

YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**Prepared by the County Administrator's Office, Economic
Development Division**

August 2010

**(Approved by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors December 8, 2009, with
status updates as of August 2010)**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Purpose of this Strategy	3
Relationship to the General Plan	3
Yolo County's Economic Development Setting	3
Established and Proposed Economic Development Goals	6
INITIATIVES	10
• <u>Business Climate</u>	
1. Business Friendly Permits & Regulations	11
2. Land Uses For Economic Diversification	13
3. Develop and Implement a Rational Incentive Policy	16
4. Develop & Redevelop Major County Assets	18
5. Monitor the Business Climate	20
• <u>Key Industries</u>	
6. Agricultural Viability, County Wide	21
7. Agriculture, By Sub-County Area (Districts)	23
8. Improved Tourism Capacity & Promotion	27
9. Promote Biotechnology	29
• <u>Community Development</u>	
10. Downtown Revitalization & New Town Development	30
11. Housing & Public Works Programs	33
• <u>Direct Business Assistance</u>	
12. Business Attraction	34
13. Business Expansion & Retention	36

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This economic development strategy supplements General Plan goals, policies and actions with specific, short-term initiatives adopted by the Board of Supervisors. This document, while consistent with the General Plan, has a five year planning horizon, compared with the 20-year horizon of the General Plan.

This strategy documents describes the county's current economic setting and sets forth thirteen Economic Development initiatives. These initiatives are designed to help improve Yolo County's business climate, strengthen our key industries, revitalize our small downtowns, and create new and improved programs for business assistance.

Business climate initiatives include the development of business-friendly permits and regulations, improved collaborative relationships with our four cities, designating adequate land for industrial and commercial development in strategic locations, and developing appropriate incentives to make marginal projects viable and increase the overall level of development.

Key industry initiatives focus on strengthening and expanding important business sectors, including agriculture in its traditional, emerging and small-scale formats; tourism; biotechnology; and services and manufacturing that support these industries. The initiatives also promote highway commercial development at selected interchanges.

Community development initiatives emphasize the revitalization of our small downtowns as a key economic development activity. This includes improving local retail and services in Esparto, Knights Landing, Madison, and our other communities. It also includes ensuring that the Dunnigan New Town develops with a healthy mix of jobs, housing and other community amenities for balanced growth. These initiatives rely on the support of several grant programs to help with providing public facilities, infrastructure, and affordable housing.

Direct business assistance includes initiatives to attract strategic new businesses to our designated development areas, as well as support for our existing industries. Successful business assistance depends on obtaining grants to support business loans and provide infrastructure for business expansion.

Most of these initiatives are the primary responsibility of the County Administrator's Office, but require the full involvement and support of many county departments and outside entities. In particular, this strategy document is the prioritized work program of the Economic Development Division, but also complements efforts in the Planning and Public Works Department, the Parks and Resources Department, the Agriculture Department, the Yolo County Visitors Bureau, the Yolo County Workforce Investment Board, and many other entities.

PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY

This document includes a set of initiatives that implement relevant goals, policies and actions of the Yolo County General Plan and other directives from the Board of Supervisors over the last several years. Successful implementation of these initiatives will improve the county's prosperity, maintain regional competitiveness, ensure accessibility to assets, improve the county's ability to market itself to visitors and businesses, and, perhaps most importantly, maintain fair and equitable rules for development. This strategy is designed to take advantage of the county's strengths and accommodate its weaknesses in bringing economic prosperity to Yolo County.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE GENERAL PLAN

The initiatives in this document are consistent with the Goals, policies and actions of the General Plan. However, while the General Plan's time frame extends to 2030, this strategy focuses on a five year planning horizon. In addition, several General Plan elements affect the activities of the Economic Development Division and its partners. The initiatives and activities in this document are therefore organized and prioritized so the Economic Development Division and its economic development partners can focus on those policies relevant to the county's most pressing economic development priorities, can plan their work effectively, and can at the same time meeting the existing goals described above.

Document	Time Frame	Document Organization
General Plan	20-years	Organized into elements by topic area. Economic development goals and policies spread throughout several elements.
Economic Development Strategy	5 years	Establishes prioritized work program of the Economic Development Division and its partners. Updated as needed.
Economic Development budget, work plan and accomplishments	1 year	Prepared annually – not a part of the General Plan.

YOLO COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SETTING

Economic development is the enhancement of a community's productive capabilities, largely through the creation and retention of jobs and revenue. The County of Yolo considers a healthy local economy to be a high priority, and recognizes the need to create high quality jobs for the future well being of its residents. The Yolo County Economic Development Strategy is geared to help the private sector provide more job opportunities for Yolo County residents, thereby increasing County tax revenue so it can provide higher levels of service. Yolo County promotes economic development as a way to improve the county's regional desirability, revitalize existing commercial areas, and improve the quality of life for all county residents.

Yolo County is continually seeking to create and maintain a positive business climate that fully supports its key industries, and which promotes the county's core values. In Yolo County, a good business climate will assure a thriving business community that enhances Yolo County's unique agricultural heritage, provides a sound tax base for the County, creates jobs for the local workforce, and builds commercial shopping and services for residents and visitors alike.

Communities thrive when they create new investment from within, and when they bring new wealth into the community from the outside. This can be most effectively accomplished through the expansion of business that export their goods and services and attract tourists. Local economies are best strengthened by matching wealth creation opportunities with the strengths and values of the local community. In Yolo County these opportunities include:

- Enhancing the viability of our agriculture and agricultural services;
- Encouraging agricultural biotechnology research and development;
- Attracting tourists to our local farms and other attractions;
- Developing more retail and other commercial at selected interchanges;
- Revitalizing our small downtowns.

Economic Development Strengths of Yolo County

Yolo County has many characteristics that make it a competitive business environment within the Sacramento region. The county's significant benefits include the following:

- Part of the greater Sacramento region, with very easy access to a large cluster of office and industrial employment centers in and around the Capitol/downtown Sacramento, North and South Natomas, and West Sacramento.
- Visibility and easy access to Interstates 80, 5 and 505 -- Yolo County has the most un-congested stretches of all three corridors, which easily link to the greater Sacramento region and the Bay Area, plus the Los Angeles, Pacific Northwest and East Coast markets.
- Airport and transit connections – Sacramento International Airport and the Yolo County Transportation District provide unique transportation/transit services and connections directly to and within Yolo County.
- Affordable housing market – Yolo County's housing market is highly affordable compared to prices in Sacramento, Placer and El Dorado counties.
- Affordable land – Yolo County and its cities have some of the lowest land prices, building prices, and rental rates for industrial, commercial and office space.
- Food and fiber business synergy – Yolo County has a plethora of synergistic business clusters related to agriculture, transportation and biotechnologies, including large and small growers, food processing, truck, port and air transportation, seed and agricultural research, bio-fuels production, and many more.

