



CITY OF PARK RIDGE

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 4, 2014
TO: Mayor, Alderman, & City Clerk
FROM: Shawn Hamilton, City Manager
RE: **FY15 Funding of Economic Development Coordinator Position**

In the FY15 budget, I have included funding for the Economic Development Coordinator. This is the only new position in the proposed FY15 Budget.

In this competitive business environment, this position is one that our City must reinvest in. The marketing, public relations, and community relations work this individual will complete, to continue to promote the "Business Friendly" atmosphere here in Park Ridge, will continue to grow our business tax base, which should reduce the property tax dependency of our residents. As we have stated numerous times in the past, the more sales tax revenue we can generate, the less of a property tax burden our residents should have to realize.

One of the recommendations of the Economic Development Task Force Final Report was the filling of an Economic Development position for the City. In the FY14 budget, there was \$30,000 allocated for Economic Development, until such a time that analysis could be completed by the CP&D Director and I to determine the best course of action. At the time, I stated that the CP&D Director and I would research how best to invest those funds to get the largest return for the City. It is our opinion, and the opinion of many others, that hiring of this position by the City will have the largest return. None of the FY14 funds have been spent at this time, and this budget line will be included in the carryover memo presented in a future budget meeting.

I have spoken with various stakeholders about the advantage of the City having this type of position return. Nearly all of them talk about the competitive advantage the City can realize with an individual who can take the time marketing and promoting our City to the prospective business community. Members of the business community, through the Chamber of Commerce, have pledged their support for the return of the position in a letter they sent to me last week.

The CP&D Director and I are completing the development of the position's job description. With consent of Council, I will have the position posted and complete interviews by mid-April, with the hopes of a start date of May 1, right before the spring and summer business season. This is a full time position budgeted at \$80,000 with benefits.

I will continue to report on the progress in the Economic Development Report that I will be producing every other month.

Our Mission:

THE CITY OF PARK RIDGE IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING EXCELLENCE IN CITY SERVICES IN ORDER TO UPHOLD A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, SO OUR COMMUNITY REMAINS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK.



February 26, 2014

TO: Park Ridge Mayor Schmidt, City Council Members and City Manager Hamilton
FROM: Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce
RE: Economic Development Coordinator Position

Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce—and also on behalf of our Chamber leaders who served as Mayoral appointees to the Economic Development Commission—we enthusiastically thank you for including the position of Economic Development Coordinator in the upcoming City budget!

We understand that having a dedicated City professional handling marketing, communications and other outreach efforts on behalf of the City are essential. From the time a business owner considers possible locations for his or her operations, Park Ridge faces vigorous and worthy competition from numerous nearby municipalities. It will greatly improve our position when we have a professional on staff who will help businesses find locations, comply with ordinances, and take advantage of marketing and management tools such as those provided by the Chamber and other organizations.

The funding of an Economic Development Coordinator will directly help businesses, but for those of us who are residents, the indirect value of this position is even greater. The Coordinator's success will bring in more long-awaited shopping, dining, and service options for Park Ridge residents, and will thus improve the attractiveness of Park Ridge as a place to buy a home.

And we don't want to leave out the most compelling reason of all for hiring and supporting an Economic Development Coordinator: To attract more businesses that will help shoulder the tax burden now carried primarily by homeowners!

Furthermore, one challenge faced by residents in need of human and social services is identifying and leveraging the existing support systems already provided by various nonprofit and municipal services. Having the help of the Economic Development Coordinator in this effort will make it easier and more efficient for people to find the services they need.

Bottom line: The position of Economic Development Coordinator has everything to do with fulfilling the City's mission of making and keeping Park Ridge a wonderful place to live and work. Again, we are pleased and enthusiastically supportive of this position, and we applaud your vision and your willingness to continue improving Park Ridge.

Sincerely,

Joshua Nichols
President

Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce

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