

**CITY OF BELMONT
CITY COUNCIL AND BELMONT FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**



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CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, January 25, 2022

5:30 PM

City Council Chambers

City Hall, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, California

TELECONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Councilmembers will participate by teleconference under Government Code Section 54953(e), and City Council Resolution 2021-001. All votes shall be by roll call.

The meeting will be broadcast live to Belmont residents on Comcast Cable Channel 27, streamed live via the City's website at www.Belmont.gov. The public may also attend the meeting in the City Council Chambers and address the council from the chambers. Social distancing must be practiced, and seating will be limited.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

To maximize time for live public comment, we encourage members of the public to provide comments by joining the City Council meeting via Zoom: For web, visit <https://belmont.gov.zoom.us/> select "Join" and enter Meeting ID: 95745673035. Use the **Raise Hand** feature to request to speak. You may rename your profile if you wish to remain anonymous.

For dial-in comments, call *67 1-(669) 900-6833 (your phone number will appear on the live broadcast if *67 is not dialed prior to the phone number), enter Meeting ID: 95745673035, and press *9 to request to speak. All public comments are subject to a 3-minute time limit unless otherwise determined by the Mayor.

If you wish to submit written public comment, you may send an email to cclerk@belmont.gov before the council considers the item. Please indicate the agenda item topic or agenda item number you wish to comment on in your email's subject line. Any public comment regarding agenda items that are received from the publication of the agenda through the meeting date will be made part of the meeting record, but will not be read during the Council meeting.

1. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Persons wishing to orally address the Council on the items of business listed below will be given an opportunity to do so before or during the Councils consideration of the item.

2. CLOSED SESSION 5:30 P.M.

Conference with Conference With Labor Negotiators (Govt Code Section 54957.6)

(1) Agency designated representatives: Afshin Oskoui, City Manager; Employee organization: Mid-Management Confidential Employees Association (MMCEA)

3. STUDY SESSION (6:00 P.M)

A. Economic Development Task Force Presentation

Recommendation: Receive a presentation from the Economic Development Task Force and provide direction on next steps.

Attachment(s):

[Economic Recovery Task Force - Staff Report](#)

[Economic Development Task Force - Presentation](#)

4. ADJOURNMENT

If you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (650) 595-7413. The speech and hearing-impaired may call (650) 637-2999 for TDD services. Notification in advance of the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

Meeting information can also be accessed via the internet at: www.belmont.gov. All staff reports will be posted to the web in advance of the meeting, and any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Council/District Board or Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, One Twin Pines Lane, during normal business hours and at the Council Chambers at City Hall, Second Floor, during the meeting.



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 25, 2022
Agency: City of Belmont
Staff Contact: Jennifer Rose, Housing & Economic Development Manager, Finance Department
Karen Clark, Administrative Assistant, Parks & Recreation Department
Agenda Title: Economic Development Task Force Presentation
Agenda Action: Discussion & Direction

Recommendation

Receive a presentation from the Economic Development Task Force and provide direction on next steps.

Strategic Focus Area

Economic Development and Housing

Background

In September 2019, City Council adopted Resolution 2019-087 approving an Economic Development Implementation Strategy which identifies City policies and program activities aimed at furthering the Citywide priority of promoting economic growth. The Resolution also adopted a Fiscal Year 2020 (FY 2020) Action Plan that included a recommended set of City activities to establish a local economic development program, connect the City with community stakeholders, support local businesses, and encourage economic growth. Many of the FY 2020 Action Plan recommendations were incorporated into the City's 2020 Strategic Plan, and funding resources were included in the Fiscal Year 2021 adopted budget.

Included in the FY 2020 Action Plan was a recommendation to establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) to help enhance communications between the City and local business stakeholders while providing a forum for listening to and responding to business community needs and ideas.

In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City shifted staff and resources to focus on responding to altered City operations and business closures. During the business closures, the City partnered with San Mateo County and other local jurisdictions as part of the *San Mateo County Strong* initiative to provide grant funding opportunities for local businesses impacted by pandemic-related closures and operational changes. The City provided \$150,000 for COVID-19 Small Business Grants, leveraged with San Mateo County Measure K funds and other private donations to total \$280,000 in available grant funds. San Mateo County Strong grant funds have been disbursed to 28 small businesses in Belmont.

The City Council held a study session on March 9, 2021, during which Council discussed the formation of an Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) focused on economic recovery efforts and provided direction to staff to recruit a diverse group of stakeholders with oversight from the Economic Development Subcommittee. Council approved the general parameters of this effort, including a limited duration (90



days), after which Council would receive recommendations and evaluate options for establishing an ongoing task force or advisory committee.

In August 2021, the City completed a comprehensive update and redesign of the City's economic development webpage, which includes business resources, developer resources, links to local business directories, and a homepage for the EDTF. Using direction provide by Council, staff developed a charge for the EDTF, proposed meeting dates and topics, and created an online application to join the EDTF. EDTF member recruitment efforts included City Manager's Weekly Updates, emails to all business license holders, a press release, the publication of application deadlines on the City website calendar, social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor), and direct communications. The final list of applicants was reviewed by City staff in consultation with the Economic Development Subcommittee.

