



County of Calaveras Planning Department

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Date: December 8, 2011
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Rebecca Willis, Planning Director
Subject: General Plan Study Session on Economic Development Element

The staff report for the General Plan study session on the Economic Development Element did not include a draft of the Element. Staff was concerned the draft still needed work. There are policies that rely on County staff, resources, and funding that are not feasible. Some policies may be more appropriate for the private sector to implement instead of the government, which is a sensitive subject in the County.

Staff had a conversation with Trish Kelly from Applied Development Economics (ADE), the subconsultant that worked with the Economic Development Workgroup on drafting the Element. Ms. Kelly confirmed the workgroup had many meetings, discussions, and provided direction to ADE, but never saw a work product. This did not seem fair to the participants. Although the draft Element still needs work, staff felt it is important to release a document so that the participants could see the work in progress and engage in a meaningful discussion.

Staff recommends the draft element be reorganized into a document, separate from the General Plan Update, that could be used as a framework for economic development efforts by the Central Sierra Economic Development District JPA or other business or non-profit organizations that can pursue opportunities. Ms. Kelly indicated if the "County shall" language is problematic, there are other ways to articulate the goals. She offered to help finalize the document (pro bono) to help see this effort to a positive conclusion.

Attached is a Draft Economic Development Element for discussion and direction.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Introduction

This element provides guidance for how Calaveras County can achieve its vision for economic development and economic sustainability. This element includes goals and policies under the following headings:

- Agriculture and Resource Development
- Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion
- Tourism
- Retail and Professional Services
- Economic Development Planning and Revitalization

Economic sustainability recognizes the need for economic prosperity and resilience to maintain the health of the county for current and future generations. It encourages self-reliance, entrepreneurial activity, and the generation of wealth in a manner that does not degrade or burden future generations' ability to meet social, economic, and environmental needs. In Calaveras County this means building on the base of all existing economic sectors, diversifying the economy, nurturing local entrepreneurs, improving infrastructure and community facilities, and encouraging green business and new emerging technologies that leverage and enhance the natural assets of the county. For example, efforts are underway to create a new forest economy that goes beyond simple resource extraction to focus on value-added processing to create products, renewable energy sources and better watershed management and recreational values. Thus, economic diversification is intricately connected to the traditional economic drivers in the County.

Agriculture, Forestry, and Resource Development

Historically, Calaveras County has been a rich source of timber, minerals, and agricultural products. These resources and industries provide multiple economic, environmental, and community benefits. Wineries, for example, not only enhance the local economy with value-added products, but they also contribute to the county's tourism and visitor service sector and enhance the scenic value of the rural landscape. A host of natural resource product companies and other agriculture and timber industries are beginning to incorporate and support environmental sustainability in response to changing consumer demands. These sectors are faced with changing global markets, environmental demands, and changing demographics, such as the aging of existing farm and ranchland owners, which pose a challenge to maintaining these lands and operations into the future. With proper positioning these industries can continue to be important components of the county's economic base. *(Note: please see the Natural Resources Element for additional goals and policies related to agriculture, forestry, and mineral resource extraction; the Water Element for additional goals and policies related to water availability, use, and conservation; and the Land Use Element for additional goals and policies related to agricultural protection and uses).*

Goal ED-1

To strengthen and expand agriculture, forestry, and other resource-dependent industries for long term economic and environmental sustainability.

Policies

ED-1.1 New Forest Economy

~~The County shall~~ support expansion of a new forest economy which includes the businesses and initiatives that capitalize on value-added forest products and forest ecosystem services to expand job opportunities and support local economic development.

ED-1.2 Diversified Agricultural Operations

~~The County shall~~ support existing agricultural operations and encourage the industry to diversify with organic, value-added, small-scale, or community supported agricultural operations in the county.

ED-1.3 Agricultural Services

~~The County shall~~ encourage businesses that provide agricultural services (e.g., trucking, warehousing, distribution) to maintain economically viable commercial agriculture.

ED-1.4 Resource Economies

~~The County shall~~ encourage natural resource-based businesses that foster energy efficiency and independence, forest health, and fire safety, working with community and business groups to establish programs to engage with carbon credit markets and other emerging components of the carbon economy.

