



**Monterey Bay**  
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

**2020-2021**  
**Strategic Plan**

**January 2020**

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# Executive Summary

## Background

Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) is a regional membership supported nonprofit organization consisting of public, private and civic entities located throughout the counties of Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito. MBEP was conceived out of a realization that our communities share similar industries, challenges and opportunities for learning, sharing and doing. MBEP provides regional solutions for regional needs.

Our board now consists of 21 members including leaders of industry, educational institutions, nonprofits and cities who are engaged in the fulfillment of our mission. As of December 2019 we have 87 members throughout the region in various industries and sectors. We are primarily funded through annual membership fees which are based on the member organization's size.

In 2018 and 2019, we expanded our growth through additional grant funding including generous grants from the Morgan Family Foundation, the Monterey Peninsula Foundation and Community Foundation for Monterey County. These were restricted grants specifically allocated to our workforce development and housing initiatives. In 2020 we will be receiving a grant from the State of California (CASF funding) to continue work on the proliferation of broadband throughout the region.

This is the fourth iteration of this strategic plan. We update it at the end of each calendar year to address new needs and changing market conditions. Since the 2019-20 plan we have revised the Strategies and Initiatives.

## Goals

Goals and KPIs (key performance indicators) are laid out in this plan by initiative. In October 2019 the Board asked for tracking against more encompassing goals of well-being and economic health. However, MBEP cannot control all the variables at play in the region nor can it take responsibility for all the positive work that is accomplished. Though we address the California Dream Index in this plan, it is important to recognize that MBEP does not have direct impact on all indicators.

## Strategies

The following are the three strategies we will pursue to fulfill our Mission:

- Strategy #1: Catalyze Change Through Focused Initiatives
- Strategy #2: Convene Local Leaders to Drive Progress on Critical Issues
- Strategy #3: Gain Consensus Around a Regional Vision

## **Marketing, Membership, Operations and Finance**

Since 2016 we have been continuously improving operational efficiency, ensuring compliance with State and Federal regulations, and achieving economies of scale. As of December 2019 we have 7 FTEs, 4 part-time employees, and 1 open req for an FTE. There has been a very low level of churn of employees in 2019, and our headcount has stayed constant over the past year.

In 2019 we significantly increased regional awareness of MBEP and its efforts, as demonstrated by conference attendance and requests for partnership on a variety of initiatives. We also stepped up efforts to engage members in our daily work, and tracked our touchpoints with members. In 2020 we will continue to amplify member engagement and make connections among members and partners to enhance regional cooperation.

Total revenue has increased steadily – from \$731,990 in 2016 to \$1,077,718 in 2019. Grants have increased as a percentage of revenue over time (8% of total income in 2016, 8% in 2017, 32% in 2018 and 33% in 2019). Restricted funds were received for both Housing and Workforce Development. In 2020 we will receive the last payment of a three-year grant from both Monterey Peninsula Foundation and Community Foundation for Monterey County for Housing. We will start a three-year grant cycle for CASF funds (approximately \$120,000 per year), promoting broadband infrastructure in the Monterey Bay area.

At the end of 2019 we have 87 members. Though there have been non-renewing organizations, membership growth was strong in the past year, with the addition of 13 new members.

## **Summary**

We acknowledge that the issues that influence our quality of life require a shared vision and coordinated regional action to make a difference. This is not easy work. It takes perseverance, thick skin, a big vision, and a “compass” guided by our values. We strive to be valued by all sectors as the go-to organization for problem solving. We are passionate about our community, and honored to pursue this work—to be change agents that are creating positive impact.

# Vision, Mission and Values

## Vision

A thriving region for all residents.

## Mission

To improve the economic health and quality of life in the region.

## Values



## Goals

There will be new projects and activities that we embark on during the period covered by this Strategic Plan that will align with our Vision, Mission and Values, but for which we are unable to set specific goals. For the initiatives and programs we are currently working on or are anticipating in the near future, we have set "SMART" goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) to track progress and to ensure accountability.

