



## *At a glance (July 2007)*

- **Infrastructure funding and construction projects sought by EDA for 2008.**
- **Business missions completed to Bay Area and Los Angeles markets**
- **Economic development strategies reviewed by area banks**
- **Developing an inventory of manufacturing businesses**
- **Two dozen business contacts and two site tours completed.**

MCEDCO met with EDA staff to discuss the process of completing the Merced County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In addition to the proposed series of workshops with local city councils and the County Board of Supervisors outreach to the business community and special interest groups is encouraged to heighten awareness and encourage greater participation. MCEDCO shall include the CEDS material in upcoming events and link the project to activities such as the One Voice program. EDA staff are very interested in identifying construction projects that are viable candidates for YR2008 EDA grant funds. MCEDCO has requested input from each of the localities and the County to develop a list for review by EDA.

Two business missions were completed in July by MCEDCO and its partner CCEDC. Representatives of Kings County and Tulare EDC met with eight location consultants and property developers in the LA market. Three leads were generated, including one specific request for information on Los Banos. Concurrent with the LA mission, MCEDCO and representatives of the City of Los Banos met with five consultants and developers in the San Jose area. Three projects were identified, and one major developer is now in contact with a Los Banos business regarding a relocation/redevelopment proposal.

A "Lender's Roundtable" event was hosted by the Alliance Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) focusing on local issues, economic development and focused on child development centers. MCEDCO provided an overview of the regional approach to economic development and encouraged collaboration and referrals from the business community to support efforts to create new wealth and prosperity. MCEDCO and the Alliance SBDC are formulating workshops in Los Banos and other communities to promote small business development and raise awareness on available support services.

Building on its list of local manufacturers, MCEDCO commenced activity to create a comprehensive inventory of manufacturing businesses throughout the County. The inventory includes maps, aerial photographs, site pictures and contact details for local businesses. The information will be instrumental in assessing the local network of manufacturers, identifying changes and should assist in monitoring firms to promote outreach for the enterprise zone. MCEDCO also coordinated a meeting of the Merced Manufacturing General Manager's in tandem with the Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce. The GM's have suggested expanding the "invitation list" to increase the number of participants and broaden input for new ideas and identifying business concerns.

July was a slow month attributed to staff vacations and seasonal lassitude. In addition to the missions noted above, staff contacted 17 businesses in July, and conducted two site tours.