



Monterey County Workforce Development Board

Strategic Planning 2026-2028

Monterey County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Strategic Plan 2026-2028

Introduction

The Monterey County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Strategic Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to strengthen industry engagement, workforce alignment, and community visibility across Monterey County. This plan is grounded in data-driven insights, stakeholder collaboration, and the region's unique economic and geographic characteristics. It spans eight bi-monthly phases (8 Quarters for purposes of conciseness in this report) and focuses on four key priorities: (1) Developing Sector Strategies, (2) Building Brand Awareness through a Public Relations Campaign, and (3) Advancing Career Pipelines in Key Industries. Each initiative is designed to ensure the WDB remains responsive, innovative, and connected to the county's economic priorities.

(4) Advance and Develop Career Pipelines in Key Industries (Ag Tech, DART, Green Jobs).

SWOT Analysis Summary

The WDB's strengths include being housed in the County of Monterey's Administrative Office, its strong partnerships with local community colleges, responsiveness to business needs, diverse and experienced staff, and a well-regarded reputation within the region. Monterey County's desirable location, robust agricultural sector, and commitment to on-the-job training provide additional leverage for workforce advancement.

However, challenges persist, including the prevalence of low-wage industries, high cost of living, and limited availability of head-of-household jobs. Geographic barriers due to the county's rural size, staffing shortages, and limited marketing capacity hinder outreach and service delivery. There is also a recognized need for a stronger succession plan, increased healthcare representation on the board, and broader community awareness of WDB initiatives.

Opportunities include expanding access to apprenticeships that lead to higher-wage employment, building stronger partnerships between employers and educational institutions, and leveraging advancements in agricultural technology, artificial intelligence, and transportation infrastructure projects. Emerging collaborations with schools, veterans' organizations, and housing development partners further position the

WDB to expand impact and visibility.

Threats include natural disasters, funding fluctuations, regionalization of workforce boards, and challenges associated with the aging workforce, housing shortages, immigration enforcement, and evolving labor market dynamics due to automation and artificial intelligence.

Goal 1: Develop Sector Strategies to Ensure Industry Demand is Understood and Addressed

Objective: Strengthen engagement with key industries to identify workforce needs and align training, recruitment, and service delivery strategies accordingly.

Bi-Monthly Timeline:

- Q1: WDB and Business Services begin outreach to key industries, inviting participation in meetings to discuss occupational shortages and trends.
- Q2: Review WDB budget to explore hiring a consultant to conduct a market analysis.
- Q3: Contract with a research firm to conduct the market analysis; initiate meetings with the Growership Association and Farm Bureau.
- Q4: Research firm presents findings to WDB; outreach initiated to the Monterey Hospitality Association.
- Q5: Board will recruit representatives from key industries to serve on WDB; formal partnership established with Agriculture Industry.
- Q6: Conduct focus group with top key industry identified in research; generate list of job openings to prioritize.
- Q7: Conduct focus group with second key industry; generate list of job openings to prioritize.
- Q8: Launch industry sector strategies—operationalized and supported by partnerships in Agriculture and Hospitality sectors.

Goal 2: Add Industry Employers to the Board (Healthcare Representation Emphasis)

Objective: Strengthen board composition by recruiting employers from key industries, particularly in healthcare, to enhance strategic alignment and sector representation.

Define Board Needs and Goals – WDB Mission and Vision (Q3 and Q4)

1. At the February 12, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, identify specific employers in high growth areas and sectors – Health Care, Agriculture, Hospitality/Tourism, Advanced Manufacturing – as the primary focus areas for Board member recruitment **(Done)**.
2. At the February 12, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, identify relevant professional organizations for MCWDB outreach to identify potential Board members **(Done)**.
3. At the February 26, 2026, Board meeting, Board members to identify 3 potential organization and association members in high-growth sectors.
4. At the March 19, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, develop a clear message that highlights the unique value of the MCWDB.
 - a. Membership provides an opportunity to influence workforce strategies in Monterey County.
 - b. MCWDB brings together the key organizations working to train and employ Monterey County residents.
5. At the April 23, 2026, Board meeting, request current Board members to leverage social media platforms and professional organizations to promote MCWDB and its initiatives.
 - a. Create a Public Relations plan
 - b. Promote and hold an Open House
 - c. Ask Board members to use their social media and professional organizations to expand opportunities to meet with potential Board members.
 - d. Encourage referrals from current Board members to provide personalized outreach.
6. By the Executive Committee meeting of May 21, 2026, staff shall develop outreach materials for potential new board members to include:

