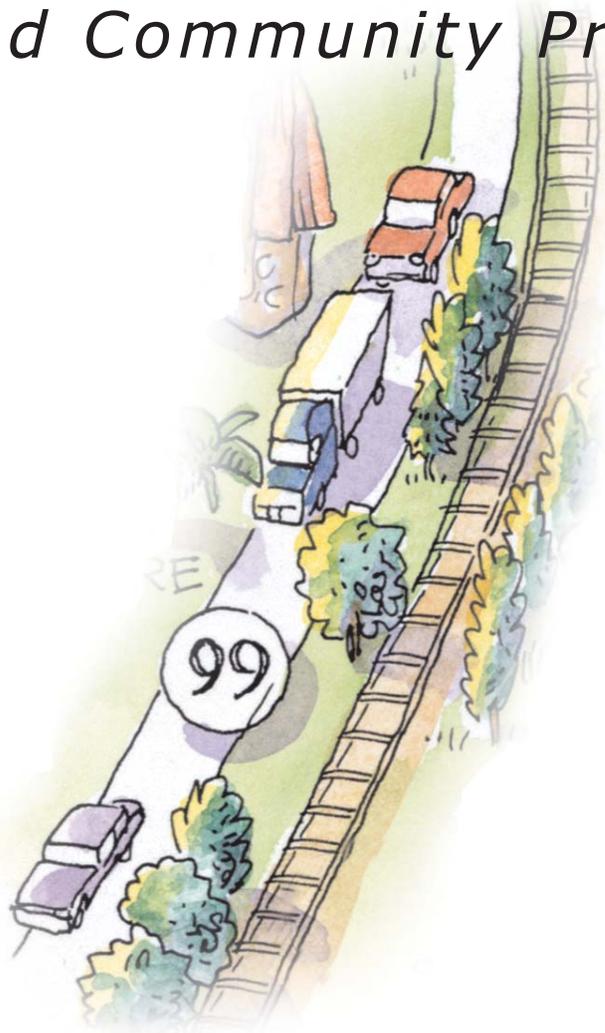


# Corridor of Opportunity:

*Highway 99 as a Catalyst for Economic and Community Progress*



Highway 99 Task Force  
March 2005

The Highway 99 Task Force is a collaborative effort assessing opportunities and developing strategies for improving the Route 99 corridor from Kern to San Joaquin Counties. The Task Force is composed of business, community, and government leaders from jurisdictions throughout the San Joaquin Valley. For more information on the Task Force, please visit [www.greatvalley.org/99](http://www.greatvalley.org/99) or call 209-522-5103.

This report was prepared by Collaborative Economics for the Great Valley Center.



### **Great Valley Center**

The Great Valley Center is a regional nonprofit organization working to make California's Central Valley a better place to live by supporting organizations and activities that promote the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the region.

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# Introduction

Investment in both the interstate and highway elements of our freeway system is tied to economic well-being within the San Joaquin Valley. Highway 99 can play a much greater role in economic and community progress. Today, it provides the basic transportation route through the region for people and commerce. But, it also provides a potential, though underutilized source of economic development for the communities along the corridor. The purpose of this report is to show how, whether as an interstate or highway, investments in and along the 99 corridor can be used as a catalyst by local communities for economic development and related benefits.

Over the next twenty years, more than \$1 billion in roadway improvements are scheduled to be made along the Highway 99 corridor. How this investment gets made will determine how much local communities benefit. Improvements will no doubt help improve safety and capacity, but will they help spur economic development and other benefits? That will depend on how well communities are prepared to work with Caltrans on design and implementation, how well they mobilize their jurisdiction to make and coordinate other investments as part of a cohesive economic development strategy, and how well they connect and collaborate with other jurisdictions to generate positive regional impacts for all.

Communities along the Highway 99 corridor have a choice.

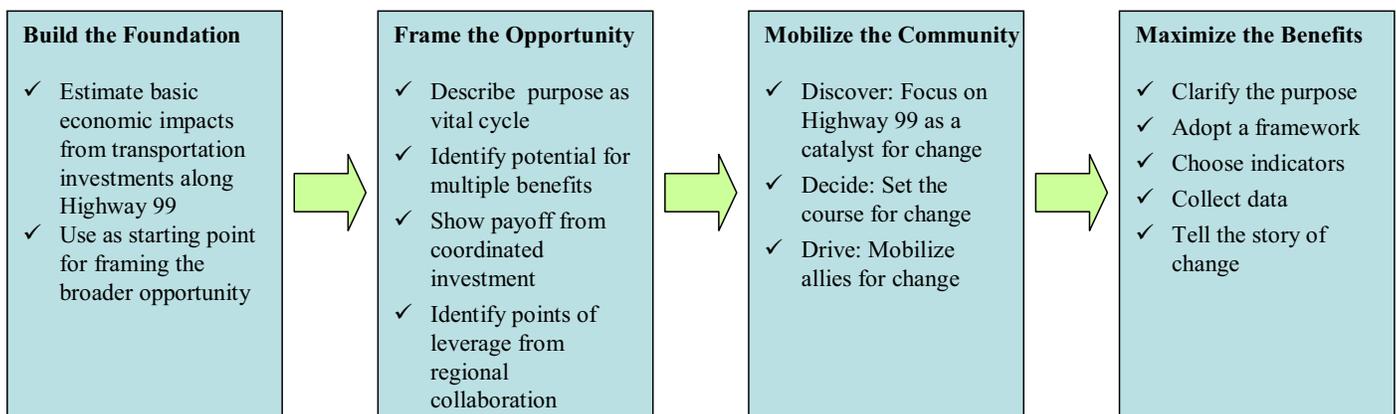
- Highway 99 can be seen as basically a transportation route, deferring to Caltrans on design and implementation of any improvements.
- Highway 99 can be seen as the front door to their community, influencing the design and implementation decisions of Caltrans and making other investments to improve and beautify the corridor.
- Highway 99 can be seen as a catalyst for economic and community progress, using freeway improvements as a part of a comprehensive, coordinated strategy that requires both local action and local participation in a regional initiative to reinvent the corridor as the Main Street of the San Joaquin Valley.

How can  
Highway 99 be  
used as a catalyst  
by local  
communities for  
economic  
development  
and related  
benefits?

This report describes three steps communities can use to turn Highway 99 into a catalyst for economic development and other benefits (see Figure 1):

- *Build the Foundation*—Chapter I describes how to estimate basic economic impacts from transportation investments, then explains why this step is only the beginning for communities along Highway 99.
- *Frame the Opportunity*—Chapter II describes how to define the opportunity, using Highway 99 improvements as a starting point, but showing the connections and broader impacts possible with a more “opportunistic” approach.
- *Mobilize the Community*—Chapter III describes how to recruit civic entrepreneurs, identify compatible interests, define a common purpose, and commit to complementary roles in implementation.
- *Measure the Benefits*—Chapter IV describes how to assemble a system of “baseline” measures that can be used to define and monitor progress over time, while also identifying areas needing further attention.

**Figure 1: Turning Highway 99 into a Catalyst for Progress**





The Highway 99 Task Force focuses efforts on the 280 mile transportation corridor from San Joaquin County through Kern County.

