

This initial draft outline of the Coachella Valley Economic Blueprint strategy presents the proposed goal areas, objectives and potential strategies to be included in a full draft document and – later – the final Blueprint strategy. The outline incorporates all the research to date – both quantitative and qualitative – into a framework

that represents the “what” that the Valley has to do to be competitive for future jobs and investment. The “how” component (i.e., how will the plan be put into action) will be included in the Implementation Plan to follow the confirmation of the final Blueprint strategy by the Steering Committee.

Coachella Valley Economic Blueprint—Outline

The following *draft* Goal Areas, objectives and potential strategies represent a first look at the Economic Blueprint plan. When the full draft plan – and, later, the final plan – is completed, the document will contain a detailed complement of action steps and sub-actions under each Goal Area.

Economic Diversification

This goal will focus on programs and policies to make the Coachella Valley competitive for jobs and investment.

Objective 1: Ensure existing Coachella Valley businesses are retained and expanded.

Potential strategies

- Business retention and expansion (BRE) program
- Ambassador program
- Participation in inbound marketing events

Objective 2: Provide entrepreneurs and small business persons the resources necessary to succeed.

Potential strategies

- Networking opportunities
- Seed and venture capital
- Minority business development
- Support services (SCORE, business plans, incubation, etc.)

Objective 3: Effectively develop the Coachella Valley’s identified target sectors.

Potential strategies

- Assembling cluster councils of existing businesses
- Local entrepreneurship opportunities and attraction of targeted entrepreneurs and small companies
- Infrastructure development
- Research and development and commercialization activities
- Enhanced relationships with state and federal elected officials
- Optimization of web-based tools
- External marketing efforts

Objective 4: Provide comprehensive data collection and analysis services for regional stakeholder groups.

Potential strategies

- Development and management of robust economic data storehouse
- Partnering with local communities to identify best-practice programs and development opportunities
- Working with economic development organizations to research competitiveness issues and solutions
- Continue – and potentially expand – hosting of regional economic conferences

Workforce Excellence

The quality and capacity of a community’s workforce is its number one competitive concern. This Goal Area will address issues related to the Valley’s school districts and local training institutions – including colleges, universities and workforce centers.

Objective 1: Ensure Coachella Valley school districts effectively prepare students for college and the workplace.

Potential strategies

- Enhanced career-focused education
- Development of additional vocational programs
- Bi-lingual programs and services
- Reducing dropout rates and improving graduation rates

Objective 2: Best position the Coachella Valley’s higher educational institutions to develop the local workforce and spur economic growth.

Potential strategies: College of the Desert

- New program development
- Enhanced linkages with K-12 systems
- Broadened awareness of available degree opportunities

Potential strategies: UCR-Palm Desert and CSUSB-Palm Desert

- Campus development priorities
- Programmatic development priorities
- Linkages with the community and training institutions
- Leveraging of relationships with main campuses

Objective 3: Ensure that workforce development organizations provide maximum benefit to Coachella Valley adults.

Potential strategies

- Enhance Valley presence of workforce board (develop a local center)
- Formalize linkages between workforce center, businesses, training and community organizations
- Assess programmatic opportunities (i.e., on-the-job training, bi-lingual services)

Regionalism

This Goal Area will address the need for an organization to serve an active role to foster regionalism in the Valley.

Objective 1: Work to educate regional stakeholders on the dynamics of competitiveness and growth.

Potential strategies

- Informational sessions and meetings
- Speaker's bureau presentations
- Visits to best-practice external communities

Objective 2: Build the capacity to advocate for issues of importance to Coachella Valley constituencies.

Potential strategies

- Lobbying and political action

committee development

- Outreach to local leadership regarding the competitive dynamics of key issues
- Developing – as viable – media campaigns to advocate for key legislation and referenda

Objective 3: Better link Coachella Valley communities through activities that foster regional identity and relationship-building.

Potential strategies

- Hosting of issues forums and conferences
- Supporting the creation of new or enhanced regional stakeholder networks
- Internal marketing and branding efforts

Quality of Place

Ensuring that the Valley continues to maintain and develop quality of life and quality of place amenities will be a key component of the Economic Blueprint.

Objective 1: Ensure that best-practice development patterns are advocated for and supported.

Potential strategies

- Optimize business community partnerships with CVAG
- Provide opportunities for development of mixed-use environments as the market demands
- Encourage regional communities to improve inter-connectivity through the development of bike and pedestrian paths and greenways.

Objective 2: Support the development of quality housing options for residents of all ages and incomes.

Potential strategies

- Advocate for the provision of "age-in-place" communities
- Ensure quality affordable housing options are available for regional constituencies

Objective 3: Engage in partnerships to ensure Coachella Valley communities are safe and provide effective services for residents-in-need.

Potential strategies

- Support the efforts of local public-safety and social service agencies
- Assess and advocate for best-practice programs in crime prevention, drug-use prevention and education, teen-pregnancy-reduction programs, and other key issues
- Help to enhance awareness and connectivity of programs, as necessary

Objective 4: Continue to enhance the Coachella Valley's capacity in arts, culture and recreation amenities.

Potential strategies

- Marketing and connectivity of amenities
- Development of programs and facilities
- Restoration of the Salton Sea
- Linkages between product-development and target business efforts

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