

# REGIONAL RESULTS

Promising Practices from the California Stewardship Network

January 2012

Prepared by Collaborative Economics  
With Support from the Morgan Family Foundation



# introduction

**California's regions are a wellspring of promising practices that are transforming local economies and communities across the State.** This report provides a window into 10 specific practices from 10 diverse regions, a sampling of innovations emerging from California's grassroots. The purpose of this compendium is to encourage and educate other practitioners across the State about how to move forward with new approaches to regional problem-solving. It is also intended to provide state leaders with insights into the importance of regional, bottoms-up innovation to the future of California.

**The regional organizations featured in this report are members of the California Stewardship Network. With support from the Morgan Family Foundation, the Network was founded in 2008 and regularly brings together regional innovators to share promising practices and work together to encourage state actions that support regional progress** ([www.castewardship.org](http://www.castewardship.org)). Each promising practice profile in this report is designed to provide a brief overview including key success factors and lessons learned, along with contact information for those interested in learning more about the innovation.

**While the promising practices showcased in this report have unique characteristics and outcomes, there are several important areas of innovation:**

- **Public engagement**—Several regions have developed breakthroughs that engage large numbers of people in regional change, including educational improvement (e.g., Redwood Coast, Butte) and regional economic development (e.g., Los Angeles).
- **Business mobilization**—Several regions have successfully mobilized business leaders, including organizing industry clusters to drive regional economic strategies (e.g., Sonoma, San Luis Obispo, Fresno).
- **Distributed leadership**—Several regions have pioneered new models of regional collaboration, including helping multiple jurisdictions work together with the business community (e.g., Silicon Valley, Sacramento, Los Angeles), connecting federal, state, and local government and local business and community interests (e.g., Sierra Nevada), and building partnerships across county lines and a national border (e.g., San Diego).
- **Stewardship mindset**—Every organization profiled in this compendium has developed and promoted a new problem-solving mindset—regional stewardship—that pervades their work, a simultaneous attention to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of their places.

What distinguishes all the promising practices described here is the role that regional organizations played as neutral convener. The form and function of regional organizations that play this role are quite diverse, ranging from non-profit business civic organizations to multi-sector collaborations. These regional results are the product of organizations and their leadership taking responsibility as stewards of place, convening the necessary partners to drive action.

**We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions regarding regional promising practices.**



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## BUILDING NEW COMMUNITIES AROUND SCHOOLS AND RECONCILING FRACTURED LEADERSHIP

The initial success of a growing group of stewards in Butte County is providing the foundation for a sustainable platform for community problem-solving—the Chico Stewardship Network. Stewards have worked together to create the Community Alliance for Educational Excellence (CAEE), which is pursuing a two-level strategy: Building Community Around Schools and Reconciliation of Fractured Leadership, which is also proving to applications in other areas (e.g., crime prevention). CAEE partners include: Chico Unified School District, City of Chico, Chamber of Commerce, Chico Economic Planning Corporation, Rotary, CSU-Chico and the Faith Community—all focused on advancing education in the Butte Region.

### BUILDING COMMUNITY AROUND SCHOOLS

#### Community Alliance Structures

As part of their stewardship-based governance model, CAEE instituted the formation of community alliance structures (citizen + institution) to address fundamental issues in education.

This effort is focused in two primary areas of student achievement and preparedness:

#### Underperforming Elementary School Students

(roughly 40% of the total student body) – A volunteer “tutor army” of 400 and growing is working with elementary students 1-on-1 to prepare them for junior high school with the necessary tools for success. The goal is 1,000 tutors for 1,000 students, helping them to achieve at grade level and learn the necessary skills for independent living.

**High School, Career Preparation** - They are working to develop a series of Academes that are centered around local sub-economies (agriculture, technology, medical, business/sales have been identified).

These strategies are pursued through the building of “community” around individual schools.

Example “communities” include:

- **Love Chico** - 1000s of citizens serving institutions throughout the city.
- **Citrus “Community”** - Bidwell Presbyterian Church provides 100’s of volunteers partnering with the school to raise the expectation and therefore the hope of kids and staff alike.
- **Rosedale “Community”** - a community of Rotary, Business and Church provides volunteers to facilitate grounds improvement projects and at-risk student support.

- **McManus “Community”** - a community of Costco, Fairview High and Grace Community provide volunteers that tutor struggling students and support after school programs.
- **Chapman “Community”** - a community of volunteers is currently forming to provide support for struggling students through individual tutoring and classroom support.

CAEE’s role in the “community”:

- **CAEE provides ‘team captains’** at each of these schools that are tasked with advancing the idea of ‘community alliance’ as a significant part of meaningful educational reform.
- **CAEE’s one paid staff person** operates as a Volunteer Coordinator, facilitating the successful interface of citizens and institution.
- **CAEE has successfully introduced CUSD to Reading Partners**, a nationally active group with a tremendously successful program and ‘community tutor’ based curriculum. Initial meetings will be held in November toward the goal of implementing this curriculum at Citrus and Rosedale in the fall of 2012. If successful, this program will be expanded to other elementary schools.

A key milestone in the process was the creation of the first CAEE staff position of Volunteer Coordinator. The Coordinator works as a community advocate, helping to resolve cultural issues, engage citizens (showing them what it means to get involved, what stewardship means in school), and teaching the schools how to receive a volunteer. This focus on citizen and institution interface makes the stewardship/governance model work (community alliance).



**RECONCILIATION OF FRACTURED LEADERSHIP**

Building a Leadership Coalition in the Education Community  
Team10!

Team10! was formed 3 years ago as a community alliance designed to assist in the prevention of a state takeover of the local school system. Representatives of the 3 bargaining units and the District met with CAEE personnel (as chair) to gain a common understanding of ‘the budget’ in the hopes that this understanding could become the foundation of more meaningful and successful negotiations. This was followed by an expansion of the group to include representatives of the School Board. In addition, the agenda was expanded with a current focus on the development of initiatives designed to

promote Educational Excellence, several of which are in the implementation stage. The advancement of these initiatives is giving context for partnership with the broader community including both Chamber of Commerce and CEPCO.