# Build the Foundation

Transportation investments for Highway 99 are certain to have economic impacts on the communities along the corridor. The question is, how much and what kind of impacts? The answer to this question, as this report will show, depends not only on Caltrans' funding decisions, but what communities themselves do to make the most of whatever transportation investments are made along the corridor. The first step in understanding the potential impacts of Highway 99 improvements is to estimate the basic impacts of transportation investments, using the methodology recommended by the U.S. Department of Transportation. In this way, communities can build the initial foundation for action to improve the Highway 99 corridor.

## **Estimating Basic Economic Impacts from Transportation Investments**

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration has funded research on the economic impacts of transportation investments for many years. The latest summary of findings from this ongoing research concludes that transportation investments have substantial and varied economic impacts on local communities and economies:

- **Productivity impacts:** On average, the nation's highway network (freeways and local streets and roads) contributes about one-quarter of the yearly productivity growth rate in the United States. Nationally, for investments in non-local roads (i.e., freeways), the social rate of return has been estimated at 16%. The social rate of return is the net income to private industries divided by the value of the shared public highway or non-local road network.
- **Employment impacts:** Every \$1 billion of federal highway investment in road improvements is estimated to produce over 42,000 total full-time jobs. Of that figure, almost 8,000 are direct, on-site highway construction jobs, about 20,000 are indirect, supply industry jobs, and more than 14,000 are induced jobs, or those created in the general economy when highway construction industry employees spend their wages. These impacts are calculated based on federal dollars invested independent the classification of the transportation route (interstate, highway, arterial, etc.).

The Federal Highway Administration estimates total impacts by (1) measuring the direct employment impacts of transportation investments (i.e., construction jobs) and (2) estimating the indirect and induced employment impacts from those jobs. The estimates of indirect and induced employment are generated using a methodology called an input-output model. An input-output model quantifies the effects of industries on one another, based on assumptions that industries use as inputs the outputs of other industries. In this way, an input-output model can be used to quantify the multiplier effect of adding new employment (i.e., highway construction jobs) in a geographic area.

One of the most widely used national models is IMPLAN, which was developed at the University of Minnesota. This model, in particular, is widely used in California for economic and fiscal analysis. In 2004, the Sacramento Regional Research Institute (SRRI) used the model to estimate the economic impact of transportation investments in California. Figure 2 shows the estimated impacts at the \$1 billion level of transportation investment. The study found that:

- For every \$1 billion of transportation spending in California, approximately 18,000 new jobs are added in the state, along with more than \$1.7 billion in economic output, \$959 million in value-added (a measure of productivity gains), and \$640 million in employee compensation.
- For every construction job created with additional transportation spending, California generates an additional .76 jobs in indirect and induced sectors, a total employment multiplier of 1.76.
- For every dollar spent on transportation projects in California, there is an additional 97 cents in indirect and induced spending in the state's economy. Many of these additional transactions produce sales tax revenues and taxpayer income creating additional revenues for state and local governments.

**Figure 2 Estimated Economic Impacts From \$1 Billion of Transportation Investment in California**  
(Dollars in Millions)

<i>Impacts</i>	<i>Direct</i>	<i>Indirect</i>	<i>Induced</i>	<i>Total</i>
Output	\$864	\$333	\$508	\$1,705
Employment	10,165	2,628	5,073	17,866
Value Added	\$470	\$188	\$300	\$959
Employee Compensation	\$382	\$103	\$156	\$640

Source: IMPLAN, Sacramento Regional Research Institute

The impacts of transportation investments are spread widely across the economy. For example, the SSRI analysis using the IMPLAN input-output model identified the industry sectors that experience the greatest estimated impacts from transportation investments. Figure 3 shows the industry sectors experiencing the largest impacts per \$1 billion in transportation investment in California.

Why are there differences between the national estimate of 42,000 jobs from the U.S. Department of Transportation and 18,000 jobs from the IMPLAN-based California study? The national estimate has a much higher multiplier because virtually all of the economic impacts of federal transportation spending is felt somewhere within the United States. The California analysis includes only those impacts that would be felt in California, not those captured by other states. Even in this case, however, the economic impacts are substantial in relation to the dollars expended for transportation improvements.

In sum, if the Highway 99 corridor is to receive more than \$1 billion in new transportation investment over the next 20 years, then it is reasonable to expect thousands of new jobs in direct, indirect, and induced employment and millions of dollars in new economic output, value-added, and employee compensation—economic transactions that will, in turn, produce increases in public revenues for local communities along the corridor.

**Figure 3 Estimated Industry Impacts per \$1Billion of Transportation Investment in California**

Sectors with Greatest Total Employment Impacts		Sectors With Greatest Total Output Impacts	
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Economic Output Generated</i>
Other new construction	5,805	Highway, street, bridge, & tunnel construction	\$435,000,000
Highway, street, bridge, & tunnel construction	4,250	Other new construction	\$413,000,000
Food services and drinking places	621	Wholesale trade	\$76,000,000
Architectural and engineering services	550	Architectural & engineering services	\$54,000,000
Wholesale trade	525	Owner-occupied dwellings	\$38,000,000
Offices of physicians and dentists	291	Petroleum refineries	\$34,000,000
Employment services	283	Automotive repair and maintenance	\$32,000,000
Automotive repair and maintenance	212	Food services & drinking places	\$28,000,000
Hospitals	207	Real estate	\$28,000,000
Food and beverage stores	202	Offices of physicians & dentists	\$25,000,000
General merchandise stores	171	Hospitals	\$24,000,000
Real estate	170	Monetary authorities & depository credit intermediation	\$20,000,000
Nursing and residential care facilities	146	Insurance carriers	\$20,000,000
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	144	Machinery & equipment rental & leasing	\$19,000,000
Nonstore retailers	129	Truck transportation	\$16,000,000

Source: IMPLAN, Sacramento Regional Research Institute

## Why This Step is Only the Beginning

Communities along the corridor should understand that widely-used, well-regarded national input-output models suggest that planned investments in Highway 99 improvements will generate substantial benefits in terms of jobs and revenues. These models provide the foundation on which to build. But, this step is only the beginning. Input-output models are based on assumptions about current industry-to-industry flows. They do not predict the emergence of new sectors or new kinds of industry-to-industry impacts that might result from fundamentally transforming a transportation corridor, as the Highway 99 Task Force has advocated.

In addition, the specific models discussed previously were used to show only the multiplier effects of new construction jobs from transportation spending in interstate, highway, or other roadway improvements, not the broader potential benefits of transforming the Highway 99 corridor from the region's "back alley" to its "main street." If, over the next two decades, the Highway 99 corridor was the focus of not only freeway upgrades, but landscaping improvements, new signage in every community, a regional theme connecting the corridor's historical, cultural, and other assets, new development and redevelopment adjacent to the highway, and other related investments, then the multiplier effect of transportation spending could be considerably higher. By coupling freeway upgrades with community corridor investments the benefits could include not only an increase in jobs and public revenues, but higher per capita incomes, improving social indicators, and better environmental conditions.

The focus of the remaining chapters is to show how to make the case for Highway 99 as a catalyst for greater economic and community benefits—beyond the basic economic benefits that can generally be expected with transportation spending. Building on the basic foundation, communities can make an even stronger case for change, then mobilize for action and set up a system to measure a broader set of benefits over time.



