

Monterey County has elected to include an Economic Development Element as part of the General Plan. County leaders believe that economic prosperity is essential for assuring that residents will have jobs and income that will enable them to enjoy a good quality of life and that jurisdiction will have revenue to provide essential services for their residents. Monterey County's economy is based upon its two most important and unique natural resources: (1) the fertile Salinas River Valley, and (2) the Monterey Bay and Pacific coastline. Approximately 33% of the region's population works in the agriculture industry and about 13% in tourism or the hospitality industry. Unfortunately, these industries tend to provide a higher proportion of lower paying jobs than other industries. This condition combined with a relatively high cost of living in Monterey County creates a growing disparity between income and cost-of-living.

Goals and policies in this Economic Development Element are designed to promote economic development in key industries to create jobs and business opportunities, maintain the existing workforce, and improve the business climate in Monterey County. Prepared with the assistance of the County's Overall Economic Development Commission (OEDC), these goals and policies stress the need for a coordinated approach to economic development based upon mutually supportive arrangements among the County, cities, and other public agencies and private enterprise.

GOALS AND POLICIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL ED-1

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN MONTEREY COUNTY

Policies

- ED-1.1 Work with the cities to create a wider diversity of employment opportunities.
- ED-1.2 Work with public and private entities to promote sustainable economic growth.
- ED-1.3 The growth of key industries and targeted clusters that result in the creation of career ladder jobs to increase the County's average wage level shall be supported. Linkage among identified clusters shall be encouraged.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL ED-2

DEVELOP PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AMONG CONSTITUENTS, COUNTY, CITY, BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS AND KEY INDUSTRIES TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH WITHIN EACH OF THE KEY INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

Policies

- ED-2.1 A comprehensive public/private economic development strategy and program that will enhance the competitiveness of Monterey County's key industry clusters shall be designed and implemented.
- ED-2.2 The progress and evolution of all of the County's industry clusters shall be tracked, reassessed, and revised annually to the extent feasible.
- ED-2.3 Work with the cities to place commercial and industrial development in the most appropriate locations.

MAINTAIN WORKFORCE

GOAL ED-3

CREATE AND MAINTAIN AN ADAPTIVE/SKILLED WORKFORCE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EXISTING AND FUTURE BUSINESSES

Policies

- ED-3.1 Provide incentives for employers to educate and train their workforce.
- ED-3.2 The Overall Economic Development Commission (OEDC) and the Workforce Investment Board should work together to develop and implement coordinated programs that meet the employment training needs of businesses.
- ED-3.3 The activities of the Overall Economic Development Commission (OEDC) and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) should be linked to ensure a seamless delivery of needed services.
- ED-3.4 The Overall Economic Development Commission (OEDC) shall work with the regions higher-level educational institutions, universities and research facilities to encourage the creation of highly skilled jobs in the County.

IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

GOAL ED-4

IMPROVE THE BUSINESS CLIMATE TO RETAIN AND EXPAND EXISTING BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES, RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES AND SUPPORT EMERGING INDUSTRIES

Policies

- ED 4.1 A permit assistance process for projects that support the key industry clusters shall be developed and implemented.
- ED-4.2 A mechanism to maintain and update the inventory of vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial land within the cities and unincorporated areas of the County shall be developed.
- ED-4.3 Incentives shall be provided for businesses that locate or expand in the major employment centers as deemed appropriate by the Board of Supervisors.
- ED-4.4 Work with the stakeholders of the key industry clusters to prioritize industry needs and to obtain support for the development of funding initiatives and potential solutions that support the industry clusters.

- ED-4.5 Incentives for value-added industries to locate within Monterey County shall be provided as deemed appropriate by the Board of Supervisors.
- ED-4.6 Continued growth and development of aquaculture as an economic, research, and educational activity in the coastal zone, consistent with overall conservation policies shall be encouraged.
- ED-4.7 Oceanographic research in Monterey County shall be encouraged.