



Perris News

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer
Phone: 951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org

Perris Has Overwhelming Response to STEP Business Summit

More than 80 Perris Valley small businesses attended an economic summit Wednesday to learn tips and strategies to keep and grow their companies during challenging economic times.

The "Stimulate the Economy of Perris" summit, which was sponsored by the City, also featured speakers from the Small Business Administration, retired executives, loan officers and human resources experts who spoke about how to navigate businesses through the current rough economic waters.

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, Chamber of Commerce CEO Shelly Yarbrough, City Manager Richard Belmudez, Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Michael McDermott and Redevelopment Project Coordinator Veronica Arana led the City's contingent at the summit.

McDermott said the response was overwhelming. The event drew a capacity-audience to the Perris City Council Chambers.

"We sold out," McDermott said. "The response has been better than we anticipated. We got more people than we thought we would."

Yarbrough, who owns two small businesses that serve the Perris Valley, told the audience that the City remains very committed to attracting companies to the community and working with them to make sure they prosper.

"We are very proactive when it comes to business," he said. "We have a reputation for fast-tracking business applications through the red tape."

Yarbrough said Perris is financing new programs to improve the City's business climate. Perris officials are in the midst of a commercial façade improvement program on D Street to restore the historic look to one of the City's oldest roads. Work is beginning to retrofit masonry buildings to help them survive an earthquake. The City's Shop

Local program has already attracted nearly 80 participants.

The program makes available discount cards to residents and out-of-city customers who shop at businesses enrolled in the "Shop Local" effort and provides advertising to companies that participate.

Yarbrough called small businesses a backbone of Perris and America.

"Without you, none of this would exist," he said.

Chamber of Commerce CEO Shelly Yarbrough urged the audience to join the chamber. It's the best way to learn what is going on in the local, state and national business community.

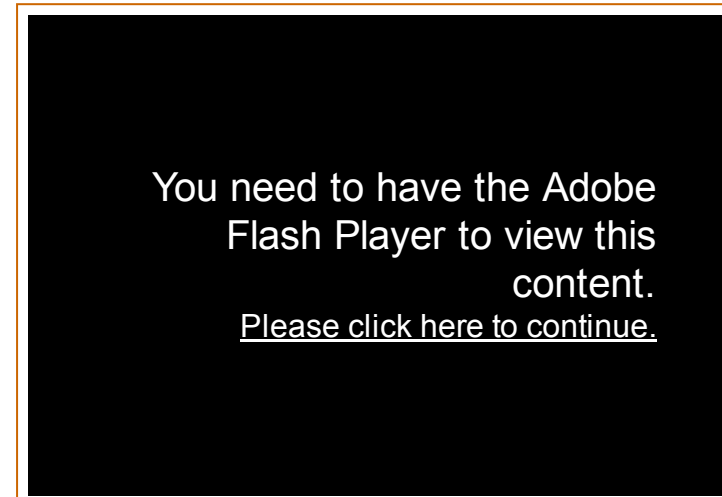
The list of speakers includes representatives from the Small Business Association, the Inland Empire Small Business Development Association, the Inland Empire Women's Business Association and SCORE, a group of retired business executives.

Max Bosetti, a member of SCORE based in Riverside, urged every one of the business owners to develop a plan that outlines short and long-term goals. He said they should not be dissuaded from starting a business, even if economic conditions as tough as the current recession.

"Don't use the excuse that there is a bad economy," he said. "Don't be distracted by that. Don't let it hold you back." Douglas Dare, the Small Business Administration representative, said programs exist to help companies started by minorities, women and military veterans.

"Small businesses are the engines that drive our economy," he said. Chris Coria, who operates CDC Electric in Perris, said he was glad he attended. He said he picked up a lot of pointers about growing his residential and commercial electrical shop.

"There are a lot of opportunities in Perris," Coria said. "I want to know what kind of opportunities exist that I can take advantage of."



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough addresses the first-ever Stimulate the Economy of Perris business summit. The City has a reputation for fast-tracking business applications.



Chamber of Commerce CEO Shelly Yarbrough told the audience: "Business stimulates the economy."



Chris Coria and Dan Dorado, who own a Perris electrical company, said they received many valuable tips from the seminar.