



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE:	May 26, 2026
CATEGORY:	Consent
DEPT.:	Community Development
TITLE:	Economic Vitality Strategy Annual Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the 2026 Economic Vitality Strategy Annual Progress Report.

BACKGROUND

Economic Vitality Strategy

In April 2024, the City Council adopted the Economic Vitality Strategy (EVS or Strategy), a 10-year road map to strengthen Mountain View's economy and support a thriving, inclusive community. The Strategy aims to align the City's leadership, residents, and businesses around a shared economic vision that fosters both economic and community well-being. It takes a comprehensive view of economic vitality, encompassing not only industry and employment, but also residents' economic security and quality of life.

The EVS outlines five overarching community goals, supported by 25 strategies and 164 action items. These action items encompass a range of initiatives, including programs, plans, studies, ordinance updates, and other policy or implementation measures. The strategies and actions are designed to promote economic prosperity and vitality in the City and are grounded in extensive data analysis and input from a broad range of stakeholders. The Strategy was shaped through policy direction from Council and robust community engagement, incorporating feedback from Mountain View residents, business owners, community leaders, and representatives from the nonprofit and private industry sectors (see [September 26, 2023 Council Study Session](#) and [April 23, 2024 Council report](#)).

Vision and Goals

Following extensive community consultation and analysis, the Council adopted the EVS with the following overarching vision and supporting goals to guide its efforts (see Figure 1):

Vision: Mountain View seeks to create a thriving community where small businesses, innovation, entrepreneurship, and diversity are encouraged and flourish. We aim to be a global leader that balances a flourishing economy with the health and well-being of our community and the environment.



Figure 1: EVS Goals

Alignment with Other City Plans

The EVS includes an analysis of how the Strategy supports and works alongside other City plans, including the General Plan, Precise Plans, Downtown Parking Strategy, and the Housing Element.

EVS Implementation

All EVS action items include a timeline, cost designation, departments and divisions involved, and identification of key actions focused on equity. As shown in Table 1 below, action items were prioritized into immediate-, short-, medium-, and long-term timeline categories.

Table 1: Number of Action Items by Timeline

Timeline Implementation	Number of Corresponding Actions	Share of Total Items
Immediate = Less than one year	21	13%
Short-term = one to two years	38	24%
Mid-term = three to five years	68	41%
Long-term = more than five years	37	22%

Measures of Success

To evaluate the effectiveness of the EVS, staff developed 15 “Measures of Success” aligned with the five community goals. Several of these measures apply to more than one goal, as detailed in Attachment 1 (also referenced as Appendix C in the EVS). The measures include both performance-based metrics, with specific targets established, and workload indicators. These metrics were developed using best practices from the International Economic Development Council and the California Association for Local Economic Development.

ANALYSIS

EVS Implementation Summary

Figures 2 and 3 provide a visual summary of the implementation progress of EVS actions over Year 2 of the Strategy (April 2025 to April 2026). These figures offer a snapshot of the activities supporting the plan’s implementation and are updated annually to reflect progress.

Figure 2 illustrates the implementation status across all five goals of the EVS, showing the number of actions categorized as “Completed,” “Ongoing,” “In Progress,” or “Not Started.” The status categories are defined as follows:

- **Completed**: All tasks or milestones have been achieved, and no further action is required.
- **Ongoing**: The action is continuous in nature and does not have a defined endpoint.
- **In Progress**: Action is underway with measurable steps being taken toward implementation.
- **Not Started**: No substantive action has been taken to date.

