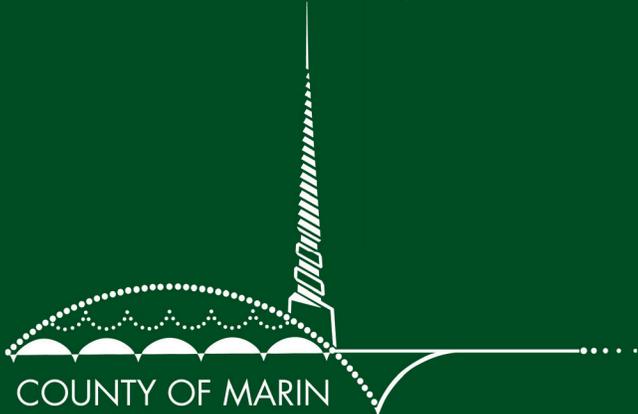


Marin County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan



About

About this Report

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Executive Summary

Marin County has been fortunate to have a largely prosperous economy nested within the broader San Francisco Bay Area. Residents have enjoyed access to well-paying jobs in the larger metropolitan areas like San Francisco while local employers have been able to draw talent from surrounding counties to fill gaps in Marin's workforce. As the Bay Area regional economy has flourished, so to have residents, businesses and government in Marin County, but this success has also brought challenges. Marin's employers increasingly compete to fill jobs, especially at lower wage levels. Significant job creation in high-skilled industries have benefitted many while leaving others behind, creating a wealth gap in the county. Longstanding issues, like housing and transportation, in some cases are working against, not for Marin's residents, due to limited supply.

Against this backdrop the pandemic had significant impacts on the Marin economy early on. We know the impacts were not felt evenly; more affluent residents fared well while other residents lost jobs, housing and even educational opportunities. Despite this environment, Marin has successfully navigated the pandemic and is showing good signs of recovery, both in health and economic outcomes. One thing that was abundantly clear is that the pandemic forced and accelerated shifts in how the economy now carries out business.

The challenge facing Marin today is for the entire county to understand how the economy is performing for its residents and to better learn what drives the creation, expansion and attraction of employment and opportunity in a way that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable. With that knowledge, stakeholders from Marin can collaboratively decide what needs to be done, by whom, and how to effectively take action using existing resources in new ways. This is what an economic strategy like the Marin County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP) is about. Ultimately, the actions taken in support of the EVSP are intended to create a dynamic economy, providing equitable access to good jobs, opportunities for new business creation and a high quality of life for all Marin's residents.

EVSP GUIDING PRINCIPLES & APPROACH

To orient the EVSP analysis and proposed actions, a set of Guiding Principles were identified. These Guiding Principles are:

- Take a "Whole County" Approach to the Economy
- Focus on Targeted Industries and Their Impacts
- Improve Inputs for Targeted Industries
- Collaborate to Aggregate Demand & Mediate Supply of Actions
- Use the County's "Priority Four E's" as a form of measurement

Approach

Producing the EVSP followed a "bottom-up approach" whereby stakeholder input was matched with robust economic analysis to determine the actions the strategy would pursue. Such an approach assures stakeholders will participate in the implementation of the EVSP because it responds to the demands they identified while helping the county and other service providers know where to invest.

The EVSP team conducted 12 stakeholder focus groups with over 100 participants including residents, public officials, non-profit and business leaders. Their inputs were critical to forming the actions of the EVSP.

The Pandemic's impact on Marin County

When the pandemic hit in March 2020 Marin County responded quickly. Assuring health safety was the top priority while the county also created an important dialogue platform with the local business community to manage state-mandated business closures and health protocols.

Understanding the pandemic's impacts on the Marin economy was a necessary part of the EVSP process, in part to identify any immediate term actions that can support recovery. When compared to other like counties, Marin fared better in terms of overall health impacts and restoring jobs and tax revenues however impacts were felt differently among three groups:

RESIDENTS: Some residents lost jobs or other income opportunities (such as gig-related jobs) and subsequently suffered financial hardship. However, Marin’s affluent residents also experienced gains in asset values, including equities and real estate. Not all residents had equal access to remote jobs.

CITIES/TOWNS: Commercial vacancies increased during and post-pandemic leaving some downtowns with vacant street front properties. Foot traffic in some downtown areas has not fully recovered, hurting businesses that rely on in-person consumption. City officials have collaborated to keep downtowns active throughout the pandemic.

BUSINESSES: Business performance during the pandemic was uneven, with some businesses flourishing and others suffering from lack of revenues, including leading to shuttered businesses.

Findings from Stakeholders and Economic Analysis

Stakeholders communicated challenges and opportunities in the economy according to traditional “economic inputs” including workforce, governance, logistics, finance & capital, quality of life, resources (environment) and innovation. The input obtained from stakeholders forms the core of actions of the EVSP.

The stakeholder input was followed by a robust competitiveness assessment of Marin’s economy with the intent of identifying “targeted industries” that will deliver job and revenue growth over the next 3-5 years and thus deserve focus over the life of the EVSP. These targeted industries are Life Sciences, IT & Multimedia, Tourism & Hospitality, Healthcare & Aging, Climate-related enterprises, and a new category referred to as “remote work opportunity.”

Flagship Initiatives

The many months of research and stakeholder input provided significant data into the ambitions and needs Marin of residents and businesses over the next five years. This information has been organized into “Flagship Initiatives” that can be pursued by the county and the community. Each Flagship has corresponding actions, identifies illustrative stakeholders for collaboration and defines “success metrics” to measure progress. The Flagships are:

1. Expand & Integrate Marin’s Workforce Infrastructure
2. Catalyze Growth of Marin’s Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
3. Accelerate Growth of Climate Solutions & Enabling Enterprises
4. Increase Pathways to Economic Mobility for Marin Residents
5. Formalize Countywide Economic Development Activities

Implementation

Economic strategies are usually led by those public entities they serve. In the case of the EVSP, Marin County can serve as the “catalyst and convener” leveraging its resources and expertise to support community partners working on the “front lines.” Under the EVSP the county will collaborate with key partners, including the Marin Economic Forum, to drive the EVSP.

Activities include:

- Ensure integration and collaboration to achieve EVSP goals across county agencies;
- Convene stakeholders to lead implementation;
- Collaborate with Marin cities and towns; and
- Measure Progress of the EVSP.

II. Introduction

A. THE CHALLENGE: THE PANDEMIC'S IMPACT & THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING A FUTURE

Marin County has been fortunate to have a largely prosperous economy nested within the broader San Francisco Bay Area. Residents have enjoyed access to well-paying jobs in the larger metropolitan areas of San Francisco and Silicon Valley, while local employers have been able to draw talent from surrounding counties to fill gaps in Marin's workforce. As the Bay Area regional economy has flourished, so to have residents, businesses and government in Marin County, but this success has also brought challenges. Marin's employers increasingly compete to fill jobs, especially at lower wage levels. Significant job creation in high-skilled industries have benefitted many while leaving others behind, creating a wealth gap in the county. Longstanding issues, like housing and transportation, in some cases are working against, not for Marin's residents, due to limited supply.

Against this backdrop the pandemic had significant impacts on the Marin economy early on. Unemployment claims, especially for lower wage workers, skyrocketed and local businesses were forced to close, and some still have not reached pre-pandemic revenue levels over two years later. The digital shift of business operations left many of Marin's beloved small businesses behind, lacking resources or expertise to "pivot" to a new operating environment. We know the impacts were not felt evenly; more affluent residents were able to shift to a remote work environment and enjoyed increased values of assets like their homes, while other residents lost jobs, housing and even educational opportunities. Despite this environment, Marin has effectively contended with the pandemic to date and is showing good signs of recovery, both in health and economic outcomes. One thing that was abundantly clear is that the Pandemic has, in fact, forced and accelerated shifts in how every sector of the economy now carries out business.

The challenge facing Marin today is for the entire county to understand how the economy is performing for its residents and their communities, its industries and key public, private and non-profit providers. With that understanding, stakeholders across the county can better learn what drives the creation,

expansion and attraction of employment and opportunity in a way that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable. Then, with that knowledge, stakeholders from Marin can collaboratively decide what needs to be done, by whom, and how to effectively take action using existing resources in new ways. This is what an economic strategy is all about. This is what the Marin County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP) is about.

B. THE MARIN COUNTY ECONOMIC VITALITY STRATEGIC PLAN

As Marin County residents, officials and businesses managed the impacts of the pandemic, consensus for an economic strategy emerged. Such a strategy would not only help identify near-term needs in the economy resulting from pandemic impacts but could identify strategic actions over the next 3-5 years that would ensure growth of the economy in a post-pandemic environment. With the support of Marin County, the Marin Economic Forum (MEF) designed a template for an economic strategy, hired consulting firm James Gollub Associates to assist with production and recruited a Steering Committee of leaders from across Marin County to help guide the process. The EVSP process included 5 key steps:

- 1. The Pandemic Impacts & Recovery Opportunities**
- 2. Competitive Economic Assessment of Marin County**
 - a. Marin's Overall Performance**
 - b. Marin's Industry Competitiveness**
 - c. Marin's Economic Inputs**
- 3. Stakeholder Focus Groups**
- 4. Cross-County Stakeholder Session**
- 5. Prioritization of Actions & Plan Preparation**

This process resulted in a set of "Flagship Initiatives" that the County of Marin and community partners will pursue over the next 5 years. Ultimately, the actions taken in support of the EVSP are intended to create a dynamic economy, providing equitable access to good jobs, opportunities for new business creation and a high quality of life for all Marin's residents.

C. EVSP GUIDING PRINCIPLES & APPROACH

To orient the EVSP analysis and proposed actions, a set of Guiding Principles were identified. These Guiding Principles are intended to be straightforward and involve demystifying often over-complicated economic concepts and language. They are:

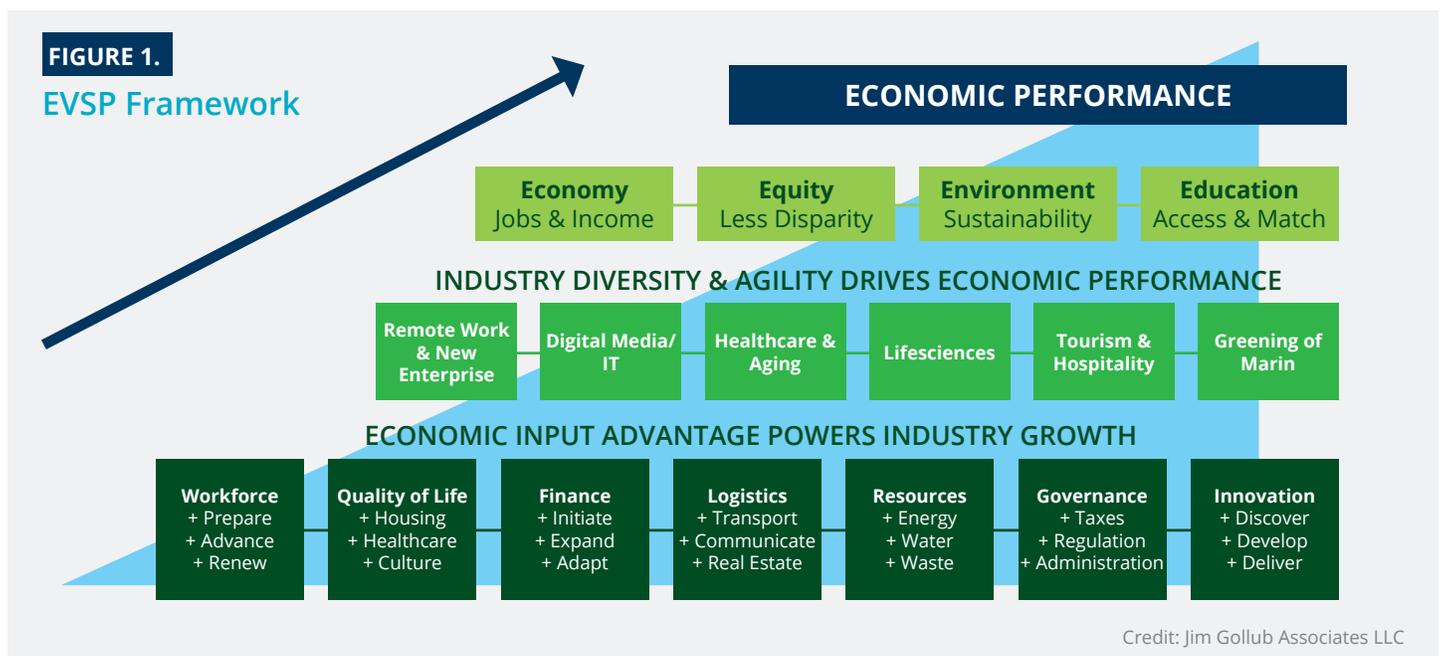
- **Take a “Whole County” Approach to the Economy:** Ensure actions impact the economy and residents across Marin’s multiple jurisdictions.
- **Focus on Industries & Their Impacts:** Accelerate formation, expansion and attraction of priority industries with high primary, secondary and indirect economic impacts creating jobs, living wages, and investment that are sustainable.
- **Improve Inputs for Targeted Industries:** Create actions to drive growth and competitiveness of target industries at the economic inputs level, including: workforce, finance, quality of life, logistics, adequate and sustainable resources, governance, and innovation and enterprise.
- **Collaborate to Aggregate Demand & Mediate Supply:** Catalyze collaborative actions across communities with public, private and non-governmental actors as partners. The key to EVSP implementation is to support inclusive, bottom-up collaboration to identify and aggregate demand (needs) on the part of end-user industries and mediate supply (EVSP actions) of existing and new public or private economic input providers. Much can be accomplished by using existing resources in new ways.

→ **Use the “Priority Four E’s” as a form of measurement:** Marin County has established a set of “priority Four E’s”: Equity, Environment, Education and Economy. The EVSP is oriented to use these themes as a form of measurement in evaluation of actions and for measuring desired outcomes of the proposed Flagship Initiatives (Chapter V.). For example:

- **Economy:** Seek job growth across multiple industries with occupational diversity and high-quality jobs.
- **Equity:** Raise living wages and salaries and reduction in disparity in household and per capita incomes, creating equal opportunities resulting in lower poverty rates across all groups.
- **Environment:** Progress toward zero carbon emissions, independent water supply, reduction and reuse of waste, with corresponding growth of green businesses and employment.
- **Education:** Enhance K-12 preparation and workforce training to impart in-demand career skills, with educational opportunities reaching across all groups.

APPROACH

The EVSP approach relied on a bottom-up, stakeholder led, process to identify needs combined with rigorous economic analysis to define Marin’s targeted sectors of growth for the next 3-5 years, identify actions applied at the economic input level that will support growth of those sectors, with a goal of good job creation and increased revenues, and leverage the economy to provide greater resources and quality of life outcomes for Marin’s residents. This approach is integrated into a more detailed strategy framework as illustrated in Figure 1 below.



III. The Pandemic's Impact on Marin

A. HOW IS MARIN RECOVERING FROM THE PANDEMIC?

The EVSP is intended to define actions that will improve the performance of the economy for Marin residents. To do this, the EVSP needs to take into consideration how the pandemic has impacted Marin, to determine how well the county is recovering and whether there are new challenges that need to be addressed or long-standing challenges accelerated by the pandemic.

Three primary questions guided the impact analysis:

- 1. Are Marin's Health Impacts Like Others?** Are health impacts different from those of other counties? Are there differences in outcomes across different groups that vary by age, ethnicity, and income?
- 2. How Are We Recovering Economically?** Is the Marin economy recovering quickly or lagging behind other regions? Has employment recovered? How have businesses fared?
- 3. Has The Pandemic Changed How We Work?** What technology trends has the Pandemic accelerated? How are those trends felt in Marin's economy?

To show the differences in impact, the EVSP compares Marin County's Pandemic recovery to four similar U.S. counties. Counties were chosen based on adjacency to a major metropolitan area, a population range from 250,000 to 1,000,000, workforce numbers, a higher-than-average median household income (the US median is \$62,843)¹, a county's GDP,

and a county's portfolio of abundant open space. The following four counties were selected (See Fig. 2):

- 1. San Luis Obispo County, CA**
- 2. Kitsap County, WA**
- 3. Boulder County, CO**
- 4. Westchester County, NY**

B. THE PANDEMIC'S HEALTH IMPACTS

Marin County was able to manage the Pandemic health crises in exemplary fashion, rallying public and private resources towards prevention and treatment, ultimately realizing the highest vaccination rate in the country at one point while experiencing relatively lower hospitalization and death rates compared to peer Bay Area counties. Some key data:

- Marin has experienced 36,760 COVID cases and 243 recorded COVID deaths (June 23, 2022)².
- Marin had fewer cases and deaths per 10,000 residents than the four benchmark counties. (See Fig. 3) This is especially noteworthy given Marin's high number of older residents and the increased vulnerability of older residents to COVID.
- Despite these encouraging overall numbers, Marin's Latin-American community, which represents 16% of the population, experienced over 30% of COVID cases, and 25% of hospitalizations. Both indicators were significantly higher relative to other demographics in Marin³.

FIGURE 2.