Analysis

Twelve community members were selected for the Economic Recovery Task Force (EDTF), and nine members were ultimately able to participate for the full duration. The EDTF met six times from October 2021 through January 2022. Meeting facilitation support was provided by the consulting firm Management Partners, with general discussion topics suggested by City staff and ultimately directed by the EDTF. EDTF members included:

1. Patrick Colabucci, Ed.D., Notre Dame de Namur University
2. Mark Gurevich, Private Investor
3. Karen Haas-Foletta, Footsteps Childcare
4. Mary Morrissey Parden, Belmont Chamber of Commerce/The Parden Agency
5. Kenneth M. Pizzi, Thai Tamarind Restaurant
6. Joe Polyak, Realtor, Homes by RISE
7. Walt Shjeflo, Fox, Shjeflo & Babu, LLP
8. Surya Singh, Intutive Surgical and Belmont Resident
9. Sirinee Tippakorn, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

The EDTF was charged with (1) identifying current challenges and opportunities facing the local business community and (2) reviewing best practices and resources available to support Belmont businesses. While COVID-19 pandemic recovery and local business support was a central theme, the EDTF was also interested in discussing Citywide economic development programs and current residential and non-residential development activity. The following is a summary of the topics reviewed and discussed by the EDTF.

- **October 12, 2021** – EDTF charge, tentative work plan, recent business community challenges, and tools to continue to enhance communications between the City and business community;
- **October 25, 2021** – Economic development trends and shop local best practices and policies;
- **November 8, 2021** – Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan along with related business assistance, grants, and technical assistance programs;
- **November 29, 2021** – Continued discussion of the Economic Development Action Plan and kick-off community benefit priorities conversation;
- **December 13, 2021** – Results of community benefit prioritization questionnaire, and discussion of the business license tax modernization effort; and,
- **January 10, 2021** – Discussion of the City Council presentation.



The general economic development themes and ideas raised during EDTF discussions have been incorporated into the attached presentation (Attachment A). This presentation serves as an informational tool, offering new perspective for Council and staff consideration on ways in which the City can promote local economic development that benefits both residents and businesses.

There was general support from EDTF members and staff to continue using the Task Force as a forum for the City to share ideas, listen to stakeholders, and make sure it is on the right track. However, the City recognizes the need to connect with stakeholders who were missing from these initial conversations, including a larger variety of small business owners, large businesses, and developers.

Recommended Next Steps

City staff and the consultant have prepared a set of recommended next steps for continued expansion of the City's economic development program and continued engagement with economic development stakeholders and community members.

1. City Council will receive an updated version of the Economic Development Action Plan, including Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) recommendations.
2. Staff and the City's economic development consultant will prepare information for a Council study session to kick-off the community benefit policy discussion, including the EDTF community benefit priority rankings.
3. The City will commit to reconvening the EDTF two times over the next 18 months to provide updates and gather input on the City's economic development progress, strategy, and communications/outreach.
4. The City will continue to provide economic development activity updates and City Manager's Weekly Updates to the EDTF and other interested stakeholders and will work to enhance communication strategies as recommended by the EDTF.

Alternatives

None

Attachments

A. Presentation

Fiscal Impact

☒ No Fiscal Impact

No financial resources are requested at this time. Dedication of supplemental funding or resources for economic development activities can be considered by the City Council at the Strategic Planning Session tentatively scheduled for late February, and as part of the FY 2023 Budget development process.

☐ Funding Source Confirmed:

Source:

Staff

Purpose:

Council Vision/Priority

Public Outreach:

