

MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
PLANNING DIVISION

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Community Development Agency

RE: Countywide Plan Economic Element
Item #5

DATE: October 20, 2003

Background:

The Marin Economic Commission (MEC) is responsible for suggesting to the Board of Supervisors economic policies and implementation measures for inclusion in the economic element of the Countywide Plan. The Commission is comprised of ten members which include one representative from each of the following: Marin Nexus, Agriculture, Chambers of Commerce, environmental organizations, Marin Builders Association, Marin Association of Realtors, North Bay Council, Marin Housing Council, the Cities of Marin and Labor organizations. The Commission is submitting their final Economic suggestions for the Countywide Plan (attachment 1).

The development of this element began in April 2001, with a workshop on “Sustaining the vitality of Marin’s economy”. The keynote speaker was Stephen Roulac, CEO of the Roulac Group who is considered a leading academic and futurist in real estate and the economy. The workshop purpose was to identify the key economic issues facing Marin County.

Following the workshop a subcommittee of the MEC was formed and Suzanne Lampert, from Mundie & Associates consultants in land use and economics was hired to assist staff and the MEC complete the element.

The Economic Element complements the other components of the Countywide Plan: its goals, policies, and strategies address the aspects of land use, housing, and transportation that affect the economy. The Economic Element relies on those other components of the Plan to provide primary guidance with respect to those topics.

Just as the Economic Element is only a part of the Marin Countywide Plan, economic activity in the unincorporated portion of Marin County comprises only a part of the economic activity of the county as a whole. Therefore, this Economic Element can help set the tone for Marin County, and can provide an example of goals, policies, and programs for Marin County cities, but it will directly affect policies for economic activity in only a small portion of the County’s developed/developable land area. The Element includes policies and programs that encourage the cities to adopt and pursue complementary strategies for a vital economy in a sustainable planning framework.

The entire Economic Element will be an appendix to the Countywide Plan and the policies and programs will be included in the Plan. The MEC has already begun one of their program suggestions, a *Targeted Industries Study*, which is due to be completed in December. The Study will assess the business clusters (employers with the greatest number of employees) in Marin County and make recommendations on how to fill the gaps to strengthen the largest clusters.

Recommendation And Future Steps:

No action other than discussion and comment is required at this time. The Marin Economic Commission has been invited to attend the meeting, and Chairperson Virginia Brunini will be present to answer questions. At your next meeting, staff will present the final recommendations on San Quentin Prison.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Draft Economic Element dated April 10, 2003.