Benchmark Counties for COVID Impacts Analysis

County	Population (2020 Census)	Labor Force	Current Dollar GDP (2019, thousands of \$)	Median Household Income (2019)
Marin, CA	262,321	134,474	\$27,489,610	\$115,246
San Luis Obispo, CA	282,424	123,284	\$19,065,947	\$73,518
Westchester, NY	1,004,457	484,706	\$86,228,480	\$96,610
Boulder, CO	330,758	195,449	\$30,176,559	\$83,019
Kitsap, WA	275,611	126,130	\$13,983,229	\$75,411

Sources: Columns 2-3, 5: United States Census Bureau. Column 4: Bureau of Economic Analysis

FIGURE 3.

COVID Cases and Deaths by County

County	Population (2020 Census)	Total Cases	Total Deaths	COVID Cases Per 10,000 Residents
Marin, CA	262,321	37,211	293	1418.5
San Luis Obispo, CA	282,424	54,691	481	1936.5
Westchester, NY	1,004,457	273,428	2,729	2722.1
Boulder, CO	330,758	69,682	369	2106.7
Kitsap, WA	275,611	42,641	347	1547.1

Source: USAFacts.org COVID Tracker (as of June 1st 2022)

C. THE PANDEMIC'S ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Economic impacts are measured within three primary groups: residents, businesses and towns and cities. Those three groups experienced various impacts from the pandemic:

RESIDENTS: Some residents lost jobs or other income opportunities (such as gig-related jobs) and subsequently suffered financial hardship. Residents able to keep employment may have experienced reduced income opportunities through the need to provide care (children, older adults) or loss of a public transportation option during the pandemic heights. However, Marin's affluent residents also experienced gains in asset values, including equities and real estate. Some residents had to acquire new skills to accommodate remote work and education demands, but not all residents had equal access to the training or equipment that was required to work, even in traditional rolls at restaurants or healthcare. Despite some financial relief and support programs for residents, eligibility or accessibility did present challenges for some.

CITIES/TOWNS: Commercial vacancies increased during and post-pandemic leaving some downtowns with vacant street front properties. Foot traffic in some downtown areas has not recovered, hurting businesses that rely on in-person consumption. Managing public spaces must balance commercial and public interests, potentially altering traditional downtown landscapes to accommodate new forms of visitor experience, such as outdoor dining. Creating affordable housing

continues to be challenged by the desire of many residents to maintain single-family zoning, especially considering the premium placed on space due to new work-from-home opportunities or safety concerns created by the pandemic. Sales and property tax revenues temporarily dipped, but have mostly returned or exceeded pre-pandemic levels. The composition of most downtown business districts and main streets, with a high proportion of in-person, locally serving markets, remains a risk to economic shocks, including the current (2022) uncertainty and inflationary pressures. However city officials have collaborated to keep downtowns vibrant and active throughout the pandemic with many in-person events returning and consideration of new uses for public spaces increasing.

BUSINESSES: Business performance during the pandemic was uneven, with some businesses flourishing and others suffering from lack of revenues, including leading to shuttered businesses. Decline in business, establishment closures, and job loss have led to difficulties paying bills like rent. Staffing continues to be as difficult as pre-pandemic levels with lower wage jobs the hardest to fill, in part due to Marin's small workforce able to accept wages that are lower than "living wage" (currently around \$24/hr.). Exogenous factors including supply chain disruption, inflation and increased consumer preferences for online consumption create an air of uncertainty for small businesses challenging their planning and investment. Some businesses have been forced to adapt business models although the ability to do so is highly dependent on owner resources and experience, creating more demand for business services (and expense to owner).

Major impacts are concentrated in the following issues and data points:

13,882

Unemployment insurance claims reached 13,882 in April 2020, but these numbers have since stabilized and now Marin has among the lowest levels of unemployment in the state (1.8% for May 2022⁴).

↗ \$1.614B

Taxable sales in the county have recovered and exceeded pre-pandemic levels: \$1.614B in Q2 2021, up from \$1.331B in Q2 2018.⁵

↗ 10%

Business license applications increased by almost 10% in 2020 vs. 2019 to 3,025.

↗ 5.5%

Marin experienced a faster jobs recovery than each of the four benchmark counties, with a 5.5% increase in jobs from January 2021 to July 2021, compared to 2.1% in Boulder, 4.2% in Kitsap, and 1.2% in San Luis Obispo. (See Fig. 4)

↗ 74.6%

In the hotel sector, June 2021 occupancy rose to 74.6% (up from 42.2% the previous year), with a revenue per available room ("RevPAR") of \$114.74 (up from \$48.50)⁶ suggesting a path to recovery for this sector.

Jobs in the leisure and hospitality sector, including those in foodservice, retail trade, and "other services", comprised of many of Marin's in-person service providers, were most severely impacted (Figure 5) and jobs in those sectors remain significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels (-21%, -8%, and -9% in May 2022 respectively⁷).

Many small businesses struggled to hire and retain employees as people dealt with childcare issues, illness and other workforce concerns. Childcare remains among the top challenges to help employees return to work with a shortage of subsidized daycare available in Marin and a shortage of professionals working in childcare leading to under capacity.

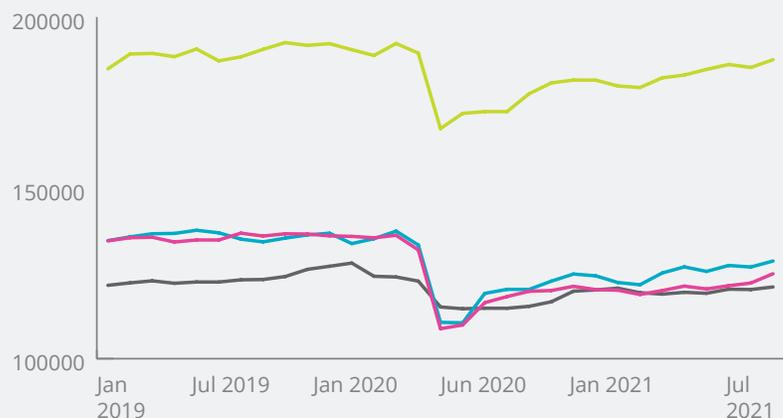
In a business impact survey from November 2021 business recovery time was varied (Figure 6), however, a majority of respondents also noted intent to remain in operation with the same number of staff or even increase employment. (Figure 7).

Access to capital was and remains an issue, especially for BIPOC entrepreneurs. Many small businesses that didn't have a good relationship with their bank had difficulty accessing government assistance such as the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). However, businesses in Marin were able to access over \$1 billion in funding through two rounds of the PPP.⁸

The County of Marin also made significant funds available for the purposes of business loans and grants, including partnering with jurisdiction Chambers of Commerce to provide grants and use of Community Development Block Grants totaling \$915,000 for loans and grants to small businesses operating in specific districts.

FIGURE 4.

Jobs recovery among Marin and four benchmark counties



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Data Finder

FIGURE 5.

Unemployment impacts by sector

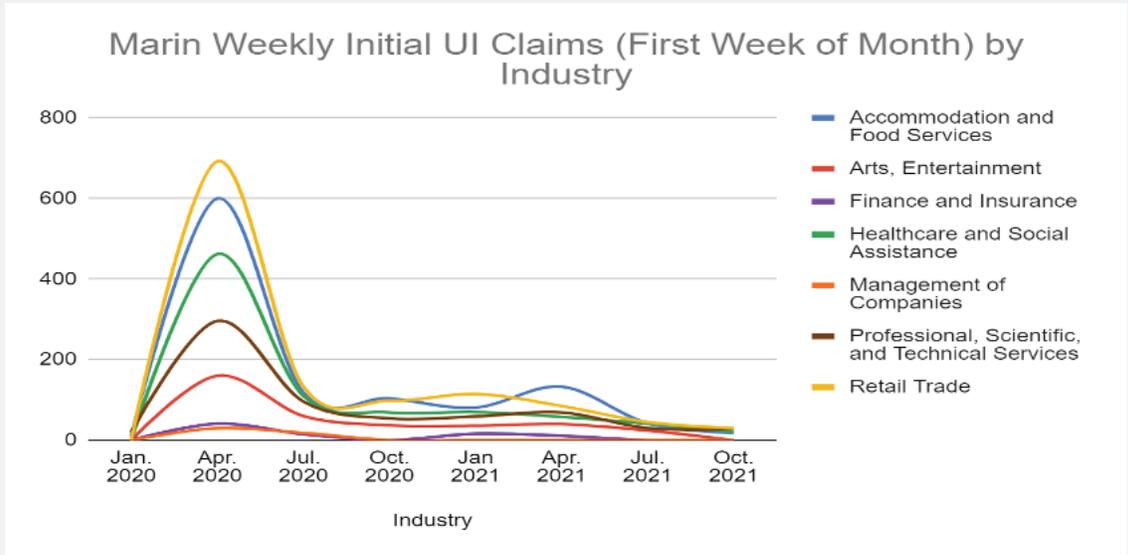
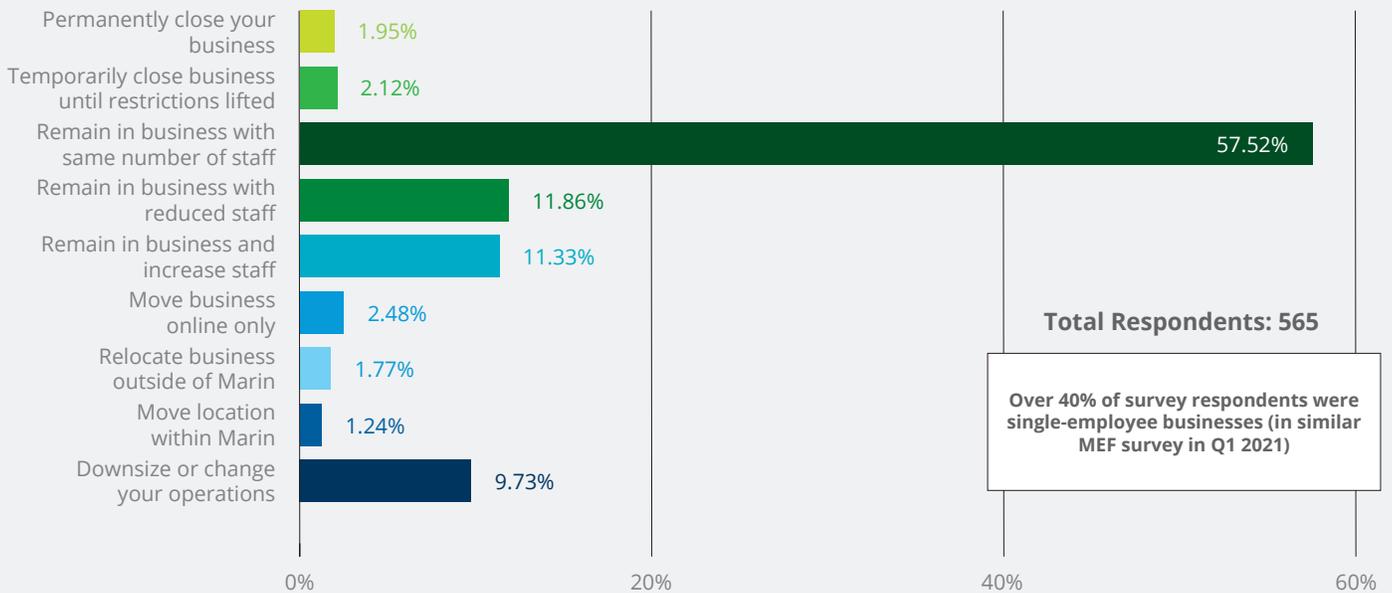


FIGURE 6.

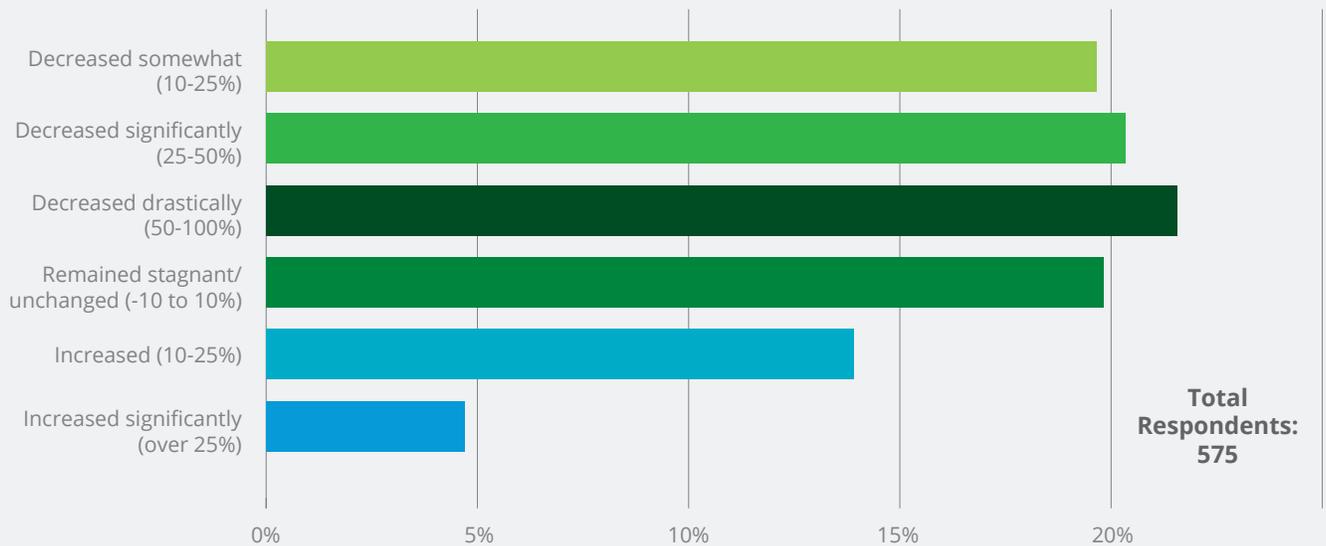
Business Planning 2021



Source: MEF 2021 COVID Impact Business Survey Oct/Nov 2021. Respondents were self-selected, and may not be fully representative of Marin SMEs.

FIGURE 7.

Business Revenue Impacts 2021



Source: MEF 2021 COVID Impact Business Survey Oct/Nov 2021. Respondents were self-selected, and may not be fully representative of Marin SMEs.

D. THE PANDEMIC'S ACCELERATION OF LONG-TERM TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Marin's businesses and industries both suffered and thrived due to the COVID-induced acceleration of a number of long-term business and technology trends. (See Fig. 8). These trends must be considered as stakeholders in Marin look to support the economy going forward in consideration of both near term or longer term recovery interventions:

- **ECOMMERCE:** Boomed across all stages in purchasing cycles with design, engineering, production, purchasing and distribution moving online. For Marin, this is having major impacts on tourism and retail, both positive and negative.
- **REMOTE WORK:** New work trends increased with white collar employees spending increasing time working from home and less at the office. This could have a positive effect, increasing local employment and expenditures in the community.
- **REMOTE SERVICES:** Providers increased their online offerings from healthcare to education and training, aided by growth in remote diagnostics equipment and cybersecurity (identity validation, smart home devices). This especially impacts Marin's healthcare industry, opening avenues for healthcare providers to care for patients remotely.
- **"LAST MILE" DELIVERY:** Companies built out efficient physical distribution networks, strengthening "Last Mile" delivery. This allows retail businesses to provide services from delivering food to dog grooming at a consumer's residence.
- **CUSTOMER SERVICE & FULFILLMENT:** Elements surrounding a business' relationship with customers began moving online (feedback, troubleshooting, upselling). This leads to an increase in products like entertainment content being fulfilled online, impacting Marin's Digital Media industry.
- **SUPPLY CHAIN REWORKING:** The pandemic disrupted the supply chain for many industries. To improve access and reliability many companies have reduced risk and increased flexibility by using multiple suppliers and multiple distribution points and networks.

FIGURE 8.

COVID Effects on Key Marin Industries/Businesses

Global Trend	Key Marin Industries/Businesses						
	Retail	Tourism & Hospitality	Financial Services & Invest.	IT & Digital Media	Healthcare Svcs. & Aging	Biotech & Life Sciences	Renewable Energy & Efficiency
1. eCommerce	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact
2. Remote Work	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Low Impact
3. Remote Services	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact
4. "Last Mile" Delivery	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	Low Impact
5. Customer Service & Fulfillment	High Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	Med. Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Med. Impact
6. Supply Chain Reworking	High Impact	Med. Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact



Credit: Jim Gollub Associates LLC

E. CONCLUSION

Though businesses suffered in the early period of the pandemic Marin has largely recovered through a mix of health interventions and public funding for business sustainability and recovery (Federal, State, and County). Jobs have mostly been recovered to pre-pandemic levels, with the exception of those in the in-person services sector which continue to experience high demand for workers.

New consumption trends, including a major shift to digital, has enabled businesses to survive early business shutdowns and

allowed some businesses to prosper as a result, including new business ventures capitalizing on post-pandemic dynamics. An increase in business license applications in 2020 and 2021 above pre-pandemic levels suggest entrepreneurs are seeking new opportunities while sales tax revenues have in most cases been restored, even providing some surpluses.

In the longer term new business trends present both opportunities and threats to more traditional businesses, while workforce development must be highly targeted to occupations with digital skills and in sectors that will be priorities for growth (see following Chapter).

