

Part I: City or Native American Community Description

The City of Riverside is a culturally, generationally and economically diverse city with over 317,000 residents. Our economy is supported by a wide variety of industries, a majority of which are small businesses from restaurants, retail, and services to manufacturing and technology start-ups. Our city is growing – quickly. We are the 12th largest City in California with a total labor force of over 148,000 and a steadily dropping unemployment rate.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------|
| Population, 2013 estimate | 316,619 | |
| Total Labor Force | 148,200 | This |
| Employed | 169,100 | year, |
| Unemployment | 6.1% | |
| Median Household Income 2009-2013 | \$55,636 | |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts
Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division

Riverside has seen a flurry of activity in its Community & Economic Development Division. From January to May of this year, the City has seen over 700 new business license filings and almost 1,800 permits issued representing 78 million in capital investment. In April, our award-winning Office of Economic Development website had over 5,000 visitors, the majority of them seeking resources, and information on how to start a business in Riverside.

Part I: Problems and Solutions

For many, submitting plans to the appropriate City departments can be a daunting task, even for the most seasoned developer or business owner. Between understanding the different zones in the City and the many requirements associated with each, entrepreneurs spend countless hours first identifying an appropriate location and second, getting their permits through the process.

The City of Riverside has made great strides in simplifying the process in a variety of ways including the Business First program, a friendly, collaborative approach to helping entrepreneurs and small businesses navigate the business development process and E-plans, a workflow management system designed to provide an online solution plan checking process. However, applicants must still begin by identifying a location; navigating a complex zoning code, including the intricate details and conditions of each zone, and any connected specific plans or zone overlays. Entrepreneurs want services that save them time and effort. Riverside needs to improve

the way applicants identify and compare properties in the City to more efficiently determine which locations are right for their business.

Currently, the applicant must first research the City's permitted use table which identifies allowed uses, accessory uses, temporary uses, conditionally permitted and prohibited uses. This document is only available as a PDF on our website which prints at 30 pages, sized 11x17, making it cumbersome. The document is static so interpretation can be difficult, leaving the entrepreneur unclear on the meaning of each zone and whether or not additional conditions or restrictions may apply. Without adequate information, a small business owner can find themselves locked into a new lease or purchase that requires unexpected permitting; creating additional costs and operation delays. In a worst case scenario, an entrepreneur may even find that the site is unworkable for their type of operation.

Part III. Implementation

If awarded the prize, the Office of Economic Development would work with the City's IT and Planning Divisions to identify a solution to digitalize the current permitted use table, allowing the user to quickly identify permitted uses, appropriate zones and any specific conditions. In addition, we would tie this information into our GIS system so the user can apply zoning, land use and APN information to a particular parcel. This new tool would give entrepreneurs the power to better understand the process and quickly answer their questions while removing the burdensome task of either looking at a PDF document or waiting to hear back from City staff. Success will be measured by: A) Increase in web traffic; B) Reduction in staff time spent on land use questions/research; C) Reduction in land use questions by user; D) Increase in permit submissions; and E) Increase in overall customer satisfaction

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Phase I: Design and Analysis (4 Weeks) | | |
| Identify or Build Database | Compile data sources | Determine success metrics and reporting tool |
| Phase II: Development and Testing (4 Weeks) | | |
| Design presentation layer for results using GIS technologies | Integrate online tools with data sources | Application Testing |
| Phase III Implementation (2 weeks) | | |
| Publish new online tool to website | Demonstrate tool to internal departments | Promote new tool through City marketing channels |
| Phase IV: Measurement and Analysis (2 Weeks) | | |
| Analyze increase in web traffic | Look for reduction in permit errors | Publish online customer survey refinements |