**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**THE VALUE OF LEARNING FROM OTHER REGIONS**

The founders had the opportunity to meet and learn from other innovators in the California Stewardship Network, and credit those interactions and models with inspiring and informing the design and launch of CAEE and subsequent efforts. Specific frameworks and strategies were drawn from a diverse range of regions, from Fresno to Los Angeles.

The model has proven to be replicable, with a team formed around crime prevention (i.e., over 60 businesses and growing number of citizens working together with law enforcement on tangible steps to mitigate criminal activity in the community).

**THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINED CATALYTIC CAPACITY**

Based on their initial experiences and advice from other regions, the founders added professional staff—but someone who was particularly adept as a catalyst and teacher, helping motivate and manage and train a volunteer army. More importantly, she has been a critical interface between the schools and residents, helping volunteers envision themselves as stewards, helping schools understand how to best work with stewards, and keeping the focus on meaningful outcomes for students.

**BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP-BASED PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL**

The experience in education and crime prevention has encouraged the founders to move to the next stage, seeking to create a sustainable platform for stewardship-based collaboration to address community and regional challenges in many areas. They are currently sharing the concept and vision of a Chico Stewardship Network: the broad restoration of maximized personal liberty (freedom) in the context of the common good (responsibility) – stewardship based governance. The Chico Stewardship Network believes that the two strategies developed by the CAEE are pragmatic expressions of “WE THE PEOPLE” governance.

**RECOGNIZING THE POWER AND REPLICABILITY OF THE RECONCILED LEADERSHIP MODEL**

A key first step was the creation of a leadership team around education (see above). This team was challenged to find a place of reconciliation—to learn to work together to solve a specific problem even if participants disagree on many other issues. The result: specific progress on shared goals, but also an expanding willingness to revisit areas of disagreement based on a growing sense of trust.



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## STEWARDSHIP TRANSFORMING HOW REGION FRAMES AND SOLVES PROBLEMS

Building upon the foundation laid by the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative in 2000, the Fresno Business Council and its many partners will launch the Fresno Stewardship Initiative (FSI) in 2012 to scale and accelerate transformation efforts already underway. Committed to self-reliance, shared responsibility and collective action, leaders of major institutions and the private sector are forming a governance team to lead the FSI. In Fresno, steward leadership of the whole is called Fourth Sphere leadership. The Fourth Sphere encompasses the work to build a prosperous economy, a quality man-made and natural environment and insure opportunities for all citizens. Key past results include:

- **Wide adoption** of a set of ten community values that provide a contract for behavior in the civic sector.
- **Continuous and broadening education** about the interdependence of the economy, the environment and human development and the importance of steward leadership of the whole.
- **Commitment by key leaders** to build relationships across sectors, learn the language of multiple disciplines and understand the top priorities in each sphere.
- **Strengthening or creating of assets** needed for community transformation. Examples include: the Center of Advanced Research and Technology (CART), the Central Valley Business Incubator, intervention at Fresno Unified School District .

The FSI is based upon three primary strategies:

1. **Develop, steward and execute** a shared community agenda for the Fresno Region.
2. **Assist leaders and institutions** in using it as a lens to view their initiatives and endeavors.
3. **Create coordination and communication functions** to leverage the resources of institutions, agencies, organizations, companies and individuals who commit to playing their part in achieving community goals.

In order to align the decision making of all partners, tactics will include the following:

- **Educate the community** on (1) the Four Sphere Framework, (2) the Community Values (<http://www.fresnorji.org/about/principles.php>), (3) Abundant Community principles and (4) the nature, purpose, and use of a community agenda.
- **Train CEOs, senior management teams, boards of directors, political officials, and senior agency staff** on the nature, purpose, and use of the community agenda.
- **Create a common set of strategic and tactical tools** to assist participating institutions, agencies, organizations, and companies in integrating the community agenda into their decision-making framework.
- **Recruit and align task forces** where needed to advance priorities.
- **Create a hub** for collecting information, analyzing information, and distributing information about projects, initiatives, and progress on the community agenda.
- **Monitor and report** on results, both quantitative and qualitative, using appropriate dashboards and report cards.
- **Deliver information** through the Internet, mobile technology, and social media so that access is universal and transparent.
- **Develop a stewardship pipeline** for future Fourth Sphere leaders.



## GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The goals of the Initiative are short-term and long-term; micro and global; quantitative and qualitative; personal and in aggregate. We have learned that transformational change is highly personal and one by one. It requires sustained leadership and perseverance. Ultimately, it adds up to cultural change. In Fresno’s case, this means creating a new mindset about what is possible, a civic infrastructure designed to address intractable issues and capitalize on shared opportunities, and a widely shared set of values for behavior.

### BROAD GOALS WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS AREAS:

- **Globally competitive** and locally resilient economy
- **System of education** that inspires lifelong development of character, knowledge and skills
- **Multi-sector commitment** to health based upon personal responsibility, prevention and inclusion.
- **A sustainable ecosystem** of essential infrastructure, natural beauty and cultural/ artistic amenities.
- **Civic engagement** that demonstrates a culture of self-reliance, shared responsibility and collective action.

Key performance indicators will include:

**PRODUCTS AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE INITIATIVE:** Training curriculum, workshops, communication and outreach, and relationship development. Specific numeric goals will be determined by team leaders. Metrics include:

- **Number of endorsing** and participating organizations
- **Number of workshops** delivered and participants attending
- **Number of people** who sign up on distribution lists

- **Number of people** engaged in initiatives or projects
- **Educational materials** produced
- **Funding secured** from partners

### INDICATORS TRACKED BY PARTNERING INSTITUTIONS, LEADERS OF CORE STRATEGIES, AND PRIORITY INDICATORS OF SPECIFIC PROGRAMS.