IV. Marin’s Economic Stakeholders and Quality of Life

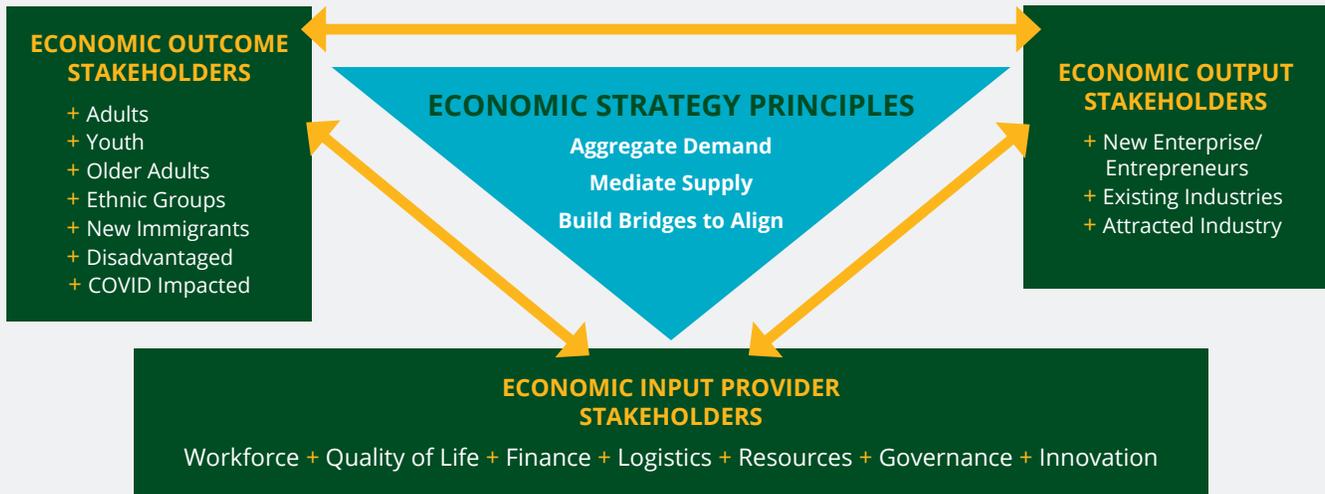
A. ENGAGING MARIN’S ECONOMIC STAKEHOLDERS

The heart of the EVSP is combining baseline comparative analysis with listening to a diverse set of Marin stakeholders. The purpose is to get beyond statistics to learn the challenges residents face in achieving economic objectives and understand the types of actions they would personally support and engage in. The EVSP team convened three different types of economic stakeholder groups as follows: (See Fig. 9 on page 16) These were:

- **ECONOMIC OUTCOME STAKEHOLDERS**—THOSE DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY THE ECONOMY: Community groups representing Marin residents by age (youth and older adults), ethnicity, or specific needs.
 - **Why EVSP Convened Outcome Stakeholders:** By ‘convening’ the Outcome or end-user beneficiaries around a given, shared, challenge, an economic strategy process is not just arguing a case, but is also engaging the end-user beneficiary directly in defining the solution. In doing so, the process helps ensure that there is needed economic scale for the priority action.
- **ECONOMIC OUTPUT STAKEHOLDERS**—THOSE PRODUCING JOBS AND NET INCOME FOR THE COUNTY: Marin groups representing key industries that generate employment, particularly but not solely traded goods and services, such as tourism & hospitality, life sciences, healthcare, but also technology entrepreneurs and small businesses.
 - **Why EVSP Convened Output Stakeholders:** By bringing together companies, suppliers and associations in each of a set of given industries the economic strategy process is able to articulate needs specific to the competitive growth of those industries, aggregate demand with member companies acting at a scale that goes beyond the grievances of individual firms and with a readiness to collaborate with public and non-profit counterparts.
- **ECONOMIC INPUT PROVIDERS**—THOSE WHO DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DELIVER WHAT THE ECONOMY NEEDS TO FORM, EXPAND, OR ATTRACT INDUSTRY: This includes entities like County agencies, Marin mayors, city managers and planners, and organizations that provide workforce skills preparation (schools and community college), financial services (county programs, community banks and investors), quality of life (housing development and healthcare), logistics (communications, transport, locations), resources (power, water and waste management), governance (taxation, regulation, administration), and innovation (science, commercialization, new enterprise).
 - **Why EVSP Convened Input Provider Stakeholders:** By understanding the diversity and variety of scale of operations among Input Provider Stakeholders, strategy process learns frustrations in delivering what may be needed, and how that can be optimized to enhance fulfillment of their missions of serving Outcome (residents) or Output stakeholders (industry employers).

FIGURE 9.

Marin Stakeholders & Their Strategy Connection



Credit: Jim Gollub Associates LLC

BUILDING THE FOCUS GROUPS: Over a six month process the EVSP team reached out to leaders in each stakeholder category and successfully held 12 individual Stakeholder Focus Group meetings. In total, focus groups engaged over 100 active participants, and several individual interviews were also conducted. (See Appendix A for list of Stakeholder focus groups and interview participants and Appendix B for Stakeholder Focus Group Process.)

WHAT DO MARIN STAKEHOLDERS CARE ABOUT? Having completed 36 hours or more of facilitated Stakeholder Focus Groups sessions and having summarized the details of each group’s challenges and actions in well over 150 pages of meeting notes, the EVSP team worked to apply a key principle of this strategy process. That principle is: Making the case for an economic change is best achieved through aggregating stakeholder demand and mediating supply of resources and response. Not one or the other, but both. This is a triangle of economic relationships.

WHY EVSP DID THIS—TO HELP MARIN MARKETS WORK: In other words, the intermediation that an economic strategy can attempt and should hopefully achieve, is focused on helping markets work in a way that addresses not only a primary objective but a cascade of impacts—economic, equity, environment and education. This is logical: Having those who need training better prepared and supported through

development aligned with employers in specific industries who need workforce with specific skills is how the skills pipeline marketplace works in successful economies. The same is true in many economic challenges. The means of overcoming a challenge may not sound like ‘rocket science’ because they often are not. The true challenges are convening demand and supply stakeholders so that they can see how best they can use existing resources in new ways.

B. FINDINGS FROM ANALYSIS & STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

The findings presented below include a benchmark analysis of “quality of life” factors, shaped by the priority Four E’s as a reference point, and the input obtained through stakeholder focus groups according to their experience in seven “economic input” categories.

The stakeholder input reported here is a summary of the issues raised in the focus group meetings. Readers should note the input is representative of many different groups across Marin, from youth to older adults, business and government leaders, non-profit leaders and beneficiaries, but

it is only a small segment of the Marin resident population. Readers should also note that several the challenges raised by stakeholder groups are currently being addressed through other means, including other county-level strategies, public and private assistance programs and by cities and towns directly.

The quality-of-life analysis benchmarked Marin's and neighboring counties of San Francisco, Sonoma Contra Costa and Alameda. Overall, the analysis revealed the Marin economy does perform well on the 4Es for many, but not for all. Specifically:

→ **E1. ECONOMY:**

- **High Income and Growing GDP:** Marin has the highest per capita income of the benchmark counties (\$72,466), and saw the quickest rate of growth in its GDP between 2017 and 2020.⁹
- **Strong Unemployment Numbers:** Marin also had the lowest spike in unemployment due to the pandemic (~10%) and lowest unemployment rate as of April 2022 (2.1%).¹⁰
- **Some Pain in Job & Establishment Growth:** Marin has suffered job loss over the last four years (-4.57%) and has experienced only modest employment increase due to difficulties replacing lost labor.¹¹ New business licenses increased by nearly 10% in 2020 versus 2019 showing strong recovery in enterprise creation.

→ **E2. EQUITY:**

- **Low Poverty Rate, But Inequitable Poverty Impacts:** Marin has a comparatively low poverty rate (6.9% in 2019)¹², but some communities, such as Marin's Latin-American residents, experience disproportionate poverty rates (22% of Latin-American children live in poverty).¹³
- **High Wealth Inequality:** Marin's wealthier residents make nearly six times as much as its less-wealthy residents¹⁴, and Marin ranks even worse than San Francisco in GINI coefficient (0.52 to 0.51).¹⁵
- **Marin's Racial Wage Gap:** There is a wage gap along racial lines as well; the median hourly wage for a white employee (\$45) far exceeds that of the average Latin-American employee (\$19).¹⁶

→ **E3. ENVIRONMENT:**

- **GHG Emissions Dropping:** Marin is improving its sustainability, with greenhouse gas emissions dropping 26% over the last fifteen years.¹⁷
- **Strong in Renewable Energy, But Little Local Generation:** MCE has a portfolio of 810 megawatts of renewable energy online and has committed more than \$2.1 to renewable energy projects¹⁸, though little renewable energy is generated within Marin.¹⁹
- **Good Air Quality:** Marin had fewer estimated days exceeding national PM 2.5 Air Quality standards than its neighbors in the East Bay.²⁰
- **Pollution Impacts Worst in Urban Areas:** Yet urban areas remain more impacted by pollution, with the worst impacts suffered in San Rafael, East Corte Madera, and Northern Sausalito.²¹

→ **E4. EDUCATION:**

- **Marin's Residents Are Highly Educated:** Marin has the most highly educated residents compared to benchmark counties, with a strong high school graduation rate²² and the highest percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or more advanced degree.²³
- **Yet Education Opportunities Are Uneven:** Only 31% of African American residents and 22% of Latin-American residents have a bachelor's degree.²⁴

1. Workforce Challenges: Need to Build Marin's Skills Pipeline

ANALYSIS: Marin's Workforce Today—Highly-Educated Workforce, Good School Performance, But Imbalanced Reach & Industry Match

- **Strong Highschool Graduation Rate:** Marin had a four-year high school graduation rate of 87.1%, second only to Contra Costa (88.7%) among the examined counties, and above the CA average of 84.2%.²⁵
- **A Highly-Educated Populace:** 54% of Marin's population over 25 has a Bachelor's Degree or more advanced degree, a higher rate than any of the benchmark counties. (See Fig. 10)
- **Inequity in Educational Opportunity:** 31% of Marin's African-American residents over 25 and 22% of its Latin-American residents have bachelor's degrees, compared with 64% of its AAPI residents and 61% of its white residents.²⁶
- **Reliance on an Out-of-County Workforce:** Between 33-60% of Marin's workforce comes from out-of-county.²⁷

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Preparation: Need K-12 Success for All

- 1. Need for Improved K-12 Preparation:** We must ensure Marin's youth develop practical and professional skills that will allow them to land a job with livable wages and succeed as adults.

Advancement: Need Flexible Occupational & Career Connection & Retention

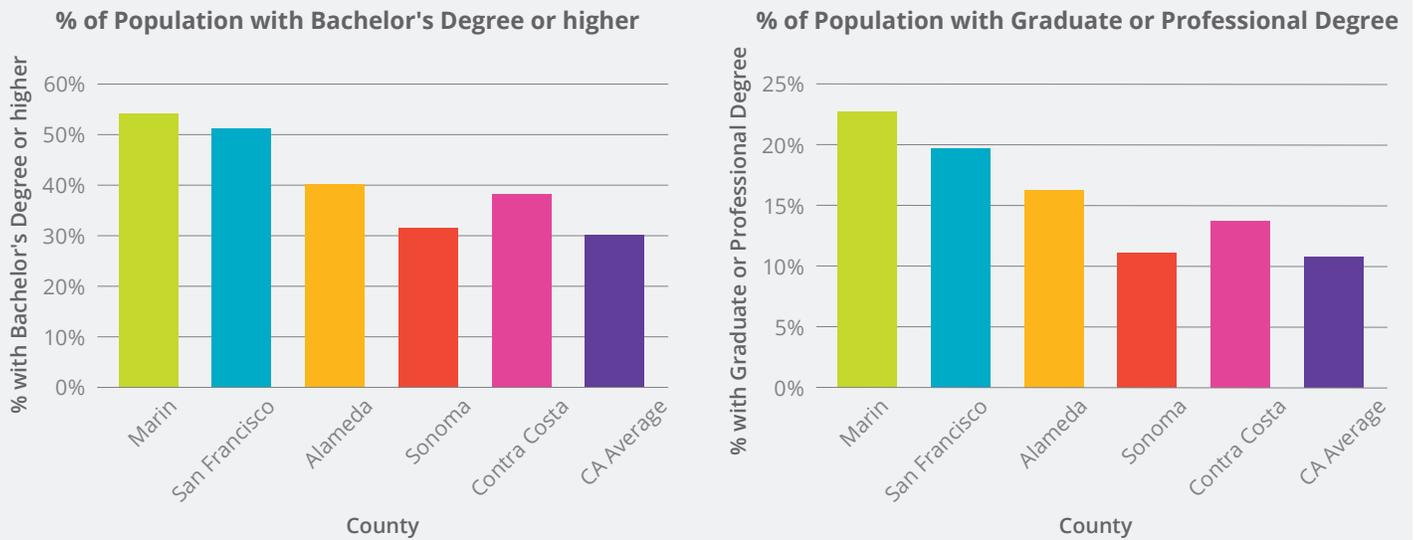
- 2. Need to Align Training Programs with Industry Needs:** There is a disconnect between students of all backgrounds, ages and potential job opportunities requiring specific skills (mechanical engineering, production, hardware, management, design). There is a need to identify and train young people interested in hospitality or cleantech fields, enable older adults to learn and apply technology, and a need to retrain contractors to perform clean energy installation and modernization.
- 3. Lack of Centralized Training Information Hub:** There is a need for a uniform, real-time method of sharing info about workforce and training opportunities to connect employers, employees, and workforce development programs.
- 4. Difficulties Completing Training Programs (Time, Language, Remote Options):** Classes are not always at workable times, offered in multiple languages, nor are they offered both in-person and remotely, making attendance hard for adults.
- 5. High Cost of Living Leads to Shallow Talent Pool:** Marin's employers face increasing pressure to hire given the high cost of living in Marin, especially in the housing segment.

Skill Renewal: Need to Enable Training Access, Entry & Re-entry Paths

- 6. Needs for Affordable Childcare:** Childcare options are expensive (\$2000-3000 per month) and in short supply for working parents who are seeking training and retraining.
- 7. Employment Discrimination Against Older Adults:** Combating the perception that people lose their value after turning 65 should be a priority.
- 8. Lack of Culturally Appropriate Leaders and Role Models:** It is easier for young people to learn and develop if they feel more connected with role models and program leaders.

FIGURE 10.

Advanced Degree Attainment Rates County Comparison



Source: American Community Survey Five Year Estimates 2015-2019 Note: Count only includes adults 25 and older

2. Quality of Life Challenges: Linking Affordable Housing to Workforce Needs

ANALYSIS: Marin's Quality of Life Today—Rising Cost of Living & Housing Prices Constrains Workforce Growth

- **Severe Shortage of Federal Program Affordable Housing Units:** With only 113 Federal Program Affordable Housing Units per 10,000 residents, Marin ranked last out of the examined counties.²⁸
- **A Good Doctor-to-Patient Ratio:** Marin has a ratio of 691 residents per primary care physician, demonstrating a greater abundance of doctors than any other examined county but San Francisco.²⁹
- **Strong Access to Medical Insurance, But Inequities Along Racial Lines:** Only 5% of Marin's population lacks medical insurance, well below the California average of 8%. However, African-American (56.7% of adults 18-64 have insurance) and Latin-American residents (80.9%) are much more likely to be uninsured. (See Fig. 11)

- **Marin's Open Space Is a Major Cultural Asset:** Marin has nearly 18,000 acres of open space, with a significantly higher rate of park acres per 1,000 residents than any of its neighboring counties.³⁰

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: QUALITY OF LIFE CHALLENGES

Housing: Lack of Affordable Access

- 1. Affordable Housing Shortage for Marin's Workforce & Disadvantaged Groups:** Much of Marin's workforce cannot afford to live in Marin, and for this reason must commute from out-of-county, leading to high turnover rates. Further, affordable housing shortages create workforce shortages in vital occupations like teachers, agricultural workers, technicians and caregivers for Marin's aging residents. Some homes in Marin remain empty or underused as second homes or short-term rental properties diminishing housing opportunities.
- 2. Difficult for Young People to Move Out:** High cost of living and housing prices make it hard for young people to leave their parents' homes and remain in Marin.

- 3. **Housing Programs Inaccessible:** People who remain behind on rent have trouble accessing programs due to unclear program requirements.
- 4. **Tenant-Landlord Challenges Exist:** Working adults and families with marginally affordable rentals cited challenges with landlords that were slow to fix problems with buildings, leading to negative health outcomes caused by mold or lack of heating. Some landlords felt challenged by layered regulations from the city, county and state regarding properties and fees.

- 5. **Inequity in Access to Healthcare:** Many in Marin receive excellent healthcare, but income, linguistic, and age differences impact healthcare access and affordability for some groups.
- 6. **Burnout Negatively Impacts Quality of Life:** There is an increase in stress and mental health issues due to working remotely, working short-staffed, and stress of pandemic itself causes employee turnover and productivity issues.

