

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley
 affiliated with The Bradco Companies, a commercial real estate company



Welcome to the 59th edition of the Bradco High Desert Report originally published in May 1993. We can all agree that 2020 was a very challenging year. Now that we have 2020 in our “review mir-

ror,” I wanted to clarify the delay in publishing the 59th edition (we should call it the post - COVID edition) and wish to apologize to our many loyal readers and subscribers who rely on this data to make some of their decisions in the Mojave River Valley region.

The year 2020 was a very odd year, including COVID-19, the unrest we saw in some of our very major cities, a very controversial presidential election, and what seems to be a constantly changing political environment.

Many of you who have received this newsletter understand the importance of my relationship (and our past relationship) with Dr. Alfred Gobar, the renowned national economist who is based in Brea, CA, whose family were long-time residents of Lucerne Valley, CA, and who is by far our most major contributing editor.

My wife, Deborah K. Brady, and I had the opportunity to meet with him at his home on November 11, 2018. Dr. Gobar has battled cancer for many years but still maintains an incredible sense of humor and is someone to whom I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude. I have said many times that I would not be the person I am without his friendship, his guidance, and most importantly, his humor. Many of you do not know I was a very poor student in school and I did not like math.

Dr. Gobar taught me how to love math, how to play with numbers, and how to better understand math in general.

2020 was also a challenging year for many of us personally. My brothers, Mark and his wife, Linda, Doug and his wife, Tanya, John, and Todd and his wife, Karen as well as my wife Deborah lost our matriarch, my mother, Mrs. Mary R. Brady. My mom passed away during the first weeks of the COVID pandemic. What COVID-19 taught us was it took exactly 120 days to bury her in Northern California. I know she is in a better place. She is with my grandparents and would be very challenged by what she saw on the TV with riots, unrest, and a very divided country.

We also lost some great people and friends throughout our region, most notably, Ms. Glee Heikes, one of the High Desert’s (Mojave River Valley) greatest philanthropists. Ms. Heikes was involved until the day of her passing in making the Mojave River Valley a better place to live, work, and play and was continually helping others through her philanthropy. We also lost other friends, including David Kniss (Bob & Judy Kniss' brother), Clifton Harris’s nephew; Paul Courtney and his family's mother, Louise Courtney; Daniel Seagondollar’s father, Harry Buddy Seagondollar;

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Economics & Politics, Inc. Law Enforcement Recommendations

By John E. Husing, Ph.D., Economist, ECAP



It is clear from the public perception about High Desert crime, the violent crime rates and the questionable property crime rates, that an increased law enforcement presence would

generally be welcomed by the community. In the four cities contracting with the sheriff's office, the very high and increasing number of people per officer shows a real need to add personnel. The problem is the budget difficulties facing these cities.

Given Barstow's experience of passing Measure Q by a 59.2% vote in the last election, and Victorville's vote of 50.1% on Measure P in November 2020, it is clear residents of those cities were willing to put taxes behind a solution. This was not the case with this year's Measure O in Apple Valley. There, only 34% agreed. So at least two of the High Desert's communities are willing to fund what appeared to be necessary increases in sheriff's staffing to deal with their crime issues.

With more funds becoming available in Victorville, it was in the High Desert Analysis & Strategic Recommendations report that only part of the increase in

the sheriff's budget from Measure Q go to sworn officers. To expand the department's coverage, a portion should go to new, less expensive, non-sworn Sherriff Service Specialists that handle such functions as taking reports when suspects are not present, collecting evidence, closing traffic lanes during traffic collisions and active crime scenes, enforcing parking violations, and towing vehicles. This would free up sworn officers to spend more time increasing their presence on patrol and/or using their community knowledge to self-initiate efforts to reduce crime.

Discussions with area leaders have also suggested creating geographically smaller beat areas in which sworn and non-sworn officers would work. This would allow additional personnel to serve areas of a city where the highest demand for attention is needed. In addition, a dedicated High Desert crime analyst was suggested.

These recommendations might work in Apple Valley, Hesperia, and Adelanto if turnover of sworn sheriff's officer's freed up staffing and funding to do so.

During my interviews with city leaders, another need that arose was the importance of efforts to reduce the presence of illegal marijuana operations in the High Desert. Too often, the area's rented

houses are being used to grow pot. This brings illegal activity into neighborhoods. Eventually, these homes must be destroyed due to the mold created by the water pumped into them. They also help deplete the area's scarce water supply. When marijuana is grown outside, illegal high fences are erected to keep it from public view. It is beyond the ability of local code enforcement personnel to deal with the issue, as they have frequently been threatened with violence. They must often be accompanied by sheriff's officers, putting further pressure on the Sheriff Department's understaffed operations. Here, serious pressure needs to be applied to the California Bureau of Cannabis Control by the High Desert's State Assembly and Senate representatives to cause that agency to begin seriously undertaking its responsibility for shutting down these operations. They have authority for fines up to \$30,000 per violation but have taken little action.

One of the reasons for the High Desert survey, analysis, and strategy report was to provide leaders with the issues people felt they were facing as well as potential solutions. Long term, the crime problem is one that people identified but will need more residents believing that solutions must be funded.

THE BRADCO HIGH DESERT REPORT

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An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

The High Desert Survey's Top Issue: Crime

By Dr. Barbara W. Sirotnik

In July 2018 (yes, in the time before COVID), Mr. Joseph W. Brady asked for my help in identifying the issues that keep the High Desert from growing and thriving. He wanted to spearhead a far-reaching survey of residents, businesses, and leaders which would identify the problems. We talked about the fact that there is nothing worse than doing a survey and raising expectations that things would change based on the results, then letting the survey report sit on a dusty shelf. He assured me that this would not be the case, since Dr. John Husing was to be charged with taking the results, conducting further analysis and in-depth interviews, and producing a "solutions report." At that point I was "all in."

The High Desert Survey was launched in August 2019. It included questions about the good, the bad, and the ugly: the best and worst things about living and working in the High Desert, perceptions of safety, ratings of public and private services, commuting, and a lot of other questions dealing with the quality of life in the High Desert. We had an unprecedented 13,046 usable surveys from residents, 184 from non-resident workers and business owners, and 89 from leaders in education, government, and the non-profit sector. A typical comment from these people was: "I love the High Desert, **BUT**...."

The final results were presented during a virtual event in October 2020. Over the next few months, Dr. John Husing and I will be contributing pieces to the Bradco High Desert Report indicating what the "**BUT**" is and providing recommendations for solutions to the region's issues. In this article, I'd like to start with probably the most serious issue on the mind of residents and non-residents alike: Crime.

Crime: The Reality

Safety (i.e. a low crime rate) is a big component of quality of life in a com-

munity. In fact, it may be one of the major components of ranking scales. For example, the *US News and World Report* ratings of the "Best Places to Live" combines five indices to create its rankings: a Job Market Index (20%), a Value Index (25%), a Desirability Index (15%), a Net Migration Index (10%), and a Quality of Life Index (30%). Within the heaviest weighted Quality of Life Index, the Crime Rate is a 30% factor among the five possible factors.

The following table shows the crime index (from 1 to 100, where 100 is "safest") and crime rate per 1,000 residents for the larger cities in San Bernardino County. The High Desert "large cities"

are highlighted in yellow, with other San Bernardino County large cities included for comparison purposes. The High Desert city with the worst crime index (least safe) is Barstow, with an index of 2. That means that it is only safer than 2% of US large cities rated. Yucca Valley has the best crime index among High Desert cities (30), but that statistic is certainly not a reason to celebrate since that means it is only safer than 30% of US large cities rated. Apple Valley has a slightly lower crime index (24) but has the lowest total crimes per 1,000 residents of all "large" High Desert cities.

Crime: Perceptions and Fear

Crime index and crime rate in largest SB County cities
(2019 FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Data)

City	Crime Index (100 is safest)	Crime rate per 1000 residents		
		Violent Crimes	Property Crimes	Total Crimes
Twentynine Palms	46	4.40	9.97	14.37
Chino Hills	45	1.12	10.53	11.66
Yucaipa	35	3.71	11.88	15.58
Fontana	32	3.42	14.33	17.75
Yucca Valley	30	7.32	13.36	20.68
Apple Valley	24	4.58	14.92	19.50
Rancho Cucamonga	23	2.79	19.28	22.07
Adelanto	21	8.00	13.31	21.31
Highland	21	6.50	16.27	22.77
Hesperia	20	4.82	17.35	22.17
Loma Linda	19	3.14	22.81	25.95
Chino	18	3.52	23.82	27.35
Ontario	16	3.59	23.40	27.00
Victorville	16	8.03	18.45	26.48
Upland	14	3.85	23.53	27.38
Colton	12	3.90	27.55	31.46
Rialto	11	5.72	30.29	36.01
Redlands	9	3.57	29.30	32.87
Montclair	5	5.88	36.92	42.80
Barstow	2	11.36	40.88	52.24
San Bernardino	2	13.19	41.90	55.09

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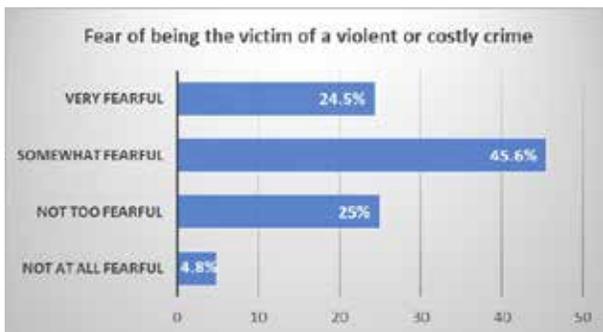
An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

The High Desert Survey's Top Issue: Crime

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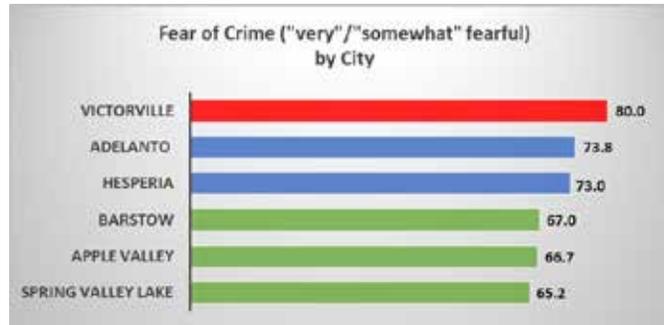
The above table certainly contains troubling information. If an area has a high crime rate, the community's attractiveness as a place to live and work suffers. Healthy behaviors such as exercising and socializing outdoors diminish, stress increases, residents and visitors begin to abandon the area, and businesses often follow that exodus.

