



RECOGNITION OF ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA CITIES-ORANGE COUNTY (“ACC-OC”) GOLDEN HUB OF INNOVATION AWARD AND CONSIDERATION OF EIGHTH FUNDING PHASE FOR THE CITY’S SHOP & DINE COMMUNITY GIFT CARD PROGRAM WITH YIFTEE, INC.

BACKGROUND



- The Strategic Economic Investment Program (“SEIP”) established a budget for economic development programs to help local businesses recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On October 4, 2022, the City formally authorized the City’s Community Gift Card Program (“CGCP”).
- Pursuant to the CGCP, residents and visitors can buy gift cards in increments of \$50 or \$100.
 - The gift cards are delivered electronically and can be used at any of the participating Lake Forest businesses.
- To date, there have been seven Phases of the CGCP.

DISCUSSION



CGCP Program Status Report as of May 20, 2024

Category	Total
# of Enrolled Merchants	117
# of Cards Purchased (including BOGO)	77,665
Value of Purchased Cards & BOGO Cards	\$7,438,520
SEIP Funds Expended	\$3,798,450

DISCUSSION



- ACC-OC Golden Hub of Innovation Awards 2024
 - Recognize and honor innovative programs, policies, and initiatives implemented by local governments and public agencies within OC.
 - Highlight successful, forward-thinking projects that improve the quality of life for residents, enhance government operations, and serve as models of excellence for other communities.

DISCUSSION



- Staff submitted a nomination form in the Collaborative Community Development & Innovation category for the City's SEIP.
- This category recognizes initiatives that demonstrate outstanding collaboration between different stakeholders and have led to innovative solutions addressing community needs, enhancing public services, or improving the quality of life for residents.



ACC-OC GOLDEN HUB OF INNOVATION 2024

Category: Collaborative Community Development & Innovation

City of Lake Forest's Strategic Economic Investment Program:

Buy-One-Get-One Shop and Dine Community Gift Card Program

Catalytic Converter Theft Deterrent Mitigation Program

DISCUSSION



• City of Lake Forest Nomination Form – Community Gift Card Program

 **2024 Golden Hub of Innovation Award | City of Lake Forest Strategic Economic Investment Program** 

BACKGROUND

The City of Lake Forest ("City"), along with every other community, felt the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City implemented several services and resources, including its Strategic Economic Investment Program ("SEIP"), to help those affected by the pandemic recover.

On February 15, 2022, the Lake Forest City Council approved the SEIP. The SEIP assigns **\$8,303,350 in economic support funds** to three business types: restaurants, hotels, and other impacted industries. The City Council's intent in approving the SEIP is to help local businesses offset the economic damage caused by COVID-19, better prepare businesses to weather future pandemics, and encourage business activity in sectors that experienced significant economic adversity.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Over several months, the City worked to develop programs that provide economic support to businesses in each of the three categories. On June 21, 2022, the City Council approved a contract with a consultant to help the City develop programs that match the genuine needs of Lake Forest businesses and promote progress toward the goals of SEIP.

The consultant and City staff surveyed 10 cities throughout California to see what initiatives they implemented to increase economic development through residents' participation. Research showed that seven of the 10 cities rolled out a program that paid residents to shop locally. Participants were able to purchase a gift card from the city and receive a second one of the same value to use at local businesses in the community. Each city saw an average 5-18 percent increase in sales during the duration of the program. In addition, within the last few years, thefts of catalytic converters have gone up dramatically. City staff and the consultant researched ways to help reduce these incidents.

After the completion of a thorough outreach process to the business community, City staff and the consultant proposed economic support programs to the City Council. The City Council approved two programs: the Shop and Dine Community Gift Card Program ("BOGO"), and the Catalytic Converter Theft Prevention Program. These programs continue to operate, offering economic benefits to businesses, residents, and Lake Forest visitors.

COMMUNITY GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Designed to support local businesses and bolster the local economy, the BOGO program offers residents and community members the opportunity to purchase community gift cards redeemable exclusively at participating Lake Forest-based businesses.

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Gift cards are available in \$50 and \$100 denominations, with a unique "buy one, get one" (BOGO) offer in which a purchaser will receive a matching card of equal value, effectively doubling their purchasing power and encouraging local spending.

The City invites local businesses to sign up to participate. Certain businesses, such as restaurants and hospitality-based businesses, automatically qualify to participate in the program. Other businesses, such as storefront retail, personal care services, automotive, etc., can participate but must attest to having experienced a negative economic impact from COVID-19. If a business can accept Mastercard credit card payments over the phone, it can accept the community gift card.

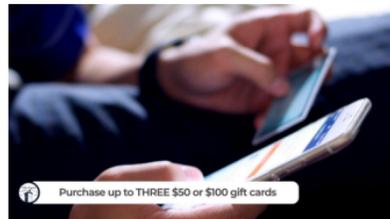
With approximately **\$4 million** in funding approved by the Lake Forest City Council, spread across seven phases, the program aims to revitalize the local economy, stimulate growth, and enhance community well-being.

For further details and a comprehensive list of participating businesses, please refer to the official Lake Forest Community Gift Card Program webpage at www.lakeforestca.gov/giftcard

CAMPAIGN



Click here for [BOGO COMMERCIAL](#)



Click here for [PSA VIDEO](#)

 **2024 Golden Hub of Innovation Award | City of Lake Forest Strategic Economic Investment Program** 

RESULTS



DISCUSSION



• City of Lake Forest Nomination Form – Catalytic Theft Mitigation Program

CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFT MITIGATION PROGRAM

To prevent catalytic converter theft, a growing problem nationwide, the City of Lake Forest has instituted a series of prevention programs. These include the Catalytic Converter Painting & Etching (P&E) Program and the Catalytic Converter Shield Program, both of which provide funds to support catalytic converter theft mitigation.

The program was based on the success of an event in 2021 where 50 Lake Forest residents were able to get their vehicle identification numbers ("VIN") etched on their catalytic converter for free. The CAT Program included this service and offered residents a \$250 gift card to offset the cost of having a shield installed on their catalytic converter.

Painting & Etching Program

Under the P&E Program, residents and local businesses with fleet vehicles can apply to have their **catalytic converters painted and etched for free**. Painting and etching catalytic converters can help deter thieves and assist law enforcement in prosecuting criminals who steal the valuable parts.



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Strategic Economic Investment Program



Painting and etching services are provided by Lake Forest businesses that have signed up to participate in the program. Residents that have vehicles on the City's List of Frequently Targeted Vehicles for Catalytic Converter Theft, or a vehicle with a catalytic converter that is accessible by thieves via the vehicle undercarriage, are eligible to participate. Not all vehicles have catalytic converters that are exposed from the undercarriage. Vehicles must be registered to a Lake Forest address via DMV registration to participate. Once approved for the program, residents may use their approved application to schedule an appointment at any one of the participating businesses to have the painting and etching service performed.

Shield Program

Under the Shield Program, residents can apply to receive a **\$250 gift card** toward the purchase and installation of a catalytic converter theft deterrent shield by a participating business. This helps residents offset the costs of purchasing and installing the device on their vehicle. Only vehicles registered to a Lake Forest address via DMV registration are eligible to participate. Once approved, residents receive an approved application form and an electronic gift card via email. Next, residents are advised to schedule an installation date with a participating business. The gift card can be used toward the full cost of the installation. The gift card will only work at a participating business for the purpose of installing a catalytic converter shield. A program webpage can be found at the following link: www.lakeforestca.gov/en/CatGrant.

CAMPAIGN

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Mayor's Minute - Catalytic Converter Theft Deterrent Programs

Click here for
[PSA VIDEO](#)



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Strategic Economic Investment Program



RESULTS

Catalytic converter thefts **decreased** after the launch of the campaign. On average, seven smog devices were stolen a month in Lake Forest, the most recent report showed a decrease to only four being stolen monthly.

01 Painting & Etching

274 Applications approved

02 Shield Program

165 Gift Cards issued

DISCUSSION



- City of Lake Forest wins Award in the Collaborative Community Development & Innovation Category for SEIP
 - Community Gift Card Program
 - Catalytic Converter Theft Mitigation Program



THANK YOU

City of Lake Forest

ACC-OC Golden Hub of Innovation Award 2024

Strategic Economic Investment Program

Buy-One-Get-One Shop and Dine Community Gift Card Program

Catalytic Converter Theft Mitigation Program

DISCUSSION



DISCUSSION





RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Receive and file the presentation for Recognition of the Association of California Cities – Orange County Hub of Innovation Award.
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into the attached BOGO Campaign Quickstart Agreement with Yiftee, Inc. and solely include the \$50 and \$100 gift card options in the Shop & Dine Community Gift Card Program.
3. Adopt a Resolution Entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE FOREST, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING THE 2023-2025 OPERATING BUDGET; AMENDING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-24.