



Insight

WINTER 2002

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Concord strives to make the City a premier place to live, work, and do business. In order to achieve this goal, Concord has implemented a dynamic Economic Development Program. Through its business attraction, retention and expansion activities, this program promotes Concord's advantages to new companies and enhances Concord's business climate for existing companies.

By working to strengthen Concord's business community, citizens as well as employees of Concord-based companies benefit from the advantages that Concord has to offer. Examples of these benefits include quality housing, from affordable to executive homes, access to 22 community and neighborhood parks, and reduced commute times.

This newsletter will focus on how the City implements its Economic Development Program and how this program is grounded in Concord's pro-business attitude. It will discuss how the City promotes Concord's advantages to attract business and how the business retention and expansion programs work to retain Concord companies and assist those that wish to expand. ♦

Business Attraction – Finding the Right Fit



“A premier place to live, work and do business”. For the City of Concord, this is not just a slogan, but a fundamental goal. Promoting the fact that Concord is the right fit for companies and their employees is an important element of the City's business attraction efforts. Concord's business attraction program includes marketing the specific strengths of Concord, partnering with the real estate community and providing valuable information via the economic development web page.

Concord's Strengths Are Numerous

- Access to a qualified and educated labor pool
- Lower cost of doing business
- Reverse commute and convenient access to Interstate 680, State Routes 4 and 242 and two BART stations
- Broad range of employee housing – From upper-end, executive homes to entry-level homes for the first-time buyer
- City government that is pro-business
- Excellent quality of life

The City of Concord's business attraction program promotes these strengths to prospective businesses and targeted industries. Existing Concord companies also cite these strengths as reasons for having chosen Concord as a location. The City utilizes these companies to market the City to other companies that are interested in a Concord

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Marketing Concord's Strengths

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location. The contacts and testimony from business peers already located in the community are often the best attraction tools.

In the summer of 2001, the City of Concord launched a major media marketing campaign aimed at increasing awareness of Concord as a premier business location. This campaign was targeted to companies located in the Silicon Valley and San Francisco areas, with the goal of attracting businesses that were

planning to relocate or expand. The campaign was focused on conveying the amenities and opportunities that make Concord a premier business destination.

Direct personal outreach to companies is a complementary component of the business attraction effort. Outreach to companies is timed to coincide with a company's strategic planning schedule, when a lease is due to expire or when internal growth necessitates a new location.

Once contact has been made, economic development staff provides the information and resources a company needs to make a relocation decision. This frequently includes demographic, real estate, and consumer spending information. Staff will also give companies tours of Concord buildings and sites that are available for lease or sale. In addition, staff will work with the company to facilitate the permitting and building process.

Partnering with site locators and the real estate community

The City partners with real estate professionals in most business attraction projects. These individuals may either work within a company's real estate department, or be an outside site selection firm/real estate broker hired by a company.

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The City maintains close contact with these individuals in order to facilitate business relocations. Relationships established through business attraction projects also facilitate new leads and position Concord as an attractive business destination for other companies looking at our community.

The work, effort and time spent to attract a business is a long-term investment. A contact or lead



City staff review plans with Bill Hillis (right), Colliers International.

generated can take 12 to 16 months to generate results or bear fruit. As such, this program requires a

sustained, focused effort on the part of the City and ongoing support from the business community.

Concordfirst.com – A Valuable Source of Information

Looking for a site for your business expansion? In search of demographic or consumer expenditure data for a site in the City of Concord? This information is available 24/7 on Concordfirst.com, the interactive web page of the City of Concord's Economic Development Program. Here you will find the City's profile, demographics, rede-

velopment information and links to featured projects and organizations.

An important feature of the web page is a property locator system. This system allows a user to inquire about potential retail, office or industrial locations to buy, lease or develop. It provides access to a parcel map, property owner/broker contact information, and all perti-

nent lease and/or purchase information. Information for this site is updated on a monthly basis by major real estate brokerage firms. Overall, Concordfirst.com has received excellent reviews from the real estate and the business communities. ♦

Business Retention – Helping companies stay and grow in Concord

While attracting new businesses is key to a vital economy, expanding and retaining existing Concord businesses are the cornerstones of the City's Economic Development Program. The companies that

panies operating in the City, and to assist companies that wish to expand within its borders.

The Business Retention Program's activities address the needs of distinct segments of the business

way to establish good relations and communications with its business partners.

The "Goodwill Program" targets key companies that are either major employers or large sales tax generators. Because of the nature of their business, or the size of their company, these companies have a major impact on the economic vitality of the City. An Account Executive Team consisting of a City Councilmember and an executive staff member visits these companies. As with all company visits, the objectives are to improve communication, learn more about the companies visited, and offer services where they are needed. In addition, the Account Executive serves as the principal City contact for the visited company.

Economic Development staff members also make retention visits to targeted companies. These

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make up a business community are the foundation of the local economy. They generate income, create employment and produce products and services. The City of Concord recognizes the importance of its existing companies and the positive impact that successful, growing companies have on our economy and community. That is why Concord's Business Retention Programs are in place: to retain companies that are considering leaving the City, to assist compa-

community and seek to enhance Concord's relationship with businesses in the following ways:

- Strengthen communication
- Provide educational programs and workshops
- Acknowledge significant contributors

Communication Company Visits

The City of Concord believes that personal visits are the most effective

Company Visits

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companies are typically in growth industries and meet other economic development objectives. However, the Economic Development Program has an open-door policy to meet or speak with any business that

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has concerns or wishes to expand. In this way, the City is able to work with companies that may not have been initially identified, and can respond to business community issues.

To schedule an appointment to meet with Economic Development staff, please call (925) 671-3048.

Economic Insight

On a quarterly basis, the City of Concord produces this newsletter which focuses on a major topic or issue relevant to the business community. Past issues have focused on how Concord's small businesses favorably compare to others in the industry, the activities and role of the Concord Redevelopment Agency, Concord's technology sector, Concord's diversified economy, and the energy crisis. Look for the next issue to give "Insight" into Concord's emerging business clusters.

Business Survey

Every spring, the City sends a business survey to all of the companies who have a business license in Concord. The City uses the survey

to gauge the overall business climate. It also provides an important opportunity for businesses to communicate their needs to the City. When you receive the survey this year, please take a moment to fill it out. Your input is valued and appreciated.

Education

Cash In On Concord

The City of Concord encourages business growth through educational events targeted at its business community. Where can you learn about ways to improve your business and network with your business peers? The answer is at *Cash In On Concord* events. These events are sponsored by the City of Concord to provide a value-added service to the local business community. The City partners with the Concord Chamber of Commerce, the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center and the U.S. Small Business Administration to produce these programs and workshops.

The first *Cash In On Concord* event of the fiscal year was held on October 30, 2001 at the Concord Hilton. Manex, a consulting and resource company, presented this event that provided an executive briefing on lean manufacturing techniques and employee training funds. The workshop was well attended by a cross-section of small to medium-sized manufacturing companies.

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Cash in on Concord, sponsored by the City of Concord and presented by Manex was held on October 30, 2001. Pictured above is Dwayne Dalman, Economic Development Specialist from the City of Concord.

Cash In On Concord

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Don't miss the next *Cash In On Concord* event to be held from 9 a.m. until noon on February 28, at the Concord Sheraton. This workshop will focus on types of small business financing and programs available to Concord businesses. A panel of

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experts will be on hand to present information on SBA (U.S. Small Business Administration) loan programs, microloans, industrial development bonds and business plans. Please call (925) 671-3048 to reserve your space.

In May 2002, *Cash In On Concord* will address issues important to the 2,500 smaller-sized retail/



Business Recognition Award recipients Isaac Dee and Guy Erickson, Harris & Associates.

service stores in Concord. This workshop will focus on how these businesses can remain competitive in today's economic environment. Industry experts will discuss topics such as signage, inventory control, merchandising and pricing.

If you are interested in attending either of these events, or if another topic is of interest to you, please contact our office at (925) 671-3048.

Acknowledgement

Business Recognition Awards

Concord is proud of the companies that make up our business community. On a quarterly basis, the City recognizes three businesses through the Business Recognition Awards program. This program publicly showcases companies that have contributed to the overall well being of the City. Businesses are recognized at a City Council meeting, in the *Contra Costa Times*, and at the annual Mayor's Breakfast hosted by the Concord Chamber of Commerce. Companies can receive an award by meeting any one of the following criteria:

1. Businesses with a proven longevity in Concord



Business Recognition Award recipient Lynne Walter, Eltegra, Inc.

2. Major tax generators
3. Companies that have shown significant growth over a twelve-month time frame
4. Major employers
5. Businesses that support Concord's community
6. Innovative companies ♦

Upcoming Events

Annual Mayor's Breakfast

January 30, 2002
Concord Hilton
(925) 685-1181

Chamber of Commerce Crabfeed

February 8, 2002
Centre Concord
(925) 685-1181

Cash In On Concord

February 28, 2002
Concord Sheraton
Small business financing
(925) 671-3048

May, 2002
To be announced
Retail competitiveness

Business Expansion - A One-Stop Shop

The City of Concord has a newly expanded and remodeled Permit Center ready to serve the needs of the business community. The center houses building inspection, current development-engineering, neighborhood preservation, planning and multi-family inspection. With staff

from all necessary departments located in one building, applicants can complete the permit process in one place. Visitors to the new Permit Center will find expanded counter space and a more comfortable and customer-friendly environment for completing the permit process.



City of Concord has expanded the Permit Center in order to provide better customer service.

The goal of the center is to have 90 percent of City permits issued over the counter on the same day. This standard of performance and customer service has earned Concord two Contra Costa Economic Partnership Awards for permit streamlining. ♦

Need an Answer?

www.ci.concord.ca.us

www.concordfirst.com

Economic Development Program (800) 727-2254

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CONTACTS

One-Stop Shop/Building Permits (925) 671-3114

Planning Department (925) 671-3152

Flood Zone Inquiries (925) 671-3023

Police Services, Information (925) 671-3232

Potholes (925) 671-3228

Street Trees (925) 671-3230

Graffiti Hotline (925) 671-3080

Redevelopment Agency (925) 671-3355

Business license* (925) 671-3307

*application is available on website above

CITY COUNCIL

Bill McManigal Mayor

Mark A. Peterson Vice Mayor

Helen M. Allen Councilmember

Laura M. Hoffmeister Councilmember

Michael A. Pastrick Councilmember

Lynnet Keihl City Clerk

Thomas Wentling City Treasurer

Edward R. James City Manager

Dwayne Dalman Editor



City of Concord

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