



Insight

APRIL 2003

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Is your business looking for ways to expand? Are you looking for new customers or ideas on how to run your company more effectively? Are you searching for a site in which to expand? If you are, then the City of Concord can provide assistance. This issue of Economic Insight will illustrate how the City of Concord can be a valuable resource for your business. It will also discuss business licenses as well as ways that companies can be involved in enhancing the community in which they are located.

While attracting new business is key to maintaining a vital economy, the City of Concord recognizes the importance of its existing companies and the positive impact that successful, growing companies have on the economy and community. That is why Concord's Business Retention Programs are in place; to assist companies operating in the City, to assist companies that wish to expand within the city's borders, and to retain companies that are considering relocating out of the City.

Concord's Economic Development Program offers a number of services to companies that are either locating or expanding here. However, many firms are not accustomed to asking the City for assistance and are consequently unaware that these services are available. The following sections describe the programs that are offered by the City to assist in the expansion and growth of its existing businesses. For personal assistance with any of these programs, please contact our office at (925) 671-3048. ♦



John Montag (right), Concord's Business Development Manager at the construction site for the Metroplex Office Center with Scott Ellis (left) of Colliers International and Carl Campos of Loving & Campos Architects.

Help Available in Finding the Right Site

The City partners with the local real estate community to maintain a real estate inventory that is either currently available or soon to be available for business expansions. This information is conveniently available 24/7 on ConcordFirst.com, the interactive web page of the City of Concord's Economic Development Program. The web

page features a property locator system that allows a user to inquire about potential retail, office or industrial locations to buy, lease or develop. The website also allows access to demographics, consumer expenditures and workforce data. If your business has outgrown its current facility, please contact our office or visit our web site. ♦

Finding the Right Connection – Business to Business Commerce

In today's economy, businesses are always looking for ways to increase sales and find new customers. The City of Concord subscribes to a service that offers local, regional and national market research information that is typically

only available to larger firms. Market research can be performed to generate a list of potential customers, suppliers or competitors. Basic company contact information is available, as well as detailed information such as number of employees,

years in business and annual sales. This is an excellent resource that can make a tangible difference for any company. Please contact our office to discuss how this service can benefit your business. ♦

Finding the Right Resource

Concord's Economic Development staff can direct you to a number of local agencies that provide services and programs to Concord's business community. The following is a listing of some of these organizations and the services they provide. Please contact our office for more information on how these programs can benefit your business.

Key Business Expansion Contacts

**Economic Development,
Business Retention &
Expansion Program**

(925) 671-3048

One-Stop Permit Center

(925) 671-3114

Business License

(925) 671-3307

Local Agency Services & Programs

Todos Santos Business Association

- Local business association
- (925) 671-3258
- www.concordmainstreet.com

EASTBAY Works Business Services Center

- Employee hiring and recruiting
- (925) 646-5559
- www.eastbayworks.com

California Communities

- Industrial development bonds
- (800) 635-3993
- www.cacommunities.com

Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce

- Networking
- Advocacy
- (925) 685-1181
- www.concordchamber.com

Contra Costa Small Business Development Center

- How to write a business plan
- Start-up business counseling
- (925) 646-5377
- www.contracostasbdc.com

U.S. Small Business Administration

- Small business financing
- SCORE business counseling
- (415) 744-6820
- www.sba.gov

Monument Business Association

- Local business association
- (925) 676-2305

Regional Training Institute

- Employee training
- (925) 930-8366
- www.4rti.org

Questions & Answers About Business Licenses

The City of Concord welcomes your new business to our community. One of the requirements for doing business in Concord, as with most cities, is a business license. Income received from the business license tax goes into the City's General Fund, which supports services used by businesses such as street maintenance, crime prevention, planning and other programs that maintain Concord's high quality of life. The following questions regarding business licenses are the most frequently asked of staff:



Mike Snow (right), License and Permit Agent for the City of Concord provides over the counter assistance

Who is required to be licensed?

All persons or companies conducting business in the City of Concord are required to obtain a business license and pay the business license tax. This includes commercial landlords, retail outlets, wholesalers, manufacturers and their representatives, service companies, self-employed professionals, independent contractors and home businesses.

If you conduct business in Concord from an office located outside of Concord, you are also required to obtain a business license.

When do I pay and what are the rates based on?

Business licenses must be renewed annually. The tax is based on the nature of a particular business and the business tax schedule.

Businesses that are either retail or wholesale will pay based on their gross receipts. All other businesses will be taxed either on gross receipts or according to their classification.

How does zoning affect my license?

The City has established zoning regulations that control the location and operation of commercial activities according to

the approved General Plan. Before a new business license can be issued, companies must contact the City Planning Division to make sure that their business and business location conforms to the plan.

Please contact the business license department for specific information on rates, or the Permit Center for permits that may be required for your business. The City business license office is located in the Finance Department at 1950 Parkside Drive.

Applications can be picked up in person or conveniently filled out online by accessing the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org, and going to the "Doing Business" section of the website. ♦

Linking Community Pride with a Promotional Opportunity: City of Concord announces Adopt-A-Street Program

In response to a high level of interest from local businesses and civic groups, the City of Concord is launching a volunteer program that provides the opportunity to get directly involved in enhancing the community's appearance and in promoting your business.

