



Agenda Cover Memorandum

Meeting Date: February 25, 2013

Item Title: Economic Development Goals for the City of Park Ridge

Action Requested:

☒ Approval

☐ For discussion

☐ Feedback requested

☐ For your information

Staff Contact: James F. Testin, CP&D Manager

Phone Number: 847-318-5296

Email Address: jtestin@parkridge.us

Background:

The Economic Development Task Force has been meeting since January 2012. It was formed as an outcome of the City's strategic planning session in 2011, which identified economic development as a key, urgent, strategic initiative. The group should be recognized for all their hard work and assistance they have given to the City. Those who have been part of the Task Force are:

Joe Campagna
Kyra Cavanaugh
Thomas Chisari
Amy Degrasio
Leo Dietlin
Sheila Duda
Curtis Edlund
Jo Ann Flynn
Tania Forte
Dan Galuska

Gail Haller
Sergio Lazzara
Roger Loeffler
Barbara Low
MaryJo MacSwain
Steve Marti
Jacqueline Mathews
Vicki Mutchler
Mike Quaid
Franklin Ramirez

Sal Raspanti
Mary Ryan
Bill Scharinghausen
Jared Skiba
Barbara Tyksinski
Janet Van De Carr
Keli Walbert
Jim Ward
Herbert Zuegel

In the first meeting of the Task Force several aspects were targeted as areas that the Council was looking for feedback on:

- Economic development tools, issues, and approaches;
- The development of a formal economic development business plan for the community;
- The creation of multi-dimensional economic development strategies the City can use and targets to work toward;
- Educating and informing the public and encourage them to shop locally;
- Knowing what space is available so they can open a business and what services are available;
- and
- Enhancing the City's internal procedures to help businesses.

On September 24, 2012 the economic development goals developed by the group were presented at a Committee of the Whole meeting. The focus of that meeting was to ensure the group was on target with what was envisioned by the Council. At the meeting the Committee supported the work developed by the group and encouraged the Task Force to develop estimated costs to achieve the goals in preparation of the upcoming budget cycle. On January 30, 2013 the Task Force unanimously passed a motion to recommend the City Council support the Economic Development Goals for the City of Park Ridge.



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Two key elements that the Task Force emphasizes in the goals are an update to the website and the assignment of some entity (staffing or consultant) to manage economic development. Implementation has begun on certain goals thanks to the work of the Task Force members and through current staffing but to fully address the goals having someone specifically assign to economic development has been identified as a critical need by the Task Force. Currently the proposed FY2013/2014 budget includes a part-time economic development position to manage the implementation of the economic development tasks. While the Task Force has identified costs, as requested by some Committee members in September, the cost is only an estimate and may be adjusted by focusing on certain priorities, utilizing current staff, and the assistance of volunteers such as those on the Task Force.

Recommendation:

Accept the report by the Economic Development Task Force, "Economic Development Goals for the City of Park Ridge".

Budget Implications:

Does Action Require an Expenditure of Funds: ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, Total Cost:

FY2013/2014 includes:

\$32,460 Part-Time Economic Development Position

If Yes, is this a Budgeted Item: ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Budgeted, Budget Code (Fund, Dept, Object) Planned for FY2013/2014

Attachments:

- Economic Development Goals for the City of Park Ridge
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Economic Development Goals for the City of Park Ridge 2013 and Beyond

Work Product of the Economic Development Task Force 2012

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW:

The Economic Development Task Force was created in January 2012 as an outcome of the City's Strategic Planning session in 2011, which identified economic development as a key, urgent, strategic initiative. The Task Force, comprised of 28 business and community leaders, set overall objectives to improve perception of the City as business-friendly, encourage and facilitate businesses locating and succeeding here, provide residents with more shopping options, and through all of the above, boost sales tax revenue and commercial real estate tax revenue in Park Ridge.

