5 IMPLEMENTING THE ECONOMIC VITALITY STRATEGY

ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In order for Mariposa County to successfully implement the Economic Vitality Strategy and Action Plan, **the county must adopt an organizational structure and develop the capacity** needed to undertake the program.

Goal: Maintain an environment that is conducive to economic development.

Objective: Realize sufficient revenue from expansion and diversification of the county's economic base to sustain and enhance the public services and infrastructure needed by local residential, commercial and industrial activities and social services.

ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS

Establish an Organizational Structure

- Establish an **Economic Development Advisory Committee** to serve as an advisory board to the Board of Supervisors, comprised of two members from the Board of Supervisors, plus one representative from each of the following organizations: Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center, Tourism Bureau, Business Association, Economic Development Corporation, and a representative from each of the Planning Area Advisory Committees.
- Set-up economic development as a separate department that reports to the County Administrator.
- Establish a **Business Development Team** consisting of key members from Economic Development, Planning, and Public Works.

Build Internal Capacity

- Expand **Economic Development Staff** to oversee economic development activities and implementation of the Economic Vitality Strategy. Staff should include 2-3 full-time equivalent staff (including a manager, marketing specialist/economic development analyst, and an assistant).
- Develop and implement an **Annual Work Program** for economic development to identify the scope of activities and set priorities and budget for the year.
- Consider hiring **Student Interns** from the high school and/or submit an application to AmeriCorps for economic and community development assistance (www.americorps.org).

Expand Budget/Funding Sources

- Increase the **Annual Operating Budget** for economic development to approximately $250,000 - $300,000. As necessary, gradually increase the budget to effectively implement annual work programs.

- Investigate state, federal, and charitable **Economic Development Grants**, including USDA Rural Business Development and Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (see http://reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities).
- Establish a low cost annual **Business License Fee** for the purpose of tracking business statistics and funding economic development services.
- Conduct an annual assessment of **Transient Occupancy Tax** revenues to monitor monthly and annual trends regarding room nights from the different types of accommodations (motels, BnBs, vacation rentals) and locations.

Develop Collaborative Networks

- Collaborate with **Local and Regional Stakeholders** on common infrastructure needs, marketing, and economic development efforts to promote the community's mutual interests.
- Continue to **Building Partnerships** with local business groups, regional economic development organizations, workforce training providers, and industry groups.

BRAND IDENTITY AND PLACE MARKETING

Increase External Visibility and Awareness

- Prepare and implement a **Strategic Marketing Plan** to promote Mariposa County as a business friendly location for target industries. Promote on county website.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Develop and Utilize Tools

- Monitor and **Measure Progress** on accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth in the Economic Vitality Strategy.
- Continually evaluate and improve upon the current **Economic Development Website** so that it always provides the most current and useful information for businesses and links to technical assistance resources.
- **Utilize Databases** like California EDD labor market information or commercial sites such as Emsi to monitor economic and labor market trends.
- Create **Website Dashboards** of local economic indicators using free software applications like Tableau Public.
- Obtain and use **GIS Applications** like Zoom Prospector to offer up-to-date information on the economic development website about demographics, workforce, infrastructure, housing, commercial/industrial development sites for lease or sale, employment, and the number and type of businesses and industry.

KEY PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

The success of the Economic Vitality Strategy (EVS) will require committed county leadership and active community partners to implement specific actions that are coordinated by the county's Economic Development Department, working in conjunction with the Board of Supervisors and other county agencies. Active participation by community partners will be vital to the success of the EVS. An initial list of community partners for implementing the EVS includes the following organizations:

- Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau
- Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
- Mariposa County Economic Development Corporation
- John C. Fremont Hospital District
- Mariposa County High School District
- Mother Lode Workforce Development Board
- Mariposa County Business Association
- Mariposa County Arts Council
- Mariposa Public Utility District
- SierraTel
- Mariposa County Board of REALTORS®
- YARTS

6 MONITORING SUCCESS

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are a number of indicators that can be used to measure the county's progress in achieving its economic development goals. Tracking these indicators on an annual or quarterly basis will provide insight into the health of the local economy and assist in monitoring the county's progress in accomplishing its economic development goals and objectives. The following economic indicators can be used as a yardstick for evaluating progress in improving the overall prosperity of the county:

Economic Indicators Report – a baseline Economic Indicators Report was prepared prior to updating the EVS. This should be updated annually to monitor changes and trends in the local economy. The economic indicators report should include:

- **Employment by industry and sector**. This information can be obtained from the California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information (see www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/county/marip.html).
- **Tourism spending and revenue** including visitor spending by sales category, revenue generated and the amount of Transient Occupancy Tax collected. This information can be obtained from Dean Runyon Associates (see www.deanrunyan.com/doc_library/CAImp.pdf).
- **Commercial office, retail, and industrial space availability & cost**. The Building Department can provide information about building permits. Office, retail and industrial vacancy and lease rates can be obtained from local commercial and industrial real estate brokers (see www.loopnet.com/California/Mariposa-County-Commercial-Real-Estate/).
- **Retail sales and growth data** by retail category and sales per outlet. This information can be obtained from the California Retail Survey, which publishes an annual report (see http://californiaretailsurvey.netfirms.com/). Sales tax revenue data can be obtained from the California Board of Equalization (see www.boe.ca.gov/news/tsalescont15.htm).

Implementation Status & Outcomes Report – actions and expected outcomes were identified in the Economic Vitality Strategy. These should be monitored on an annual, quarterly, or monthly basis as to their status and success in accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth in the EVS. Strategic plan indicators include:

- **Business Outreach.** Number of businesses visited and assisted (BRE Program).
- **New Business Formations and Attraction**. Number of new businesses formed or relocating to Mariposa County. The county business license office can provide this information including the number of fictitious business name certificates filed and associated revenue as an indicator of new businesses formed or new businesses moving into the county.
- **Business Vitality and Growth.** Number of full and part-time jobs gained/lost due to business expansion, contraction, closure, and retention. This information can be obtained from the California Employment Development Department, Mother Lode Workforce Development Board, WARN Notices, and business visitation program.
- **Business Licenses and Revenue**. The county business license office can provide this information to the Economic Development Manager.

Economic Vitality Report Card - An annual business survey would provide feedback on how county operations and other factors are affecting the business climate.

RE-EVALUATING PRIORITIES OVER TIME

Using the indicators listed above, the county should evaluate progress in completing actions on an annual basis. The annual report provides a mechanism for county staff to recommend, if necessary, modifications to the Economic Vitality Strategy to improve its effectiveness. Over the next five years, economic conditions will change and new opportunities may arise. While the overall objectives of the Economic Vitality Strategy may not change over the next five years, the county should reassess its priorities in light of changing conditions and opportunities.