

## Cannabis: More Than High Hopes

Monterey County, California

*#Extensive Internal Collaboration*

Population: 433,898

### Innovation

#### Criteria:

- Initiative fundamentally changed a process, product or service (fundamental)
- OR
- Initiative builds upon existing knowledge to improve a product, process or service (incremental)
  - The initiative substantially stretched the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations.

### Describe Your Innovation

*(When and how did this innovation get started? Do also detail how the program or policy innovative, how it has changed previous processes, products, or services, and how it has substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations.)*

When cannabis became legal in California, we knew Monterey County, known as the Salad Bowl of the World, was well-positioned to capitalize on this newly legal agricultural crop. But we also knew that cannabis is an incredibly complex issue, affecting public health, the environment, law enforcement, agriculture, tax collection and other areas covered by County policy and practice.

The County's elected Board of Supervisors and the County's Chief Administrative Officer support the industry's potential in the County and formed the Monterey County Cannabis Program to ensure our policies and practices toward cannabis are best in class. The Program coordinates the efforts of 10 County departments, industry representatives, state regulators, the public and other stakeholders. One of our first tasks of the Cannabis Program was to create the strategic plan that included four primary goals, strategies to achieve each goal, performance measures and an implementation plan. We needed a compass, in the form of a vision, mission, goals and strategies, to maximize the potential of the program, encourage its success, and protect the County from possible negative effects.

The mission of the Program is to "provide a local framework for successful leadership and management of commercial cannabis through coordination and collaboration with multiple County departments, state agencies, and local governments to address taxation, regulation, policy, enforcement, education and protection of the health, environment, and safety of our communities. Specific goals include supporting economic development in the County; protecting the environment, health and safety; ensuring compliance and enforcement; and generating revenue to support the program and services.

## Collaboration

### Criteria:

- Initiative demonstrated engaging stakeholders both internal and external.
- Initiative demonstrated high performance teaming, breaking down internal silos.
- Strategic partnerships and or community networks were developed as a result of the initiative

**In less than 200 words, what individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? What strategic partnerships and/or community networks, if any, were developed?**

The County's Board of Supervisors and the Chief Administrative Officer were initiators of the Cannabis Program. Once we began meeting and sketching out the Program's work, we realized it covers the work of 10 County departments: the Treasurer/Tax Collector, the District Attorney, the Health Department, the Agricultural Commissioner, the Assessor, the Auditor, the Sheriff's Office, the County Counsel, the Resource Management Agency. (Note: only 9 in the diagram.) It also includes CalCannabis state agencies, the public, industry and community groups in evolving cannabis policies and regulations. With 10 county departments and multiple outside agencies involved in various aspects of the program, having a well-coordinated program is essential to meet the policy objectives of the Board of Supervisors. Our strategic planning process engaged representatives from all these groups and is helping us all to continue coordination of efforts so that we are able to respond quickly to new challenges.

**If a private consultant was used please describe in detail their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. Maintain a 100 word maximum.**

Jan Perkins and Mandy Brown of Management Partners facilitated the process, from the interviews and information gathering, to the workshop to identify the vision, mission and goals, to the creation of a draft strategic plan and implementation plan.

## Significance

### Criteria:

- Initiative addresses an area of concern for the majority of local government organizations.
- Initiative can serve as a model and replicated in other jurisdictions.

**Please describe the extent to which you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please also provide verification of the replication.**

Our program is absolutely replicable in any jurisdiction that wishes to launch and maintain a best-in-class cannabis program. The process of strategic planning can be done by any local government, and while the details of each program's vision, mission and goals will be different, the process of identifying them can be completed anywhere. We do discuss challenges and opportunities with other cannabis program managers but we are not aware of any with a strategic plan yet.

## Effectiveness

### Criteria:

- Initiative addresses a community or organization need.
- Initiative has achieved tangible results.
- Initiative improved the organizational culture or the traditional approach to problem solving.
- Initiative has received recognition for its achievements, i.e. independent evaluation, national recognition, local press, etc.

**Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain?**

Obstacles and challenges include the illegal cultivation of cannabis and supporting law enforcement's efforts toward that at a time when enforcement has become a lower priority; the transition of formerly illegal growers who wish to become legal growers; saturation of the market; the cultivation of hemp. All of these challenges require us to be vigilant about establishing processes to respond to them, coordinate efforts among participating departments and stakeholders, and use the strategic plan to remain focused on our primary goals and not become distracted as other issues arise (as they inevitably will do).

**What outcomes did this program or policy have? Could you share one or two objective measures that demonstrate these outcomes? Ultimately, how did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment?**

We have 14 performance measures by which we can assess the success of our effort. These include number of inspections, number of cannabis operations permits, investigations of illegal cannabis operations, reported pesticide use and others. Each measure supports one or more of the strategic plan's goals of supporting economic development while protecting other industries; preserving public safety, health and the environment, and ensuring effective and equitable compliance and enforcement.

**Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage.**

The strategies related to cannabis in Monterey County have received extensive coverage. The following links show the complexity of the issue and the need for comprehensive, collaborative planning and execution.

- <http://www.montereyherald.com/government-and-politics/20180416/publics-cannabis-tax-spending-wish-list-set-for-county-board-review>
- <https://www.ksbw.com/article/big-tax-relief-coming-to-cannabis-growers-in-monterey-county/20879708>
- <http://www.montereyherald.com/article/NF/20180417/NEWS/180419850>
- <https://www.thecalifornian.com/story/news/2018/06/26/monterey-county-uses-marijuana-cash-help-save-150-jobs/735698002/>

## Presentation

### Criteria:

- Presentation will be delivered by a team.
- Presentation will be highly interactive and engaging.

### Example Social Media Post

cannabis is coming! Is your local government ready? Monterey County explains how they launched a world-class program designed to maximize revenue, minimize safety risks and protect health and the environment. #TLG2019

**Please write an abstract or short description for your innovation that would make conference attendees say "Well, I need to attend this session!"**

Cannabis is coming! Is your local government ready? Monterey County explains how they launched a world-class program and an accompanying strategic plan designed to maximize revenue, minimize safety risks and protect health and the environment. Best practices include involving stakeholders, from 10 County departments to state regulators to industry representatives and the public; identifying a vision, mission, goals and strategies; establishing performance measures to ensure goals are being met.

**How will you make the session creative and unique?- How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?- Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.- What will attendees be able to have as an actionable "takeaway" from the session?**

We will provide a template for initial brainstorming and help walk attendees through some of the questions that we faced when we started working on the plan, such as: what are the challenges posed by the introduction of cannabis to the community? What are the potential benefits? How do we maximize the benefits? How do we minimize the threats? We will give each table an opportunity or threat to explore and have them come up with a strategy to respond.

**Anything else you would like to add?**