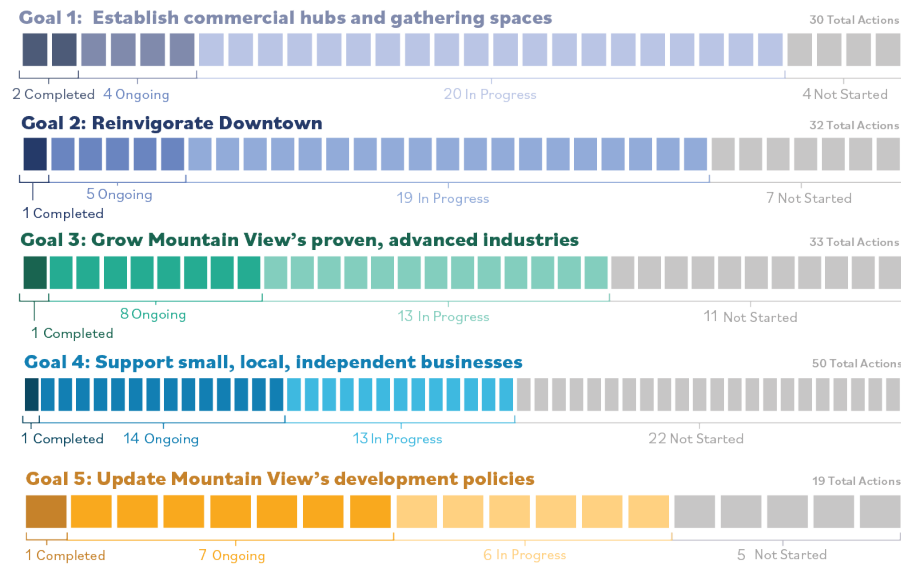


Figure 2: Status of EVS Actions by Goal

Figure 3 offers a complementary view of implementation progress by categorizing actions according to their intended timeline: immediate, short-, medium-, and long-term. Tracking progress in this way provides insight into how the Strategy is advancing relative to established timelines, helps identify areas that may require adjustment or additional support, and informs the planning and prioritization of staff work plans.

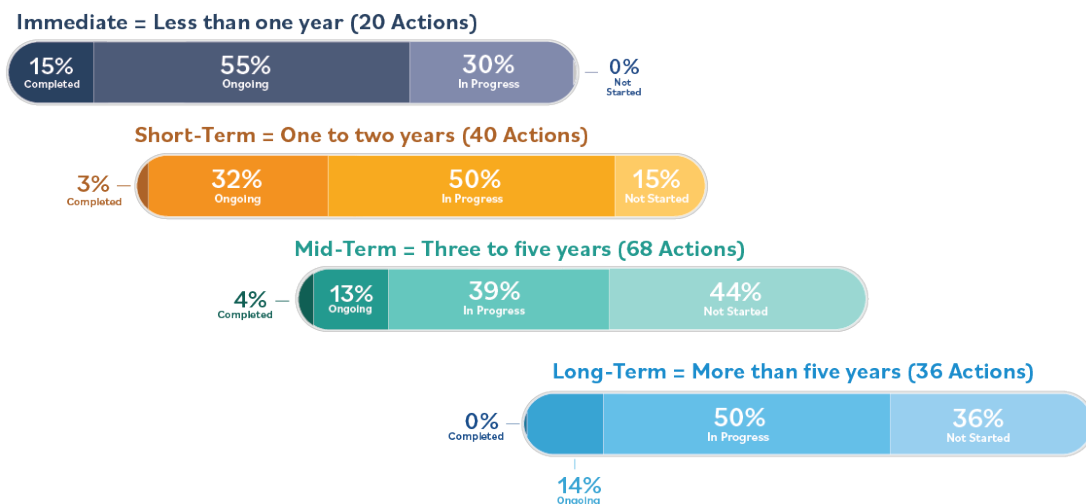


Figure 3: Status of EVS Actions by Timeline

Figure 4 provides a year-to-year comparison of all action items by status (completed, on-going, in progress, and not started), illustrating the progress from Year 1 to Year 2 of implementation.

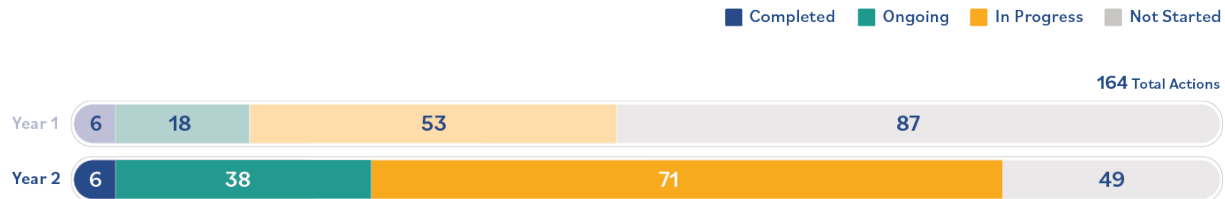


Figure 4: Year-to-Year Comparison of EVS Actions

A comprehensive list of the EVS actions and status updates for each action item can be found in Attachment 2, EVS Implementation Matrix.