Challenges Facing Yolo County Economic Development¹

Yolo County faces significant challenges to developing a program of sustainable economic development including:

- The key “business” of Yolo County is agriculture and open space. Consequently, only eight percent of the land area of Yolo County is designated for residential-commercial-industrial development. The remaining 92 percent is currently set aside for agriculture or open-space preservation. Approximately 67 percent of the unincorporated area of the County is protected under Williamson Act contracts, which further limits development potential for a minimum of ten years.
- Yolo County’s historic commitment to protect and preserve agriculture relies in part on long-standing development agreements between Yolo County and the four incorporated cities to largely focus housing and commercial development within existing city limits. This limits opportunities for development in the unincorporated area, particularly along the urban edge where demand is often the greatest.
- This historic commitment to agriculture, open space and “smart growth” planning principles has had financial consequences for both the broader Yolo County economic climate and for the fiscal strength of Yolo County government. Less than thirty percent of the \$300 million plus annual County budget is discretionary, with the remainder tasked to fund on-going employee contracts, and federal and state mandated programs and services. Demands for County government services are increasing annually because the number, level and type of services mandated to county government continue to increase, and because population is also increasing. Yolo County government outlays increased by 7.4% in 2005/2006 alone which - while less than the 11.4% average growth for counties in the region - is nevertheless a significant rate of growth in demand for government services and expenditures. Yolo County may grow from the 2006 level of nearly 200,000 residents (countywide including the cities) to more than 275,000 residents in 2030. At the same time as demands for County government services and programs are increasing, county funding is not increasing proportionately. This is due to several factors including:
 1. The County’s share of sales tax receipts has not significantly increased because under existing land use policy, key sales tax generators are approved for development in city jurisdictions instead of in the unincorporated area.
 2. Revenue-sharing agreements between cities and the County underpinning the Smart Growth policy of limiting development within city jurisdictions have not been revenue-neutral for Yolo County.
- Because the “business” of Yolo County is agriculture, the County has not historically experienced or encouraged significant increases in jobs, industry or – in some cases – housing. Therein lays the key dilemma at the heart of continued and sustainable economic development in Yolo County. How can a County firmly committed to an agricultural-based lifestyle, land use and economic development model sustain and encourage sufficient economic growth and resources to produce

¹ Much of this section was written in 2006 by Bob Waste, facilitator of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Economic Development.

sustainable levels of jobs, opportunities, housing, services and amenities for the years ahead, notably for the timeframe in the current General Plan?

- Tourism is an increasing component of the Yolo county economy, and promoting its continued growth is a high priority. Further, since many of the county's best rural tourism opportunities are in the unincorporated area, and many are in public ownership (e.g. BLM, County Parks, other open space), the county should work closely with both public and private landowners and operators to ensure expanded tourism opportunities.

Visitor spending (i.e. dollars brought into the county from outside and spent here) boosts local business income, personal income and tax revenues. Tourists patronize hotels and other lodging, restaurants, department stores, grocery stores, cinemas, casinos, local parks, bike and equestrian trails, passive recreation areas, museums, golf courses, and gasoline and other automotive service businesses. Furthermore, clearly delineated, attractive, historic downtowns enhance the visitor experience. Creating additional attractions also increases sales and property tax revenues to the county. Similarly, the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the area is attractive to the film industry, which has the potential to generate short term but substantial local income during location filming activities.

In addition to jobs, good schools, access to health care and affordable housing, local residents appreciate many of the same services that tourists do, including a variety of shopping and dining choices; good highways, bus and air transportation; and a selection of local entertainment and recreational opportunities. A survey of Esparto residents conducted in 2001 indicated that local residents are currently making 70% of their general merchandise and food purchases in cities such as Woodland and Vacaville. Redirecting county economic development policies to help the tourism industry will also help recapture some of that lost spending, and will at the same time improve the quality of life for local residents. Further, many local residents would be expected to supplement their incomes through home based businesses. Access to travel services and the Internet are important infrastructure concerns for this business group.

ESTABLISHED AND PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2006, the Board of Supervisors created its ad hoc Blue Ribbon Panel on Economic Development, to provide input to the General Plan. Their recommendations have since become the interim work plan for the Economic Development Division. In addition, as a part of their goal setting and Strategic Plan, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors has developed a number of economic development goals and priorities in recent years. Although developed separately, they have been integrated into the Agriculture and Economic Development Element of the new Draft General Plan, which includes five economic development goals. This strategy incorporates both sets of adopted and proposed goals.

2005 Board of Supervisor Goal-Setting

In 2005, the Board of Supervisors created the following economic development goals for our county:

- Preserve and promote agriculture, rural recreation, and environmental habitat;
- Balance housing growth with commercial and industrial growth;
- Provide jobs for the county's residents;
- Develop adequate retail and other services to our residents;
- Ensure long-term fiscal health for the County's finances;
- Incorporate innovative development principles, such as smart growth, energy efficiency, walkable and bikeable communities, etc.

The 2006 Blue Ribbon Panel on Economic Development

The panel consisted of 11 individuals from different backgrounds. It met three times during 2006 to discuss Yolo county's economic strengths and weaknesses, and recommended a set of policies to help guide the County's economic development efforts. The Board of Supervisors adopted the panel's fifteen recommended policies in 2006, and also directed them to be incorporated into Yolo County's General Plan Update:

- I. To better achieve a sustainable economic future in Yolo County, the Economic Development Panel recommended that Yolo County adopt the following **Primary Goals**:
 1. **Improved Agriculture** enhancement & support efforts
 2. **Targeted Biotechnology development**, including development of high tech R & D campuses, and regional office/business park/light manufacturing nodes
 3. **Increased Tourism**, including farms and wineries as entertainment/education destinations; and **Preservation of Accessible/Useable Open Space**
 4. **A Reinvigorated County/City Fiscal Dialogue**, and
 5. **Establishment of a limited number of Retail Highway Commercial Nodes** where & when appropriate
- II. The Economic Development Panel also recommended exploring the following **Secondary Goals**:
 1. **Increased attention to Vocational/Technical Education** opportunities in Yolo County
 2. **"Growing" the community infrastructure and local economies of smaller Yolo "villages"** such as Esparto, Knights Landing, and Capay.
 3. **Increased attention to natural gas generation** capacity-related economic opportunities in Yolo County
 4. **Incentivizing alternative energy/smart transit** efforts via targeted Yolo county programs and policies.
 5. **Achieving a jobs/housing match.**
- III. The Economic Development Panel also recommended exploring the following **Process Goals** to better achieve a sustainable economic future in Yolo County:

1. Be willing to **listen to & honor local community priorities** and local area plans in meeting the larger countywide General Plan objectives
2. Be willing to **change regulations** to achieve economic sustainability
3. Be willing to **expand the traditional view of agriculture**
4. Be willing to **act quickly to achieve strategic economic objectives**
5. Be willing to **explore economic development across numerous different job sectors** and classifications.

2007 and 2008 Board of Supervisors Strategic Goal Setting

In 2007 the Board of Supervisors conducted an annual strategic goal-setting retreat, which was updated by a second annual retreat in 2008. Creating an Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan was a top priority. The following were among the goals of those sessions:

- Economic development is important to Yolo County,
- The county should facilitate businesses that want to expand or locate in Yolo County;
- The county should develop a reputation as business-friendly;
- The General Plan should incorporate economic development;
- The Clarksburg Agricultural District should be aggressively approached;
- Financing tools for economic development should be developed;
- Economic development input should be provided in a timely manner for zoning issues;
- Agricultural related businesses should be encouraged, especially in key locations amenable to processing;
- County sign ordinances should be reviewed and balanced with economic development goals;
- Permit streamlining is a key component of an economic development strategy
- Incentives should be developed that promote economic development;
- Relations with cities and their spheres of influence should be strengthened.