Specific numeric goals will be determined by team leaders. Metrics are expected to include:

- **Number of people participating in PeopleNet**—a neighborhood based communications system
- **Number of people participating in financial literacy workshops** and opening bank accounts
- **Home ownership** in targeted neighborhoods
- **Number of business start-ups**
- **School attendance and graduation rates** in targeted neighborhoods
- **Decrease** in reported crimes
- **Per capita income**
- **Employment rates**
- **Capital secured** for expansion
- **Air quality**
- **Voting rates**

**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES COMMUNITY BUILDING AT THE TOP AND BOTTOM**

Historically, most collaboration was done at the level of program. While there may have been measurable results, transformational impact remained elusive. We have learned that to change the underlying conditions, major institutions—the “bones of the community”—must be in alignment. They must learn to leverage one another’s assets to fully embrace all the factors that create complex, interdependent challenges like poverty, obesity, and poor educational outcomes. This means key leaders must develop strategies together--not in their silos-cross-train staff, and deploy resources to achieve shared outcomes. This type of collaboration requires new skills sets, personal trust and a commitment to long-term engagement.

In addition to community at the top, another critical element is community at the neighborhood level. Those whose behavior you wish to change must be included in the dialogue and goal setting, treated as equal citizens and engaged in ongoing communication both in the neighborhood and directly with the leadership level. Otherwise, programs run their course without real time information or simply miss the mark. Engagement in any community is a choice; it is a commitment of the mind and heart. Compliance gained through power is neither sufficient nor sustainable.

**STEWARDSHIP LEADERSHIP IS A DEVELOPMENTAL JOURNEY**

While engagement in community transformation must have easy, accessible onramps for everyone, steward leadership of the whole is only required from a few. In most cases, those that commit to this type of leadership have already been successful in their careers and simply want to serve their communities at the highest level of impact. Learning the community business requires time as few are well schooled in the many disciplines, issues and sectors of work that make up a community. In addition, the skills needed to collaborate across cultures of disciplines, sectors, ethnicities and other aspects of diversity requires trust and a long-term investment in relationship. Steward leadership is best learned through exposure to role models and experience. Steward leadership is highly intuitive, adaptive and generous. Thus, most steward leaders are at least in mid-life.

**AMERICANS RESPOND TO A CALL TO CITIZENSHIP**

The work of citizens cannot be outsourced. Building a great community requires the engagement of great citizens. Talent that would not be affordable in the marketplace is often given for free by those who recognize they can make a significant difference. Developing great citizens is the work of community. The quality of a community’s citizens is reflected in its level of prosperity, educational attainment, health, crime rates, and overall quality of life.

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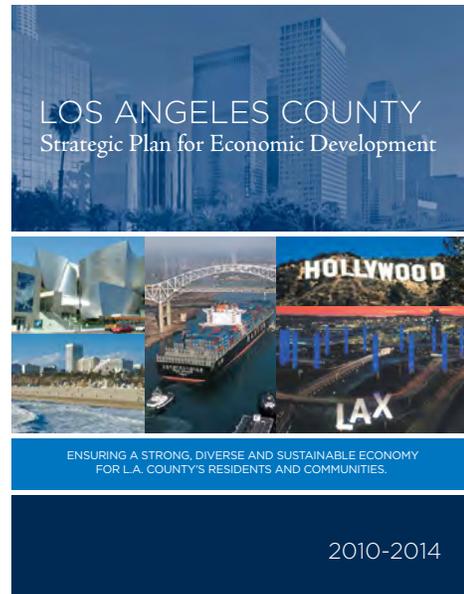
## OVER 1,000 IDENTIFY SHARED PRIORITIES AND COMMITMENTS FOR A FIRST-EVER ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY

In 2009, the LAEDC completed the development of Los Angeles County's first-ever Strategic Plan for Economic Development. They began the development of the Strategic Plan through a very public, year-long, grassroots process that brought together over 1,080 stakeholders from business, government, labor, education, environmental and other community-based organizations to identify and build consensus around a set of economic development priorities to strengthen the economy, improve the environment and promote broader prosperity across all our communities. The result of this very public, consensus-building process was a community-developed plan that identified 12 objectives and 52 strategies to achieve five core aspirational goals critical to achieving their shared vision of ensuring a strong, diverse and sustainable economy for L.A. County's residents and communities.

To ensure the Plan's successful implementation, they identified "champions" – organizations that have already assumed leadership roles in their respective areas of focus to help develop and identify the benchmarks and measurements of success, as well as to shape and carry out many of the specific implementation actions and initiatives contained in the plan. And to maximize the plan's impact and to leverage the consensus nature of the plan's development, the LAEDC sought the support and endorsements of individuals, the business community and elected officials. To date, they have received the endorsements of 84 of the County's 88 cities either through their respective council of governments or through the city individually.

### Five Core Aspirational Goals:

1. Prepare an Educated Workforce
2. Create a Business-Friendly Environment
3. Enhance our Quality of Life
4. Implement Smart Land Use Policies
5. Build 21st Century Infrastructure



**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**KEEPING THE MOMENTUM GOING**

*Build the Implementation Strategy from the Start*

The key was to engage as many stakeholders up front as possible, and build the implementation strategy into the planning process from the start. The more people in the community who get a chance to be involved in the process, the more it builds mutual respect and commitment to achieving the specific results. It also gives plan strength, power and maximum impact moving forward. The LAEDC reorganized their own organization around the strategy, and engaged implementation champions – groups already doing great work on the ground – to bring additional stakeholders in.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

*Social Media Plays a Role*

With the belief that it is incumbent upon all of us to take responsibility for the health of our community, the LAEDC public outreach process was critical.

As part of the implementation strategy, they developed a social media plan which includes:

A website dedicated to the Strategic Plan which includes:

- **A downloadable version** of the Plan
- **An overview of the plan** and its goals
- **An outline** of performance measures
- **A call to action to residents** of the region to ‘Endorse! Advocate! Education!’ - which includes a point-click endorsement page where individuals and organizations can show their support for the plan by adding their name to the growing endorsement list
- **Link to LAEDC YouTube channel** with up-to-the minute videos (town halls, public forums, meetings) and announcements

Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr feeds which include streaming, daily updates to keep followers abreast of:

- **New legislative developments** in the region
- **Upcoming meetings** and town halls
- **Important announcements**



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## MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY AROUND A 10-YEAR EFFORT TO PREPARE YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

Launched in 2010, the Decade of Difference is a ten-year community initiative designed to prepare Humboldt youth to be contributing and productive members of society, community and economy. This will be achieved through strategic efforts focused on kindergarten readiness, early literacy in reading and math, financial literacy, college and career planning, creative and innovative entrepreneurship activities, teacher training and professional development, and parent, business and community engagement.

### Goals of the Decade of Difference

- **100% of 4th grade students** will demonstrate grade level mastery in Reading and Math;
- **95% of entering high school freshmen** will graduate with a high school diploma; and,
- **90% of high school graduates** will continue their education and enroll in a post-secondary educational program.

By achieving these goals, youth will be better prepared for the economy of the future and the Humboldt region will have a ready, willing and capable workforce for local employers. There will be increased opportunities for young adults to engage in viable employment and small business opportunities. They will see an improved standard of living in the region evidenced by decreased reliance on social services, decreased youth and young adult criminal activity and decreased poverty rates. Most importantly, there will be a culture where parents, schools, businesses and the broader community are working together to set high standards and expectations for youth. The Initiative was developed and launched in Humboldt County, but is now being introduced in Mendocino and Del Norte Counties to the South and North, respectively.



## FIRST YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- **Launch of the Work Group** consisting of 100 community members
- **Identification of 11 Pilot Schools/Communities** and completion of needs assessments
- **65 Early Literacy Tutors Trained** Serving 190 Youth (Kindergarten and 1st Grade)
- **35 Youth Business Plan Applications**
- **Career Technical Education Programs** has been redesigned
- **“I’ve Already Been Admitted to College”** College of the Redwoods Program launched
- **Ten year commitment** to an Online Career Planning Tool
- **HSU Teacher Training Program** being reviewed
- **180 Teachers Trained** in Professional Learning Communities, Business Plan Development, and Career Resources
- **Youth Entrepreneurship** activities provided (e.g., Guy Fieri, Lemonade Day, Junior Achievement, 4-H SET Fair Expo, etc.)
- **Evaluation Framework drafted**
- **Over 90 Community Presentations**
- **Identification from Business Community Members** of essential workforce competencies
- **Ferndale High Schools’** Financial Literacy Graduation Requirement
- **5 Financial Institutions** have come to the table to support financial literacy and savings

## PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

### SETTING EXPECTATIONS THAT SUSTAIN MOMENTUM

The biggest lesson learned thus far is the importance of packaging and promoting the effort as 10 year plan. This has been the key to creating the “sustained attention span” necessary to tackle a complex challenge like education. People expect continuing progress, but not overnight success. It also will help weather the inevitable changes in leadership over 10 years. Already, long-term commitments in terms of base-level funding from institutions have been established.

### CAPTURING PEOPLE’S IMAGINATION AND PROVIDING MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

The initiative offers a clear focus for mobilization coupled with a multitude of opportunities for a lot of people to get involved, enabling the whole community to “own” part of the solution. Hundreds have been able to get involved in planning, teaching, evaluation, and mentoring. There have been professional development communities for teachers to focus student learning; engagement of service clubs; roles for employers; opportunities for community tutors; etc.

### ENGAGING BUSINESS AS A CRITICAL DRIVER

The Initiative convened panels of employers, and they emphasized the importance of having an educated workforce, as well as the importance of making entrepreneurial skill development a part of a student’s experience (e.g., through Junior Achievement in middle school, business plan contests in high school and college). The business community has been mobilized to focus on being specific about what makes for a successful worker (e.g., entrepreneurial thinking, adept at working in teams, etc.). With this engagement, business can now be called on for internships and other opportunities.

### ESTABLISHING MEASURABLE GOALS HAS KEPT THE FOCUS ON OUTCOMES

Setting fourth grade reading and math goals, in particular, has resulted in educators and community paying close attention to the statistics and test results, even as individual schools seek to achieve the outcomes in different ways.

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## DRIVING JOB CREATION, INVESTMENT, AND INNOVATION IN THE NEXT ECONOMY

With Valley Vision acting as the neutral convening organization, in collaboration with the Sacramento Metro Chamber, SACTO, and SARTA, the Next Economy Capital Region Prosperity Plan is a broad-based public-private partnership led by area business leaders to create effective strategies and joint action over the next 12 months to drive new job creation, investment, and innovation.

Since the global recession hit in 2007, more than 145,000 people have lost their jobs in the six-county Capital Region, with construction, professional services and government – the dominant employment sectors – being hardest hit. The region’s unemployment rate recently escalated to 12.5% in July, and economists predict Sacramento’s unemployment rate won’t fall below 10% until the end of 2015. As a result, foreclosures and bankruptcies remain at devastatingly high levels. To reverse this pattern, employers, business, government, educational institutions, utilities and workers themselves need the courage to consider bold new approaches—and to work together for such approaches to succeed.

Investing in building a shared economic prosperity plan that diversifies and strengthens the regional economy is exactly what Next Economy aims to do. A broad and diverse slate of regional stakeholders have joined together to forge new joint ventures and strategies with measurable outcomes that will:

1. **Encourage innovation, new business creation, capital formation and the scaling up of key industry sectors in our region**, and through enhanced trade, link us to the outside world;
2. **Remove unnecessary impediments** that slow business investment and job creation; and
3. **Ensure our regional workforce acquires the education and skills needed** for the jobs that will be in demand.

Data-driven strategies and action steps for transforming the 6-county economy will be established, targeting high growth industries and industry clusters that drive economic growth, innovation, workforce development, access to new capital, and increased quality of life factors. Based on preliminary analysis, the following clusters have been identified:

1. **Life sciences and health services** (e.g. hospitals, research and development, and medical devices)
2. **Information and communications technology** (e.g. software, computer and electronic products, and telecommunications)
3. **Agribusiness and food technology** (e.g. farms, food processing, and agricultural machinery)
4. **Knowledge-intensive business and financial services** (e.g. technical consulting, engineering, and investments)
5. **Education & knowledge creation** (e.g. higher education, publishing, and support services)
6. **Clean energy technology** (e.g. renewable energy, energy efficiency, and alternative transportation)

The Next Economy project was unveiled in August 2011 to 400 regional leaders where a case for action was made. In November, 150 citizens were invited to the Next Economy Regional Forum. In a town hall format, this action-oriented interactive session presented preliminary research findings and opened the first public discussion to move the Capital Region to their Next Economy as quickly as possible.

**nexteconomy**  
CAPITAL REGION PROSPERITY PLAN

## PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

### CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

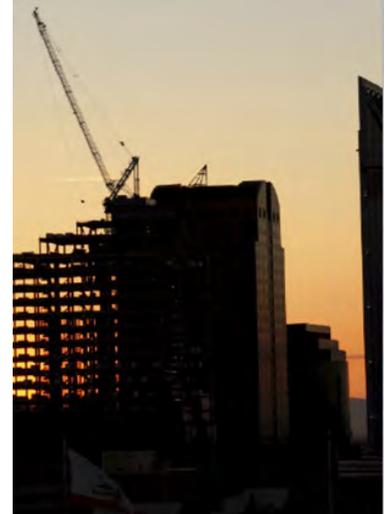
The Next Economy provides an example of state-of-the-art regional economic development with a stewardship focus. The Sacramento region has developed a culture of collaboration over the past decade that provided essential conditions for this effort. Starting with the Water Forum, followed by the Sacramento Blueprint, these initiatives gave people the tools to work with others, helped them find a common ground and gave them the ability to make choices and give input in a group setting. This coupled with a kind of “servant leadership” model – where everyone contributes but getting credit is not the focus – has created this culture of collaboration in the Sacramento Region.

### NOT TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The culture of collaboration/nature of stewardship takes time to build but is the basis of building an economic strategy – this is not traditional economic development. It is actively engaging all community stakeholders - pulling people from various leadership positions across the region – to build support.

### NEED TO BUILD A STRONG LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Key lesson learned is that a region needs to build a leadership infrastructure to organize and sustain this kind of major economic strategic initiative. However, there is no need to create a new organization – existing partners will promote the actions identified in the strategy.



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## BUILDING BI-NATIONAL BRIDGES FOR MUTUAL PROSPERITY

The world's economic landscape has profoundly changed since the end of the Cold War. Competition is no longer limited to nation-states. With the emergence of globalization, the world has become increasingly inter-connected, and large economic units called "mega-regions" have emerged as the centers of global economic activity. The creation of the Cali Baja Bi-National Mega-Region is an innovative response to these new economic realities. Through a partnership made possible by a twelve-month U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant, the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (SDREDC) and the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC) conducted a series of workshops, in-depth interviews, meetings and discussions with literally hundreds of public and private stakeholders representing all regions within the bi-national mega-region. Contributors included the active participation and guidance of the Mega-Region Advisory Board – Bank of America, AT&T, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Imperial Irrigation District, County of Imperial, Imperial Valley Joint Chambers, San Diego County Water Authority and the Brawley Inn.

The purpose of this strategy is to attract new high-tech industry investments and retain and expand existing businesses; and to differentiate the region from Los Angeles and the rest of the Southern California Mega-Region by creating a global brand that defines the unique qualities of the Cali Baja Bi-National Mega-Region. Each region within this bi-national mega-region offers something special:

- **San Diego County** brings intellectual capital in the form of an educated workforce, academic and applied research centers and access to venture capital.

- **Imperial County** offers abundant, relatively inexpensive land, water rights and the capacity for alternative and renewable energy development and generation.
- **Baja California** provides a sophisticated low-cost manufacturing base, inexpensive labor and a steady supply of engineers.

Combining their strengths and assets around a campaign targeting key high-tech industries positions the mega-region to meet its economic development goals of attracting and creating sustainable, high-wage jobs. To achieve these goals, the mega-region is focusing on attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), recruiting established companies to expand operations and creating new business opportunities within the bi-national mega-region. These industries include:

- **Cleantech** (including alternative and renewable energy);
- **Applied Biotech** (Biotechnology, Bio-Agriculture and Medical Devices);
- **Specialized Manufacturing**; and,
- **Logistics** (including transportation and warehousing).

This strategy is an ambitious and innovative approach to economic development for several reasons. First, it partners a predominately urbanized, knowledge-based economy – San Diego County – with a predominantly rural, traditional agricultural economy – Imperial County. Recent literature on mega-regions notes that the rise of cities on which these mega-regions are based is often at the expense of rural economies which frequently experience a loss of business and human capital. This development strategy is designed to help



Imperial County grow and diversify its economy and avoid a “brain drain” in the process by marketing its assets as part of the larger package. Not limited to attracting outside foreign investments, this strategy is designed to encourage entrepreneurialism by connecting business interests in San Diego with business opportunities in Imperial.

Second, the strategy reaches across the international border to bring in the major metropolitan areas of Baja, California -- Mexicali, Tecate, Tijuana and Ensenada -- as partners. It is based on the understanding that both Imperial and San Diego counties have strong economic

ties south of the border. People move back and forth across the border to work, live, shop and recreate. Baja’s economy has strong agricultural roots, much like Imperial County’s. However, it is much more diversified, with a sophisticated, low-cost manufacturing base and a talented pool of locally educated engineers. The value of this bi-national approach combines Baja’s assets into the larger package, adding to overall competitiveness. Additionally, this bi-national mega-region facilitates their collaborating on marketing activities and cooperating on the common challenges they face.

**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**NEED A DEDICATED DRIVER**

There needs to be a dedicated person/key staff person to drive these efforts – someone involved with the organization, not just a consultant brought in to do a study.

**MANAGE STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS**

It is important to manage stakeholder expectations and reinforce the notion that economic development is a long-term process that requires building trust among key partners.

**BUILDING TRUST IN A CAREFUL WAY**

Historically, there had been a long-term distrust between rural and urban areas based on the belief that all the urban areas wanted were rural resources. By conducting a series of stakeholder workshops with all three partners to agree on what kind of workforce and infrastructure were needed, they were able to break down preconceived notions and build trust. An MOU developed in June 2011 among the three parties is establishing ongoing working relationships and rules of engagement for attraction and retention efforts and growing the regional economy together. As a result of these collaborative efforts, the region received one of seven national “America Works” \$500,000 grant from Wal-Mart to align workforce training systems across San Diego and Imperial Counties – further enhancing the human infrastructure of the mega-region.



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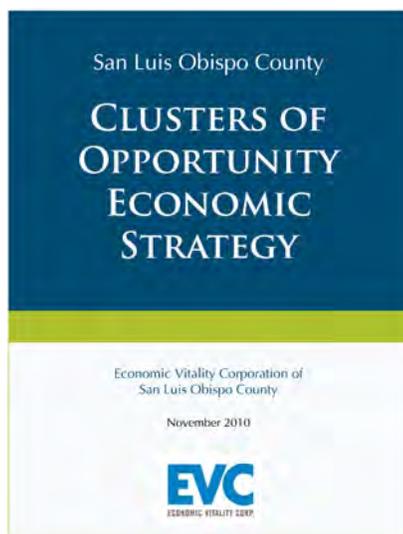
**For additional information, please visit:**

[www.calibaja.org](http://www.calibaja.org)

## OVER 100 BUSINESS LEADERS DRIVE FIRST-EVER ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Economic Strategy Project is the first-ever public/private partnership to perform an in-depth assessment and develop a strategic plan for the San Luis Obispo (SLO) County economy. The initial phase was completed in November 2010 after more than twelve months of work and multiple strategy sessions involving more than 125 business leaders throughout the region. The next phase has been underway for over a year: the implementation of the strategy, which is expected to create long-term prosperity and job growth throughout County, while improving the economic vitality and well-being of its communities.

The Economic Strategy project identified six business clusters – Business, Design and Construction, Green Energy, Health Services, Knowledge and Innovation, Specialized Manufacturing, and Uniquely SLO County – that have been responsible for 90% of regional job growth since 1995. Through a series of work sessions with business leaders, the most promising opportunities for growth and prosperity were identified, followed by the most critical requirements to capitalize on those opportunities by cluster. Priority strategies were identified and implementation teams were created, involving “business champions” from each cluster. These champions have been teamed with community partners where appropriate, and receive staff support from the San Luis Obispo County Economic Vitality Corporation.



### INITIAL PROGRESS

- **Board of Supervisors and Staff expressed support** to move forward with the development and implementation of the Economic Strategy
- **Building Design and Construction** – Participated in the County’s Process Improvement Committees for Building Permits and Land Use with significant progress on mutual goals to improve county processes.
- **Green Energy** – Two large-scale solar projects have been approved; multiple BPI trainings have occurred in SLO County with additional certifications achieved.
- **Uniquely SLO** – Launch of major marketing campaign (e.g., U.S. Airways, EVC cluster ad, Savor the Central coast marketing); heavy promotion of local farmers markets.
- **Health Services** – Sierra Vista Hospital hosted a convening on the benefits, resources, regulations, and implementation considerations regarding Health Information Exchanges, a critical first step on priority strategy for the cluster.
- **Knowledge and Innovation** – A survey of local employers established a baseline of interest for a Local Employers Job Fair at area colleges, and for current participation in internship programs.
- **Specialized Manufacturing** – A vision statement was completed, and focused topics chosen for exchange among companies.

**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**BUSINESS CHAMPIONS ARE THE KEY CATALYST**

The Economic Strategy represented a breakthrough for SLO County. The breakthrough was possible only with the engagement of key business leaders who also were willing to step forward as stewards of their County’s economic and community vitality. The breakthrough would not have happened if the effort had been public-sector led.

**BIPARTISAN PUBLIC SECTOR STEWARDSHIP IS ALSO A KEY INGREDIENT**

Two County Supervisors—one Republican, one Democrat—joined together to secure seed funding for the strategy development process. However, just as importantly, they participated in virtually every cluster strategy meeting, hearing directly about opportunities and requirements for growth. As a result, they continue to support the implementation process. By creating a bipartisan partnership in support of a business-led, county-based economic strategy, they created visibility, credibility, and an opportunity for a breakthrough.

**SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

Business champions need to know what they are signing up for and that it is a long-term process – that it will not be completed in 12 months. At the same time, it is important to make it clear that they are not expected to implement strategies on their own—that the EVC will support them and bring community partners to the table when necessary.

**ORGANIZE IMPLEMENTATION AROUND TANGIBLE PROJECTS**

A vision is important, as is the articulation of priority strategies, but implementation must also be broken up into manageable pieces or projects that can be completed, with tangible outcomes. Then, it is just as critical to use those completed projects as the foundation for the next set of projects that continue the implementation trajectory of the vision and priority strategies.

**EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION WITH VOLUNTEER CHAMPIONS REQUIRES PERIODIC “NUDGING” FROM STAFF**

Realistically, although with the best of intentions, volunteer business champions are a challenging time following through in a timely fashion on implementation commitments. There needs to be a support staff function that provides project management and outcome tracking—but also periodic reminders and encouragement to keep the momentum going on key tasks.