# Frame the Opportunity

Communities  
should view  
freeway  
improvements as  
elements of a  
diversified  
investment  
portfolio for  
economic and  
community  
progress.

If Highway 99 is to make a greater contribution to economic development, then communities along the corridor must shift local mindsets. This chapter shows how communities can “frame the opportunity” of Highway 99 improvements as a catalyst for achieving much greater economic and related community benefits:

**Describe the Purpose as the Vital Cycle**—Corridor improvements can have a ripple effect on communities, as corridor investments can lead to economic gains, which lead to growing public revenues, property values, and economic opportunity for residents, which in turn can improve community vitality and environmental quality, and which then comes full circle to strengthen the economy in a “vital cycle” of mutually-reinforcing outcomes.

**Identify the Potential for Multiple Benefits**—Corridor improvements can lead to economic benefits, but can also produce social and environmental benefits for communities. Communities can maximize these multiple benefits by prioritizing “win-win-win” or “triple bottom line” investments.

**Show the Payoff from Coordinated Local Investment**—Corridor improvements begin with roadway investments by Caltrans, but their impact is determined by roadside and corridor investments by communities, producing greater community benefits.

**Identify Points of Leverage From Regional Collaboration**—Beyond what can be done by an individual jurisdiction, communities have the opportunity to leverage their investments with those of other communities along the corridor, creating mutual benefits.

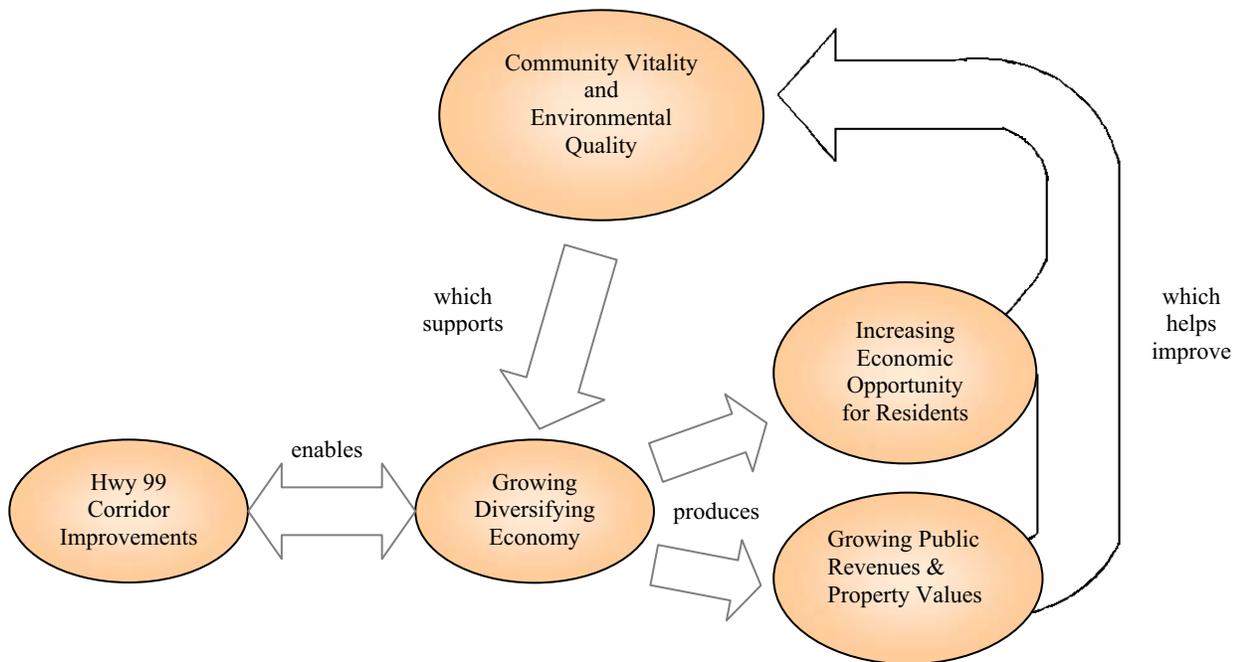
## Describe the Purpose as the Vital Cycle

The first step in making the case for Highway 99 as a catalyst for economic and community progress is to connect freeway improvements to broader impacts than just better traffic flow and safety. Communities must move from the mindset that views freeway improvements as isolated capital projects to one that sees them as elements of a diversified investment portfolio for economic and community progress.

Research and experience have shown that the “vital cycle” is the secret to successful communities (see the Sources section at the end of this report). Communities that exhibit high rates of economic prosperity and quality of life have a strong vital cycle (see Figure 4), in which investments that are made circulate through the cycle, creating added benefits along the way. The reverse is also true. Failing communities can suffer from a “vicious cycle” of underinvestment, which starves the economy, making it difficult to maintain community quality of life, which in turn further dims economic prospects, and so on.

The concept of the vital cycle can help explain how freeway improvements, if done with a broader goal in mind, can create a ripple effect on the local economy and community. It is important that policymakers and community residents understand the overarching goal is to strengthen the vital cycle of the community, and Highway 99 improvements offer a great opportunity to “fill the pipeline” with additional investment, which will trigger other investments and downstream benefits.

**Figure 4: Highway 99 Corridor’s “Vital Cycle”**



## **Identify the Potential for Multiple Benefits**

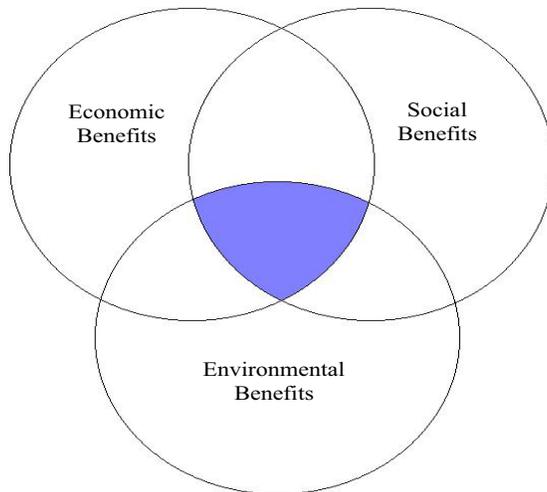
The second step is to describe the potential for multiple benefits for the community from Highway 99 improvements. For most communities, the prime motivator will be economic benefits, and rightfully so considering the economic situation facing many communities in the San Joaquin Valley. While these communities clearly have important social and environmental issues, economic development is critical to provide the job opportunities and public revenues necessary for community progress.

At the same time, economic, social, and environmental goals need not be in conflict. In fact, Highway 99 improvements offer a classic opportunity to address all three goals at once.

- Highway 99 improvements can spur economic benefits in terms of business growth and industry diversification, including tourism and higher-value added industries and clusters, as well as rising property values.
- The same Highway 99 improvements can lead to complementary social benefits, including gains in the quantity and quality of jobs for existing and new residents, improvements in community safety and health, and increases in public revenues (i.e., from tourism, sales tax, commercial/residential property taxes, state and federal income taxes returning to localities), which help fund improvements in public services including parks and other infrastructure.
- The same Highway 99 improvements can lead to complementary environmental benefits. Freeway upgrades can enhance traffic flows, improving air quality. Beautification efforts can reduce trash, restore views, increase trees and greenery, and preserve agricultural and other land. Environmental improvements can project a better image, attracting tourism, talent, and investment in other economic sectors, and resulting in greater opportunities for local residents.

