

## Mike Ryan's "City of Sunrise Small Business Initiative"

The "Businessman of the Year" last year in the City of Sunrise was Mike Jacobs, the owner of a local restaurant, Beef O'Brady's of Sunrise. However, just 9 months later, he and his wife closed the doors. Employees are out of work, we lost a great charity sponsor for schools, and our youth leagues lost an important part of growing up after games. For Mike and his wife, it was the end of a passionate dream.

Small businesses employ hundreds, if not thousands. They are shop owners who give us a helping hand and restaurants who remember how we like our food. They are families living out a dream while making our neighborhoods more complete and generating real jobs and real dollars for our City. We are fortunate businesses want to relocate their headquarters to our City. But, can you name a small business that has been in the City over 20 or 40 years? Those businesses have employed a whole generation, created real jobs and produced significant revenue for our City.

Sadly, those promoting economic growth often forget about responsible businesses already in our City. With Federal and State governments offering little help and the credit markets having contracted, our "mom-and-pop" businesses need our support. Small businesses can hire as many employees, generate as much sales tax, and provide the same community benefits as one large business relocating to our City. Delay in opening a small business may doom the business to failure no matter the strength of the product or service. Therefore, while we must foster new corporate development, understanding the needs and challenges of small business is also vital to our City's financial stability and prosperity.

Therefore, I am proposing a "City Of Sunrise Small Business Initiative" with the following focus:

- ✓ *A targeted program of ensuring new business doors are opened quicker. Our small business entrepreneurs must be confident that every City department truly wants responsible businesses to open their doors as quickly and efficiently possible;*
- ✓ *A complete review of sign ordinances and how those impact the ability of small businesses to succeed;*
- ✓ *The creation of a "Small Business Advisory Board" to specifically address the unique issues facing small businesses. This Board will be tasked with working closely with the Economic Advisory Board, advising the City on how to foster, promote, and support small businesses, identifying issues unique to small businesses in our City, and encouraging a mentor program for successful businesses and new small businesses looking to grow;*
- ✓ *A central repository of information regarding available assistance for small business development;*
- ✓ *A joint effort with our entire Community to support local businesses through focused events and emphasis on their importance to the local community;*
- ✓ *Financial breaks where possible for local businesses, including those that hire local residents;*
- ✓ *A recognition program for businesses based on charity, longevity, and support of our City.*

Small businesses are the life blood of our neighborhoods and community. Small businesses and their owners deserve the best possible chance to achieve their vision of success and to participate in our collective economic growth.

*Mike Ryan*

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