

The Economic
Development
Strategic Plan

For THE CITY
OF
LATHROP

“We’re building a City!”

**Developed by:
The City of Lathrop
Economic Development Team**

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Introduction

In 2007, the City of Lathrop was the 5th fastest growing City in the State of California. Fast paced residential growth brought many opportunities and many challenges. It is increasingly evident that the City must attract and retain higher-paying primary industry and jobs, more shopping and dining choices, and a range of entertainment venues in order to keep pace with this residential growth. At the same time, it is important to maintain a commitment to creating a community that is attractive, well planned and maintains a high quality of life for the residents of the City of Lathrop.

A twenty-two member Economic Planning Team composed of local business leaders and representatives of the public sector developed the plan. Meeting from April 2007 to May 2008, the Planning Team reviewed regional economic trends and the City demographics, and highlighted opportunities and challenges facing the City.

The plan has several purposes:

- To identify the vision of the future economy and the industries that will serve as targets for recruitment and expansion
- To set the priorities of the Economic Development Team in allocating resources to pursue its mission of regional economic development
- To identify strategic opportunities and/or weaknesses that must be addressed in order to create jobs and investments
- To identify strategies to increase the region's competitiveness when high-wage businesses and industries select sites
- To create ample cultural entertainment and recreational opportunities in order to improve the quality of life of the citizens of the City

This plan is not a static plan and is designed to be revised to reflect changing or emerging economic conditions.

Economic Development Vision Statement

The City of Lathrop commits to aggressively pursue and retain business in a sustainable yet viable environment. This will be achieved by creating goals and promoting a positive community image.

Economic Development Goals and Strategies

This section identifies and discusses several general goals for local economic development in Lathrop. These goals serve as a framework to organize a series of more specific strategies and actions that the City can undertake to enhance and expand the local economy.

Goal 1: Business Attraction, Expansion, and Retention

The key ingredient for a strong local economy is a healthy community with businesses having an important role in promoting the well-being of the community. The first goal is to expand the local economic base by attracting new industries and retaining the businesses currently situated in Lathrop.

Strategies

Industry expansion and retention

Focus on existing businesses where the region has a strategic advantage and which are supported by the existing infrastructure and workforce base.

Identify new and emerging industries that offer the potential for growth and an increased tax base within the local and regional economy. Refine the support requirements for each industry and recommend programs and public sector actions necessary to support growth in each industry.

Identify and target potential retail stores and restaurants that are compatible with Lathrop's demographics.

Promote the advantages of the Enterprise Zone to both existing and potential businesses.

Work closely with the San Joaquin Partnership to assist their efforts to attract industries to the region.

Community Climate

Continue the supportive business climate already in place by enhancing communication among the business community and City administration.

Support Chamber efforts to promote corporate citizenship of existing businesses. Assist with providing existing businesses the demographic information necessary to maintain a good customer base.

Develop a business retention and expansion program for existing industries and retail businesses that provide high-paying jobs within the local economy.

Create a recognition program for business longevity in the community.
Maintain demographic and market condition information and make it readily accessible to potential and existing businesses on the City's website.

Develop a local incubator program by partnering with the San Joaquin Delta College Small Business Development Department.

Goal 2: Develop an industrial/commercial land base conducive to the recruitment of targeted industries, retail development, and office commercial development

In order to attract the industrial and commercial development targeted, it is important to provide the appropriate land base. Specific planning targeted for industrial and commercial development will create attractive areas to promote Lathrop as industry friendly.

Strategies

Maintain current industrial land inventory by generally guarding against conversion to non-industrial and /or commercial uses or uses that do not create primary jobs.

Increase the industrial land base to allow for aggregation of land for large master-planned, mixed-use development on industrial lands.

Support increased retail commercial development in order to create employment and growth.

Allow for the development of a broader scope of non-retail office commercial uses on designated industrial lands to allow for the location of targeted industries.

Designate additional industrial land inventory in areas of growth sufficient to accommodate industry clusters.

Goal 3: Expand public infrastructure to allow for the timely development of industry

To be successful in retaining, expanding, and attracting a high quality local economic base, Lathrop must ensure that the proper environment, or infrastructure, exists to make Lathrop a competitive location for businesses. One of the keys to attracting industry is providing a workforce. Education and housing for the workforce play a major role in this effort.

Strategies

Physical Infrastructure

Target and prioritize physical infrastructure (sewer, water, streets etc) development to areas identified as industrial growth areas. This would include the areas in the Enterprise Zone.

Workforce Education

Identify and focus attraction efforts on companies with high average skill and wage levels.

Expand local public/private partnerships involving schools–to–workforce links to simultaneously enhance the local labor supply and link local youth to economic opportunities.

Support practical job training and vocational programs geared to specific industries and occupational needs within the community.

Workforce Housing

Encourage a full range of high quality homeownership opportunities including single and multifamily housing options.

Encourage increased infill housing development or density bonuses for development of smaller, more affordable, units.

Goal 4: Promote a Positive Community Image

The image a community portrays is a vital component of economic development. It is necessary to promote the City of Lathrop as an attractive location for economic activity and one that offers an attractive overall quality of life.

Strategies

Develop and implement plans for enhancement of educational, cultural, and recreational facilities for the City that will improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Increase the number of recreational and cultural events held each year.

Increase the number of retailers and restaurants in the City to give local residents more opportunities to shop locally.

Promote the Delta and the River as a destination.

Create and promote an ongoing “Buy Locally” program including a farmers market.

Promote community self help programs such as the current beautification day program or adopt a block or street programs.

Create the ability to report code violations through the city website or an anonymous tip line.