

Lompoc City Council Agenda Item



City Council Meeting Date: October 7, 2008

TO: Gary P. Keefe, City Administrator

FROM: Kathleen A. Griffith, Economic Development Manager
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SUBJECT: Subscription enrollment with California Association for Local Economic Development/The California Academy for Economic Development "Tools for Business Success."

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council:

- A) Review and consider the attached Subscription with California Association for Local Economic Development/The California Academy for Economic Development "Tools for Business Success."
- B) Authorize the City Administrator to execute the attached subscription terms with the California Association for Local Economic Development/The California Academy for Economic Development "Tools for Business Success" authorizing \$1,340 from account #52500-59150, which is budget within the Electric Enterprise Fund.

BACKGROUND:

CALED is the premier statewide professional economic development organization dedicated to advancing its members' ability to achieve excellence in delivering economic development services to their communities and business clients. CALED's membership consists of public and private organizations and individuals involved in economic development: the business of creating and retaining jobs.

The California Academy for Local Economic Development is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established as a Center for Economic Development Training, Education and Research. The Academy is managed by the California Association for Local Economic Development with the mission to: 1) Educate economic development professionals, officials and others about the critical processes and strategies needed to improve California's communities so they can succeed in the global economy. 2) Provide new business information and resources to local economic development professionals so that they, in turn, can pass this information on to entrepreneurs in their

communities. 3) Conduct supportive research, data development and analysis. 4) Strengthen the link between economic development and education systems (universities and colleges). 5) Make economic development professionals more productive by bringing new technologies to the field.

DISCUSSION:

The California Academy for Local Economic Development is offering in conjunction with CALED a new web resource called "Tools for Business Success," which can be viewed at <http://www.toolsforbusiness.info/>. This innovative program offers a central web feed of small business resources. Local organizations have a button on their website that links the user to up-to-date information on a wide variety of business topics, all of which appear to be coming from the host organization's website. For a very small investment, cities, counties, economic development corporations, chambers, and others can now offer local entrepreneurs a new level of business assistance with virtually no staff time to develop or maintain the system.

San Luis Obispo Economic Vitality Corporation, City of Atascadero and Monterey County Business Council are examples of ED organizations on the Central Coast that are already offering the new service. Many other cities across the state and nation are using it, as well. There is a \$200 initial set up fee and \$1,140 annual subscription, with a one-year minimum commitment, with a total annual fee of \$1,340.

Tools for Business provides local, state, federal and best-of-the-web information and resources to help businesses grow. Some highlights in the software include: Business Formation and Start-up Kit; Payroll calculator; Business planning tools and information; Business assessment tools for growing businesses; Business funding options; Sustainable green business practices; Free and low-cost online classes.

The Buy Locally link is useful because it will facilitate use of the City Clerk's Office data to feature local businesses under the Local Business Showcase feature. Also, an opt-in form may be added to the tools site allowing the collection of information for a mailing list at no extra charge. The data can then be accessed and downloaded into Excel at any time through the host user only site area. The data can then be imported into any tool as necessary.

The Spanish Translation Tool is also included in the package pricing. The option will appear as a button or link on the customized landing page. The user may click the tool and the text is automatically translated throughout the site. The City of Clovis offers an example <http://www.toolsforbusiness.info/success/index.cfm?cx=Clovis&switch=yes>, just see the link in the top right corner.

CALED's Tools for Business Success will be a useful and cost effective tool that will enhance the City's Economic Development website.

Kathleen A. Griffith
Economic Development Manager

Attachments: 1. [Subscription enrollment with California Association for Local Economic Development/The California Academy for Economic Development "Tools for Business Success."](#)

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

Gary P. Keefe
City Administrator