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# Consultant: New arena would provide needed construction jobs

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A local consultant told Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson's arena task force today that building a new arena would help revitalize the region's struggling construction industry.

"Last year alone, the region lost about 49,000 jobs," said Cathleen Dominico of Capitol Public Finance Group. "The largest losses have been in construction. So that's really calling out for an economic stimulus."

Dominico's comments came as she presented the results of a study she conducted into the immediate economic benefits of building a new arena. The study concluded that the city of Sacramento would gain 1,300 temporary jobs during arena construction and 229 permanent jobs after its completion.

The study did not explore funding for the arena. Nor did it quantify how many jobs could be created around a new arena - a question that several task force members asked of Dominico. Dominico said that without knowing the arena's eventual location or funding source, estimating the development impact of it would be difficult, and possibly misleading.

Not all of the initial construction jobs created by the arena would last the entire three-year construction process, Dominico said. Local construction officials in the audience said several hundred workers would likely be employed at the construction site on any given day.

In the past two years, the construction industry in the four-county region has seen a net loss of 20,000 jobs, or 33 percent of its workforce, according to the latest figures from the state Economic Development Department.

"This project isn't going to save the world, but it would make a significant contribution to the local economy," Larry Booth, principal at FM Booth Mechanical, a local construction contractor, told the task force.

On the other hand, Stanford University economist Roger Noll, when told of the report Wednesday, noted that a city could effectively create the same number of temporary construction jobs by paying a lot of workers to build anything - a mall, a ditch, an arena. What matters, Noll said, is the more lasting job impact. He said the 229 permanent jobs the city could gain that are directly tied to the arena would likely come at a steep price to taxpayers.

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