Key Accomplishments

Over the past year, notable progress has been made on several key initiatives identified in the EVS. The list below highlights actions that have been completed or have had substantial components implemented:

- Small Business Zoning Code Updates:** Adopted a series of small business Zoning Code updates designed to support small businesses and modernize land use regulations. These updates streamlined permit provisions for certain small-footprint land uses up to 4,000 square feet in floor area, removed change of use permit requirements for changes from one permitted nonresidential use to another, reduced the need for conditional use permits for certain types of active businesses (e.g., retail, restaurants, personal service, and indoor recreation and fitness centers), and reduced minimum parking standards for retail and personal service uses to better align with other nearby communities. Together, these changes help the City remain regionally competitive while better aligning zoning regulations with current retail and service market trends. The updates also simplified the Code, making it easier and less expensive for businesses to open in Mountain View. (Actions 1B.7, 4A.6, and Strategy D)
- Facade Improvement Grant Program:** Supported 14 small business projects in downtown and other commercial areas, helping businesses invest in storefront improvements that enhance customer experience and strengthen neighborhood commercial areas. Grant funds have supported improvements such as exterior painting, new signage, and architectural upgrades. Recent program updates approved by Council on [March 10, 2026](#) provide increased flexibility and financial support to Mountain View small businesses. (Action 1C.1)

- Commercial Real Estate Engagement: Continued the Broker Breakfast series as part of a broader strategy to strengthen partnerships with the commercial brokerage community. These efforts enhance two-way communication, increase awareness of City priorities and available resources, and position Mountain View as a proactive and business-friendly environment for investment. (Action 3D.1)
- 2026 Games Activations: Successfully delivered the “Fan Fest Tailgate,” a Super Bowl activation that brought significant activity to downtown through live music, games, and community giveaways. The event resulted in a 39% increase in visitors and a 21% increase in average dwell time in the downtown area compared to the same day in the prior year. To further support local businesses, the City developed a Business Fan Fest Map highlighting promotions and events, which received over 8,000 views.

Building on this momentum, the City is preparing for 2026 World Cup Summer of Soccer activations through a coordinated program of downtown watch parties, business promotions, park activations, and community events. These efforts are designed to increase visitor activity, support local businesses, and position Mountain View as a vibrant and welcoming destination. (Actions 2E.3 and 4F.4)

- Downtown Entertainment Zone Pilot Program: Established an 18-month pilot program on Castro Street for City-hosted events, including the upcoming World Cup activations. The pilot is intended to enhance community programming, support local businesses, and strengthen Mountain View’s position as a regional destination. (Actions 2E.3 and 2E.4)
- Downtown Pop-Up: Launched the “Don’t Eat Me” pop-up retail space in partnership with MOMENT at 293 Castro Street, activating a previously vacant storefront. This one-year program provides brick-and-mortar opportunities for four creative microbusinesses and represents a proactive approach to addressing vacancies. The pop-up is performing strongly in its initial months, with sales trends comparable to some of the highest-performing periods at other MOMENT pop-up locations. (Actions 1C.3, 1C.4, 2A.6, 2C.3, 4B.6, and 4D.3)
- Strategic Communications: With several public and private projects planned across downtown in the coming years, the City launched a strategic communications initiative to strengthen outreach to attract visitors and keep the community informed about construction timelines and project impacts. As part of this effort, the City introduced a new downtown subbrand, “Downtown MV in Motion” (Figure 5). Inspired by the colorful decorative street treatment, the brand reflects the dynamic energy of Castro Street and celebrates everyday moments such as enjoying live music, playing street games, or gathering with friends. (Actions 2A.1, 4F.1, 4F.4, and 4F.5)



