



**Economic Vitality Corporation**

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Non-profit 501(c)(3)

July 9, 2015

Mr. Dan Buckshi  
Chief Administrative Officer  
County of San Luis Obispo  
County Government Center  
1055 Monterey Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Re: **Status Report on Economic Strategy Project**

Dear Mr. Buckshi:

The Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC) of San Luis Obispo County is please to submit the attached report dated on June 24, 2015 representing an update to the countywide economic strategy project.

Now in its fifth year, the implementation of the project continues to be an impetus for positive change in support of economic vitality. To put this update into context, below is a chronology of major milestones related to the project:

- Project initiated in 2009
- Economic Strategy published in 2010
- Endorsement of the Economic Strategy in 2011
- Project implementation initiated in 2011
- Formal status report in 2013
- Advocacy policy revision in 2014

Revision of the EVC Advocacy Policy made in 2014 included an in-depth evaluation of EVC's advocacy policies and refining them to align with the cluster priorities. In addition, the Policy was revised to reflect the designation of the EVC and the Economic Strategy clusters as a referral body by the County of San Luis Obispo. As a result of that effort, we have seen an increase in advocacy by the industry clusters represented in the strategy, specifically on issues related to land use, resources, housing, and infrastructure. This enhanced engagement has resulted in increased awareness and a more balanced discussion of policy decisions throughout the County.

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By design, the Economic Strategy Project remains responsive to current economic needs, regularly evolving to improve the project's efficacy and outcomes. Through a collaborative process with EVC staff, County staff, the Economic Strategy clusters, and the Board Liaison representatives, a comprehensive evaluation of the project's current structure, goals and implementation processes was completed. This included analyzing the relevance and feasibility of existing and proposed initiatives, and revisiting leadership roles. The outcomes of those discussions were documented and vetted by key stakeholders, and resulted in the attached Economic Strategy update. The EVC Board of Directors recently established a five-year review cycle, as part of the strategic planning process, beginning with adoption of the Economic Strategy Update 2015 during the Board's monthly meeting on June 24, 2015.

Major accomplishments highlighted in the 2015 update include:

- Establishment of the Economic Strategy Steering Committee to promote collaboration across all of the six clusters, and to guide implementation of the economic strategy;
- Identification of County liaisons to support key initiatives in leadership roles, such as the Assistant County Administrative Officer being a member of the Steering Committee and the directors (and/or their delegates) of the County's Planning and Building and Public Works departments being members of the Building, Design, and Construction Cluster;
- Addressing the need for workforce housing through multiple initiatives (building awareness, assessing new and modified policies to facilitate a wide range of housing types and affordability, and convening key stakeholders solutions);
- Development of guidelines for industry participation in the County' process for planning, prioritization and financing of infrastructure;
- Development of a mechanism for better tracking the County's economy and the connection with the Economic Strategy;
- Successful completion of a pilot project between the County and the EVC called the **Economic Analysis Program Pilot Project** that is now finalized for implementation; and
- Formation and implementation of a tri-county Broadband Consortium.

We enthusiastically continue to collaborate and convene both public and private sectors, to effectively implement the economic strategy that will foster the economic wellbeing of the County by increasing/expanding jobs and businesses, thereby enhancing our quality of life.

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Sincerely,



Kris Vardas  
Chair  
Economic Strategy Project



Michael E. Manchak  
President & CEO

cc: EVC Board of Directors  
Christine Rogers, Program Manager