

COMPETITIVE CLUSTERS: C²

A Public / Private Partnership
MONTEREY COUNTY

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Overview of Monterey County Competitive Clusters

Monterey County moved to a cluster-based economic development strategy in March 2003 with funding from the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and significant support and resources from the Monterey County Business Council. Over 300 leaders have come together to identify critical issues and challenges facing their industry. The key to success is **collaboration**. The objective of C² is to achieve a more competitive economy in the existing key industries and emerging industries that fits the special character of Monterey County. The expected benefits of C² are:

- 1) Increase wealth in the region (export-orientation);
- 2) Raise wages;
- 3) Increase the supply and diversity of job opportunities;
- 4) Increase the array of career-path opportunities;
- 5) Develop a shared sense of direction for the County; and
- 6) Smooth out the impacts of seasonality on employment.

The Process

- 1) Bring together a representative group of individuals from private firms and public sector organizations that cluster firms rely on for inputs such as a skilled workforce, research & development, finance, and infrastructure.
- 2) Create a consistent forum for structured discussion and achieving consensus among participants in identifying key challenges and setting priorities.
- 3) Meet regularly and report progress annually on six to ten specific action items.

Great Examples

H.E.L.P. – Healthy Eating Lifestyle Principles is an award-winning, non-profit agency that works with schools, parents, and employers, to promote nutrition, education, and physical activity to the community, for the elimination of childhood obesity. Since its launch in 2004 from the Ag Cluster, H.E.L.P. has received over \$2MM in public and private funding.

Grapevine Express – Monterey-Salinas Transit's new service to Carmel Valley began as a pilot project within the Tourism Cluster with funding from a \$30,000 revolving loan from C2. The first year offered a special service on the weekend during the summer. Now two years later, the Grapevine Express is fully funded year round.

ConnectEd – An outgrowth of the Education Cluster's goal to designate Monterey County as an "education destination" worldwide, ConnectEd successfully held its inaugural conference on global education with over 400 attendees. Additional benefits include filling the Monterey Conference Center during tourism's low season, replacing the void that is left by the TED conference moving to Long Beach, and \$125K in spending at local businesses from out-of-town attendees alone.

Other Clusters

Agriculture ▪ Tourism ▪ Education & Research ▪ Building & Design ▪ Wellness & Lifestyle

For more details, visit: <http://competitiveclusters.com/>



COMPETITIVE CLUSTERS: C² is a public/private partnership for Economic Development in Monterey County, sponsored by: the County of Monterey and the Monterey County Business Council