Often, people's perceptions of safety do not correspond to the actual crime rate of an area. That is the reason for including a question on the survey regarding people's perceptions about (i.e. fear of) crime. We asked the direct question: "How fearful are you that you will be the victim of a serious crime such as a violent or costly crime?" As seen in the following graph, a bit over 70% of respondents are either "very fearful" or "somewhat fearful" of being the victim of a serious crime. For comparison purposes, we look to other IAR surveys, specifically our San Bernardino Annual Survey and a recent survey of the City of Riverside conducted at about the same time as the High Desert Survey. When the question about fear of crime was asked in those surveys, 36% of county-wide residents expressed that they were "very" or "somewhat fearful." The figure was 32% in the survey in the City of Riverside, and 50% in the City of San Bernardino (a city which has a crime index of 2 as shown in the table on the previous page).



As one might expect, fear of crime and

actual crime are not evenly distributed throughout the region. Every region (and every city) has its "good areas" and "not-so-good" areas. The level of fear varied widely among High Desert cities, with Victorville respondents reflecting the highest level of fear.



In a related question, respondents were asked to indicate whether they feel it is safe to walk in their neighborhoods. A little more than a third (36%) said it is safe, and another 38% think it is "somewhat safe." Again, for comparison purposes, 70% of City of Riverside respondents in a recent survey indicated that they feel it is safe to walk in their neighborhoods, 26% feel it is "somewhat safe," and only 4% do not feel it is safe. And when High Desert residents were presented with the statement: "The High Desert is a relatively safe place to live," only 43% either strongly agreed or agreed.

It is important to determine residents' reasons for the feeling that they are not safe. Upon probing, the main reasons cited for the perceived lack of safety were the fear of crime and gangs (61%) and the homeless population and panhandlers (12%). Another sizable group (18%) expressed concerns about no sidewalks, bad sidewalks, or poor lighting.

The survey also included the following overall/general question:

"What are your biggest concerns/negatives about living/working in the High Desert?" A list of possible negatives was provided, and people were given the option to select multiple concerns. In addition, there was room for people to just write about anything that was on

their mind. The concerns most often mentioned were: Crime and violence (mentioned by 73% of respondents), gang activity (30%), and drugs (47%).

When we asked people to elaborate on their answers, it became clear that people are afraid to shop and remain active outside

their homes due to fear of crime and the perception that there isn't enough police presence to keep them safe. Indeed, there were 488 pages (single spaced) of comments about the various issues and challenges in the community, and most were about crime. Following are a few of the comments:

- "Crime, drugs, and gangs are out of control! It is not even safe to go the store during the day without fear of being car jacked, robbed or assaulted!"
- "The community is very unsafe. I can't even let my little girls outside alone. I have seen so many awful things up here - I am saving every dime I have to get my children out of here. I hate this place and if rent wasn't so expensive down the hill I would've left - however I am a single mother of 4 and I'm not financially able to at this time. I pray every day before bed God will find a way for us to leave here."
- "Need a higher ratio of law enforcement, and crackdowns on absentee landlords who have no stake in our community. We have good people here who are leaving by droves because our community is changing to a place where we no longer feel safe."

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The High Desert Survey's Top Issue: Crime

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With comments like these, it is no wonder that a staggering 64% of respondents agreed with the statement: "I would move out of the High Desert if I could." And only 9% of those with children agreed with the statement: "My children plan to stay in the High Desert when they grow up."

All of the above results demonstrate that crime is on top of people's minds as the major issue in the High Desert. The key takeaway from all of these statistics is that fear of crime can lead to a situation where people may avoid going out and socializing, or they may avoid certain locales altogether. That is, fear of crime can have a huge impact on where people live, work, shop, and socialize. Fear of crime may also increase "protective behaviors" (i.e. owning a weapon, installing a security system or extra locks

in their home, or taking a self-defense class). These behaviors make sense in terms of deterring crime; however, they can also increase isolation and diminish people's sense of connectedness with their community.

Obviously people need to be safe ... that is a priority. But they also need to *feel* safe, so reducing fear of crime should be an additional priority for police departments, city governments, neighborhood watch groups, economic development personnel, and other individuals committed to improving quality of life in the county. Initiatives such as the San Bernardino County Vision 4 Safety (www.Vision4Safety.com) "aims to bring people together to create safer neighborhoods, schools and workplaces in all of our cities, towns and communities." The site includes videos, information

on connecting with law enforcement agencies, safety tips, steps on how to stay safe in an emergency, etc. This is just one way to reduce fear and provide community support for crime reduction efforts of the professionals.

In the next short article, written by Dr. John Husing, you will read about further recommendations to address the issue of crime in the High Desert. I'd like to end by THANKING all of the people who responded to the survey, all of the people who spent their time and financial resources fielding and promoting the survey, and the regional leadership who, along with committed residents, will be responsible for making the solutions happen.



Update From Jay Obernolte's First Term as State Assemblyman, 33rd District

It has been one of the high honors of my life to represent you in the State Assembly these last six years. We achieved much in that time. As your representative, I passed 48 pieces of legislation, including bills that protected taxpayers, cracked down on crime, reduced the burden of government, and made our government

more transparent. We also stopped a lot of bad bills. In my time in Sacramento, I helped defeat over \$300 billion in tax increases, including a \$220 million tax on drinking water. One critical achievement is that, for the time being, we've been able to protect Prop 13 by defeating Prop 15 on the November ballot, which would have chipped away at the protections of Prop 13 by requiring commercial properties be reassessed every year. The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association estimates this

would have raised taxes by \$11.5 billion annually and would hurt many small businesses. California's economy is already struggling, and we already pay among the highest taxes in the country. Voters understood we simply can't afford this.

In closing, my family and I would like to extend our sincere thanks for allowing me to represent you. Regardless of what the future holds for me, it's been an honor to serve as your voice in Sacramento for the last six years.

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Nonprofits and COVID-19 – A New Norm

By Debbie A. Cannon, VP & COO, Academy for Grassroots Organizations

Academy for Grassroots Organizations (AcademyGO) celebrates 20 years of coalescing and strengthening the nonprofit and community-benefit sector in our region. My sincere thanks to the Bradco Companies for asking AcademyGO to report updates about the nonprofit sector's status and the impact of COVID-19.

With a mission to Convene, Equip, and Guide Community Leaders, AcademyGO provides various resources and learning opportunities throughout the region and serves a network of more than 3,000. AcademyGO members have raised over 100 million dollars.

As our CEO, Vici Nagel, likes to say, "They improve our quality of life ... so we want to make sure that the thousands of amazing people and organizations working to change lives in our region have all the resources and skills they need to be successful. That's our mission in a nutshell."

Some of the most impactful training resources are The Fundraising Academy for Grassroots Organizations™ with 205 attendees and The Grantwriting Academy for Grassroots Organization™ with 214 attendees. In response to surveys from 2009 until the Fall of 2020, attendees report raising 100 million dollars combined.

Over the past 20 years, AcademyGO has focused on delivering resources and a place for nonprofit leaders, funders, community leaders, and local businesses to find innovative ways to work together to promote safe, collaborative, and healthy communities.

This article will discuss the impact of the nonprofit sector, learnings during COVID-19, and how nonprofits and businesses can work together to thrive and grow. What will be the "new norm?"

For a quick understanding of nonprofit impact statewide, let us look at the **2019**

Causes Count Report about The Economic Power of California's Nonprofits.

Here are a couple of fundamental discoveries

- One in every 14 California jobs is at a nonprofit and generates 15% of California's Gross State Product.
- California's state, county, and city governments rely heavily on nonprofits to deliver services.
- Nonprofits generate \$208 billion in annual revenue.
- Nonprofits rank as the 4th largest industry in California by employment, producing more jobs than the construction, finance, or real estate industries.
- California volunteers contribute more than \$24.7 billion in unpaid labor each year, the equivalent of 450,000 full-time jobs.
- Download the full report for more details at <https://calnonprofits.org/publications/causes-count>
- Download the San Bernardino County section at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vIKHgw4ATGERkDIX-L-AZN4aG84d9iag/view?usp=sharing>

Learnings from COVID-19

One thing is certain: "getting back to normal" is not going to happen anytime soon.

Just like everyone else, here at AcademyGO there was a need to pivot quickly. Our network convenings, training resources, and grant research programs had to move to Zoom's virtual world. Below are just a few examples of our responses to the virtual world:

- In response, the 2020 Summer Grantwriting Academy became our first Zoom delivery after a few technical hurdles.
- In May, AcademyGO partnered with the Inland Empire Capacity Builder Network to present the 2019 CalNon-

profits Causes Count Report. This collaborative effort produced 138 attendees. A new group of convenings was an informal dialogue with local funders and gave the nonprofit leaders a chance to hear tips about submitting funding requests.

- The annual Access Government Day featured Supervisor Robert Lovingood, 1st District San Bernardino; Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, Chair, 4th District Riverside County; Assemblymember Eloise Reyes, 4th District Assembly District, and U.S. Congressman Mark Takano, 41st Congressional District. The purpose of Access Government Day is connecting nonprofits with government entities they can work with to advance shared goals.

- While attending numerous Zoom webinars and speaking with members, some clear messages started to emerge. One that stood out was the fact that most nonprofits rely on the support of volunteers. This volunteer situation is incredibly real for the smaller nonprofits, food providers, and faith-based organizations. The average volunteer is in the COVID high-risk category, and now there was a greater need and fewer volunteer resources.

These responses were made possible by several nonprofits, funders, and government representatives working together to get the information out and keep nonprofits and community-based organizations informed. The lesson learned is that there is a need to find suitable partners and create teams with the skills, willingness, and desire to rise to the task.

In all of this, there is good news, and this gives AcademyGO hope. Despite all of the confusion and uncertainty, nonprofits continued to serve thousands of meals, provide shelter, masks, technical assistance for homeschooling,

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US 395 Project is just the latest in High Desert transportation improvements

By Tim Watkins, SBCTA, Chief of Legislative and Public Affairs



Construction on San Bernardino County Transportation Authority's (SBCTA) US

395 Widening – Phase 1 project began in April 2019 and was completed in October 2020. US Route 395 is one of the main north/south highways in Southern California, providing access to and linking economic centers, recreational areas, and urban and rural regions. As a result of the project, enhanced safety, improved travel times, congestion relief, and overall traffic flow will be realized in this segment of this important High Desert corridor.

