

COMING SOON!

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVANCES WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL MODEL TO ASSIST BUSINESSES; San Bernardino Valley Enterprise Zone Highlighted

In a bold effort to reverse an environment where businesses are closing and few new businesses are opening, the Economic Development Agency (EDA) of the City of San Bernardino is reorganizing and consolidating its business assistance programs and staff in a one-stop business center which it is naming the Office of Business Development. Executive Director Emil Marzullo culled the idea of assigning specialized staff to coordinate services and programs and work one-on-one with businesses from his long-time experience in organizational management coupled with expertise in all aspects of economic development, redevelopment, financing and running an independent business himself. In addition, many discussions with Mayor Pat Morris on setting new goals and objectives for the EDA, confirmed the timing was right, especially now that EDA already has a unique and great asset and business tool with its San Bernardino Valley Enterprise Zone (SBVEZ) designation confirmed, and already highly performing in this tight economic market.

The plan in progress will create a centralized Office of Business Development within the confines of the EDA building located on E Street downtown, encompassing a wide range of available resources and currently active programs that exist at EDA as well as seek out new programs and monies to assist the business community.

“We are the entrepreneurial and revenue-generating arm of the City,” stated Marzullo. “We need to step up and stand out as an example of change and retooling to meet the business market needs now and for future economic growth. Our location in the City’s downtown core also gives us access to many other business and government resources in close proximity,” he added.

The Office will focus on three specific areas; business retention, business recruitment and business solutions. Below is an initial summary of these services that will be adjusted to accommodate the business and market needs as the Office progresses.

Business Retention will consist of programs currently existing at EDA, including but not limited to facade improvement; Enterprise Zone incentives; Small Business Administration loan programs; Small Business Development Center (SBDC) resources for business plans and expansion opportunities, entitlement procedures, fast track and more. Business development staff from the San Bernardino Employment & Training Agency (SBETA) will be relocated to the Office as well.

Business Recruitment will consist of business development staff, foreign and domestic; resources for demographics and site location, bureaucratic processes fast track; conference and trade show attendance, Enterprise Zone incentives and more.

Business Solutions will provide educational and mentoring opportunities for the business

community in several forms: live presentations, web streamed presentations, internet archives, television live/replays and DVDs. Remote camera equipment with fiber optic links to recording equipment and live playback will be available in two separate areas of the office. Several other agencies including the San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce have expressed a desire to use the training rooms. Nominal fees for such use are yet to be determined, as well as for specific marketing and communication services that will also be available.

The Office of Business Development is scheduled to open for business in the EDA building by late summer 2009. EDA's Lori Tillery is the project manager for all aspects of the coordination and development of the Office, and will assume the Office of Business Development leadership role under Emil Marzullo when it officially opens. Lori also serves as the General Manager for the EDA's newly expanded Inland Empire Media Group Television Station and Production House (IEMG -formerly KCSB-TV3), located on the ground floor of the EDA Building, 201 North E Street, San Bernardino 92401. **For information, call Lori Tillery, Economic Development Agency, 909-663-1044; www.sbrda.org/qfmedia.htm**

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