The Task Force was broken down into five subcommittees, each of which developed goals in its area. Subcommittees were: communication, consumer/maintain up-to-date information, market Park Ridge business environment, promote Park Ridge, and review processes. As reflected in their names, the subcommittees took on some overlapping areas of concern to assure key issues were addressed from several useful vantage points.

The Task Force met as a whole and in its subcommittees at least monthly throughout 2012 for intensive planning purposes. Each meeting resulted in some concrete advance. Individuals also contributed many hours of hands-on deliverables; specifically in website content development and surveys of consumers and businesses which have been provided to the City.

Mindful of the current budget constraints and the large scope of needed remedial work, each Subcommittee developed short-term and long-term goals. The Task Force concluded that two priority needs were a basic update of the City's first impression and ongoing education tool – its website -- to be more user-friendly and business-friendly; and the assignment of professionals to handle economic development and related marketing communications to support that development. Contracting with several existing Task Force members with specific skills, hiring outside consulting firms, or hiring new employees on staff at the City are all options, but these functions must be assigned to specific individuals capable of performing at the necessary level and assigned these as their primary duties. Website updates and economic development outreach activities must be ongoing, regular and vigorous to be competitive.

Communication tasks start with urgent content (info and photos) improvements to the City website and include other communication efforts, from a simple stuffer in every water bill to other low-cost, high-impact marketing tactics (see detail following).

Consumer/Maintain Updated Information tasks start with developing an RFP and/or otherwise determining how to reestablish a formal economic development entity led by a consultant or

staffer and accountable to the City. It further suggests the development of a selling strategy and presentation deck for Park Ridge to use to attract new business, incorporating consumer survey results and other feedback (see detail following).

Market Park Ridge Business Environment tasks start with developing an incentive package for new and current businesses, including the return of the façade renovation matching program and a tax benefit when the City is financially on sounder footing; as well as creating an economic development entity to oversee and conduct needed tasks. Other tasks include staging windows and vacant retail spaces to improve the City's retail image and attract prospects, and addressing a text amendment to the signage ordinance (see detail following).

Promote Park Ridge tasks include reviewing ordinances and making recommendations to the City Council for better enforcement or more user-friendly language. It also includes maximizing existing events' value for shopping/dining, allowing retailers to stage empty storefronts or open short-term "pop-up" shops to improve City's image, and more (see detail following).

Review Process tasks include reviewing "doing business in Park Ridge" ordinances and providing the Council with recommendations for revisions to improve perception of the City's "business-unfriendly" reputation and ease the process of opening a business, including ordinances related to signage, parking, liquor license, etc. Tasks also include documenting actual business concerns and creating a user-friendly checklist for new businesses on the City website (see detail following).

Bottom-line, the Task Force appreciates the opportunity to assist the City Council, encourages the Council to authorize and adopt the short-term, high-impact improvements that will address our uncompetitive position and reauthorize a formal entity to address our ongoing needs for economic development and related marketing communications as well as analysis of City ordinances and processes that affect economic development in Park Ridge.

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Category: Communication

Goals: Short-Term

1. Update the City website

Tasks

- Complete input of all content and creative direction edits provided by Mary Wynn Ryan and the Economic Development Task Force Communications sector.
- Prioritize inputting the content and creative direction edits to the "Doing Business" section.
- Prioritize inputting the content and creative direction edits to the "Economic Development" section.
- Have AmericanEagle.com include idev CMS within the City site so that staff or other non-tech person can update it efficiently. (AmericanEagle.com already does this for Village of Wilmette and is preparing to do it for the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce.)
- If this CMS system is already in place, train key staff or contractor on it.
- Assign staff or contractor who can a) professionally rewrite and edit content provided by various City department heads to meet City image and marketing requirements; and who can also b) creative direct photo shoots, selection of available photos and other graphics and overall placement of elements within AmericanEagle.com template to meet City image and marketing requirements.
- Develop additional urgent website content additions/updates and related creative direction in addition to new/edited content and creative direction provided by the Task Force, and make one round of corrections.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Marketing communications on behalf of really, really big-ticket decisions (a house, a business location) take repeated, consistent, positive exposures over time, but as prospects' first line of education about the City, a quality site will result in:
 - Improved quality of taxpayer's perception of City services, professionalism, efficiency, responsiveness and user-friendliness.
 - Improved quality of current business owners' perception of City commitment to being "business-friendly; possible improved retention rates.
 - Improved quality of potential residents' perception of City services and user-friendliness
 - Improved quality of potential businesses' perception of City commitment to being "business-friendly," possible improved quantity of leads.