Phase 1 widened US 395 between SR-18 (Palmdale Road) and Chamberlaine Way from two lanes to four lanes and installed turn lanes and signals at various intersections within the project limits including:

- A new signal at Seneca Road, leaving a dedicated turning lane for northbound traffic to turn left.
- Added traffic signals at Mojave Drive to allow for two through lanes in each direction.
- Modified Ranch Road to include

ADA requirements and pedestrian signals.

- Widened Air Base Road to two lanes in each direction. ADA improvements and new signal poles match the new configuration.
- Added video detection systems to Chamberlaine Way to help signals operate efficiently.

The project represents an investment of nearly \$60 million in transportation funds, including approximately \$18 million from Measure I. Measure I is the 1/2 cent sales tax collected within San Bernardino County for county-specific transportation improvements. San Bernardino County voters first approved the measure in 1989 and, overwhelmingly, its extension in 2004, with more than 80% voting to extend the measure through 2040.

In recent years, the High Desert has seen an array of transportation investments throughout the region. The Interstate 15 interchanges at Rancho Road and La Mesa/Nisqually, the extension of the Yucca Loma Corridor, and the Lenwood Road Bridge are just a few of the examples of the advancements made for commuters, residents, and business owners of the High Desert.

Nonprofits and COVID-19 – A New Norm

Continued

transportation, food, and in-home visits to seniors, plus so much more. Several collaboratives developed to share information and build a network to identify and deliver services, often without outside funding. Businesses stepped up and began dialogues with nonprofits regarding what they needed and what they could deliver in response.

So, the New Norm is upon us. It points directly to more collaboration among all sectors. It is time to start defining the next steps to evaluating the learnings from COVID-19 together.

Call to Action:

Join AcademyGO in continuing the work of striving for our communities' health, safety, and dignity. Let us appreciate that the task is not easy and can sometimes seem impossible, yet let us believe that together we can accomplish the impossible. Let us author the "New Norm" for our community. May I count on you to start the conversation? Contact: Debbie@AcademyGO.com.



Caltrans Project Information for High Desert Region - September 2020

Joy Schneider—Public Information Officer, Caltrans

1. XpressWest – Private rail venture from Victorville to Vegas along I-15 corridor (see attachment for details).
2. 395 Widening Project – these are San Bernardino County Transportation Authority Projects (SBCTA). Please contact Tim Watkins at twatkins@gosbcta.com for more info.

3. Route 395 Caltrans projects

- a. 0N971 – Adelanto (Kramer Rd. to SR 58) Constructed 4-foot median buffer, added 8-foot shoulders, and centerline rumble strip. Completed in 2019.
- b. 0N9712 – Adelanto (1 mile south of Kramer Rd. to 6 miles north of Kramer Rd.) Constructed 4-foot median buffer, added 8-foot shoulders, and

centerline rumble strip. Completed in 2019.

- c. 1G640 – Hesperia, Victorville, Adelanto (From I-15 to 3 miles north of SR 58) Rehab pavement, install CMS signs, upgrade to ADA standards, upgrade guardrail and sign panels. Start in early 2024 and complete in late 2024.
- d. 1K010 – (Includes SR 58) Up-

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Tapestry

Tapestry Update

The Tapestry project is a master-planned residential community in Hesperia. The project is approved for 15,663 residential units and over 700,000 square feet of commercial and support development. The first phase of the project is currently in plan check with construction slated to start in early 2021. The first phase will include 2,104 residential units, an elementary school, a community center, and several parks. It is anticipated that the initial construction of infrastructure will require 18 months and that the first homes will be delivered 9 to 12 months thereafter.

The Tapestry development team is also working with the City of Hesperia and the County of San Bernardino to complete the next phase of work on Ranchero Road. Plans to widen Ranchero Road to 4 lanes with a median/turning movement are being completed, with construction scheduled to begin in the second quarter of 2021. This project will extend from I-15 east to Avenue I and will greatly improve traffic circulation for all Hesperia residents. The project includes signals at various intersections and enhanced turning movements at all intersections. The Tapestry project is contributing \$12 million to this project.

This coming year will be an exciting time for the City of Hesperia. The Tapestry project will bring a new focus on the city and will provide a modern housing stock that has not been available anywhere in the Mojave River Valley. Tapestry will go a long way to help address the housing crisis in the State of California and will be an example of how cities and private investors can work together to address the affordability issues for housing in California.



Caltrans Project Information for High Desert Region - September 2020

Continued

- grade striping to standard 6". Completed in January 2020.
4. State Route 58 Caltrans Projects
 - a. 34770 – Boron (Kern Co. Line to north of Route 395) Construct four-lane divided highway, new interchange, and railroad overhead bridge. Started in late 2017 and will be completed in September 2020. \$190 million.
 5. Interstate 15 (I-15) Caltrans Projects
 - a. 35556 – Victorville (D St., Mojave, Stoddard Wells) Reconstruct three interchanges, widen Mojave River Bridge, and realign I-15. Completion in 2021.
 - b. 1C720 – Barstow (Razor Rd. to Harvard Rd.) Regrade median cross slope. Start late 2022, end late 2023.
 - c. 36851 – Nipton (Stateline) New Agricultural Station completed in October 2019.
 - d. 0K122 – Hesperia and Victorville (Oak Hill to Bear Valley Rd.) Rehab mainline and ramp pavement. Start in Spring 2021, complete in early 2024.
 - e. 0K123 – Barstow (Sidewinder to Mojave River Bridge) Rehab mainline and ramp pavement. Started in August 2020, complete in late 2021.
 - f. 1H390 – Cajon Pass (Near Cleghorn) Construct new CHP Weigh Station close to the one that burned down. Start in late 2022, complete in late 2024.
 - g. 1H660 – CV Kane and Valley Wells Rest Areas (Barstow and Baker) Install electric ZEV charging stations north and southbound at the rest areas for electric vehicle charging. Started in late 2019, complete in late 2020.
 - h. 1J350 – I-15 from Stateline to San Diego County Line. Upgrade striping to 6" standard. Completed in late 2019.
 - i. 1K190 – (Hesperia to Stateline) Overlay bridge deck approaches and departures. Replace joint seals. Start in early 2021, complete in late 2021.
 - j. 1L150 – Barstow (Razor Rd. to east of Baker) Pavement rehab, upgrade guardrail and signs. Start in late 2026, end in late 2027.



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The Mojave Desert AQMD is committed to attaining and maintaining **healthful air quality** while supporting strong and sustainable **economic growth**.

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB) Updates

By Maria Razo, Executive Director

Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino

Despite these unprecedented times with COVID-19, the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB) continues to make great progress in various areas, such as housing families throughout the county, helping families achieve self-sufficiency, and rehabilitating its first permanent supportive housing site for homeless individuals. The article below provides some highlights in our term-limited housing program, our efforts to address homelessness, housing program participants living in the Mojave River Valley region, and a few frequently asked questions. We look forward to our ongoing partnership in making a difference in the lives of the families throughout San Bernardino County.

Term Limits on Housing Assistance for New Voucher Households

Through a special congressional designation called Moving to Work, HACSB can develop, transform, and establish local housing programs and services that best meet the needs of the local communities. Therefore, in 2012, HACSB launched the Term-Limited Lease Assistance Program, which includes term limits for new, non-elderly/non-disabled families receiving housing assistance, coupled with coaching and supportive services to help participating families achieve economic self-sufficiency. Loma Linda University conducts an annual study of the participating families, and below are a few research highlights:

- 60.6% to 78.8% increase of families with wage income
- 78.6% of families meet the self-sufficiency goal by their fifth year of the program
- 65.2% of families have exited the

program prior to their fifth year of assistance.

These outcomes show the positive impact of coupling housing with supportive services. Families are receiving life-long skills to help them gain and retain employment.

Addressing Homelessness

The Housing Authority does not provide emergency housing. It's two primary housing programs provide housing assistance to a limited number of households, based on federal funding received. However, to help address chronic homelessness, the Housing Authority acquired Desert Haven Apartments (formally known as Queens Motel) in Victorville. This site is being completely renovated to create 31 units to house chronically homeless individuals. Various community and county partners will provide on-site supportive services to help ensure stability and to maximize each tenant's ability to live independently. Homeless individuals are referred to this housing site through the county's Coordinated Entry System. At the time of this article submission, the construction at Desert Haven was pending completion.

HACSB Participants in the High Desert

The Housing Authority serves almost 10,800 households in San Bernardino County, the majority of which are seniors, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. The families participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as Section 8) that currently live in the Mojave River Valley Region make up approximately 20% of all the households served in the voucher program, as outlined in the following table:

2020 Program Stats		
Housing Choice Vouchers		10,798
City	HCV	% of total HCV Program
Barstow	504	4.67%
Adelanto	239	2.21%
Victorville	843	7.81%
Apple Valley	315	2.92%
Hesperia	244	2.26%
Total Units	2,145	19.86%

Housing Authority Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can an individual/family access the waiting list applications?

Recently, the Housing Authority transitioned away from paper waiting-list pre-applications to an online, paperless applicant portal. New and existing waiting-list applicants will need to register for the applicant portal by visiting www.hacsb.com

2. Are there any resources in San Bernardino County for homeless individuals and families?

The Housing Authority does not have the resources for immediate housing assistance nor does it manage homeless shelters. San Bernardino County has established a Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) to identify, assess, and prioritize homeless individuals and families for housing and services based on their individual situations. All individuals/families in need of homeless housing assistance and resources should call the 3-digit calling code, 2-1-1. The caller will be connected to a call specialist. A call can be made 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.

3. Prior to housing new families, does HACSB conduct background checks?

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Investing in our Future: Decarbonization in the Mojave River Valley

By Marika Erdely, Founder and CEO of Green EconoME



Protecting the California High Desert communities from the effects of climate change is critical to the health of its residents and

the dynamic ecosystem of the Mojave River Valley. Increased wildfires, drought, and flood risk are taxing an aging infrastructure, which will have devastating outcomes when a large event strikes. Mitigating damage is a necessary step. Getting ahead of it is an innovative one and is where the State of California is invested. The CPUC, CEC and utility companies are working in tandem to make clean energy affordable and accessible while updating the grid and moving us closer to California's energy goals.

