

## **Business and Innovation Committee**

To: DLANC Executive Committee

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### **Mission Statement**

#### **Part 1 — Small Business Strength & Vacancy Activation**

The Business and Innovation Committee works to support Downtown Los Angeles' small business community by reducing storefront vacancies, improving commercial accessibility, and strengthening the resources available to neighborhood-serving merchants. We aim to activate empty retail spaces, streamline permitting, and foster a safer, more welcoming environment for independent operators and local entrepreneurs.

#### **Part 2 — Innovation, Creative Economy, & Industry Attraction**

The Committee also seeks to position Downtown Los Angeles as a premier home for cutting-edge companies in technology, film, music, entertainment, and design. By building an ecosystem that welcomes emerging industries and forward-thinking creative firms, we will encourage investment, workspace expansion, and long-term business relocation into the historic urban core.

### **Purpose**

Downtown Los Angeles is a multicultural epicenter home to business, entertainment, travel, and tourism. The rapidly evolving economic district is full of unique opportunities for growth, entrepreneurship, and community revitalization amidst the many unique challenges, especially when it comes to rising costs and a decrease in socioeconomic activity overall, that the area faces. Small businesses, startups, major chains and commercial stakeholders benefit when there is a direct channel of communication and partnership with the Neighborhood Council, the City Council, and state-level regulatory partners.

I envision the Business and Innovation Committee on DLANC to strengthen this alignment and support a more vibrant, informed, and innovative business environment in the DTLA area. This committee will focus on fostering economic development and provide data driven insights to guide community and policy conversations centered on local stakeholders' needs in business and innovation

## **Proposal**

The Business and Innovation Committee will be tasked with:

### **1. Monitoring and Measuring the Economic Development and Conditions of the City of Los Angeles**

- Track economic indicators such as local spending, foot traffic, commercial occupancy, retail trends, labor conditions, and crime statistics
- Conduct an Annual DTLA Business Conditions Survey that gathers input on revenue trends, challenges, hiring needs, and sentiment
- Analyze vacancy and tenant mix via community engagement and research of comparable cities
  - Track storefront vacancy by corridor (Broadway, Historic Core, Arts District, South Park)
  - Track tenant mix in tech, music production, post-production, and digital media offices.
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### **2. Being an Advocate for Small Businesses and Local Business-Friendly Policies**

- Represent the interests of small businesses, entrepreneurs, and emerging stakeholders/industries, in DLANC decision-making and city-wide advocacy.
- Review and comment, offering testimony or letters of support/opposition on City of Los Angeles policies affecting the business climate
- Monitor and Track orders of business in LA City Committees including but not limited to:
  - Ad Hoc Committee for LA Recovery
  - Budget and Finance Committee
  - Economic Development and Jobs Committee
  - Ad Hoc Committee for 2028 Olympic Games
  - Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee+3

### **3. Providing Resources for the DTLA Business Community to Collaborate with the City**

The Committee will help small businesses, creative operators, and emerging industry firms navigate City processes and commercial requirements.

- Facilitate direct communication between business owners, property managers, and City departments
- Host public workshops and informational sessions with EWDD small business teams, FilmLA, Office of Finance, City Planning, and CD 14
- Provide clear guidance on permitting timelines, business licensing, renewals, and inspection requirements
- Support access to City-backed grant and fee programs without reliance on non-City agencies
- Partner with DTLA BIDs and arts districts to ensure business owners have a single point of contact for navigation support

### **4. Storefront Activation and Vacancy Reduction**

- The Committee will focus on reducing long-term commercial vacancy and activating underused retail, studio, and cultural space in Downtown.
- Maintain a DTLA vacancy and corridor tracking effort
- Connect empty storefronts with small retail operators, pop-up users, rehearsal and post-production spaces, galleries, and creative studios
- Encourage short-term activation leases and flexible usage models (pop-ups, micro-leasing, shared creative space)
- Coordinate with property owners and City departments to streamline tenant onboarding and reduce delays in occupancy
- Support activation efforts led by Downtown BIDs and building stakeholders

### 5. Innovation, Creative Industry, and Technology Ecosystem Development

The Committee will help Downtown attract and retain key Los Angeles industries, including technology, film, music, entertainment, and digital media.