Figure 5: Downtown In Motion Logo

- **Pedestrian Wayfinding:** Finalized the design for a new pedestrian wayfinding system, with installation anticipated in spring 2026. This signage will help visitors navigate downtown and locate key destinations, including public parking facilities and community attractions. The signs feature visual elements inspired by Mountain View's history and surroundings, reinforcing the community's character and sense of place. (Action 1A.9)
- **Business Workshops and Technical Support:** Partnered with the Enterprise Foundation's Mountain View Neighborhood Small Business Center, funded through a Valley Transit Authority Transit-Oriented Communities Grant, to provide workshops, training, and one-on-one advising for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and nonprofits. The City has supported these efforts by hosting in-person workshops at City facilities, expanding access to technical assistance. (Actions 1B.1, 4A.10, 4B.2, 4C.2, 4C.7)

In addition to the accomplishments highlighted above, Economic Development staff continues to provide ongoing support to small businesses through a variety of programs and services. The Business Ambassador Team meets bimonthly to assist business applicants in navigating permitting process (Action 1D.1). Staff also provides one-on-one support to nearly 200 businesses annually, including site selection assistance, permitting guidance, and referrals to technical resources and business support organizations (Actions 1D.1 and 3A.4). In addition, staff conducts business retention visits to connect directly with local businesses, better understand emerging challenges and opportunities, and share information about available programs, initiatives, and resources (Action 1C.1). While the Economic Vitality Strategy includes a dedicated goal focused on supporting small businesses, actions that support small businesses are integrated throughout all of the Strategy's goals, reflecting the important role small businesses play in supporting local jobs, fostering entrepreneurship, and contributing to Mountain View's unique community character and local economy.

Public Art and Creative Economy

The EVS identifies the creative economy as a key component of economic vitality, recognizing artists and creatives as small businesses that contribute to innovation, placemaking, and the

overall vibrancy of commercial areas. Over the past year, public art has been a major focus of the Economic Development team's work, with several notable accomplishments:

- **Public Art Strategy:** Advanced development of the City's first Public Art Strategy, a comprehensive 10-year roadmap to guide how art is integrated into everyday spaces throughout Mountain View. Completed a comprehensive community outreach effort, with more than 700 community members providing input on desired art types and locations. The final strategy is anticipated to be presented to the Council for adoption in Q4 2026. (Actions 1A.2, 1A.9, 2C.1, 2C.2, 3D.3)
- **Public Art Administrator:** Secured Council approval and funding for a new Public Art Administrator position as part of the midyear budget update. This role will support implementation of the Public Art Strategy, enhance program coordination, and expand opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with public art across the community. Recruitment for this position is underway. (Actions 1A.2, 1A.9, 2C.1, 2C.2, 3D.3)
- **Public Art Installations:** Installed several new public artworks across the City, including painted safety bollards along the Castro Street Pedestrian Mall (see Figure 6), a mural at Rengstorff Park (see Figure 7), and an art installation at the Mountain View Train Depot. In addition to physical installations, the City expanded public art programming by hosting an artist talk and reception at the Center for the Performing Arts, where more than 90 attendees engaged with artist Don Hershman and his series "The Art of Code Switching." (Action 1A.9)



**Figure 6: Bollard Mural by
Artist Katherine Liu**



**Figure 7: Rengstorff Park Mural by
Artist Fernanda Martinez**

- **Facade Improvement Grant—Mural Track:** Expanded the Facade Improvement Grant Program to include a dedicated mural track, allowing artists to apply for funding in partnership with property owners to create murals on private property. This enhancement is intended to encourage additional public art installations on private property and further integrate art into the City's commercial areas. (Actions 1A.9 and 1C.1)

Implementation Approach—Year Ahead

In addition to the key initiatives highlighted above, Economic Development staff is actively managing numerous “ongoing” EVS implementation efforts while also handling the day-to-day operations of the division and leading implementation of the Downtown Parking Strategy, Public Art Strategy, and coordination of several other City strategic priorities.

