

EVSP Steering Committee Meeting Minutes 6/8/18

Action Items:

- Subgroup to meet to discuss potential EVSP metrics, quality of life definition and potential marketing focus (Talia Barrera; Vanessa Bechtel; Matthew Fienup; Bruce Stenslie; Erick Went; Denise Wise)
- Bruce Stenslie – reach out to opportunity zones and create an inventory of the different development opportunities and available properties.
- Bruce Stenslie – develop an Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) needed to assist with the EDA applications.
- Paul/Rachel – Ask County RMA if they can overlay the Opportunity Zones on a map with the city/county boundaries.
- All – Brainstorm ideas for how to establish a group to create a broad, county-wide strategy for how to conduct fundraising activities in times of disaster. (this item will be discussed in greater detail at the August meeting.)

1. General Comments

- a. If there are any potential partners that could be important to involve, please feel free to invite them to attend one of the Steering Committee Meetings.
- b. Our role is to be the intermediary and promote communication, but also develop a measurement/metric to be able to measure activity and success.
- c. A good idea is to start the conversation by identifying what success looks like for the specific focus area, and then determine measurements and outcomes from there.
- d. Proposed to form a working group to theorize what measurements and higher-level goals there are, to compile into an overall document.
- e. Would like to define what is considered within Quality of Life (the elements) and what we are focusing on addressing. What does it mean in terms of economic impact and give a more strategic focus of it?
 1. Cultural determinants
 2. Food, housing and industry
 3. Ventura County Grows Business lists: Safety, education, climate, open space, affordability in the region. The Agency created this site and conducted public outreach to determine these (focus groups, collaboration with the 10 cities). Talia will work to gather this study information and bring it back to the group, for us to then use and augment.
- f. Decided to continue meeting on a monthly basis on Friday mornings, continued at the VCCF location.
- g. Workgroup will meet to discuss metrics, quality of life definition, and potential marketing focus.

2. Adoption of Revised EVSP Steering Committee Charter
 - a. Motion to adopt – Melissa Livingston, seconded by Tracy Hudak. All voted in favor.
3. Opportunity Zones
 - a. Piece of the tax act just passed by Congress. Has a 10-year time frame for implementation.
 - b. Each state, region and county had an opportunity to identify a certain number of zones that needed economic assistance (based on poverty, unemployment, etc.). The goal is to create the opportunity to attract investors to create and support businesses in these specific areas.
 - c. Gives tax benefits to investors. Can defer tax on prior capital gains (CA has the highest capital gains tax in the world.)
 - d. There is the ability to add benefits from the local level.
 - e. Investment is made, revenue is deferred for an amount of time, but tax benefits are given right away. Can also give a donation and get the full tax benefits upfront.
 - f. Funds are self-certified, but the IRS has yet to issue additional instructions. The state also has yet to issue their instructions.
 - g. The people who should be involved are those who were involved with this type of economic development before. Identify the areas, identify investment opportunities, then encourage the private sector to establish a fund to gather the money and make that investment.
 - h. Social Impact Investing is a good example of this, can give evidence of the lasting benefits.
 - i. Bruce has contacted some consulting groups to give some guidance on how to best establish and manage this type of a fund.
 1. The Ventura County Trust Fund could be a good financial institution to approach – they just completed their CDI and would be in a good place to help manage this type of fund.
 2. Most likely will want a local financial advisor to help set up a CDFI
 3. The Housing Solutions Working Group would additionally be a good group to approach.
 - j. Potentially create an online market place for potential projects – this would be an easy way to attract investors and communicate what opportunities are available.
 - k. Initial plan of action will be to reach out to the different zones and create an inventory of the development opportunities and available properties – Bruce volunteered to oversee this.
 - l. Would like to see an overlay of the Opportunity Zone map as well as the County/city boundaries – this would help us understand where the County RMA can be involved.
4. Economic Development Administration – Notice of Funding Opportunity
 - a. We are part of the Seattle office, which manages the west coast. There are about \$97 million available to our area.
 1. Some of the most recently funded activities include: upgrading a major highway corridor; dock infrastructure; food equipment; biomedical incubator project; creating an economic resiliency plan; automotive