Culture: Growing Marin’s Identity While Balancing Diversity, Growth & Sustainability

- 7. **Visitors Overload Public Services:** During peak visitor periods on holidays and weekends, emergency services and garbage collection cannot keep up which impacts local residents.
- 8. **Marin’s Identity Issues in Diversity, Economy & Sustainability:** A lack of cultural diversity may be a disincentive for enterprises to move to Marin. Marin is among the most inequitable by various metrics with uneven access to job opportunities and leadership positions. Further, Marin’s self-branding as a bedroom community is not conducive to a dynamic economy.
- 9. **Insufficient Exposure of Marin’s Strengths:** Some people come to Marin just to view San Francisco, and do not focus on local assets, which diminishes tourism revenue. Advertising budgets for Marin destinations are often small.
- 10. **Increased Fire Risk Threatens Open Space:** Climate change and increase in fires threaten to damage Marin’s parkland, a major quality of life asset in the region.

FIGURE 11.

Marin Health Insurance Access by Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Adults (18-64) with Health Insurance
API	97.8%
African American	56.7%
Latin-American	80.9%
Two or More Races	92.3%
White	95.5%
Overall	91.8%

Sources: California Health Interview Survey (2015-2017)

3. Finance & Enterprise Challenges: Need for More Access to Capital & Financial Literacy Training

ANALYSIS: Marin Finance Today—Abundant Capital Could Be Invested in Marin if Enterprise Growth is Accelerated

- **High Density of Investors:** Marin has a higher density of angels, incubators, venture capital investors and private equity firms than any other county aside from San Francisco. (See Fig. 12)
- **Firms Tended to Invest in FinTech or IT:** The most lucrative investments in Marin were in Financial Services or Information Technology.³¹
- **Marin Small Businesses Were Proactive in Applying for COVID Relief Loans:** Through the end of 2020, Marin received 189 EIDL COVID relief loans per 10,000 residents, a higher rate than any of the benchmark counties. (See Fig. 12)

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: FINANCE & ENTERPRISE CHALLENGES

Startup Seed Funding: Accessing Marin’s Capital for New Enterprise

1. **Marin Not Harnessing Wealth for Capital:** There is lots of wealth in Marin, including well-paid professionals, affluent retirees, and money managers. Investment solutions in issues related to health care and sustainability appear as under-funded investment targets.
2. **Lack of Access to Early Funding—Community Banks Ill-Equipped:** Seed funding sources don’t have offices in Marin, small and growing companies are underserved, and community banks do not understand startup lending or how best to assist new enterprise.

Credit & Debt Access: Learning to Navigate Financing & Avoid Predatory Lenders

3. **Financial Literacy Training Need:** Most youth and many adults are not taught the financial skills they need to succeed as professionals and business owners and broader computer literacy is a need as well. New immigrants are often unfamiliar with loan and financing details or how to navigate these processes, leading to bad credit.

4. **ESL Access to Capital Challenges Exist:** English as a Second Language (ESL) residents have difficulty accessing federal loan opportunities, and many small businesses lack the financial records required for certain loans and grants. Due to their legal status, some residents are forced to take high interest paycheck loans due to lack of microlending organizations

New Project Investment: Need Access to Capital for Marin’s Growing Flow of Opportunities

5. **Lack of New Enterprise Growth & Enterprise Continuity:** Establishment formation and growth in Marin is modest at best. Some residents feel too much emphasis is put on developing visitor-focused businesses at the expense of local-serving enterprise. Unfortunately, the high cost of living impedes intergenerational business continuity as young family members cannot afford to live here.
6. **Funding Needs for Climate Action Plan (CAP) Projects:** Not enough capital put towards solving pressing climate change and sustainability issues. Specific actions have been laid out in CAPs, but communities have not established funding.
7. **Need Funding Sources for Marketing & Facilities Upgrades and Development of a Full Convention Center:** It is hard to compete with surrounding counties for visitors in advertising Marin’s assets and addressing aging facilities. Need vision, land, and capital to address lack of large-scale meeting space.

FIGURE 12.

Investor & Relief Loan Application Density County Comparison

County	# of Angels/ Incubators per 10000 Residents	# of Venture Capital Investors per 10000 Residents	# of COVID EIDL Loans Awarded by SBA* per 10000 Residents
Marin	2.82	2.78	188.62
San Francisco	19.31	11.75	171.53
Alameda	0.97	0.37	116.62
Sonoma	0.27	0.27	123.43
Contra Costa	0.41	0.32	113.58

Source: Pitchbook, SBA (COVID EIDL data available through 12-1-2020)
 Note: An investor’s or deal’s “presence” in a county means that the investor or company have an office (not necessarily their HQ) located there

4. Governance Challenges: Frustrations with Regulatory Inefficiencies

ANALYSIS: Marin’s Governance Today—Silos of Regulation & Administration Impede & Discourage Economic Development

- **Strong Sales Tax Revenue:** Marin had approximately \$19,500,000 in Sales and Use tax revenue in FY 2019-20. Accounting for population, this amount ranked 2nd only to San Francisco’s revenue. (See Fig. 13)
- **Weaker Property Tax Revenue Growth:** Though Marin was similarly strong in property tax revenue for its size, property tax revenue grew only 25.5% between 2017 and 2020, a slower rate of growth than any other county aside from Sonoma.³²
- **Regulatory Processes Frustrating & Sometimes Inaccessible:** Stakeholder group members expressed dissatisfaction with timeliness, cost, and inconsistent information provided by agencies, with many group members also reporting that websites lacked Spanish translations of essential regulatory information.
- **Having Many Communities & Districts Is Both a Challenge & Strength:** With eleven cities and towns, eight unincorporated communities, seventeen school districts, eleven police departments (plus CHP and a county sheriff’s office), and nineteen fire districts, departments, and stand-alone stations, Marin has a fragmented administrative system. This likely leads to higher costs, but this autonomy also enables localized focus.

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

Taxation & Expenditures: Ensure Program Needs, Costs & Funding Align

- 1. Visitor-Imposed Burdens & Workforce Training Needs Not Reflected in Funding:** Visitor impacts exceed current funding/resources allocated to visitor destinations. For this reason, this imbalance may need to be considered in county funding allocation calculations for communities, such as West Marin.
- 2. County Could Attract More Grant Funds:** Some stakeholders expressed interest that the County could attract more state and federal funding to expand economic development in communities, including in “green” and “climate-related” grant facilities and entrepreneurship programs serving BIPOC communities.

- 3. Financial Security A Concern:** Older adults and lower income residents rely on potentially threatened governmental services to continue and remain well-funded.

Regulation: Need for Streamlining Across County Agencies & Communities for Business & Residents

- 4. Frustration with Regulatory Inefficiencies (Time, Money, Lack of Recourse):** Delays and expenses of permitting and zoning processes impede development and enterprise formation, making development and renovation more expensive. Many believe that permitting involves burdensome paperwork, and interlocking regulations without cross-agency coordination create confusion, especially in dealing with the County Health Department and in trying to implement cleantech projects. Further, many permit applicants feel they have no recourse for reporting problems and inefficiencies.
- 5. Difficulties Navigating Legal Issues/Programs:** Many ESL residents and new immigrants find it difficult to navigate compliance with legal matters pertaining to citizenship, drivers’ licenses, or program offerings for health insurance and food stamps. Processes are viewed as time consuming and overwhelming.

FIGURE 13.

Sales & Use Tax Revenue County Comparison

County	2018-19 FY Sales & Use Tax Revenue	2019-20 FY Sales & Use Tax Revenue	2019-20 FY Sales & Use Tax Revenue per 10,000 County Residents
Marin	\$18,522,000	\$19,552,000	\$745,346
San Francisco	\$329,296,000	\$279,453,000	\$3,197,531
Alameda	\$69,976,000	\$75,305,000	\$447,617
Sonoma	\$26,732,000	\$24,469,000	\$500,529
Contra Costa	\$17,108,000	\$17,461,000	\$149,761

Sources: Marin, San Francisco, Alameda, Sonoma, and Contra Costa County Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports

Administration: How to Reduce Isolation of Programs, Ensure Fairness, Accountability & Avoid Negative Impacts

- 6. Administrative System Fragmented:** The multitude of Marin districts and agencies complicates navigating the administrative system and leads to agencies addressing problems like climate change within their own organizational silos. Having individual districts is recognized as a positive quality of life and autonomy factor for some residents, but there should be better integrated processes across Marin communities and the county on common themes, such as 'green standards.' Marin would benefit from developing common cross-county standards for regulatory changes, such as electrification.
- 7. Legacies of Injustice-Redlining & Immigration-Related Trauma:** Some communities still suffer the effects of a history of systemic racism. Some young people are anxious about their immigration documentation status, and do not receive the wraparound support they need to develop into well-prepared citizens with a viable career path.
- 8. More Accountability & Community Agency in Government:** Residents feel frustrated and disenfranchised due to a perceived lack of representation and transparency in policy and management.
- 9. Lack of Affordable Fire Insurance:** Growth of fire hazard has raised costs and negatively impacts new enterprise and homeowners.

5. Logistics Challenges: Commuter & Technology Challenges

ANALYSIS: Marin's Logistics Today—Work Complexity & Commute Congestion Call for New Thinking

- **Long Average Commute Times:** The average worker in Marin has a 32.5-minute commute time to work, even higher than the California average of 29.3 minutes (6th highest among states). (See Fig. 14)
- **Marin's Digital Divide:** Digital Marin's findings identified 600 households in five underserved areas lacking adequate access to the internet and digital devices. While wealthier areas average around three computers per household, underserved areas average less than half that.³³

- **Vacant Office Space Despite Affordable Prices:** Flexible work space may offer a means to house existing a new enterprise and reduce commute time. As of Q3 2021, Marin had an office vacancy rate of 20.7% (higher than any other examined county) despite having an affordable average asking price of \$3.35 per square foot. It may be possible to reuse this space to ease commuting for Marin's workforce.³⁴

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: LOGISTICS CHALLENGES

Transportation: Easing Commutes for Working & School-Age Residents While Reducing Costs & Congestion

- 1. Marin's Car-Centrism & Traffic Congestion:** Traffic has increased, both within Marin and between Marin and other counties, contributing to climate change. Congestion is especially bad at visitor destinations like Tennessee Valley, Muir Woods, Palomarin, and Cascade Canyon. Peak visitor periods cause traffic, noise, and an increase in dangerous parking
- 2. Public Transit Could Be More Reliable & Connective:** Parts of Marin are inaccessible without a car, especially for Marin's older adults. Further, buses are often late, transit routes do not reach all areas where people are employed, and many large buses have few passengers.

Communication: Ensuring Every Family is Connected & That Marin Optimizes Remote Work Services

- 3. Telecom Infrastructure Needs:** Businesses and employees need access to affordable high-speed internet, especially with increase in remote work trend (e.g., gigabyte lines).
- 4. Inequitable Family Access to Internet, Computers, Routers & Software Applications:** Home internet is expensive and often slows down when used by multiple family members, which causes problems for those concurrently working or learning remotely. Not all Marin communities have access to affordable computers. Many students do not have access to apps important to developing career skills, like Adobe, Excel, and AutoCAD.
- 5. Facilities Insufficient to Meet Business Visitor Demand:** Marin lacks a sufficient number of business centers with faster internet, modernized facilities, furniture, A/V equipment and furnishing are necessary to support development of competitive large business spaces.

Real Estate Sites: Need to Flexibly Accommodate Business Tenant Needs & Accept More Mixed-Use Zoning

- 6. Mixed-Use Projects & Industry Needs are Impeded by Zoning:** While some communities have adopted progressive zoning for industries, such as Life Sciences, for many communities outdated zoning requirements impede desirable mixed-use development projects and restrict industries seeking growth in Marin.
- 7. Variation in Vacancy Rates in Large Offices Due to Pandemic:** During higher impact periods there were many spaces too large for current demands. For future shifts, space should be used more flexibly, without constraints or long delays.
- 8. Lack of Warehouse Spaces:** Marin's entrepreneurs are limited to start companies that require maintaining large inventories due to lack of existing facilities or the availability to build new ones.
- 9. Insufficient Infrastructure at Marin Destinations:** There is not enough accessible parking, water, or toilet infrastructure to meet visitor demand, placing burdens on local systems.

FIGURE 14.

Bay Area Average Commute Times (2018)



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2014-2018

6. Resource Challenges: Cleantech Inaccessibility & Water Supply Questions

ANALYSIS: Marin's resources such as renewable energy and water require scaling up and more enterprises supplying services in the "green" space.

- **Marin a Leader in Clean Energy:** MCE provides energy to 78.5% of Marin's accounts³⁵ with a default service option that is 61% renewable energy, nearly double the California average of 33%.³⁶ MCE anticipates its default option will be 85% renewable energy by 2029.³⁷
- **Potential Solutions to Marin's Water Problems Are Costly:** Marin Water has considered a \$90 million pipeline to the East Bay. Other options include spending \$35 million to rent or buy portable desalination plants, focusing on capturing more rainwater, raising existing dams, and heightening water use restrictions.³⁸
- **Marin's Food2Energy Program:** Some Marin cities are participating in an innovative program, currently involving 196 restaurants and stores, that takes food waste and converts it into bio-gas through anaerobic digestion.³⁹

- **High Waste Generation, Low Transformation:** According to CalRecycle data, Marin generated the second most waste tonnage per 10,000 residents, and "transformed" waste at a lower rate than any other examined county. (See Fig 15)

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: RESOURCE CHALLENGES

Energy: Given Rising Conventional Costs How to Expand Affordable Renewable Energy & EV Charging

1. **Rising Cost of Power a Burden for Families & Businesses:** Affordable energy is vital to small businesses and utility costs can be a challenge to residents, especially older adults and low-income tenant families already facing high rents. MCE provides a solid portfolio of renewable energy, however, adding local generation may make power more affordable if not just more sustainable and enable capturing energy expenditures within the county.
2. **Solar & Cleantech Inaccessibility:** Due to cost, renewable and clean energy home infrastructure is often only accessible to wealthy families. Older adults, lower-income families, and business owners, all could benefit from broader access to cleantech projects, making Marin more of a leader in cleantech and sustainability.

FIGURE 15.

Waste Production & Transformation⁴⁰ Rates by County



Source: CalRecycle Countywide Origin Summaries
 Note: CalRecycle's "Transformation" term refers to incineration, pyrolysis, distillation, gasification, and biological conversion aside from composting or biomass conversion.

3. **EV Charging Station Shortages:** Municipalities cannot keep up with rising demand for EV charging facilities.

Water: With Rising Concerns for Water Supply How to Unify & Develop Options Across Marin Districts

4. **Water Supply Uncertainty:** Climate change has caused continuing water supply issues in Marin, with impacts like salinity during low-water runoff in certain water districts. While certain parts of Marin are better served, anxiety concerning security and safety of water supply is a common worry and will impact certain industries who may face constraints on water use.
5. **Need to Anticipate and Mitigate Water Shortages Through More Efficient Water Use Practices:** For Marin to become self-sufficient in water supply, residents and facilities should make more sustainable use of water resources through many known techniques for minimization of use and recovery.

Waste Conversion: Marin Needs to Catch Up in Municipal, Industrial & Agriculture Waste Recovery & Conversion

6. **Lack of Regenerative Economy in Marin:** Marin does not do enough to facilitate resource recovery and municipal and industrial waste conversion (plastics in particular), despite active Drawdown and related demonstration projects in other areas. How can Marin's municipal, industrial, and agricultural waste be reduced or converted into a positive product at a commercial economic scale?
7. **Apartments Lack Recycling & Composting:** Many apartment buildings only have garbage bins, with no opportunity for tenants to recycle or compost.

7. Innovation Challenges: Lack of Commercialization Infrastructure

ANALYSIS: Marin's Innovation & Entrepreneurship—Need to Build the Innovation Pipeline to Feed New Enterprise

- **Marin Receives Modest NIH Funding, but Very Little from the SBIR:** Marin received ~\$23,000,000 in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding in 2020, placing it third out of the five counties examined.⁴¹ However, Marin residents received only 6 awards from the Small Business Innovation Research program between 2020 and 2021, compared to 94 in San Francisco and 86 in Alameda.⁴²
- **Utility Patent Development is Middle of the Pack:** With 12.28 utility patents granted per 10,000 residents, Marin exceeded the California average, but trailed both San Francisco (14.78) and Alameda (18.40).⁴³
- **Marin Residents are Starting Many New Businesses:** Entrepreneurs in Marin accounted for more than 115 business applications per 10,000 residents, a higher rate than the California average (110) and 2nd among benchmark counties. (See Fig. 16)

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS: INNOVATION CHALLENGES

Discovery (Science to Technology): How Can Marin Generate Research to Anchor Innovation & Talent?

1. **Marin Lacks a Research University to Catalyze Local Innovation:** Lacking a research university impedes generation of local innovation (research publications and intellectual property), shared use of facilities, as well as research talent that could advise or enter the economy.
2. **Expand Marin's Applied R&D on Aging Issues:** While Marin has advanced science research in aging (Buck Institute) and good hospitals, given its demographics (high percent of population over 65), Marin should be a leader in translating science into practical solutions for challenges

associated with aging. This should link strong science with the ‘wisdom’ of older adults to help define, develop and deliver new innovations. Marin does not have but needs an intermediary applied R&D institution able to bridge science to solution.

- 3. Expand Marin’s Applied Terrestrial & Marine R&D:** Marin can grow and harness its array of existing maritime and land-based research institutes in West Marin to address environmental/sustainability issues.

