

EVSP Steering Committee Meeting Notes

County Government Center

Pacific Conference Room

4/20/2018

1. Welcome and Opening Comments
 - a. General Plan Update
 - General Plan update occurred this past Tuesday – engaged the BOS and the Planning Commission on Alternatives to the General Plan. Sandy and Bruce were there to provide public comment and give connection to the EVSP.
 - One of the GP efforts is looking at infill opportunities and farmworker, which provides an excellent crossover to the EVSP. There will be many more opportunities highlighted.
 - b. Permitting Navigator Overview
 - Dr. Rachel Linares is serving a role as the Permitting Coordinator. This role has three focuses:
 1. Public Relations – listen to the needs and concerns of permitting customers and the business community, while seeking to address these concerns with County leadership.
 2. Process Improvement – provide process improvement expertise when opportunities for improvement within the County are identified.
 3. Mediation – act in a mediator-capacity when a permitting issue has worked through the regular county channels and still has not achieved resolution.
2. Review Draft Steering Committee Charter
 - a. Recommend editing the first goal in the Charter: Proactively foster economic growth in a manner that is consistent with the County's longstanding commitments to quality of life, environmental sustainability and broadly-shared prosperity.
 - b. Please review and provide any additional comments to Paul Stamper.
3. Review Focus Area Leads and Action Items
 - a. 1-page handout highlights the leadership for the focus area groups and the corresponding Action Items. There are multiple areas that overlap, but this outlines the primary responsibility for the action items.
 - b. Goal is to have at least 2 leaders identified for each area.
 - c. Significant difference from last meeting is the division of Infrastructure and County Services – discussion in the last meeting highlighted the differences between the two.
 - d. Diversity and Inclusion and the Thomas Fire are two areas that are overarching and need to be incorporated in all focus areas (instead of having one single focus area). Would like to have every focus area highlight and call out any activities that relate to these two overarching topics.
 - e. Suggestion that Action Item A6 (Establish countywide Arts and Culture Collaborative) keeps an open focus to encapsulate the entire creative economy (commercial as well as arts).
 - Some of the target industries outlined in the industry clusters are directly visible as arts and culture related (tv, arts, etc.). Other industries might not have a direct identification, but there can also be a commercial portion (design, creative manufacturing).
 - f. Energy and renewable projects can be located within the Infrastructure Focus Area.
 - Ventura County was approved to create a Regional Energy Network with Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. This could provide additional opportunities and funding.
 - g. Resiliency and sustainability were suggested as items to include. There are state funds to support some of these activities. (rainwater capture, earthquake preparations, renewable energy projects).
 - h. Sample packets will be created for every Focus Area group, gathering all the assigned action items and potential partners.
 - Be sure that selected activities are achievable, manageable, identify any potential funding and ideally capitalize on the right time and opportunity.

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- Would like to identify items that are achievable within 12 months as well as within a longer time horizon. Be sure to have a blend of both – short-term achievements as well as long-term goals.
- Avoid duplication – support what is already underway and better coordinate resources. A recommended first item is to conduct an assessment or inventory so that we are aware from the beginning of what is already underway.
- Call out the activities that are being undertaken with the Thomas Fire, since the plan was created before the fire occurred.
 1. VCCF and other public organizations are utilizing about \$50,000 to engage USC to conduct a study related to the public impact of the Thomas Fire.
 2. Please submit any ideas to Vanessa Bechtel within the next 35 days (by May 25th) and they can be included in the RFP.

4. Focus Area Groups Updates

a. Economic Development

- The three individuals in the leadership roles cover all the individual sectors and stakeholders that would have been involved anyways. Not sure that another committee needs to be setup. The focus will be to integrate the goals from the EVSP within the scope of work of the existing organizations in order to leverage the relationships and memberships already in place.
- Most of these activities are already being engaged by their entities. The focus will be to improve the efficiency of the dialogue between everyone, bring elements from the EVSP into the work already being done and find a meaningful way to report back to the EVSP.
- One current EDC-VC project is to launch a quarterly local economic indicator report to supplement what is already being completed by CLU. EDC-VC is also finishing an assessment of the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the local area – the report will help indicate what is working and what needs to be improved. EDC-VC will also be launching an angel funding initiative in partnership with Mater Labs this summer.
- VCEDA has identified innovation and technology as a focus area. They will hire a community partnerships director with the focus to help build stronger relationships within this sector. VCEDA is also working to identify challenges to the manufacturing sector and what is needed to retain/expand these businesses within Ventura County.

b. Workforce Development

- The Workforce Development Board already has a solid foundation and is focused on engaging with businesses.
- WDB funding is starting to focus around apprenticeships and internships, putting the emphasis on businesses and what they need.
- The WDB agreed to create a committee with representatives from education, business, labor, workforce and non-profits, with the goal of identifying the current workforce gaps and what can be done to address them.
 1. The initial meeting will be May 8th at the America's Job Center.
- The Business Services Committee has been revitalized and will hold a series of town hall meetings to engage businesses in order to understand what workforce skills are needed. This information will be provided to local college systems with the goal of aligning educational offerings to business needs.
 1. Manufacturing, Healthcare and Clean-Green are the three sectors receiving significant focus in order to align with the needs of the community.
 2. Also working to engage businesses regarding the Thomas Fire and its effects.
- P-20 Council is currently revising their initiatives.
- WDB will try to be a one-stop, convener and collaborator (tied to their WIOA funding).
- Dr. Alexandra Wright has two current initiatives: working to provide industry priorities to the educators prior to advisory meetings, and publishing a master calendar of the advisory board meetings.

