



LOS ANGELES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

CONTACT:

Colin Maynard

(213) 236-4845

Colin.Maynard@laedc.org

Nhien Lasky

(213) 236-4816

Nhien.Lasky@laedc.org

PRESS RELEASE

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Finalists Announced For 2011 Business-Friendly City Competition

*Eleven cities selected for award in competition to be named L.A. County's "business-friendliest" city.
Finalists picked for commitment to job creation and economic development.*

LOS ANGELES, CA - The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) today announced the finalists for its 2011 *Most Business-Friendly City in Los Angeles County* award. The cities of **Burbank, Carson, Glendale, Torrance, West Covina** and **Whittier** are finalists for the population 60,000 and over category, and the cities of **Commerce, Duarte, Gardena, La Mirada, and Monrovia** are finalists in the population 60,000 and under category.

One winner from each category will be announced live at the 16th Annual Eddy Awards® on Thursday, November 3rd, at the Beverly Hilton. Inaugurated in 1996, the Eddy Awards® gala has become the most important economic development award program in the state of California. In 2006, the LAEDC created the "business-friendly" award category to recognize cities within the County that are proactively promoting business-friendly programs and services.

"The 2011 finalists stand out as model communities in Los Angeles County that are proactively engaging and working with businesses and the private sector to create jobs for their residents," said LAEDC President and CEO, Bill Allen. "In the midst of a prolonged economic crisis, these cities have shown they truly understand the importance of attracting, retaining and growing businesses to create much-needed jobs and generate necessary tax revenue for important public programs. Join me in honoring all of our city finalists as we work together to ensure a strong, diverse and sustainable economy for all of L.A. County's residents and communities."

The finalists were selected based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated commitment to economic development as a priority
- Excellence in programs and services designed to facilitate business entry, expansion, and retention
- Economic development activity over the past three years
- Competitive business tax rates and fee structures
- Availability of economic incentives
- Effective communication with and about business clients

Each of the finalists has created a business-friendly environment that encourages businesses to locate or expand in their respective communities.

CITIES WITH POPULATIONS OF 60,000+

Burbank

The City of Burbank, aptly known as the “Media Capital of the World,” is home to some of the world’s largest media companies, including The Walt Disney Company, Warner Bros., NBC, ABC, and 700 other media related businesses. The City is served by an excellent transportation system, including the Bob Hope Airport, connecting Burbank to the LA metropolis and beyond. Burbank’s “Team Business” links the best resources for training, consulting and access to capital with those looking to start a business in addition to business owners who are poised for growth or are seeking stability in today’s promising economy. Burbank was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2006 and 2007.

Carson

“Future Unlimited” is the vision for Carson, a dynamic and culturally diverse city in the South Bay. Carson, well known as an industrial center with excellent access to numerous multi-modal transportation systems and the County’s twin ports, has enjoyed steady and continued growth. With more than 120 acres of park land and a state-of-the art sports complex, Carson residents and businesses enjoy a variety of sports, recreational and cultural programs. Economic development is a cornerstone of Carson’s shared community vision and is highlighted in its Economic Development Element in the City’s General Plan. Carson was also a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2010.

Glendale

Glendale gives businesses a competitive advantage. As LA County’s third largest city, Glendale has long been an economic activity hub for Southern California. A single-point liaison within the City is designated to shepherd businesses through entitlement and any other City related process. The concierge helps smooth and streamline the City process to get the business on-line quicker, saving dollars for the business, and producing jobs and revenue to the General Fund faster. A Development Review Committee provides a coordinated and streamlined development and entitlement process for citywide projects by engaging appropriate staff from conception to completion. Glendale was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2008.

Torrance

Torrance, the sixth largest city in L.A. County, competes globally leveraging its myriad of assets, including: the diversity of its population, diverse residents, flourishing businesses and safe communities. Torrance demonstrates its commitment to economic development with an Economic Development Element in its General Plan, an aggressive economic development office, expedited plan checks, preliminary plan reviews, one-stop permit center, ombudsman program, online project status tracking, interactive voice response system, field computer units and permit process flow charts to help businesses better understand city processes. Torrance was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2009 and 2010.