Goals in the Approved 2030 Countywide General Plan

The Agriculture and Economic Development Element of the Approved Yolo County General Plan Update includes five economic development goals, each of which also includes a set of related policies and actions²:

Goal ED-1 Economic Diversity. Diversify the local economy to provide substantial and sustainable long-term growth that will benefit businesses, residents, and local government.

Goal ED-2 Business Climate and Business Assistance. Work aggressively to create a welcoming environment for both existing companies and new business to advance local economic growth.

Goal ED-3 Community Revitalization. Revitalize communities, especially downtown areas, to serve the economic and social needs of residents, as well as to support regional visitor needs.

² See the General Plan for a complete set of policies and actions.

Goal ED-4 Expansion of Tourism. Provide a variety of tourism and recreational opportunities to expand the local economy in a manner consistent with Yolo County's agricultural and open space emphasis.

Goal ED-5 Economic Sustainability. Support sustainable economic development. Encourage local industry to adapt to the expected effects of climate change and minimize greenhouse gases and other emissions.

YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (FOR THE NEXT 2 – 5 YEARS)

The following pages constitute a prioritized set of initiatives and activities that will advance wealth creation and quality of life in Yolo County, and that incorporate the policies and goals listed previously.

Success with these initiatives is necessarily a team sport, with participation by the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and various county departments, partner agencies, community groups and business groups.

The 13 initiatives are grouped in four categories:

- Business climate
 1. Business Friendly Permits & Regulations
 2. Land Uses For Economic Diversification
 3. Develop and Implement a Rational Incentive Policy
 4. Develop & Redevelop Major County Assets
 5. Monitor the Business Climate
- Target industries
 6. Agricultural Viability, County Wide
 7. Regional, by Sub-County Area (Districts)
 8. Improved Tourism Capacity & Promotion
 9. Promote Biotechnology
- Community development
 10. Downtown Revitalization and New Town Development
 11. Housing & Public Works Programs
- Direct Business Assistance
 12. Business Attraction
 13. Business Expansion & Retention

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 1
BUSINESS FRIENDLY PERMITS & REGULATIONS**

Background:

The most important hallmark of a business-friendly community is the extent to which it has an efficient, fair, cost-effective regulatory structure. It takes a consistent pattern of effective permit processing and objective code enforcement to create a positive image of the County among business owners. However, one bad experience can create a lasting bad reputation. At the same time, regulatory agencies have mandated responsibilities to ensure compliance with numerous federal, state and county rules about land use, site access, building safety, and public health.

Over time as Yolo County has steered growth to the cities, the perception has grown that Yolo County's regulations and the way in which they are implemented are hindering cost-effective development in the county. Regardless of its accuracy, this negative image has been transmitted to potential developers and may potentially discourage new investment. As a result, County departments are paying attention to the county's regulatory programs and are seeking to ensure that their processes are adequate to address the type and number of applications anticipated in the General Plan. For these projects to move forward, a clear, consistent, rational and expeditious regulatory process is required.

As our four cities expand, it is also important to work with them to apply their regulations to city-edge developments in the unincorporated area, consistent with the Pass-Through Agreements, where applicable.

Lead Entities: County Administrator's Office, Planning and Public Works,
Health

Supporting Organizations: Information Technology, Agriculture

Activities – Business Friendly Regulations:

	Item	Status
1	Streamline and improve efficiencies within the permit review process, including enhanced customer service, expanded technology, and coordinating interdepartmental resources.	Significant progress by PPW and Environmental Health since 2007, ongoing.
2	Continue to use the new Development Review Committee as an opportunity to share information between departments, cities, other agencies, and applicants during the permit review process.	Committee created in early 2008, meets monthly.
3	Communicate the purpose and process of permit review to the public. Regularly solicit public input about process improvements.	Dozens of informational workshops have been held to date.
4	Increase resources in the Planning and Public Works and Health Departments so that they can accommodate the higher volumes and complexity of development proposals expected as a result of the General Plan Update process.	Expanded capacity should be ready as the current economic downturn ends.
5	Provide clear and understandable information explaining the permit process, by expanding existing Web-based and hard-copy explanatory materials;	Ongoing. Many Web based and print materials have already been created, with more to be developed.
6	Create positive press about improvements and successes wherever possible.	Ongoing.
7	Coordinate individually with cities to agree on how permits and regulations are processed and implemented.	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 2
LAND USES FOR ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION**

Background:

While respecting its historical heritage of protecting agriculture and open space, Yolo County now has a policy for rational development in places where development will enhance the county's revenues. The county's new mandate is to promote job creation, new investment, and economic well-being in Yolo County, where appropriate and needed. New jobs, continued investment, profitable businesses, increased property tax, and sales tax growth are also important for long term fiscal health.

Business diversity helps to insulate the county from major economic downturns. The reuse of previously disturbed industrial sites, and developing in existing communities are cost-effective policies that minimize impacts to agriculture.

It is important to set aside adequate new land for job creation in places that complement existing communities as a means of meeting other county objectives. The county would in fact be well served to include too much, rather than too little commercial and industrial land in its General Plan. Land zoned commercial/industrial can still be farmed until the market sufficiently matures. In addition, there is the uncertainty associated with the unavoidable economic boom and bust cycles over the next 20 years. The county is also wise to set aside plenty of land for the occasional large processing plant or large-scale winery, particularly if it supports agriculture. Having plenty of land to choose from makes Yolo County more attractive to future users.

Lead Entities: County Administrator's Office, Planning and Public Works

Supporting Organizations: Parks and Resources Department, Local Agency Formation Commission

Activities – Land Uses for Economic Diversification and City Edge Development:

	Item	Status
1	Support continued reuse of the Spreckels site, a previously disturbed large industrial site. Support filling of unused land with other agriculture and industrial uses.	Clark Pacific owns and occupies the site. Room for expansion.
2	Maintain diverse pool of developable land in appropriate locations, particularly industrial and commercial land.	Complete, General Plan Land Use map includes ample land.
3	Encourage new development in places with existing or previous industrial and commercial activity to minimize loss of existing agricultural lands, and to maximize downtown revitalization.	Downtowns and previously disturbed lands are targeted for redevelopment.
4	Conduct a market study to determine how the county can capitalize on specific competitive locations where revenue generating uses might be highest.	Countywide study should be completed in Fiscal Year 2010/2011. Other studies for individual sites will be done as needed.
5	Encourage industrial and commercial uses (including new business and technology parks) that are compatible with and/or do not conflict with existing agriculture and other industrial uses.	Ongoing.
6	Strategically locate new industrial properties to take advantage of local and regional transportation corridors (e.g., Interstates 80, 5 and 505, and State Routes 16 and 128), and to minimize impacts to agriculture	Complete. General Plan Land Use map includes appropriate land.
7	Strategically locate highway commercial properties to take advantage of interstate transportation corridors (e.g., Interstates 80, 5 and 505), particularly in Dunnigan;	Complete. General Plan Land Use map includes appropriate land.
8	Encourage new community-serving ³ and local-serving ⁴ retail to locate in existing communities, closest to population centers and housing clusters, and at an appropriate scale.	Complete. General Plan Land Use map includes appropriate land.
9	Encourage new regional retail ⁵ to locate only in existing cities and/or in the Dunnigan new town	Complete. General Plan Land Use map includes appropriate land.

