"When I heard how the Opportunity Stanislaus new five-year plan's main objective is to support local companies, especially small entrepreneurial companies, I thought to myself, this is it! This is exactly what we need to do to prosper going forward!"

— Hemanta Agarwala, President, P.E.; Alpha, Inc.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Mission

Expand the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in Stanislaus County by building upon our strong tradition of home grown world class companies and industries. In partnership with higher education, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and industry and the start-up community of existing entrepreneurs and mentors, promote a greater sense of entrepreneurship.

Objective #1 – Downtown Innovation Centers

- Lead the effort to establish and maintain unique and distinct Innovation Centers in at least four different communities within our County
- Recruit local entrepreneurs to participate both in the development of these Innovation Centers and serve as mentors on an on-going basis
- Recruit regional institutions of higher learning to participate in the Innovation Centers

Objective #2 – Stanislaus Innovation Challenge

- Hold four local competitions annually rotating among the nine cities with the fifth and final "money" round in Modesto
- Add two special "Fast Pitch" events annually at local colleges/universities
- Host/partner "meet-ups", mini hack-a-thons and other "tech-type" events to raise awareness of innovation happening in the County
- Expand innovation support efforts to other industries or business sectors like health care, environmental/"green", hospitality/tourism and Ag-Tech

Objective #3 – Local Food and Beverage Program

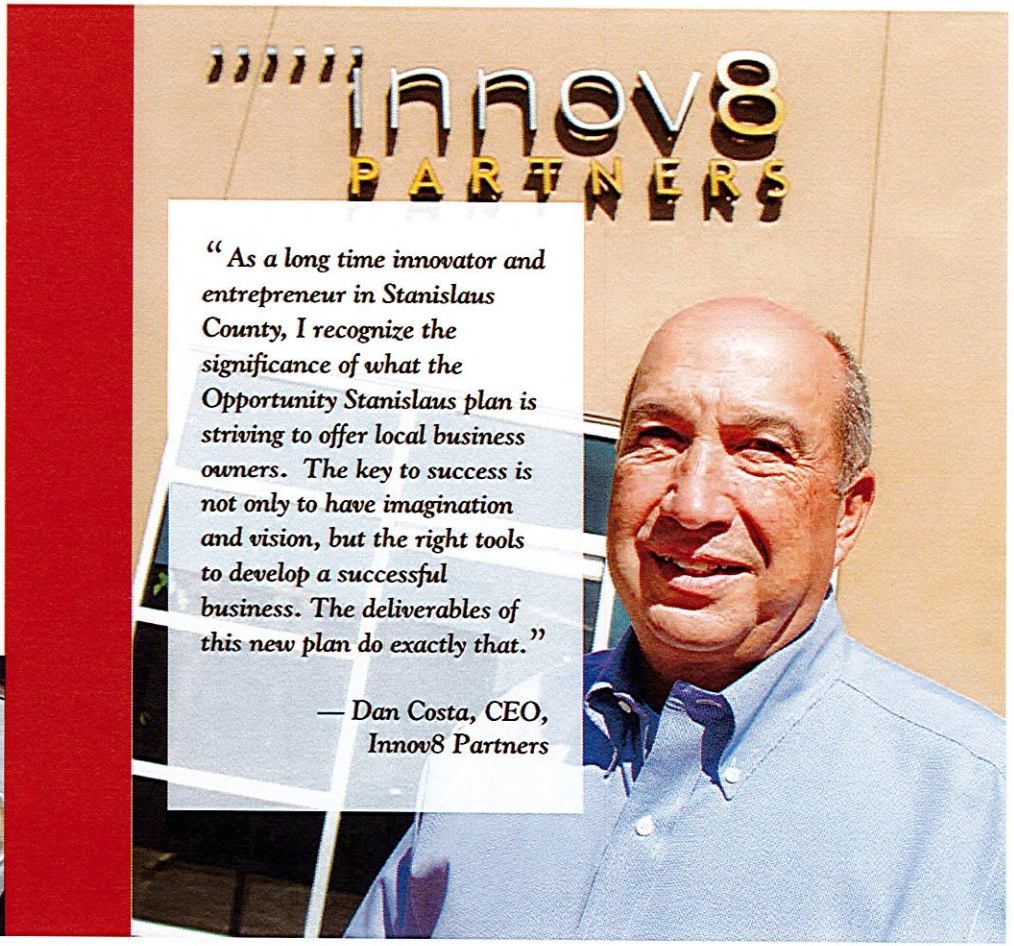
- Develop local food and beverage initiatives that will increase the number of related startup enterprises in the county
- Explore best practices around the nation to help local food and beverage enterprises open up new markets for sales growth
- Support "value-added" home-crafted beverages and food businesses tied directly to our local producers such as artisan cheese, specialty dairy, branding of processed fruits and nuts, new innovative food products, organic/exotic vegetable markets and others