By identifying the potential for multiple benefits, communities can mobilize many constituencies to work on making Highway 99 improvements a catalyst for broader, positive change. In this way, freeway improvements are not viewed as strictly an economic development, social service, or environmental initiative. Instead, they are viewed as a potential catalyst for community improvement, with economic, social, and environmental benefits.

The key is to direct the attention of policymakers and community residents to the intersection of these goals, as Figure 5 shows. As the last chapter will demonstrate, this framework is also important to use as the focus of a measurement system to quantify and monitor economic, social, and environmental “returns on investment” from Highway 99 and other local improvements. This “triple bottom line” provides the opportunity to mobilize a community-wide coalition for change.



**Figure 5:  
Potential Community  
Benefits**

### **Show the Payoff From Coordinated Local Investment**

The concepts of the vital cycle and multiple benefits show that Highway 99 improvements should not be seen as isolated infrastructure investments, but a catalyst for broader economic and community progress. The next step is to show that Highway 99 improvements are one of many elements in the community’s investment portfolio. These elements need to be connected in ways that will produce “a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts” (i.e., additional benefits beyond that which would accrue if each investment was made in isolation). In short, communities must see the payoff of making and coordinating local investments in economic and community progress, using Highway 99 improvements as a catalyst to pull the “portfolio” together.

Figure 6 offers a simple way to communicate the concept of coordinated local investment.

- One can start with “roadway investments,” the capital improvements paid for by Caltrans. These investments include new lanes, overpasses, exits, surfaces, as well as landscaping, signage, and other aesthetic treatments along the right-of-way.

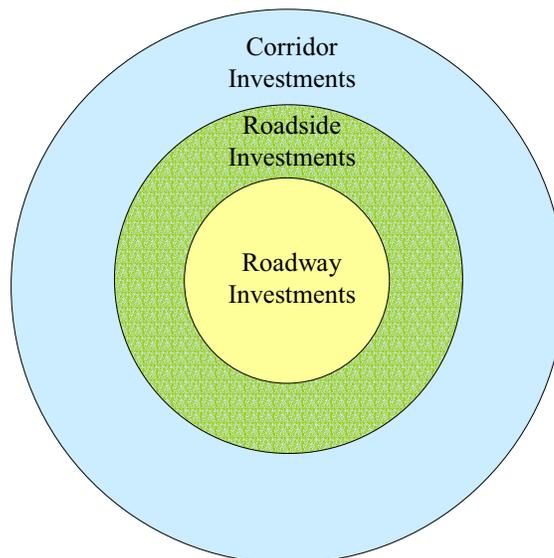
- A community can coordinate additional “roadside investments” focused on the land immediately adjacent to Highway 99. These investments can include commercial and residential development, agricultural and other land preservation, community identifiers and gateways, signage, clean-up and landscaping.
- A community can also coordinate additional “corridor investments” focused on the areas not directly adjacent, but tied to Highway 99. These investments include tourism information and services, cultural and historic attractions, downtown revitalization and redevelopment, and commercial and residential development, as well as investments focused on people (e.g., education, training, health), community safety, and environmental improvement (e.g., clean-ups, landscaping, land preservation, habitat restoration).

### Identify Points of Leverage from Regional Collaboration

Beyond the coordination of local investments lies the opportunity for even greater leverage from regional collaboration. The opportunity should be framed as a way to extend the local impacts of local investments, rather than as a redirection of local investment to a regional purpose. The bottom line is that larger local benefits are possible only by working regionally. By working with other communities, any single community can experience more benefits than by working alone.

Highway 99 provides a classic opportunity for local communities to participate in transforming and promoting the regional corridor as the “Main Street of the San Joaquin Valley,” increasing the flow of tourists and enhancing the attractiveness of the entire region for economic development. In addition, it is in the interest of any single community to encourage other communities along the corridor to make local investments. As Figure 7 shows, like a chain, every community “link” is necessary to create a true Highway 99 “corridor of opportunity.”

**Figure 6: Highway 99 Corridor Improvements**



## What are the possible points of leverage for local communities?

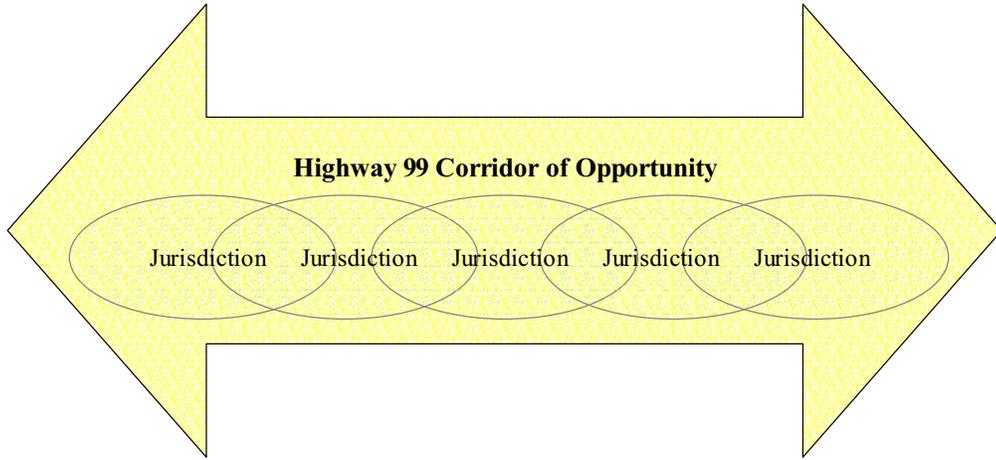
- *Compelling unifying theme*—Communities can participate in the development, implementation, and promotion of a unifying corridor theme, one that projects a sense of continuity and consistency to tourists and potential business investors. Even as communities develop, implement, and promote a distinctive local theme to promote their unique attributes, they can tie their efforts into a connected series of diverse, high-quality experiences showcasing and celebrating the culture, history, and other amenities of the Valley. In this way, a regional theme can be promoted through signage, freeway design, landscaping, joint tourism materials, maps, initiatives, and the like—all steps that both reinforce and extend local efforts.
- *Comprehensive improvement and maintenance of the freeway right-of-way*—Communities can work together to see that all segments of the freeway are upgraded and maintained, so as to avoid vast differences in quality. For example, a community can succeed in advocating and securing high-quality improvements for its segment of the corridor, while adjacent segments suffer inattention, thereby undermining the value of the local improvements. Similarly, the positive benefits of an effective adopt-a-highway program, clean-up day, or landscaping plan for one segment can be reduced by indifference along other segments. Conversely, coordination of local efforts in all these areas can create a regional outcome that generates greater benefits than could be achieved by any one community acting alone.
- *Compatible high-quality development standards*—While pursuing their own unique set of development standards in response to local conditions, communities can also seek compatibility with other jurisdictions for mutual benefit. For example, compatible standards—though not exactly the same standards—for billboards, cell towers, landscaping, identifiers and gateways, visual quality of land uses, and the like, could create a consistently high-quality image and experience for travelers along the Highway 99 corridor, promoting economic development region-wide.

