COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We seek to promote the health and economic vitality of the region. As a community resource, the district and its colleges contribute to community life through partnerships, staff involvement in civic affairs, and programs that are open to the public. The district and colleges also support economic development through their occupational programs and their partnerships with businesses and industry.

BACKGROUND AND EVIDENCE
The following findings provide an overview of the issues and challenges facing the district related to community and economic development.

External Scan
The external scan of the policy and competitive environment indicates:

• Strong growth in technical fields including computer and health service jobs.
• Labor shortages in high technology, health care and elementary/secondary education.
• Rising housing costs in the region.

External Focus Groups
Key findings from the external focus groups include:

• Need job placement services for students.
• Need to improve methods for matching career and vocational education curricula to workplace needs.
• Need to prioritize the district’s response to increasing diversity during the development of programming and outreach processes.
• Interest in increasing the community use of district cultural and sports facilities as a means of increasing awareness of district programs.
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

To respond to the findings listed above, the district will pursue the following strategic directions (not listed in priority order):

1. Continue to seek effective partnerships with private, public, community and labor organizations to enhance the quality and responsiveness of the district’s career and general education programs and to support district goals and values.

2. Develop and implement effective job placement services for students.

3. Build ties with organizations linked to diverse populations.

4. Streamline processes for organizations and individuals doing business with the district.