Staff often uses the analogy of an iceberg (see Figure 8) to demonstrate how staff resources are allocated. Council work plan priorities and other major, strategic initiatives represent the visible “tip of the iceberg,” while a substantial portion of staff effort, estimated at approximately 85%, is dedicated to ongoing programs, services, and operational responsibilities that occur “below the waterline.” These efforts by the Economic Development team are critical to achieving the City’s Economic Vitality goals and sustaining progress over time. As EVS implementation progresses, an increasing number of action items will transition into ongoing programs and services. Many of the Strategy’s 164 actions are designed to be continuous in nature, requiring sustained attention, coordination, and refinement rather than having a defined end date. As a result, the “below-the-waterline” portion of the iceberg continues to grow, adding to the division’s baseline workload each year.



Figure 8: Iceberg Illustration of Economic Development Team Ongoing Workload

This progression is typical for a comprehensive economic development strategy as successful efforts become embedded in the City’s core operations. With the recent filling of the vacant Economic Development Strategist position and the addition of a Public Art Administrator role,

which increases the time the division's two strategists can focus on economic development, the division has increased its capacity to advance EVS implementation and related priorities. As this added capacity is integrated, staff will continue to take a thoughtful and strategic approach to prioritizing and phasing work, focusing on initiatives with the greatest impact while ensuring the ongoing programs that underpin long-term economic vitality are effectively maintained.

Year 3 Work Plan

In addition to maintaining the 38 "ongoing" actions (more than double the ongoing actions compared to Year 1) and continuing progress on the 71 "in-progress" actions (a 34% increase from Year 1), Economic Development staff have identified several focus areas for the year ahead. These areas were chosen due to their designation as short- or mid-term opportunities in the EVS, their alignment with current staff capacity, and feasibility factors, such as funding and market conditions:

- **Public Art Strategy Implementation:** Present the final Public Art Strategy to Council for adoption in Q4 2026 and initiate implementation through development of a Year 1 work plan. (Actions 1A.2, 2C.1, 2C.2, and 3D.3)
- **Pedestrian Mall Vacant Storefront Activation Program:** Continue advancing this Council Work Plan priority project as part of the Fiscal Years 2025-27 Council Work Plan. (Actions 1A.4, 1C.2, 1C.6, 1C.8, 2A.6, and 2C.3)
- **Downtown Parking Strategy Implementation:** Continue implementation of the 2021 Downtown Parking Strategy, including new parking wayfinding signage and technology tools. (Actions 1A.9, 1B.3, 1B.4, 2B.2, 2B.3, and Strategy 2D)
- **Downtown District Evaluation:** Evaluate existing downtown business improvement areas and engage business and property owners to assess the feasibility of forming an improvement district to support services, such as maintenance, safety, marketing, and events. (Action 1A.3)
- **Revolving Loan Program:** Develop a low-cost loan program to provide flexible capital to small businesses, with a focus on addressing vacancies, supporting legacy and displaced businesses, and advancing an inclusive local economy. (Action 1A.5)
- **Makers Fair Pilot:** Launch a Makers Fair series to support artists and creative entrepreneurs and bring added activations to the downtown pedestrian mall. (Actions 2A.8, 2C.3, 2E.3)
- **Downtown Office Vacancies:** Review local and regional office vacancy trends, engage office property owners and brokers, and evaluate potential strategies and initiatives to support office attraction, retention, and adaptive reuse opportunities in the Downtown. (Goal 2)

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts associated with Council's acceptance of the 2026 EVS Annual Progress Report.

LEVINE ACT

California Government Code Section 84308 (also known as the Levine Act) prohibits city officials from participating in any proceeding involving a "license, permit, or other entitlement for use" if the official has received a campaign contribution exceeding \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant within the last 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants. For more information, see the Fair Political Practices Commission website: www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/pay-to-play-limits-and-prohibitions.html.

Please see below for information about whether the recommended action for this agenda item is subject to or exempt from the Levine Act.

EXEMPT FROM THE LEVINE ACT

☒ General policy and legislative actions

CONCLUSION

Year 2 of the Economic Vitality Strategy demonstrates meaningful progress across a broad range of initiatives while also reflecting the evolution of the Strategy from initial implementation to sustained, ongoing programs. Looking ahead to Year 3, staff will continue to build on this momentum by advancing key priorities, implementing new programs, and strengthening partnerships with business and community stakeholders.

Attachments: 1. Measures of Success Year 2
2. EVS Implementation Matrix Year 2