- a. Mission/Vision
 - b. Impact Report
 - c. WDB funding
 - d. Time commitment and Board member responsibilities – clarify expectations
 - e. Talking Points for Board members/business cards/name tags
7. While requesting quorum for the Board meeting of June 25, 2025, suggest that members bring a potential board member to the WDB meeting.
 8. Board Chair and Executive Director will hold ongoing, in-person Board Member Orientation meetings with potential new Board members.

Board Retention Strategy (Q5 through Q8)

1. Pre-Orientation packet sent out once an individual is nominated to sit on WDB.
 - a. Bylaws
 - b. Strategic Plan
 - c. Organizational Chart
 - d. Calendar of meetings and events
 - e. Financial Reports
2. Implement a structured Board Member Orientation program to onboard new members.
3. Provide ongoing, relevant training on WIOA and industry trends.
4. All Board members to participate on Committees – Business Services or Career Services – to increase their deep knowledge of the work of the WDB.
5. Administer a Board Member Satisfaction Survey to obtain feedback from the Board members.
6. Board Chair checks in with new Board members at 30/60/90 days.
7. Ensure Board members are aware of opportunities for their Professional Development – CWA conferences, workshops, webinars.
8. Focus on results that foster a sense of accomplishment and purpose for Board members.

Goal 3: Create a Public Relations Campaign to Strengthen WDB Brand Identity

Objective: Develop and implement a strategic public relations campaign to increase visibility, community engagement, and awareness of WDB's role and accomplishments throughout Monterey County.

Bi-Monthly Timeline:

- Q1: Committee identifies current marketing strategies and gaps to address.
- Q2: Identify budgetary needs to support the development of the PR campaign; conduct outreach to workforce stakeholders to refine messaging.
- Q3: Develop a 'speakers bureau' of WDB members and a standardized presentation to deliver across community events and organizations.
- Q4–Q5: Launch outreach to schools, veterans' organizations, and CBOs; increase participation in job and resource fairs.
- Q6: Initiate outreach to local media outlets to secure workforce-related coverage and increase public visibility.
- Q7–Q8: Expand marketing reach through digital billboards, school marquees, and other community platforms. Measure success by increases in partnerships, programs, and funding.

Goal 4: Advance and Develop Career Pipelines in Key Industries (Ag Tech, DART, Green Jobs)

Objective: Build sustainable career pathways and apprenticeship programs in high-demand industries, leveraging educational partnerships and economic development initiatives.

Bi-Monthly Timeline:

- Q1: Invite County Economic Development to present the SEDS plan to WDB; initiate engagement with United Way Childcare Initiative.
- Q2: Contract with research firm for market analysis; review findings to identify growth industries and engage employers on pipeline opportunities.
- Q3: Develop capacity around apprenticeship intermediary work; learn from other local WDBs on partnerships with Project Labor

Agreements (PLAs) and Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs).

- Q4–Q5: Engage County and Cities in PLA/CBA opportunities; meet with local colleges and K-12 institutions to align CTE and apprenticeship programs.
- Q6–Q7: Link education and industry partners to develop WDB-led apprenticeship programs.
- Q8: Launch apprenticeship program within one industry; evaluate success and scalability.