For information on corridor improvement strategies see the *Route 99 Corridor Improvement Guide*, released in May of 2004. The report is available online at [www.greatvalley.org/99](http://www.greatvalley.org/99).

Fortunately, communities are not on their own when it comes to seeking out and securing partners to pursue a compelling regional theme, comprehensive improvement and maintenance of the freeway right-of-way, or compatible high-quality development standards. The Great Valley Center's Highway 99 Task Force offers an ongoing forum and a growing set of tools to use to help individual communities work together and learn about innovative strategies from other places.

This chapter has provided a framework to help make the case for using Highway 99 improvements as a catalyst for economic and community progress, while the next two chapters describe how to mobilize the community around the opportunity and how to set up a measurement system to help focus implementation efforts and monitor their results.

**Figure 7: Leverage From Regional Collaboration**



# Mobilize the Community

## Different Paths

After framing the opportunity, mobilizing the community is the next step in creating a local initiative to use Highway 99 improvements as a catalyst for economic and community progress. Mobilizing the community means more than making a policy change or investing in a project. It means bringing together diverse interests in the community, individuals, and institutions with a stake in economic, social, and environmental progress. It means more than catering to individual interests, but rather finding a common ground that serves the public interest. It means moving beyond good intentions to coordinated actions, with different partners playing different roles consistent with their expertise and resources.

Communities have a choice. The following vignettes illustrate how one community might make different decisions about Highway 99, with very different results:

### Stay the Course

The community views Highway 99 only as a transportation route. Caltrans follows a traditional practice of making decisions on its own about how and when to maintain and occasionally upgrade portions of the right-of-way, emphasizing safety and traffic flow. The community's segment includes a junk yard, a row of billboards in disrepair, attractive farmland whose view is obscured by chain-link fences, and a build-up of trash along the side of the road. Since the community regards Highway 99 as a basic transportation route, especially for industry, it accepts the condition of the freeway as inevitable. Any efforts that would add costs for the community or businesses along the right-of-way are discouraged since economic development is already a problem.

The result? Even with some Highway 99 improvements for traffic flow and safety, the community continues to suffer economic decline.

### Focus on Beautification

The community views Highway 99 as a transportation route, but also as its "front door" and a potential catalyst for economic development. The community is proud of its heritage, but hungry for economic development, and views Highway 99 as an obstacle to progress. City officials actively provide input to Caltrans about improvements to their segment, including a new landscaping plan. They pass an ordinance banning future billboards, while encouraging the gradual retirement or renovation of existing billboards. They create new zoning along Highway 99, which includes steps to screen the view of visually unappealing land uses. They erect a new community identifier sign for tourists and other travelers proudly announcing their city.

Mobilizing the community means bringing together diverse interests in the community, individuals, and institutions with a stake in economic, social, and environmental progress.

The result? Over the next several years, the community's segment is improved, with freeway upgrades, new landscaping, better views, and new signage projecting a much better image of the community. However, by focusing exclusively on beautification, the community has not linked their Highway 99 work with other investments in economic development, such as downtown redevelopment, commercial development along the freeway, tourism promotion, industrial recruitment, and others. While important city policies have been changed, city officials have not tapped into other segments of the community to supplement their efforts. In the end, beautification improves the image, but has only a small impact on economic development. The impact of the community's efforts is further dampened as adjacent communities choose to "stay the course" and do little to improve their segments.

### **Build a Corridor of Opportunity**

The community views Highway 99 as a catalyst for economic and community progress. City officials recognize early that they need to mobilize all segments of the community and participate in regional efforts to truly create a corridor of opportunity that benefits their residents. They create a local task force, which assesses the situation, identifying assets and liabilities along its segment of the corridor.

The task force also identifies compatible interests in Highway 99 improvement, finds common ground, recommends specific actions, and identifies complementary roles for city government, the business community, nonprofits, and residents themselves. It proposes coordination of local investments, including redevelopment, tourism, and others, to ensure maximum benefits for the community. It provides an ongoing link to the regional Highway 99 Task Force, and enables the community to coach other communities and participate in targeted regional efforts to create a unifying theme, as well as promote comprehensive improvements across corridor and higher development standards.

The result? Over the next several years, a set of coordinated investments in economic and community progress begin to pay off. Highway 99 is transformed into an attractive "front door" to the community.

- City officials do their part, passing ordinances and ensuring public investments are coordinated and leverage one another for maximum benefit.
- The business community steps up, encouraging private investment in tourism promotion and events, downtown revitalization, and a new business park adjacent to the freeway, as well as showing existing businesses along the corridor how to screen unsightly views most cost-effectively.
- Agricultural interests work with others to promote agricultural tourism and land preservation along the corridor.

- A consortium of businesses and educational institutions form a training initiative to prepare residents for a growing number of new jobs.
- A group of service clubs recruit enough organizations to ensure 100% coverage by the Adopt-a-Highway clean-up program, and follow through on a commitment to plant 100 trees along the corridor.
- Residents participate in annual clean-up days, and vote for new investments to help transform their community.

The community also successfully encourages adjacent cities to initiate their own efforts, and pursues joint development projects as well as similar high-quality land use standards that are mutually beneficial. The community joins a regional tourism initiative to promote the “Main Street of the San Joaquin Valley,” and periodically picks up creative ideas about how to cost-effectively improve their segment of the corridor from other communities. The community participates in a corridor-wide clean-up day every six months, leveraging its modest investment many times over.

The coordinated investments in economic and community progress help create an image of a “community on the move”, with a thriving downtown, healthy tourist trade, and an increasingly vital and diverse economy. Economic gains help increase public revenues, and enable the city to expand its investment in parks, recreation, downtown development, a new business park and incubator, tourism promotion, and community events, as well as environmental restoration. The vital cycle gets even stronger, as these investments produce greater economic activity and a rising standard of living for residents.

## **Making the Best Choice**

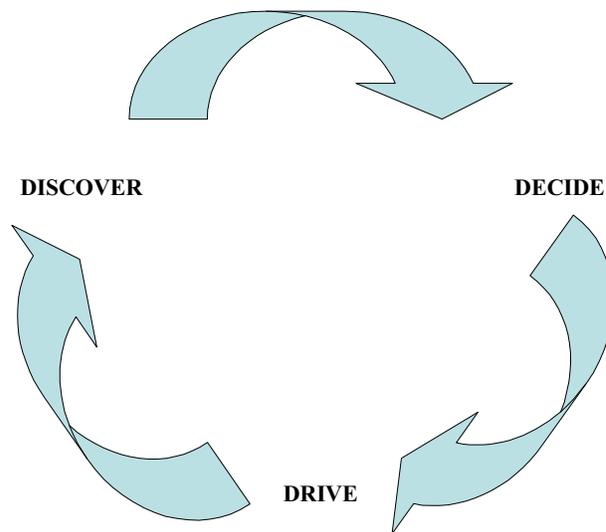
Every community will need to make its own decision about Highway 99. The purpose of this chapter is to suggest how communities can make the best choice, one that will maximize the economic, social, and environmental benefits for their residents.