³ A community-serving shopping center is no larger than about 100,000 square feet, and is usually anchored by a major supermarket.

⁴ A local-serving shopping center is no larger than about 50,000 square feet, and is usually anchored by a grocery store or small independent supermarket.

⁵ Regional retail typically includes centers larger than 100,000 square feet that are typically anchored by one or more big box department or home improvement stores, plus a series of national brand retailers. An auto mall is also a regional retailer.

10	Support growth of local economies and new infrastructure in existing communities as needed for economic sustainability. The concentration of development near existing infrastructure is not only cost-effective, but is a key component of downtown revitalization and the creation of attractive amenities that contribute to community vibrancy.	Ongoing. Existing and draft policies, including the DMX Zone encourage concentrated development.
11	Require large master-planned developments to provide turnkey infrastructure, adequate financing for long term services, and allow infrastructure financing tools such as Mello Roos, Community Service Districts, assessment districts and other mechanisms.	Ongoing. Existing and draft policies require infrastructure development.
12	Consider applying for California Infrastructure Bank and other grants and loans to assist desired development.	Being considered when appropriate. County is currently working a \$124,000 E.D.A. grant for infrastructure master planning in Esparto, Madison, Knights Landing, and Yolo.
13	Work with Yolo County's four cities to ensure the equitable sharing of property taxes, sales taxes, Transient Occupancy Taxes, and other revenue sources.	Ongoing.
14	Ensure continuous and productive dialogue and agreements between jurisdictions that provide sufficient revenues for the county to serve all county residents, including those within the cities, with adequate public infrastructure, public safety and court services, health and mental health services, social services, libraries, housing, etc	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 3
DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A RATIONAL INCENTIVE POLICY**

Background:

As economies tighten, businesses see their costs rise and profits squeezed. Competing effectively to recruit businesses and helping the tax base expand in tight times often means developing policies that help to minimize business costs. Competing effectively in good times also means matching the incentives other communities offer. Conversely, small local governments are not in a strong position to offer incentives that take away resources from more important services. Therefore, local governments need to provide a range of incentives that do not significantly affect the county's budget, and consider a public investment policy which ensures that incentives quickly returns taxes, jobs and other public benefits.

Yolo county's incentive policy should therefore be a combination of providing direct business assistance, obtaining grant funds to add business assistance and financing resources, creating zoning and regulations that encourage desired investment, brokering competitive incentives where available, and where necessary making case-by-case strategic investments in infrastructure and/or partnerships.

Redevelopment is the strongest incentive California's local governments can offer. Yolo County has a Redevelopment Agency, but no defined Project Areas. Though it appears that a combined Esparto-Madison project area has a chance to develop adequate tax increment to have an impact over time, the cost of completing the necessary studies and community outreach and establishing a project area may cost up to \$300,000. Further study is warranted, but should be considered after a set of less expensive incentives is developed.

Occasional case by case strategic investments that do not tap into the General Fund can be considered for projects that serve an important county goal such as significant job creation, promoting and encouraging private investment, bringing a major processing plant, leveraging investments in distressed areas, promotes downtown revitalization, and/or providing an important service to county residents.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office

Supporting Organizations: Planning and Public Works, General Services, Community Service Districts, and California Association of Local Economic Developers (CALED)

Activities – Rational Incentive Policy:

	Item	Status
1	For major beneficial projects that need incentives, consider assisting in the provision of infrastructure, offering fee reductions, making land write-downs or other incentives as an investment for future property, sales and/or TOT tax returns.	Case by case.
2	Consider instituting a zoning incentive program that may include flexible development standards, fast-track processing, fee-based incentives, etc. for target uses and infill development.	Being considered as Clarksburg's agricultural district moves forward.
3	Create "red teams" to help expedite review of development applications for major development projects and specific plans that will create significant new jobs and tax benefits.	Similar processes already used for Clark Pacific, Mariani, and Bogle.
4	Consider incentives to business owners and property owners for improving the appearance of existing retail space.	Complete. The Sierra Economic Development Corporation offers similar loan programs, alleviating the need for the county to establish its own.
5	Revive the CDBG-funded Revolving loan program, which offers low interest loans to job-generating businesses.	(Same as above.)
3	Consider a façade loan program and/or micro-loan program.	(Same as above.)
7	Use the awarded USDA-RBEG small business assistance grant to hire a small business assistance specialist to broker incentives as needed.	Yuba College SBDC was hired and will continue its services post-grant.
8	Maximize the use of existing financing and incentive tools for businesses, including the California Infrastructure Bank, Recycling Market Development Zone, Industrial Revenue Bonds, Pollution Control Financing, and other programs.	Being considered whenever appropriate.
9	Work with West Sacramento and HCD to finalize the Clarksburg Enterprise Zone so that incentives can be activated.	Complete. Final designation achieved.
10	Perform a more detailed analysis of the value in establishing an Esparto-Madison Redevelopment Project Area.	Waiting until state stops raiding redevelopment funds.
11	Create and publish an incentive flyer as an aid to recruitment and business assistance.	2010.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 4
DEVELOP & REDEVELOP MAJOR COUNTY ASSETS**

Background:

The Yolo County Airport is the one of the most important economic development asset owned by the County. With its 6,000 foot runway, 600 acres and regional location, it is under-utilized and has potential for added aviation-dependent and aviation-related development. Its proximity to UC Davis makes it a candidate for non-airport related commercial and industrial development, perhaps oriented to technology.

Other pieces of land owned by the county have specific economic development potential, including sites in Woodland, the County Landfill, and others. The County is also seeking ownership of other parcels, including the Davis Telecommunications Center adjoining Grasslands Park. The county should be willing to obtain, trade, write down land and otherwise use its ability to buy and sell property as a catalyst for economic development.

Lead Entities: County Administrator's Office, General Services

Supporting Organizations: FAA, Cities and their redevelopment agencies

Activities – Major County Assets

	Item	Status
AIRPORT		
1	Continue upgrading navigation and safety features, especially those that can attract the new light jet type of aircraft.	Airport Manager is actively working on upgrades, which are expected to be completed over the next several years.
2	Support application to FAA for funds to re-asphalt the runway and taxi-ways.	Complete.
3	Support expansion of facilities on the flight line, such as hangars, aprons, water, sewer, fueling and food services.	Airport Manager is actively working on relevant projects.
4	Develop infrastructure at the designated future commercial areas and promoting them.	Airport Manager is actively seeking new commercial users.
OTHER		
5	Work with General Services as it continues its asset management program. Encourage revenue-generating uses on surplus lands.	Ongoing.
6	Encourage research and commercial uses at the landfill that promote recycling and other compatible technologies.	Ongoing active research and recycling programs and aggressive development of landfill underway.
7	Support acquisition of the communications site at the grasslands.	Complete.
8	Look for opportunities to obtain and use land and other assets as catalysts for economic development.	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 5
MONITOR THE BUSINESS CLIMATE**

Background:

The Economic Development Division staff should generally act as the county’s designated business advocate, engaging whenever appropriate in policy development and implementation that may affect business.

