



**Minutes of the Economic Development Task Force  
June 8, 2009—9:00 a.m.  
King's Fish House  
100 West Broadway, Banquet Room  
Long Beach, CA 90802**

**PRESENT**

**Voting Members:** Rose Barrantes, Becky Blair, Amy Bodek, Loara Cadavona, Greg Gill, Steve Goodling, Pat Paris, Mark Schneider, Tony Shooshani

**Guests:** None

**Staff:** Kraig Kojian, Kris Larson, Erin Murphy

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Kraig Kojian called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., and self-introductions were made.

**II. DLBA 2010 AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

Kojian provided information on the strategic plan, *DLBA 2010: A Focus for Leadership and Development* and an overview on the other Task Forces' roles in accomplishing the stated goals.

**III. OVERVIEW OF DLBA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ED)**

Kris Larson delivered an overview of the services provided by the Los Angeles Economic Development Council (LAEDC), City of Long Beach, Redevelopment Agency (RDA), Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, Long Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), and Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Larson then identified challenges in the Downtown such as a lack of a singular resource for information about Downtown, limited pro-active retail recruitment, a lack of centralized data/information, a lack of a business retention/expansion structure, limited ED marketing of Downtown, and a lack of a shared vision for Downtown's commercial future. The challenges were presented as opportunities for the DLBA to provide complementary ED service that would support and augment the work done by the above-mentioned organizations.

Larson subsequently presented a very brief overview of the DLBA ED Department's programs and services for FY2008-09 and proposed for FY2009-10, which were formulated to accomplish the following objectives:

- Build upon understanding of economic climate
- Foster collaboration through identification of SWOT
- Position the DLBA as the ‘go-to’ organization for ED
- Complement current initiatives planned by City of Long Beach & RDA
- Provide a targeted approach to business retention and recruitment
- Advance toward a culture of partnership and specialization

Larson highlighted upcoming initiatives such as Broker Briefings, Business/Merchandising Seminars, Website, and the Additional Storefront Activation Program and expanded on the website process at greater length before suggesting a few projects on which the Task Force might be especially useful— Retail Visioning Process, Business Retention/Expansion Surveys and Focus Groups, Office and Retail Council, and Economic Development Website.

The Task Force then proposed how they might be most effective. Steve Goodling inquired about the responsibility for managing the data on the ED website, which Larson affirmed would be shared by the DLBA and the broker community. Goodling requested that the Task Force be involved in providing feedback on the challenges and opportunities in retail recruitment. Goodling suggested an initial focus on local independent retailers seeking to move or expand and targeting regional corporate offices. Goodling also asked to develop a timeline with goals that could be checked off as they are achieved as well as specific data on storefront activation. Goodling also advocated for the collecting data about and marketing to visitors.

Gill articulated opportunities to improve the retail database, navigate the City’s Planning and Zoning process, beautify (if not develop) the City Hall East property, and better understand the existing consumer base. Goodling added that retaining restaurants on Pine Avenue should be a priority as well. Becky Blair agreed with Gill regarding zoning and recommended more flexibility and communication to attract and retain businesses. Blair mentioned that importance of combating the discouragement felt within the brokerage community, and Larson responded that the first meeting of the Office and Retail Council was scheduled for June 18. Larson also noted that the public hearing process regarding zoning was scheduled to meet on June 22 and that the Task Force might be able to take an advocacy position.

Loara Cadavona recommended targeting residents who attend performances at the Convention Center as a potentially untapped market for local businesses. She then offered the example of Westwood Village’s revitalization via UCLA’s rental of office space, which then increased foot traffic. Cadavona then spoke of a potential storefront display of *Press-Telegram* photographs.

Larson recommended prioritizing challenges and then developing potential solutions.

Mark Schneider recommended that the Promenade property owner be represented on the Task Force.

Following up on Schneider's comment regarding demographics, Amy Bodek observed that the Downtown hosts two separate demographic groups—new residents with higher levels of income and lower-income residents. Bodek also recommended that the Task Force operate at a higher-altitude, policy-making level rather than impeding on Larson's daily duties.

Tony Shooshani referred to Cadavona's earlier example of UCLA and suggested that the Task Force develop partnerships with local educational institutions. Larson added that the RDA, with DLBA's support, was negotiating with CSULB relative to the Art Exchange development. Blair mentioned that perhaps the immediate answer to a retail shortage was not retail, but instead an interim focus on the office market.

The Task Force discussed the need to meet more frequently than monthly. Copies of Strategic Economics' report to the RDA were distributed for review in advance of the next meeting. Kojian stated that DLBA would present more detailed information about the ED work plan as well as the proposed budget at the June 22 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.