

From the Desk of the CEO



Dear CALED Members and Friends,

Over the last decade or so, we have seen several articles that talk about economic development being at a crossroads or a transition. Whether it was because we lost Trade & Commerce, the attacks on and eventual loss of redevelopment, the Great

Recession, the creation of GO-Biz, the end of the enterprise zone program, the creation of new economic development tools, or a host of other reasons, California’s economic developers have found themselves asking how do I adapt? What’s next?

CALED Priorities

1. Identify the next generation of economic developers
2. Offer a California-focused economic development certificate program

Thank goodness for the resilience and tenacity of our economic developers to continue to forge on and find ways to support local economies by helping businesses succeed in their communities!

At CALED, we are always looking at trends in the state and the profession to identify gaps where we can assist in your efforts. Over the last couple of years, we have seen that it is more widely understood that economic development does not just rest on the shoulders of the person with the economic development title, but rather, several people play a role.

In fact, not all jurisdictions even have staff with an economic development title, but they are still implementing their economic development strategy through other staff, partner organizations, and the private sector.

At a recent meeting, the CALED Board of Directors approved an action to conduct research to identify who is engaged in economic development in California’s jurisdictions (regardless

of the title they hold). We also want to identify how CALED can help these professionals and their communities in delivering quality economic development services and develop a support system to meet those needs.

Additionally, the Board of Directors agreed that there is a need to develop and offer an economic development certificate program with a California focus in partnership with the members. We are looking at several options from partnering with others that offer similar training to creating the curriculum from scratch.

The primary aim of the program is to get professionals quickly and effectively trained in economic development so they have a strong foundation and the tools and tactics to make a difference on behalf of their communities. Please watch for outreach on this program, as we need your input in creating something that helps you.

While we work on these activities, we will continue to look to you – the members – for feedback on ways that we can better serve you and make a difference. As always, you are welcome to contact us with your ideas and suggestions – we’d love to hear from you!

Thank you.

Gurbax Sahota