Posting of Agenda



Economic Development Task Force City Council Presentation

January 25, 2022

Management
Partners



Agenda



Introductions



Staff Introductions

Jennifer Rose, Finance Department

- *Housing, Economic Development and Finance Manager*

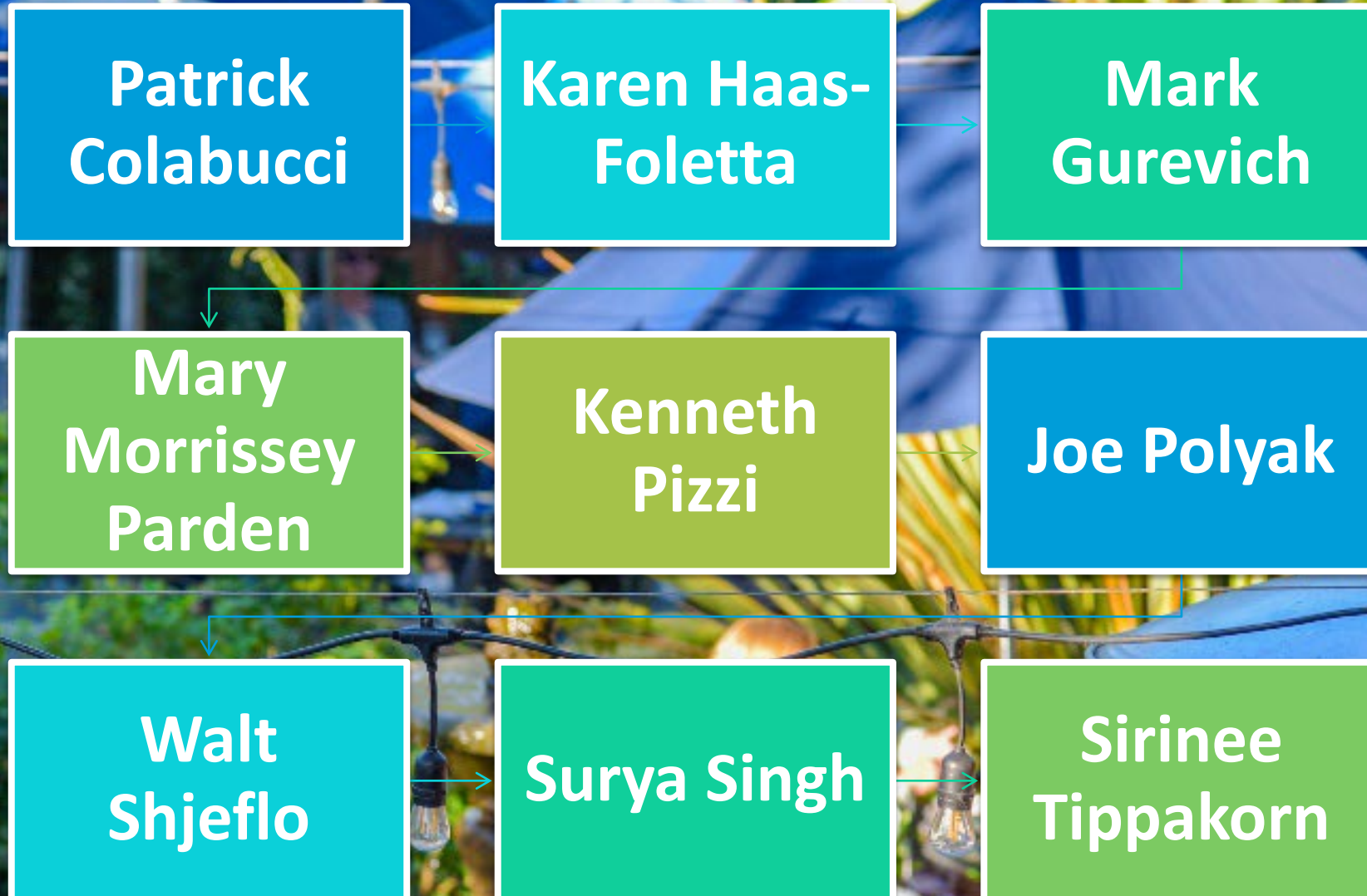
Karen Clark, Parks and Recreation Department

- *Administrative Assistant*

Christine Butterfield, Management Partners

- *Senior Manager (Consultant)*

Economic Development Task Force Members



Economic Development Task Force Charge



- Identify current challenges and opportunities facing the local business community.
- Review best practices and resources available to support Belmont businesses.



EDTF Charge (continued)



- Review current efforts by the City to collaborate with businesses and identify areas to improve communications and support.
- Advise the City Council on methods to grow the City's collaborative efforts to support current and future businesses.

Economic Development Task Force Work Plan



October 12, 2021 - Complete

- Review charge, tentative work plan, recent business community challenges and communication interests

October 25, 2021 - Complete

- EDTF review economic development trends and discuss shop local best practices and policies

November 8, 2021 - Complete

- Review the 2019 City of Belmont Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan along with related business assistance, grants and technical assistance programs

EDTF Work Plan (continued)



November 29, 2021 - Complete

- Continue discussion of the Economic Development Action Plan and kick-off community benefit priorities conversation

December 13, 2021 – Complete

- Results of community benefit prioritization questionnaire, discuss the business license tax potential changes, ballot measure and timeline and other topics as requested by the EDTF

January 10, 2022 - Complete

- Review and discuss City Council presentation

City of Belmont Economic Profile



Pandemic Effects on Regional Economic Trends

- **Casual dining** up 65%, quick-service restaurants up 35% but below pre-pandemic levels
- Return to in-person shopping and **consumer demand strong**
- **Hotels rebounding slowly**
- **Auto/transportation sales soared** in Q2-2021
- **Companies adapting to new ways of doing work** as business services and technology activity spike
- **Single and Multi-Family Residential construction** remains strong
- **Nonresidential construction** was largely dormant



Office and Industrial Profile



- **Office development increasing** and relatively high vacancy rate 19%. New office development (only 27% pre-leased) will increase vacancy rate in the short-term.
- **Industrial space expected to decrease** as economic incentives encourage landlords to convert existing supply into alternative uses, such as office, life science, hotel, and residential. Low vacancy rate 3%, but availability rate at 8% (COVID).

Research and Development Profile

- **Research and Development** activity pipeline strong, with 3.4 million square feet currently under construction and all slated for life science space.
- **Pandemic increased demand with** vacancy rate at 7% and availability at 11%.
- **San Carlos Eastside Innovation District** catalyzed Belmont's eastside development activity.



Pandemic's Effect on the Business Community

- Lockdown was difficult
- Nimbleness is key
- Transition to courses, meetings and services online
- Financial services industry “busier than ever”
- Pandemic loans helped
- Negative mental health impacts of the lockdown
- Government response lacked empathy
- High volume of home improvements underway
- Hiring is a challenge due to limited applicants

Review of City Communications with Businesses



Business Information and Communication Needs

How do you currently **receive** or **seek** information from the City?