Development (Technology to Product): Marin Needs Commercialization Infrastructure to Support Entrepreneurship

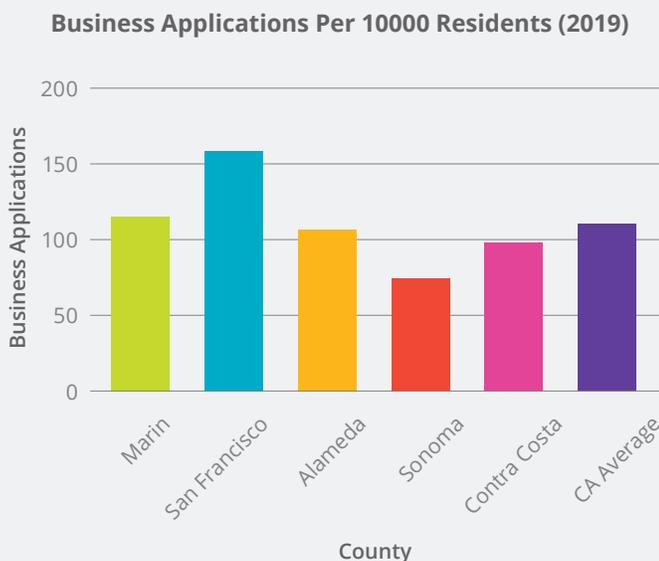
- 4. Need Prebuilt Infrastructure & Space for Prototyping:** Facilities that meet needed specifications with equipment infrastructure necessary to support R&D are not always available, making it more difficult to start out in Marin, especially for Life Sciences enterprises.
- 5. Lack of Communication Between Innovators:** There is a need for identification and facilitation of collaboration between entrepreneurs to better connect talent and form new technology enterprise.

Deployment (Product to Market): Marin Needs Integrated Services & Capital to Accelerate Enterprise Growth

- 6. Marin Has Limited Commercialization Capacity to Translate Tech into Economic Value:** While Marin does have technology enterprises in certain fields, there is no intermediary support for translating technologies into products as is available in other regions. Leading research institutions like the Buck Institute do not have commercialization infrastructure, but could have such an entity as an annex. Marin would benefit from one or more R&D centers that can support and feed innovation to existing and future technology accelerators and established companies.
- 7. Need to Expand Entrepreneurial Ecosystem to Drive Enterprise Development & Capture Spin-offs:** There is no critical mass of commercial infrastructure for tech-driven new enterprise development or capture of corporate spin-offs as in competing regions. As a result, there is a need for start-up ecologies in life sciences, green technology, and IT-digital media.

FIGURE 16.

**Business Application Rates
County Comparison**



Source: US Census Bureau Business Formation Statistics

V. Marin's Economy Today & What It Means for Tomorrow

A. Marin's Economic Drivers

What follows here is an assessment of Marin's overall portfolio of industries, followed by an analysis of the industries that will be drivers of broader economic growth in Marin over the next 3-5 years. Together, these insights, along with the economic input challenges cited by stakeholders in the previous chapter, form the foundation for the flagship actions that form the EVSP.

METHODOLOGY: Through an analytic screening process target industries were identified that build on Marin's historic natural and quality of life attributes, the legacy of prior companies, emerging trends and major shifts in enterprises, such as the proliferation of remote work.

The first step was assessment of all traded goods and service industries in Marin to form a baseline. These industries were examined in terms of their employment change over the past five years in Marin and their forecast global growth. (See Fig. 17)

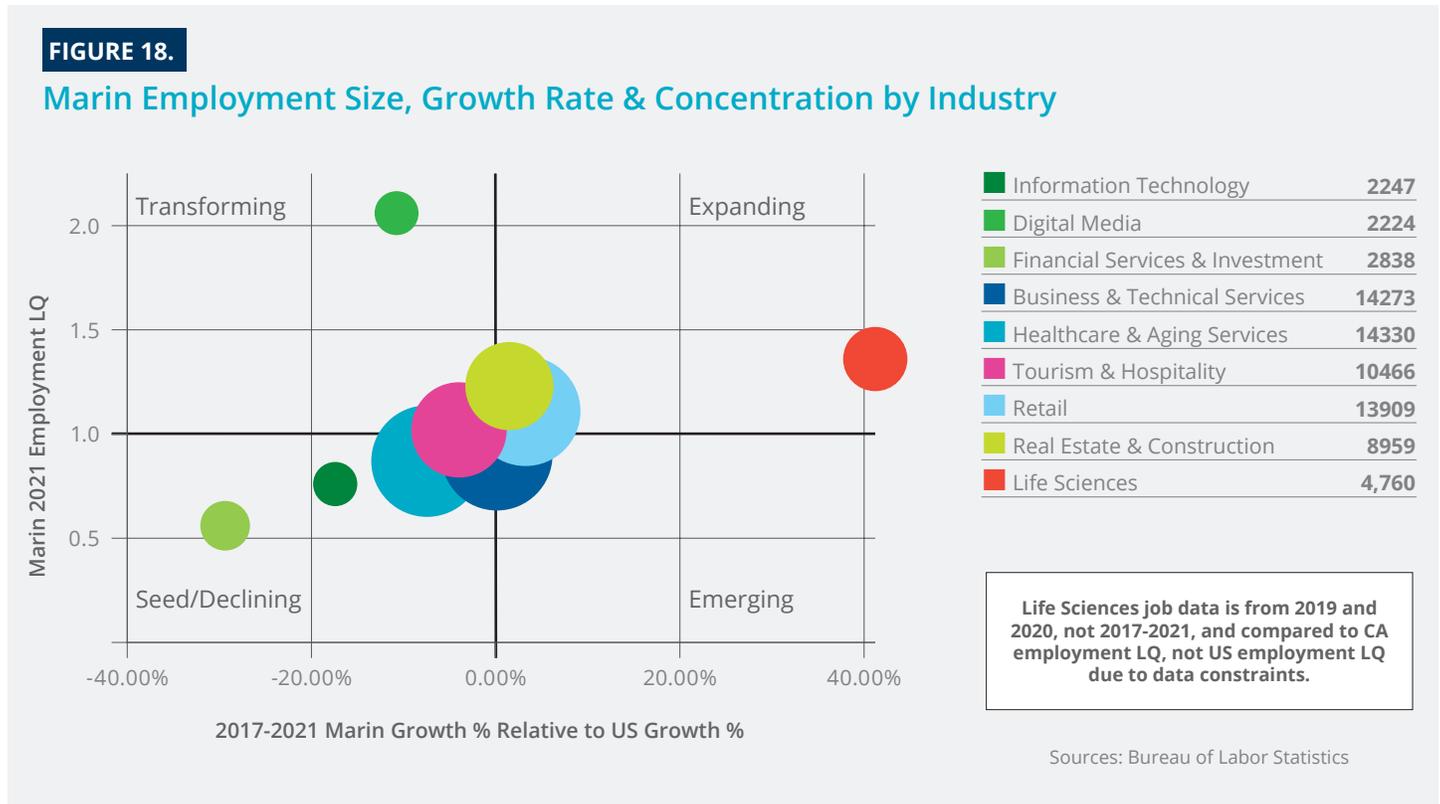
FIGURE 17.

Marin County Net Change in Employment by Industry (2017-2021)

Composite Category	March 2017 Employment	March 2021 Employment	Net Change in Employment	Percent Change in Employment	Forecast Growth (Global CAGR For 2025)
Information Technology	2,483	2,247	-236	-9.5%	9%
Digital Media	2,430	2,224	-206	-8.48%	7.22%
Financial Services & Investment	3,811	2,838	-973	-25.53%	6%
Business & Technical Services	10,599	10,979	380	3.59%	Managed Services 8.1% Legal Services 4.1% Accounting Services 5.9%
Healthcare & Aging Services	15,004	14,330	-674	-4.49%	Medicine 3-6% Elder Svcs/Prod. 3.9% Home Healthcare 8.6%
Tourism & Hospitality	13,208	10,466	-2742	-20.76%	6%
Retail	13,919	13,909	-10	-0.07%	7.7%
Real Estate & Construction	8,216	8,959	743	9.04%	Real Estate 8%, Construction 7%
Life Sciences*	3,359	4,790	1,401	41.71%	10.2%

Sources: BLS, Biocom 2020 and 2021 EIRs, Businesswire, Statista, Globenewswire, PRNewswire, NIH
*- Life Sciences data from 2019 and 2020, not 2017 and 2021

COUNTY INDUSTRY POSITIONS: These baseline industries in the above table were compared against each other in terms of 1.) total employment, 2.) average growth rate and 3.) specialization. (See Fig. 18)



Based on these three variables, Marin's industries fall into the following four categories of industrial life cycle, although four are close to the U.S. average:

→ **EXPANDING—HIGH GROWTH & HIGH SPECIALIZATION (STRONGEST POSITION)**

- **Industries:** Marin's Life Sciences leads, with Retail and Real Estate just barely expanding.
- **Needs:** Sustain growth through delivery of target workforce skills (to ease pressure to recruit out of county skills), accommodative zoning and streamlined permitting for expansion, and preservation of surrounding high quality of life that attracts founders and high-end talent.

→ **TRANSFORMING—NEGATIVE GROWTH & HIGH SPECIALIZATION (STRUCTURAL CHANGE)**

- **Industries:** Marin's Digital Media has high specialization with decreased employment while

Tourism & Hospitality and Healthcare & Aging Services straddles the border between Transforming and Declining stage.

- **Needs:** Valuable to retain or adapt due to existing concentration of workforce. Diversification into new segments in which to grow competitive position is key and requires access to innovation, entrepreneurs or spin-offs from existing firms, targeted skills, risk investment and matching to customers.

→ **EMERGING—HIGHER THAN AVERAGE GROWTH WITH LOW SPECIALIZATION (RESPONDING TO DEMAND)**

- **Industries:** Business & Technical Services are emerging, but only marginally.
- **Needs:** Important source of future economic impact consisting of small fast-growing enterprises, often with specialized needs. Emerging sector firms need access to a broad array of skills (and recruiting is often a major cost), competitively priced locations

with flexible space options for growing operations, access to strong marketing services, and while often self-powered (due to growth), often need financing A or B round expansion.

→ **DECLINING—REDUCED EMPLOYMENT & SPECIALIZATION (WEAK COMPETITIVENESS)**

- **Industries:** Financial Services & Investment (conventional services increasingly on-line, investment management doing well, separately) and Information Technology (impacted by more by structural shift in major firms, rather than due to competitiveness, therefore worthy of attention).
- **Needs:** Often difficult to turn-around without merger of competencies with other industries (e.g., IT and Digital Media), key is innovation-driven start-ups and partnerships and cost competitive facilities for spin-offs from declining core business.

Second, after being assessed and classed by life cycle stage, each target industry was compared to four Bay Area counties, where data permitted. The benchmark counties selected were San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa and Sonoma. These comparisons provide insight into Marin's economic position in each of the industries relative to its geographic neighbors.

Finally, candidate target industries, including two emerging industries, for which there were no standard data, but strong

stakeholder agreement, were subjected to analysis according to the Four E model:

- **E1. ECONOMY:** Each industry produces traded goods or services sold outside of Marin in a diverse range of markets, bringing in net new income to the county. They also offer diverse opportunities (EDD growth forecast) with positive living wages (BLS average compensation). These industries all serve markets that are growing nationally and internationally (as measured by estimated global CAGR).
- **E2. EQUITY:** They offer diversity of employment across a range of growing occupations and higher average salaries (EDD occupational forecast, BLS NAICS segment and annual compensation data), building on Marin assets whether natural (Marin's open space destinations) or human competency (high workforce education) and capital.
- **E3. ENVIRONMENT:** These industries operate at a scale compatible with Marin's quality of life, with estimated low environmental footprints, modest (if any) manufacturing space needs, and tend to be employers that adopt clean and green energy practices related to climate change, water and waste disposal challenges.
- **E4. EDUCATION:** As technology centered and impacted industries, growing domestically and internationally, these employers seek and develop talent and engage with community skills partnerships.

B. SIX INDUSTRIES TO POWER MARIN FOR THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS

The analysis of Marin's economy revealed six industries with the characteristics and traits that will provide the best opportunities for new business and job creation over the next 3-5 years. These industries and the associated analysis that led to the "targeted" designation is presented here (For additional diagnostic observations see Appendix C.)

TARGET 1. LIFE SCIENCES-BIOTECH—AN EXPANDING INDUSTRY WITH POTENTIAL TO BE A LEADING SECTOR

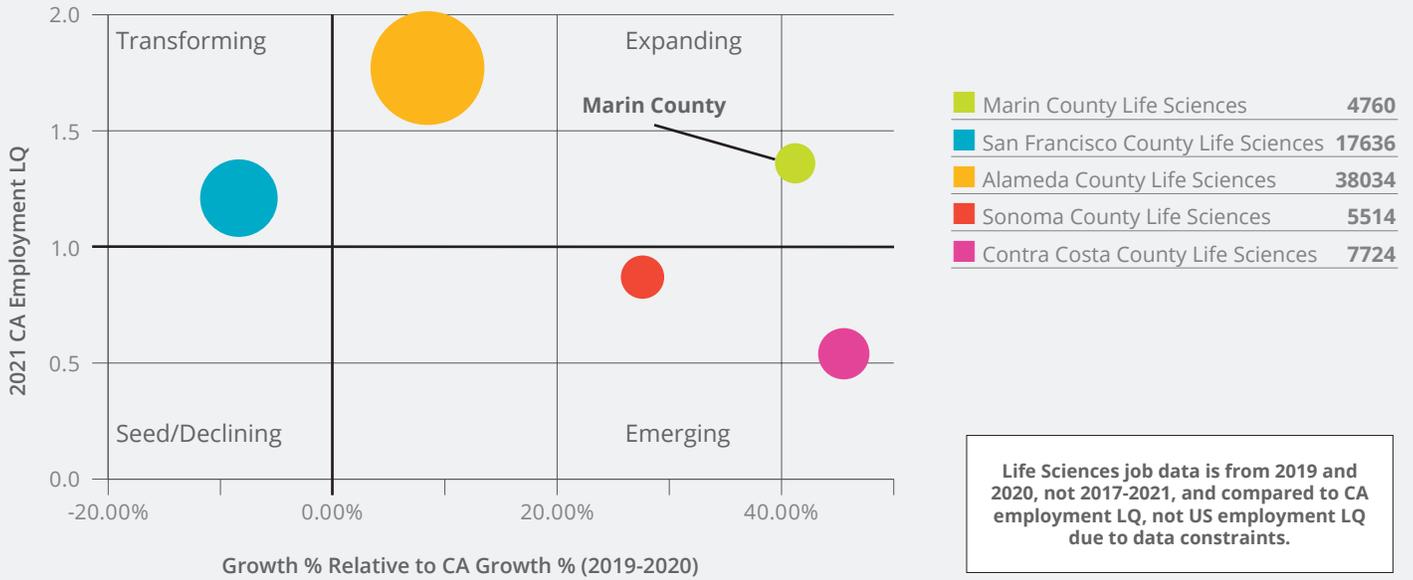
Rapid growth of enterprises founded by residents and those who value Marin's quality of life range across the spectrum of biomedicine. Marin's life sciences industry is small, but is also both specialized and growing quickly, with the potential to be a strong component of a diverse Marin economy. (See Fig. 19 for comparative position)

Marin's Life Sciences Industry Today—An Exciting Source of Growth⁴⁴

- **Total Employment (2020):** 4,760 (See Fig. 20 for growing occupations)
- **Concentration (California Employment LQ):** 1.36—Solid specialization

FIGURE 19.

Life Science County Comparison



Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics

FIGURE 20.

