



City of San Leandro

Meeting Date: October 1, 2012

Staff Report

File Number: 12-464

Agenda Section: PRESENTATIONS/
RECOGNITIONS

Agenda Number: 2.C.

TO: City Council

FROM: Chris Zapata
City Manager

BY: Luke Sims
Community Development Director

FINANCE REVIEW: Not Applicable

TITLE: Presentation by John McManus of Cushman & Wakefield and Staff Report on East Bay Economic Development Alliance's "Open for Business" Pledge

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council will consider adoption of an "Open for Business" Pledge as part of an East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) initiative to promote the region's business-friendly environment. Staff recommends that the City Council adopt, by Resolution, the East Bay EDA's "Open for Business" Pledge

BACKGROUND

Many East Bay cities, as well as Contra Costa and Alameda counties, have experienced significant negative financial impacts resulting from the economic downturn and the dissolution of redevelopment agencies. In many instances, this has resulted in the elimination of positions in development, planning and business services. The East Bay EDA recognizes that local municipalities and other regulatory entities continue to strive to provide an excellent level of customer service despite these cuts and financial hardships affecting many communities.

To help focus attention on the excellent business climate in the East Bay, a number of East Bay EDA's members - public and private - came together to develop an "Open for Business" pledge that cities, counties, and other regulatory bodies could adopt to indicate their dedication to fostering and maintaining excellent customer service related to economic development despite the economic downturn.

The City of San Leandro's Office of Business Development staff has participated in the ongoing discussions and development of this Pledge and recommends that the City adopt the Pledge, as the Pledge solidifies the work and leadership by the City Council focusing on economic development and ongoing support to the San Leandro business community. In

fact, staff believes that the City currently meets all of the criteria outlined in the Pledge. Examples of some of the City's policies and procedures include:

- Community Development offers complimentary pre-application and pre-development meetings bringing business development, planning, building, engineering & traffic, fire, and environmental professionals to the table early in the process to advise developers and contractors of issues that might need to be addressed and particulars regarding the building or site.
- Planners available at counter for same day approval of small projects. Planners phone line answered within 24 hours.
- Expedited plan check or building permit processing at cost.
- The City's business-friendly code provides a mechanism where simple planning entitlements can be handled administratively without Planning Commission review.
- On-going modernization of the Zoning Code to accommodate new development needs.
- Building permit review can occur concurrently with processing of entitlements to expedite the process.
- Building permits can be issued in phases to allow demolition and foundation work to begin while construction documents are being finalized.
- The Building Division is extremely responsive and flexible in providing inspections which can be scheduled 24-hours a day, 365-days a year. Contractors can also obtain a same day inspection by calling prior to 7:00 a.m.
- Office of Business Development serves as an ombudsman, available to resolve unforeseen obstacles in the process.

The East Bay EDA will track and promote those communities that signed the Pledge and will share the best practices that are identified as a result of its adoption.

Fiscal Impacts - None

ATTACHMENTS

None

PREPARED BY: Cynthia Battenberg, Business Development Manager, Community Development



City of San Leandro

Meeting Date: October 1, 2012

Resolution - Council

File Number: 12-465

Agenda Section: PRESENTATIONS/
RECOGNITIONS

Agenda Number:

TO: City Council

FROM: Chris Zapata
City Manager

BY: Luke Sims
Community Development Director

FINANCE REVIEW: Not Applicable

TITLE: ADOPT: Resolution Adopting the East Bay Economic Development Alliance's "Open for Business" Pledge (indicates the City's dedication to fostering and maintaining excellent customer service related to economic development despite the economic downturn)

WHEREAS, the City Council has placed a high priority on proactive economic development and support for the business community; and

WHEREAS, the City is an active participant in the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) and wishes to endorse their "Open for Business" Pledge, which is aimed at promoting the pro-business environment that exists in the East Bay; and

WHEREAS, the City understands that many municipalities have been hit hard by the economic recession and the elimination of redevelopment agencies. This Pledge intends to reassure the development and business community that communities in the East Bay stand ready to assist in business attraction, expansion and retention efforts to create jobs; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager has recommended approval of said document.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of San Leandro does hereby adopt the East Bay Economic Development Alliance's "Open for Business" Pledge, attached hereto.



“OPEN FOR BUSINESS” PLEDGE

Because we recognize and understand the critical importance of providing excellent customer service to all our customers – but particularly the business community – and because we recognize that our policies and practices have a direct impact on the East Bay’s business climate and the ability of companies in the region to create jobs, the City of San Leandro officially endorses East Bay EDA’s *Open for Business* Pledge.

We Pledge:

- *To provide senior management leadership and support for permit streamlining and empower the staff to act administratively.*
- *To conduct periodic reviews of our practices to ensure that we are current with changes in regulations, technology, and codes - including green building codes.*
- *To proactively seek customer feedback regularly, positive and negative, and to respond appropriately.*
- *To provide transparent, easy to understand fee schedules and applications online.*
- *To provide staff with training in order to achieve high levels of consistency related to permitting.*
- *To provide clear guidance on project schedules and milestones early in the process and to strive to meet to that schedule.*
- *To respond to all communication, whether phone, email, written or in-person, within 2 business days.*
- *To share best practices amongst East Bay EDA’s localities.*
- *To recognize exemplary operations and staff, both internally and externally to the organization*