Which ways are most **useful** and **beneficial**?

What is **least useful**?

What **improvements** in communications do you recommend?



EDTF Offered Communication Interests

The City should **continue** to:

- Send targeted emails (e.g., park and recreation alerts, economic development specific updates)
- Promote the City Manager's weekly update
- Use both email and social media platforms

The City should **avoid** using:

- Nextdoor



EDTF Communication Recommendations



- Implement a **social media strategy**
- **Target information** to different types of businesses and sizes
- Develop a merchant portal to allow businesses to share and **exchange information** and resources
- Assist with development of Chamber of Commerce's **business listing** and link the City website to it
- Improve **website search function**
- Develop a **map showing local business locations**
- Provide **24-hour turnaround** on public questions

Review of the Economic Development Strategy



Economic Development Strategy Background

- City Council adopted economic development strategy September 2019
- Result of six-month public input process:
 - City Council study sessions
 - Community stakeholder interviews including developers, landowners, brokers and the Chamber of Commerce



Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan



Guiding principles of the strategy and action plan

- Formulate realistic economic development expectations for the City and private sector
- Develop long-term strategies for business retention and expansion
- Identify types of development the community wants and create local incentives program to facilitate

Action Plan Challenges



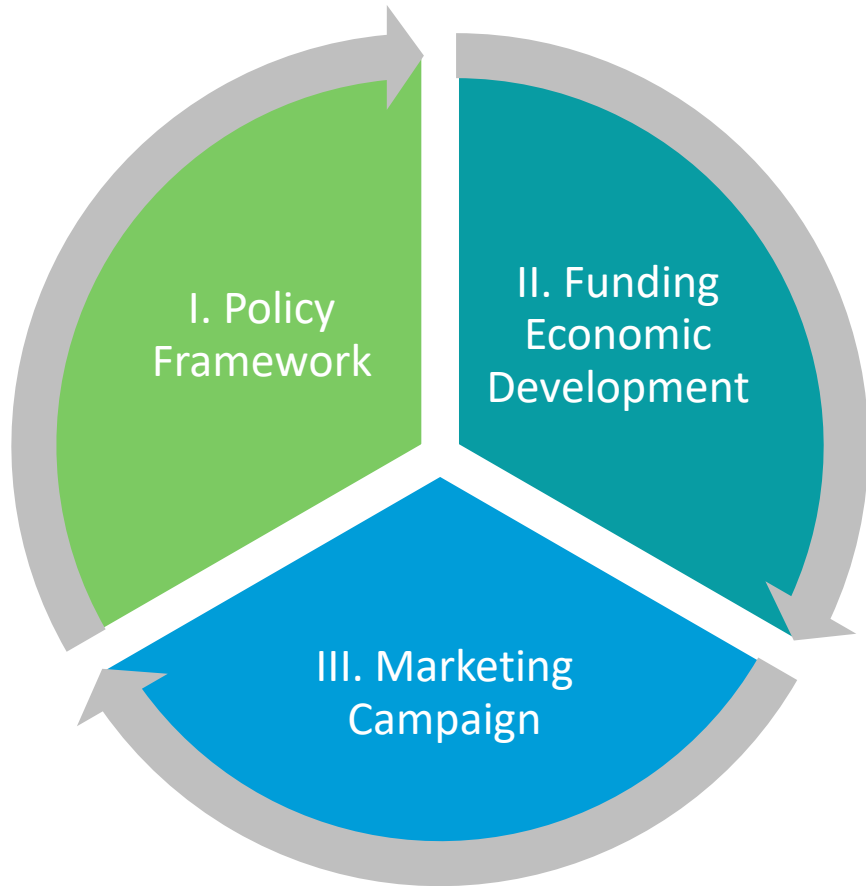
- **Aspirational** timeline
- Pandemic led **2020 and 2021 budget priorities**
- **No funding** sources identified to implement the strategy
- Limited **staff capacity**

Action Plan Opportunities



- Current pipeline activity includes **six multifamily housing** developments and **three research and development office** projects
- COVID increased **regional collaboration** with County and economic development organizations
- EDTF creates a **new opportunity for stakeholder review** of the action plan

Review Economic Development Strategy Elements



- I. Policy Framework** – define what is most important to the City. What development does the City want, and what is the City willing to offer in exchange?
- II. Funding Economic Development** – Identify existing and new funding sources; establish investment priorities.
- III. Marketing Campaign** – Communicate our vision and priorities to the public; partner with existing business community to create Belmont brand identity.