The programs and activities of the Economic Development Division should show results over time, by helping create new jobs, investment, and positive business feedback. The Division should track these trends.

Lead Entity: County Administrator’s Office

Supporting Organizations: Planning and Public Works Department, Community Service Districts, California Association of Local Economic Developers (CALED)

Activities – Monitoring the Business Climate

	Item	Status
1	Act as the county’s designated business advocate during the development of county policies that may positively or negatively affect the business community. Monitor and weigh in on Delta, budget, regulatory and other issues as appropriate.	Ongoing.
2	Feedback Loop. Create a set of Performance Measures for the county’s economic development program and track them annually. The measures should track jobs, investment, tax revenues to the county, and other measures.	Planned by the end of 2010.
3	Continually monitor economic development strategies to determine their effectiveness in encouraging economic diversity, sustainability, and desirable development projects. Adjust policies and incentives when necessary	Ongoing.
4	Maintain a press and news file and track other information about projects, investment, the business climate and other relevant information.	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE #6
AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY, COUNTY WIDE**

Background:

The core value of Yolo County is agriculture and open space. Ninety-two percent of the land surface of Yolo County is currently set aside for agriculture or open-space preservation. Sixty-seven percent of the unincorporated area of the County is further protected under Williamson Act contracts. The new General Plan generally preserves these percentages.

In addition, our highly segmented agricultural industry is rapidly evolving into new crop types, new farming practices, new technologies, new distribution networks, and new organizational structures. Direct marketing, wine grapes, and high value crops are increasing. Though the county still relies heavily on large-scale commodity crops such as tomatoes, alfalfa, and rice, our traditional large-scale food processing capacity has diminished. Profitability is a continual struggle. It is therefore important that the agricultural industry is allowed to maximize its use of its lands, and that our farms and farmers thrive long term.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office, Agriculture, Planning and Public Works, Parks and Resources

Supporting Organizations: Farm Bureau, Ag Futures Alliance, California Alliance of Family Farmers, South County Farmers for Progress, and many others.

Activities – County Wide Agricultural Viability:

	Item	Status
1	Work for funding to keep our county roads well maintained, and to limit conflicts between agriculture and commuter traffic.	Ongoing.
2	Attract new and assist existing processing facilities for expanding farm industries.	Ongoing effort. Bogle is a recent success.
3	Assist existing agricultural support businesses and attract new ones. Work to site consolidated agriculture support facilities such as cold storage facilities and community commercial kitchens.	Ongoing.
4	Support and continue the Taste of Yolo marketing program.	Must be renewed after expiration in 2009. In absence of funding, Ag Commissioner has taken over.
5	Ensure land use policies and regulations that facilitate development of new agriculture and its support businesses.	Implement the Clarksburg Agricultural District as a pilot project by 2010.
6	Maintain and possibly expand the impact fee exemption for agriculture buildings to include agricultural processing.	Debate and cost analysis needed.
7	Study and understand our existing agriculture base and trends so the county can respond effectively to changing conditions.	Ongoing. Ag Issues Center has completed one study.
8	Amend agricultural zoning to encourage farms to vertically integrate from field to consumer (direct marketing) and to encourage on-site agri-tourism and eco-tourism. For example, in addition to allowing on-site produce stands by right, consider also allowing on-site crushing, fermentation, barrel storage, labeling, tasting rooms, picnic areas, etc.	Actively being considered as part of Clarksburg Agricultural District, and as General Plan implementation proceeds.
10	Consider enhancing land use and incentive policies that help farmers generate secondary income from non-farm sources so that they may continue farming.	Actively being considered as part of Clarksburg Agricultural District.
11	Lobby for Williamson Act renewal, and for revisions that allow agri tourism activities in the A-P Zone.	Will continue to seek Williamson Act Renewal.
12	Encourage conservation easements that emphasize operations which integrate agricultural and habitat practices on the same land.	Under development as part of Natural Heritage Program.
13	Continue existing downtown revitalization efforts so our small towns are centers of support for agriculture.	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE #7
AGRICULTURE– BY SUB-COUNTY AREA (DISTRICTS)**

Background:

Agricultural districts are areas where county marketing resources can be focused, and where county policies can be created to benefit local farms, visitor-serving venues and processors located within the district. They emphasize areas which are considered to have a unique aspect of Yolo County's agriculture industry that is expanding and that is also beneficial to brand and promote. The table below lists three agricultural districts: the boundaries of one have been officially established by the Board of Supervisors, while two other potential districts are under further study. The table below lists aspects of each district and its suggested advantages:

Except for policies encouraging the establishment of visitor-serving attractions within each district, it should be noted that most county-wide policies and regulations established for the benefit of agriculture also apply within the districts, including existing land use policies, the Swainson's Hawk mitigation program, easements and offsets, any future development rights programs, housing regulations on agricultural land, and other established policies. Creating a different policy in any of the agricultural districts would require a strong case for a unique need or advantage within that district.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office, Agriculture, Planning and Public Works

Supporting Organizations: Farm Bureau, Ag Futures Alliance, California Alliance of Family Farmers, South County Farmers for Progress, and many others.

POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS

District	Size (Acres)	Unique agricultural & tourism aspect(s)	Suggested District policies and programs
Capay Valley	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic farming with many different specialty crops • Agricultural tourism • Cache Creek Casino destination resort • Historical downtowns • Cache Creek recreation • One wine appellation (Capay Valley). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote organic and small-scale farming; • Enhance cooperative small-scale processing, aggregation, warehousing, marketing capacity; • Improve the visitor experience. • Advance the Capay Valley Grown brand. • Review land use policies for visitor-serving facilities.
Clarksburg (officially created January 2008)	40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine grape growing potential; • Agricultural tourism; • River & Delta related tourism; • Historic mill site with boutique wineries. • One wine appellation (including both Clarksburg and Merritt Island) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote wine grape growing • Establish local crushing, fermentation, bottling, storage capacity; • Promote tourism • Establish a Clarksburg brand • Review land use policies for visitor-serving facilities. • Establish and promote Enterprise Zone benefits.
Dunnigan Hills	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One wine appellation (Dunnigan Hills) • Established almond, wine grape and orchard region; • Olive oil growth potential; • High eco-tourism potential. • Nearby planned new town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote wineries and olive presses; • Establish a Dunnigan Hills Brand. • Encourage vineyard and olive grove planting and investment. • Promote intensive permanent agricultural investment in areas adequately served by water. • Encourage Constellation Brands to again use its appellation.