ED-1.5 Agriculture, Forestry, and Resource Workforce

~~The County shall~~ work with the Mother Lode Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and educational institutions to ensure that local workforce skills meet the technical needs of changing agricultural, forestry, and other resource management industries.

Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion

Through much of the first decade of the 21st Century, Calaveras County experienced population and housing growth, but the number and size of local businesses did not grow at the same pace, creating an employment gap. In addition, the types of jobs available have not met the skill levels or income requirements of many residents, which means that many must commute to job centers in the Valley. High rates of commuting not only imposes costs on residents but also creates a host of other negative impacts on the county, from air pollution to retail sales tax leakage. Increasing the diversity and numbers of local businesses would improve the quality of life for many households and communities in Calaveras County, adding economic stability and a solid revenue base to fund public services and facilities.

Goal ED-2

To attract and retain high quality businesses compatible with the county's rural character.

Policies

ED-2.1 Regional Business Expansion

~~The County shall~~ encourage regional businesses to expand their operations within the county and, when not possible, to reduce their commuter impacts by providing opportunities for local workers to telecommute or use alternative transportation modes.

ED-2.2 Local Business Expansion

~~The County shall~~ encourage local businesses to expand their operations, increase their employment opportunities, or increase their competitiveness in the regional market.

ED-2.3 New High-Tech Economy

~~The County shall~~ strive to keep pace with the new high-tech economy by supporting businesses that incorporate new technologies, and stay at the forefront of market changes.

ED-2.4 New Business Development

~~The County shall~~ encourage entrepreneurial development and business incubator to grow and support start-up businesses, including those in the "green economy," and other high growth clusters.

ED-2.5 New Employment Centers

~~The County shall~~ help facilitate efforts by responsible agencies to provide adequate infrastructure, including high speed broadband, energy, water, and wastewater services, to support expansion and development of employment centers.

Tourism

Tourism is a key component in the county's economy. Tourist spending in Calaveras County is significant, and this income helps provide a higher level of community services and amenities to the residents of Calaveras County. The health of the tourism market relies heavily on the quality and character of local hotels, wineries, golf courses, and resorts, and the availability of natural and built attractions and entertainment activities for tourists. Expanding the amenities and opportunities for visitors will increase the attractiveness of the county as a destination and improve the tourism sector's ability to operate in off-peak times when prices are low and the weather is milder. The preservation and enhancement of Calaveras County's tourism market is unequivocally linked to the continued economic health of the county.

Goal ED-3

To sustain and strengthen Calaveras County's position as a premier national and international tourism destination and resort community.

Policies

ED-3.1 Hotels and Resorts

~~The County shall~~ encourage the development or expansion of high-quality hotels and resorts that enhance community character and create new opportunities for tourist attractions or entertainment.

ED-3.2 Resorts for Market Segments

~~The County shall~~ encourage diversity and quality in the lodging industry and resorts that cater to specific market segments (e.g., spas, skiing, water, caving, dude ranches, eco-tourism and culinary tourism).

ED-3.3 Destination Attractions

~~The County shall~~ encourage the development of destination attractions that celebrate Calaveras County's heritage, including contemporary and performing arts, winemaking culture, Sierra Nevada mountain sports, agritourism, Native American culture, cowboy lore, and the Mother Lode gold country environment.

ED-3.4 Tournaments and Events

~~The County shall~~ encourage the development of sporting tournaments and entertainment events including cycling, baseball, field hockey, tennis and golf, Frog Jump, Grape Stomp, Irish Days, Bass Tournament, Wine/Art Fairs, Ironstone and Bear Valley Concerts.

ED-3.5 Outdoor Recreational Venues

~~The County shall~~ encourage the development of outdoor recreational opportunities for visitors and residents alike, such as mountain climbing, hiking, river rafting, horseback riding, camping, lake sports, fishing, zip lines and caving.

ED-3.6 Tourism and Travel

In coordination with the Calaveras COG, ~~the County shall~~ preserve and enhance the tourist's ability to travel easily to different destinations throughout the county, develop strategies to move visitors safely on rural roads, and promote user supported transportation systems, bike rental services, pedestrian connections, hiking, biking and riding trails.