(Source 2019 Economic Development Strategy prepared by RSG)

Economic Development Action Plan Accomplishments

Actions Completed or In Progress as of November 2021	Status
✓ Economic Development Manager	Complete
✓ City's Economic Development webpage	Complete
✓ Development Impact Fees Update	Completed
• Economic Development Task Force	In Progress
• Explore funding mechanisms for addressing and funding business needs, such as pros and cons of forming a CFD/BID, consider a feasibility study	In Progress
• Belmont wayfinding and placemaking project	In Progress
• Permit streamlining	In Progress
• Modernize/simplify the Belmont Business License Tax .	In Progress

Economic Development Action Plan

Strategy 1: Formulate Realistic Economic Development Expectations for the City And Private Sector

ED Strategy

- | | ED Strategy |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Enhance communications to communicate City's goal to balance long term fiscal sustainability with business retention/attraction efforts. | Marketing |
| 2. Prepare a regular newsletter with info/links to available resources, workshops/webinars. | Marketing |
| 3. Conduct developer and property owner outreach to discuss and evaluate what may be feasible to do today given available resources and market conditions. Establish short term priorities and long-term goals/alternatives. | Policy |

(Source 2019 Economic Development Strategy prepared by RSG)

Economic Development Action Plan (continued)

Strategy 2: Develop Long Term Strategies for Business Retention and Expansion

ED Strategy

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 4. Develop Inventory of Belmont businesses, identifying their business profile to help determine ways in which the City can offer support. | Marketing |
| 5. Develop a Business Visitation Program to provide regular interaction between City Hall and business leaders, and to listen and learn from businesses. | Marketing |
| 6. Partner with Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Corporation, Senior Core of Retired Executives to provide regular programming | Policy |
| 7. Establish Economic Development Fund and propose funding priorities and criteria for incentives to retain/support/attract businesses to Belmont | Policy/ Funding |
| 8. Conduct stakeholder surveys to identify any City development review bottlenecks; consider process and systems improvements. | Policy |

Economic Development Action Plan (continued)

Strategy 3: Identify Types of Development the Community Wants to See in Belmont, and Create Local Incentives Program to Facilitate Priority Development Activity

ED Strategy

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 9. | Adopt a community benefits program to identify what community benefits/improvements are most important; make a list of concessions the City is willing to provide to developers in exchange for community benefits. | Marketing |
| 10. | Update the inventory of City assets available to further its goals (i.e., land held, funds, grant eligibility, partnerships, etc.). | Marketing |
| 11. | Create Economic Development Fund with both one-time monies and identify ongoing funding sources; make a list of the funding priorities (see page 10 of the strategy). | Policy |

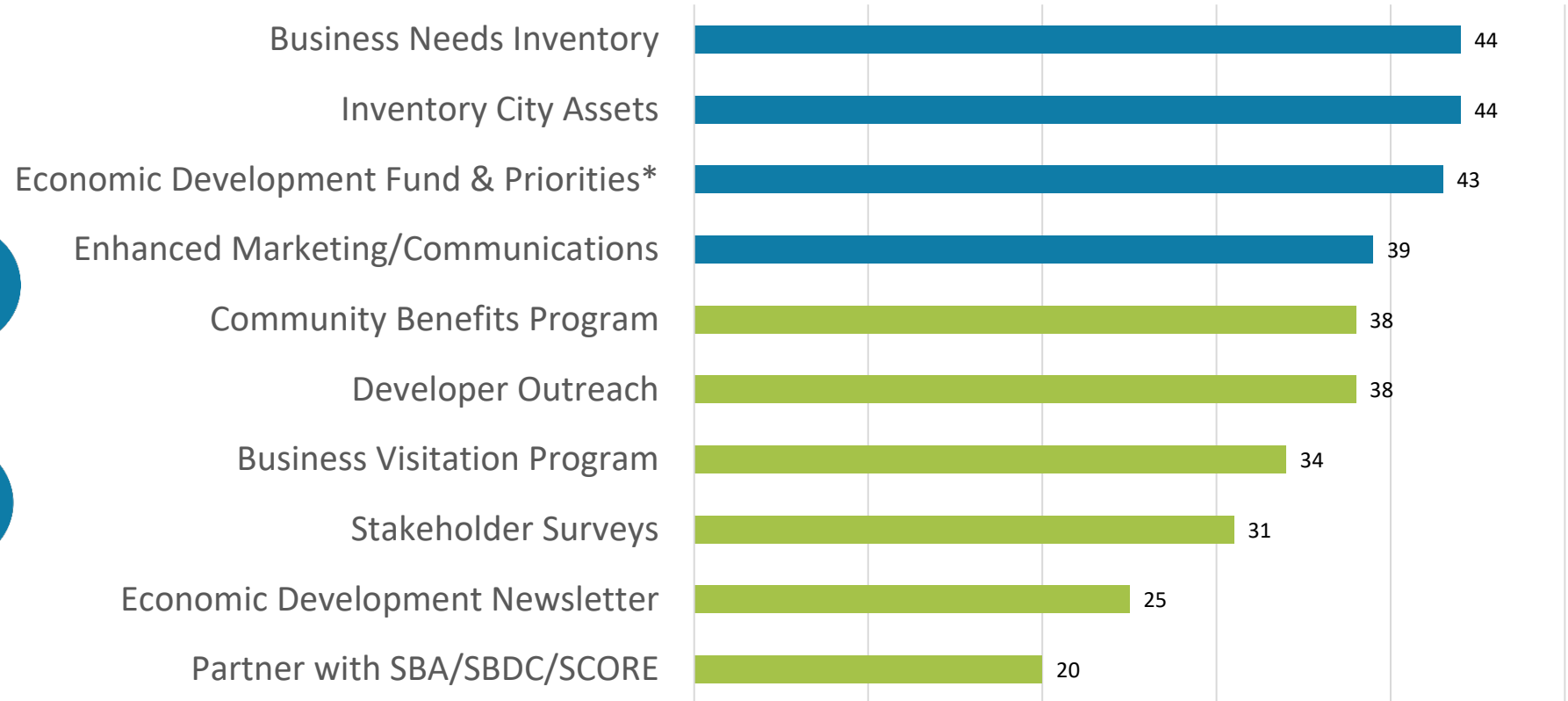
Economic Development Tools and Approaches