- technology center within a community college; add sewer and waste water treatment plan; road infrastructure, back-up generators.
- b. Generally want to pay for things, rather than activities. The focus of the activities needs to spur additional economic investments, create jobs, or prevent the loss of jobs.
 - c. Need to make a case statement as to how it improves resiliency both for disasters but also for economic threats.
 - 1. The city is significantly dependent upon _____ industry, and the infrastructure for this industry is at risk from _____.
 - 2. Workforce development and manufacturing could be particularly liked. Want to see investments that facilitate economic growth through an export economy.
 - d. Initial requirement to have an active CEDS – EDC-VC is working on upgrading theirs right now (working with Wells Fargo). This is the preparatory document – we don't want to ask EDA with help paying for this – we would rather ask for help paying for the elements identified within the CEDS.
 - 1. We will try to use the EVSP plan – this meets all of the criteria that is within the CEDS. Have had conversations with EDA staff and they appear to be ok with this.
 - e. EDC-VC has received EDA funds since 1996 (revolving loan funds).
 - f. EDA would like a dollar-to-dollar match, but can go as high as providing 80% of the funds.
 - g. An information meeting is scheduled for June 21st, 1-2:30 in the County Government Center, Lower Plaza Assembly Room.
5. Review Status of Focus Area formation
- a. Marketing/Branding
 - 1. Looked at other regions for working models, and there are huge disparities in what activities they undertook – this affects their marketing strategy as well as what elements they measure.
 - 2. This needs to be established before we can craft a marketing plan.
 - 3. Would like to see if Natelson Dale has any sort of benchmarks that could be used to create a measurement or metric.
 - 4. Instead of focusing on attracting companies, need to focus on attracting talent? Also a focus on equity and broadly shared economic growth.
 - 5. Kellogg Logic Models – need indicators can be helpful to see if we are shifting the needle.
 - 6. WDB and Ventura County Grows Business - Already have a media plan for the next year, just need to know how to support the group.
 - b. Workforce Development
 - 1. Working to decide priorities. One of the biggest issues is the need for greater alignment between businesses and education, providing a viable workforce pipeline.
 - 2. P-20 is planning an Education Summit that will take place this Fall.

3. Need to integrate entrepreneurship, internships, and apprenticeships into the conversations. Working to complete an inventory of what already exists and establish a common language for all.
 4. Bruce is working on creating a current state map.
 - a. Identify what motivates each group and what they are reporting. Then help shift towards business engagement (rather than just placement of students).
- c. Safety Net, County Services
1. July 11th, 12:30-4:30 the State will come and do a presentation on the Census Count, discuss high-reach funding opportunities. This will help learn how to bring in philanthropic dollars to fund outreach to the high-risk populations.
 2. June 18th – taskforce will be meeting at the VCCF offices (about 15 organizations already participating).
 3. Phil Hampton has joined to assist with the Preschool Initiative.
 4. Need to create a cohesive strategy for how to approach philanthropic funding in the times of disaster. Problem is that funds gathered for disaster has not been given yet as individual assistance and are not enough to address the entire problem. This could start to erode the trust and giving of the community.
 - a. Could be included in the CEDS development. Would be a neutral group that was not involved within the disaster but would help create a broad county-wide strategy.
 - b. Need to establish a group to address this. Will bring this back to the next meeting to discuss who will take ownership of this conversation.
 5. Also need to identify how to better use 2-1-1 during the next disaster to help provide information.
 6. Paul Fisher (Social Justice Fund for VC) – will be the Chair for the Census Focus Area.
 - a. Potential of \$153 million dollars from the state to help prepare for the census.
 - b. 14.7 million hard-to-count California residents
 - i. Latino immigrants
 - ii. Pacific Islanders
 - iii. 2 other categories
 - c. Identify community hubs (CBOs – Community Based Organizations), then allocated share based on the number of hard-to-count populations.
 - d. We are in the top 10 counties in CA for risk of undercounting vulnerable populations in the census, so will fight to get our share of those funds.
 - e. John Kabara (California Community Foundation) – could be a resource to have as a guest speaker.

- f. Still trying to get answers on how the technology/online application will work.

d. Housing

1. Called on by the City of Thousand Oaks to support City Council voting on the general plan, relocating housing density. Was able to motivate the City Council to be able to pass the general plan changes.
2. In the process of forming a Housing Land Trust (will present to the group at a future meeting). Have three cities that have offered demonstration projects. Need commitments of \$150,000 for three years. Three have expressed interest in funding but more are needed. First time implemented in Ventura County, but has been very successful in other locations.
3. HUD issued a No Funding Available notice for certain vouchers (non-elderly adult disabled). Three housing (Oxnard, Area and Ventura) authorities are coming together to submit a regional, joint apply for this, along with other service providers.
4. Starting a regional database outlining the different areas of coverage. (waiting lists, ages, populations being served). Bringing already existing data together.

e. Arts, Culture & Recreation

1. Ojai signed an agreement with Carnegie Mellon – develop an economic and environmentally sustainable city.
2. Carnegie facilitates – develop a vision for Ojai, address water issues, inspire community to embrace necessary changes.

f. Infrastructure

1. Met as a focus group – currently starting the assessment phase (infrastructure projects underway) and cataloguing existing infrastructure. Match to the EVSP, and then identify gaps.
2. Could be an excellent group to look at the EDA funds and coordinating projects, applications, and the approach to the funds.

6. Next meeting scheduled for Friday, August 3rd 9-11am.