*TBD = To Be Determined by the Board of Supervisors

Activities – Regional Agricultural Viability:

	Item	Status
CLARKSBURG		
1	Bring Enterprise Zone benefits to Clarksburg	Final designation complete.
2	Maintain existing industrial & commercial land use designations in the Clarksburg urban area so effective revitalization can occur.	100 industrial acres and existing Old Sugar Mill are designated. Subject to various proposed Delta planning efforts.
3	Recruit large scale winery to region, at all possible locations.	Bogle has used 50 acres. Sewer constraint solution needed.
4	Complete wine industry feasibility analysis (CDBG grant)	Complete.
5	Conduct community outreach to define features of district to help agriculture and tourism	Being finalized for Clarksburg.
6	Assist the Old Sugar Mill development and expansion, particularly its services to small area wineries. Support any future master projects.	5 new buildings approved, more in the offing.
7	Assist the viability of existing business organizations in the region	Ongoing.
8	Ensure land use and development policies that encourage agriculture and agri-tourism.	In General Plan and subject to various proposed Delta planning efforts.
9	Help Clarksburg create and promote its own brand.	Underway.
10	Create effective policies, incentives and support as the Clarksburg Agricultural District is defined.	Active discussions underway.
11	Ensure the provision of adequate services to the emerging wine industry.	Active discussions underway.
12	Work with the Delta Protection Commission and others developing policies for the Delta to ensure long term continued support for agricultural production, food processing, and agri-tourism.	Active discussions underway.

CAPAY VALLEY		
13	Help promote Capay Valley Grown brand	Funding needed for active support.
14	Help local businesses take advantage of Casino expansion by establishing attractions not provided at casino.	Active business development should begin as soon as expansion construction starts.
15	Enhance cooperative small-scale processing, warehousing, marketing capacity, including a community kitchen, and custom cut & wrap.	Ongoing.
DUNNIGAN HILLS		
16	Encourage emerging olive oil industry and wine industry	Ongoing.
17	Encourage planned services and retail along I-5 & I-505	General Plan Land Use Map includes appropriate lands.
17a	Create effective policies, incentives, and support in the Dunnigan Hills Agricultural District.	Ongoing.
17b	Recruit small scale wineries to the region located at appropriate locations.	Ongoing.
17c	Assist the viability of existing vineyards and wineries in the district.	Ongoing.
ALL DISTRICTS		
18	Work with UC Davis and other institutions and institutes to make better connections between their missions and agri-tourism in Yolo County	Ongoing.
19	Work with Caltrans to get signage places at strategic locations.	Funding is needed to place signage. New signage installed in Clarksburg area.
20	Ensure land use and development policies that encourage investment in agriculture and agri-tourism.	Ongoing.
21	Enhance cooperative, small scale processing, warehousing and marketing capacities.	Ongoing.
22	Ensure the provision of adequate services to the emerging wine industry.	Ongoing.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 8
IMPROVED TOURISM CAPACITY & PROMOTION**

Background:

The 2006 Blue Ribbon Panel on Economic Development named increased tourism, including farms and wineries as entertainment/education destinations. The Board of Supervisors later added the preservation of accessible/useable open space. These amenities strengthen Yolo County's attractiveness as a rural place.

Tourism is an increasingly important source of revenue for businesses in the unincorporated area, and for the county. Maintaining a strong Visitors Bureau is an important priority for Yolo County.

The overall strategy is to increase visitation from established markets (i.e. Sacramento, Bay Area), increasing day trips from nearby markets and increasing average visitor stay from all markets. The county's attractiveness as a day trip and overnight destination would be achieved, in part, through bundling various activities and amenities.

The general idea of bundling is to increase the availability of linked activities, and "bundle" tourist opportunities available in the area. For instance, those engaging in outdoor recreation such as camping or rafting also need supermarkets, restaurants, equipment/gear, film, souvenirs, rest stop opportunities along the way, and gasoline. Every need should be available nearby and clearly marketed as such.

In addition, business travel, convention business, and local sporting events are also attractive targets to expand tourism.

Lead Entity: **Yolo County Visitors Bureau**

Supporting Organizations: **County Administrator's Office, Parks and Resources, Cities, and private sector businesses.**

Activities – Improved Tourism Capacity and Promotion:

	Item	Status
1	Continue County representation on the YCVB Board of Directors	Ongoing. County should provide funds as soon as practicable.
2	Help businesses increase their visitor-serving capacity in all districts.	Ongoing.
3	Encourage planned visitor-serving development at the county's freeway interchanges, focusing on services not available off highway (e.g. motels, gas stations, auto maintenance, etc.).	Ongoing.
4	Work with the county's four cities to maintain and increase their contributions to the YCVB for its ongoing viability and ability to enhance services.	Ongoing. West Sacramento is last holdout.
5	Encourage the bundling of promotional activities in Clarksburg, and in Capay Valley.	Underway.
6	Encourage the YCVB to enhance its film promotion capacity.	Ongoing.
7	Encourage public agencies, including BLM, Caltrans, and County Parks, to increase their capacity to serve visitors.	Ongoing.
8	Work with the Yolo County Visitors Bureau to identify potential tourism-oriented market opportunities and to develop stronger links to regional and national tourist markets.	Ongoing.
9	Establish successful working relationship between Cache Creek Casino and YCVB, and perhaps River Cats and YCVB.	Underway.
10	Support creation and expansion of stores that promote products grown in Capay Valley, Clarksburg and Dunnigan Hills	Capay store as pilot project and perhaps a store along I-80.
11	Create an annual <u>State fair booth</u> exhibit that obtains a Gold Ribbon or higher award each year. Continually strive for "Best of Show"	Three ribbons were received in 2008, including a Gold. Silver in 2010.
12	Update the Yolo County window at the State Capitol and keep its material fresh and interesting. Partner with UC Davis, the Yolo Arts Council and others.	YCVB has agreed to update the window.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE #9
PROMOTE BIOTECHNOLOGY**

Background:

The county has a continued strong commitment to technology and biotechnology.

Yolo County has a large agricultural industry with the vast majority of its land involved in producing feed, fiber and horticultural commodities. Annual total output totaled \$450 million in 2007. The agricultural industry utilizes biotechnology in various forms; from seeds that have been bred to produce hardier and more productive crops to new medicines and improved veterinary care. Other technologies such as irrigation improvements, pest management practices, cultivation practices, etc. are keeping the county's agricultural systems on the leading edge of innovation. Biotechnology is actively researched at UCD and other private and public research facilities, field trials are conducted throughout the county.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office, Agriculture

Supporting Organizations: UC Davis Innovation Access, Sacramento Area Regional Technology Alliance (SARTA), Bay Bio and others.

Activities – Biotechnology Encouragement:

	Item	Status
1	Support UCD and its technology research and transfer programs such as the UC Biotechnology Research and Education Program, UC Innovation Access, the Seed Biotechnology Research Center, and others.	Ongoing on a limited scale.
2	Support seed and other technology companies through targeted business retention and attraction.	Plan to be developed in 2010/11.
3	Participate in SARTA and other regional technology advancement groups.	Limited involvement to date.
4	Promote the county's involvement and support for technology, including the Golden Capitol Network.	Ongoing on a limited scale.
5	Help our small businesses access technology through UC programs and programs like the SBIR program.	Limited involvement to date.
6	Maintain membership in Bay Bio and participate in events and activities that relate to ag-biotechnology and/or further the county's goals.	Ongoing on a limited scale. Membership temporarily suspended due to budget constraints.
7	Convene a biotechnology industry working group to advise the county on optimal supporting policies	2010 or after.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 10
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION & NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT**

Background:

Yolo County has a number of small unincorporated communities, the largest of which has over 2,500 residents (Esparto). In the past two decades, the economy of the county has shifted towards the four incorporated cities, causing these small towns to lose some of their vibrancy and commercial activity. Because of recent economic and technology shifts, there is now a window of opportunity to revitalize many of these communities. Older, boarded up commercial buildings have a chance to again be commercially viable, and each downtown has the opportunity to serve its local population.

