

Council Meeting of  
June 26, 2012

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Torrance City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**Members of the Council:**

**SUBJECT: City Manager – Addition of One Staff Assistant position for  
Economic Development Program  
Expenditure: \$82,500**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation of the City Manager to add one Staff Assistant position in support of the City's Economic Development Program for business retention, outreach and recruitment.

Funding

\$82,500 from the Economic Development Program Budget Fiscal Year 2012-13.

**BACKGROUND and ANALYSIS**

The City expanded its Economic Development Program in January 2005 with the employment of one Management Associate with the working title of Economic Development Manager. The mission of the Program was to focus first on business retention and secondly on business attraction. This mission was further refined with the adoption of the 2008 Strategic Plan which included a specific Economic Development Priority as one of the 10 Priorities of the City. The Strategic Plan more finitely defined expectations of Economic Development as follows:

“The strategic priority of Economic Development includes retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and encouraging the creation of quality jobs for all members of the community. A distinct aspect of economic development is the furthering of the City's economic development connection to world commerce and emerging markets, technologies and trends. Economic Development also includes participation and involvement of businesses in civic affairs. While a strong economic base is necessary for the City's health, it must continue to support and retain the balanced community. A proactive stance on new business attraction will retain the high standards that Torrance exemplifies.

Data gathered for the 2008 Strategic Plan update continued to emphasize the same principles as important to the continued viability of Torrance and its place

as the 'Economic Capital of the South Bay'. The data gathered also identified new elements to furthering such goals, including the redevelopment of older commercial/industrial areas with cleaner, greener, more efficient structures, and jobs-housing balance as a factor in traffic congestion. In addition, the data showed that there is a need for increasing the availability of new, corporate headquarters and 'Class A' type office space in the City, as well as updating existing older, smaller, office space stock to include a more high end appearance, modern telecommunications and broadband internal infrastructure capability to meet the needs of the modern business community."

The specific goals of the Strategic Plan are:

- Enhance regional and international market development
- Attract and retain businesses
- Provide a supportive environment for entrepreneurial endeavors
- Establish a residential and commercial/balance that supports the economic needs of the community

The Action Plan adopted in 2010, and updated in 2012, has provided funding in the amount of \$50,000 for the development of a marketing and recruitment plan, \$100,000 to develop an incentives plan in support of new, continuing and expanding businesses, and \$65,000 for development and funding of a plan for the revitalization and redevelopment of the Downtown Business District. These Action Plan items have not been realized to date due to the day to day activity level of the Program.

The Economic Development Program is achieving successes in generating visibility through the tourism business improvement district, Discover Torrance, and through the Strategic Plan initiatives, such as support of the newly founded and funded business incubator, the South Bay Entrepreneurial Center; update of the Hawthorne Corridor Specific Plan; outreach to current businesses through on site visits and externally through business profiles, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and the broker community; and business recognition through the annual "Torrance Advantage Awards".

In order to help achieve the goals of the City's Strategic Plan, the Economic Development Manager not only leads the City's internal Economic Development Team, but actively participates in and supports the activities of outside entities such as the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce, El Camino College, the Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network and others to solidify those partnerships and better provide services to businesses in Torrance. The Economic Development Manager also acts as Ombudsman at City Hall to help shepherd businesses through City processes, whether the business is new to Torrance, or is one that is expanding or downsizing their operation. Some recent successes have been: the assistance to Pelican Products to enable them to expand and remain in Torrance maintaining 600+ jobs in the City; the expansion of Centinela Feed with their addition of manufacturing capability in Lotus Pet Food; the attraction of Western Psychological Services, Partner Engineering, and soon Ryan's Express.

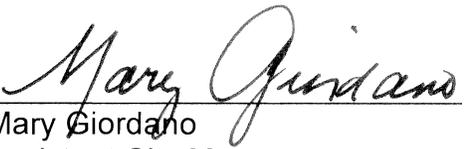
Expectations from and demand for Economic Development have increased beyond what one person, backed by a team drawn from all City departments, can achieve. The accomplishments in the program have been many, but full economic potential is stymied due to a focused staff of one. Therefore the City Manager is recommending that an additional staff person be added solely dedicated to economic development.

By adding a Staff Assistant to Economic Development, the Economic Development Team will be able to focus on the development of a business attraction plan to include analysis of regional economic data, creation of a menu of incentives, update of marketing collateral to include a brochure and more interactive webpage. The Staff Assistant will also help with developing data and information to coordinate efforts for the working group on the Downtown Visioning Plan, to include business and property owners. The Staff Assistant will also be instrumental in coordinating the Economic Development Team's Business Visitation Program to ensure that the City remains proactive with our business community. Another area where the Staff Assistant will be instrumental is in helping to create a Small Business Advisory Council.

As noted, the Program Budget has a business assistance budget of \$100,000 that will provide funding for 2012-13. Funding for 2013-14 and forward will be budgeted from the Economic Development Reserve, or from the General Fund tied to increased revenues stream.

Respectfully submitted,

LeRoy J. JACKSON  
CITY MANAGER

By   
Mary Giordano  
Assistant City Manager

CONCUR:

  
LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager