

CITY OF WHITTIER



Economic Development Strategy Fiscal Year 2018-19

Preface

Whittier's economy remains strong and the future of economic development continues to look bright. The City looks for opportunities to increase sales tax revenue by working to attract new businesses and creating new jobs, while collaborating with local partners to ensure support for our existing businesses. As always, the City's focus will remain on proactive economic development and promoting the "business-friendly" culture we have created here.

The City maintains a strong partnership with the Whittier Chamber of Commerce. Through joint programming, we provide to the business community advertising assistance, free business seminars and mixers, legislative updates, and more. With the help of organizations like the California Association of Local Economic Development, the LAEDC, and other invaluable local partners—Whittier Uptown Association, America's Job Center of California, Tri-Cities ROP, the school districts, Whittier College and Rio Hondo College, etc.—we will continue to help our existing businesses thrive.

We expect to see more dust over the coming year as residential developments continue construction, commercial renovations are completed, and The Groves at Whittier makes its way up off the ground at the former Fred C. Nelles site. Vacant lots of former auto dealerships have all been replaced with quality residential, commercial, and service development, and we will continue to see shopping centers adapt to changing retail trends and position themselves for long-term sustainability.

City staff will continue to work on updating the General Plan this year. Data collected from an economic analysis administered in 2018 focused on the changing nature of retail and will help us plan by applying expected market changes that may impact Whittier to our land use decisions so we can be well positioned for long term healthy growth.

The Whittier City Council has programmed excess redevelopment bond funds for infrastructure improvements in Uptown Whittier and a much-anticipated transformation is already underway. In partnership with property owners, the City facilitated the formation of the Uptown Whittier Improvement Association to establish a long-term vision for Uptown and fund vital improvements including streetscape design, sewer and water line upgrades, and a parking structure. We look forward to bringing new retail and housing to the area while further supporting the many unique shops and eateries that continue to bring people to the City.

As always, please remember to Shop Whittier!



Summer 2018
City of Whittier
Business Development Manager

Economic Development Strategy
Fiscal Year 2018-19

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Vision and Mission	4
III.	Current Economic Environment	5
IV.	Principles	6
V.	Economic Development Goals	6
VI.	City-Wide Economic Development Activities	7
	• Business Attraction and Economic Diversification	11
	• Business Retention and Expansion	12
	• Coordination and Cooperation	12
VII.	Action Target Areas	13
	A. Uptown Whittier	13
	B. Whittier Boulevard	15
	• Gateway District	16
	• Workplace District	16
	• Shopping Cluster I	17
	• Center District	18
	• Shopping Cluster II	19
	• Neighborhood Spine	19
	C. Lambert Road	20
	D. Washington Boulevard/PIH Health	20
	E. Manufacturing	21
	F. Housing	21
	G. Workforce Development	22
VIII.	Specific Objectives for Fiscal Year 2018-19	23
IX.	Conclusion	23

I. INTRODUCTION

Economic development is a multi-faceted approach to the policies and programs designed to preserve, enhance and promote a vibrant and successful community. The success and overall health of businesses within a community is directly linked to the quality of life experienced by the residents of that community, and therefore, of great importance to the community as a whole.

A healthy business community, through the creation of jobs and revenue, is a major element in allowing the City to carry out its various functions. Typically, a City's major revenue sources are property tax and sales and use tax. Sales and use tax revenues generated by the business community provide a major contribution to the funding of essential City services, as well as nonessential services, which continues to create a certain quality of life standard that all of Whittier has come to expect and the reason many have chosen Whittier as a place to live, work, shop and play.



Examples of the benefits of an Economic Development Program may include, but are not limited to:

- Enabling the City to address quality of life issues, while keeping the general tax burden to its residents at as low a level as possible.
- Enabling the City to better respond to the community's desire for quality of life "infrastructure" investment, i.e. roads, parks, community centers, aquatics facilities, City buildings, etc.
- Creating new, permanent jobs and retaining existing jobs in the community.
- Encouraging business-to-business transactions.
- Re-patriating dollars currently spent outside the community so that the economic investment of local residents will stay in Whittier.
- Communicating the value of a sound and diversified economy to residents and business owners alike.
- Maintaining a healthy balance of residential, commercial/retail, industrial and service.

II. VISION AND MISSION

The City of Whittier's Economic Development Strategy includes a vision statement as well as a mission statement. The Vision for economic development in the City of Whittier is:

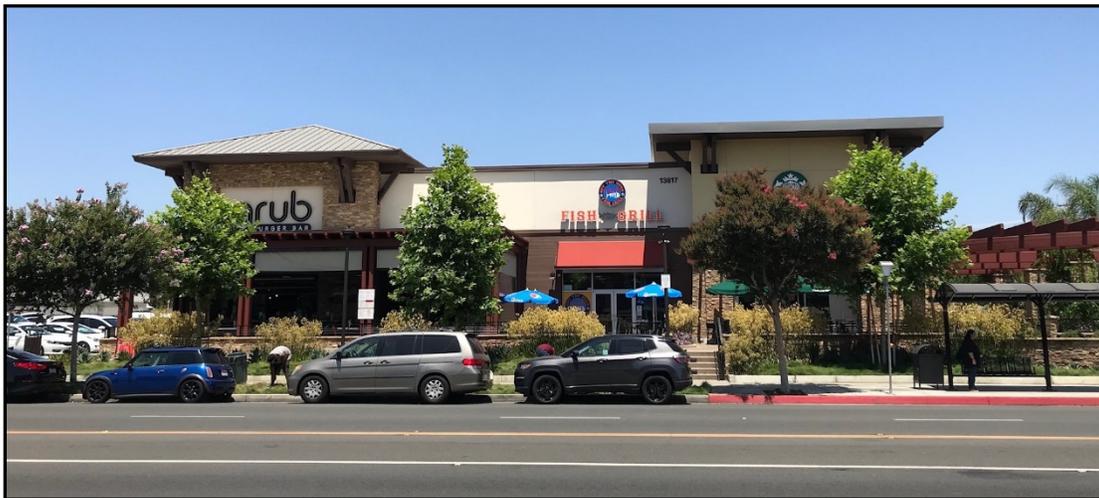
“A well balanced city where business complements and adds to the quality of life for all who live, work, shop and play in Whittier.”

The Mission statement established to achieve this vision is:

“Facilitate the growth, diversification and stability of the Whittier economy; create prosperous income opportunities for all citizens of the city; expand the economy; and provide a sustainable future for Whittier.”

III. CURRENT ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The City of Whittier is presently experiencing a resurgence of commercial activity. Every one of the former auto dealer sites is currently under construction or open with new uses. In their places now stand Oakmont Senior Living, LA Fitness and luxury apartments at Whittier and Catalina. The Friendly Hills Marketplace, anchored by Orchard Supply Hardware and Home Goods, is complete, and Grub Burger Bar and Off the Hook Fish Grill recently opened at the new Whittier Crossing shopping center. From an even longer-term vantage point, The Groves at Whittier will soon yield 150,000 square feet of unique housing, quality retail, and new commercial uses.



The unemployment rate is an indicator used to determine the health of the economy. The City’s unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) is currently 3.9%, lower than that of Los Angeles County (4.8%), the State of California (4.2%), and the national rate (4.2%). (*EDD, Labor Market Information Division, June 2018*).

The housing market continues to post gains and a number of townhome apartment projects are approved and underway including ones at Hadley and Magnolia and at the intersection of Five Points. Construction is still underway of the 76-unit luxury apartment project at Whittier and Catalina, as well as new units at the former Toyota used car lot, providing a rich balance of

residential products from which residents may choose. In addition, 750 new residential units were approved at the former Fred C. Nelles site and are now under development.

In terms of sales tax revenue, the City of Whittier gross receipts for sales during the January through March 2018 period (the most recent available) rose by 5.9% compared to the same quarter one year ago after adjusting for anomalies. This represents a healthy gain in consumer and business spending. For the year ending in March, 2018, General Consumer Goods provides the City's largest sales tax revenue by business group at 23%, followed by Restaurants and Hotels at 19%, allocations from the State and Countywide Use-Tax pools at 13%, Autos and Transportation at 12% and Fuel and Service Stations at 10%. Whittier will continue to diversify its business base, so not to rely on only one or two business sectors. (*HdL Companies, August 2018*)

IV. PRINCIPLES

The City of Whittier is committed to proactive economic development. Accordingly, the principles outlined below are the fundamental rules that will guide economic development in the City.

- It is an appropriate role for the City of Whittier to be involved in proactive economic development activities that address the goals outlined in this Economic Development Strategy.
- The City, where appropriate and within the limitations of law, should provide incentives for quality business investment in terms of retention or attraction in targeted areas. These incentives could include, but are not limited to, general business information; site location assistance; technical assistance referrals; employment linkages; marketing and public information assistance; permit processing and problem solving; financing referrals; economic data and analysis, etc.
- There must be an active partnership between the City, the business community, business organizations such as the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce, Whittier Uptown Association, Uptown Whittier Improvement Association, residential neighborhoods, etc., as the City cannot be expected to act on its own to achieve the goals outlined in this Strategy.

V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The following are the general goals established to achieve the City's adopted vision and mission statement related to economic development.

- Create a strong, diversified and sustainable local economy and enhance the quality of life within the community by promoting a balance of residential, commercial and industrial development.
- Increase the city's sales tax revenue growth and tax base.
- Retain and enhance existing businesses.

- Encourage and promote the development and enhancement of retail areas to achieve a vibrant shopping, dining and/or entertainment experience.
- Encourage active cooperation between the City and local businesses concerning economic development issues.
- Promote local resident support of businesses located in Whittier.
- Encourage job creation, where possible.

VI. CITY-WIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

A business-friendly environment is a philosophy shared throughout Whittier City Hall. We continue to take pride in being named the 2012 Most Business-Friendly City in Los Angeles County by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation as the well-known recognition affirms that we are doing something right. However, we must continue to explore the best ways to serve our businesses to the highest degree possible. The continued support by our partners such as the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce, Whittier Uptown Association, Uptown Whittier Improvement Association, Tri-Cities ROP, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, America’s Job Center of America, etc. is critical in maintaining the level of service our businesses have come to expect.



One of the major benefits offered by the City of Whittier to developers and the business community is our convenient permitting process. The Community Development Department is the hub of permitting for commercial and residential development projects in the City. City Hall serves as a “one-stop shop” for all development related services including planning permits, building permits, building inspections, business licenses, permits for construction in the public right-of-way, information on operating a business in Whittier, information on developable sites and other general information.

The team effort of City departments results in fast and convenient services such as:

- Coordinated customer contacts with appropriate staff representatives;
- Related development services in a central location;
- Streamlined, expedited permitting processes; and
- Plan checks and permit issuance combined in one location.

Whittier Express Permitting Departments at City Hall include:

- Business Ombudsperson
- Planning 2nd Floor in Community Development
- Building 2nd Floor in Community Development
- Business License 1st Floor
- Public Works/Utilities 1st Floor
- Cashier 1st Floor (fees for all permits paid here)

Some development projects may require separate review and permits by Fire, Health, Alcoholic Beverage Control, Sanitation, School Districts, or SCAQMD. Community Development staff are available to assist in verifying applicability and to provide referrals to those agencies.

Despite the elimination of redevelopment, business development and assistance remain a priority for the City of Whittier. Assembly Bill 1484 allows Whittier to use its remaining redevelopment bond funds, as programmed by the City Council, to provide the City an opportunity to implement some of the improvements charted in the Uptown Specific Plan such as parking, utilities, streetscape improvements, and lighting. Per Council direction, staff has worked closely with Uptown property owners on the establishment and implementation of the Uptown Whittier Improvement Association (UWIA). Having recently hired additional security to patrol the area and embarked on sidewalk cleaning and other beautification efforts, the UWIA promises to support a much-anticipated transformation in Uptown, in conjunction with approximately \$12.5 million in redevelopment bonds to be programmed.

Our city-wide approach to being business-friendly also includes public safety. We believe that a safe business community leads to a prosperous business community. Loitering, graffiti, and homelessness are general challenges that affect many Los Angeles County cities and the Whittier Police Department has taken these challenges seriously. Whittier is patrolled by its own Police Department and boasts a highly successful Community Based Policing Program. A cornerstone of this model program is a partnership between the Police Department, local residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations like Whittier Area First Day to produce a high quality of life for all residents.

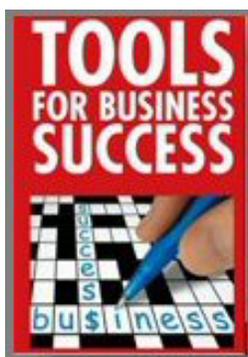


The City's economic development activities include coordinating a "RED" Team approach with our partners. The RED (Rapid Economic Development) Team is a valuable resource offered by the City to the local businesses. The RED Team may be coordinated for businesses that are:

- Growing;
- New or opening a new location;
- Considering a layoff; or
- Making a significant change to their business strategy.

By identifying the early warning signs of at risk companies, the RED Team can marshal resources and personnel to address a company’s needs, not only preserving existing jobs but creating expansion opportunities and new jobs. Furthermore, realizing the importance of business retention, staff conducts business outreach and visitations on an on-going basis.

It is critical that the City continue to assist and help maintain the business base we currently have. Continued use of data such as sales tax analysis, trends, economic drivers, emerging industries, and new or expanding businesses will assist in the City’s business attraction and retention efforts.

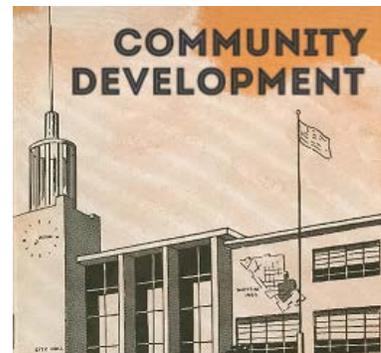


Staff continues to look for new and creative economic development programs for Whittier businesses. Furthermore, the City will focus on helping businesses remain competitive in today’s highly technical and social media savvy marketplace. As previously mentioned, businesses must be able to compete in today’s market using technology, as traditional bricks-and-mortar is no longer enough to sustain viability. Businesses must be innovative and use new applications and various social media platforms to remain relevant in this fast-paced, dynamic economic environment. Staff will focus on providing tools and educating the business community in this area. The City and Chamber’s business seminar series will also focus on innovation and digital marketing to help businesses meet the changing demands of consumers. Recognizing the importance of technology, the City offers an online economic development program called “Tools for Business Success.” The internet-based program offers local, state, federal, and best-of-the-web resources directly from the City of Whittier website. This economic development tool makes it easier for businesses to start and grow in Whittier. Business owners can easily access

information and resources from their home or office computer saving them valuable time and money.

By maintaining this service, the City has been able to provide cost-effective and much-needed resources during times of limited funding. The “Online Help” button is available throughout the day and evening hours, six days a week. If someone is having difficulty finding a specific resource or information for their business, the Online Help button connects the business person to a “live” representative via an instant message chat window, further saving the City time and money. We are pleased to report that the Tools application has continued to be successful and we hope to grow its presence and accessibility within the business community over the next year. We will continue to market this valuable economic development tool to local businesses and monitor the program’s new format and effectiveness.

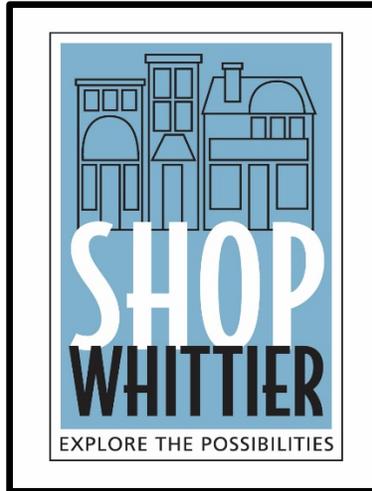
The Community Development Department has established a social media presence for Economic Development via online communities including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in an effort to better connect with our residents, business owners, and community members. Given the increase in development throughout the City, this will continue to allow us the opportunity to highlight major projects, educate the public on our processes, and offer helpful tips and assistance. Social media has become a great avenue for positive and proactive engagement within the community and our growing presence gives us the chance to showcase the great things happening in town through photos, videos, and interactive posts, as well as connect with local partners and spotlight mutual achievements. Social media has become another tool for business attraction as we market the City as “open for business.”



The economic development electronic newsletter, *Growing Whittier*, is published quarterly and features relevant content such as development news and projects occurring in the city. The e-newsletter provides the ability to reach more individuals at a significant cost savings and is emailed to commercial real estate contacts, Whittier businesses, and community partners such as the Whittier Chamber, Whittier Uptown Association, America’s Job Center of California, Tri-Cities ROP, Whittier Union High School District Superintendent and others.

Continuing the “Shop Whittier” campaign for residents and partnerships with economic development organizations (Whittier Chamber, LAEDC, Whittier Uptown Association, CMTC, America’s Job Center of California, etc.) will help maintain a thriving business community.

Additionally, the City will monitor and support statewide economic development legislation that may evolve in a post-redevelopment environment.



The City will continue to offer the following incentives and assistance programs to business owners, property owners and/or developers:

- Business ombudsperson;
- Expedited permit processing;
- No impact/exaction fees;
- Free business seminars;
- Assistance with Uptown Association special events;
- Sales tax sharing (considered on a case by case basis);
- Commercial broker meetings;
- Site selection assistance;
- Guide to Doing Business in Whittier (online handbook);
- Buy Whittier 2% local preference;
- Coordinated project review;
- Business license facilitation; and
- Business outreach and visitation.



Following are specific strategies for city-wide economic development activities.

Business Attraction and Economic Diversification Strategies

- 1) Work with site selectors, real estate developers, state and local economic development agencies, and other partners to attract new business and industry to Whittier properties through attendance at ICSC conventions and other marketing events.
- 2) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.

- 3) Meet with potential developers wanting to relocate or expand in the city.
- 4) Continue to use data to target new and expanding national businesses.
- 5) Participate in a full range of economic development activities, including marketing and promotion, research, committee meetings, and other efforts to attract new business and industry to Whittier.



6) Provide updated demographics information on the city's website to assist with business attraction efforts.

7) Continue to work toward becoming a more "business-friendly" city.

- 8) Explore tourism opportunities as a business attraction mechanism with the Whittier Chamber, Whittier Uptown Association, and Uptown Whittier Improvement Association.
- 9) Coordinate periodic brown-bag brokers' lunches with Community Development staff.
- 10) Invest in enhanced infrastructure to facilitate long term growth.
- 11) Sell former Whittier Redevelopment Agency parcels to facilitate new development.

Business Retention and Expansion

Strategies

- 1) Maintain open communication with businesses and meet with them on an ongoing basis to discuss current operations, future needs, determine plans for changes or expansions, etc.
- 2) Continue business outreach and visitation to ensure constant communication and feedback with the business community.
- 3) Continue to use data to target existing businesses that may be positioned to expand within the city.
- 4) Continue active involvement in the Whittier Chamber of Commerce and other business groups.
- 5) Participate with the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation and other partners to assist and retain existing businesses.
- 6) Communicate the provisions of the City's Specific Plans to property owners and businesses on Whittier Boulevard and Uptown.
- 7) Encourage the purchase of local goods and services through the "Buy Whittier" policy.

- 8) Partner with the Whittier Chamber of Commerce and Whittier Uptown Association to showcase, wherever possible, business success and expansion through City participation in ribbon cuttings and other business recognition programs.
- 9) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

Coordination and Cooperation

Strategies

- 1) Continue to support and promote the City's efforts to streamline and make the development review process more efficient.
- 2) Serve as a knowledgeable and reliable source for local business assistance and development programs.
- 3) Expand efforts to share information regarding the City's economic development programs and activities with community constituencies in order to develop a stronger community "buy-in" to the City's economic development program through the local media, City website and economic development newsletter, as well as using partners such as the Whittier Chamber and Whittier Uptown Association.
- 4) Leverage marketing and development opportunities through partnerships with local economic development organizations such as the Whittier Chamber, Whittier Uptown Association, America's Job Center of California, Tri-Cities ROP, etc.
- 5) Ensure current information is posted on the City's website such as upcoming business seminars and conferences, demographic information, etc.
- 6) Work closely with the Code Enforcement Division to ensure commercial properties are well-maintained.
- 7) Support efforts in Whittier by other governmental agencies such as Caltrans for street improvements and off-ramps maintenance and MTA for potential Gold Line extension.
- 8) Connect employers to America's Job Center of America and Tri-Cities ROP for business services such as employee recruitment and job training.

VII. ACTION TARGET AREAS

It is essential that the strategies identified to meet the goals outlined above be clear, concise, and measurable. In order to provide focus to the strategies outlined below, the following economic development target areas are established. It is staff's intent to continue to provide a report of economic development activities and progress to the City Council on a quarterly basis.

A. Uptown Whittier

Uptown, the City's historic business district, is the "heart" of the community both from a business and cultural standpoint. Uptown has made great strides, given the slowly recovering economy. The lack of redevelopment financial resources has left the City with limited ability to address major infrastructure issues in Uptown such as parking constraints and the inability to improve the lighting and streetscape. However, as previously stated, Assembly Bill 1484 allows the City to use its existing redevelopment bond funds to focus on Uptown infrastructure specifically. Implementing some of the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan recommendations such as additional parking and infrastructure improvements with the bond proceeds will assist the area in becoming a more thriving business district. Uptown continues to gain recognition as a dining destination and continues to attract local entrepreneurs willing to invest in restaurants as well as "foodies" from throughout the region. Over the next few months, the City will continue to work with the property owner of the Nixon Building in Uptown Whittier and Chef Ricardo Diaz to streamline final tenant improvements for the new Poet Gardens dining hall on the ground level, which will feature Whittier Brewing Co. and other local food vendors in an eclectic and communal atmosphere. There have been a number of additional businesses that have opened in Uptown or are in the process, including Super Mex restaurant.