Expected Outcomes

- Open an Innovation Center in Turlock in 2016 and Patterson in 2017
- Create 40 new companies through clients served in Innovation Centers by 2020
- Attract colleges/universities to open extension offices as partners/collaborators in at least two of the four Innovation Centers by 2018 and all four by 2020
- In 2016, expand the Stanislaus Innovation Challenge to a total of seven pitch competitions of which two will be "Fast Pitch" events in collaboration with CSU Stanislaus and/or MJC
- Through Innovation/Entrepreneurship programs assist at least 1,000 clients leading to the creation of 125 new businesses, 500 new jobs and $12 million in revenue growth in Stanislaus County by 2020
- Develop a local food program roadmap by 2017 that lays out a plan for business startup and growth opportunities in artisan food production
- Facilitate the opening of a commercial kitchen or food collaborative working space by 2018 as a place for entrepreneurs to gather, develop and/or produce new local food products
- Facilitate the creation of 15 new food startups through the local food program by 2020

Key Indicators

- **125 new businesses creating 500 new jobs**
- **Recognition by The California Economic Development Association (CALED) as an entrepreneurial hot spot**



"As a long time innovator and entrepreneur in Stanislaus County, I recognize the significance of what the Opportunity Stanislaus plan is striving to offer local business owners. The key to success is not only to have imagination and vision, but the right tools to develop a successful business. The deliverables of this new plan do exactly that."

— Dan Costa, CEO, Innov8 Partners

Positioned to Succeed

The next five years will be instrumental in continuing to build economic development for the future of the county, its nine cities, and local and prospective businesses. We will step up our efforts in our role of "One Stop" for economic development, workforce needs and innovation.

In the past two years we have gained experience and begun to build our list of accomplishments. Our communities are generating a lot of energy and enthusiasm. There is no question that the region is moving in the right direction. The unemployment rate has not been this low since 2007. We are seeing increased numbers of inquiries from companies about doing business in the county. The economic development process in Stanislaus County is at a pivotal point and is now positioned to compete in a more aggressive mode than ever before.

In the past two years we have played a vital role in these community accomplishments:

Economic Development

- 42 Current active prospects in the pipeline
- 9 Companies who relocated or made capital expansions in Stanislaus County
- 2,842 New, expansion and retained jobs
  New, expansion and retained workforce created 2,842 jobs with a payroll of $192,910,602 leading to 800 indirect jobs and 1,001 induced jobs providing an additional payroll of $77,949,736
- 30 Hosted site selectors and real estate brokers
- 3,086 Employer job assessments
- 356 Local business interviews have been conducted for input and needs assessment

Workforce Development

- 34 Specialized training: Heavy Equipment Operator; Solar Panel Installer; Multi Craft Pre-Apprenticeship
- 226 Customers received traditional vocational training
- 4,421 WorkKeys job seeker skills assessments
- 2,090 Enrolled clients served through Worknet
- 61,891 Number of clients served through Worknet Career Resource Centers
- 9,910 Total number of Job Prep workshop attendees served
- 419 Careers in Manufacturing (CIM) participants served
- 198 Staff assisted employer job recruitments resulted in 747 jobs filled and 153 new positions

Innovation

- 26 Small business start-ups
- 629 Small Business Development Center clients counseled
- 1,736 Jobs created
- 118 Jobs retained
- 116 Trainings with 1,330 attendees
- Launched the first Stanislaus Innovation Challenge
- Opened the first Technology Incubator in Downtown Modesto and a second one in Oakdale

Messaging

- Launched a new messaging campaign "Start Here, Grow Here, and Live Here"
- Published a new 16-page brochure about the Alliance (Start Here)
- Produced a 20-page regional marketing piece highlighting Stanislaus County area (Grow Here)
- Launched the 1st external newsletter emphasizing positive business news within the region
- Published an industry report featuring 193 local companies
- Hosted the 1st Annual Celebrate Stanislaus to thank our local employers for creating jobs and driving the economy

Message from the Opportunity Stanislaus Campaign Council

Over the past two years, business and public sector leaders working throughout the county have begun developing a wide array of key community initiatives and laid the foundation for our scope of work going forward.

The last several months have been particularly exciting and challenging for our leadership. Seventy three one-on-one, in person interviews have been conducted with community and business leaders plus 300 meetings with local employers to assess how our Stanislaus County region can continue to grow appropriately and prosperously. We received outstanding input from those interviews, and we have used that information to develop a five-year comprehensive, performance-based strategy that contains clear and measurable goals.

We are unified as your leadership in encouraging you to invest in the economic future and quality of life in all our communities. Embracing this *Opportunity Stanislaus -- Our Future is Now* plan will fuel our initiatives to help ensure our success in improving the quality of life for all our citizens in every community.