West Covina

Located in the heart of the San Gabriel Valley, West Covina is a vibrant business-friendly community that takes pride in developing first-class projects. West Covina exerts a powerful retail pull with a 10-mile radius population that exceeds 2.5 million with excellent freeway access. West Covina embodies the “Elements of a Successful City”, including a pro-business climate, great location, distinct quality of life and economically favorable demographics. The City’s General Plan Economic Development Element includes business-friendly processes such as: streamlining the entitlement process, over-the-counter approvals for select permits, expedited plan checks and permits for a fee, staff available to discuss plan/permit applications, design review committee and an ombudsman program. West Covina was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2010.

Whittier

A growing, dynamic and diverse community located in the Gateway Cities region, Whittier has a long tradition of making economic development and business a top priority. The City’s Economic Development Element in its General Plan represents the blueprint for business attraction, retention and sustainability, including Redevelopment Project Areas, a Foreign Trade Zone, Retailer Recruitment and Reward Program, ombudsman services, entitlement and permit fee subsidies and permit processing fee reductions. “The Guide to Doing Business” in Whittier makes City processes easier to navigate. Whittier was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2009 and 2010.

CITIES WITH POPULATIONS 60,000 AND UNDER

Commerce

The City of Commerce’s commitment to its business community is demonstrated through the free employment recruitment services offered to residents by the city’s business development center. The center provides job announcements, applications, job placement assistance, training and hiring tax incentive information. Additional incentives include four Redevelopment Project Areas, a Recycling Market Development Zone, industrial development bonds, regular standing business relationship meetings and a strong relationship with the Commerce Industrial Council. Commerce was a “Most Business Friendly City” Finalist in 2009 and 2010.

Duarte

Duarte – “Our Kind of Town” – prides itself with maintaining its “small town” feel and a business-friendly atmosphere. Duarte provides cutting edge business development strategies and professional assistance, including a one-stop permit center, an updated strategic plan, an Economic Development Element in its General Plan and a hands-on city council regularly in touch with businesses. Duarte’s incentives include an effective Redevelopment Agency, no utility user tax, free business seminars, business, residential and youth surveys, a low crime rate and distinguished schools. Duarte was a “Most Business Friendly City” Finalist in 2010.

Gardena

The City of Gardena’s Economic Development Element in its General Plan solidifies the “*Promoting Business Success, Offering Exceptional Service, and Creating Jobs*” motto of its Economic Development department. For example, Gardena has partnered with the Small Manufacturers Advantage® program from the California Manufacturing Technology Consulting Group (CMTG) to offer “no-cost” business assistance to its manufacturing companies as a means for providing strong retention support. Recently, the City made a commitment to develop a “user-friendly” business oriented website containing invaluable resources.

La Mirada

“Life Keeps Getting Better” in La Mirada, where for over 50 years the City has worked closely with businesses to meet their needs and promote economic vitality. La Mirada was voted by CNN and *Money Magazine* as the 34th Best Place to Live in America, and has been recognized in the Kosmont-Rose Institute’s “Cost of Doing Business Survey” as one of the least expensive cities in which to do business in L.A. County. The General Plan’s Economic Development Element includes a number of goals and policies designed to attract and retain key businesses. La Mirada was a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Monrovia

Monrovia public officials and staff work tirelessly to attract and retain businesses in this city of nearly 40,000. With a diverse portfolio of businesses ranging from nationally known technology firms to “mom and pop” shops in Old Town, Monrovia offers an array of services and incentives for businesses. Monrovia offers financial relocation assistance, lease/tenant subsidies, broker bounties, the Old Town business development assistance and facade improvement programs, two redevelopment project areas, no utility user tax assessment and regionally low city fees. Monrovia was named a “Most Business Friendly City” finalist in 2008 and 2010.

In addition to announcing the winners of the “Most Business-Friendly City in Los Angeles County,” the LAEDC will also recognize Dominic Ng, Chairman and CEO of East West Bank, and the Los Angeles World Airports.

About the Eddy Awards®

The Eddy Awards® were introduced by the LAEDC in 1996 to celebrate individuals and organizations that demonstrate exceptional contributions to positive economic development in the region. For sponsorship and event information, please contact Justin Goodkind at (213) 236-4813 or justin.goodkind@laedc.org. For more information about the Eddy Awards®, visit www.laedc.org/eddy.

ABOUT THE LAEDC

Established in 1981, the LAEDC is an economic development leadership organization dedicated to promoting job growth, economic expansion, and the overall global competitiveness of Los Angeles County, its surrounding regions, and the state of California. For more information, please visit www.laedc.org and follow at twitter.com/laedc. To schedule interviews, please contact Colin Maynard at (213) 236-4845 or email at colin.maynard@laedc.org.

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