Retail and Professional Services

Calaveras County's retail market is an integral part of its unique identity and is one of the major economic drivers in the community. Calaveras County's retail sector in its communities will continue to be challenged by competition from other foothill communities. Professional services, including occupations in technology consulting sectors, provide quality employment and career opportunities and significantly improve the quality of life in the county by reducing the need to travel out of county for key services. Professional services can be developed as an important economic base sector for the county as well as serving the needs of local residents and businesses.

Goal ED-4

To encourage and maintain high quality retail and professional services and entertainment venues that supports the needs of residents and attracts visitors.

Policies

ED-4.1 New Locally-Owned Services

~~The County shall~~ encourage new, high-quality, regionally-oriented retail and professional services that complement the quality and historic character of the county.

ED-4.2 Retail and Entertainment Centers

~~The County shall~~ encourage concentration of retail and entertainment in central locations to maintain distinctive districts, provide good transportation access, and attract customers.

ED-4.3 Neighborhood Shopping Centers

~~The County shall~~ encourage the development of small-scale shopping centers that are close to neighborhoods to provide for the every-day-needs of residents.

ED-4.4 Commercial Developments

~~The County shall ensure neighborhoods are adequately protected from the effects of major commercial development (e.g., noise, traffic, lights) through good design, buffering, and traffic management.~~

Economic Development Planning and Revitalization

Success in economic development requires a proactive, coordinated, and collaborative program that anticipates business needs in terms of location, infrastructure and services, and promotes the needs of the workforce and the community. An economic development strategy should provide a point of entry for businesses and entrepreneurs to learn about services, resources, and regulatory requirements, while providing accountability for the County's economic development functions. This increased capacity will allow the County to better leverage and pursue economic development opportunities, collaborate with other public and private sector investors, and partner on strategic initiatives.

In addition, as the county matures, revitalization and redevelopment of existing development becomes a critical part of the economic vitality of the community to prevent decline in mature areas before those areas lose their attractiveness.

Goal ED-5

To sustain the long-term economic well being of the county and its citizens through quality development and revitalization efforts, accountable and efficient government services, and desirable workforce housing and community amenities.

Policies

ED-5.1 Economic Development Planning

~~The County shall maintain a proactive economic development strategic planning process, which can be staffed by the Planning Department or the County Administrative Officer's office, that anticipates future needs of residents and businesses.~~

ED-5.2 Revitalization of Employment Centers

~~The County shall encourage redevelopment and revitalization of existing employment centers to provide new jobs, new retail, and new entertainment opportunities.~~

ED-5.3 Renovation and Reuse of Existing Sites

The County shall encourage and support the renovation and reuse of underutilized or vacant parcels, industrial sites, buildings, or shopping centers.

ED-5.4 Community Aesthetic Improvements

The County shall work with communities and businesses to complete small-scale aesthetic improvement projects such as building facades renovations, streetscapes redesign, and public art and landscaping installations. *See Land Use Element.*

ED-5.5 Workforce and Affordable Housing

The County shall promote revitalization and redevelopment of existing residential areas to increase the availability of workforce and affordable housing. *Covered in the Housing Element.*

ED-5.6 Efficient Development Review Process

The County shall ensure that its development review process meets stated timelines and statutory requirements. *See Land Use Element.*

Implementation Programs

Program ED-A: Regional Support for Value-Added Markets

~~The County shall~~ work with the Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group and other organizations to expand regional support for value-added markets for natural resources, including manufacturing of furniture, wood pellets, post and pole products, and biomass. In addition ~~the County shall~~ pursue grants for feasibility studies addressing expansion of other related activities such as carbon markets, ecosystem management, and restoration services (e.g., mitigation banks) to help develop a new forest economy.

Policies ImplementedED-1.1

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsAmador-Calaveras Consensus Group, Sierra
Business Council, Sierra Nevada Conservancy,
CalWorks, Tuolumne County EDC

Program ED-B: Tourism Promotion

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with other public and private organizations to help market and promote agritourism, geotourism, culinary tourism, and local agricultural products (e.g., Calaveras Grown).