Goal 5: Develop Funding Strategy

Q2 through Q8

1. By April 30, 2026, Board meeting, develop a *purpose* for the Central Coast Regional Workforce Partnership (CCRWP) non-profit to include:
 - a. Mission/Vision
 - b. Develop Strategic Plan for the CCRWP
 - c. Conduct SWOT analysis related to funding
 - d. Develop Case Statement/Impact Report showing WDB outcomes and why donors should support the mission of CCRWP
 - e. Fund utilization report – review historical data of past donors
 2. By May 30, 2026, identify funding strategies/priorities and align fundraising goals with overall strategic plan:
 - a. Target Potential Funders
 - b. Define Revenue Mix
 - c. Grants – Foundations
 - d. Local/Regional Grants
 - e. Corporate Partnerships - Employee Giving programs
 - f. Earned Income – provide fee-based programs/certifications to employers or individuals
 - g. Special Events
 - h. Embrace culture of philanthropy
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3. By June 30, 2026, recruit a minimum of 3 new (non-WDB) Board members for the CCRWP non-profit, inform them of the results of steps 1 and 2 above, and request their input on purpose and strategies.
4. By June 25, 2026, engage stakeholders, and implement plan:
 - a. Engage CCRWP Board members, WDB members, and staff – define roles and responsibilities
 - b. Begin to develop fundraising strategy
 - c. Streamline giving process
 - Facilitate donations via MC Works website and/or other avenues.
 - d. Create communication and marketing strategy.
 - Create consistent narrative showing impact to donors.
 - Develop Marketing Calendar to engage donors.
5. By the July 16, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, schedule a formal Brown Act meeting for the CCRWP members and WDB staff to fully develop their fundraising strategy.
6. By the September 17, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, WDB staff will assist CCRWP members to develop a purpose statement and implement their fundraising strategy, including working to build long-term relationships for donor retention.
7. Provide a presentation at the October 22, 2026, Board Retreat on CCRWP’s fundraising plan and progress.
8. By the November 19, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, and subsequently from Q5 through Q8, monitor and evaluate on a quarterly basis:
 - a. Fundraising performance against goals.
 - b. Fundraising plan. WDB staff will assist CCRWP to adjust the fundraising plan as needed, according to performance data or external factors.

Conclusion

This Strategic Plan positions the Monterey County Workforce Development Board to enhance its regional impact through data-driven decision-making, targeted partnerships, and innovative workforce solutions. Through focused efforts in sector engagement, board development, public relations, and career pathway creation, the WDB will continue to drive equitable economic growth and strengthen the Monterey County workforce ecosystem.

Quarterly Implementation Table

Goal	Objective	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Goal 1: Develop Sector Strategies to Ensure Industry Demand is Understood and Addressed	Strengthen engagement with key industries to identify workforce needs and align training, recruitment, and service delivery strategies accordingly.	WDB and Business Services begin outreach to key industries, inviting participation in meetings to discuss occupational shortages and trends.	Review WDB budget to explore hiring a consultant to conduct a market analysis.	Contract with a research firm to conduct the market analysis; initiate meetings with the Growership Association and Farm Bureau.	Research firm presents findings to WDB; outreach initiated to the Monterey Hospitality Association.	Board will recruit representation from key industries to serve on WDB; formal partnership established with Agriculture Industry.	Conduct focus group with top key industry identified in research; generate list of job openings to prioritize.	Conduct focus group with second key industry; generate list of job openings to prioritize.	Launch industry sector strategies. Operationalized and supported by partnerships in Agriculture and Hospitality sectors.
Goal 2: Add Industry Employers to the Board (Healthcare)	Strengthen board composition by recruiting employers from key industries, particularly in	Identify 1–3 agriculture & Healthcare industry organizations and	Develop a comprehensive Board Information Packet with high-level	Engage potential candidates through personalized outreach	Confirm interest and initiate onboarding for selected members.	Full implementation and orientation of new board members.	Create Board Member Retention Strategy	Implementing Board Member Retention Strategy	Review and Evaluate Success by appointment and retention data

Representation Emphasis)	healthcare, to enhance strategic alignment and sector representation.	association members as potential board members.	talking points and promotional materials.	emphasizing the opportunity to influence workforce strategies.					
Goal 3: Create a Public Relations Campaign to Strengthen WDB Brand Identity	Develop and implement a strategic public relations campaign to increase visibility, community engagement, and awareness of WDB's role and accomplishments.	Committee identifies current marketing strategies and gaps to address.	Identify budgetary needs to support PR campaign; conduct outreach to workforce stakeholders to refine messaging.	Develop a "speakers bureau" of WDB members and standardized presentation for community outreach.	Launch outreach to schools, veterans' organizations, and CBOs; increase participation in job/resource fairs.	Continue community outreach and evaluate campaign performance.	Initiate outreach to local media outlets for workforce-related coverage.	Expand marketing reach through digital billboards, school marqueees, and community platforms.	Measure success by increases in partnerships, programs, and funding.
Goal 4: Advance and Develop Career Pipelines in Key Industries (Ag Tech, DART, Green Jobs)	Build sustainable career pathways and apprenticeship programs in high-demand Ag-Tech, DART and Green Jobs leveraging educational partnerships and economic development initiatives.	Invite County Economic Development to present SEDS plan to WDB. Initiate engagement with United Way Childcare Initiative.	Contract research firm for market analysis on industry growth and workforce needs. Review findings to identify high-demand	Develop capacity around apprenticeship intermediary work. Research best practices from other WDBs on PLAs and CBAs.	Engage County and Cities on PLA/CBA opportunities. Meet with local colleges, K-12 institutions, and training providers to align CTE programs.	Continue engagement with education and industry partners. Plan for pilot apprenticeship program in one key industry. Secure funding and resources	Develop WDB-led apprenticeship programs with employer partners. Implement mentorship and career coaching components.	Launch apprenticeship program within the first industry. Monitor participation, employer engagement, and trainee progress.	Operationalize career pathways across growth industries with education and industry partners. Evaluate long-term outcomes and plan next cycle of program expansion.