Wind, sun, desert floor, and location give the Mojave River Valley a unique opportunity to make significant contributions towards this goal. Leading industries in the Valley such as aerospace, transportation, and manufacturing, emit the most carbon. They also stand to gain the most in NOI through energy investments. For example, in 2016, Green EconoME helped an aerospace manufacturing facility save 719,232 kWh in lighting usage alone across three plants. All three of these lighting projects had a payback period of just 1.6 years, putting thousands back in the client's bottom line.

Investing in clean and efficient energy.

You have put an energy budget in place. Here are some of the programs offered through SCE that property owners in the Mojave River Valley can take advantage of. Self-generation like solar or wind receive Net

Energy Metering, which provides billing credits for surplus energy you "sell back" to the grid. Solar Power on Warehouse Rooftops program is exactly what it sounds like, providing your warehouse rooftop(s) as a sort of solar farm for which you will both use the power and get paid for the surplus kWh. In addition to self-generation, green energy strategies provide clean energy solutions and help finance the cost of installing energy storage, retrofit measures, and demand response. Properties in fire-risk areas of the valley may qualify for the SGIP incentive program, which helps keep power on during Public Safety Power shut-offs or other outages.

How to start saving.

Energy consulting firms like Green EconoME are a great place to start because of our extensive knowledge and experience with a wide variety of solutions and financing options. Green EconoME has helped a diverse set of buildings achieve energy and cost savings through efficiency measures that fit the application and through leveraging incentives to save on project and utility costs. Green EconoME's objective is to increase the net operating income of a property to positively affect market valuations. We are accountable and committed to the performance of each project.

For Green EconoME, a great place for us to start with our client is benchmarking the building to get a baseline of consumption levels and patterns. ENERGY STAR® benchmarking is also required for California's AB 802 energy disclosure law, which I wrote about in the 58th edition of the Bradco Report. This is a perfect reason to take a deeper dive into how your building can become more efficient and part of

the solution.

Marika Erdely is Founder and CEO of Green EconoME. In her previous life, she was a CFO for a land developer and home builder in Calabasas. Marika has an MBA, is a LEED AP BD+C, is a Certified Energy Auditor, and a Fitwel Ambassador and License B Contractor (#1001368).

Contact Marika if you wish to discuss making your building more energy efficient or your AB 802 compliance.

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www.greeneconome.com



(HACSB) Updates

Continued

All applicants 18 years of age and older are subject to third-party screening and verification of criminal history.

4. Who can a community member contact with issues regarding any HACSB program participants?

If a community resident believes a household may be a participant in any of HACSB's affordable housing programs and may be violating housing program rules, they may call (909) 332-6302 to report the situation. Whether the family is a HACSB program participant cannot be disclosed. However, if the family is a HACSB program participant, we will open an investigation and address any findings.



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California Water Law: Legal Challenges of Water Supply Assessments

By Marc Campopiano, Diego Flores, and Lucas Quass¹

Mark Twain is often credited with saying, “Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over.” This remains true in California, where drought conditions, climate change, and population growth throughout the state’s history have made water an increasingly valuable and regulated resource. The legal landscape involves complex questions related to water quality, water sustainability, and competing claims to water rights. One notable area of controversy involves the adequacy of water supply for new development projects.

Nearly two decades ago, in 2001, the state legislature enacted Senate Bill (SB) 610 and SB 221 to promote sustainable, long-term water planning. Collectively, SB 610 and SB 221 require public agencies to determine whether adequate water supply exists for certain large development projects as part of the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by, in part, requesting water supply assessments (WSAs) from water service providers.

Generally, upon request by public agencies, water service providers must prepare WSAs that evaluate whether the projected water supply during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry water years is sufficient to meet the projected water demand associated with the proposed development project over a 20-year planning horizon. After the water service provider approves the WSA, it is then submitted to the public agency as part of the project’s environmental review under CEQA.

Environmental groups and project opponents have challenged WSAs over the past 20 years, generally focusing on the alleged uncertainty or inadequacy of water supplies.

We reviewed each judicial challenge

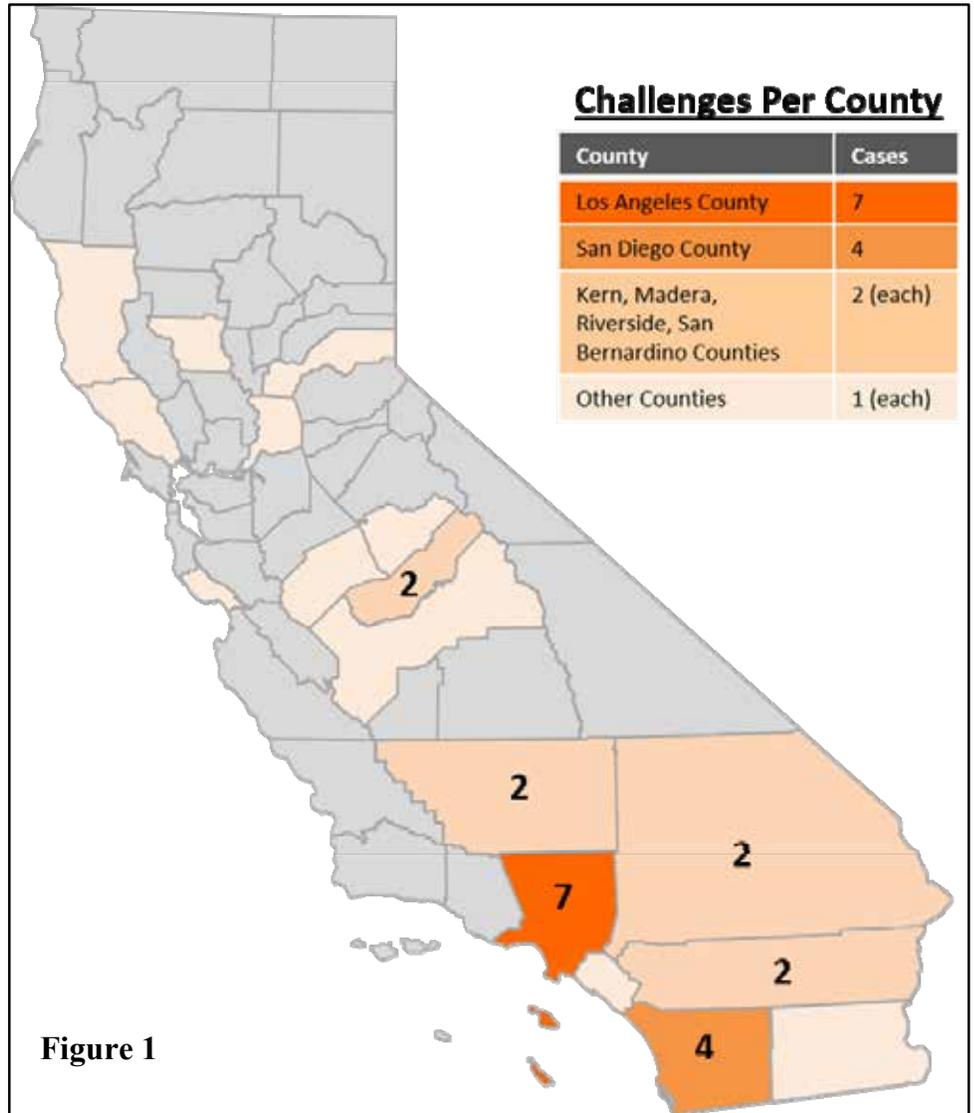


Figure 1

that has resulted in a California appellate court decision and found that of the 30 Court of Appeal opinions, the WSA and/or the associated environmental review was found to be adequate in 22 cases. Figure 1 depicts the counties where these cases were litigated. Notably, roughly two thirds of the total number of those challenges occurred in Southern California. Challenges to a WSA and a project’s water supply tended to focus on the uncertainty of the water supply, the lack of clarity in the environmental documents, or unanalyzed or unmitigated impacts.

As depicted in Figure 2, WSA litigation that ultimately resulted in Court of Appeal decisions tended to originate more often in drought years. Although litigation tends to be driven by case-specific issues, such as opposition to a project by a neighborhood or environmental group, arguments aimed at a project’s water supply may gain more traction when framed within the context of an ongoing drought.

Although agencies typically prevail when WSAs are challenged, project applicants and agencies alike should

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Looking back on Eight Years as County Supervisor

By Robert A. Lovingood, San Bernardino 1st District Supervisor

As my second and final term as San Bernardino County First District Supervisor draws to a close, I want to share a few highlights from these past eight years, as well as updates on exciting projects on the horizon.

Law enforcement has always been a priority of mine. Unfortunately, during the past several years, California has undergone a radical decriminalization shift with passage of AB 109 and Propositions 47 and 57. More recently, the state has done away with cash bail for many crimes and released about 10,000 prison inmates, ostensibly due to coronavirus. Despite all of this, I am proud of the work we have accomplished in successfully advocating for innovative anti-crime programs, including an increase in crime sweep funding, which was initially set at \$75,000 under the previous county supervisor and is now up to \$1 million. These expanded efforts of law enforcement have yielded thousands of arrests and taken millions of dollars in drugs and weapons off the streets. With the help of Sheriff John McMahon,

whom I was pleased to appoint with the board as our county sheriff, we have increased the number of deputy sheriffs in unincorporated areas and rolled out programs to reduce recidivism. In partnership with the district attorney's office, we focused on critical areas in our county, including implementation of reforms to welfare fraud policies and support of welfare fraud sweeps around the county.

Job creation has been another top priority during my time in office. The First District has a lot to offer prospective manufacturing companies, opening the door for many great opportunities. Industry growth ultimately brings with it the need for a skilled workforce, and I have strongly advocated for technical training programs like the newly created High Desert Training Center at Southern California Logistics Airport. The 66,000-square-foot building at the airport was provided by Stirling Capital Investments, ProLogis, and Exquadrum. The High Desert Manufacturers' Council, the County Workforce Development Board, and Victor Valley College

worked together on the project, inspired by the success of Barstow Community College's technical training program. This program will allow us to retain local talent by providing access to skills training for our high school graduates, veterans, and residents seeking a career opportunity with our local manufacturers.