Esparto, for instance, has seen the approval of 500 new housing units since 2001 and is benefiting from the local spending power the new residents bring. Even so, millions of dollars are being spent by Esparto residents in Woodland and Vacaville, where they work. Esparto also has an active community-led revitalization program which will help the community capture some of that leakage. Like Esparto, Capay and Brooks also have limited commercial development potential, driven by Casino expansion efforts.

Clarksburg has the renovated Old Sugar Mill and the increased visitation that its attraction is bringing. Dunnigan has newer truck stops and gas stations, and is slated for an entire new town of up to 7,500 homes. Madison, the Highway 5 communities of Yolo and Zamora, and Knights Landing have some potential as their populations and highway traffic expand.

The retail and service markets in most downtowns are primarily local, and only small retail and office uses are likely to be supportable. Because of limited markets, the larger downtown parcels and vacant buildings cannot easily support a single use, so mixed use zoning makes sense for added flexibility. Those downtowns along I-5 can also benefit from maximizing highway commercial development.

Effective revitalization depends on adequate water, sewer, roads, fire and public safety. The infrastructure systems of these communities must also be upgraded as an important component of revitalization.

Lead Entities: County Administrator's Office, Planning and Public Works, Health, Local Agency Formation Commission, Community Service Districts, and Fire Districts

Supporting Organizations: Caltrans, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Department of Health, Public Utilities Commission, and many other jurisdictions.

Activities – Downtown Revitalization:

	Item	Status
1	Work in Yolo County’s downtowns to again create a vibrant mix of appropriately scaled retail and other commercial services, new residential and employment opportunities, governmental services, restaurants, entertainment, and cultural/recreational opportunities.	Ongoing. Current emphasis in Esparto.
2	Engage local chambers of commerce and other local organizations to ensure local revitalization momentum.	Ongoing.
3	Engage the development community to commit risk capital for attractive retail, office, industrial and residential uses. Provide incentives through zoning, partnerships, and financing assistance.	Ongoing.
4	Encourage housing development in style and numbers appropriate to each community to provide a customer base for downtown commercial development and help local Community Service Districts and County Service Areas improve their economies of scale in operations.	General Plan Update quantifies housing levels.
5	Focus on creating local retail and entertainment, including specialty food stores, restaurants, farmers markets and lodging to meet local and visitor demand.	Ongoing.
6	Madison should develop attractive Highway 16 frontage that reflects its status as the gateway to the Capay Valley and the Casino.	General Plan Land Use Map includes new development and ultimate relocation of the existing sewer ponds.
7	Existing commercial and industrial zoning in small towns should be maintained, with the added flexibility of mixed use zoning where appropriate.	DMX zoning in Esparto is pilot project.
8	Help promote Yolo County businesses by encouraging residents and employees to obtain their goods and services locally.	Campaign could start in 2010/11.
9	Optimize grant and other funding sources to increase the infrastructure capacity in our downtowns.	Ongoing as staff capacity and funding sources permit. \$155K EDA grant project now being implemented.
10	Encourage the development of pedestrian-oriented and bicycle-oriented neighborhoods within and between Yolo County’s downtowns	Esparto’s peripheral bike path is about 50 percent complete, and will be enhanced with the streetscape project.
11	Use street corridor improvements as catalysts for economic revitalization.	Phase I Esparto downtown streetscape is complete.

12	Supplement private and public funds through use of Community Development Block Grants and other outside funding sources whenever possible to stimulate economic development in the County	Ongoing as staff capacity and funding sources permit.
13	Where appropriate, consider establishing defined redevelopment Project Areas that can effectively use tax increment to encourage the revitalization of existing downtowns and neighborhoods	An Esparto-Madison combined redevelopment project area is a near term possibility. Will wait until State stops raiding redevelopment funds.
14	Encourage local businesses and community groups to form business investment districts, Main Street ⁶ programs, and local development corporations as local mechanisms for revitalization	Esparto is current focus, working with Capay Valley Vision and New Seasons Development Corporation.
15	Maintain an inventory of vacant and underutilized land designated for commercial and industrial uses. Target key underutilized or vacant parcels and buildings for rapid development and/or redevelopment.	Inventory to be taken in 2010/11.
16	Absent Redevelopment, consider establishing focused public investment areas where the County will take a more proactive role in providing basic infrastructure and assisting planned development.	Consider as appropriate. Largest downtowns are good candidates. The Clarksburg Ag District is another.
17	Streamline the development review process and fees to avoid unnecessary delays for targeted areas. Tools can include planned developments, specific plans, downtown overlays, historic overlays, etc.	Ongoing as staff capacity and funding sources permit.
18	Work actively with property owners in each community to create a balanced employment and housing.	Will start now that General Plan is adopted and Specific Plan process is beginning.

⁶ The Main Street program is a national movement to improve the quality of life in America's towns, cities and neighborhoods by restoring the economic health of historic central business districts. Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, the Main Street Approach organizes a district's comprehensive revitalization efforts into a four-point framework: organization; promotion; design; and economic restructuring. California presently has almost 40 Main Street Program participants of all sizes, including cities such as Arcata, Oceanside, Salinas, Hanford, Grass Valley and San Diego.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 11
HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS**

Background:

A variety of housing programs are operated by the Economic Development Division, which enhance quality of life by providing homes for local workers. The Division has an ongoing series of grant sources that keep an active home loan program for low income families, first-time homebuyers, and housing rehabilitation. The CDBG and HOME programs are the primary source of housing grants for the Division.

The Board of Supervisors has directed county staff to establish a more coordinated housing effort, including affordable housing, low income and assisted housing, homeless programs, migrant farm worker housing, and low interest loans to promote home ownership among low income populations. The form of this improved coordination is being developed.

Lead Entity:

County Administrator's Office

Supporting Organizations: Yolo Housing Authority, Planning and Public Works, Department of Employment and Social Services, General Services, Cities, and other public and non-profit housing and homeless assistance entities.

Activities – Housing and Public Works Programs:

	Item	Status
1	Continue to keep the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, First Time Homebuyer, and Housing Rehabilitation programs active.	Ongoing.
2	Optimize the use of CDBG grants for increased capacity of public works projects in our small communities.	Ongoing.
3	Continue to engage in the development and coordination of housing and homeless policies in Yolo County.	Underway. 10-year homeless plan being implemented.
4	Develop a General Plan housing element that continues to provide strategies for encouraging an adequate supply of quality affordable housing.	General Plan Housing Element complete and approved by HCD.
5	Identify viable affordable housing development projects and create partnerships for implementation.	Esparto's affordable senior housing project is first project.
6	Establish and maintain a viable grant and loan database and financial system that simplifies tracking and helps the county maintain compliance with the various grant programs.	Complete. In addition, a larger grants database is now being developed in the CAO's office.
7	Consider organizational solutions that will improve housing program coordination throughout the county.	Underway.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 12
BUSINESS ATTRACTION**

Background:

Thriving businesses are an indication of a positive business climate, which in turn attracts other businesses. Though most business investment is independent of government influence, local government can to some degree help create a strong local business climate for desired businesses. A positive local business climate meets the needs of the business prospect for transportation, water, sewer, workforce, land and buildings, access to capital, regulatory framework, access to technology, and other factors.