Economic Development Tools	Belmont	San Carlos	Redwood City	South SF	San Bruno*
Business Visitation Program		✓	✓		
Small Business Assistance, Senior Core of Retired Executives Programming			✓	✓	✓
Economic Development Newsletter			✓	✓	
Marketing Development Sites		✓	✓	✓	
Economic Development Fund			✓	✓	✓
Community Benefits/Priorities Policy		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wayfinding Program	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Some of these activities may be altered or on hold due to COVID-19 safety precautions

*Activities carried out by the San Bruno Community Foundation Non-Profit

EDTF Action Plan Weighted Rankings

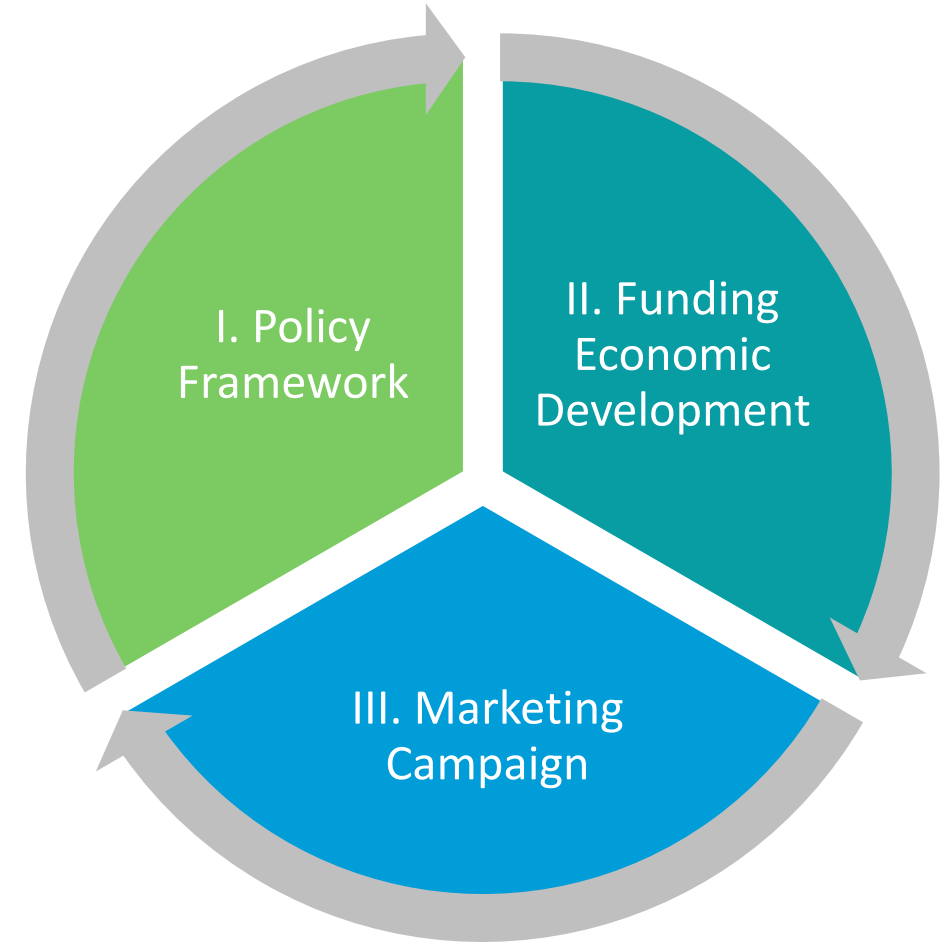


*Combines Economic Development Funding Actions

**Rankings weighted to attribute more “points” to higher-ranked items (e.g., out of 11 items ranked, a #1 ranking received 11 points, a #2 ranking 10 points, a #3 ranking 9 points, and so on)

EDTF Action Plan Ranking Reflections

- Share more information about **affordable** and **attainable housing**
- **Balance parking** needs with the retail, business and housing growth
- **Improve walkability** of community with economic development growth
- Provide an **inventory/list of local businesses**



Discussion of Community Benefits Program



What is a Community Benefit Program?