c. County Services & Safety Net

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- A County safety net is the backbone of a successful economy.
- Per Vanessa Bechtel, their most meaningful project (3-4 year project) will be to prepare for the 2020 Census and making sure that all of the vulnerable populations within Ventura County are counted.
 1. Lack of this counting will prevent the County from accessing significant federal funds which can bolster and support safety net services.
 2. Focusing on identifying philanthropic dollars that can go to support counting the vulnerable populations within the census.
 3. Ventura County has been identified within the top 10 counties in California that are at risk of not having an accurate census count.
 4. One goal (among others) is to provide census takers with iPads so that they can go into the field and help citizens complete the online census.
 5. Vanessa is putting together a rough calendar of census preparation activities.
 6. Vanessa will work on getting a number from the Silicon Valley Foundation related to the federal money that Ventura County has lost over the 10 years from the last census.
- Exploring funding opportunities to help with public preschool. Competing for funding from the Audacious Project – could provide millions of funding.
 1. At least 11,000 children in Ventura County that cannot enter preschool each year – presents a significant economic issue.
- Non-profit sector has a sustainability issue that was exacerbated by the Thomas Fire. Sponsorships and fundraising opportunities are not providing enough money to support non-profit organizations.
 1. Would be a help to the community if there was an economic indicator for the non-profits, highlighting the lack of reserves for these organizations.
 2. City managers association (ICMA) potentially has a dashboard for non-profits to use – Vanessa will look to use this as the beginning of a dashboard.

d. Housing

- 5 housing authorities within the region. Denise Wise is sitting down with them to identify their inventory and to map their pipeline. There are some silos (based on funding), but there is work going on to break these down.
- The goal cannot be to just build units – there has to be a focus on communities as well as consideration within school districts.
- The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura has made a priority of housing families affected by the Thomas Fire.
- They are starting to explore opportunities in the Farmworker Housing arena.
- Currently have 8,500 households on waiting lists.

e. Arts, Culture & Recreation

- Working to research how other communities have defined their creative economies because it is such a wide-reaching definition. If anyone else has any feedback on where the creative economy overlaps with their industries please provide this to Tracy Hudak.
- Bicycle friendliness could be a great way to tie together the cities and the counties. Kate Faulkner with Channel Islands Bike Club and Cycle California Coast will participate in this focus area group.
- This focus area can look to strengthen specific creative business sectors and find opportunities to connect/utilize arts to engage on topics such as housing, homeless...

f. Business Climate

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- Looking at where the cities and the county overlap. The challenge is that most of the economic vitality lies within the cities but is still affected by things within the County.
 - Focusing on best practices and sharing information and practices has great applicability.
 - There are several groups that are already meeting - Building Officials, City Managers groups – the focus could be on bringing them together and again working to share issues and best practices.
 - Housing is one of the greatest focuses because of the regulatory issues. There are others who do not interact with the government in the same way that are still encountering issues. Mixed use issues are an example of this – how do we zone for this and promote the best use? What is the way that we surface these problems and then deal with them?
 - Culinary businesses could be an issue of this – how are we incubating local artisanal food businesses and supporting them, farm-to-table and their specific regulatory items? Commercial kitchen for use at non-commercial rates would be a great start-up opportunity. Shared workspace is another opportunity. Paul Shrater – Minimus (does packaging for small and mid-size companies) – could be a good partner to have on the committee.
5. Identifying success
 - a. Sustainable development model could be used.
 - b. Creating a shared understanding of growth and success and the indicators that are used.
 - c. Success could be in-part listing and identifying accomplishments – could be a role of the committee to provide vetting on the actions and ideas coming out of the sub-committees for potential conflict with other action items.
 6. Persons suggested to add to the Steering Committee and/or Focus Area groups:
 - a. Representative from the Simi Valley or Moorpark area
 - b. Mike Pettit – incorporate a technology focus
 - c. Paul Shrater (Minimus - <https://www.minimus.biz/About-Us.aspx>)
 - d. Infrastructure – Anthony Morales
 - e. Marketing and Branding – include the WDB website “Ventura County Grows Business” as an idea and a resource to be able to use (something that is already built).
 7. Next Steps
 - a. Finalize who will be part of the Steering Committee outreach to individuals who may participate in the Focus Area groups
 - b. Begin identifying and inventorying existing groups/initiatives/resources and refining Action Item objectives for each Focus Area
 - c. Identify KPI’s and methods to measure the success of EVSP activities
 8. Next Meeting
 - a. Friday, May 11th, 9am-11am, VCCF offices (4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo, CA 93012)