I'm especially proud of our initiative, "Made in the High Desert," which over the past six years has connected more than 14,000 high school students with local manufacturers offering careers in well-paying jobs. This event also provides an opportunity for manufacturers, teachers, and school administrators to discuss how to link classroom lessons with job skills that are in high demand. As the COVID lockdown continues, the loss for our businesses and youth is deepening. I have consistently pushed back on the governor's lockdown and called for the careful reopening of local businesses and schools. Our communities cannot sustain the continued mental, emotional, and financial strain caused

continued on page 13

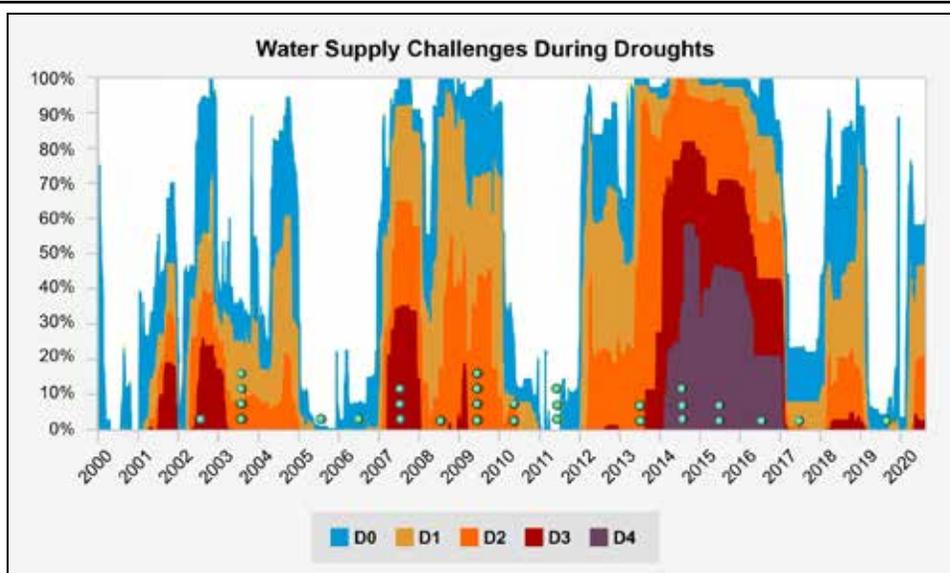


Figure 2: The green dots indicate water supply challenges, while the color shadings indicate the severity of drought. The percentage is the amount of California affected. The National Integrated Drought Information System defines D0 as Abnormally Dry, D1 as Moderate Drought, D2 as Severe Drought, D3 as Extreme Drought, and D4 as Exceptional Drought. For more information, visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought/states/california>.

California Water Law

Continued

think carefully about developing robust analyses that demonstrate the adequacy of water supply—especially as California experiences fluctuating periods of droughts.

¹This article was prepared with the assistance of summer associates Ann Bright and Casey Kirk. For more than 40 years, Latham & Watkins' Environment, Land & Resources lawyers have advised clients on complex regulatory, litigation, and transactional matters stemming from cutting-edge environmental issues. For more insights and commentary on environmental issues, please visit <https://www.globalelr.com/>.

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Looking back on Eight Years as County Supervisor

Continued

by the closures. Our families and businesses desperately need the opportunity to thrive for sustainability and continued economic growth.

Every year my office spends considerable time working through bureaucratic logjams for hundreds of constituents and businesses. We have worked with the Bureau of Land Management to help reduce a two-year backlog of mining permits, helped to clear hurdles for local drone manufacturer General Atomics, and were even able to assist the developer of the Cracker Barrel restaurant in Victorville—the first in California. There is never a question of a task being too large or small. Our commitment of service for the betterment of the First District has remained an ultimate priority.

During my time as supervisor, the county has completed a major resurfacing of all roads in Silver Lakes, sections of National Trails Highway/Route 66, and areas around Newberry Springs, Needles, and Trona. County Public Works has also rebuilt many of the bridges along old Route 66, many originally built 90 years ago. I successfully advocated for the repaving of all county-maintained roads in Spring Valley Lake and Wrightwood. And I expect paving and widening of Phelan Road will start in the next few months. We've also partnered with local cities on joint city-county paving projects. An important transportation project to note is one initiated in 2018 when we saw a sharp rise in major injury and fatal traffic accidents on Highway 395. In order to address this concern, we brought together several agencies and formed the Highway 395 Task Force. Working with the CHP and Caltrans, data shows that in the year following implementation of the task force's solutions, fatal crashes in the identified accident-prone areas have been eliminated.

I believe in the adage that the most effective government is one that is closest to the people. I've seen how local Com-

munity Service Districts in Helendale, Phelan, Pinon Hills, and elsewhere in the county have done outstanding work in providing high-quality, low-cost services to the public. With those models in mind, I supported the formation of the Wrightwood CSD, which voters passed in 2017, and the proposed Spring Valley Lake CSD on the Nov. 3 ballot. Within the established CSDs, I have seen locally elected boards make decisions based on their insight and knowledge of local needs. That local control means CSDs can ultimately provide essential services at lower costs than the county, which is one important reason why residents of San Bernardino County have chosen to establish the current 13 CSDs county-wide to date.

One of the most exciting transportation projects on the horizon is the privately funded Brightline/XpressWest high-speed rail project connecting Las Vegas to the Victor Valley and, eventually, Rancho Cucamonga, providing connectivity to Ontario International Airport or Union Station. The project cleared a series of important hurdles this summer. Nevada has approved \$200 million in private activity bonds that can be marketed for up to four times their amount for a total of \$800 million. Earlier this year, California approved \$600 million in tax-exempt bonds, which can be marketed for \$2.4 billion in private equity bonds. Also this summer, Caltrans has entered into a lease agreement allowing XpressWest to use existing right-of-way along I-15 for the rail project. Electric and zero-emission trains will reach top speeds of 200 miles per hour. According to ridership estimates, at full operations XpressWest will carry 10 million passengers each year. XpressWest expects to complete construction and commence service in the second half of 2023.

The E-220 High Desert Corridor continues to make progress toward environmental work completion for this impor-

tant project. This multipurpose corridor will offer a vital connector route for residential, commercial, and industrial areas in Antelope Valley and Victor Valley. Brightline/XpressWest has included this corridor in their plans for a future high-speed rail expansion between the Victor Valley and Palmdale. Stakeholders recognize the value this corridor brings in east-west mobility within the High Desert region and are committed to its development.

It has been an absolute honor and privilege to serve the residents of the First District as their County Supervisor. I am confident that the High Desert and surrounding communities will continue to be a great place to live, work, and play.

Publishers Note to Robert Lovingood's Article

I want to thank Robert A. Lovingood, his wife, Melanie, and his children (Ashley, Autumn and Jedidiah) for allowing him to serve the residents of San Bernardino County for eight years.

Robert brought a serious amount of passion and care when he took the job and the associates of The Bradco Companies wish him and his family the very best as they transition back into the private sector. They have done very well with the ownership of ICR Staffing (Victorville).

Great job, Robert. God bless you, Mel, Autumn, Ashley, and Jed.



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VVWRA embarks on renewable energy project

By David Wylie

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority (VVWRA) has teamed with Anaergia Inc. and Southwest Gas (SWG) on an exciting new project that will expand the main plant's treatment capacity while also providing a new source of publicly accessible green energy.

VVWRA and Anaergia Inc., a global leader in wastewater and clean energy technologies, are in the process of rehabilitating and restarting the original three digesters built in 1978. The 300,000-gallon digesters have been mostly offline for more than 10 years. New mixers, valving, and electrical components are being added to digesters #1, #2, and #3. A new soft-sided, bio-membrane roof has been installed on digester #2, matching the similar roof on digester #1. The complex piping and valving in the digester's basement have been completely reconfigured for easier and more efficient operation. The digesters will be used primarily to treat FOG (fats, oil, and grease), and food waste. A byproduct of treating waste in an anaerobic digester is methane or biogas. As part of the project, Southwest Gas will purchase the biogas produced in all our digesters and clean it via a process that will scrub the hydrogen sulfide and

other impurities from the gas. Once it meets natural gas standards, it will be called renewable natural gas. It will be pressurized and injected into a major Southwest Gas pipeline that runs through the west side of VVWRA's property. The clean biogas will mix with traditional natural gas and be distributed to commercial and residential customers of SWG. Project planning has been ongoing for several years. Construction began in September 2020 and is expected to be completed by the middle of 2021.

"VVWRA is committed to protecting public health and the environment in the Victor Valley, and this partnership reflects our three core values: collaboration, dedication, and integrity," said VVWRA General Manager Darron Poulsen. "This project provides operational and capacity resiliency for the future of VVWRA by improving our infrastructure with greater operational flexibility and increased digester redundancy and capacity needed for future growth, while benefiting the agency economically."

The project will beneficially reduce more than 6,000 metric tons of meth-

ane per year which otherwise would have been flared. The energy generated will be equivalent to displacing more than two million gallons of diesel fuel per year.

VVWRA currently uses about half the biogas it produces to power a pair of 800-kwh generators. The generators provide up to 70% of the electricity VVWRA needs to power the main plant in Victorville. The remaining biogas is burned off by a flare. The new renewable energy project will assure that virtually all the biogas produced at VVWRA is reused.

VVWRA is a regional resource recovery agency that provides wastewater treatment services for Apple Valley, Hesperia, Victorville, Spring Valley Lake, and Oro Grande.

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High Desert Report

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Looking Through Smoke-Colored Lenses – MDAQMD Maintains Operations, Increases Outreach Efforts During Pandemic, Wildfire Smoke Events

By MDAQMD Communications Staff

This year may have wrought havoc across broad spectrums of the world, but there may be some silver linings to be found, even for those who call the High Desert home.

Despite a statewide shutdown in the spring and a prolonged period of economic instability, the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District has continued operations throughout, maintaining and fulfilling its duties and responsibilities under state and federal clean air laws.

Carrying out its responsibilities hasn't come without acknowledging the struggles many have faced in this rough year. MDAQMD recognized that some entities faced hurdles, and hardships and it extended help in the form of requested extensions, payment plans, and other options to its permit holders to help in their efforts to weather the storm and keep their doors open during the pandemic.

Meanwhile, from the onset of the downturn, the District looked inward.

We learned a lot about our own operations. For the safety of our employees and the public we serve, we were among the first to shut down in-office operations and send employees home to telecommute—a full day in advance of Gov. Gavin Newsom's announced official stay-at-home order in March.

MDAQMD is considered an essential operation; our mission and mandate mean protecting public health and monitoring the air we all breathe. Still, the virus' spread left so many questions unanswered, so we accepted the challenge of carrying out this mission from the safety of our homes for nearly two months.

