City of Lincoln

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN 2030

Building a strong local economy.
Preserving our character. Creating opportunity.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

DESTINATION LINCOLN

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

A distinctive and business-friendly community where economic vitality thrives. and quality of life. comes first.

Acknowledgement

Special recognition is extended to the Economic Development Committee for the significant volunteer leadership, project support, business engagement, and strategic guidance it has provided since its formation. Prior to the addition of dedicated economic development staff resources, the Committee played an important role in advancing economic development discussions, identifying opportunities, supporting local initiatives, and helping elevate economic development as a long-term City priority. The Committee continues to serve as an active advisory partner supporting Lincoln's long-term economic vitality and competitiveness.

This Economic Development Action Plan update was informed through economic and market analysis, review of local and regional conditions, studies and reports, the existing Economic Development Plan, implementation discussions, and stakeholder interviews whose time, insight, and collaboration helped shape this framework and align it with Lincoln's long-term economic and community priorities.

Name	Organization	Role
David Riccitiello	Economic Development Committee	Chair
Faraz Mahmood	Economic Development Committee	Vice Chair
Jason Price	Economic Development Committee	Member
Andrea Faria	Economic Development Committee	Member
Joann Hilton	Economic Development Committee	Member
Melanie Borchardt	Economic Development Committee	Member
Whitney Eklund	City Council & Economic Development Committee	Mayor Pro Tem, City Council Member (District 5)
John Reedy	City Council & Economic Development Committee	City Council Member (District 3)
Sean Scully	City of Lincoln	City Manager
Erin Frye	City of Lincoln	Economic Development & Communications Specialist
Daniella Stepek	City of Lincoln	Economic Development Specialist
Tom Indrieri	Lincoln Area Chamber	CEO
Kim Summers	Placer Valley Tourism	CEO
William Wong	Downtown Lincoln Association	President

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Introduction

The purpose of this Economic Development Action Plan update is to align the City's existing Economic Development Plan with the Lincoln City Council's 2025–2027 Strategic Plan and current priorities related to long-term fiscal sustainability, more sustainable growth, economic vitality, infrastructure, and community capacity.

While Lincoln's previous economic development efforts established a broad and comprehensive foundation, this update is intended to create a more focused and implementation-oriented framework aligned with the City Council's priorities over the next several years.

The update recognizes that economic development plays an important role in helping the City:

- strengthen long-term fiscal sustainability,
- increase local investment and revenue generation,
- support business growth and expansion,
- improve economic competitiveness, and
- maintain Lincoln's quality of life and community character as the community continues to grow.

Based on economic and demographic conditions, a review of market conditions, and stakeholder input, the Action Plan organizes priorities into three Economic Development Pillars and associated focus areas intended to guide implementation, organizational alignment, and future economic development activities.

Pillar 1: Business Development. Purpose is to drive new investment and revenue generation.

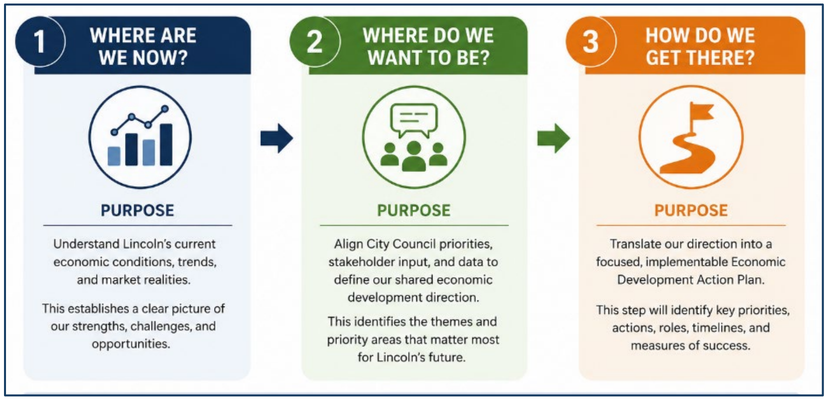
Pillar 2: Business Retention Expansion & Creation. Purpose is to maintain and grow the existing base and support new business creation.

Pillar 3: Competitiveness & Business Climate. Purpose is to position the City for future investment.