Policies ImplementedED-1.2, ED-1.3, ED-1.4

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsCalaveras County Farm Bureau, UC Extension,
wineries and other agricultural enterprises,
Chambers of Commerce, Calaveras Visitors
Bureau, Calaveras Grown, Ag Working Group,
Calaveras Winegrape Alliance, Tuolumne
County EDC

Program ED-C: Workforce Training Programs

~~The County shall~~ coordinate with the Mother Lode WIB to develop workforce training programs (e.g., biomass or wine production) to train workers to meet the changing employment needs of the agricultural, forestry, and other natural resource industries.

Policies ImplementedED-1.3

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsCalaveras Winegrape Alliance, Columbia
Community College, Delta Community College,
CalWorks, Mother Lode WIB

Program ED-D: Economic Development Marketing Program

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with the private sector to create an economic development marketing program that will enhance the county's image, support expansion of existing businesses, and encourage relocation of new operations to the county. This marketing program should target economic sectors such as medical and health care services, biomedical research and development, technology related research and development, light manufacturing, business and professional services, energy efficiency services, specialty food processing, green industries, administrative offices, and corporate and regional headquarters.

Policies Implemented.....ED-2.1, ED-2.2, ED-3.2, ED-3.4, ED-3.5

Responsibility

Other Participants.....Tuolumne County EDC, Calaveras Chamber of
Commerce, Visitors Bureau, Sierra Business
Council

Program ED-E: Inter-Agency Coordination

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with local and regional economic development organizations, including the City of Angels, to launch a process to:

- a. Apply for funding from USDA Rural Development to help form a rural manufacturers association and work plan;
- b. Inventory local manufacturing sectors (including cottage industries), to provide information on:
 1. Who are the local firms and what are their products and markets;
 2. What skills are needed to grow and diversify the sector; and
 3. What are their location, facility, and infrastructure needs;
- c. Quantify business-to-business sales leakage and identify opportunities to fill in gaps in the supply and services value chain, including for the agricultural industry;
- d. Conduct proactive outreach to the manufacturing sector, including business surveys and visitations;
- e. Assist the manufacturing sector by providing input on land use, zoning, infrastructure, utilities, and other issues related to industrial development;

- f. Work with the manufacturing sector to inventory existing industrial sites and facilities, identifying best sites for industrial locations/business development; and
- g. Analyze the potential for redeveloping former quarry sites for manufacturing use.

Policies ImplementedED-2.1, ED-2.2, ED-2.3

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsTuolumne County EDC, Calaveras Chamber of Commerce, Sierra Business Council, City of Angels Camp, industry representatives

Program ED-F: Workforce Training Services Inventory

~~The County shall~~ work with the Mother Lode Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to maintain an inventory of workforce training services and programs to help connect local businesses with training resources and the local labor force.

Policies ImplementedED-2.1, ED-2.2, ED-2.3

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsMother Lode Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Calaveras Chamber of Commerce, Columbia Community College, Delta Community College, CA Employment Development Department (EDD)

Program ED-G: WIB Membership Recruitment

~~The County shall~~ assist recruit representatives from the manufacturing sector to be members of the Mother Lode Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and support other efforts to improve workforce training in the county.

Policies ImplementedED-2.1, ED-2.2, ED-2.3

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsMother Lode WIB, industry representatives, Chamber of Commerce

Program ED-H: Home-Based Business Outreach

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and sub-regional business associations in the county to conduct outreach to home-based businesses and potential entrepreneurs. Based on the input received and the issues identified, prepare and implement a home-based business development plan.

Policies Implemented.....ED-2.4
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsTuolumne County EDC, Calaveras Chamber of
Commerce, Small Business Development
Corporation (SBDC)

Program ED-I: Commercial and Mixed-Use Sites Inventory

~~The County shall~~ work with real estate brokers to develop a list of commercial and mixed-use development opportunity sites within the county.

Policies Implemented.....ED-2.1, ED-2.2
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsCounty Association of Realtors and property
owners

Program ED-J: Business Resource Network

~~The County shall~~ work with other economic development groups to develop a business resource network that connects local businesses to technical assistance, site or building services, financing, workforce training, marketing, or other needed services. In addition this network will establish a “quick response team” to retain businesses in danger of leaving the county, or closing, or assist those that are interested in expanding locally.