- Support workspace expansion for production, post-production, rehearsal, recording, digital media, and design firms
- Coordinate with FilmLA and City Planning to improve clarity around filming, event use, rehearsal space, and production-related permitting
- Facilitate introductions between landlords, creative firms, and emerging technology businesses seeking Downtown space
- Promote Downtown as a central location for creative and innovation-driven companies looking to establish an urban core presence
- Collaborate with DTLA BIDs, arts districts, and creative networks to strengthen Downtown's position within the city's broader innovation and entertainment economy

### 3. Providing Resources for the DTLA Business Community to Collaborate with the City

- Facilitate more accessible communication between businesses and local government
- Host public forums, workshops, and informational sessions in partnership with the City's Economic & Workforce Development Department (EWDD), Mayor's Office, and CD 14's Office.
- Provide guidance on small business loans, grants, and relief programs
- FilmLA (permitting + production integration)
- LA City Office of Finance (licensing clarity)
  
- EWDD small business teams
  
- DTLA BIDs & arts districts
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#### 4. Being a bridge to Business Resources and Stakeholders: Taxing Authorities/Regulatory Commissions

- Maintain active, consistent outreach with
  - Franchise Tax Board
  - California Secretary of State
  - City of Los Angeles Office of Finance
  - Los Angeles City Controller
  - LA County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
- Build Partnerships with
  - Local Credit Unions
  - CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions)
    - DTLA BIDs
  - Minority Owned Business Associations
  - DTLA Chamber of Commerce
- Provide clarity and direction to small businesses navigating licensing, filings, compliance requirements, and regulatory updates

#### 5. Focusing on Initiatives Related to Startups/New Business Incubation

- Partner with 15+ DTLA Headquartered Banks representing \$215 Billion in assets. Create loan guarantee programs for startups in new locations in DTLA area.
- Create DLANC Sponsored re-training initiatives and increased collaboration with California workforce Board for DTLA-specific programs and businesses.
- Facilitate community engagement that encourages new business creation
  - Advisory initiative led by local business leaders to encourage new business creation in DTLA area by reporting to the committee on first hand knowledge and needs in the area as well as providing recommendations based on their expertise and experience that can be taken to the DLANC Board and City Council.

#### Key Initiatives for Year one

- Development of Economic Reporting Program
  - Quarterly Economic Snapshots for DTLA
    - Using XYZ (what resources/data vendors can we look into that will provide up to date quarterly economic snapshots for DTLA?)
  - Annual Business Conditions Survey
    - Develop a survey
  - Foot traffic and spending trend monitoring in partnership with mobility and economic data vendors?
- Create a Small Business Resource Guide
  - Publish a DLANC-endorsed guide covering:
    - City, State, and Federal Resources
    - Licensing and permitting
    - Tax Requirements
    - How to start a business in Los Angeles
    - Regulatory contracts and deadlines
  - Make the guide widely available online

## **Data Driven Impact**

### **Recent businesses that have closed in DTLA**

- Tokyo Fried Chicken, despite critical acclaim and devoted fans, shut its doors on Aug 10
- La Cha Cha Cha, a Mexican rooftop lounge in the Arts District, said it is closing after protests and ICE raids led to a significant drop in customers
- The parent of Angel City Brewery, announced a sale and closure of its downtown taproom by 2026
- Orsa & Winston – Michelin-starred, closed permanently in 2024
- Bar Ama – Closed after a decade in business

A number of these businesses reported having to close due to rising costs, decrease in foot traffic post-Covid, and safety concerns.

### **Property Crime Data - LAPD COMPSTAT Central Area Profile**

After analyzing property crime data from the past three months (August 24-November 15), property crime in the Central Area decreased significantly, driven by reductions in burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft.

#### **Total Property crimes over the past three months:**

- 1,427 incidents
- Average per-28 day period: 476 incidents
- Trend: Downward - about a 23% decline from late August to mid-November

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Total Property Crime</b>	<b>Change</b>
Aug 24 – Sep 20	527	—
Sep 21 – Oct 18	492	-6.6%
Oct 19 – Nov 15	408	-17.1%

#### **Year-to-Date**

- 2025 YTD Property Crime: 5,554
- 2024 YTD Property Crime: 6,545
- YTD Decline: -15.1%

#### **What does this mean for Business in the DTLA neighborhood?**

The Central Area continues to trend downward year-over-year in overall property crime. Property crime is meaningfully down across all major categories. Burglary and general theft show notable reductions, indicating effective targeted policy & prevention. The district is trending safer than last year based on year-to-date numbers

## **Committee Structure**

The Business and Innovation Committee will be composed of:

- A Chair appointed by the DLANC Board
- DLANC stakeholders with professional or academic experience in business, economics, public policy, or community development
- At least one representative from a downtown small business or nonprofit
- Liaisons from key city and state departments

Meetings will occur monthly.

Presentation Draft link:

<https://gamma.app/docs/Business-and-Innovation-Committee-rm9c45b5p3mczdg?mode=doc>

Business Survey Draft Link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1n9KzluGk9544j4xxZ8uFt36-oWI3EcMaNyVBBCTsxic/edit>