**FIND MANY WAYS TO KEEP PEOPLE ENGAGED**

To maintain momentum in implementation, it is critical to find different ways to keep business and community partners engaged even when they are not able to attend meetings or are not immediately put to work on a project. They need to be kept in the loop, and given opportunities to provide ideas and an open door to get involved in projects. It is important to remember that implementation is not a straight line process; there is a need to be opportunistic and very flexible in working people in and out of implementation roles.

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## REGIONAL COALITION PIONEERS NEW APPROACH IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Sierra Nevada Tourism project is a partnership among the Sierra Business Council, the National Geographic Society, and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to capture the history, heritage, and attractions distinctive to the Sierra Nevada region.

The project seeks to promote tourism for the 21st Century, tourism that can conserve the region's historic towns and heritage sites, restore and protect the landscape, sustain local businesses and communities, and develop a constituency to advocate for the sustainability of the region.

Attractions, businesses, and events distinctive to the Sierra Nevada are recognized, providing travelers with a richer and more complete experience spread throughout the Sierra Nevada. Hence, this project seeks to celebrate the Sierra Nevada as a world-class destination, while contributing to the economic health of the region by promoting sustainable tourism.

### Overall Project Goals:

- **Empowers** the community and promotes collaboration
- **Highlights** frequently overlooked assets
- **Distributes** the tourism impact
- **Attracts** travelers' interested in conservation, local values, history & culture
- **Promotes** responsible and sustainable Tourism = economic value
- **Connects** visitors to the land through authentic and distinctive experiences
- **Economic benefits** – increased tourism and local dollars
- **Increased reach** by co-branding with National Geographic
- **Affinity Network** to advance regional objectives

### Deliverables include:

- **Website and WebMap** – Both are active and continue to be enhanced and expanded. There are currently 1,200 assets online, with an additional backlog of approximately 1,800 assets still to come. Itinerary building on the site is now a working function, and they receive 15,000-18,000 unique visitors to the site per month, with monthly traffic growing 10% per month.
- **Print Map** – has been completed, distribution channels and methods are identified, and the print map will be distributed in the Spring of 2012. The plan is to distribute 100,000 copies next year.
- **Hand Held App** – has been completed both for Droid and iPhone platforms. The App is distributed.
- **Geocouncil** – continues to meet and play an active role in the project.

### Additional unanticipated outcomes:

- **Formation of a National Geocouncil** – to share best practices across the country and now across the world (e.g. Guatemala, Balkan Peninsula). Sierra NV project covers the largest geographic area, but there are 13 additional geotourism projects in the U.S.
- **Issue of sustainable tourism is being picked up nationally** – the Obama Administration intends on establishing a national tourism bureau one focus of which will be sustainable tourism.



**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**SET EXPECTATIONS**

It is important to be clear up front on the time required to make this happen. This is not an overnight process, so one must be clear that it will be 3-5 years before things are truly complete.

**LEADERSHIP**

Having long-term relationships built within the region and business (forestry, transportation, land management) but also state and fed agencies has been a critical success factor across sectors and landscapes.

**REGIONAL IDENTITY**

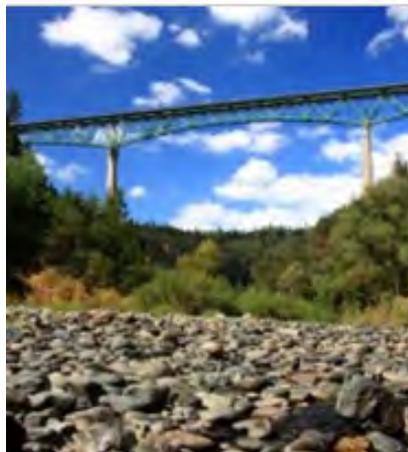
Having a regional identity already established helped advance the identity and the project and fostered an even stronger sense of regional identity.

**ABILITY TO TAP INTO MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES**

The critical timing of the Morgan Family Foundation contribution created the ability to leverage much more funding from other sources - BLM, Forest Service, SN Conservancy, Fed Highway Administration, state parks, and others. Having that infrastructure in place was critical.

**BREAKING THROUGH THE SENSE OF PAROCHIALISM IN THE REGION A CHALLENGE**

Breaking through the sense of parochialism around marketing, tourism and promotion – each city wants its own strategy, but the hope is to aggregate that effort into a regional effort – has been a real challenge for them and is still an ongoing process.



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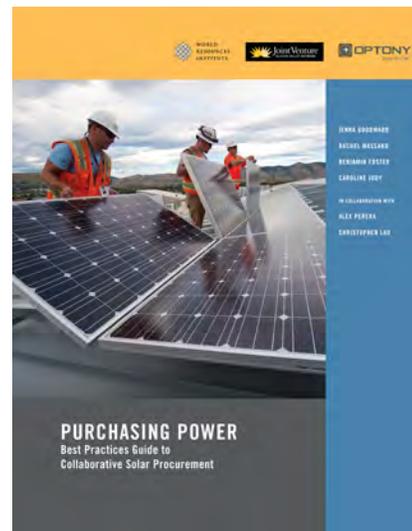
[www.sierranevadageotourism.org](http://www.sierranevadageotourism.org)

## BUILDING A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COLLABORATION PROMOTING RENEWABLE ENERGY

The Silicon Valley Collaborative Renewable Energy Procurement (SV-REP) Project is a large-scale initiative intended to serve as a replicable, scalable model of regional collaboration. Due to the vision and leadership of the participating organizations and individuals in Silicon Valley, Phase I of the SV-REP Project is the largest multi-agency procurement of renewable power in the country (as of January 2011) and serves as an example of how collaboration can significantly reduce costs associated with the procurement of solar power by public agencies.