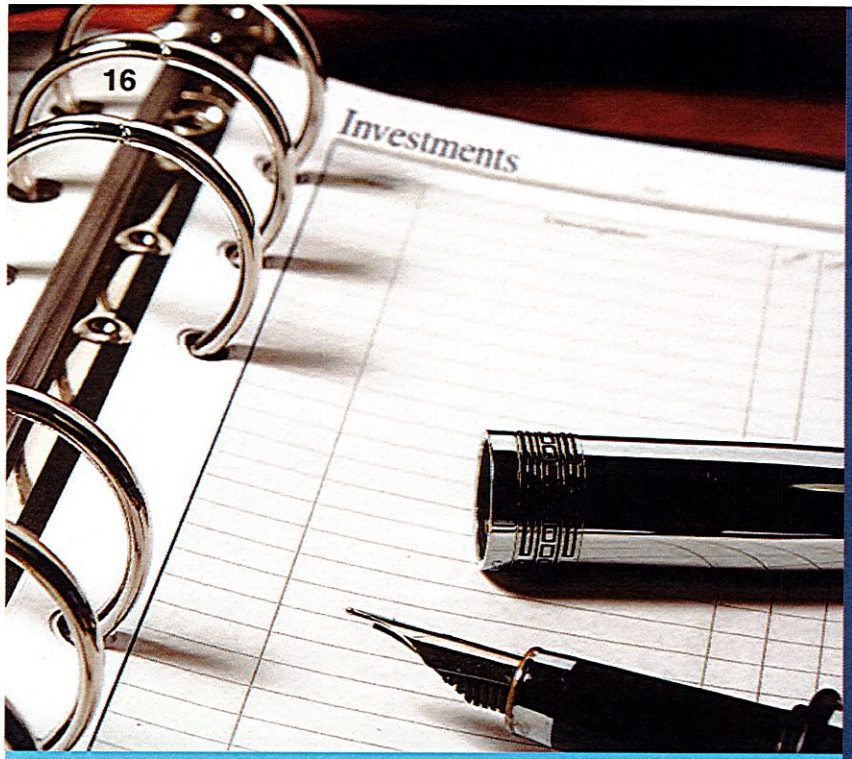
CAMPAIGN COUNCIL:
(L to R):
David White, *Stanislaus Business Alliance*

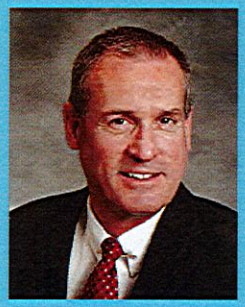
Paul Van Konynenburg, *Britton Konynenburg Partners*

Ron Jackson, *Beard Land and Investment Co.*

Jeff Foster, *Foster Farms*

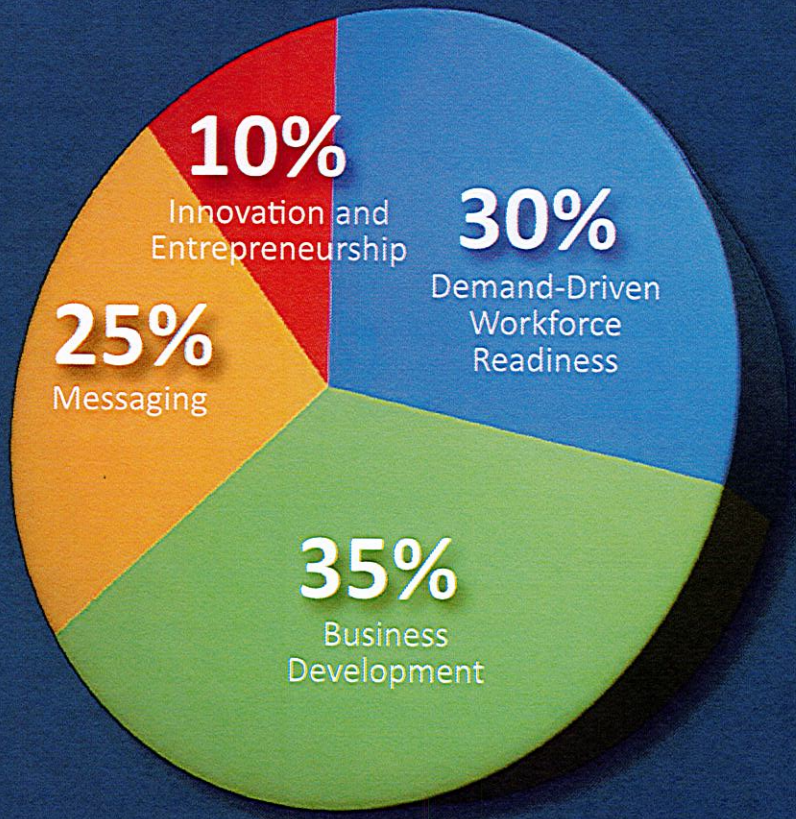
Doug Johnson, *Stanislaus Surgical Hospital*





" I am very happy that the Opportunity Stanislaus plan is looking to the private sector to partner with the public sector to drive economic development. This plan is the way for businesses to join with government to invest in initiatives that will improve our quality of life throughout Stanislaus County. "

Terry Withrow
Chairman, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

Campaign

How Your Investments Are Spent