

**Workforce Investment Board
Of Merced County
Board of Realtors
Meeting Notes
October 18, 2001**

Members Present:

Andrea Baker	George Brown	Bill Cahill
Doreen Crawford	Kathleen Crookham	Harry Dull
John Fowler	Carol Greenberg	Brian Griffin
John Heading	Jeff Knapp	Charlie Lambert
Gisela Malone	Anne Newins	Dave Riordan
Carole Roberds	Al Romero	Dick Shipley
Mike Smith	Mike Sullivan	James White

Members Absent:

Kathy Andrade	Susan Armstrong	Richard Becker
Nicholas Benjamin	Don Bergman	Bob Bittner
Bob Carpenter	Elaine Craig	Ben Duran
Ernie Flores	Peter Fluetsch	Robert Harmon
Leo Lamb	Tom May	Nellie McGarry
Ned Miller	Grover Omyer	Rick Osorio
Leslie Peeler	Alfonse Peterson	Steve Tinetti

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1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chair, John Heading and roll was taken by Donna Ornelas.
 2. Approval of Agenda – The agenda was accepted as written.
 3. Public Opportunity to Speak – none
 4. Economic Development Panel – Each panel member gave an overview of their position within the county.
 - a. Rick Dahlgren, City of Los Banos – Mr. Dahlgren reported that Los Banos is involved in redevelopment of an area approx 2700 acres, this is an increase of 400% since 1999. He noted that one of Los Banos’ biggest challenges is the lack of infrastructure. Mr. Dahlgren noted that the city has taken efforts to purchase land of the rail property approximately 3 years ago. It is anticipated escrow will close in a couple of weeks. Additionally, he noted that there has been an application submitted for Rail-to-Trail. Los Banos will also be hiring a revitalizing consultant. There is to be an industrial park with a link to the rail property. The city is looking into a community facility district as well as a baseball stadium next to a housing development. Another proposal for the Los Banos area is a new century

learning center, where they would be incorporating a business center for commuters.

- b. Scott McBride, City of Atwater – Mr. McBride reported that they are working on industrial projects. The projects total \$33 million dollar in investments. It is anticipated there will be 150-200 new jobs created out of this. In addition, there is a commercial development of 60,000 sq. ft. currently under construction, plus 100,000 sq. ft. for assessment. It is anticipated this will bring in 300-350 new jobs over the next few years. He noted that one area of concern for Atwater is the downtown area. He noted there is code enforcement, city and county tax sharing issues to be taken into consideration. Future growth is expected due to the new high school. He noted that new home prices increased dramatically in last 4 years, and the largest was 10%-11% growth rate in last year. It is thought that the prison may be the prime reason for increase in new home purchases.
- c. Dave Hanham, City of Livingston – Mr. Hanham noted that between the years of 1995-2000 only 22 single-family dwellings were built in Livingston. It is anticipated that more home building will occur this coming year. The homes are expected to be larger, upscale homes. There are plans in place to add a Travel Center of America (truck stop), consisting of 12.6 acres. Additionally, the city is working on an industrial project. The city has received a letter of intent from a major hotel, they anticipate more businesses coming to the area producing 200-250 new jobs. This is anticipated growth over the next few years. Mr Hanham noted that the City of Livingston economic development has an advantage of smaller staff, creating quick turnaround on decision-making, etc. He noted that schools in Livingston have the highest math scores in the county and increased scores in high school. The property values north of Livingston are helping in affordable housing for Livingston. There is a 700 acre redevelopment plan in the works, and major redevelopment in the downtown area.
- d. Bill Cahill, City of Merced – Mr. Cahill noted that the economy of Merced is greatly impacted by the University. The primary goal of economic development in Merced is recruitment, expansion and retention. He noted that, while there have been many industrial inquiries including call centers, customer services, etc., there seems to have been a fall in interest. They are now seeing more traditional manufacturer inquiries. Mr. Cahill noted they are still working on downtown redevelopment. Additionally, they are looking at cultural infrastructure – the impact for retaining residents. He noted that another consideration is the need for adequate housing for students, and faculty. Some of the challenges for the Merced area is slowing economy, and workforce skill levels. He reported that our area is far behind the national average in academic scores. He addressed the downside of SB 975 in relation to economic development. Mr. Cahill noted that on average there are 150-200 new units built per year, while this year it is expected that 400 units will be built.

- e. John Fowler, County of Merced – Mr. Fowler noted that the County is working on a fiber optic services and installation at Castle. He noted that the capabilities will exceed any industrial park in the valley. In addition, there are plans for wireless internet, and video teleconferencing at a new welcoming center stationed at Castle. Mr. Fowler noted that there have been many people interested in the entrepreneurial programs and they will be working with one-stop partners on this.
 - f. Lou Martinez, Merced County Economic Development Corp (MCEDCO)– Mr. Martinez reported that there is a lot of interest in Merced from companies. There has been much cooperation and support from the community. The University and Castle gain a lot of attention from outside the area. It is projected there will be large growth over next 30 yrs up, boosting the population to 20 million in the San Joaquin Valley. MCEDCO is continuing to seek grants and helping communities who do not have the resources.
5. Review Strategic Choices Recommendations
- a. John Baker – Mr. Baker called attention to the recommendations from Cal State University Stanislaus on economic development and growth. He asked that members of the WIB look at these in relation to the needs and plans addressed by the panel members.
6. Prioritize Strategic Choices/Economic Development Areas for WIB
- a. John Baker – Mr. Baker led the group in a brainstorming session to prioritize areas of economic development. (*see Attachment A*)
7. Chair Comments – None
8. Adjourn – 4:45

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN PLACE IN 3 YEARS?							
<i>Better Educated System/Citizens</i>	<i>Better Job/Better Pay</i>	<i>Enhanced Services</i>	<i>Planned Growth</i>	<i>Improved Transportation</i>	<i>Booming Castle</i>	<i>Integrated Workforce Development Plan</i>	<i>Improved Infrastructure</i>
Improve Education	Higher Wages	Macy's	Completion of Downtown Development	Road Improvements	Castle Build out	Business & Education Partnering	Service Infrastructure
New Culture for Learning	More & Better Jobs	Strengthening Families	Improving Air Quality	Bart East	747's at Castle		Improved Community Appearance
UC up and running	High Tech Business Growth	Medical, retail, entertainment			Castle with multi-functional development		Community Beautification Projects
Good Public Schools	Large Employers Higher Wages	More Cultural Infrastructure			No more room at Castle Industrial Park		Affordable Housing
Higher Education	Higher Paying more diverse employment	Youth Programs Childcare					
Markedly improved school test scores							