Nationally, a decade of experimentation has produced many innovative efforts to promote economic and community progress. These efforts are chronicled in several books, and have spawned peer-to-peer networks so communities can learn from one another (See Sources at end of the report). Most recently, *Civic Revolutionaries: Igniting the Passion for Change in America’s Communities* (Wylie and Sons/Jossey Bass, 2004) examined these innovative efforts, and described a “vital cycle” of community mobilization that delivers results. As Figure 8 shows, its three major elements are:

- ***Discover: Building a Compelling Case for Change***—Leaders of innovative efforts seek out and accumulate information, ideas, and allies in an effort to “discover” what needs to be done and who is willing to help get it done. They diagnose the challenges facing their communities, seek out ideas from their own and other communities, and they recruit others to be part of a coalition for change.

- **Decide: Making Critical Choices in Experimentation**—Leaders of innovative efforts are always faced with many options, but they sort through different ideas and determine the focus, scope, and priority of actions to be taken. In short, they make the hard decisions to pursue one course of action over another, and not fall prey to “paralysis by analysis” or other afflictions that prevent progress.
- **Drive: Mobilizing Allies for Change**—Leaders of innovative efforts are relentless in their drive for change. They embody the spirit of experimentation, taking action, measuring and reflecting on results, making course corrections, continuously looking for better ideas, and always pushing forward.

**Figure 8:  
Process for Mobilizing  
the Community**



### **Discover: Focusing on Highway 99 as a Catalyst for Change**

The “discovery” phase of the process is critical because it shifts the mindset, enlarges the possibilities, and creates an initial core of champions willing to take the next step.

#### **Frame the Opportunity, Recruit the Core Team**

Using the guidelines from the second chapter, the idea of Highway 99 as a catalyst for change can be introduced and a core team of champions can be recruited. The Highway 99 Task Force offers a good source of peer guidance and examples in this early stage of exploration. Setting up a local Highway 99 Task Force can help create a focal point for the effort. Champions can come from any sector, but a cross-section of business (including agriculture), government, nonprofit, and other community leaders is ideal, as the core group will need to be able to mobilize the broader community.

## **Consult the Community, Identifying Current Assets, Liabilities, and Interests**

The next step is to educate the core team of champions on the local situation, a hard-nosed look at the assets, liabilities, and diverse interests in the community, and how they relate to using Highway 99 as a catalyst for change. This outreach process is an excellent opportunity not only to collect critical information, but also identify additional champions and allies who will be needed to drive any major changes. The process can involve formal meetings or informal consultations or both, but should be expansive enough to create a thorough understanding of the situation and widespread interest in taking action. Seek out other communities to see how they are using Highway 99 as a catalyst.

Do, however, set a time limit at the outset of the initial discovery phase to provide a discipline to keep the effort moving forward. Summarize the findings of the discovery process in a concise format, in the form of a briefing document that emphasizes the main themes, while also keeping as a reference “package” the full set of information and ideas from the outreach process. A Regional Strategy Workbook available from the Highway 99 Task Force ([www.greatvalleycenter.org/99](http://www.greatvalleycenter.org/99)) provides an example of a process and guiding questions to assess the current reality and desired future regarding Highway 99. It also includes actual results from each county, the product of the views of Task Force members from communities along the corridor.

Communities as diverse as Chattanooga, Charlotte, and the Greater Wasatch Area of Utah demonstrate how to implement an effective “discovery” process:

- Once declared the most polluted city in America, Chattanooga, Tennessee engaged hundreds of citizens in a process that produced a bold vision and a series of specific projects using their river as a catalyst for economic, social, and environmental progress. Since 1984, millions of dollars have been invested in coordinated riverfront development, downtown revitalization, and environmental restoration, producing jobs, higher incomes, and new parkland.
- Charlotte, North Carolina implemented a process called “Voices and Choices” that helped residents understand the linkages among economy, the environment, and quality of life, and the importance of working together as a region. The effort also translated local interests into regional action. Regional collaboration has produced financing for regional transportation improvements and additional green space. City and county officials are in the process of connecting their individual greenway projects across four counties. More information is available at [www.voicesandchoices.org](http://www.voicesandchoices.org).

The outreach process is an excellent opportunity to identify additional champions and allies who will be needed to drive any major changes.

- Envision Utah is one of the nation’s most comprehensive efforts to engage residents in planning the future of their region. A series of communities, linked as a region bounded by lakes and mountains, worked together to solicit the views of residents, asking them to make choices about growth, and then engaging them in efforts to change local master plans and development projects. Envision Utah has also created an “Urban Planning Tools for Quality Growth” workbook, trained hundreds of local officials, launched a media campaign, and created Quality Growth awards to showcase and encourage progress. More information is available at [www.envisionutah.org](http://www.envisionutah.org).

### **Decide: Setting the Course for Change**

Once an initial discovery process is completed, new champions should be added to the core team to span the range of key interests in the community. Ideally, these additional champions should have a credible base of support and influence in their sector or constituency. The enlarged core team should then ask a series of questions to gauge how ready they are to move forward, and in what ways. For example:

- Is there strong enough motivation and trust to work together?
- Are participants willing to identify and work together to overcome the biggest barriers to change?
- Are participants open to new approaches and partnerships, locally and regionally?

### **Define Compatible Interests and a Common Purpose**

There will be many interests among participants. Some of these interests will coincide, or complement one another. Some will be able to co-exist with one another. Others will be in conflict. The key is to focus on “compatible interests,” that is those interests that are either coinciding, complementary, and can co-exist with one another. A series of questions can help guide the process:

- How do different parties define the problem or opportunity? What are their underlying interests? Where are there similarities and differences?
- What are the strongest compatible interests? Is the combination of compatible interests strong enough to justify moving forward even if other interests are in conflict?
- What is the “common purpose” for action that can be fashioned out of these compatible interests?

A common purpose can often be defined, even as individual parties represent many different interests. The point of coming to a decision is not to achieve unanimity among participants, but rather agreement on a common purpose that will allow the group to move forward. This common purpose may initially be modest in scope, but can grow over time as trust grows and interests evolve.

## **Define Collaborative Actions and Complementary Roles**

Once a common purpose has been established, actions and roles can be defined. An overall strategy with specific implementation steps is required. To identify specific actions, it is important to understand what roles different parties can play. What are all the different actions that must be taken to implement the strategy, and who can contribute to them? What are the complementary roles that different parties can play? What's missing? Who else must be recruited to the team to play a needed role? Each party should make explicit, written commitments to implementation. In addition, the team should periodically review progress in implementation, making any adjustments as necessary.