“For a staff of around 40, it's easy to take for granted the daily interaction and communication with your coworkers—being able to simply pop into the office

of a colleague to discuss projects,” said Ryan Orr, MDAQMD Communications Supervisor. “Accountability, meetings, field work—everything presented a challenge with little time to prepare a strategy.”

Fortunately, the two-month experience proved a success, and MDAQMD's services continued uninterrupted. District leadership communicated with staff regularly. Twice-weekly emails to the entire District workforce not only updated on the pandemic, safety, and work projects, but also included free resources for mental well-being and constructive outlets on how to use free time, such as education for kids and interactive social media offerings. Our team expressed an encouraging resilience. Although we're back in the office, operating under strict safety guidelines, the challenge continues to inspire us to question the status quo and find efficiencies in programs that were only uncovered due to the adversity of the novel coronavirus.

“The challenges presented by 2020 have truly made us a stronger organization and a tighter team,” said MDAQMD Executive Director Brad Poiriez. “The benefits we're seeing from having to adapt and overcome are still revealing themselves.”

One of the largest benefits to the stay-at-home order was the measurable improvement in ambient air quality throughout the Mojave Desert Air Basin. In April alone, Hesperia's ground-level ozone decreased by 16.3 percent; Barstow's N02 dropped 17.2 percent and Victorville's PM2.5 fell 20.5 percent compared to averaged data of the past five years during the same period. All communities where federal monitors are located dropped in each criteria pollutant by considerable margins.

As the true benefits to air quality from the impacts of the pandemic were just becoming clear, they were quickly

blurred by the smoke overtaking the state in what has become, by far, the worst recorded wildfire season in California's history. So far this year, more than 4 million acres have burned, dozens of lives were lost and thousands of structures destroyed. The Mojave Desert Air Basin was impacted by several fires, including the large complex fires started by lightning in the northern portion of the state in August.

The wildfire smoke was so constant and impactful that the District kept a smoke advisory in place for well over a month.

Wildfire smoke is the last thing the state needed when already battling a devastating respiratory virus. Despite the tragedies, this too is a lesson we hope can lead to better forest management, awareness of ensuring our residents have the necessary means to create good indoor air quality, and stronger education for everyone on the importance clean air has on the health and longevity of our population.

As novelist Robert Jordan wrote in *The Fires of Heaven*, “The oak fought the wind and was broken, the willow bent when it must and survived.” The High Desert and its residents have survived droughts, economic downturn, dust storms, tremors and more. We will continue to adapt. We will bend when we must and survive. We will come back stronger than ever.

Take care and stay safe.



Under New Leadership MWA Continues Mission of Water Sustainability Breaks Ground on Recharge Project in Adelanto

By Yvonne Hester, Director of Community Outreach

Kathy Cortner assumed the leadership role of general manager for the Mojave Water Agency in June and is continuing to lead the agency in its mission of water sustainability.

Cortner, who took the reins in June, replacing Tom McCarthy, who has served as general manager since 2017, is a longtime MWA employee,

“The Board of Directors has full confidence in Kathy’s ability to lead the agency through this transition,” said Thurston “Smitty” Smith, MWA board president. “She possesses 25 years of experience in the water industry and understands our region and the challenges we face. She has been active with the State Water Contractors, fighting for improvements in our contracts with the Department of Water Resources, to ensure sustainability for our region.”

Cortner, who was recently promoted to assistant general manager, previously served as the chief financial officer for the Mojave Water Agency since joining MWA 12 years ago.

Cortner serves on various committees of the State Water Project Contractors and has the responsibility for developing and executing plans to optimize financial assets, including the State Water Project-related assets, to mitigate current and long-term financial threats.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting and a master’s degree in Business Administration from the California State University, San Bernardino.

As a member of the State Water Project (SWP), MWA has the ability to purchase water from the state to augment the local water supply. The SWP conveyance system also enables the agency to embark on local projects such as the Regional, Recharge and Recovery Project, called R3.

MWA’s R3 project utilizes aquifer storage capacity in the Mojave Basin to enhance the regional supply of water by recharging local basins using the California aqueduct and a pipe system to move water to local communities. The project was launched in 2013 with pipelines in Hesperia, Victorville, and Apple Valley

On September 30, officials from the City of Adelanto, the City of Victorville, and the Mojave Water Agency celebrated the groundbreaking of the Regional, Recharge and Recovery (R3) project in Adelanto. Wearing R3-branded face masks, city and water agency leaders kicked off the project that will help ensure a

reliable water supply for the growing community.

Adelanto Mayor Gabriel Reyes said, “This project is key to the health and growth of our community. Having reliable access to an additional source of water ensures our citizens have access to quality water, and it means our business community can thrive and grow.”

Thurston “Smitty” Smith, MWA board president, said the celebration was the culmination of years of planning and collaboration. “This project was developed to maximize our water resources and restore local aquifers. Our communities worked together for many years and it’s great to extend the project to Adelanto.”

Victorville Mayor Gloria Garcia said,

“By improving the sustainability of our water supply, this new pipeline will have lasting benefits for generations to come. We commend the Mojave Water Agency for their leadership role in ensuring a safe and reliable water supply for our entire region.”

When completed, the project will extend



water delivery service by constructing approximately one mile of underground pipeline along Mesa View Drive, beginning at MWA's existing turnout located near Del Rosa Road and continuing to the Adelanto reservoir tanks located on Olivine Road near the intersection with Mesa View Drive.

Construction cost of the project is approximately \$5.1 million and will be performed by Nicholas Construction Inc. Kennedy Jenks is serving as the construction manager. The project is funded by Mojave Water Agency, the City of Adelanto, and grant funds from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Water Resources Prop. 1 program.



High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Challenges & New Beginnings

By Senator Mike Morrell, 23rd Senate District



It has been the honor of my life to represent San Bernardino and Riverside counties in both the State Assembly and the State

Senate. I cherish the relationships I have built over the years with many like-minded people who love our country.

California has been through a lot this last decade. I first took office at the end of the Great Recession and now leave during another trying point in our nation's history.

Through it all, I have sought to make life better here. Government should work for us, not against us. It should be our servant and not a heavy-handed master, which it has become.

My Republican colleagues and I have held back tax increases on personal property, we have continued to scrutinize wasteful spending on programs like high-speed rail, and we have championed independent contractors and freelancers across the state who want the flexibility to work as they desire. We have also worked to ensure that parents have choices in education that best meet the needs of their families, and we also pushed for full parental disclosure and transparency in teaching on sensitive topics like sex education.

Yet in California, under the increasing control of one party, we have seen government grow, with more authority ceded to the bureaucracy and executive branch. California has some of the highest taxes, top energy costs, and most expensive housing markets in the nation. Small businesses also deal with cumbersome regulations. Yet each year Democratic leaders propose billions of dollars in new taxes.

The results of one-party rule are evident. For 16 years, 500 CEOs polled by the Chief Executive have named California the worst state in which to do business. Despite having 12 percent of the U.S. population, California bears 34 percent of the welfare caseload. While California's public K-12 schools were once top in the country, they now rank 37th or lower. Since 2011, at least 60,000 convicted felons have been released into our communities. Since the beginning of the century, California has lost residents to other states, including more than 100,000 people every year since 2015. The list goes on.

Keeping the California dream alive has become more difficult, and the numbers tell the story. While I do have hope for its future, restoring California will require time and effort. We can only get there by focusing on strengthening those commonalities that bind us together: faith, family, and free enterprise.

America and California face serious challenges, and I believe there may be more to come. Yet I am confident Providence is not done with our country and that better days lay ahead, although much may still be asked of us.

The closing lines of our Declaration of Independence sum up the duty we share as Americans: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

It is in this spirit that each of us is called to serve our nation, in whatever capacity that might be.

Many have asked what is next for me. My wife, Joanie, and I continue to pray about the future and opportunities that might arise. I will keep you posted.

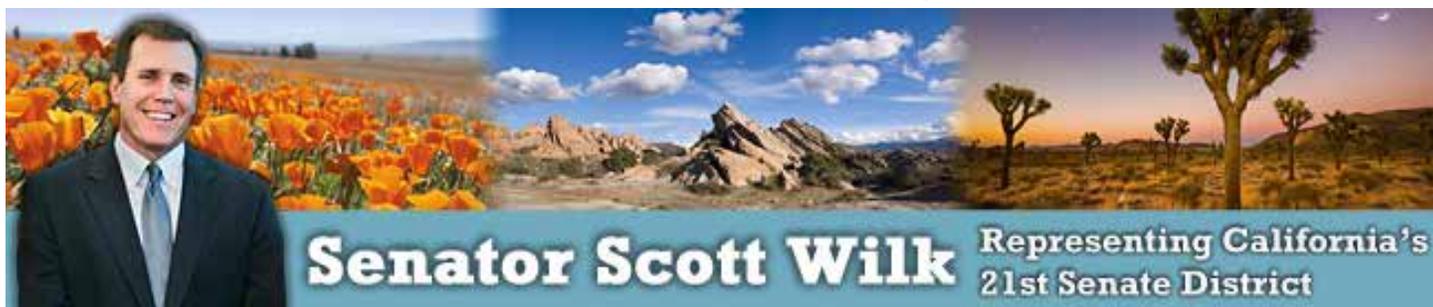
Again, I want to thank you—I am grateful to have had the privilege of being your voice in Sacramento. God bless you, your loved ones, California, and the United States of America.

Senator Mike Morrell represents the 23rd Senate District in the California Legislature, which includes portions of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles counties.



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Meeting This Moment Together

By Senator Scott Wilk, 21st Senate District

In one way or another, every corner of California has been impacted by the steady stream of curveballs thrown our way in 2020. By necessity we have all had to develop new ways to cope with life during the pandemic, the High Desert being no exception. Whether fortunately or unfortunately, we've been united by our struggles: from economic shut downs to economic downturn, to EDD complications, and quarantine stories, we have found common ground on which to meet our neighbor across the street and across the state.

When the state shut down, so too did the legislature. Because of the pandemic, legislative hearings were minimal and we were forced to reduce our legislative packages. I turned my focus to policies that will help our economy transition out of a recession, as well as working to assist constituents struggling with the fallout from the pandemic.

I masked up and got to work in food banks, in school parking lots distributing lunches, and any other activity to help our community weather this storm. My office held town halls and Zoom meetings and provided information on important resources. My wife is immune compromised and her mother lives with us, so we do not take the safety protocols lightly but still wanted to do our part.