Life Sciences: Occupations with Positive Projected Growth (2018-2028)

Occupation	Estimated Current Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (Number)	Employment Change (Percentage)
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	2,483	2,247	-236	-9.5%
Environmental Scientists, Including Health	2,430	2,224	-206	-8.48%
Environmental Technicians, Including Health	3,811	2,838	-973	-25.53%
Life Scientists	10,599	10,979	380	3.59%
Biological Technicians	15,004	14,330	-674	-4.49%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	13,208	10,466	-2742	-20.76%
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	13,919	13,909	-10	-0.07%

Source: California EDD
 Note: Life Sciences Occupations Overlap with Healthcare Occupations to a degree

- **Growth Rate Relative to CA Avg. (2019-2020):** 41.21%—High
- **Stage:** Expanding—Biopharmaceutical companies thriving
- **County Position (Out of 5):** 2nd in growth rate, 2nd in concentration—Strong
- **Average Annual Compensation:** \$200,318—High
- **Global Growth Rate (2025 CAGR):** 10.2%—High

Marin's IT & Digital Media Industry Today—Transforming in a Booming Global Economy⁴⁵

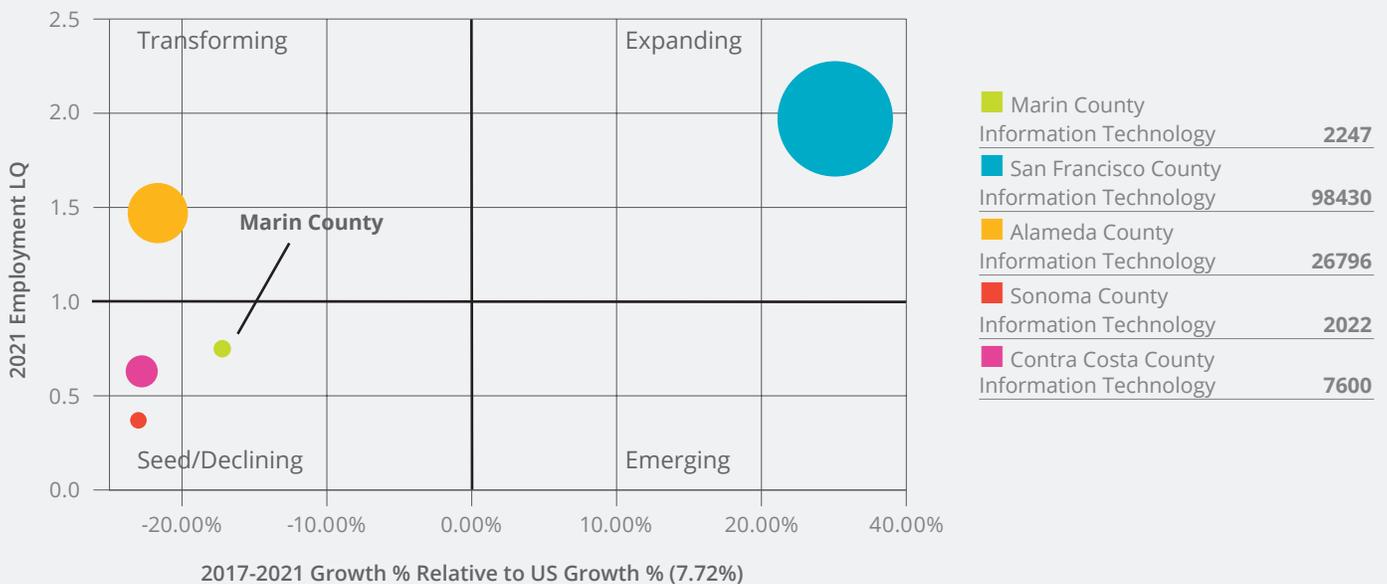
- **Total Employment (2021):** 4,471 (See Figs. 23 & 25 for growing occupations and Figs. 24 & 26 for leading NAICS segments)
- **Concentration (Employment LQ):** 1.10—Slightly above average specialization
- **Growth Rate Relative to US Avg. (2017-2021):** -15.23%—Decline due to reduction in Autodesk and related firm relocation of operations
- **Stage:** Transforming—Diversification of firms
- **County Position (Out of 5):** 2nd in growth rate, 2nd in concentration—Strong
- **Average Annual Compensation:** \$157,552—Moderately high
- **Global Growth Rate (2025 CAGR):** IT 9%, Digital Media 7.22%—Moderately high

TARGET 2. IT & DIGITAL MEDIA—SOME EMPLOYMENT LOSS, BUT STRONGER GROWTH AND SPECIALIZATION THAN MOST NEIGHBORS

Independent enterprises from software to gaming and film build from the legacy of Lucas ILM and Autodesk into the booming market of Internet and digital media. For the Marin EVSP, Information Technology and Digital Media are being treated as one intermixed and interdependent target industry. (See Figs. 21 & 22 for comparative position)

FIGURE 21.

IT County Comparison



Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics

FIGURE 22.

Digital Media County Comparison

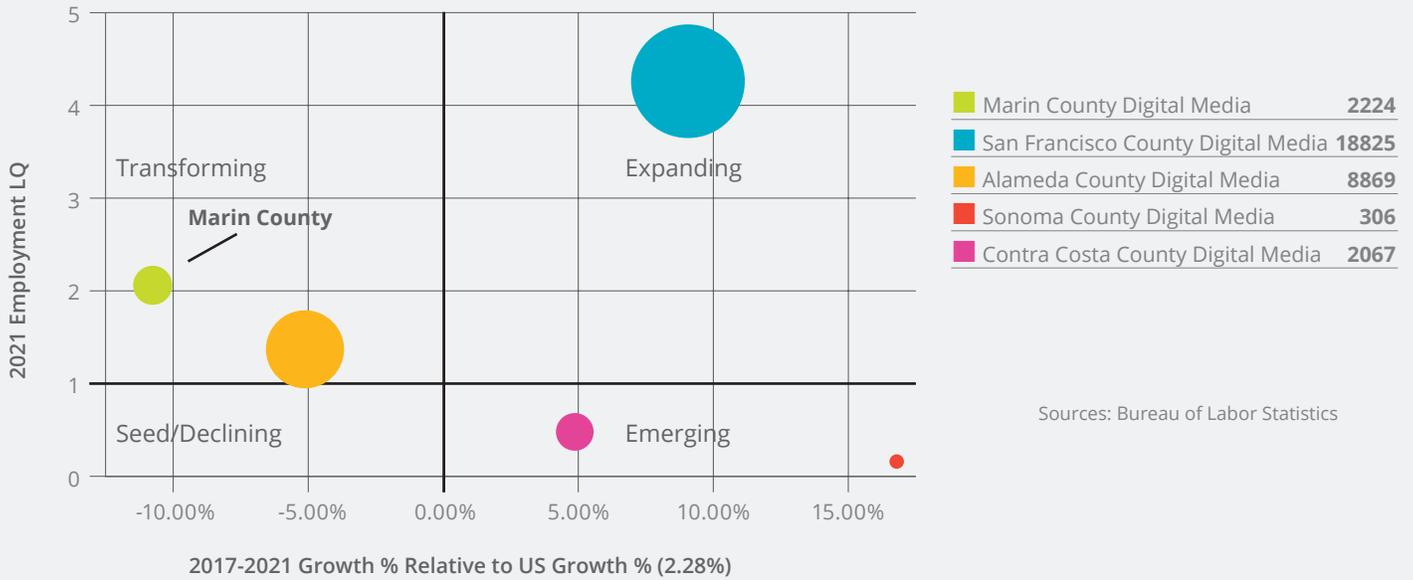


FIGURE 23.

Occupations with Positive Projected Growth (2018-2028)

Occupation	Estimated Current Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (Number)	Employment Change (Percentage)
Web Developers	120	140	20	16.7%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	380	420	40	10.5%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	3,380	3,720	340	10.1%
Computer User Support Specialists	420	460	40	9.5%
Computer Occupations	3,290	3,600	310	9.4%
Computer Occupations, All Other	580	630	50	8.6%
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	230	240	10	4.4%

Source: California EDD
 Note: EDD occupation data likely do not perfectly align with NAICS job data

FIGURE 24.**Information Technology: Leading Employment Segments (2017-2021)**

Segment	Growth in # of Jobs (2017-2021)	Percentage Change (2017-2021)	2021 Employment LQ
1. NAICS 5191 Other Information Services	51	73.91%	0.45
2. NAICS 541511 Custom Computer Programming Services	-137	-8.62%	2.0
3. NAICS 541512 Computer Systems Design Services	-90	-17.14%	0.57
4. NAICS 517311 Wired Telecommunications Carriers	-17	-17.71%	0.22

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

FIGURE 25.**Digital Media: Occupations with Positive Projected Growth (2018-2028)**

Occupation	Estimated Current Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (Number)	Employment Change (Percentage)
Film and Video Editors	90	120	30	33.3%
Audio and Video Technicians	170	220	50	29.4%
Software Developers, Apps.	600	730	130	21.7%
PR and Fundraising Managers	70	80	10	14.3%
Producers and Directors	210	240	30	14.3%
Media and Comms, Other	90	100	10	11.1%
Ad., PR, and Sales Managers	900	970	70	7.8%
Media & Comms Equipment Workers	530	550	20	3.8%
Graphic Designers	490	500	10	2%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	3,880	3,930	50	1.3%
Media and Comms Workers	690	700	10	1.5%

Source: California EDD

Note: EDD occupation data likely do not perfectly align with NAICS job data

FIGURE 26.**Digital Media: Leading Employment Segments (2017-2021)**

Segment	Growth in # of Jobs (2017-2021)	Percentage Change (2017-2021)	2021 Employment LQ
1. NAICS 512110 Motion Picture and Video Production	85	50.60%	1.48
2. NAICS 541820 Public Relations Agencies	8	16%	1.37
3. NAICS 511210 Software Publishers	75	5.31%	3.8
4. NAICS 517311 Wired Telecommunications Carriers	-97	-30.12%	1.58

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

TARGET 3. HEALTHCARE & AGING SERVICES—VITAL SECTOR FOR MARIN'S UNIQUE POPULATION DEMOGRAPHIC, BUT COST OF LIVING REMAINS AN ISSUE FOR GROWTH

Strong provider institutions face growth in demand and delivery from Marin's aging population leading to new trends enabling aging in place. (See Figure 27 for comparative position)

Marin's Healthcare & Aging Industry Today—Tremendous Job Potential, Impeded by Cost of Living and Commute⁴⁶

- **Total Employment (2021):** 14,330—Largest employer (See Fig. 28 for growing occupations and Fig. 29 for leading NAICS segments)
- **Concentration (Employment LQ):** 0.87—Below average, a surprise
- **Growth Rate Relative to US Avg. (2017-2021):** -7.45%—Difficulties retaining and attracting workforce in competitive Bay Area marketplace
- **Stage:** Transforming—Due to lagging employment growth (due to workforce costs and recruitment difficulties in technical and nursing staff) with growing demand, should be Expanding
- **County Position (Out of 5):** 5th in growth rate, 4th in concentration—Lagging Bay Area, which should not be the case
- **Average Annual Compensation:** \$68,737—Low relative to Marin cost of living, leading to use of long-commute, out of county workforce with high turn-over rate
- **Global Growth Rate (2025 CAGR):** Medicine 3-6%, Elder Services & Products 3.9%, Home Healthcare 8.6%—Moderate growth rate, but is likely to rise in Marin due to aging population

FIGURE 27.

Healthcare & Aging Services County Comparison

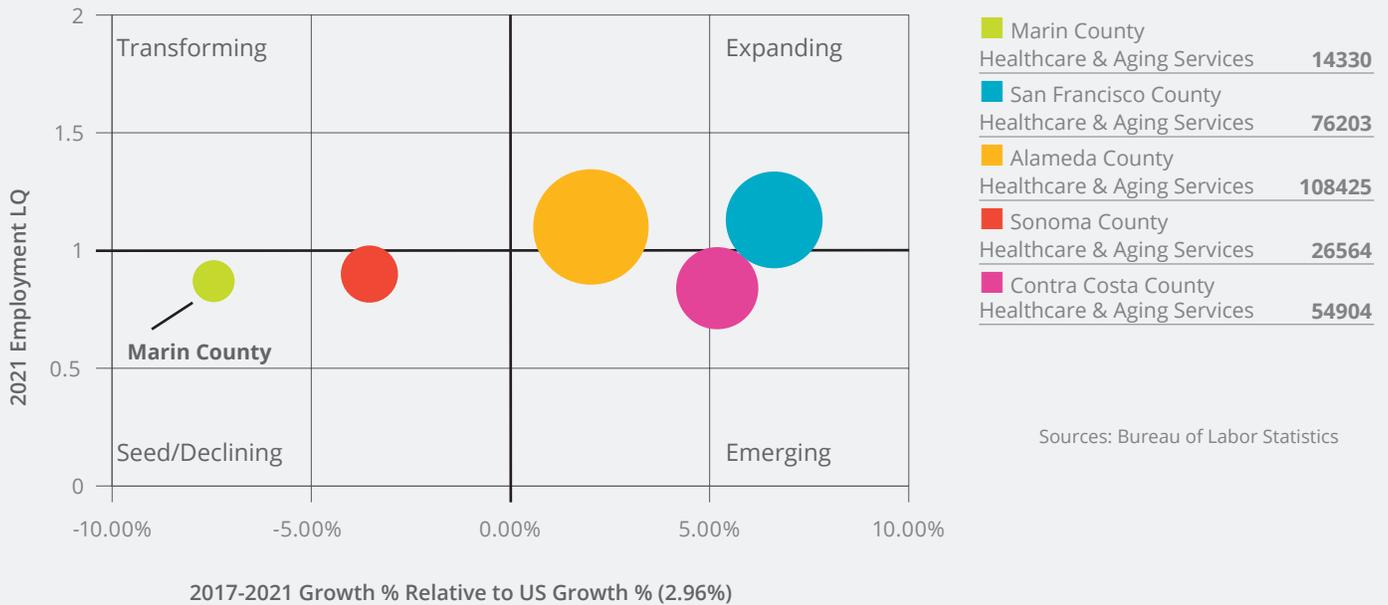


FIGURE 28.

Healthcare & Aging Services: Occupations with Positive Projected Growth (2018-2028)

Occupation	Estimated Current Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (Number)	Employment Change (Percentage)
Nurse Practitioners	140	190	50	35.7%
Rehabilitation Counselors	30	40	10	33.3%
Personal Care Aides	3,950	5,110	1,160	29.4%
Medical Assistants	590	750	160	27.1%
Registered Nurses	2,030	2,500	470	23.2%
Physical Therapists	180	220	40	22.2%
Healthcare Social Workers	90	110	20	22.2%
Health Information Technicians	100	120	20	20%
Radiologic Technologists	100	120	20	20%
Health Diagnosing and Treating	4,410	5,270	860	19.5%
Healthcare Support, Other	2,050	2,430	380	18.5%
Practitioners and Tech. Occup.	6,330	7,480	1,150	18.2%
Healthcare Support Occupations	2,840	3,330	490	17.3%
Health Techs	1,840	2,140	300	16.3%

Source: California EDD
 Note: EDD occupation data likely do not perfectly align with NAICS job data

FIGURE 29.**Healthcare & Aging Services: Leading Employment Segments (2017-2021)**

Segment	Growth in # of Jobs (2017-2021)	Percentage Change (2017-2021)	2021 Employment LQ
1. NAICS 6232 Residential Mental Health Facilities	208	27.08%	2.17
2. NAICS 6214 Outpatient Care Centers	362	17.14%	3.41
3. NAICS 6216 Home Health Care Services	127	14.17%	0.93
4. NAICS 6213 Offices of Other Health Practitioners	51	10.47%	0.75

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

TARGET 4. TOURISM & HOSPITALITY—HARNESSING MARIN'S NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES TO CAPTURE VALUE

This industry can capture greater value from our natural and cultural resources and destinations as global travel shifts to regional and sustainable patterns. With sector employment over 10,000, Tourism & Hospitality is an important economic driver. The sector is particularly influenced by technology impacts such as online booking, contactless technologies, and short-term home rental market (driven by digital platforms like AirBnB). (See Fig. 30 for comparative position)

Marin's Tourism & Hospitality Industry Today—Redefined by COVID & Technology⁴⁷

- **Total Employment (2021):** 10,466—Second largest industry (See Fig. 31 for growing occupations and Fig. 32 for leading NAICS segments)
- **Concentration (Employment LQ):** 1.02—Average specialization, due to majority of visitors coming from San Francisco and staying short times in Marin
- **Growth Rate Relative to US Avg. (2017-2021):** -3.98%—Highly impacted by COVID
- **Stage:** Transforming—Change driven by shifts in visitor markets (decline in international travel, growth in outdoor activities) and technologies (remote transactions with customers)
- **County Position (Out of 5):** 1st in growth rate, 2nd in

concentration—Suggests Marin is adapting to shifts in visitor markets (such as growing visits from Bay Area) and has potential for expansion

- **Average Annual Compensation:** \$35,142—Low compared to the other five sectors, but important in range of opportunity
- **Global Growth Rate (2025 CAGR):** 6%—Strong potential
- **Arts & Culture Synergy with Tourism & Hospitality:** Though Marin's arts and culture segments do not fit neatly into any one industry, they are closely tied to tourism & hospitality. Arts destinations, experiences, and products all add to the value chain of tourism and hospitality, helping drive visitation to Marin.
- **A High Economic Impact & Over 1500 Jobs:** Marin's nonprofit arts and culture sector generated \$76.4 million in total economic activity in 2018, and supports 1,648 jobs.⁴⁸
- **Hundreds of Creative Businesses:** Marin's creative businesses, including nonprofits, museums, theaters, and visual arts venues, number about 1,750 by a conservative count.⁴⁹
- **Marin Artist Mapping Inquiry:** The Marin Cultural Association began a program in 2019 to gather information on the location of Marin's artists, as well as their practices, vision, and needs.⁵⁰

FIGURE 30.

