

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Coachella Valley Economic Blueprint?

In 2008, the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) contracted with Atlanta based Market Street consultants to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for the region, working with a steering committee of local leaders. The effort was led by Riverside County Supervisor Roy Wilson, Publisher of the Desert Sun Rich Ramhoff and former mayor and local developer Richard Oliphant.

Recognizing that in today's economic development landscape, the competition among communities for quality, high-paying jobs is more intense than ever. In order to bring jobs to the area, effectively develop existing local companies, and better assist entrepreneurs and small businesspeople, CVEP has completed an economic development strategy process for the Coachella Valley. The Economic Blueprint's comprehensive, umbrella strategy for economic development created by the region for the region. The Blueprint will target existing and emerging industry clusters to drive job creation and regional wage growth and economic vitality.

The Blueprint is market based, has strong leadership, will advance productivity-innovation-entrepreneurship, is long term diversification strategy, has broad base of local commitment, coordinated and collaborative regional approach, linkages to global marketplace. It has a detailed strategy and five year budget plan and is ready to go.

Who is the Blueprint Steering Committee tasked with overseeing the Blueprint development?

The Desert Lyceum and CVEP Executive Committee members were joined by appointees of the CVEP Co-Chairs who attempted to assemble a regional and representative sampling of area private, public and civic stakeholders. The Blueprint Steering Committee was Chaired by Supervisor Roy Wilson (in memoriam), Richard Oliphant and Rich Ramhoff. Over forty local government, business and civic leaders function as the steering committee providing ongoing oversight and direction for the development of the Blueprint. The process is being coordinated by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership.

Hundreds of individual and organizational stakeholders have been involved in focus groups, surveys, and consultation over the course of the months long process to develop strategies and implementation plans.

What kind of specific economic impact can be demonstrated to come directly from the Blueprint?

Economic impact depends on the type of investment, the quality of the jobs that are expected to be created (including the job mix), the amount and duration of construction investment, local tax rates, insurance rates, etc. The Blueprint contains quite a number of recommended strategies and programs, all of which must be implemented in order to accomplish progress against the goals and specific objectives identified. Specific outcomes will depend upon the pace and extent of investment and implementation.

What can be said is that - in example after example, some of which have been identified and detailed in the Blueprint - major investments in a locality have resulted in positive and measurable job and income impacts throughout the region. Attempting to measure very specific direct impacts requires incredibly complex modeling efforts. To use a less scientific methods of impact-assessment takes away all credibility from the projections.

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What is the benefit to individual cities from regional cooperation on economic development?

An important component of regional coordination is pooling resources to attract companies to the region. The motivating factor for this coordination is the recognition that job creation and retention have economic effects that spill over city boundaries. If a company comes to one city, for example, workers from nearby cities can benefit by commuting to those jobs. Businesses in the entire region would benefit from all workers spending some of their money in their home city or nearby, and from the new business making some of its purchases within the region.

Based on an analysis of regional economic data, **the Coachella Valley's base multiplier is 1.7**. So, in other words, for every 1000 "basic" jobs created in the region, 700 additional "non-basic" jobs will be generated by the multiplier effect of these new investments. These non-basic jobs are created as "new" money filters through the regional economy and leads to spending on additional goods and services.

The **Blueprint's** recommended target sectors were selected partially because they represent employment comprised almost exclusively of "basic" or export jobs. Thus, the benefit of job creation in these target sectors is amplified by the fact that nearly every new job will create .7 additional new positions. In other words, for every 100 new target-sector jobs created, another 70 indirect jobs will be generated

Why the focus on workforce development and education?

The individual and community-wide benefits to having a highly trained and highly skilled workforce are enormous. Not only does a highly trained and highly skilled workforce attract new industry and businesses to a local community or region, but a highly trained and highly skilled workforce can also create new jobs by themselves through new business start-up and entrepreneurship. The greater the ability of a community or region to attract and create high-paying and high growth sector jobs, the greater likelihood that the community or region will enjoy longer periods of stable, long-term local and regional economic growth.

Why develop the Blueprint Strategy now?

Virtually every community across the country is facing a changing economy right now. But it's important to remember that today's uncertainty should not prevent local economic developers from planning for the future. The Coachella Valley is competing against regions that have been implementing strategic programs for many years. The timing of this process is essential for the valley to build its capacity to move the economy forward.

Who is funding the project?

The overall project is being funded by regional stakeholders including: Riverside County; UCR Palm Desert Graduate Center; Imperial Irrigation District; the cities of Palm Desert, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Cathedral City, Palm Springs, Coachella, Indio, La Quinta, and Rancho Mirage as well as the Desert Chapter of the Building Industry Association and the Palm Springs Desert Resort Communities Convention and Visitors Authority.

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Who is Market Street?

Market Street Services, Inc. is the consultant for the Economic Blueprint. The firm is a community and economic development consulting firm headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. The firm was founded in 1997 by J. Mac Holladay as an alternative to the traditional economic development firm. *Market Street's* staff of eleven is a diverse group of people from across the country that brings varying cultural, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. *Market Street's* clients include: Austin, Texas; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Halifax, Virginia.

When will the project be completed?

The Economic Blueprint Action Plan will be presented in October 2009 during the annual Coachella Valley Economic Summit. A local marketing campaign will be kicked off as part of the public roll out of the Blueprint. This will be the start of the implementation efforts for the Blueprint.

What is the economic impact of this type of strategy?

The effective implementation of a comprehensive community and economic development strategy like the **Blueprint** holds wide-ranging benefits for the Coachella Valley. A growing economy with good paying jobs raises total regional incomes and provides additional capital for consumer spending, business investment and the funding of arts, culture and recreation amenities. Rising tax receipts strengthen governments' ability to provide enhanced services to local residents. Effectively linking the private sector with training providers creates workforce "pipelines" for in-demand occupations and exposes regional students to dynamic employment opportunities in the Valley. This, in turn, increases the likelihood they will be more engaged in their studies, graduate from high school and pursue college degrees. A better educated, higher income population would likely lead to declining poverty, teenage pregnancy and crime rates. Balancing regional growth with environmental protection, smart land-use and effective planning of transportation, water and communications infrastructure ensures that the Valley's future is sustainable. All of these positive impacts are included in the performance metrics *Market Street* developed to monitor **Blueprint** implementation. They represent the ultimate "selling points" for investment in the strategy for both public and private-sector stakeholders.

*...we truly believe that the overall community benefits beyond simple job creation – improved educational performance, declining poverty and crime, more art galleries, parks and museums, healthier children and adults, etc. – make for an extremely compelling case for the benefits of **Blueprint** investment. -Market Street*

Where can I view the reports, studies and analysis?

All technical reports are posted at www.cvep.com/blueprint

For additional information contact CVEP at 760-340-1575.