Similar in concept to the Adopt-A-Highway program operated by Caltrans, Concord's Adopt-A-Street Program enables interested groups to adopt a minimum half-mile stretch of one of the City's key thoroughfares. In return for conducting scheduled clean-ups of that stretch of street four times a year, the group is recognized with signage located at the beginning and end of their designated street section. Concord is particularly interested in tapping into the strong volunteer ethic that exists within its active business community.

"This program was first proposed in the Neighborhood Services' Strategic Plan," says Hamid Pouya, Director of Building and Neighborhood Services.

"Two key desired outcomes from that strategic plan involve improving the overall general appearance of the city and providing a forum for citizens and businesses to demonstrate

pride in their community. Adopt-A-Street is a perfect combination of both elements."

The program also provides an excellent promotional

Bamberger, Neighborhood Services Manager. "Adopt-A-Street offers yet another way for local businesses to demonstrate the civic pride that's so much a part of Concord."

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— Elia Bamberger, Neighborhood Services Manager

opportunity by publicizing the sponsoring business through signage posted on the street. The City's pilot program will consist of 12 groups total, with no more than 10 participants per group. These volunteer groups will adopt a minimum half-mile stretch of Clayton Road, Concord Avenue, Willow Pass Road or Monument Boulevard. Adoption requires the commitment of four annual clean-ups to remove litter over a two-year period.

"While Concord is the largest city in Contra Costa County, it's still a close-knit community, retaining its small-town feel and values. The business community has a proven track record of getting involved and really making a difference," states Elia

The program is scheduled for implementation this spring, with special focus being placed on partnering with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses. If successful, additional streets will be made available for adoption, and more groups will be able to participate in the future. Business leaders are encouraged to learn more about the program and apply to adopt a street. Please contact the City of Concord's Neighborhood Preservation Services Division at (925) 671-3075 for more information. ♦

The logo for the Adopt A Street program. The word "Adopt" is written in a blue, cursive font above a stylized blue road graphic. The word "Street" is written in a blue, cursive font below the road graphic. The letter "A" is integrated into the road graphic, appearing as a white "A" on a blue background.

Find New Business Opportunities at the Next Cash In On Concord Event

Where can you learn about new ways to improve your business and network with your business peers? The answer is at Cash In On Concord business workshops. The City of Concord partners with the Concord Chamber of Commerce, the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center, and the U.S. Small Business Administration to produce workshops that add value to your business. Past workshops have focused on small business financing, manufacturing and visual merchandising.

Don't miss the next Cash In On Concord workshop, *"Making More Money and Finding New Opportunities for Your Business in Uncertain Times,"* to be held on

Wednesday, May 14 at the Concord Hilton. The event will feature the return of nationally recognized business expert Kent Burnes. This is what attendees said about Kent Burnes' last workshop:

"Enjoyed every minute. Kent was very informative and a pleasure to listen to"

*"Great presentation!
Great information! Clear and direct"*

"Fantastic ideas given out"

"Simple and straightforward advice"

This year's three-hour program will be full of useful, common sense approaches that every business owner or manager can use to build a better business.

Kent will cover topics such as:

- Where are the new opportunities?
- What do today's customers want from your business?
- How to improve sales and work "smarter".
- How to improve customer service and image.
- How to retain employees.

For your convenience, the workshop will be offered twice in one day: from 7:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m., and from 6:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend. To reserve your space or to receive more information, please contact our office at (925) 671-3048. ♦



Cash In On Concord business workshops are sponsored by the City of Concord. Pictured above is Dwayne Dalman, Concord's Economic Development Specialist.

Quick Turnaround at Permit Center

Concord's Permit Center is a one-stop-shop for businesses, residents and property owners in need of permits and entitlements. The Permit 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. The goal of the center is to issue 90 percent of construction-related permits within 24 hours of application. The Permit Center has earned Concord the Contra Costa Economic

Partnership Award for permit streamlining two years in a row.

If you are an expanding business and are in need of a permit, please contact Economic Development at (925) 671-3048 or the Permit Center at (925) 671-3114. We will make the right introductions and work with you throughout the process. ♦



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

Need an Answer?

www.cityofconcord.org
www.concordfirst.com

Economic Development Program (800) 727-2254

John Montag johnm@ci.concord.ca.us

Dwayne Dalman ddalman@ci.concord.ca.us

CONTACTS

Business License*	(925) 671-3307
Flood Zone Inquiries	(925) 671-3023
Graffiti Hotline	(925) 671-3080
One-Stop Shop/Building Permits	(925) 671-3114
Planning Department	(925) 671-3152
Potholes	(925) 671-3228
Police Services, Information	(925) 671-3232
Redevelopment Agency	(925) 671-3355
Street Trees	(925) 671-3230

*application is available on website above

CITY COUNCIL

Mark A. Peterson	Mayor
Helen M. Allen	Vice Mayor
Susan Bonilla	Councilmember
Laura M. Hoffmeister	Councilmember
Bill McManigal	Councilmember

Mary Rae Lehman	City Clerk
Thomas Wentling	City Treasurer
Edward R. James	City Manager

Dwayne Dalman	Editor
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City of Concord
 1950 Parkside Dr., MS 1B
 Concord, CA 94519-2578