2. Include 1/3-page stuffer in every water bill highlighting events to encourage shopping and attendance by residents.

Tasks

- Assign a professional marketing copywriter to craft a compelling sell message and select an enticing typeface and layout for a low-cost, text-only format slip-in/stuffer. (Note: It is more challenging to create short copy that sells than to create long.) Each stuffer should reference the City website for ongoing cross-marketing.

- Estimated print on 20# offset stock (printer paper), colored stock, print quantity approx. 5,000, cut into thirds to make 15,000 stuffers for 14,000+ households.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Cost-effective promotional alerts to all residents including those less likely to use digital media.
- Reminder to taxpayers of City's multifaceted efforts toward community building and fulfillment of City mission of "a wonderful place to live and work."
- Demonstration to businesses of City's commitment to actively promote and support them, which supports City goal of business retention.
- Reminder to taxpayers about checking City website for up-to-date info.

3. Develop a media list of electronic and print outlets

Tasks

- Solicit lists from Park District, Chamber, Economic Development Task Force members and others.
- Research and augment list with additional appropriate media Ex: *Chicago Magazine*, *Today's Chicago Woman*, etc.
- Assign public relations and/or editorially experienced professional as contact on all outreach press release e-blasts, to be available for comment within 24 hours of request. Relay requests to City Manager and assist in crafting and conveying official response as needed.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Enhance media and public perception of Park Ridge and improve access to valuable City information by facilitating professional (prompt, knowledgeable) contact with appropriate media in a timely fashion.
- Save time for City Manager and other management staff.
- Protect City image/brand by helping formulate and express information in a consistently appropriate manner across all platforms.

4. Send e-blasts of newsworthy new retailers, special events, etc.

Tasks

- Build City's business and resident email database by requesting email addresses on all forms (business license renewals, City stickers/vehicle and pet licenses, construction permits, etc.) Indicate that info is never sold and is used to help City more cost-effectively contact residents with info of importance and/or interest. Work with Police and CERT to ensure no conflict and repurpose contact information where appropriate. Update list monthly.
- Build City's media email database (see Communication Goal re: "Develop a media list...."). E-blasts to media function as news releases.
- Develop eblast content and (optional) appropriate visuals for promotional e-blasts. Send no more often than once per week and include opt-out language. Includes soliciting suggested topic(s) from City management.

- Reference City website on each e-blast.

NOTE: to minimize opt-outs, it is ESSENTIAL that only truly newsworthy content be blasted, but smaller items can be used together to improve weight of content. Contractor with proven experience as an editor can identify appropriate content and obtain approval from City management.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Establish and reinforce positive perception of City's efforts to build and support business (to the existing business community).
- Establish and reinforce positive perception of City's efforts to provide shopping and entertainment options and community-building efforts (to residents).
- Build public interest via editors to perception of Park Ridge as business friendly and filled with shopping options (to potential residents, businesses and visitors).

5. Develop pdf-format promotion for Park Ridge events

Tasks

- Investigate "Clear Slide" software and analytics to optimize collateral. (ClearSlide helps to remove technology friction, encourage teamwork, and highlight customer interest; provides a broad, integrated product platform that helps drive more revenue. Living Social, Expedia, The Wall Street Journal, and many others use ClearSlide's sales communications platform to connect with customers, get real-time feedback, and increase close rates.)