Yolo County should spend some of its resources promoting the county's strengths to prospective businesses. Promoting the county to new users involves creating at least a minimum set of marketing materials including a Web Page and printed promotional materials, and also involves some group and individual outreach to prospects. Our membership in SACTO helps us focus on larger prospects, but the smaller users remain our responsibility. Collaborating with our four cities on business attraction helps to leverage scarce marketing resources.

Most critically, though the unincorporated county has adequate land set aside for future industrial development in desired locations, it is not served. Though most available land has excellent highway access, almost all lacks infrastructure, making it much less attractive to all but large single users. Our Community Service Districts (CSD's) should be encouraged to develop their capacity to serve the undeveloped lands in their jurisdictions. Land suitable for redevelopment is currently concentrated at the two closed sugar mills, which fortunately have attracted desirable developments. The Old Sugarmill in Clarksburg has plenty of available industrial land, but if it is to attract desired processing, it needs sewer capacity and redevelopment. The Spreckels mill site near Woodland has a single user that may have additional land suitable for development. Planned development at select highway interchanges also has interested developers and should over the next decade serve a mix of highway and local traffic.

Perhaps one of the most promising strengths to promote is our access to technology through UC Davis and our ability to apply that technology through our ag-biotechnology firms. Other important technology targets include automotive and green technologies. Promoting technology is enticing, but should not supplant promotion to our basic industries. Some areas of the county still lack adequate Internet service.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office

Supporting Organizations: Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization (SACTO), UC Davis, Cities, Sac Metro Chamber, and others

Activities – Business Attraction:

	Item	Status
1	Create and maintain an up-to-date economic development Web page with pertinent economic and demographic information, as well as profiles of key development sites and vacant buildings available for new businesses.	Basic pages up, expansion and improvements. Ongoing.
2	Encourage manufacturing growth, including value-added agriculture, food processing, and agricultural suppliers and customers.	Ongoing.
3	Create printed and Web based materials that promote Yolo County.	Ongoing.
4	Encourage the telecommunications industry to install and maintain state-of-the-art high-speed high-capacity service throughout the county so that established businesses, public agencies, and home businesses can overcome any distance-to-market competitive disadvantages they currently have.	Ongoing. ARRA has some promising funding.
6	Promote our technological advantages, such as biotechnology.	Ongoing.
7	Attract new tourism venues as appropriate	Ongoing.
8	Maintain membership in SACTO as recruitment support for county's attraction efforts.	Ongoing. Temporarily suspended by B.O.S. in Nov. 2009.

**YOLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE # 13
BUSINESS EXPANSION & RETENTION**

Background:

Strong local economies have thriving businesses and a local workforce with the skills to match the needs of those businesses. Globalization, federal and state tax policies and other governmental and economic conditions strongly influence the local business climate. Local government itself has a limited ability to affect its business climate, but should still do all it can. Local government can effectively compete regionally and improve the business climate by ensuring adequate supplies of available land, assisting with local infrastructure, maintaining business-friendly implementation of the regulatory structure, providing technical assistance, arranging financial assistance, supporting technology development and adoption, and creating other supportive policies.

Yolo County has a number of important industries, including agriculture, higher education (e.g. UC Davis), food processing, distribution, gravel mining, natural gas fields, and others. Keeping abreast of trends in those industries and maintaining a nurturing business climate is important. Expansions such as Clark Pacific justify creating teams of staff that can work with the business to ensure timely permitting and construction. For businesses facing significant downsizing or closure, staff teams can also work with the WIB and other agencies to problem-solve, and perhaps help avert or mitigate the negative effects.

Yolo county's 391 businesses⁷ and approximately 800 farms are mostly small businesses. Therefore, helping our businesses thrive means creating an effective retention and expansion program geared to small businesses with an emphasis on our downtowns and our farms. The County is building its small business assistance program from scratch. Important components include membership on the Yolo County Workforce Investment Board (WIB), participation in the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce's Metro Pulse program, adding staff resources to provide technical assistance to our businesses, establishing a small business loan program, and creating a micro-enterprise program.

Lead Entity: County Administrator's Office

Supporting Organizations: Planning and Public Works, Health, Metro Chamber and others.

⁷ Dun & Bradstreet Zapdata©, 2008

Activities – Business Expansion and Retention:

	Item	Status
1	Implement USDA RBEG application for business assistance staff in Clarksburg and other agricultural districts.	Awarded & Underway. Complete in 2010.
2	Become a strong voice on the Workforce Investment Board to help better link businesses with services and education.	ED Manager is member of WIB Board & Executive Committee
3	Participate in LEEDS (Linking Education and Economic Development) and support their policy and forecasting goals.	Quarterly conference participation ongoing.
4	Support the continued operation of existing mining activities within the county as well as new mining in appropriate areas, subject to each operator meeting all applicable safety and environmental laws and regulations.	Ongoing.
5	Join the regional Metro Pulse business retention and expansion program, and use it to track business assistance and monitor business trends.	Joined in 2007, maintaining membership.
6	Reactivate the county's CDBG-funded Revolving loan program	Not Complete. Other available loan programs are less rigorous.
7	Develop a micro-lending program for small business assistance in Yolo County. Apply for CDBG grant to fund the program.	Sierra Economic Development Corporation offers an appropriate set of loans including micro-loans for farmers.
8	Collaborate with other economic development entities to leverage scarce economic development and capital resources.	Ongoing. Cities and County have a joint business retention/rapid response program.
9	Attract and retain a balance of businesses that provide a full range of quality career choices, serving entry-level as well as highly trained workers.	Ongoing.
10	Encourage Yolo County residents and employees to live and work in the community	Ongoing.

11	Support non-profit business and merchant associations with the goals of promoting a strong business base, encouraging joint marketing, and improving the County's business climate. These business and merchant associations may include but not be limited to the Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization (SACTO), Sacramento Area Regional Technology Alliance (SARTA), Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, the Yolo County Visitors Bureau (YCVB), Capay Valley Vision, Capay Valley Grown, and various Chambers of Commerce.	Ongoing.
12	Collaborate with local non-profit, business and merchant associations to promote and advertise local programs and events.	Can implement if funding for support becomes viable.
13	Facilitate catalyst projects by bringing together key organizations to expand vocational and technical programs in secondary schools	Through the WIB.
14	Promote and expand business activities that support schools, such as school partnerships, student internships, faculty internships, and job shadowing.	Through the WIB.
15	Foster an on-going connection with existing industries to retain businesses by effectively responding to concerns.	RBEG small business consultant conducting systematic outreach.
16	Work with the Employment Training Panel (ETP) to enhance training for employees of small businesses and seasonal workers.	Collaborative relations established.