portal, permitting programs, financing and parking allowance, Commendable Commutes

Resident Awareness – Gift card and savings pass programs, downtown light pole flag update, Main Street closure for Weekend on Main, support local campaigns and videos, social media

An updated visual framework for the business support program is provided as Attachment 1.

With the State’s anticipated announcement to reopen the economy and move beyond its color-coded Blueprint for a Safer Economy, progress has been made on programs and activities, which provide immediate support to businesses. These activities and programs fall under the Business Assistance, Resident Awareness, and Business Promotion pillars as follows:

Business Assistance

Business Assistance Brochure

In 2011, the EVC had ongoing discussions to implement strategies contained in the City’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. The development of business assistance programs was an outcome and eventually evolved into the Business Assistance pillar of the Coordinated Business Support Program. One of the action items included the development of a Business Assistance brochure as a means to attract new businesses to Pleasanton by addressing the following:

1. Amenities in Pleasanton which benefit a business
2. Support provided by the City and its partners including Hacienda, Pleasanton Downtown Association, Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, and Visit Tri-Valley
3. Awareness and guidance of Pleasanton’s one-stop Permit Center process
4. Information on available assistance programs

Printed as well as a pdf-versions of the brochure were created and provided to prospective businesses by City staff, business partners, and commercial brokers. The brochure is now dated and does not include recent changes and enhancements to the Permit Center, including the availability of [Pleasanton Permits](#), the City’s online permitting portal.

The current version of the Business Assistance brochure is provided as Attachment 2.

The EVC is asked to provide feedback on the brochure as staff prepares to update the brochure. Here are some questions on which the EVC is asked to provide input:

1. Is there anything that can be removed or is not relevant anymore?
2. Is there anything missing that should be added?
3. Which areas could we do better in providing information?

Resident Awareness

Gift Pleasanton - Citywide Gift Card Program

In continuing efforts to provide recovery assistance to Pleasanton businesses and encourage residents to support businesses by spending locally, the City is launching a

citywide electronic gift (eGift) card program, *Gift Pleasanton*. Community eGift cards enable residents and companies to “give back” and drive more business into local businesses. Custom-branded for Pleasanton, the eGift cards will be valid at any participating merchant, including restaurants, salons and spas, boutiques, sports and entertainment, or hotels. In addition to residents, local companies can purchase eGift cards to give out as employee rewards, customer appreciation, marketing and other programs.

There is no special technology or administration required by a merchant to participate, as long as Mastercard is an acceptable form of payment and the merchant can key in a transaction like a phone order. Businesses must register with the City to be added as a participating business to receive a “redemption” email from Yiftee, Inc., the technology partner hosting the eGift card portal, to take the necessary steps to begin accepting *Gift Pleasanton* eGift cards. **There is no fee for businesses to participate.** The purchaser pays \$1 plus a 5% fee of the gift card total when purchasing a card.

The eGift card will be available for purchase online beginning June 1, 2021 at Pleasanton’s Shop Local website, www.inPleasanton.com. Participating businesses can also provide a link to the eGift card portal from their website and Facebook pages. To incentivize residents and companies to purchase eGift cards, introductory bonus offers will be offered, i.e., Buy \$25 or more, get a \$10 bonus card, etc.

Economic Development Manager Lisa Adamos will provide an overview of the eGift card program.

Business Promotion

Tri-Valley Recovery Marketing Campaign

At the April EVC meeting, Tracy Farhad, President & CEO of Visit Tri-Valley (VTV), the Tri-Valley’s destination marketing agency, gave a presentation on a Tri-Valley local recovery campaign – *To Tri-Valley, With Love* – which encourages residents to explore their city and support the recovery of local businesses that have been affected by COVID-19 pandemic temporary closures.

The campaign, spanning the cities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Ramon, and the Town of Danville, launched on May 1. Each city has a tailored theme – “*To Pleasanton, With Love*” – intended to remind residents why they love Pleasanton and highlights the importance of spending locally.

Pleasanton residents are asked to make a promise – “The Pleasanton Promise” – to support local businesses during this time of recovery by downloading the Promise Pass, which features participating local businesses offering special savings. Residents can show the pass at participating businesses on their mobile device to receive deals and savings.

Marketing of the campaign is underway, including TV commercials, radio, print, social media, direct mail, webpage, and several promotional pieces. Visit Tri-Valley President and CEO Tracy Farhad will provide a brief update on this campaign.

EVC Input

The EVC is invited to provide feedback on the Business Assistance brochure and offer comments and ask questions about the Gift Pleasanton eGift card and Tri-Valley Local Recovery Campaign programs, and how they are being received by local businesses.

ACTIONS: PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON COORDINATED BUSINESS SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Attachment 1 –Coordinated Business Support Program Framework, Revised May 11, 2021
Attachment 2 – Business Assistance Brochure