Tourism & Hospitality County Comparison

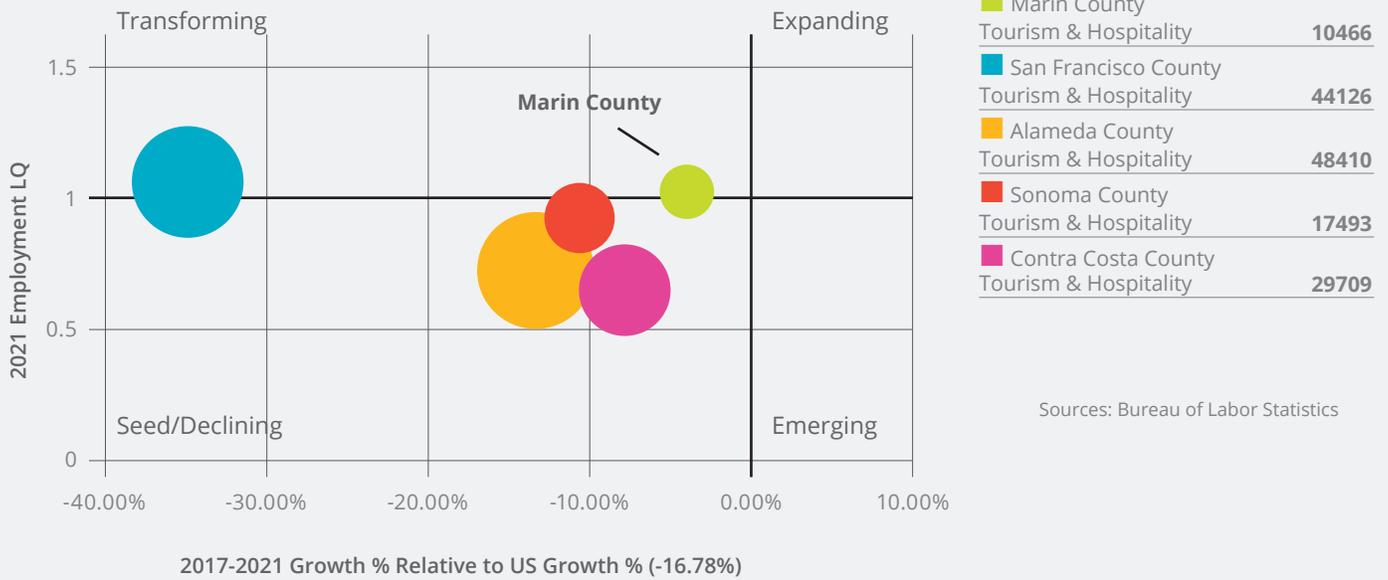


FIGURE 31.

Tourism & Hospitality: Occupations with Positive Projected Growth (2018-2028)

Occupation	Estimated Current Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (Number)	Employment Change (Percentage)
Transportation, Tourism, and Lodging Attendants	30	40	10	33.3%
Lodging Managers	60	80	20	33.3%
Tour and Travel Guides	40	50	10	25%
Cooks, Restaurant	2,000	2,390	390	19.5%
Hotel, Motel, & Resort Desk Clerks	230	270	40	17.4%
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	280	320	40	14.3%
Combined Food Prep & Serving	2,800	3,190	390	13.9%
Recreation Workers	460	520	60	13%
Dining Room, Cafeteria, and Bartender Helpers	1,120	1,260	140	12.5%
Chefs and Head Cooks	350	390	40	11.4%
Cooks and Food Prep Workers	3,760	4,180	420	11.2%
Amusement & Rec. Attendants	390	430	40	10.3%
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	200	220	20	10%

Source: California EDD
 Note: EDD occupation data likely do not perfectly align with NAICS job data

FIGURE 32.**Tourism & Hospitality: Leading Employment Segments (2017-2021)**

Segment	Growth in # of Jobs (2017-2021)	Percentage Change (2017-2021)	2021 Employment LQ
1. NAICS 712190 Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions	9	12.86%	11.61
2. NAICS 722513 Limited-Service Restaurants	-160	-5.56%	.88
3. NAICS 713990 All Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	-22	-9.52%	1.98
4. NAICS 722511 Full-Service Restaurants	-2634	-38.73%	1.36

TARGET 5. REMOTE WORK & NEW ENTERPRISE—ADAPTING COMMUNITIES TO NEW WORK PATTERNS

Growth of distributed work, early retirement among professionals eager to advise or work with new enterprise and youthful entrepreneurs, will power acceleration of new local services for work support and meetings while also generating more start-ups, all supported by Marin’s quality of life.

Marin Remote Work & New Enterprise Industry Today—A Trend That Can Benefit Communities

Remote Work Is an Established Trend: Prior to the pandemic, 39% of Marin’s jobs were eligible for remote work, with 19% of remote-eligible employees electing to work predominantly from home, a higher proportion than in any other San Francisco Bay Area County.⁵¹ Marin’s remote workforce will continue to increase, as surveys have indicated that under a quarter of workers want to return to the office five days per week.⁵² Remote work is part of a larger synergistic set of trends:

- **Automation & Communication:** Enabling distributed work across a growing array of functions that leads to downsizing of real estate occupancy and flexible use of existing space and growth of smaller work centers plus expansion of day-time services from restaurants to wiring of smart home infrastructure.
- **Workforce Disengagement:** Successful mid-career professionals with adequate savings are leaving work earlier, often to form or advise new enterprise while generational shifts in values are leading younger workers to move laterally to jobs that offer greater

meaning, membership or autonomy, existing retirees, particularly those with relatively high net worth are increasingly exploring becoming angel investors or re-entering the workforce.

- **Community Dissatisfaction:** Many small to medium-size communities are less accepting of firms that do not match community values whether it is scale or operations, sustainability impacts or social practices.

All these factors suggest that Marin can cultivate a new environment—an entrepreneurial ecosystem—for distributed workforce, new enterprise and small companies.

Remote Work & New Enterprise Trends—Marin Should Prepare for & Capture Distributed Work & Entrepreneurship Harnessing Marin Capital Sources

- **Marin’s High Rate of Establishment Births:** With ~33 establishment births per 10,000 residents in 2019, Marin trailed only San Francisco in density of establishment births among the five counties examined. However, Marin also had a high rate of establishment exits, resulting in only modest establishment growth between 2018-19 (0.41%).⁵³
- **Need to Scale Up Entrepreneurial Support:** To retain residents and talent, communities may need to dramatically scale-up capacity to meet demand for entrepreneurial support and growth, as well as investing in local housing and transportation to meet workforce needs.

- **Layoffs May Increase Talent Pool Available to Startups:** The tech industry shows signs that the post-pandemic hiring boom is over and layoffs are increasing. This may be a boon to start-up enterprises seeking top tech talent or may fuel greater start-up activity from displaced workers starting new firms.
- **Accepting Spin-Offs from Parent Organizations:** To retain relationships and value of skilled employees, companies may need to do more than offering flexible work options, including assisting formation owned or co-owned spin-offs of existing units as well as fostering and assisting and investing in start-ups by employees in areas that are not central to current business operations, but which may serve as means of adding to the company value-chain or diversification. Corporate venture funds focusing on harnessing creative talents of employees have a long history among major high-tech firms from semiconductors (Intel) to biomedicine (J&J).

TARGET 6. MULTI-SEGMENT GREENING OF MARIN—COORDINATING EXISTING EFFORTS AND AGGREGATING DEMAND TO CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Climate change driven opportunities are leading to formation of for-profit, for-benefit and non-profit corporations serving the diversity of sustainability enterprises in energy, water, waste, and are seeking to capture expenditures within Marin and beyond.

Marin has the opportunity to strengthen how its green and cleantech sector helps the county meet GHG emission goals, grow green jobs, and generate new sales and tax revenues. Electrification and renewable energy projects can create high quality jobs for electricians, building tradesmen, and energy installation and maintenance. Supporting early-stage green enterprises can help create local supply to meet market demands and help solve pressing climate issues. Around the United States, the green and cleantech sector will grow thanks to funding from national, state, and private sources. Marin should ensure that it captures its share of this funding.

Marin’s Green-Clean Industry Today—Diverse Formation, Application, & Growth Activity

- **An Evolving Industry:** There is already a critical mass

of green and clean industry activity in Marin. Marin’s green and cleantech industry cuts across numerous categories and for that reason prevents NAICS code categorization and industry statistical analysis.

- **Multiple Segments:** Segments that contain green and cleantech jobs include energy, transportation, recycling & waste management, agriculture, water, consulting, and finance. Eventually every industry will either produce using green techniques or make products that enable green solutions.

Green & Cleantech Companies & Organizations in Marin

- **Energy Generation, Efficiency, & Storage:** MCE, Illumalighting
- **Green Transportation:** Polestar, ElectroMeccanica
- **Recycling & Waste Management:** Biomass Recovery Group, Zero Waste Marin, Recology, Marin Sanitary Service
- **Sustainable Agriculture:** Agricultural Institute of Marin, Straus Family Creamery, Stemple Creek Ranch, Gilardi Family Farm
- **Water:** Marin Water
- **Energy & Environmental Consulting, Education, & Outreach:** TrimTab Media, Drawdown: Marin, Carbon Cycle Institute, SEI: Strategic Energy Innovations, Marin School of Environmental Leadership, Resilient Neighborhoods
- **Cleantech Finance:** Sol-Ed, Helios

A Base to Build From: Marin Promotes Sustainability Through a Number of Programs

- Marin County Green Business Program
- Green Building Requirements
- Low-Carbon Concrete
- Electrify Marin
- Marin Solar Program
- Marin County Energy Watch
- Marin Bay Waterfront Adaptation Vulnerability Evaluation
- Sea-Level Marin Adaptation Response Team

MarinCAN an Existing Asset: MarinCAN, a collaboration between the County, staff, and community leaders, focuses on

reducing GHG emissions and preparing Marin for the impacts of climate change. MarinCAN's near-term endorsed solutions include:⁵⁴

- Marin Carbon Farming Initiative
- Drive Clean Bay Area
- Agricultural Institute of Marin's Center for Food & Agriculture
- Biomass Study/Recovery Pathways
- Microgrids- Fairfax Pavilion Pilot Project
- Community Resilience Hubs
- Resilient Neighborhoods- Climate Preparedness and Reduction for the Planet

New Enterprise Track Record—Successfully Incubated Cleantech Enterprises: Marin's green and cleantech incubator and accelerator programs have already successfully incubated enterprises such as Illumalighting, a lighting solutions company recently acquired by Evolvelectric, and Helios, the world's first commercial real estate platform focused on energy project development and financing.

Targeted Funding—American Rescue Plan Act Funding Source: Marin County currently has \$4 million in ARPA funds allocated for a first round of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects.⁵⁵

VI. EVSP Flagship Initiatives

Flagship Initiatives

Economic strategies define a vision and set out how to achieve that vision. For Marin County, this vision is rooted in the desire to create a dynamic economy, providing equitable access to good jobs, opportunities for new business creation and a high quality of life for all Marin’s residents. To achieve this vision, the EVSP team had to prioritize actions that have been defined by stakeholders, identified through the robust economic analysis of pandemic impacts and the County economy, and respond to the known needs for growth in the target industries.

Further, since many issues cited and observed are being addressed through other efforts of the County, cities and towns, the non-profit sector, and private businesses, EVSP actions should both fill gaps and amplify existing efforts where shared outcomes, such as “good jobs” are the goal.

In response the EVSP identifies five “Flagship Initiatives” with corresponding actions that will be pursued by the County and community partners to achieve economic vitality in Marin over the next 3-5 years.

Flagship Initiatives establish an overarching goal and are intended to be broad enough to provide the space for community partners and the County to collaborate and pursue actions that will lead to goal attainment. In some cases, actions under a Flagship Initiative are well defined while in others there is a need to identify the best approach and partners that will require time. Implementation of Flagship Initiatives is expected to occur over a 5-year period, although some actions may be underway in other forms or more immediate because of the issue they are addressing, such as recovery from the pandemic. In all cases, the role of the County is as “convener and catalyst” utilizing resources and expertise to support community partners on the front lines.

Each Flagship Initiative is presented below with a discussion of the challenges they address or opportunity created by them, the proposed actions that can lead to achievement of the initiative, the success metrics to be used in measuring progress, and an illustrative list of community partners, including public entities within the County, that can play an active role in implementation and funding.

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE #1:

Expand & Integrate Marin's Workforce Infrastructure



Marin has a robust network of public and private entities providing workforce services to residents and employers. These providers services are concentrated in improving basic work skills and creating career pathways for lower and middle-income residents, and only a few programs are oriented towards specific industries (healthcare, trades). Marin's higher skilled sectors (including life sciences and IT) have a limited number of firms thus are not able to absorb a high number of employees that would emerge from training programs. This creates a challenge for workforce providers and their funders who must carefully weigh the costs and demand of programs that may only produce few graduates. Other traditional workforce issues, including scale of programs, peer linkages and even childcare, persist as challenges in Marin, despite a high number of entities working in the space.

The high cost of housing is perhaps the greatest challenge to Marin's employers, limiting the available workforce

especially in low and middle-wage occupations. Marin County local governments are required by January 2023 to plan for significantly more housing units at all income levels, which is expected to reduce this burden. All Marin's cities, towns and the unincorporated County is planning for over 14,400 additional housing units over the next 8 years. For example, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requires the County to identify 3,569 new units with 2,246 of those units allocated to "very low," "low" and "low to moderate" income levels. In addition, the County has allocated over \$15 million in an affordable housing trust fund to help leverage various funding sources to preserve and build affordable housing units countywide. Accelerating the pace of affordable housing development countywide would greatly benefit Marin businesses by providing expanded workforce housing options. A number of county, state, federal and even private resources have been allocated towards helping secure housing, especially for those that do not meet Marin's high median income levels.

Several opportunities exist to expand and integrate the workforce ecosystem in Marin, with a goal of building more robust talent pipelines and improving prospects for residents to secure more jobs in the middle and high-income occupations that will emerge as target industries grow. Doing so will require greater collaboration between workforce providers and employers in those target industries, which to date has not traditionally existed. Providers themselves would benefit from more frequent dialogue to share information, tactics, and even collaborate to expand access to public funding opportunities. Marin's opportunity is to leverage an existing strong base of providers across the education, public and non-profit sector and strengthen linkages to growth-oriented target industries with underlying support to residents, creating more robust talent pipelines and living-wage or better occupations.

ACTIONS:

1. **Create a single platform** that will allow workforce practitioners to share knowledge, collaborate for scale, or pursue public funding sources.

2. **Expand existing training programs** to provide more openings for residents displaced by the pandemic or seeking higher-wage opportunities, including those in the trades, healthcare, or other service-oriented occupations.

3. **Create a dialogue platform for business and childcare providers** to collaborate to expand capacity and resources.

4. **Support Industry Training Partnerships** within EVSP Target Industries.

5. **Work across county agencies, town and city offices and community partners** to increase access to existing or newly created public and private funds allocated to affordable and workforce housing.

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Marin County Office of Education
- College of Marin
- Workforce Alliance of the North Bay
- Non-profit/Community-Based Organizations
- YWCA
- Community Action Marin
- Chambers of Commerce
- Marin Economic Forum
- Marin Builders Association
- Equus
- Area Hospitals
- North Bay Leadership Council
- Marin Childcare Council

SUCCESS

METRICS

→ Jobs created in target industries

→ Number of childcare slots

→ Number of industry partnerships created

→ Number of program graduates from trades and healthcare programs

→ Number of preserved or new affordable housing units created with public or private resources.

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE #2:

Catalyze Growth of Marin's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



In today's economy developing job growth is closely linked to new enterprise formation. In response, regions are now striving to enhance the formation and survival of start-ups. This is particularly true in the target industries defined in the EVSP.

Marin has had some positive history in enterprise formation. Yet this has been opportunistic rather than the norm and often due to entrepreneurs coming to Marin with their own resources and not being induced or supported by any kind of entrepreneurial ecosystem. There are limited resources that generate innovation or commercialization opportunities and while Marin has many high-net worth individuals, there is only a modest history of early-stage investment. There are few incubators or accelerators that typically help grow start-ups or obvious physical spaces in which entrepreneurs can convene and collaborate. The start-up community, that would otherwise be a strong creator of middle and high wage jobs, is constrained to grow as fast as the Marin-based talent desires.

Despite these constraints, a growing and more visible start-up community is present in Marin, and is being supported by mostly private entities. Marin can strengthen its entrepreneurial ecosystem by catalyzing activities and programs that can create new businesses, address and support traditional needs of entrepreneurs, such as capital, expertise, mentorship and culture, and physical spaces. Further, given trends that are restructuring work (outsourcing, remote work, automation), Marin would especially benefit from the presence of a technology "commercialization center" to support target industries to advance their adaptation and growth. Delivering this entrepreneurial ecosystem requires purposely aligning private and public resources on a continuing basis. In such a case, the county can leverage its connections to state or federal funding sources, while integrating the ideal of supporting entrepreneurs, from all backgrounds, into existing services and activities where relevant.

ACTIONS:

1. **Collaborate on activities** that will strengthen the networking and mentoring of Marin’s entrepreneurs.

2. **Support expanded access** to entrepreneurship and financial resources available to youth and BIPOC entrepreneurs.

3. **Seek opportunities to support the expansion** of incubators and accelerators that can serve Marin’s entrepreneurs.

4. **Seek opportunities to collaborate** or partner in the establishment of a commercialization entity in Marin County.

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Marin Sonoma Impact Ventures
- VenturePad
- Marin SBDC
- Dominican University
- Marin Economic Forum
- MCOE
- College of Marin
- Digital Marin
- Buck Institute

SUCCESS METRICS

- Number of organizations supporting entrepreneurship across the county
- Presence of incubators, accelerators or other private sector entities supporting the start-up community
- Mechanism to regularly track and measure business creation/licenses across county

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE #3:

Accelerate Growth of Climate Solutions & Enabling Enterprises



Marin has a history of leadership in the climate space. The county and several jurisdictions have established “Climate Action Plans” and supporting initiatives to mobilize resources towards mitigation and management of climate issues. While progressive and innovative, these efforts also provide an economic development opportunity through growth of companies and jobs in the sector.