Uptown continues to gain recognition as a dining destination and continues to attract local entrepreneurs willing to invest in restaurants as well as "foodies" from throughout the region. Over the next few months, the City will continue to work with the property owner of the Nixon Building in Uptown Whittier and Chef Ricardo Diaz to streamline final tenant improvements for the new Poet Gardens dining hall on the ground level, which will feature Whittier Brewing Co. and other local food vendors in an eclectic and communal atmosphere. There have been a number of additional businesses that have opened in Uptown or are in the process, including Super Mex restaurant.

Following are specific strategies for the area.

Strategies

- 1) Serve as a liaison to the Uptown Whittier Improvement Association approved by property owners in Uptown Whittier.
- 2) Use bond proceeds under Assembly Bill 1484 to implement the Parking Management Plan's recommendations.
- 3) Implement the recommendations of the Uptown Specific Plan as development proposals are received.
 - a. Parking
 - b. Streetscape Improvements
 - c. Security
- 4) Educate the business community and developers on the zoning guidelines of the Uptown Specific Plan.
- 5) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.

- 6) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 7) Provide a City liaison to the Whittier Uptown Association and attend Uptown events.
- 8) Provide administrative services to the Whittier Uptown Association for annual re-approval of business improvement area and levy of assessments.
- 9) Assist with marketing the Uptown area to the greater Whittier area and region.
- 10) Assist with the processing of special events and coordinating logistics for the Friday Farmers Market, Spring Antique Fair, Car Show, Dia de los Muertos Art and Music Festival, Holiday Sonata, Christmas Parade, etc.
- 11) Incorporate any identified capital improvements into the City's Capital Improvement Program to meet needed infrastructure requirements for future development (i.e. alleys, streets, and parking lots lighting upgrades, sewer upgrades, etc.).
- 12) Continue business outreach and visitation to ensure constant communication and feedback with the Uptown business community.
- 13) Connect employers to America's Job Center of California for business services such as employee recruitment and training.
- 14) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 15) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.



B. Whittier Boulevard

The Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan (WBSP) was originally adopted in 2005 and updated in August 2011. The Specific Plan represents the zoning along Whittier Boulevard that consists of five land-use districts: the Gateway Segment, Workplace District, Shopping Cluster District, Center District and Neighborhood Spine District. The zoning clusters specific land uses into distinct districts. For example, within the Neighborhood Spine, in east Whittier, multi-family housing is permitted along Whittier Boulevard. The Plan also includes street and landscape design enhancements to Whittier Boulevard.

The Fred C. Nelles Youth Correctional Facility (Nelles), which closed in 2004, is a 75-acre site previously owned by the state and Brookfield Residential is now underway on a mixed use

development that will include up to 750 homes and approximately 150,000 sq. ft. of commercial development.

Nelles is the last large piece of underutilized land in the City and its development will have a significant positive impact on the local economy. As part of the approval, Nelles was removed from the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan and given its own Specific Plan development standards.



Below is a description of the strategies for each district along Whittier Boulevard.

Gateway District

Strategies

- 1) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 2) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 3) Maintain communication with the County to ensure continued planning of street and public infrastructure improvements and code enforcement efforts.
- 4) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 5) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

Workplace District

Strategies

- 1) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 2) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.



- 3) Assist with the development of the Leggett and Platt site.
- 4) Assist PIH Health and other major employers with potential expansion efforts.
- 5) Assist with the development of other medical and biotechnology uses in proximity to PIH Health, including Washington Boulevard and Whittier Boulevard.
- 6) Continue business outreach and visitation to ensure constant communication and feedback with the business community.
- 7) Connect employers to America’s Job Center of California for business services such as employee recruitment and training.
- 8) Assist with the development of the southeast corner of Whittier Boulevard and Philadelphia Street as a gateway to Uptown.
- 9) Assist in the development of properties adjacent to the southeast corner of Whittier Boulevard and Philadelphia for possible medical office use along the Boulevard.
- 10) Consider street improvement plans for Whittier Boulevard between Sorenson Avenue and 5-Points.
- 11) Continue to study the manufacturing area on the east side of Whittier Boulevard in the district and encourage job creating businesses to locate in the area.
- 12) Assist with the development process of the former Five Points Whittier Redevelopment Agency owned site and preservation of the former Googie car wash.
- 13) Meet with property owners on the west side of Whittier Boulevard to assess their current and future needs as the area develops.
- 14) Encourage manufacturing businesses to utilize resources and participate in programs through CMTC.
- 15) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 16) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

