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development strategy, a necessary step to position the inland and mostly agricultural county's agencies to receive millions of federal grants meant to help spur job growth.

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San Joaquin county officials on Tuesday signed off on an “aggressive” economic development strategy, a necessary step to position the inland and mostly agricultural county's agencies to receive millions of federal grants meant to help spur job growth.

Last updated in 2010, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is updated every three to five years through a process that brings together strategies from across the county with public officials and community members. With detailed demographic information, it lists shared goals and priority projects, but it can change between the regular updates, officials said.

The county has received millions of dollars in Economic Development Administration grants in the past, and this strategy is needed to get those grants in the future.

“This gives us a ticket into the amusement park. After that, it's up to us to pick which rides we want to go on,” county Economic Development Director Fran Aguilera said.

The wish list in the strategy includes things such as a green business incubator in Lodi, improvements to the Port of Stockton and road and other infrastructure projects all over the county. In total, it includes 23 infrastructure projects, 30 transportation projects and about 20 programs for education, entrepreneurship, tourism or “quality of life.”

The document gives more direction to efforts happening across the county, said Bob Elliott, chairman of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors.

“I think the most important thing is that it includes all the cities to identify projects

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that one of the previously funded programs was a county business retention and expansion program.

After receiving such notices, the first step is to try to prevent the closure, said John Solis, director of the county Employment and Economic Development Department. But if the closure is inevitable, a “rapid response” tries to help those losing their jobs find new work, he said.

Ruhstaller questioned if it was rapid enough and asked that the board receive updates for this latest closure.

“It's going to cost us as a county, one way or another, if these folks are unemployed,” he said. Without work they would turn to county services for safety-net programs, or worse, could turn to crime, he said.

“The quicker we operate and get to them, the quicker we solve unintended consequences.”

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