This framework is designed to help focus City efforts on areas most critical to achieving the City Council's Strategic Plan priorities while remaining flexible as market conditions, opportunities, and community needs continue to evolve.

Planning Process & Strategic Alignment

The planning process followed a three-step approach intended to align economic conditions, stakeholder input, and City Council priorities into a practical and actionable strategy framework.



Step 1 — Where Are We Now?

The first phase focused on Lincoln's current economic-market realities, competitive position analysis, and review of local and regional trends. This work identified the key ***Headwinds***, or challenges to be navigated, and ***Tailwinds***, strengths and opportunities to leverage and build upon.

The economic analysis indicates Lincoln is evolving from a primarily residential community toward a more balanced economy capable of supporting additional jobs,

investment, services, and long-term revenue generation. Appendix A[1]

Step 2 — Where Do We Want To Be?

The second phase focused on stakeholder engagement. Several consistent themes emerged throughout the process, including:

1. Attract job-producing industries, expand local employment opportunities.
2. Activate the airport areas.
3. Capture retail leakage, attract higher-quality commercial development.
4. Improve business support, City responsiveness.
5. Invest in infrastructure.
6. Move from reactive to proactive economic development implementation.
7. Strengthen downtown as a destination.
8. Preserve Lincoln's small-town identity while supporting growth.

The second phase also focused on aligning City Council priorities, stakeholder input, market realities, and economic data creating an *alignment matrix* to help define Lincoln's economic development direction. Appendix B[2]

[1] Appendix A. Where are We Now? Economic Scan, Workforce Commute Patterns, Industry Composition, Talent Pipeline Trends, and Retail Demand.

The process also reinforced the importance of aligning economic development efforts with the City Council's Strategic Plan priorities, particularly those related to sustainable growth, revenue generation, infrastructure, downtown improvements, airport activation, and long-term community sustainability.

Step 3 — How Do We Get There?

The final phase translated the economic analysis, stakeholder input, and City Council priorities into a focused Economic Development Action Plan organized around:

- a shared vision and mission,
- Economic Development Pillars,
- priority focus areas, and
- an implementation framework intended to guide future economic development efforts.

The result is a targeted framework focused on the areas expected to have the greatest impact on Lincoln's economic vitality, competitiveness, and long-term fiscal sustainability while remaining flexible as conditions and opportunities continue to evolve.

Support and referenced documents, briefings, matrices are included in the Appendix.

[2] Appendix B. Where Do We Want to Be? *City Council Strategic Priorities, Stakeholder Input Summary, Alignment Matrix: Council Priorities + Stakeholder Input, Economic Conditions*.

The Economic Development Action Plan

The Economic Development Committee noted during the stakeholder engagement process a clear and concise Vision and Mission statement were needed to help ground the Economic Development Action Plan with a shared understanding of where Lincoln wants to be and how the community intends to get there.

The Vision defines the community's long-term direction and desired future position, while the Mission establishes the City's ongoing role in supporting thoughtful economic growth.

Together, they establish the framework for the Economic Development Pillars, focus areas, and implementation strategies outlined in this Action Plan.

Vision

Lincoln is a distinctive and business-friendly community within the Sacramento region where economic growth strengthens our safe, historic small-town character, quality of life and sense of community.

Thoughtful planning and a welcoming environment attract business and investment. Strong private and public partnerships are Lincoln's foundation for supporting entrepreneurship, developing local talent, creating opportunities for future generations, and building a resilient economy rooted in community character and long-term prosperity.

Mission

Advancing thoughtful development that enhances Lincon's quality of life and community character while fostering a business-friendly environment that encourages strategic investment, supports local entrepreneurship, creates diverse high-quality jobs, and drives sustainable economic growth.

Desired Outcomes

1. Increased job creation and local employment opportunities
2. Expanded revenue generation and reduced sales tax leakage
3. A defined portfolio of programs supporting business growth and investment
4. Preserved economic differentiation within the region

Economic Development Framework

After careful review and discussion, and suggested refinements, the Economic Development Committee accepted a three-pillar framework that is reflected below. The framework is organized by implementation priorities, aligned with City resources, with the intention of guiding future economic development efforts. The three pillars are structured to work together.