Communities as diverse as Chicago, Kansas City, and the San Francisco Bay Area demonstrate how to find compatible interests and forge complementary roles in implementation:

- A local community development organization called Bethel New Life led an effort with several Chicago neighborhoods, resulting in the modernization of a shared transit line as well as economic development of the transit corridor. Bethel New Life worked with local transit and development officials, as well as local neighborhood leaders, to identify compatible interests and complementary roles. For example, in upgrading the transit line and redeveloping the corridor, Bethel New Life provided local knowledge and investment, a private developer contributed regional investment and expertise, the Chicago Housing Authority provided land for residential development, and the Chicago Transit Authority invested in station and other modernization of the transit line.
- Using a main thoroughfare as a focus, a Kansas City community development corporation brokered a multi-party collaboration that is producing economic, social, and environmental benefits. Focusing on Troost Avenue, historically a dividing line between rich and poor, Community Builders was interested in jobs and economic development, but found allies with compatible interests such as the police department (crime reduction) and a coalition of business, education, and faith leaders from both sides of Troost Avenue who recognized their interdependence. The result: A coordinated set of investments and actions to transform an existing scrap yard and abandoned houses into a vibrant commercial and residential district.
- The Community Capital Investment Initiative is an effort to link regional resources to revitalize the San Francisco Bay Area's poorest neighborhoods. The Initiative has launched three investment funds, having raised more than \$140 million. Investments are being made according to a set of economic, social equity, and environmental investment criteria, developed collaboratively by business, community, and government interests.

The most effective community efforts create a lasting infrastructure or set of organizational arrangements that can drive and sustain change.

### **Drive: Mobilizing Allies for Change**

The most effective community efforts create a lasting infrastructure or set of organizational arrangements that can drive and sustain change. Over time, these efforts gain momentum, mobilize additional allies, leverage more resources, and produce ongoing results.

### **Create a Compact and Network to Sustain Implementation**

Many communities have used a traditional American approach to accountability, that of the compact. From the Mayflower Compact of 1620 to today, community members have written down public commitments to the common good. A compact makes explicit the mutual commitments to action, and provides a focal point for encouraging additional parties to “sign on” to the effort.

- Communities and regions as diverse as Denver, Boston, Portland, and Minnesota’s Twin Cities have all fashioned compacts to solidify commitments about development, land use, planning, and other issues.
- One of the most extensive efforts to define commitments and raise funds to implement specific projects is found in Oklahoma City. Led initially by the local chamber of commerce, a series of development projects were identified and packaged as the Metropolitan Area Projects Plan or MAPS. The package included nine major projects from a canal river walk to a new convention center, with voters approving public funding to assist in implementation.

In addition, many communities have created an ongoing implementation network that can grow as additional partners join, while still providing a focal point for implementation advocacy and accountability. Rochester, New York provides an excellent example. A mayor-initiated effort called “Neighbors Building Neighborhoods” involved residents in making decisions about city priorities and updates to the city’s comprehensive plan, as well forming action plans for neighborhood improvement. However, the effort went further to create ongoing committees that work with city officials and other partners to implement the plans. Residents contribute time and expertise, while local businesses and foundations provide financial and in-kind support, and city staff provide technical guidance and coordinate city investments.

### **Create a Measurement System to Monitor Results, Adjust Course, and Grow Support**

Perhaps the most important step in driving and sustaining implementation is a system to measure whether or not progress is being made. First, it provides current and prospective investors and partners with confidence that measurable results are expected. Second, it provides information to participants on what is working and what is not working, enabling the team to make course corrections in the spirit of continuous improvement. Third, it shows progress from an initial baseline, building the case for continuing (and even more extensive) investment in the future from local sources and funders outside the community (e.g., state and federal government, foundations, companies). There are many examples from which to draw, as many communities in California and nationwide have created “indexes” of progress. The Highway 99 Task Force could be a resource in developing such a system. The final chapter of this document provides guidance on how to set up such a system.



# Measure the Benefits

## An Effective Measurement System

Communities can effectively frame the opportunity and mobilize the community, but will have difficulty sustaining positive change without a system in place to measure the benefits. Without such a system, communities cannot be sure their coordinated investments in roadway, roadside, and corridor improvements are delivering results or falling short of the mark, requiring adjustments in implementation. Without such a system, communities will have trouble making the case for additional resources for greater improvements in the future.

Developing a measurement system is different than compiling a set of indicators or a community index. A measurement system is tied to a vision or set of goals—a common purpose such as using Highway 99 as a catalyst for economic and community progress. A measurement system establishes a “baseline” from which progress can be assessed. The first step is to decide how the measurement system will be used, and with what audiences for what reasons.

As Figure 9 shows, a measurement system also provides an integrated, replicable, and sustainable approach that connects the following elements:

- *Story*—How can the measurement system produce an overall “story of change” beyond individual indicators?
- *Framework*—What is the organizing framework that helps us to understand and interpret measures, and helps produce an overall “story” of change?
- *Indicators*—What is most important to measure? What will show meaningful progress in areas considered most important to the community?
- *Data*—What data is most reliable, timely, and collectible over time? What steps should be taken to ensure sustainable sources of data for indicators considered most important to the community?

## Creating the System

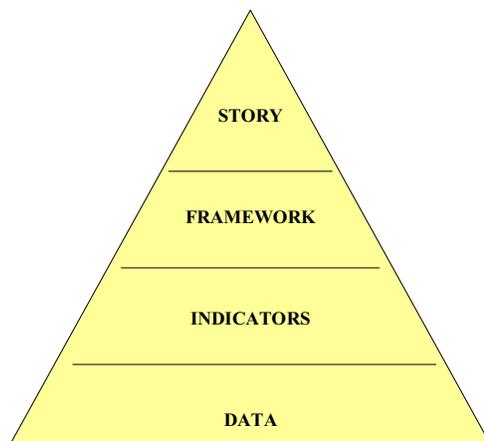
The following steps can be taken to create an effective measurement system: (1) clarifying the purpose, (2) adopting a framework, (3) choosing the indicators, (4) collecting the data, and then (5) telling the story of change. The “story of change” is the actual product of the measurement system, one that can be used to generate support and spur improvement. The overall story of change is dynamic, and will shift with periodic updates of indicators.

### 1. Clarifying the Purpose

What is the common purpose that the management system will support? If a community team has developed a common purpose of using Highway 99 as a catalyst for economic and community progress, how will the measurement system be used? Potential uses of the system include:

- *Monitor*—track progress towards a common purpose or specific goals
- *Communicate*—tell an overall story of change to stakeholders, funders and other places
- *Educate*—increase understanding about what is important, model how community progress takes place
- *Identify gaps*—show areas where more work is needed
- *Motivate*—provide the catalyst for leadership to take action on problem areas, assemble teams to address issues, or support existing efforts
- *Compare*—benchmark against other places

**Figure 9: An Effective Measurement System**



Without a credible framework to provide a unifying theme, it is difficult to choose a consistent group of indicators that will tell a compelling story.

Communities should review this list, add to or subtract from it, and prioritize the uses. This process will help clarify the expected impacts of the measurement system. A related question is audience. Who are the prime audiences? Are they different for different uses of the measurement system? What specifically do we want to happen as a result of publishing measures of progress? To achieve this result, what formats and approaches would be best suited for effective communication of results?

## 2. Adopting a Framework

A good indicators document is more than a data book: it provides insights into what is important in a place. While many can find and analyze data, the challenge is organizing the data in a way that both conveys a message and that is grounded in theory and the data. An organizing framework provides a unifying concept, or paradigm to help interpret and understand what the data say. It is essential to adopt a framework in order to organize individual indicators of progress into an overall story of change—a story of how Highway 99 is a catalyst for economic and community progress.