		Identify key growth industries and potential partner employers.	occupations in Ag Tech, DART, and Green Jobs. Begin mapping current educational & apprenticeship programs.	Identify target employers for apprenticeship and training programs	Draft initial apprenticeship and pipeline program structure.	for program launch.	Evaluate program readiness for launch.	Adjust program based on early feedback.	
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Board Recommendations

All board members should volunteer to be on at least one committee. One board staff should assist with scheduling, coordination, note taking and implementation of strategies. Create a standing agenda item for each board meeting to review progress and status of goals by each committee.

Goal 1: Develop Sector Strategies to Ensure Industry Demand is Understood and Addressed

Objective: Strengthen engagement with key industries to identify workforce needs and align training, recruitment, and service delivery strategies.

Recommendations:

1. **Establish Industry Sector Committees:** Form sector-specific advisory groups (e.g., Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Ag Tech, and Green Jobs) consisting of employers, education partners, and workforce staff to provide quarterly input on emerging skills needs.

2. **Conduct Comprehensive Labor Market Analysis:** Partner with regional economic development organizations and utilize existing sources to analyze in-demand occupations, skill gaps, and wage trends to guide training investments.
3. **Develop Sector Playbooks:** Create concise strategy documents for each sector that outline employer needs, existing training resources, and recommended investments or policy actions.
4. **Integrate Sector Focus into Business Services:** Align the Business Services team to support sector priorities and tailor employer engagement to industry clusters rather than general outreach.
5. **Establish Performance Metrics:** Track metrics such as number of employers engaged, training enrollments aligned with sector needs, and job placements within targeted industries.

Goal 2: Add Industry Employers to the Board (Healthcare Representation Emphasis)

Objective: Ensure the Board reflects the regional economy and includes voices from key growth industries.

Recommendations:

1. **Conduct Board Composition Analysis:** Assess current membership to identify gaps in industry representation, especially in healthcare, green tech, and advanced manufacturing.
2. **Launch a Targeted Recruitment Campaign:** Work with regional hospital systems, healthcare networks, and local medical associations to identify potential board candidates.
3. **Develop a Board Recruitment Toolkit:** Include clear descriptions of board member roles, responsibilities, and impact to assist in outreach and engagement.
4. **Leverage Existing Partnerships:** Utilize relationships with chambers, industry associations, and sector partnerships to identify interested employers.
5. **Institute Rotating Term Appointments:** Create opportunities for emerging industry leaders to serve through term-based or advisory seats to keep board engagement fresh and relevant.

Goal 3: Create a Public Relations Campaign to Strengthen WDB Brand Identity

Objective: Increase public awareness of the Workforce Development Board's mission, services, and regional impact.

Recommendations:

1. **Develop a Comprehensive Communications Plan:** Define key messages, audiences, and communication channels (social media, local news, employer newsletters, etc.).
2. **Highlight Success Stories Using Data:** Showcase employer partnerships, job seeker outcomes, and innovative training initiatives to reinforce the WDB's role as a workforce leader.
3. **Modernize Branding Materials:** Refresh visual identity and marketing collateral to align with a unified, professional image.
4. **Engage Local Media and Stakeholders:** Host press events, employer roundtables, and community showcase to build awareness and credibility.
5. **Measure Brand Reach:** Track engagement through website analytics, social media metrics, and stakeholder feedback to assess brand impact and adjust strategy.

