



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:17-1581

Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 2/8/2017

In Control: Economic and Human Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Rene Dominguez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

Presentation and discussion on the Free Trade Alliance (FTA) goals, objectives and ongoing programs.

SUMMARY:

Jose E. Martinez, President and CEO of the Free Trade Alliance will present on history, evolution and current status of the Free Trade Alliance and current objectives and programs in the context of the overall SA Tomorrow and Forefront SA Strategic Plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The mission of the FTA is to accelerate the development of international business and trade by creating an environment that is conducive for local companies to explore international markets and for foreign companies to establish operations in San Antonio. FTA's programs and services are designed to increase awareness of and participation by their members and the business community in international business. Further FTA works to advocate on trade related laws and policies that affect the global competitiveness of our businesses.

The City of San Antonio Economic Development Department maintains an annual professional services agreement with FTA. Through this agreement, FTA is contracted to promote and support companies in the export of products and services by San Antonio companies as the coordinating organization of all export-related programs and services towards implementation of the 2015 San Antonio Trade and Investment Strategy and in congruence with the Forefront SA as administered and implemented by the San Antonio Economic

Development Foundation.

FTA's goals, deliverables, and metrics for FY2017 include:

Export Market Assistance

FTA is charged with building awareness of community incentives, services, and programs available for companies seeking to export to foreign markets. The Export Management Program is a key component that will enter its second year in 2017 and is sponsored by JP Morgan Chase. It is a one-year customized program designed to help local San Antonio companies begin or increase their exporting activity and prepares the company for two trade missions by FTA to Mexico and one other international market deemed the best fit for its product.

Mexico City Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

FTA supports in the development and implementation of activities based on the MOU signed with Mexico City in conjunction with community partners and as such will organize 4 'Grupo San Antonio' breakfasts in Mexico City to promote targeted industries in accordance with the San Antonio Trade & Investment Strategy and in collaboration with our Casa San Antonio foreign office program in Mexico.

Foreign Investors

FTA assists foreign companies with establishing a presence in San Antonio, Texas. Through the International Business Development Center, trade missions and relationships with business leaders, city, county, state and federal level partners, FTA provides support to assist businesses to establish and expand in San Antonio.

Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ #80)

FTA leads and supports the community's efforts to maximize the impact of the Foreign Trade Zone designation by identifying key industry prospects that are high-potential targets that would be likely to benefit from an FTZ designation.

Advocacy

FTA is charged as the authority on advocacy and research support on foreign trade policies critical to trade, investment and logistics issues of importance to the City. In connection with such efforts, FTA:

- engages at the national level, advocating trade policies and agreements which create the right environment for international business particularly for San Antonio and the South Texas region.
- assists members and clients to address specific trade or export related issues, including bureaucratic issues that may limit their ability to expand their products and services into the global marketplace.

ISSUE:

This is a briefing by Mr. Jose E. Martinez, President and CEO of the FTA on the state of the organization and its current goals, objectives and ongoing programs in relation to accomplishing the goals of SA Tomorrow and the SA Trade & Investment Strategy.

ALTERNATIVES:

None.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the City's Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is a presentation and no action is necessary.