**For the time period of the Strategic Plan, FY 2020/21, our goals are:**

- **LEAD: Provide thought leadership and convene people to find solutions**
  - Achieve attendance of 350-450 at every Regional Economic Summit and State of the Region with an average NPS rating of 4.4 or higher

- Organize and lead regular meetings each quarter around focused initiatives, with measurable outcomes for each initiative
- Mobilize our partners and host events specific to our initiatives (such as business/student mixers and affordable housing events)
- Continue to encourage our members and partners to think outside the box and bring new technology and policies to the region
- Play a key role in the coordination and hosting of the 2020 California Economic Summit in Monterey

➤ **IMPACT: Catalyze and expand regional resources**

- Continue our positive trajectory of MBI by working closely with employers, including employer-focused workshops throughout the region. By educating employers on site features, we hope to capture more internships filled through mbinterns.org.
- Continue to grow MBCC by working closely with the colleges/universities, alternative high schools, middle schools, and youth organizations, including hosting quarterly educator trainings, implementing pre/post surveys on high school campuses, and implementing [Career Connect Ambassador Pilot Program](#) on college campuses.
- Identify a minimum of 4 viable last-mile broadband infrastructure projects and assist agencies/ISPs in the application for funding at least 2 of these projects
- Leverage the funds in the Monterey Bay Housing Trust (MBHT) to fund four new affordable housing projects in 2020, creating over 200 new affordable housing units
- Execute a combined total of at least 12 “campaigns” through MBEP Action Center for both Housing and Transportation with 500 active users

➤ **THRIVE: Share best practices across the region**

- Promote best practices among member base
- Enable three additional high quality employer-sponsored housing projects, which will consist of 200 housing units
- Partner with policy makers and influencers to implement our new high-speed broadband standard
- Engage with cities and counties, local agencies and ISPs to partner on infrastructure projects that will gain us higher level of broadband coverage
- Encourage the development of last mile fiber throughout the region
- Disseminate best practices around regional approaches to education and career development, transportation, etc.

➤ **General organizational goals**

- Conduct annual member survey and use it to inform refinements to plan
- Attain net total of 90 members by December 2020
- Achieve 80% member renewal rate

- Gain approximately \$445K in grant funding annually (\$209K from Monterey Peninsula Foundation, \$56K from Community Foundation for Monterey County, \$60K from Morgan Family Foundation, \$120K from CASF)
- Maintain and update Regional Dashboard and all data tracker pages on website
- Hire one additional staff member for Housing (total: 8 FTEs and 4 PTEs)

## Inputs to Strategic Plan

We regularly solicit input from:

- Our Board of Directors, through quarterly board meetings and our annual board retreat
- Key stakeholders in the community, through meetings and conferences
- Staff
- Members, through one-on-one discussions and an annual survey

## Governance

Our bylaws offer clear guidance on roles and responsibilities, and board composition. In 2018 we revisited the bylaws and updated them to accommodate changes in the organization as it grows. There was some board member transitions in 2019, and vacancies were filled by the Board Development Committee. We are continually searching for ways to ensure appropriate risk oversight and overall board effectiveness.

The Executive Committee acts for the entire board in situations where it is untimely or unwieldy to convene the entire board. A subset of six board members (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and two others) make up the current Executive Committee which will continue to be convened from as necessary (usually once a month).

### **Policies**

To ensure proper risk management the organization regularly reviews and updates policy documents to reflect changing conditions. No new policies were instituted in 2019, but all were renewed to stay current on compliance issues.

## Strategies

### 1. Catalyze Change Through Focused Initiatives

MBEP's approach is to establish and implement initiatives aligned with our strategy of catalyzing change. Our two original initiatives were **Workforce Development** and **Building a Tech Ecosystem**. In April of 2016 we added **Housing**. In the fall of 2017 a **Transportation** initiative was added. In 2018, **Building a Tech Ecosystem** transformed into **Technology**, which now consists of promoting ubiquitous broadband at a higher regional standard. In 2020, we plan to focus on **Climate Change**, not only as a new initiative, but also as a key component of all of our work. **Transportation** will become less of a focus as we move forward after completing and publishing commuter-oriented tools, but will be encompassed as part of our Climate Change and Housing initiatives.