Goal 4: Advance and Develop Career Pipelines in Key Industries (Ag Tech, DART, Green Jobs)

Objective: Strengthen regional career pathways that align with high-growth industries and employer needs.

Recommendations:

1. **Map Existing Career Pathways:** Identify current training programs, credentials, and employment pipelines in Ag Tech, DART (Digital Automation & Robotics Technology), and Green Jobs sectors. Includes actively soliciting new training providers to join the Eligible Training Provider List to meet occupational training demands.
2. **Establish Employer-Led Curriculum Development:** Work with employers and training providers to co-design curriculum and identify credential gaps.
3. **Secure Funding for Pathway Development:** Pursue state and federal grants (e.g., WIOA, Good Jobs Challenge, or Climate Corps funding) to support program creation and expansion. This will include reviving the Non-Profit organization for raising additional philanthropic funding and fundraising activities.
4. **Create Youth and Adult On-Ramps:** Develop outreach and engagement strategies to introduce high school and adult learners to these industries through internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning.

5. **Implement Continuous Evaluation:** Track pipeline performance through placement rates, completion data, and employer satisfaction to refine programs and ensure sustainability.
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Implementation Oversight

Board Role:

- Establish a Strategic Implementation Committee or designate existing committees (e.g., Executive, Business Services, or Career Services) to oversee each goal area.
- Provide bi-monthly progress reports on key performance indicators and adjust strategies as needed.
- Direct the Executive Director and staff to develop annual work plans aligned with these goals and report progress regularly.

1. Establish Board Committees

- **Career Pipeline & Apprenticeship Committee:** Oversees pipeline program development, partnerships with employers and education, and program evaluation.
- **Industry Engagement Committee:** Focuses on building and maintaining relationships with key industries (Ag Tech, DART, Green Jobs).
- **Education & Training Committee:** Ensures alignment of local colleges, K-12 CTE programs, and workforce training initiatives with industry needs.
- **PR & Community Outreach Committee:** Coordinates communications, marketing, and community awareness campaigns to support recruitment and visibility of pipeline programs.

2. Define Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board Chair:** Leads overall strategic direction, approves committee actions, and ensures alignment with the WDB mission.
- **Committee Chairs:** Lead committees, schedule meetings, report progress to full board, and drive decision-making.

- **Industry Representatives:** Provide sector-specific insights, identify workforce needs, and facilitate employer partnerships.
- **Education Representatives:** Advise on program alignment with curriculum and training programs, support apprenticeship structure.
- **Community Representatives:** Help with public relations, outreach, and identifying community resources to support pipelines.

3. Implement a Structured Meeting Cadence

- **Bi-Monthly Full Board Meetings:** Review progress on pipeline development, approve key strategies, and evaluate program outcomes.
- **Monthly Committee Meetings:** Committees meet to advance their specific objectives and address challenges.
- **Bi-Monthly Progress Reports:** Committees submit short progress updates to the full board to maintain transparency and track milestones.

4. Set Clear Goals, Metrics, and Accountability

- **Establish KPIs for each objective:**
 - Number of apprenticeships launched.
 - Employer and education partnerships formalized.
 - Participant placement and retention rates
 - Feedback from employers and trainees
- **Quarterly progress dashboard:** Track actions vs. target for each bi-monthly milestone.

5. Use Project Management Tools

- Adopt a project management tool (like Asana, Trello, or Smartsheet) to track objectives, tasks, deadlines, and responsible parties.
- Create a shared timeline of the 8-quarter action plan, visible to all board members.

6. Foster Collaboration and Communication

- Regularly communicate successes, challenges, and upcoming milestones.
- Encourage cross-committee collaboration to prevent siloed work.
- Provide professional development or training to board members on industry trends and workforce development strategies.

7. External Resources Leverage

- Bring in subject matter experts (industry, apprenticeship programs, education) for board education sessions.
- Hire consultants for market analysis or program design when needed.
- Partners with workforce organizations, local chambers, and community-based organizations to expand reach and resources.

8. Plan for Sustainability

- Develop strategies for ongoing funding and resource allocation for apprenticeship programs.
- Create succession plans for committee chairs and board members to maintain continuity.
- Document lessons learned and continuously refine processes to improve program efficiency and outcomes.