During the last seven months, I saw

so many of you out doing the same things—helping neighbors who were housebound, volunteering, juggling work and distance learning, celebrating seniors who were not able to “walk” at their graduations—a true testament to the strength of our community and the people who live here.

In Sacramento I supported measures that will make things easier for people now and as we move out of the pandemic. These include tax credits for small businesses as they begin their post-pandemic rehiring process and a community college pilot program to help retrain displaced workers in new and emerging industries. We must lay the foundation for recovery now in order to help our business community, workers, and cities more easily transition when we get back to business as usual.

Of all the pandemic fallout, the chaos and dysfunction at the Economic Development Department (EDD), the agency responsible for managing California's unemployment, was the most critical. For many of our unemployed family members, neighbors and friends, the pandemic and subsequent government shutdown have been a death march into economic ruin. Through no fault of their own, Californians have lost their jobs and been forced to burn through their savings while EDD, the supposed safety net for those who are out of work, completely failed to meet the challenge.

Since March of this year, over 12 million Californians have had no other choice but to apply for unemployment—1.6 million of whom are still waiting to receive their benefits. Of those applicants, 8.5 million Californians turned to EDD for the first time in their lives, while 147,000 of them filed for unemployment for the second time since the pandemic began, due to the governor's on-again-off-again decision to reopen the economy. With over 25% of Californians at the mercy of a floundering state agency, every day counts when addressing the problem at hand.

A recent report from the governor's “EDD Strike Team” has revealed the gross mismanagement of the department by the administration. The report reeked of a backlog of 1.6 million unresolved claims not expected to be cleared until late January of next year; antiquated technology that has plagued the department since before the great recession of 2009; a negative analysis of the governor's EDD massive new-hire scheme and, among over 100 other recommendations, a recommendation to suspend acceptance of new unemployment claims for a two-week period as they continue to rake in upwards of 10,000 new claims a day.

While this report should have been done months—maybe even years ago it is truly a step in the right direction. With this knowledge as well as that gained from the approved au-

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Meeting This Moment Together

Continued

COVID Scared to Cancer Aware Apple Valley woman seeks routine screening despite COVID fears; diagnosed with early-stage cancer

By Bryan Kawasaki

As the High Desert continues its fight against COVID-19, fears of contracting the virus have led to many instances of delaying care. This is the third installment of a multi-part series highlighting the potential risks of waiting too long to seek medical attention and the precautions St. Mary Medical Center is taking to keep our patients safe. If you or anyone you know is in need of vital emergency care, please call 9-1-1.

APPLE VALLEY (Oct. 13, 2020): As dystopian images began to emerge out of New York and Italian hospitals—early epicenters of the COVID-19 pandemic—Sue Jones, 50, of Apple Valley, couldn't help but wonder if going to the hospital for routine diagnostic tests was worth the risk of contracting this new and unknown disease.

"Watching the news of all these COVID hotbeds made me think going into any clinic would be like going into COVID central," Jones said. "I remember thinking, 'Do I really want to go in or wait it out a bit?'"

"I didn't want to get exposed."

But while these indelible news clips would frequently circulate through her mind, she had trouble completely dismissing the idea of seeking medical treatment, especially when it came to her annual mammogram.

Just five years earlier, doctors had discovered a large tumor on one of Jones' ovaries, a cancer scare she described as "mind-numbing."

"After they told me it was probably cancerous, I didn't hear much else," said Jones, who recalled doctors telling her

there was only a 5-percent chance the tumor was benign. "It was a shocking experience. I didn't believe it could be true."

Two days after finding the tumor, Jones was sent to a gynecologist to undergo more tests before being referred to University of California, Irvine Medical Center, to see an oncologist.

At the time, she was living on-base at Ft. Irwin, a roughly 2 1/2-hour drive north of Irvine—plenty of time to let her fears run wild on her way home from doctor appointments.

"It was like I was driving on autopilot," Jones said. "They convinced me I had (ovarian cancer), which the survival rate is very low. You can get yourself in a very bad mental state, especially when you start looking things up online."

Soon after meeting the oncologist, Jones underwent surgery to remove the tumor, which doctors said had low malignant potential. Jones said she felt like she had hit the lottery, but the weeks of uncertainty and trepidation had a lasting impact, later acting as an effective counterweight to her COVID-19 fears.

While she fought against self-induced paralysis of going to the hospital, an informal conversation with a public relations colleague at St. Mary Medical Center helped sway her decision to seek treatment.

During the course of the conversation, Jones, who works as the spokesperson for the City of Victorville, was reassured of the safety precautions hospitals are taking during the pandemic to limit the

dit that began in early October, we will be better prepared to face future emergencies, emergencies that I pray are nowhere on the scale of the one we are currently facing.

In addition to the 1.6 million EDD cases still pending, legislative offices have been managing over 16,100 open cases of rightfully distraught constituents who have been waiting—not days, not weeks, but months—to receive an answer from EDD. My office alone has opened nearly 1,000 constituent case files since the pandemic started, most of which are to help people deal with the EDD.

Bureaucratic incompetency and a perpetual dragging of the feet have been the cause of immeasurable suffering. It's been more than 200 days since Governor Newsom first declared a state of emergency in California, and in addition to navigating a pandemic, economic uncertainty, and wildfires, many of us are still awaiting the unemployment insurance benefits we rightfully earned.

In the meantime I will continue to do everything I can to assist you during these troubling times; we will meet this moment together. My office and I have been working tirelessly to help the community of the 21st Senate District access the help they need by bridging the gap between the people and the state. We are ready to help you with any state agency, local issue, or connection to services. Follow me on social media (@ScottWilkCA) for updates on resources and other helpful information, and together we will weather this storm.



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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

2020 Legislative Update

By Dawn Rowe, San Bernardino County 3rd District Supervisor

This year brought a host of challenges to local economies and governments alike. Here in San Bernardino County, many of our ongoing and long-term priorities were shelved or paused due to the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Even worse, the economic damage caused by the state-mandated closures of businesses will have lingering effects for years, if not decades, to come. Despite these challenges and constraints, my colleagues and I on the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors are focused on meeting the standards set forth in the governor's re-opening plan so that we can restore our local economy sooner rather than later.

One of the easiest ways the county can move into a less restrictive tier in the state re-opening plan is to increase our daily COVID-19 testing rate. Currently, our testing rate is below the statewide median. Until we can surpass that figure, the state penalizes the county by artificially inflat-

ing our new case rate, which causes us to remain above the threshold to move into the next tier. I've worked closely with staff from the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health to drastically increase our COVID-19 testing capacity. Despite this increase, we still need more residents to get tested! Even if you're asymptomatic, your test result counts toward our daily testing rate and will assist in lowering the overall positivity rate for the county. I encourage residents to visit SBCovid19.com to schedule a test, at no cost to you, at your nearest collection point.

Additionally, the County of San Bernardino is providing direct financial assistance to small businesses to mitigate financial losses incurred as a result of the pandemic. Known as the COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program, the Board of Supervisors approved the use of \$30 million in CARES Act monies to fund

the program. Eligible businesses can receive up to \$2,500 for complying with basic COVID-19 safety protocols. Business owners should visit the SBCovid19.com website to view eligibility requirements and submit applications. The deadline to apply is October 31, so move fast!

While coronavirus has dominated discussion in the public sphere since March, there are other important policy proposals moving forward that will have a significant economic impact on the Victor Valley and surrounding desert communities. Chief among these is a petition to list the western Joshua tree as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). If this proposal is permanently adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission, land development as we know it in the desert will likely come to a standstill.

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COVID Scared to Cancer Aware

Continued

spread of the virus—the tipping point in deciding to schedule her screening.

She did and quickly learned she had early-stage breast cancer and, thankfully, a good prognosis.

“Because I caught it so early,” Jones said, “I have a favorable prognosis and much higher survival rate, which is why early detection is so important.”

Due to the infancy of the cancer—the tumor was small and the cancer had not spread to her lymph nodes—Jones had multiple treatment pathways available to her, eventually deciding to opt for a lumpectomy and radiation.

Jones admits that her first cancer scare helped mentally prepare her for her current bout with cancer but realizes her situation could have been made much worse had she succumbed to her initial fears of seeking care.

“If the tumor was larger and if it had spread to other tissue, I'd have to have a mastectomy and a whole host of additional surgeries,” Jones said. “My outcome could have looked very different had I not come in.”

A study by Epic Health Research Network of 39 health systems with a total of 100 hospitals across 23 states found that in the very early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, routine screenings for breast, colon, and cervical cancers dropped as much as 94 percent compared to relative January averages.

While Jones still has five weeks of radiation ahead of her, she hopes telling her story might help others who might suffer from similar COVID-related fears.

“Please don't delay routine tests, because early detection is so, so important to your health and future,” Jones said. “From my experience, I believe health

care professionals take extraordinary protections to safeguard you.

“Don't worry about going to the hospital. You're in good hands.”

About Providence, Southern California
Providence, Southern California, is a not-for-profit Catholic health network with 10 hospitals, approximately 90 clinics, TrinityCare Hospice and its TrinityKids Care pediatric hospice, Providence High School, home health care services, eight wellness centers, and numerous physician groups in its Southern California Region. Together, these ministries, including secular affiliates and some representing other faiths, generate \$7.5 billion in net revenue and have approximately 35,000 employees—called caregivers—and nearly 5,200 physicians on staff.

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Mountain Desert Economic Partnership Team 2 Proposal

2020 Legislative Update

Continued

The Mountain Desert Economic Partnership (MDEP) is a collective-impact approach dedicated to transforming the economic landscape of the Mountain Desert region over the next 15 years, thus building a culture of a high quality, locally educated workforce and a civically engaged community.

Our community is positioned for growth, a prime example being SCLA, which boasts opportunities for new business ventures and seemingly endless expansion opportunities for industries in the manufacturing, mechatronics, aviation, and aerospace sectors, to name a few. This tremendous growth should position our students for a variety of career opportunities, both now and in the future. With such lucrative careers in our students' backyards, why do so many commute "down the hill" for school and work and ultimately move out of the area? Why are local industry giants like General Atomics forced to recruit qualified individuals from outside the region and state? Team 2 of MDEP has been working on a solution to these very issues. We need four-year-college partners to build a presence in our area and close the education gap that we see between the number of high school graduates, which is above the statewide average, and bachelor's degree earners, which is only 14.3% of those grads—a number about two fifths of the statewide average.