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Helps utilize content conveniently across various platforms, saving time/creative costs and maintaining consistent, professional City image.

6. Create a promotional flyer to solicit participation in events.

Tasks

- Assign a professional marketing copywriter/creative director to craft a compelling sell message and engaging graphics in a simple 8.5x11" flyer template suitable for posting in retail store windows, hand-out at City Hall, Library, Farmers Market, etc. Each flyer should reference the City website for more info and ongoing cross-marketing.
- Print on 20# offset stock (printer paper), colored stock, print quantity approx. 5,000 for use as handout.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Cost-effective promotional alerts that remind taxpayers of City's multifaceted efforts toward community building and fulfillment of City mission of "a wonderful place to live and work."
- Demonstration to businesses of City's commitment to actively promote and support them, which supports City goal of business retention.
- Reminder to taxpayers about checking City website for up-to-date information.

- Cost-effective promotional alerts to prospective residents, businesses, visitors, etc. that create and reinforce a positive perception of Park Ridge as an enjoyable, business-friendly place with exciting shopping, entertainment and community-building options.

7. Provide events for coming year for publication calendars

Tasks

- Solicit marketing events from Chamber, Taste, South Park Merchants and smaller, ad hoc event producers like the recent Northwest Highway promotion (Raffia, etc.) Other events (cultural, charity sales, etc.) held by service groups may also be included as in *Spokesman*.
- Develop standard format to capture key information in consistent form media can use, assemble master list and keep updated.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Increased visibility of Park Ridge shopping, dining and related special events due to providing publications with timely (i.e. well in advance) items for publication calendars. A minimum of 3 months advance notice is required; more would be better.
- Increased potential for editorial coverage of our events, shops, etc. when editors can gain story ideas from our events in time to plan assigning coverage.
- Improved perception of City as supporting charitable and cultural events as info on these are attractive to PSA (Public Service Announcement) editors at electronic media as well as to conventional print media.

8. Develop a way for the City Website to capture requests for information and a way to have someone fulfill.

Tasks

- It appears this is already being done on the current site. However, "General Information" when the lengthy alpha list of FAQ topics doesn't address a person's question makes it hard to ask one's question. Better to use standard practice of adding "Other" to the end of the listing and highlight it. (This will also eliminate odd pairing of "Animal Inquiries" and "General Information" under "General Requests.")
- Consider adding other opt-ins for information to make it easy for those contacting us with questions about basic City services to also sign up for e-notices of special events, online version of the *Spokesman*, etc. at the same time.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Improved public perception of City's responsiveness
- Opportunity for City to use questions to continue refining its understanding of FAQs and therefore improve and clarify City procedures on 'hot button' issues.
- Over time, transition majority of residents and others to seek and comfortably accept economical e-versions of printed materials, thereby saving the City money.

9. Continue to update City website

Tasks

- Manage day-to-day web content, using professional editorial skills and CMS. Make updates as requested by departments to ensure information is current and expressed in a way that meets professional standards.
- Develop new content and edit provided content as needed and ensure it supports City's goals and image.
- Manage photo and graphic options and utilize as needed to successfully illustrate content.
- Work with City management and website host to refine and improve content options over time.
- Add ability to post videos (video production to be priced separately)
- Add ability to use effectively in all formats including smartphones.

Category: **Consumer/Maintain Up-To-Date Information**

Goals: Short-Term

1. Create Economic Development Entity

Tasks

- Create RFP Template form.
- Complete RFP.
- Garner feedback from group.
- Solicit bids from community development experts (i.e. Findzall), including recommended annual budget.
- Review submissions and budget.
- Write job description for hire.
- Make recommendation to City Council on budget and whether to hire or use outside firm.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Sales tax revenue increases
- Improved retention
- New businesses
- More businesses approaching us to come to Park Ridge

2. Create selling strategy and presentation deck for Park Ridge to use to attract new business

Tasks

- Summarize and analyze consumer survey results.
- Gather additional data, if available (from information wish list).
- Analyze all data for key insights.
- Pull together presentation deck.
- Review presentation deck with group.