Conversely, Marin has many small businesses that, while interested in going ‘green’ do not, on their own, have the resources to implement climate-related actions, whether shifting from conventional gas to electric systems or to adopt technologies that will enhance the sustainability of their business operations. Marin also has a growing supply-side of green, climate change, focused enterprises that are also small and need help reaching scale. These enterprises are not as yet linked together as a “industry sector” nor do they have trade representation or avenues for funding as a sector/industry. There is opportunity to help this market work by bringing consumers together to scale demand while helping climate change businesses break through their silos of isolation and grow to serve Marin’s needs.

To reach scale, Marin can leverage the experience of utility franchise models and the ongoing efforts of entities like Marin Clean Energy (MCE). One approach is through an agency/entity serving as the intermediary in aggregating demand, much as MCE does for energy. By supporting Marin-based vendors, better opportunities for economic growth occurs while vendors can potentially expand services to neighboring regions. Such an agency/entity can be scaled-up incrementally, helping the county move beyond small pilot programs to an economically driven model.

ACTIONS:

1. Seek opportunities to harmonize current and future climate change-related regulations for easier support by residents (and businesses).

2. Consider establishing an agency or entity that will aggregate of demand across Marin for larger scale, higher-impact climate change projects (MCE model).

3. Facilitate the promotion, formation, and growth of green and climate change focused enterprises by working across agencies and with community-based organizations operating in the sector.

4. Convene and support public and private sector organizations to promote Marin as welcoming climate and green businesses.

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Marin CAN
- City Climate Resources/staff
- Community Development Agency (CDA)
- Electrify Marin
- Marin Green Business Program
- Marin Solar Program
- PG&E
- Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)
- Sustainability Investors
- Venturepad
- Water Districts

SUCCESS METRICS

- Number of common climate goals (quantified) among the County and cities/towns
- Growth of businesses designated as a “green business” by the Marin Green Business Program

- Number of new businesses created/ located in Marin County providing/supporting the renewable energy sector

- Creation of an agency/ non-profit/entity that aggregates and provides renewable or climate-related services supporting Marin residents and businesses

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE #4:

Increase Pathways to Economic Mobility for Marin Residents



Marin's economically disadvantaged residents have not had equitable access to jobs that provide livable and good wages despite the economic success that has occurred in the greater Bay Area over the past decade. These residents have difficulty taking advantage of job training programs due to time constraints, lack of linguistic accessibility, and job or family obligations. Further, they often have not had the opportunity to learn vital financial literacy skills and do not have the same access to capital that Marin's more affluent residents do. As a result, economic mobility suffers and the need for increased public services continues.

Currently Marin County has several public and private providers of services to Marin's lower income residents, although those services are not always oriented towards economic mobility, with respective measuring and evaluation. Economic and social indicators do not often appear in the same plans and strategies despite their obvious links.

There is an opportunity for the county to identify and integrate services that result in economic mobility, including workforce training, social services and increasing transportation opportunities to access jobs, to measure efficiency and quality more effectively. There is also a need for public and private sector operators to frequently align economic mobility programs and goals, to boost funding for shared objectives. Longer term, there will be a need to ensure that residents are not left out of the job opportunities that are expected with target industry growth, so awareness and preparation of residents to participate in target industry growth must be considered in education and workforce opportunities targeting lower income residents.

ACTIONS:

- 1. Integrate a common set of economic mobility metrics** into and across county agency plans and strategies.
- 2. Improve access to financial literacy training across the county** in schools, adult learning settings and with other service providers to assure greater economic security.
- 3. Support increased access to capital and other financial services** serving Marin's small business and low-income communities to increase availability of micro loans and conventional financing.
- 4. Encourage and expand opportunities for entrepreneurship/business ownership** for lower income residents through public funding or program design.
- 5. Expand and support culturally appropriate business training for Marin's BIPOC community.**

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Adopt A Family of Marin
- Ambassadors of Hope and Opportunity
- Bolinas Community Land Trust
- Buckelew Programs
- Canal Alliance
- Community Action Marin
- Community Land Trust Association of West Marin (CLAM)
- EAH Housing
- Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California
- Gilead House
- Homeward Bound of Marin
- Housing Authority Commission
- Marin Community Foundation
- College of Marin

SUCCESS METRICS

- Economic mobility indicators integrated into county metrics
- Establishment of publicly accessible economic mobility data dashboard
- Number of new business establishments owned by BIPOC residents
- Presence of CDFI or other lending organizations catering to disadvantaged borrowers

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE #5:

Formalize Countywide Economic Development Activities



Across the U.S., cities and counties are realizing that they each compete not only in their surrounding region but globally. This is especially true in the hyper-dynamic Bay Area, where competition for business and talent is increasingly difficult. Regardless of their size, cities and counties recognize that they can, and need to play an active role in supporting economic development activities.

While Marin County currently lacks an economic development office, it does support the economy by partnering with community organizations to lead activities, sometimes on its behalf. However, traditional activities like business retention, industry attraction and the associated infrastructure investments and program design are not occurring in a proactive way. For example, the target industries identified in the EVSP do not have a county counterpart with whom they can collaborate to enhance their expansion and competitiveness. And although the economy has largely managed the fallout from the pandemic, Marin businesses continue to face risks, including natural disasters or future economic shocks that would typically be managed by some form of county economic development resource.

Successful economies are characterized by their understanding of the economy, their catalytic impact on changing how existing resources are best used and by collaboration with key economic partners. Such actions do not occur organically, they are the result of purposeful intentions planning and leadership. In Marin, there is an opportunity to pursue economic development by elevating county support, incrementally, towards activities that strengthen the economy. A willing cadre of partners can be leveraged in the near term to boost economic development activities while the county pursues a pathway to a more institutional approach to countywide economic development.

ACTIONS:

1. Establish an acceptable initial source of economic development leadership at the county level to implement EVSP and other priority economic development outcomes.

2. Work across agencies and community partners to establish common economic development objectives that can be measured.

3. Collaborate with jurisdictions (and their Chambers of Commerce) to boost economic vitality through matching grants.

4. Support efforts to attract new businesses to Marin, prioritizing those businesses in the target industries.

5. Collaborate with community partners to expand access to training for small businesses.

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Marin Economic Forum
- Marin SBDC
- Dominican University
- College of Marin
- North Bay Leadership Council
- Target Industry Representatives
- Bay Area Council
- County of Marin
- City and Town Leadership

SUCCESS METRICS

- County staff/POC to oversee EVSP and other economic development issues in place.
- Number of businesses obtaining support assisted by county (via information or other resources).
- Number of county-city/town initiatives aimed at improving “economic vitality.”
- Number of collaborative business attraction activities performed.
- Growth of businesses operating in target industries.
- Existence of public-private sector dialogue on business and economic issues in the county.

VII. Implementation Approach

A. MOVING FORWARD—IMPLEMENT THROUGH PROACTIVE COUNTY & COMMUNITY COLLABORATION:

Economic strategies are usually led by those public entities they serve. In the case of the EVSP, Marin County may take an incremental approach to guide the EVSP while more robust economic development resources can be built over time (see Flagship Initiative #6). This could include the county playing the following ongoing roles through the EVSP:

- 1. Ensure integration of EVSP goals across county agencies:** Implementation and realization of the Flagship Initiatives in the EVSP will also deliver outcomes in thematic areas addressed by other county agencies, such as the Office of Equity or Health and Human Services for example. The county will work internally with other agencies to ensure EVSP economic development objectives can be incorporated into their policies and programs where relevant seeking resource leverage/savings.
- 2. Convene stakeholders to lead implementation:** The primary role for the county in the EVSP is to use resources, including staff, expertise and funding, to convene county stakeholders to collaborate, design, and in some cases, lead implementation of EVSP activities with
- 3. Provide & Leverage Funding:** Building on the “participatory budgeting” approach used by other county offices, the county can provide funding on a competitive bid or matching grant basis to stakeholders to implement parts of the EVSP Flagship Initiatives.
- 4. Measure Progress:** EVSP actions and outcomes should be measured and evaluated on an annual basis. Illustrative indicators are presented below.

Appendix

APPENDIX A

Stakeholder Groups & Individual Interviews

Stakeholder Groups

1. City Managers Group (12/2/2021)
2. Mayors + Elected Officials Group (12/4/2021)
3. Marin Sonoma Impact Ventures Group (12/14/2021)
4. Aging Adults and Adults with Disabilities Group (1/4/2022)
5. Workforce Development Group (1/13/2021)
6. Community Action Marin Group (2 sessions 2/3 and 2/10/2022)
7. CleanTech and Sustainability Group (2/7/2022)
8. Small Business Group (2/16/2022)
9. Youth and Family Empowerment Group (3/8/2022)
10. Tourism and Hospitality Group (3/21/2022)
11. West Marin Residents Group (4/5/2022)

Individual Interviews

1. Nucleo Life Sciences Former CEO (4/11/2022)
2. Kaiser Permanente Marin (4/13/2022)
3. MarinHealth (4/14/2022)
4. Ultragenyx (4/28/2022)
5. BioMarin (5/6/2022)

APPENDIX B

Marin EVSP Stakeholder Focus Group Process

OVERVIEW: A structured group facilitation process was used to elicit key input from the 10 to 15 participants in each focus group session. Sessions lasted two to three hours in length, with enthusiastic participation and interactive discussion throughout. Several sessions were face-to-face, but the majority were held on-line events—yet all were rich in content. Each Stakeholder Focus Group had five phases:

- **Welcome & Background:** The CEO of the Marin Economic Forum (MEF) welcomed the invitees and explained the mission of this bottom-up initiative as Marin County's first economic strategy, then introduced the consulting team.
- **Marin Today:** The JGA team provided a brief overview of Marin's competitive position and candidate target industries, then outlined the collaborative process for this session.
- **Round 1. Challenges:** The facilitator introduced the first of seven economic challenge themes they would explore and asked participants to outline one or more challenge that they, or those they represented, faced). The facilitator then asked the balance of the participants to confirm they shared this same challenge or add to the details concerning the challenge, until the facilitator felt the stakeholder inputs had been reasonably well expressed. A key point made to participants was that they should not propose a challenge impacting themselves or their organization unless they were also willing to collaborate in supporting future actions. At this juncture, the facilitating team summarized the priorities as a focal point for the next round.
- **Round 2. Actions:** Without any preconceptions, Stakeholders were then shown the Challenges that appeared to have the greatest importance or 'weight' for participants. Stakeholders were asked to consider collaborative actions they would be most ready as individuals and organizations to support to address the key challenge. While many actions were novel, many proposals echoed existing policy, program or public-private actions. That being the case, the directions expressed in these actions often suggested opportunities for enhancement or modification of existing actions. A key and continually repeated direction arising from every one of the 12 focus groups was the frustration with silos of activity and the associated need for greater integration or cohesion across categories of need and service. Within the limits of time, actions arising from this roundtable were summarized in terms of top three to five priorities.
- **Round 3. Vision:** As a 'warm down' step in the collaborative Stakeholder Focus Group sessions, participants were asked to visualize how Marin's economy, equity, environment and education would look if the challenges they had prioritized and the actions they proposed were successfully implemented. While brief, the vision of successful outcomes aligned closely with enhanced performance of Marin County on each of the 4Es—with a sincerity that was inclusive and realistic.

APPENDIX C

Target Industry Diagnostic Observations

LIFE SCIENCES—DIVERSE SOURCES OF POTENTIAL GROWTH

- **Connectivity Will Help This Industry Grow:** With non-laboratory staff increasingly working remotely, the ability to connect and work from anywhere expands access to new talent and new partners, generating more virtual innovation in the industry.
- **Build Out Marin's R&D Capabilities:** Stronger linkages between Marin companies and the existing concentration of R&D services companies within Marin will enhance growth, as will harnessing geographic synergies with the North Bay—especially stronger ties with life sciences companies with R&D and branches in Sonoma, such as Medtronic.
- **Harness the Buck Institute's Potential:** Improving the Buck Institute's commercialization capacity and strengthening ties to local life sciences and scientific R&D services companies will help attract talent, innovation among existing firms and formation of new life sciences enterprise.
- **Employ Microeconomic Hubs to Attract Growth:** Strategic actions to establish research technology nodes, centers or parks, that concentrate the value chain of existing specializations such as orphan drugs or aging research will help attract R&D, commercialization and business development services, and intermediary organizations, building out the sector's capabilities and presence in niche and broader life sciences markets.

IT & DIGITAL MEDIA—KEY IS TO LEVERAGE HISTORIC & CREATIVE ASSETS

- **Explosive Improvements Fuel Advances in Other Sectors:** Developments like those in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, and Web 3.0 are increasing the cost/performance profile of other sectors of the economy, leading to huge

productivity increases. IT improvements for industry and services are instrumental in helping eCommerce flourish and Marin industries need these inputs to compete and grow.

- **Untapped Assets:** Despite Marin's weak position in certain subsectors of IT, Autodesk, once the dominant player in CAD/CAM, remains a significant presence in the County and their current and former employees can play a role in segments of IT. Although Industrial Light & Magic moved major operations to San Francisco, Skywalker Ranch continues to work in Motion Picture and Sound Recording, has through Lucas possesses thousands of acres of land, that despite past disappointments, may be encouraged to explore low-impact means of accommodated distributed workforce with other select partners.
- **Proximity to San Francisco:** Marin's proximity to IT companies in San Francisco and elsewhere in the Bay Area helps companies attract talent and form collaborative partnerships, which may grow as readiness to adopted distributed, remote, workforce becomes an enduring condition.
- **Opportunity for an Inter-media Institute:** Creative elements in Marin could be convened to create an institute capable of drawing on the Bay Area's diverse cultural institutions, leveraging Marin's quality of life and enthusiasm of leading thinkers for new centers of excellence.

HEALTHCARE & AGING SERVICES—CONVERGENCE OF TECHNOLOGY & AGING IN PLACE

- **Proximity to World-Class Medical & Research Resources in the Bay Area:** Marin has good hospitals with close ties to medical institutes in the Bay Area. MarinHealth's 10-year alliance with UCSF includes clinical, IT, and patient records integration, as well as a \$110 million capital commitment. Kaiser-Permanente members have access to clinical and hospital care around the Bay Area.
- **Technological Advances Make Marin a Leader in Healthcare Services:** Advances in remote monitoring permit greater freedom for seniors and patients with chronic conditions. Improvements in diagnostics and treatment produce better health impacts. Progress

in data science and informatics help spur medical research and care, with Marin having a number of biomedical research, testing and instrument development enterprises (mostly listed as part of life sciences).

- **Expand Applied Aging R&D:** The Buck Institute conducts basic science research on aging and has collaboration with UCSF. These activities could be expanded from basic to translational, research and commercialization with local or global life science company clients or partners to enable impacts on aging in Marin through a possible “Aging & Disability Institute” or “Lifespan Lab”.
- **Expand Support for Caregivers & Older Adults:** Improve compensation, skills, and career growth opportunities for caregivers to enable older adults to age in place, through new care packages and, intergenerational housing (multi-age groups) and expansion of assisted living.
- **Expand Public Health Services to Underserved Groups:** Overcome challenges facing lower income older adults and families across Marin ethnic communities by providing grants to expand existing initiatives such as Community Action Marin, the Ritter Center, and North Marin Community Services, including expanding funding for federally qualified health centers (“FQHCs”) and assisting community-oriented healthcare providers to qualify as FQHCs.

- **Increase in Overnight Tourism:** Given growth in Bay Area and shorter stays, capture additional revenue through use of weekend packages with itineraries combining key attractions, tourism providers, and traditional lodging or emerging online rental programs, as well as extended stay wellness packages.
- **Coordinate Marketing & Promotion:** Need to showcase Marin’s range of tourism assets, travel packages, and lifestyle in a manner targeted to very different market segments to attract more visitation and better capture regional market share, particularly during the off-peak season.
- **Capturing More Value Through Supporting Enterprise Formation:** Build out the local value-chain through assisting in the formation of enterprises dealing in lodging, inbound tourism-operators, and specialized transportation providers

TOURISM & HOSPITALITY—NEED TO LEVERAGE NATURAL & HISTORIC ASSETS FOR TARGET SEGMENTS

Much of Marin’s possibility in Tourism & Hospitality will depend on members of the industry collaborating with one another and strategic partners to respond to current market trends:

- **Strong Existing Assets to Be Leveraged:** Marin possesses beautiful natural attractions (e.g., Muir Woods and Pt. Reyes), culinary amenities (e.g., Cowgirl Creamery and Hog Island Oysters), a wellness destination (Spirit Rock Meditation Center), and locational advantages (proximity to San Francisco and Sonoma/Napa valleys). Growth in the sector will be largely tied to linking and effectively leveraging these assets.

ENDNOTES

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- 41 Biocom 2021 EIR
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- 43 US Patent and Trademark Office
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- 45 Employment and compensation numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Employment and Wages Data Viewer, CAGR from Business Wire and Statista
- 46 Employment and compensation numbers from BLS Employment and Wages Data Viewer, CAGR from PR Newswire, Businesswire, and Globe Newswire
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