

EVSP Focus Area – Business Climate & Land Use

Focus Area Formation Guidelines:

1. Reach out to partners for participation in the sub-committee. Consider diversity and inclusion as you assemble the team.
2. Think meaningful and manageable as you contemplate the scope of work/goals to aim for in the next 12 months. Part of your role is to prioritize. Consider aspects such as timing, opportunity, and urgency. We do not have to identify a near term activity for every action item.
3. Avoid duplication. Part of each sub-committee's initial job will be an assessment or inventory of the current state resources and initiatives already in place. Consider what is already in place with our economic vitality partners and how we can support, expand or better coordinate those efforts, before looking to add or create new initiatives to support the Action Items in your Focus Area.
4. The EVSP was completed before the Thomas Fire. We encourage each sub-committee to call out activities taking place within their Focus Area that relate to Thomas Fire Recovery and have an Economic Vitality element to them. Opportunities to support/expand these efforts or fill an identified need are encouraged.
5. Consider the "Suggested Initial Objectives" for your Focus Area (Listed Below, if identified in the EVSP) as just that, a suggestion. Your sub-committee is empowered to choose the initial objectives and report those back to the Steering Committee.
6. Paul Stamper and Rachel Linares will be your primary contacts at the County if you have questions. We can also help to coordinate participation from the various County agencies on each of your sub-committees, where appropriate.
7. All EVSP reports and resources can be found at our website:
<http://vcevsp.org/>

TABLE 1. SUGGESTED INITIAL OBJECTIVES

Focus Area	Action Items	Key Initial Objectives
Business Climate & Land Use	A5 F3	Prepare a working document cross-referencing County and city regulations in major categories of land and building real estate development activity. Identify commonalities and differences in structure of regulations, procedures, estimates of timing to complete each milestone, and content.

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Focus Area Action Item	Recommended Priority Level (Scale 1-3: 1- Highest, 3- Lowest)	Proposed Lead
A.5 In connection with other related action items that imply the need for expanded development capacity, establish framework and policies for optimizing future use of Ventura County’s remaining developable (or re-developable) land	1	County RMA Cities

A.5 *In connection with other related action items that imply the need for expanded development capacity, establish framework and policies for optimizing future use of Ventura County’s remaining developable (or re-developable) land*

A key element of that action item and this one is the extent to which the County coordinates with cities on these procedures. At the most basic level of coordination, the County could prepare guidelines, backed by analysis and a strategic framework, for optional use by cities at locations where it is relevant to apply such considerations. Properties within the County’s jurisdiction could be planned for development as appropriate, within the strategic framework. The intent of the framework would be to match land supply, by designated use type, to anticipated future demand to the extent practical to do so. This would also have the effect of expediting desired economic activity (recognizing that future demand for land will arise for virtually all types of uses in addition to commercial and industrial, and all uses have some relationship to sustaining economic vitality).

At a more ambitious level, this action item could encourage potential infill/revitalization sites, primarily within the cities, that could have the effect of both increasing the land supply and achieving other objectives of the strategic plan. For example, policy recommendations that encourage higher density housing within urban cores could ease the pressure for additional residential land, provide housing stock suitable for younger workers that might be critical to a desired target industry, help revitalize overall urban neighborhoods and businesses, and in general reduce the likelihood of “brain drain” from Ventura County.

A.5 In connection with other related action items that imply the need for expanded development capacity, establish framework and policies for optimizing future use of Ventura County’s remaining developable (or re-developable) land		
KEY PARTNERS • Cities’ ED function Agricultural Cultural Community Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate brokers, developers, and owners associations in the County • Farm Bureau • Land use consultants • Ventura County RMA & Other Cities RMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventura County (CEO) • SOAR • EDC-VC • VCAA • BIA
APPLICABLE RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventura City’s Vacant Land Study Final Report, November 2002 	

Focus Area Action Item	Recommended Priority Level (Scale 1-3: 1- Highest, 3- Lowest)	Proposed Lead
F.3 Continue to promote business-friendliness in the regulatory/permitting environment throughout Ventura County, through collaboration, exchange of ideas and best practices, continued use of Lean Six Sigma, streamlining regulations and permitting requirements, adding ombudsman/facilitator resources, and promoting consistency in policy and practice, among cities and the County	1	RMA CEO Public Works Agency Fire Agricultural Comm.

F.3 *Continue to promote business-friendliness in the regulatory/permitting environment throughout Ventura County, through collaboration, exchange of ideas and best practices, continued use of Lean Six Sigma, streamlining regulations and permitting requirements, adding ombudsman/facilitator resources, and promoting consistency in policy and practice, among cities and the County*

“Business friendliness” is a matter of perception as well as function, and affected parties are often less interested in which specific jurisdiction they are dealing with than the efficiency of the overall process. To the extent jurisdictions can share common practices, businesses and developers will experience consistent treatment, which will promote economic vitality directly, and also indirectly by virtue of the positive image created. Implementation steps within this action item could include any of the following:

- Review best practices pertaining to this action item (see resources in Appendix A).
- Continue to coordinate with representatives of the development community and Ventura County Planning Division to identify and review any specific "business friendliness" issues that might require attention. In addition, identify and review any specific "business friendliness" issues of the Environmental Health Division and its work related to restaurants, as well as Weights and Measures (accuracy of measuring devices and other details), that involve a wide range of businesses. Give particular attention to conditions that might be contributing to creating a competitive disadvantage for local businesses.
- Consider the desirability of creating a formal process by which to recognize and highlight the business impact of new regulations.
- Establish within the County a “navigator/ombudsmen” role to support those going through the permitting process or navigating multiple agency services. (Update: This ombudsmen role has been added already)
- Review County policies on expedited project reviews and any other development-related incentives.
- Continue to move County services online where possible to improve accessibility, speed, and convenience for the public and local businesses. Online applications such as Accella, Safe Dining, and Safe Beaches demonstrate the County’s intention to be “online, not in line”.

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- Review existing checklists pertaining to business and development permitting, and revise as appropriate to make as user-friendly as possible.
- Assess the extent to which the County’s one-stop online permitting process could be adopted by cities.
- Offer training in programs used by the County to other jurisdictions (e.g. Lean Six Sigma and LEAP)
- Review County procurement policies in recognition of how such policies can maximize and facilitate support of local businesses.

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KEY PARTNERS

- Ventura County CEO, RMA, PWA, Fire, and Agricultural Commissioner
- Camarillo Chamber of Commerce
- Moorpark Chamber of Commerce
- Ojai Chamber of Commerce

- Oxnard Chamber of Commerce
- Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Conejo Chamber of Commerce (Serving Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills)
- Cities’ ED function

- Santa Paula Chamber of Commerce
- Ventura Chamber of Commerce
- EDC-VC

APPLICABLE RESOURCES

- City of Anaheim Regulatory Relief Task Force, Phase 1 Recommendations, November 2011

- Ventura County and cities’ regulations and procedural guides

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