## **Initiative #1: Workforce Development**

To date, MBEP has focused its Workforce Development efforts on providing internships for young adults who have graduated high school as well as support for high school students who are discovering new career pathways and understanding educational and training requirements to achieve their career goals. We have also concentrated on filling the gap for local employers, and attempting to fill the local market needs with local talent.

This initiative has been centered around two programs:

- **[Monterey Bay Internships](#)**: this website is a resource for both employers and students, aggregating internship opportunities throughout the region. Students from all educational institutions in Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey Counties can access the listings, create profiles with resumes, and apply to internship positions of their choice for free.
- **[Monterey Bay Career Connect](#)**: With support from many of the region's colleges, county offices of education, and workforce development boards, [Monterey Bay Career Connect](#) (MBCC) is a powerful online tool designed to help guide students toward educational programs and career opportunities in the region. The site serves as a one-stop hub for every student to have equal access to academic and hands-on training in order to successfully enter a career path offering a lifetime of value and achieving financial security to create a thriving region.

In 2020, we plan to consolidate all of these resources into one site. Our educational institution partners have weighed in on specific requirements for the success of their students; Monterey Bay Career Connect is designed to complement (not duplicate) the programs that each institution has established for its career development center. Our funding model will change for these efforts, with Steering Committee partners providing one annual contribution for all workforce development program, rather than multiple donations to multiple programs.

### ⇒ **Goals**

The following four metrics are used to track success:

1. [Monterey Bay Career Coach](#), 20% increase from 2019:
  - a. Visitors: 5,843
  - b. Site Visits: 7092
  - c. Profiles Created: 1,402
2. [Monterey Bay Career Connect](#), 25% increase from 2019:
  - a. Site Visits/Users: 7,000
3. [Monterey Bay Internship](#), 10%<sup>1</sup> increase from 2019:
  - a. Site Visits/Users: 13,000

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<sup>1</sup> *mbinterns.org* site may be migrated into new platform being launched at community colleges in 2020, hence usage of the site may decrease compared to prior years

b. Internships posted: 244

4. Data collected on internships posted and filled at colleges within the region via [Bright Futures Educational Partnership](#) Goal 7 Advisory Group: Cabrillo College, CSU Monterey Bay, Hartnell College, Monterey Peninsula College

### ***Initiative #2: Technology***

Originally, MBEP focused its efforts on promoting and supporting the establishment of tech companies in the region, providing gathering opportunities for individuals in the industry, as well as encouraging the growth of technology-focused programs in higher education institutions. As regional needs have evolved, this initiative has evolved as well.

In 2019 we partnered with Santa Cruz Works, which merged with Santa Cruz New Tech MeetUp. This partnership keeps MBEP up-to-date on all start-up activities and allows us to focus on one big technology gap: broadband proliferation.

MBEP contracted with Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC) to promote broadband infrastructure based on the Sunesys fiber backbone, in an attempt to deliver high-speed internet access to over 98% of homes and businesses in the region. We established a regional standard higher than the requirements of the State of California (100 Mbps download/ 20 Mbps upload vs. 6 Mbps download/ 1 Mbps upload for California).

At the end of October 2019 we received confirmation of a grant from the CPUC for CASF funds dedicated to last-mile infrastructure in the Monterey Bay region. This three-year grant has been approved for \$450K total. MBEP will receive approximately \$120K per year of these funds; the remainder will be designated for our fiscal agent, the City of Watsonville. The only costs associated with this grant for MBEP are staff time required to coordinate regional meetings and assist in the development of other CASF grant applications for infrastructure projects. The focus of this grant is to enable local agencies and ISPs to bring last-mile projects to fruition, encouraging equity in access and high-speed internet coverage in low-income areas.

#### **⇒ Goals**

- Identify at least 4 potential middle- or last-mile infrastructure projects in the region
- Enable agencies/ISPs to apply for CASF grants for 2 of these projects

### ***Initiative #3: Housing***

In 2019, we continued our efforts in Housing in the following three areas: Advocacy, the Housing Trust (MBHT) and Employer Sponsored Housing.

**Advocacy:** The MBEP Action Center has been a platform for gaining support on affordable housing projects; through the database we have developed there are over 2,500 users receiving our broadcasts and 450 registered housing advocates. We have completed 22 campaigns to

date, resulting in the development of over 1,900 homes. MBEP also conducts educational sessions or “Affordable Housing 101” workshops including some targeted to Spanish speakers or “Cafecitos” as well as policy paper presentations to various local jurisdictions.

**Monterey Bay Housing Trust:** Though we have over \$12 million to lend for affordable housing projects through the Monterey Bay Housing Trust (MBHT), no new projects were approved in 2019. Our pipeline consists of almost \$11 million in projects, and at least three of these were due to close in the last half of 2019. We have discovered that there are many obstacles to getting these projects approved. In 2020 we would like to provide planning grants for developers for each project, which would facilitate more projects that are currently being rejected based on too many up-front due diligence costs. These planning grants are contingent upon our receipt of funds for this purpose.

### **Employer Sponsored Housing**

In 2019 we supported the Salinas/Pajaro Valley Farmworker Housing Action Plan by co-leading the implementation plan including

- Convening four key subcommittees
- Supporting progress toward meeting the goal of 5,300 more permanently affordable homes for farmworker families within the next 5 years

We also expanded employer sponsored housing examples (playbooks, best practice examples from the region and beyond) and supported three projects in the region that target school districts, healthcare system, and the ag industry.

### ⇒ **Goals**

In 2020-21 we plan to build on and expand on these efforts through the following:

- Enable more projects to come to fruition in the MBHT pipeline through changing loan terms to be more favorable for developers and by positioning MBHT to access the state’s Local Housing Trust Fund Program funded by Proposition 1.
- Continue to host events related to affordable housing education and awareness, such as Affordable Housing Week in Santa Cruz County and expand to Monterey and San Benito Counties and convene quarterly mixers for housing professionals and advocates.
- Continue to influence our membership and communities to support high impact housing projects
- Build advocacy database to 500 active users and implement 3 project campaigns each quarter

### ***Initiative #4: Climate Change***

MBEP believes that climate change is more than just an environmental issue: it affects everything from our economy to the well-being of our residents. Through discussions with the board and our members/partners it has become clear that addressing climate change will be an important new initiative for MBEP in 2020/21.

By exploring how we could best add value in this area, and activate the third “E” — Environment — of our triple-bottom-line values — we can build on the good work being done in the region.

We believe there is a role for us to:

- (1) Create a robust regional dialogue by facilitating and coordinating stakeholders,
- (2) Continue to advocate for land-use policies that encourage density near existing infrastructure, and that shift new residential building away from elevated fire risk areas,
- (3) Work with our 80+ members to enable the creation of more microgrids,
- (4) Build on the work being done in the areas of drones and alert/communication systems, which will provide jobs, improve fire resiliency and harden our existing infrastructure, and
- (5) Continue to shine a light on the excellent work already being done in our region by our members, such as Taylor Farms and their wind turbines, the San Benito Health Foundation’s recent remodel of their headquarters which took them off the grid, and of course the success of Monterey Bay Community Power — the great work already being done right here today can help drive change and inspire others.

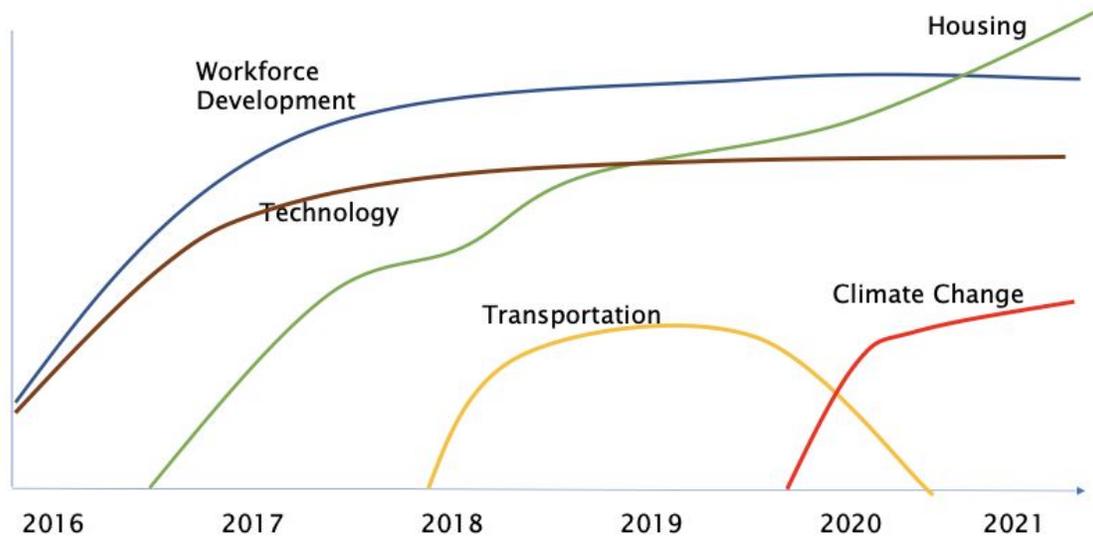
#### ⇒ **Goals**

Appropriate metrics and goals will be determined in Q1 2020 as we learn more about the current players and activities in this area, and the opportunities to collaborate and add value.

### ***Initiative Roadmap and Lifecycle***

Each initiative has its own lifecycle, with growth, maturity and decline phases that are unique to the effort and the environment in which they exist. There will be external factors and players that will influence how long MBEP leads a particular initiative that may be beyond our control. Below is the current lifecycle of all of our initiatives.

# MBEP Initiative Lifecycle



## 2. Convene Local Leaders to Drive Progress on Critical Issues

### ***Annual Conferences***

MBEP has become a recognized leader in putting on events with relevant and actionable content. Attendees for our conferences have been steadily growing, with over 350 attendees in 2019 for the Economic Summit and 450 attendees for the State of the Region. Feedback on the speakers and the format has been overwhelmingly positive, achieving NPS scores of 4.6 and 4.3 respectively.

The Economic Summit follows a half day format, while the State of the Region includes two keynotes, panels, and most recently lightning rounds. We have modified our timing and format based on the feedback from participants, and are constantly improving our process and methodology around these events.

### ***Initiative Committee Meetings***

In addition to these large bi-annual gatherings, we use our regional convener role to bring stakeholders together on a quarterly basis by area of expertise and by topic to discuss actionable solutions to regional issues.

### ***Other Events***

Based on feedback from our members and constituents, we ramped up our efforts in 2019 to include many more events focused on specific topics. Included among these were Housing 101 presentations to various jurisdictions, Affordable Housing Week events by county, Employer Workshops for Workforce Development, educator trainings for our career tools, Leadership Luncheons for members and various mixers for each initiative. We have found that our convening power is effective in catalyzing efforts to improve the quality of life in our region.

### **2020 CA Economic Summit**

MBEP has been chosen to host the 2020 California Economic Summit, which for the first time will bring the state to Monterey on December 3rd and 4th. Kate is also Co-Chair of the Summit Steering Committee. There were 900 folks were in Fresno, for the 2019 event so we're expecting over 1000 in Monterey. This will be a fantastic opportunity to showcase the good work happening in our region, and to galvanize action.

A local Host Committee will be formed, comprised of a broad spectrum of community leaders to represent the diversity of our region's industries and geography. Our Host Committee will work closely with CA Forward who organizes the event every year, providing input as it relates to program content and ancillary events such as tours, Regional Showcase, etc.

### **3. Gain Consensus Around a Regional Vision**

During our 2019 board retreat several board members articulated an interest in MBEP creating a regional vision, building on our Regional Dashboard (see below) which helps our members and residents track progress and inform decisions in eight key areas. Using the metrics we have developed for the Regional Dashboard we are tracking the overall well-being of the region, but have not taken the leap of setting target goals or a broader regional vision based on these goals.

In partnership with CA Forward, staff is working to identify metrics that will be used as part of the California Dream Index. This index will set goals for the entire state, and of course the best way to ensure attainment of these goals is for each region to embrace them and align around them. Obviously it must be acknowledged that MBEP cannot impact all the variables in the mix necessary to promote overall regional health, so it will be important for the board and staff to thoughtfully determine the engagement process and how this will be managed and communicated.

As a next step, staff will work closely with CA Forward to determine the timing of the CA Dream Index deployment and how we might galvanize a regional vision aligned with this tool.

## **Use Data to Create Consensus and Inform Action**

### ***Regional Dashboard and Data Trackers***

MBEP has developed robust data and analytic tools that are used by our members and others to track progress and inform decisions. These tools, especially the Regional Dashboard could be used to set goals related to a regional vision. A sampling of these tools are below:

- Regional Dashboard (demographics, unemployment, education, economic vitality, housing, health, infrastructure, transportation, public safety, and natural environment)
- Agriculture and Tourism Data Tracker employment figures for ag, crop production, fishing, spending on tourism, top attractions, lodging information and visitor spending)
- Health & Wellness Data Tracker (healthcare employment, county health rankings, crime statistics, incidence of obesity, recreation, means of transportation to work and revenue by county and hospital)
- Higher Education & Marine Science Data Tracker (educational attainment, degrees awarded by educational institution, community college attendance, marine science staff by institution and marine science degrees)
- Higher Education Demographics (student ethnicity, fields of study, headcount, age groups and faculty counts)
- Tech Ecosystem Data Tracker (wireline internet speeds, household connectivity, educational attainment, science and engineering degrees, top degrees, occupations and wages)

## Marketing

Investing in marketing is important for extending MBEP's brand and market perception in order to build influence, make a positive difference in our region and realize our Mission. The following is a synopsis of the 2020 Marketing and Membership plan. For more detail, the full plan can be found on our marketing team drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/OACnBVcYMTbADUk9PVA>

### **Marketing Objectives**

- 1) Increase brand awareness and recognition by 50% measured and tracked through online surveys, % of new attendees to events, and NPS.
- 2) Increase number of *paid* tickets to our Economic Summit and State of the Region conferences by 20% measured by actual ticket sales (354 tickets).
- 3) Achieve attendance of 400+ attendees at the 2020 Economic Summit and 450+ at the 2020 State of the Region.
- 4) Increase member engagement online and offline by 50% as measured by Google Analytics and attendance of MBEP events.
- 5) Lead by example by reducing our environmental footprint at our events and all marketing efforts by 50% measured by reduced printing and increased use of digital marketing platforms.

### **Continue to build and Strengthen the MBEP Brand**

Building a brand takes a long time. As MBEP membership continues to grow, we are seeing an increase not just in MBEP brand awareness, but clearer understanding, respect and recognition of what we do as evidenced in our event surveys and quotes from attendees. As we enter our 5th year, there will be opportunities to expand our recognition beyond our region and strengthen our messaging. 2020 promises to be a controversial year with the current national political climate, presidential election and increasing focus on the environment. California faces some unique environmental challenges from the Trump administration that will be addressed at the state level. As MBEP's role is more clearly defined at the regional level, there will be opportunities to amplify our members' achievements in this area as well as their outstanding goals.

### ***Increase attendance and paid tickets at ES and SOTR***

- Heighten the interest in our two main events through broader reach of marketing campaigns beyond our region. As San Benito and Monterey counties increasingly become bedroom communities for the Silicon Valley, what happens in our region can affect other regions and vice-versa.
- Capitalize on MBEP hosting the 2020 California Economic Summit in Monterey, working with CA Fwd to create awareness and interest within the region
- Capitalize on the fact that MBEP is entering its 5th year of operation by communicating the impact we have had over the last 5 years and our forward-looking goals.

### ***Increase member engagement online and offline***

- Activate member participation with high-touch outreach and opportunities for members to engage directly with MBEP: Leader Luncheons, housing mixers, etc.
- Work with MBEP program managers to develop communication opportunities with members to increase connection to MBEP initiatives
- Expand digital marketing activities through existing and new online tools.

### ***Reduce our environmental footprint***

- Find new online tools and methodologies to market MBEP across our spectrum of audiences to eliminate the need to print marketing materials that will ultimately end up in a landfill.
- Work with our members, i.e., Ecology Action, to make our events more eco-friendly.
- Publicize what we are doing and what others could be doing to reduce our environmental impact in the Regional Report in a new section "Did You Know?"

### ***Central Coast Marketing Team (CCMT)***

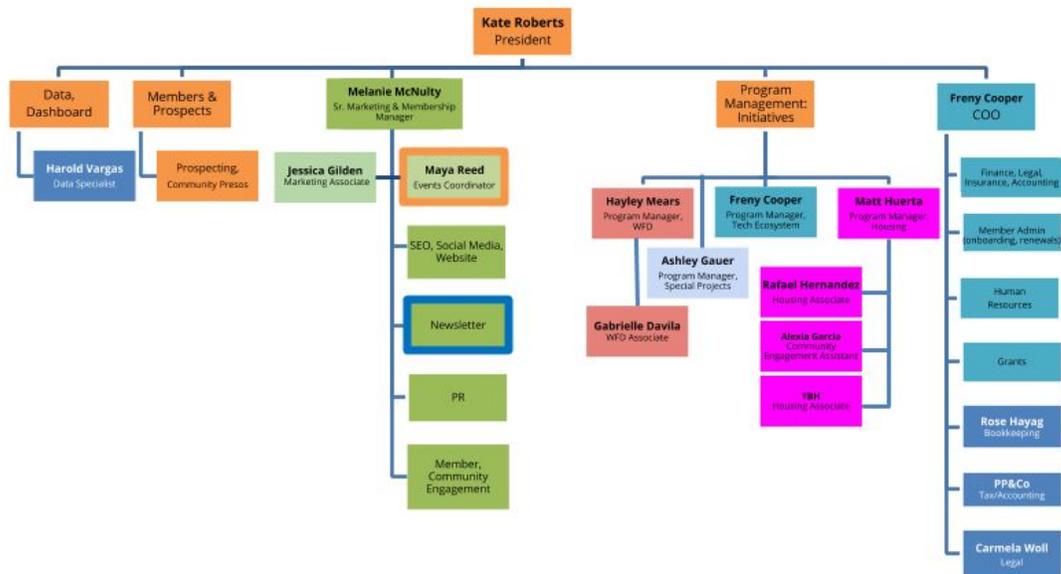
MBEP is a member of the Central Coast Marketing Team (CCMT) – a cross-sector group that strives to attract businesses to the Central Coast.

- Continue to participate in and support target industry events to attract businesses to the region, including the Monterey Bay DART Symposium on June 26, 2020.

## Operations Staff

In 2019 we added a full-time Transportation Manager, promoted our Workforce Development/Housing Associate to Program Manager of Special Projects, and hired a part-time Workforce Development Assistant. Our Transportation Manager has recently left the organization, keeping our headcount constant at 11 (7 full-time, 4 part-time). We have one open req for a Housing Program Associate. Below is our most recent org chart.

### MBEP Organizational Chart



Updated 12/2/19

dark blue = outsourced

## Financial Summary

The organization is fiscally sound and fell short slightly of its revenue goals in 2019 while significantly increasing the scope of work. Our ending cash balance as of 12/31/19 was \$292,964. We have 87 members in good standing, and several more prospects for 2020.

We will have new grant revenue from CASF in 2020, will continue to seek other grants, and anticipate membership growth (as well as some attrition) to reach a total of 90 active members by the end of 2020. For 2020, revenues are projected to be \$1,249,000.



**Lead. Impact. Thrive.**  
explore more at [MBEP.biz](https://MBEP.biz)