Nine participating public agencies were drawn from the members of Joint Venture Silicon Valley Public Sector Climate Task Force, with the County of Santa Clara acting as lead agency for the procurement. They represent a total of 70 solar installation sites spread across more than 40 locations, with the potential to generate more than 14 MW of power at peak capacity. This is the environmental equivalent of planting approximately 2,800 acres of trees and can provide enough power for 2,700 average California

homes. In total, these sites will more than double the entire solar installed capacity for nonresidential systems across the County. Collectively, the SV-REP project installations are expected to generate approximately \$70 million in local economic activity



### PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

#### WELL-DEFINED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Joint Venture (Convener)** - Joint Venture worked to facilitate the multijurisdictional effort in collaboration with Santa Clara County. Joint Venture’s Task Force structure provided the framework for close collaboration necessary for a project with such a large regional scope.
- **The County of Santa Clara, California (Lead Organization)** - The County initiated this project by scoping collaboration and completing a significant amount of research and information sharing on solar power. The County accepted the responsibility of lead organization based on its staff’s belief that reduced transaction costs and economies of scale in the procurement would result in significantly lower pricing than could otherwise be negotiated with an independent procurement.

- **Optony Inc. (Technical Adviser)** - Optony, an energy research and consulting services firm, served as the project’s technical adviser. Optony was engaged by the County and the participants to provide independent technical expertise in solar project evaluation, procurement, and project management.
- **Participating Public Agencies (Participants)** – There were a total of eight participating agencies (listed in the project summary) in addition to the lead organization. These participants ranged from small towns to large county-wide special districts. The participants were responsible for attending informational sessions, gathering preliminary site information and conducting analyses, reviewing RFP template documents, and participating in contract negotiations.

**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

As a trusted convener of local government agencies, Joint Venture was able to effectively bring together the SV-REP project participants. By leveraging the framework of an existing Joint Venture initiative, the Public Sector Climate Task Force, the project began with a common level of understanding and channels of communication. Shortly after the launch of the project, Joint Venture assembled a steering committee, the SV-REP Project Leadership Team, in order to keep the regional perspective in mind throughout the process. The team met regularly to strategize and guide each phase, engage the participants, and shape the overall collaborative effort. In addition, County staff provided leadership by conducting significant research into different methods of financing renewable energy systems and concluded that, given tight budgets and the desire to avoid debt financing, using a PPA financing model was optimal for the project.

**STRATEGIC BUNDLING OF SITES**

Strategic “bundling” (aggregation and grouping) of sites was essential in generating vendor interest, competition, and volume pricing and therefore was crucial to the success of the initiative. Bundling encouraged active local vendor participation on the smaller bundles while driving national-level players to bid on the larger bundles. Ensuring that each bundle

did not contain too many sites but allowing vendors to bid on multiple bundles encouraged participation by avoiding the risks inherent in an all-or-nothing process.

Another key feature of the approach to maximizing the benefits from collaboration and bundling was to conduct proposal evaluations and contract negotiations by bundle (rather than separately for each participant). For evaluations, the benefits of bundling were clearly demonstrated by enabling accurate comparisons for the combined pricing given specific site characteristics (e.g., comparing the pricing for a small 50 kW rooftop system with a large 900 kW carport would have been misleading to decision makers without a proper context). Contract negotiations were also conducted on a bundle-group basis. This approach was important in driving better terms and conditions with all participating agencies’ input and to streamline PPA documents for both the vendor and buyers. Based on vendor feedback and analysis of other PPA contracts, the final contract for the SV-REP may be in the top 10th percentile from a buyer’s perspective when all terms and conditions are considered.

The first contracts between the vendors and participating agencies were signed in January 2011, and in the following months project teams began working on project implementation.



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## REINVIGORATING THE ECONOMY THROUGH SUSTAINED STEWARDSHIP

The Sonoma region has a long history of successful economic development with a stewardship focus. Over the past fifteen years, the region has focused on a cluster-driven approach to respond to regional needs and accomplish wins. A few of the key initiatives are:

**ECONOMIC VITALITY PROJECT** (1995) – The Economic Vitality Project, which assessed the issues of economic vitality in Sonoma County, was a watershed for the Sonoma region. The study reviewed the overall economy of the county to understand its recent developments and identified opportunities for its future. While the focus was on economics, it became clear that the vitality of the county was also dependent upon other issues that enhanced its overall quality of life, such as education, health, crime and environmental quality. Led by the Board of Supervisors and PG&E, strong partnerships with the private sector were forged, enabling the region to engage businesses in major clusters – tourism, agriculture/wine and technology. This resulted in very specific outcomes including a new tourism program, joint marketing of Sonoma brand agricultural products and a new engineering program at Sonoma State. This initial success established credibility for the cluster-driven approach.

**UPDATED CLUSTER STUDY** (2004) – The Economic Development Board, in partnership with the Workforce Investment Board, updated the cluster study focused on experience industries, health care and professional and innovation services. This led to recommendations for training initiatives for these clusters, which were successfully implemented.

**SONOMA INNOVATION COUNCIL** (2008-ongoing) – The Sonoma Innovation Council was established to take a long-range look at the county economy, and began by looking at the impact of global competition, resource constraints and demographic changes. This led to an educational initiative which included mentoring for Hispanic youth to close the achievement gap, and followed by a further updating of clusters which included health, advanced manufacturing, environmental and tourism/ experience industries. Business leaders identified action steps in these clusters focused on regulatory/ permitting reform, training and marketing. Results are reported at regular County Economic Summits, and over 2000 people are connected to the Innovation Council and Economic Development Board through email and social media.



**PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS THAT BUILD TRUST AND FAMILIARITY ARE KEY TO SUSTAINABILITY**

The region has found consistency in leadership and staff over time gave them the ability to form long-term relationships and created a trust factor/familiarity factor. This, coupled with the fact that the EDB is a small agency, enabled them to approach things at a community level. The community approach helped build trust that things are being done for the greater good of the county.

**KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER**

Make sure you know what the needs are – what do people/community leaders/businesses want? The cluster-driven approach helped to keep the focus on the customer.

**PROMOTE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS**

Promoting strong partnerships (with business, government, non-profits) helped them to respond to cluster priorities and accomplish some early wins.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH IS VERY IMPORTANT**

Under promise, over deliver.



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