



# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STATEMENT



August 25, 2020

File ID: 20-0361

## TITLE

PRESENTATION BY HARVARD FELLOW, IRENE LIU, ON CHULA VISTA INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Council accept the report.

## SUMMARY

With the support of Mayor Casillas Salas, staff provided a summer project proposal to Harvard University to extend the opportunity for a summer fellow to address a key issue for Chula Vista. Staff identified the need for an inclusive economic development framework that would help identify the City's role in addressing inclusive economic development, as established in [the Department's Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2019-20](#). Staff also wanted the inclusive economic development work to reflect the COVID-19 impacts on the city's small businesses. Five Harvard students were interested in and matched with the City's proposal. In early April 2020, staff conducted five virtual interviews with master's degree students from the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS). Staff selected Ms. Irene Liu, a dual master's student at HKS who is also pursuing her MBA at Wharton Business School and has a background in consulting (resume included as Attachment 2) as the City's Harvard summer fellow.

For 10 weeks, Ms. Liu worked alongside staff to create an inclusive economic development framework for the City. During her fellowship, Ms. Liu led the following efforts:

- Conducted 15 interviews with city leaders and local economic development ecosystem partners;
- Created and administered a small business owner survey that received nearly 600 responses;
- Created and administered an inclusive community survey that received nearly 800 responses;
- Coded and synthesized all survey responses to create a presentation (Attachment 1) with recommendations for actionable next steps towards an inclusive economic development strategy;
- Provided Economic Development staff with the opportunity to participate in a case study with Bloomberg Harvard on the use of the new *City Leader Guide on Inclusive Growth, Racial Justice, and Economic Resilience Post COVID-19*; and
- Convened a working group of Chula Vista's economic development ecosystem partners to review the findings of the surveys, discuss shared goals and next steps towards realizing a more inclusive economy.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the activity also qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines.

## **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of the small business owner and community surveys administered in July 2020, Economic Development staff proposes to pursue the following items in order to further our inclusive economic development initiative:

- Modify the business license application and renewal process to identify Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) in our business community (Asian, Latinx or Black), Veteran Business Enterprises (VBEs) and Women’s Business Enterprise (WBEs).
- Develop procurement policies to track who, what, where and when we are spending city money and develop a system to focus city procurement that will support local MBE, WBE, VBE and other small business to keep local money circulating within Chula Vista’s economy.
- Develop a comprehensive guide on resources being provided by our partner organizations.
- Once we know which MBE, VBE and WBE businesses are in Chula Vista, we will increase awareness of resources being provided by professional organizations to the appropriate groups.
- Strengthen our ties to our minority professional organizations such as the Asian Business Association of San Diego, the Black Chamber of Commerce and the Mexican American Business and Professional Association and collaborate with them through their strategic alliance.
- Work with our professional organizations to provide education and access to capital resources to establish and grow businesses within Chula Vista.
- Work with our Development Services Department on continuing to reimagine, streamline and simplify the permitting process and how we explain it to the public.

## **CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT**

The acceptance of this staff report imposes no direct fiscal impact to the General Fund.

## **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of some of the inclusive economic development actions, as summarized in the discussion of this report, will likely have no fiscal impact to the General Fund. In return for implementing the inclusive economic development actions, the City—via the success of small businesses and dollars circulating in the local economy—may eventually realize an increase in sales tax revenue.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Survey Results PowerPoint
2. Irene Liu’s Resume

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