The second chapter of this report offered suggestions on how best to “frame the opportunity,” including a focus on multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits. A framework that offers this comprehensiveness and suggests productive linkages among economic, social, and environmental outcomes provides a strong narrative relevant to diverse community interests. It provides an opportunity to communicate the “vital cycle” of economic and community progress, and motivate a wide range of partners and funders to help with implementation. It also meets these criteria for an effective framework:

- Shows the key components of success and their relationship to each other
- Models how something works to produce outcomes desired by the community
- Is defensible, based on quality research and grounded in theory
- Endures over time

The bottom line is that without a credible organizing framework to provide a unifying theme, it is difficult to choose a consistent group of indicators that will tell a compelling story. Without a compelling, well-communicated story, it is difficult to catalyze action. A good framework provides the structure for telling the story of change, including gains and setbacks, which can help motivate people to invest in success or fix problems or both.

### 3. Choosing the Indicators

Indicators are measurements that tell us how we are doing: whether we are going up or down, going forward or backward, getting better or worse, or staying the same. The best indicators:

- show direction, indicating whether we are improving or worsening
- are bellwethers that reflect fundamentals of long-term community vitality
- reflect the interests and concerns of the community
- are meaningful to the audience, and can be widely accepted and understood
- measure outcomes, rather than inputs
- are statistically measurable on a frequent basis
- are derived from objective and reliable data sources

Communities develop all kinds of indicators to measure progress on a variety of issues. Economic indicators include measures like per capita income, a broad measure of regional prosperity, or job creation—an indication of economic vitality. Other measures address environmental outcomes, such as air quality or pollution levels in local rivers and streams. Social indicators can help show how people are doing: tracking poverty levels over time, educational outcomes such as high school graduation rates or reading levels of third graders. All these indicators, especially when tracked over time, help communities make decisions about where to invest their dollars and target their efforts.

In this measurement system, indicators are value-based. They are chosen to measure specific outcomes, linked to an organizing framework. They provide insight into areas where communities want to improve their performance, where they believe their investments will make a difference, or where they have clear challenges that must be understood.

In choosing indicators, it is important to evaluate how they fit into the organizing framework. Figure 10 provides a template for evaluating potential indicators, and includes examples of indicators and how they help illustrate the organizing framework of economic, social, and environmental benefits.

**Figure 10: Examples of Potential Indicators**

<b>What is Important to Measure?</b>	<b>What Indicates Progress?</b>	<b>Economic Benefits?</b>	<b>Social Benefits?</b>	<b>Environmental Benefits?</b>	<b>Possible Data Sources?</b>
Sales tax revenue	Rising sales tax revenue	Increased economic vitality, income	Sources of funds for community services	Sources of funds for parks, preservation	California State Controller
Traffic flow and safety	Reduced traffic congestion and accidents	Decreased hours of delay, saving time & resources	Fewer injuries and fatalities	Decreased pollution	Caltrans, Texas Transportation Institute
Miles in adopt-a-highway program	Increased miles in adopt-a-highway program	Cleaner landscape boosts tourism, spurs other economic development	Increased community pride, improved image	Cleaner, more appealing environment	Caltrans
Air quality	Reduced PM10 (particulates) and Ozone	Improves attractiveness for economic development	Fewer health-related problems associated with poor air quality	Cleaner air, increased visibility and less pollution	Air quality management district
Ground water quality	Reduced groundwater contamination	Reduced cost of using local sources of uncontaminated groundwater	Improved health outcomes	Improved groundwater quality	CA department of Health Services, Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection (DWSAP) Program
Economic prosperity	Rising per capita income	Wealth rising faster than population	Prosperity rising across the economy		Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economy.com
Job creation	Rising employment	Vital, growing businesses	Increased access to opportunity		EDD, Labor Market Information Division, Economy.com, Census Bureau
Hotel room occupancy rate	Increased revenue from tourism and business travelers (outside dollars)	Wealth creation for the community, boon to local businesses	Expansion of job opportunities in visitor services		Travel Industry Association of America, Office of Travel & Tourism Industries/U.S. Department of Commerce
Property values	Rising property values	Increased value of housing and nonresidential building stock	Broadened prosperity, increased access to capital		County Assessor's Office, State Controller's Office website
Crime	Falling violent and juvenile crime rates	Decreased costs of law enforcement and incarceration	Increased personal and business safety		FBI Uniform Crime reports, local
Pay per employee	Rising pay per employee	Increasing job quality	Improved ability to afford needed goods and services		EDD, Labor Market Information Division, Economy.com
Educational attainment	Rising educational attainment	Higher quality labor force	Increased economic opportunity		US Census Bureau, California Department of Education

#### 4. Collecting the Data

Collecting the data is the next step in creating an effective measurement system. In the search for data, the following considerations are critical:

- *Data Reliability*—Who provides and collects the data? Does the data come from a sample or population? What is the sample size? Is that sample large enough to extrapolate to the population? Is this a reliable source? How were the data collected—a survey, a filing with a regulatory agency, forms, licenses?
- *Data Availability*—How frequently are the data updated? How frequently are the data revised, are they revised retroactively? Is an existing data source available or will we need to create our own survey to obtain the information we want?
- *Data Comparability*—How does the data source differ from other sources providing the same measurements? Is this a direct or proxy measure of what we want? Can we compare this data to other places?
- *Data Limitation*—What are the caveats or known limitations of this data? How old is the data? Can we customize this data set to our specifications?

What steps should be taken to ensure sustainable sources of data for indicators considered most important to the community? Creating an ongoing commitment to collecting the data is critical. A one-time measurement of baseline conditions without follow-up to see if progress is being made is of limited use. Concrete commitments to complete periodic updates should be built into the measurement system. In fact, in collecting the first baseline data, take time to document data sources, contacts, and any issues to make future updates as cost effective and smooth as possible.

#### 5. Telling the Story of Change

Once the data for individual indicators is collected, it must be analyzed and interpreted in the context of the organizing framework. Are there patterns across indicators that suggest major themes? Are there major areas of progress or decline? Taken together, do the indicators suggest that Highway 99 is acting as a catalyst for economic and community progress? Do the indicators raise important questions or uncertainties that should be the focus for dialogue and action?

The final step is to pull together key themes, patterns, and questions into an overall narrative. Depending on highest-priority uses and audiences, the format(s) of this narrative will vary. The measurement system should come full circle, as the story of change—including gains and setbacks—focuses the community on how best to use Highway 99 as a catalyst for economic and community progress.

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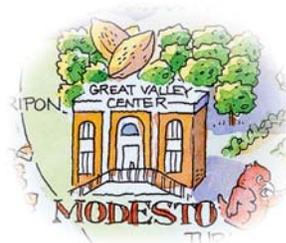
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The Highway 99 Task Force is a group of business, government, and community leaders working to develop the Highway 99 corridor into a truly compelling "Main Street of the San Joaquin Valley," the vibrant core of a competitive region. The effort is coordinated by the Great Valley Center with funding from The James Irvine Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the California Department of Transportation. Scenic California has provided technical assistance and resources through a grant from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation.



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