

# STAFF REPORT

## City of Lancaster

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DATE: August 24, 2010

TO: Mayor Parris and City Council Members

FROM: Vern Lawson, Jr., Economic Development/Redevelopment Director

SUBJECT: **Endorse the 2010 Los Angeles County Strategic Plan for Economic Development**

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### **Recommendation:**

Endorse the 2010 Los Angeles County Strategic Plan for Economic Development and authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute the document.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

None.

### **Background:**

Amidst the backdrop of a worldwide recession and underperformance in job creation throughout Los Angeles County in recent decades, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) launched an effort to establish a Strategic Plan for Economic Development on behalf of the County in 2007. Prior to the LAEDC's efforts in this area, no such plan had ever before existed for Los Angeles County.

The LAEDC serves as the primary economic development agency for all of LA County. Its mission is simple: to attract, retain and grow businesses and jobs throughout the County. To date, the organization has helped attract or retain more than 1,190 businesses and nearly 162,000 jobs, producing a direct economic impact of more than \$8 billion. As such, the LAEDC made it a priority to establish a plan that would guide regional decision-making regarding economic development in order to strengthen and stimulate job creation throughout the County. This plan was unanimously approved by the LA County Board of Supervisors in December 2009.

As job creation and economic development have long been priorities for the Lancaster City Council, the City joined the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) in 1999. Throughout the City's relationship with this organization, the LAEDC has served as an advocate for Lancaster and an invaluable partner in business attraction efforts. For example, during the past two years, the LAEDC has acted as a facilitator in establishing relationships between the City and various Chinese companies and organizations with an interest in investment in Lancaster. Such relationships have borne fruit such as the recently-launched "Home of the Future," produced through a partnership with BYD and KB Home. This home

garnered national and international attention, as well as praise for the City's forward-thinking green initiatives.

To develop the Strategic Plan, the LAEDC solicited input from more than 1,000 stakeholders in over two dozen public forums, including a forum here in the Antelope Valley in October 2008. These forums brought together leaders from a variety of sectors, including business, government, labor, education, environmental and other community-based organizations. Together, they developed a comprehensive plan which includes 12 objectives and 52 strategies to accomplish the following primary goals:

- 1) Prepare an educated workforce
- 2) Create a business-friendly environment
- 3) Enhance the quality of life
- 4) Implement smart land use
- 5) Create 21<sup>st</sup>-century infrastructure

This is the first-ever comprehensive plan for economic development in LA County. This collaborative plan aims to strengthen the economy, improve the environment and invigorate the community.

As the City of Lancaster is one of only a few cities in Los Angeles County that has an economic development element in its General Plan, the City understands the substantial benefits to be gained through such a plan. Since its inclusion in the General Plan more than 15 years ago, the City's economic development element has proven to be a valuable guide in setting policy and priorities related to economic development. This Strategic Plan is a viable method for achieving the LAEDC's stated goals of creating and retaining high-quality, stable jobs as the pathway to a stronger, more sustainable economy and a better quality of life for LA County residents.

The City of Lancaster will continue to work with the LAEDC to advance efforts to attract new industry, businesses and jobs to Lancaster to fulfill the goals of the Strategic Plan.

**Summary:**

The Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) has developed the first-ever Strategic Plan for Economic Development for Los Angeles County. This plan consists of objectives and strategies to accomplish 5 primary goals which aim to strengthen the economy, improve the environment and invigorate communities throughout the County.

The City of Lancaster is a longtime member of the LAEDC, which has served as a valuable advocate and partner for Lancaster. The City supports and shares the LAEDC's goals to attract, retain and grow jobs and businesses in an effort to strengthen the economy and improve the quality of life for area residents. Efforts by both agencies to accomplish these goals would be advanced through the City's endorsement of this Strategic Plan.