The top two focus areas within each pillar are considered the City's primary implementation priorities because they are expected to have the greatest impact on achieving City Council goals.

The shaded focus areas represent important ongoing activities that require continuous coordination with City departments, educational institutions, business organizations, workforce partners, and regional agencies.

Pillar 1 — Business Development (Jobs & Revenue)

Why This Matters

Lincoln must capture jobs and revenue currently leaving the city and grow its long-term tax base through business attraction, destination development, and investment-ready growth areas.

Primary Focus Areas

Commercial / Retail

Lincoln continues experiencing retail leakage and unmet commercial demand despite strong population and household growth. Strategic commercial and retail development can help:

- retain more local spending,
- strengthen sales tax generation,
- support neighborhood commercial services.

Focus areas may include:

- targeted retail recruitment,
- grocery and commercial attraction,
- support for investment-ready retail sites.

Airport / Industrial

The airport and surrounding industrial areas represent one of Lincoln's most significant long-term economic development opportunities.

The approximately 84-acre airport area provides opportunities to:

- attract job-producing businesses,
- diversify the economy,
- strengthen traded-sector activity.

Key implementation areas include:

- airport activation planning,
- infrastructure and utility readiness,
- target industry identification.

Ongoing Focus Areas

Downtown

Downtown Lincoln plays an important role as:

- a community gathering place,
- destination area,
- small business environment.

Continued partnership with downtown organizations and businesses will remain important to:

- activation,
- placemaking,
- business recruitment.

Sports & Visitation

Sports, recreation, and visitor activity represent secondary but meaningful economic opportunities. Lincoln's parks, sports facilities, community events, and quality-of-life assets can help:

- increase visitor spending,
- support local businesses,
- strengthen destination activity,
- improve community visibility within the region.

Pillar 2 — Business Retention, Expansion & Creation

Why This Matters

The fastest path to economic growth is supporting businesses already operating in Lincoln and helping them expand, invest, and create jobs locally.

Primary Focus Areas

Business Accelerator

The City should continue exploring partnerships and programs that support entrepreneurship, innovation, and business creation. Potential areas of focus include:

- Jessup and innovation partnerships,
- entrepreneurial support,
- and small business growth resources.

The long-term objective is to strengthen Lincoln's entrepreneurial ecosystem while supporting scalable local business growth.

Major Employer Engagement

Business retention and expansion efforts are critical to maintaining and growing Lincoln's economic base. The City should continue proactively engaging major employers to:

- identify operational challenges,
- understand expansion opportunities,
- and support long-term investment decisions.

Business retention visits and ongoing employer engagement can also provide important real-time market intelligence for future planning and implementation.

Ongoing Focus Areas

Small Business Support

Small businesses remain foundational to Lincoln's economy and community identity. Ongoing coordination with partner organizations and resource providers will remain important to:

- technical assistance,
- permit navigation,
- financing resources,
- and entrepreneurship support.

Workforce Alignment

Workforce development is increasingly connected to long-term economic competitiveness particularly as the labor market tightens. Continue partnering with:

- educational institutions,
- workforce organizations,
- and employers,

To better align workforce training and career pathways with business and industry needs, particular attention should focus on:

- skilled trades,
- early and mid-career workforce gaps,
- high school pathways,
- and future workforce pipeline development.

Pillar 3 — Competitiveness & Business Climate

Why This Matters

Lincoln competes in a regional market and must differentiate itself to attract and retain business, investment, and talent. Long-term competitiveness increasingly depends on responsiveness, infrastructure readiness, workforce alignment, investment certainty, and community identity.

Primary Focus Areas

Permitting Concierge / Process Improvement

Business responsiveness and development predictability are increasingly important competitive advantages.
The City should continue to:

- improve permit tracking,
- increase project responsiveness,
- tell the business-friendly development experience story.

The goal is not simply speed, but greater clarity, predictability, and customer service.

Identity & Positioning

Lincoln's small-town character, quality of life, and community identity represent important economic differentiators within the Sacramento region. Economic development efforts should lead:

- coordinated messaging,
- business marketing,
- destination positioning,
- and Lincoln's regional identity.