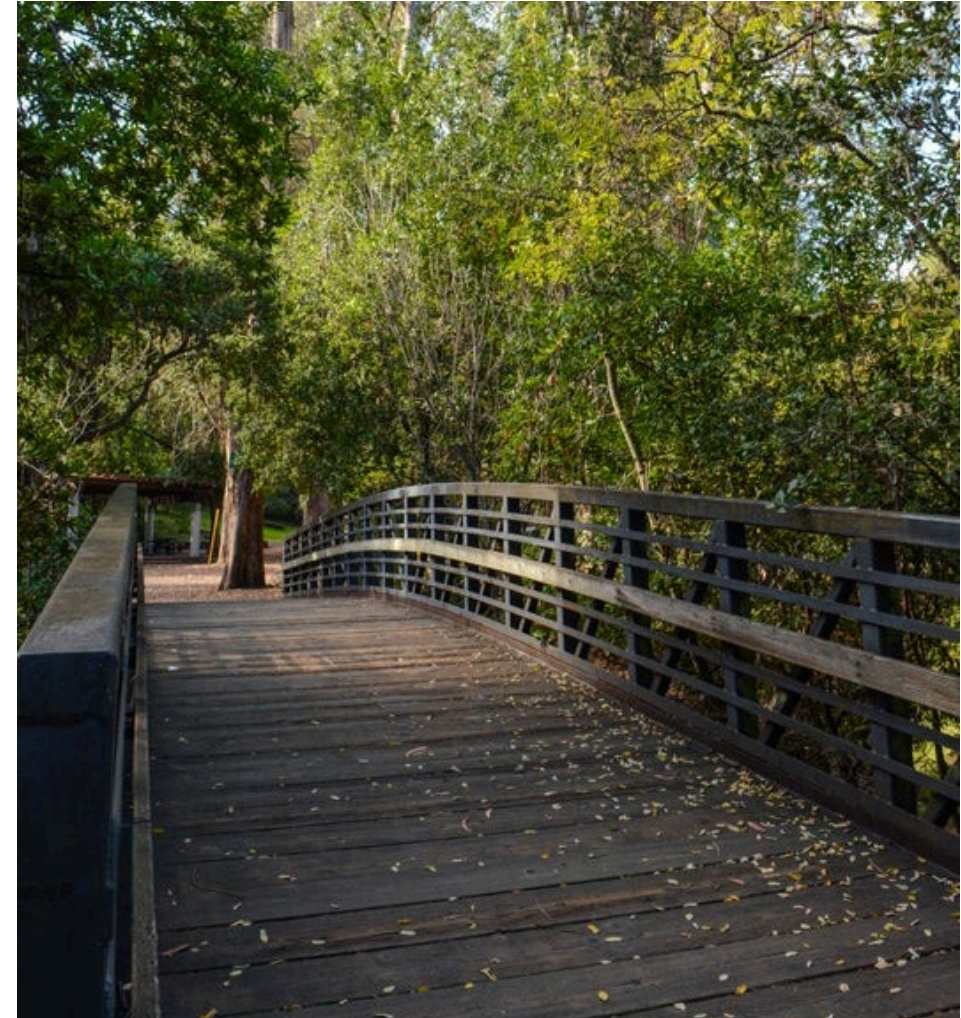
A method for local governments to **derive benefits from new development** by **offering developers incentives** that

- Increase property value in exchange for community benefit
- Provide amenities and public improvements
- Deliver a **public purpose and advance community needs**



How Do Community Benefit Programs Work?

- City and Community members identify priority “needs” or benefits
- Priorities are summarized in a “menu” for developers
- Developers contribute or construct community benefits including monetary contributions for a public purpose, and/or improvements (i.e., construction streets, sidewalks, bridges, etc.)



Potential Belmont Community Benefits

Community Amenities

- Belmont community center
- Parks and recreation facilities
- Improved pedestrian sidewalk and crosswalks
- Pedestrian amenities (benches, signage, shelters)

Sustainability

- Electric charging stations
- Solar photovoltaic panel facilities
- LEED building ratings
- Stormwater flood protection facilities (swales, floodwalls, pumps)

Transportation

- Shared parking facilities
- Bike and pedestrian overpass/undercrossing
- Bike lanes and bike racks
- Shuttle and ride-sharing programs