Shopping Cluster I

Strategies

- 1) Maintain ongoing regular communication with The Quad shopping center management.
- 2) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 3) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 4) Sell the former Whittier Redevelopment Agency site, 12705 Whittier Blvd.



- 5) Maintain open communication with the remaining auto dealership (Ocean Honda of Whittier) and conduct individual meetings as needed.



- 6) Continue business outreach and visitation to ensure constant communication and feedback with the business community.

- 7) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.

- 8) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

Center District

Strategies

- 1) Assist with the development of the Whittier/Catalina luxury apartments at the former Mitsubishi auto dealer site.
- 2) Assist with the development of the Park Place luxury apartments at the former used Toyota parking lot.
- 3) Maintain open communication with the remaining auto dealership (Toyota of Whittier) and conduct individual meetings with dealer as needed.
- 4) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 5) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 6) Continue business outreach and visitation to ensure constant communication and feedback with the business community.
- 7) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 8) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.



Shopping Cluster II

Strategies

- 1) Maintain ongoing regular communication with Whittwood Town Center shopping center management.
- 2) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 3) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 4) Assist in the reuse of the Cal Domestic site.
- 5) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 6) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.



Neighborhood Spine

Strategies

- 1) Assist housing developers in identifying opportunity sites.
- 2) Finalize street improvement plans for Whittier Boulevard from Santa Gertrudes Avenue to Valley Home Avenue including development of future landscape medians.
- 3) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 4) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.



C. Lambert Road

Strategies

- 1) Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.
- 2) Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
- 3) Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
- 4) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

D. Washington Boulevard/PIH Health

Whittier is fortunate to have a regional hospital, PIH Health, in the City to help protect the health and safety of the community while providing jobs to City residents. PIH Health has consistently been recognized by Truven Health Analytics as one of America's Top 100 Hospitals placing PIH Health Hospital - Whittier in the top 2% of all hospitals in the United States. In addition, PIH Health was awarded the National Research Corporation's (NRC) *Path to Excellence* award for the eighth consecutive year; was recognized by IBM Watson as one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals; was named a 2017 Most Wired hospital for the fourth time by the American Hospital Association (AHA); and named a Favorite Workplace twice by the Los Angeles News Group. PIH Health serves more than 2.1 million residents in Los Angeles and Orange Counties and throughout the San Gabriel Valley, investing millions each year in community education and free and low-cost services to support those with the greatest need.

In 2015, PIH Health completed the 'connecting link' corridor that connects the front and rear portions of the hospital on five levels, and was recognized in 2017 by Southern California Edison (SCE) for its LED retrofitting energy efficiency project focused on enhancing the patient experience and reducing greenhouse gases. PIH Health continues to purchase property and invest in the development of new medical businesses in the community. It is also expanding medical services in the four medical office buildings that it owns in the City and the additional ten medical office buildings in the surrounding communities.



Strategies

1. Assist the hospital with any future expansion plans.
2. Assist with the development of other medical/biotechnology uses in proximity to the Hospital, including Washington Boulevard, Whittier Boulevard, and the Workplace District.
3. Continue to foster relationships with property owners, property managers, and commercial leasing agents to assist with identifying new uses and filling vacancies.

4. Conduct regular contact with brokers representing vacant properties to assist with business attraction efforts.
5. Minimize code violations through outreach and Code Enforcement.
6. Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.
7. Encourage the Gold Line expansion along the Washington Boulevard route.

E. Manufacturing

Strategies

- 1) Continue to study the manufacturing area in the Workplace District and encourage job-creating businesses to locate in the district.
- 2) Encourage manufacturing businesses to participate in the California Manufacturing Technology Consulting programs through the CMTC.
- 3) Encourage manufacturing businesses to participate in the Recycling Market Development Zone.
- 4) Meet with the property owners on Whittier Boulevard to assess their current and future needs as the area develops.
- 5) Communicate and educate the business community on new technological tools and resources.