- Turn over presentation deck to appropriate people.
- Make recommendations for businesses to target and present to appropriate people.
- Longer-term, conduct retailer focus groups.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Improvement in Chamber of Commerce survey results
- Improved feedback from residents and shoppers
- Feedback on presentation from potential retailers

Category: Market Park Ridge Business Environment

Goals: Short-Term

1. Incentive package for new and current businesses

Tasks

- Return of façade renovation matching program.
- Tax benefit (when we are finally healthy).

2. Create an Economic Development entity

Task

- Recommend that a firm who is professional and knows what they're doing and can hit the ground running. i.e. Findzall.

Measurable Outcomes/Value

- Will bring businesses to Park Ridge!

3. Market to media and outside Park Ridge

Tasks

- Press releases about what is going on in town- utilize media more to promote the City work with Rosemont Visitor and Convention Bureau to try to get visitors to Park Ridge.
- Attend conventions to promote the City such as the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC).

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Increased exposure for Park Ridge.

4. Stage windows/vacant space/visions for vacancies

Tasks

- Text Amendment to Sign Ordinance.

- Visions for Vacancies- Patch.com asks the public to state business they'd like to see at vacant space.

5. Media Relations

Tasks

- Training elected officials in addressing and working with the media. All about "image" 3 day media training for current and elected.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Businesses considering Park Ridge, when doing fact-finding and research, would find positive messages and an environment to grow a business.

Goals: Long Term

1. Research other towns' successful marketing

Task

- Identify successful programs and evaluate if programs can be implemented in Park Ridge.

Category: Promote Park Ridge

Goals: Short-Term

1. Review ordinances and make recommendations for better enforcement or new language

Tasks

- Assign staff to find relevant sections.
- Staff, "Promote Park Ridge" Sub-Committee, and City Attorneys to meet on recommended changes.
- Decide and send recommendations to City Council.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Makes Uptown more appealing to shoppers, for example improve exterior appearance of 106 Main Street and old Herald Advocate Buildings'.

2. Investigate use of empty storefront windows by other merchants

Task

- Same as Promote Park Ridge Goal 1.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- When Tea Lula, On the Road and others have displays in now empty storefronts it reduces negative impacts of closed stores and improves the image of the City.
- Improves marketing of local businesses thus increasing sales revenue.

3. Explore ways to make “pop-up” shops easy in empty stores for short periods

Task

- Same as Promote Park Ridge Goal 1.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- When pop-up shops open and prosper. Example, Winter Farmers Market in empty space on Main Street run by New Veggie store guy, and/or Valentine’s Day and/or Easter and/or our Big Memorial Day parade.
- May be an incubator that allows for potential users of retail space to test the market.
- Fills vacant store thus improving the City’s image and increasing sales revenue.

4. Promote Park Ridge as a site for special events that build business

Tasks

- For the Norwegian Day parade, encourage parade organizers to come on Saturday (instead of Sunday).
- Support “First Fridays” with wider Marketing help from City.
- Connect with existing charity local events with tie-in marketing.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- High traffic= High sales, measure this either by Chamber of Commerce or hire a Task Force Member Ad Hoc.

Goals: Long-Term

1. Penalize landlords who leave property vacant for an extended period

Tasks

- Investigate examples that may have been implemented in our municipalities.
- City Attorney drafts Park Ridge Ordinance for City Council approval.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Empty stores are filled.

2. Market Park Ridge’s cultural heritage as Kalo has initiated

Tasks

- Contact Oakton Community College BD. Chair to arrange for a meeting with key people and Sub-Committee representative for advice on how to do and what it costs.
- Contact Oak Park to learn best approach based on their experience. Bring a Task Force representative to all meetings Oak Park.

