



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/24/2025

File #: 25-516

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Time Certain Matter

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

9:45 A.M. - Humboldt County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2025-30

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive a presentation from Thomas P Miller & Associates on the Humboldt County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2025-30 (CEDS); and
2. Approve the 2025-30 CEDS; and
3. Direct staff to submit the CEDS to the United States Economic Development Administration.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: A Diverse, Equitable & Robust Economy

Strategic Plan Category: 2001 - Promote strong economic resiliency and growth

DISCUSSION:

Following direction from your Board on Feb. 27, 2024, the County of Humboldt Economic Development Division released a request for proposals for qualified firms to assist in the completion of the CEDS. On Dec. 10, 2024 your Board approved awarding the contract to Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) for development of the CEDS. TPMA has completed the CEDS and is prepared to submit the document to the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Purpose of the CEDS:

The CEDS is a regionally coordinated, locally developed plan required by the EDA for communities seeking federal economic development funding. The CEDS outlines a multi-year strategy to support job creation, infrastructure investment and economic resilience. Its purpose is to promote sustainable and inclusive growth, especially in underserved areas, by identifying shared priorities, aligning resources and fostering collaboration across public, private and nonprofit sectors. CEDS approval ensures eligibility for key EDA programs, including Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grants.

Required Components of the CEDS:

- Summary Background: Overview of regional economic conditions;

- SWOT Analysis: Assessment of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- Strategic Direction and Action Plan: Based on SWOT findings and aligned with other regional plans; includes implementation roles, timelines and funding opportunities;
- Evaluation Framework: Metrics to assess implementation progress and regional economic impact;
- Economic Resilience: Strategies to prepare for and recover from economic disruptions.

Summary of Work:

TPMA led the development of the CEDS by conducting research, surveys, community engagement, and drafting all required components. A series of community engagement roadshows were conducted across the county to gather input and raise awareness. Industry-specific workshops with approximately 90 participants helped identify key sector challenges, and a community-wide survey with 801 responses informed the community summary. A Community Strategy Session and subsequent meeting of the CEDS Committee refined the SWOT analysis and focused the strategic action plan. The CEDS Committee included representatives from public, private, nonprofit, and tribal sectors to ensure broad regional input and alignment with federal requirements. Target Industry Clusters were updated based on projected growth and community feedback and now include Education and Training, Healthcare, Financial Services, Agriculture, Arts, Hospitality and Tourism, Construction, Renewable Energy and Aquaculture and Fisheries. A public comment period was held from May 15, 2025, through June 15, 2025, followed by a final CEDS Committee meeting to incorporate public feedback and finalize the document for Board approval.

Next Steps:

The CEDS includes a community data summary, SWOT analysis, five-year strategic action plan, and an evaluation framework. TPMA will provide a presentation to your Board summarizing key findings and strategic priorities.

Upon Board approval, staff will submit the CEDS to the EDA. This submission enables local organizations to pursue state and federal economic development funding aligned with the CEDS recommendations. Additional design elements are being adjusted and will be included in the final submission to the EDA.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund (1100)

EDA Technical Assistance Grant (1120-275)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

<i>Expenditures (1120275)</i>	<i>FY23-24</i>	<i>FY24-25</i>
<i>Budgeted Expenses</i>	<u>\$87,197</u>	<u>\$55,803</u>
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	<u>\$87,197</u>	<u>\$55,803</u>

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

<i>Funding Sources (1120275)</i>	<i>FY23-24</i>	<i>FY24-25</i>
<i>General Fund</i>	<u>\$72,962</u>	<u>\$38</u>
<i>Federal Funds</i>	<u>\$14,235</u>	<u>\$55,765</u>
<i>Total Funding Sources</i>	<u>\$87,197</u>	<u>\$55,803</u>

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

While the action today does not trigger any additional expense to the county it is important to recognize that this project did incur a total cost of \$143,000, supported by a mix of general fund match in the amount of \$73,000, previously approved by your Board, and federal EDA grant funds of \$70,000.

So far, \$87,197 was spent last fiscal year, and another \$55,803, has been allocated in the current fiscal year. These costs reflect both staff time and contract work needed to engage the community, analyze data and put together a strong, forward-looking plan.

Completion of the CEDS positions Humboldt County, local jurisdictions, non-profits and private enterprises to pursue federal EDA funding for projects in alignment with the region's economic development priorities as identified in Humboldt County CEDS through 2030.

STAFFING IMPACT:

This action has no impact on staffing allocations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

EDA

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Your Board could choose not to recommend submission of the CEDS to the EDA. However, this is not recommended as the deadline to submit is June 30, 2025 and cannot be extended further. Missing this deadline could jeopardize the grant funding used to develop the CEDS and significantly limit the ability to secure future state and federal economic development funding.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Humboldt County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2025-30

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: Apr. 15, 2025; Dec. 10, 2024; Feb. 27, 2024; Aug. 22, 2023; May 18, 2021

File No.: 25-408; 24-1582; 24-184; 23-393; 21-641