



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Kevin Johns, Director
Economic Development Department *Kevin Johns*

DATE: January 16, 2014

SUBJECT: Update- Cooperative Businesses (Council Resolution No. 20140612-072)

On June 12, 2014, Council adopted Resolution No. 20140612-072, which directed the City Manager to convene stakeholders to develop recommendations that detail ways the City can promote the development of new and existing cooperative businesses, and to report to the Council MBE/WBE and Small Business Committee for discussion prior to reporting to the full City Council.

On August 14, 2014, staff from three City departments convened a stakeholder meeting with 28 representatives of local cooperative businesses, who made the following recommendations:

- Educate City departments and policy makers about Co-Ops and develop cooperative business friendly policies and services.
- Promote cooperative visibility and support October as National Co-Op month.
- Provide business educational resources and access to funding.

Based on the stakeholders' input, Economic Development Department (EDD) staff recommends issuing a Request For Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to provide the following services:

- Research national best practices for governmental support of cooperatives businesses and submit a report of the findings to the City, with recommendations on best practices the City should adopt.
- Develop a marketing strategy for promoting the benefits of cooperative businesses to the public, based on national best practices.
- Develop a training curriculum for cooperatives businesses, based on national best practices.
- Research current and potential funding methods available to cooperative businesses in addition to any solution(s) to traditional lending guarantor requirements.

The stakeholder and staff recommendations were presented to the Council MBE/WBE and Small Business Committee on December 9.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (512) 974-7820 or EDD Assistant Director Sylnovia Holt-Rabb, at (512) 974-3131.

xc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager