



# Board Agenda Item 9

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DATE: January 31, 2017

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director  
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Economic Development Workshop

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

**Conduct workshop regarding economic development activities and efforts in Fresno County and provide direction as necessary.**

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

None. This is an informational item only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of this item is yet to be determined and will depend on direction from the Board.

DISCUSSION:

The foundation of the County's Economic Development Program is the Economic Development Element of the General Plan and the Fresno County Economic Development Strategy approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2000. The Economic Development Element and Strategy are based on the County's long standing land use policies of directing most new urban development to incorporated cities and existing unincorporated communities. The County's General Plan assumes over 93 percent of new population growth and new job growth will occur within incorporated city spheres of influence and seven percent would occur in unincorporated areas.

Other sub-regional Economic Development Documents adopted by the Board include the West Side Economic Development Action Plan, the Community Vision for the Golden State Corridor and the Fresno County Regional Enterprise Zone Program.

The County's Economic Development Strategy established by the Board, outlines the vision, goals, objectives, policies and strategic initiatives for:

- Achieving the objectives of creating jobs,
- Diversifying the County's economy and
- Improving the skills of the labor force.

The strategy presents a vision of economic advancement for the County, its residents and its businesses that will accomplish the following:

- By the year 2020 Fresno County will take its place in the Central Valley and California as a center for a wide variety of high value-added firms in a dynamic and growing globally oriented state economy.
- The growth of basic jobs in the food and fiber industry along with those jobs in emerging industrial clusters will provide all Fresno County residents with employment opportunities in interesting fields with career potential. These jobs will be above average for current wages and bring average incomes in the Fresno Labor Market area in line with other regions of the state.
- Tourism will also provide jobs related to the area's abundant scenic, recreation and entertainment opportunities.

The implementation of the County's Economic Development Element and Strategy has occurred in various ways, approaches and actions, over the years. Highlights of these activities include the following:

- Establishment of Fresno County Regional Enterprise Zone;
- Adopted High Value-Added Ordinance to facilitate the expansion and development of value added firms in unincorporated areas of Fresno County;
- Contributed \$1.2 million to the Economic Development Corporation serving Fresno County to market Fresno County and fund business expansion, retention and attraction programs;
- Partnered with the City of Fresno to facilitate relocation and expansion of the Lidestri Foods Processing Facility;
- Included a new provision in MOUs with cities that streamline the annexation of land for regional commercial and industrial purposes;
- Joined the cities of Orange Cove and Parlier in obtaining federal Community Renewal designation to provide important tax to businesses located in those cities;
- Supported County services to the business community through the County Administrative Office, and the departments of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension, Public Works and Planning, Assessor, Employment and Temporary Assistance, Library and others;
- Developed economic development partnership between Self-Help Enterprises, the Economic Opportunities Commission and the Westside Housing and Economic Network to implement federal grant to provide construction workforce training at new housing development in Biola;
- Adopted Fresno County Tourism Master Plan and created Fresno County Tourism Committee along with the Fresno County Office of Tourism and Film Commission;
- Implemented the business facade improvement program;
- Establishment of the Business and Economic Development Taskforce;
- Contracted with Fresno Economic Development Corporation to provide many of the services associated with business attraction, expansion and retention;
- Approved a Public Campaign - Fresno County as Business Friendly;
- Support use of Fresno County's "RED Team" and make available and educate all users and developers about the benefits.
- Implemented the Rapid Response Land Use Processing Program;
- Commissioned a study to identify lands for possible development of business and industrial park.

The purpose of the economic development workshop is to receive any direction the Board may have and to reaffirm the Board's position on economic development in Fresno County.

CAO ANALYST:

John Hays