Policies Implemented.....ED-2.3
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsCounty Departments, Calaveras Chamber of
Commerce, CA Employment Development
Department (EDD), SBDC, Mother Lode WIB

Program ED-K: Special Event Promotion

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with local event coordinators and the Visitors Bureau to promote special events, activities and attractions, including activities focused on cultural awareness and interaction, featuring farmers markets, street fairs, outdoor dining, wine tasting, music and concerts.

Policies Implemented.....ED-3.4, ED-3.5, ED-3.6
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsChamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau,
Winegrape Alliance, City of Angels

~~Program ED-L: Downtown/Historic District Plans~~

~~The County shall work with community groups to develop downtown revitalization plans or historic district plans for historic community centers in Valley Springs, City of Angels, San Andreas, Murphys, Arnold, Copperopolis, Toyon, Bear Valley, Frog Town, New Melones, and Big Trees.~~

~~Policies Implemented.....ED-4.1 through ED-4.5
ResponsibilityPlanning Department
Other Participants.....Community residents and businesses, business associations- **See Land Use Element**~~

Program ED-M: Buy Local Promotion

~~The County shall~~ collaborate with local business and merchant associations, as well as the City of Angels, to create and promote "buy local."

~~Policies Implemented.....ED-4.1 through ED-4.4
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsTuolumne County EDC, Chambers of Commerce, City of Angels, Cal Grown, UC Cooperative Extension, Visitors Bureau~~

Program ED-N: Retail Leakage Study

~~The County shall~~ seek funding to conduct a comprehensive retail leakage study to ensure that local retailers and retail developers have current market data available. ~~The County shall~~ also seek funding to implement the recommended commercial revitalization programs, and update the leakage study every three years.

~~Policies Implemented.....ED-4.1, ED-4.3, ED-5.3, ED-5.4
Responsibility?
Other ParticipantsChambers of Commerce, City of Angels~~

Program ED-O: Strategic Plan Process Incorporation

~~The County shall~~ incorporate long-range planning and economic development strategies during the County Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan process.

~~Policies Implemented.....ED-5.6, ED-5.7
Responsibility?
Other Participants?~~

Program ED-P: Development Review Process Streamlining

The County shall review its existing operating procedures and guidelines to:

- a. ~~Improve the efficiency of the development review process;~~
- b. ~~Continue development project processing during community planning activities;~~
- c. ~~Collaborate with other agencies to solve infrastructure issues;~~
- d. ~~Encourage completion of infrastructure master plans by responsible agencies;~~

Policies Implemented.....ED-2.5, ED-4.3 through ED-4.5, ED-5.1, ED-5.2,
ED-5.7

Responsibility.....Planning Department

Other Participants.....Community residents and businesses,
responsible public service and facilities agencies

See Land Use Element

Program ED-Q: Development Review Process Changes

The County shall review and, as necessary, revise its current development review process to incorporate the following elements:

- a. ~~Use a triage system to minimize permit backlog during periods of high development demand.~~
- b. ~~Provide regular status reports on project review schedules to the Board of Supervisors in public meetings.~~
- c. ~~Use consistent processing procedures for all projects.~~
- d. ~~Maintain contact with project applicants to ensure that inactive projects are kept at lower processing priority levels.~~
- e. ~~Provide for pre-application meetings to coordinate development review for larger projects.~~

Policies Implemented.....ED-5.6

Responsibility.....Planning Department

Other Participants.....Board of Supervisors, development community

See Land Use Element

Program ED-R: Outside Public Funding Opportunities

~~The County shall~~ actively pursue outside public funding for high-priority projects such as infrastructure, high speed broadband, improved cell phone service, and new energy and environmental systems. In particular, funds are becoming available to promote energy efficiency and green building practices, which could help stimulate the local construction industry.

Policies ImplementedED-2.5, ED-5.1, ED-5.7

Responsibility?

Other ParticipantsPG&E, telecommunications firms, other local utility companies and districts