The goal is to clearly communicate why businesses, residents, and investors should choose Lincoln.

Ongoing Focus Areas

Workforce Strategy

Long-term workforce competitiveness will require continued focus on:

- retention of working-age households,
- career pathway development,
- alignment between employers and educational systems.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure readiness remains critical to economic development implementation. The City should continue evaluating:

- infrastructure constraints,
- site readiness,
- utility capacity,
- transportation improvements,
- funding mechanisms,
- and long-term infrastructure planning tools.

Infrastructure planning will remain closely connected to business attraction, industrial development, housing growth, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Implementation Framework

This Economic Development Action Plan is intended to function as a practical implementation framework rather than a static planning document. *Appendix C is a one-page Economic Development Pillar graphic for easy reference for the Council and Committee.*

Implementation will occur through:

1) City staff actions per focus areas,
2) City Council direction,
3) departmental coordination,
4) regional and community partnerships,
5) ongoing business engagement,
6) Economic Development Committee review and input.

Economic Development Implementation Workbook

To support implementation, tracking, communication, and accountability, a companion Economic Development Implementation Workbook is organized around the Economic Development Pillars and focus areas.

The workbook is intended for staff to :

- maintain priorities and actions organized by pillar and focus area,
- document implementation activities and projects,
- identify timelines and responsibilities,
- track status and progress,
- support regular reporting and updates,
- and provide flexibility as priorities and opportunities evolve over time.

Designed to function as a living management and implementation tool.

Economic Development Committee

Prior to the addition of dedicated economic development staff resources, the volunteer Economic Development Committee played a significant leadership role in advancing economic development discussions, project support, business engagement, and strategic initiatives within the community.

Through the dedication and continued involvement of Committee members, the City was able to advance important economic development efforts, strengthen partnerships, elevate economic development as a City priority, and help lay the foundation for many of the strategies, projects, and initiatives that continue today.

As the City transitions toward a more implementation-focused structure supported by staff and this updated Action Plan, the Committee's role continues as an important Council-appointed advisory body supporting:

- implementation discussions,
- eyes and ears on the street and in the business community,
- business and stakeholder insight,
- identification of opportunities and barriers,

- review of priorities and progress,
- and communication between the business community and the City.

The Committee remains an important partner in helping support long-term economic vitality, organizational alignment, and implementation continuity as the Action Plan evolves over time.

Moving Forward

This Economic Development Action Plan is intended to provide a focused and practical framework aligned with the City Council's Strategic Plan priorities and Lincoln's long-term vision for economic vitality, fiscal sustainability, and community character.

The plan recognizes that economic development is not accomplished through a single project or initiative, but through consistent implementation, organizational alignment, partnerships, and ongoing responsiveness to changing market conditions and community needs.

The Economic Development Pillars and Focus Areas identified in this Action Plan are intended to help guide City efforts toward the areas expected to have the greatest long-term impact on:

- investment,
- revenue generation,
- business growth,
- economic competitiveness,
- workforce development,
- destination activity,
- and overall quality of life.

Just as importantly, the Action Plan recognizes that no plan should simply sit on a shelf. Successful economic development requires continued implementation, communication, evaluation, and adjustment over time.

The Economic Development Implementation Workbook, ongoing City Council direction, staff coordination, Economic Development Committee involvement, and continued business and community partnerships are intended to help ensure the Action Plan remains active, measurable, and *implementation-focused*.

As Lincoln continues to grow and evolve, this framework will need to also evolve to those changes and shifts in the economy and in the City.

Appendices

Appendix A – Phase I – Where are We Now

Economic Scan Briefing, Workforce Commute Patterns, Industry Composition, Talent Pipeline Trends & Retail Demand

Appendix B – Phase II – Where Do We Want to Be

City Council Strategic Priorities, Stakeholder Input Summary, Alignment Matrix: Council Priorities + Stakeholder Input + Economic Conditions.

Appendix C – Economic Development Pillars (1 page)

Economic Development Pillars Graphic

Appendix D

Economic Development Committee Work Session Presentation (May 13, 2026)

Appendix E

Economic Development Implementation Workbook