Housing

- Affordable housing
- Childcare facilities
- Historic preservation

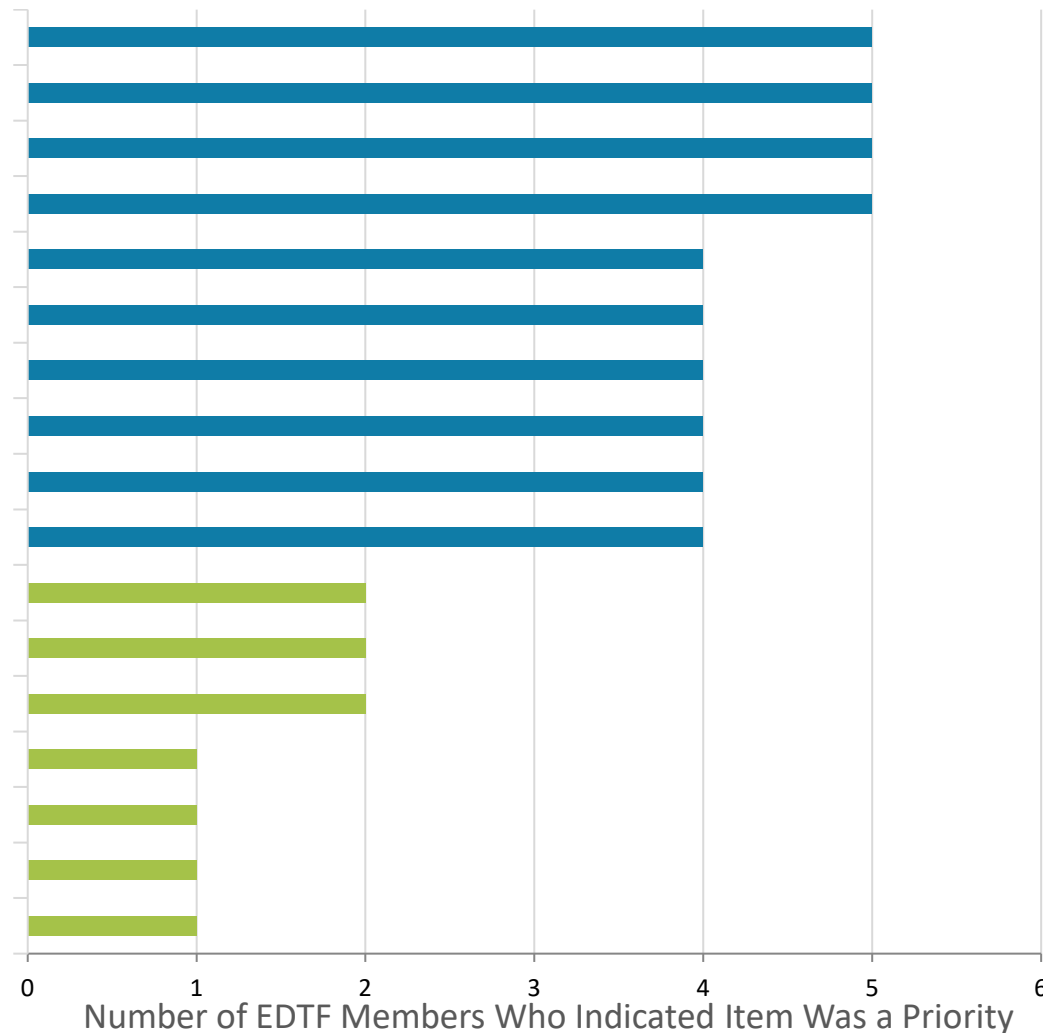
Wages and Local Hiring

- Living/prevailing wage
- Hiring low-income residents

EDTF Community Benefit Priorities Survey Feedback



- Flood protection facilities
- Shared parking facilities
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks/crosswalks
- Belmont Community Center
- Parks & Recreation facilities
- Bike & pedestrian overpass/undercrossing
- Affordable housing
- Childcare facilities
- Historic preservation
- Electric charging stations
- Pedestrian amenities
- Solar PV panels
- Living/prevailing wage
- LEED building ratings
- Bike lanes /racks
- Shuttles & ride-sharing
- Hiring low-income residents



EDTF's Top Community Benefit Priorities

**Belmont
Community
Center**

Shared Parking

**Flood
Protection**

**Pedestrian
Sidewalks/
Crosswalks**

**Parks and
Recreation
Facilities**

**Bike/Pedestrian
Overpass/
Undercrossing**

**Affordable
Housing**

**Childcare
Facilities**

**Historic
Preservation**

**EV Charging
Stations**

EDTF Community Benefit Discussion

Do the ranked list of community benefits capture **community needs**?

- **Civic center** needs improvement
- Economic development growth puts **pressure on schools** and **childcare** facilities
- Build **gathering spaces** like the City of San Carlos
- Transportation improvements and more **downtown parking** are needed



Other EDTF Community Benefit Comments



What **stands out**?

- EDTF is a small group and may not represent all community interests
- Gather more input from the business community as the EDTF includes nonbusiness owners
- Belmont needs a business welcome visit and marketing program
- Belmont would benefit from investing in a broadband network

Economic Development Task Force Feedback



EDTF Experience High Points

What are some of the **high points**?

- Learning about the projects in the pipeline
- Provide input with a diverse group of community members
- Enjoyed interacting with staff
- Invited to engage with the community
- Participated in discussions and heard an array of viewpoints about housing and development



EDTF Challenges



What was **challenging** about the experience?

- Ensuring the information we learned will be shared throughout the community
- Digesting the volume of information
- Would like to interact with the EDTF after the meetings
- Ensuring the committee as a whole remains engaged

EDTF Comments and Key Takeaways

What did you **learn**?

- About government
- What it takes to build consensus
- Belmont is growing
- Limitations placed on government
- How to focus
- Neighbor to neighbor learning
- My thoughts matter
- Additional EDTF thoughts (one minute or less)

Would you recommend the City offer **more opportunities** like this on?

- Yes!
- Fine tune future efforts to focus on economic development incentives and growth opportunities
- Engage the school district in future efforts

Next Steps

- City Council will receive an **updated version of the Action Plan including the EDTF** recommendations in the 2022/2023 Budget process
- Staff will prepare information for a City Council study session to kick-off the **community benefit policy discussion including the EDTF rankings**
- Staff proposes to **reconvene the EDTF twice over the next 18 months** to provide updates and gather input on the City of Belmont's economic development progress, strategy and outreach
- Continue to distribute **development activity updates** and the City Manager's Report to the EDTF



Questions