F. Housing

Strategies

- 1) Assist with current townhome projects including Cambridge Place, Park Place and the former ICC site.
- 2) Encourage the development of housing within the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan area where zoned.
- 3) Encourage the development of housing within the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan Area.
- 4) Encourage the rehabilitation and preservation of older housing stock in Whittier.



G. Workforce Development

Strategies

- 1) Maintain relationships and communication with America's Job Center of California, Rio Hondo College, Whittier College, and the Whittier Union High School District, including the Whittier Adult School and programs such as the Tri-Cities Regional Occupation Program (ROP).

- 2) Connect employers to America’s Job Center of California for business services such as employee recruitment and job training.
- 3) Refer businesses to county, state, and federal employment programs such as the Welfare-to-Work Program, California Employment & Training Panel, and Federal On-the-Job Training Programs.
- 4) Encourage collaboration between the business community and educational partners for satellite classrooms in commercial areas or other similar opportunities for the mutual benefit of workers and business owners.
- 5) Encourage the business community to offer internships, career development courses, and skills enhancement workshops.



VIII. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018-19

<p>Quarter 1, July through September 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate “fast track” permitting services for The Groves project • Assist with General Plan update, public outreach efforts, and workshops • Promote the California Competes Tax Credit to local businesses • Work with staff to prepare Doing Business in Whittier video • Produce and distribute <i>Growing Whittier</i> as an electronic newsletter • Participate in economic development webinars/conferences/conventions • Coordinate a roundtable event for local brokers • Organize outreach to top sales tax producers in the City • Conduct business outreach and visitations (75 per quarter) • Serve as the liaison to local business organizations including the Chamber, WUA, and UWIA • Coordinate and participate in business assistance seminars and/or events
<p>Quarter 2, October through December 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate “fast track” permitting services for The Groves project at the former Fred C. Nelles site • Produce and distribute <i>Growing Whittier</i> as an electronic newsletter • Run “Shop Whittier” ads in conjunction with the holiday shopping season • Participate in economic development webinars/conferences/conventions including the ICSC Western Region event • Coordinate a roundtable event for local brokers • Organize outreach to top sales tax producers in the City • Conduct business outreach and visitations (75 per quarter) • Serve as the liaison to local business organizations including the Chamber, WUA, and UWIA • Coordinate and participate in business assistance seminars and/or events

<p>Quarter 3, January through March 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate “fast track” permitting services for The Groves project at the former Fred C. Nelles site • Promote the California Competes Tax Credit to local businesses • Produce and distribute <i>Growing Whittier</i> as an electronic newsletter • Update department website and share video via social media and newsletter • Participate in economic development webinars/conferences/conventions • Organize outreach to top sales tax producers in the City • Conduct business outreach and visitations (75 per quarter) • Serve as the liaison to local business organizations including the Chamber, WUA, and UWIA • Coordinate and participate in business assistance seminars and/or events
<p>Quarter 4, April through June 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate “fast track” permitting services for The Groves project at the former Fred C. Nelles site • Produce and distribute <i>Growing Whittier</i> as an electronic newsletter • Participate in economic development webinars/conferences/conventions including the annual ICSC RECon event • Organize outreach to top sales tax producers in the City • Conduct business outreach and visitations (75 per quarter) • Serve as the liaison to local business organizations including the Chamber, WUA, and UWIA • Coordinate and participate in business assistance seminars and/or events • Revise and update Economic Development Strategy for FY 2019-20

IX. CONCLUSION

The City of Whittier recognizes the critical role that economic development plays in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life residents expect. The main measurement that will demonstrate overall success is increased revenues. However, while increasing revenues to the City is the primary goal of the Economic Development Strategy, we acknowledge that increased revenues is only one of the many tools the City will utilize to address the quality of life for all who live, work, shop, and play in Whittier. Thus, the benefits of a sound economic development program, which results in a balanced community where business complements and adds to that quality of life, will be measured in many ways. Last, the City calls upon our partners, including the business community, residents, business organizations, and other stakeholders, to help in the effort of economic development and put into place the building blocks that will continue to foster economic growth.



City of Whittier
13230 Penn Street
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 567-9999
www.cityofwhittier.org

Joe Vinatieri, Mayor
Josué Alvarado, Mayor Pro Tem
Fernando Dutra, Council Member
Henry Bouchot, Council Member
Cathy Warner, Council Member

Jeffrey W. Collier, City Manager
Shannon K. DeLong, Assistant City Manager