3. Promote regional tourism through various media

Task

- Contact state government/other support and identify Park Ridge professional marketing resource needs to make recommendation of plan and budget and deliverables with due dates.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Costs are for marketing materials/advice and good dissemination thereof, e.g. connect with "Chicago Architectural Foundation" to get on their tours and in their publications.

Category: Review Process

Goals: Short-Term

1. Review relevant ordinance and provide Council with recommendations for revisions

Tasks

- Committee review ordinances to determine areas to streamline.
- Prepare recommendations for possible presentation to Council.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Make Park Ridge business friendly- ease of opening a business.

2. Follow new businesses through process of starting the business and obtain feedback

Tasks

- Select recently opened and/or renovated businesses to interview and conduct a minimum of 8 interviews.
- Document business concerns.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Compile business concerns and review relevant ordinances.

Goals: Long Term

1. Create checklists of processes with sign off by owner and City

Task

- Create checklist/guidelines for new business owner.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Creates an agreement between business owner and City regarding requirements to open business.

2. Signage, parking, liquor requirements (revisions)

Task

- Document recommendations to Council for ordinance change/update.

Measurable Outcome/Value

- Less red tape for new business owners while abiding by City Ordinances.

Budget (Estimated Costs)

Communication

Goals Short-Term

1. Update the City website	\$1,600 (idev CMS within the City site \$0, if complete, or TBA from AmericanEagle.com)
2. Include 1/3-page stuffer in every water bill highlighting events to encourage shopping and attendance by residents.	\$5,400
3. Develop a media list of electronic and print outlets	\$7,800
4. Send e-blasts of newsworthy new retailers, special events, etc	\$2,550
5. Develop pdf-format promotion for Park Ridge events	TBD
6. Create a promotional flyer to solicit participation in events.	\$4,800
7. Provide events for coming year for publication calendars	\$700
8. Develop a way for the City Website to capture requests for information and a way to have someone fulfill.	\$0
9. Continue to update City website	\$19,200
Total	\$42,050

Consumer/Maintain Up-To-Date Information

Goals: Short-Term

1. Create Economic Development Entity	\$75,000*
2. Create selling strategy and presentation deck for Park Ridge to use to attract new business	\$15,000
Total	\$90,000

Market Park Ridge Business Environment

Goals: Short-Term

1. Incentive package for new and current businesses	\$20,000
2. Create an Economic Development entity	\$75,000*
3. Market to media and outside Park Ridge	\$1,500
4. Stage windows/vacant space/visions for vacancies	\$0
5. Media Relations	\$1,500
Total	\$98,000

Goals: Long Term

1. Research other towns' successful marketing	\$0
Total	\$0

Promote Park Ridge**Goals: Short-Term**

1. Review ordinances and make recommendations for better enforcement or new language	\$0
2. Investigate use of empty storefront windows by other merchants	\$0
3. Explore ways to make "pop-up" shops easy in empty stores for short periods	\$0
4. Promote Park Ridge as a site for special events that build business	\$10,000
Total	\$10,000

Goals: Long-Term

1. Penalize landlords who leave property vacant for an extended period	\$0
2. Market Park Ridge's cultural heritage as Kalo has initiated	\$0
3. Promote regional tourism through various media	\$25,000
Total	\$25,000

Review Process**Goals: Short-Term**

1. Review relevant ordinance and provide Council with recommendations for revisions	\$0
2. Follow new businesses through process of starting the business and obtain feedback	\$0
Total	\$0

Goals: Long Term

Create checklists of processes with sign off by owner and City	\$0
Signage, parking, liquor requirements (revisions)	\$0
Total	\$0

Notes: While there are specific costs, even \$0, there is significant staff time that would be assigned.

* - Cost for same item. Other costs may be incorporated into these costs.