The school districts in our region are committed to preparing students exiting high school for college and careers. This is clearly shown in the region's graduation data, which reflects approximately 89% of students are graduating from our local high schools each year, with 50% of those graduates attending some form of college. We are home to two community colleges (VVC and BCC) that boast a variety of two year degree

and certificate options and their enrollment numbers are increasing every year. But what happens to the students who wish to transfer from VVC or BCC to a four-year university or the students who are four-year bound straight out of high school? We are losing them to schools and jobs miles away down the Cajon Pass. Many of those students end up raising a family in the area closest to their alma mater, never to return to the Mountain Desert cities. In order for our region to have a sustainable supply of *local talent* filling our *local jobs*, and in order for our residents to want to live, work, stay, and play here, we must band together our resources and attract four-year partners. This is key to building a direct pipeline from K12 through degree attainment and long-term employment.

Expanded bachelor degree numbers would also draw more businesses to build a presence in our region. Companies like Trader Joes use educational demographics when determining where to set up new store locations. Higher degree rates translate to higher average household wages and an increased likelihood that a higher-end store would achieve long term success. Adding stores like this would further add to the appeal of living and working in our local community, add jobs to our economy, and poise us to be competitive with cities that have a large variety of retail and entertainment options.

In these current economic conditions, it should be noted that four-year colleges can benefit greatly by expanding their offerings to our local community. The regional expansion here through projects at SCLA, the Virgin high speed railway and two new hospitals in the works will bring more dollars and residents to the area and also increase the need for job candidates with degrees. This means high placement rates for grads who need

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Last month the commission voted to grant candidate status to the species, meaning it will be studied for at least 12 months to determine if permanently listing it as a threatened species is warranted. The problem with this action is that during the study period, the Joshua tree will receive the same protections as if it were a permanently listed species. I've already heard dozens of stories about property owners attempting to sell vacant parcels because this proposal will make their land undevelopable due to the excessive cost of complying with California Environmental Quality Act requirements and mitigation. This listing will also affect the ability of homeowners to remove or disturb Joshua trees in their own backyards. It's a short-sighted plan that will devastate desert communities.

However, I've assembled a group of stakeholders, including 1st District Supervisor Robert Lovingood, to push back on this radical proposal. While I'm optimistic the commission won't list the species after the study period, I'm also realistic and understand that we should prepare for the worst possible outcome. Consequently, we are working with state regulatory officials on potential pathways for limited amounts of take for vital infrastructure projects. Without creating exceptions for these types of projects, the Joshua tree listing will drive up the cost of building new roads, sewers, and energy generation sites in the desert to a point where they no longer pencil out. These are the same types of infrastructure projects that entice businesses to move to our region.

Representing the 3rd District on the Board of Supervisors continues to be an honor and welcomed challenge, especially in the current political and economic climate. I look forward to serving the needs of my High Desert constituency as I embark on my first full-term in December. I've learned so much during my first two years in this role, and I look forward to continuing my advocacy for small business interests and free market principles during the next four.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

By VVC Public Information Office – Charity Lindsey, Robert A. Sewell

With the current challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, Victor Valley College is more dedicated than ever to providing a premier source of higher education in the High Desert and to supporting students, especially those at risk, in achieving their goals amid these trying times.

Commitment To Students During Campus Closure

VVC was four weeks into the Spring 2020 semester when the transition of in-person classes to an online format began, a decision made with the utmost caution regarding the safety of the VVC community and as part of efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

The ongoing pandemic has produced a sweeping disruption of education across the globe, and although VVC was no less affected by it than any other institution, staff and faculty here have taken great strides and a proactive approach to ensure the smoothest possible transition.

In 2019, the college committed to its pursuit of the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence for a reason, and that reason is to harbor and increase student success, no matter the circumstances.

As VVC continues its quest to become a nationally recognized college, the challenges brought on by the pandemic only further staff and faculty resolve to work harder and smarter, doing more with less, staying connected, sharing information, and thinking creatively to ensure our students succeed.

On March 20, eight weeks after the opening of the new Student Services Center, the VVC campus became closed to the public, recognizing California's "stay at home" orders.

All face-to-face instruction had already been suspended beginning March 16 and remained postponed until March 30 while college administration worked

diligently with campus leadership and unions to move as many classes as possible to an online format.

"Before anything else, we are committed to the health and safety of our students, staff, and faculty," Superintendent/President Dr. Daniel Walden said. "The vision of Victor Valley College includes cultivating 'social responsibility.' During these turbulent times, it's paramount that we lead by example and strive to serve the common good."

Providing Online Instruction & Services

VVC's vision also includes "innovative teaching and service with imaginative uses of collaboration and technology." Even through these difficult times, the silver lining has been found in embracing new and engaging ways to teach and support students.

"Moving some 1,300 face-to-face classes to an online format in just two weeks was an enormous undertaking, but it was made possible through the ingenuity, integrity and dedication of our employees," Walden said.

All student services have been made available online, including financial aid, counseling, and admissions and records. The VVC Guidance & Counseling Department has been providing valuable resources to assist students with the transition to online learning, including tutorial videos on how to navigate virtual services.

VVC has also created a network of Student Success Centers—which offers free tutorials, workshops, and computer/resource access—to assist students in their academic development and success.

"We know that this transition is difficult for our students, too, and we are doing our best to make it go as smoothly as possible," Walden said. "I want to thank our students for their outstanding pa-

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MDEP Team 2 Proposal

Continued

jobs. Additionally, universities across the state are impacted with an increasing number of enrollees, but not enough class offerings to place them. They can't offer additional classes, due to budget restrictions and lack of resources. By using the current infrastructure of classrooms, equipment, and qualified staff that are *already available* here through our existing two-year colleges, we can propose a low-cost expansion solution, with very little time needed to get new classes off the ground. Students could transition easily from their existing community college courses to bachelor degree curriculum taught on the same campus.

Dr. Daniel Walden, Superintendent/President of Victor Valley College, said this about the proposed solution: "Firmly established community colleges offer ready-to-use facilities and faculty for higher education. Postsecondary partners will play a critical role in local students acquiring careers in our expanding economy."

Our local industry partners invest heavily in our community, and they would like nothing more than to employ as many of our local, talented students as possible. Expanding educational partnerships is the best way to achieve that outcome. Connecting our K12 system, community colleges, and four-year universities will catapult the economic growth of the Mountain Desert region and assist our four-year partners in achieving their own growth and expansion using a low cost, easy to implement model.



High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Continued

tience and understanding as we navigate this difficult time together.”

All tutoring normally conducted on campus can now be accessed online. These virtual services include real-time workshops, live tutoring, and learning resources like website links and handouts

Student services staff, including counselors, are also available to support students through email and by phone, which can include tutorials over the phone.

Emergency Response And Communications

Also in March, VVC adopted protocol for COVID-19 emergency response operations in collaboration with local health departments, including strategies to reduce the spread of disease, promoting education and awareness, and establishing protocols for containment and safe campus operations.

The college has since implemented a phased plan to approach opening the campus. At this time only critical sector courses that cannot be taught remotely, such as some nursing and respiratory therapy classes, are meeting face to face following the guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

A Crisis Leadership Team was immediately established to develop safety procedures and a Re-Opening Task Force is continuously developing reopening plans and prevention methods.

Since the start of the pandemic, VVC has aimed to lead by example and raise awareness of the necessary precautions that the community should follow. Ongoing COVID-19 information is provided on the college website and communication is maintained via student email and social media.

Dr. Walden has maintained weekly “Chat with the President” Zoom meetings for all college employees to pro-

vide recent updates and answer internal questions. More recently, the first “Ask the President” was held on October 1 for VVC students to submit questions to Dr. Walden and a panel of VVC staff and faculty. More Ask the President Zoom webinars will be held as just one of the methods the college is using to stay connected with students.

Victor Valley College also continues to serve as a coronavirus testing site as part of a partnership with San Bernardino County.

Supporting Student Success

In May, CARES Act grant money was made available to students experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. The CARES Act is a relief fund to help cover the cost of essentials, including food, housing, health care, and technology.

Recognizing that many VVC students experiencing difficulties may not be eligible to apply for federal financial aid, the college also identified \$250,000 in Emergency Grant dollars to award to students, thanks in large part to the VVC Foundation.

Also through the VVC CARES Act and a partnership with T-Mobile, the college was enabled to provide 500 students with laptops that have built-in internet connection. Additional students who applied for the CARES Act and expressed a need for a computer have been provided with loaner Chromebooks or laptops.

By appointment only, students may also access a computer on campus to complete VVC coursework, and drive-up wifi is available to provide students with high-speed internet access.

Additionally, the college food pantry, The Peak, is available for students facing food insecurities, and showers in the VVC gymnasium remain open to homeless students.

Keeping The Community Safe

VVC will soon receive additional Per-

sonal Protective Equipment (PPE) through the State of California Office of Emergency Services, including 960 N95 masks; 522,000 surgical masks; 400 face shields; 50 IR thermometers; and 6,560 16.9-oz hand sanitizers.

In April, while a shortage of surgical masks was widespread across the U.S. because of the coronavirus, VVC staff and faculty helped supply local hospitals with PPE. Along with nearly 6,000 N95 masks donated by the college's Emergency Medical Services Department, more than 200 reusable cloth masks were sewn by VVC instructors and students. The donations benefited Desert Valley Hospital, St. Mary Medical Center, and Victor Valley Global Medical Center.

Looking Forward

VVC is also using this time that students and most staff are not on campus to thoroughly clean, sanitize, and update facilities, including the campus lake. VVC looks forward to the future day of reopening when students will once again be welcomed to enjoy VVC's beautiful campus.

“Victor Valley College will continue to act in accordance with state and federal guidelines that protect the health of students, faculty, and staff,” Walden said. “I want to reiterate how grateful we are to have the support of our local community. We will get through this together.”

Accreditation

Victor Valley College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), an institutional accrediting body recognized by The Commission of Recognition of Post-secondary Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. Victor Valley College's Nursing, Paramedic, and Respiratory programs are also accredited by separate, specialized accrediting agencies.

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COVID-19 RESPONSE

Continued

VVC last received confirmation of its continued full accreditation in January 2019. The ACCJC reviewed materials submitted by VVC and an External Evaluation Team Follow-Up Report. In the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Letter, ACCJC President Dr. Richard Winn expressed appreciation “for the diligent work and thoughtful reflection that Victor Valley College undertook to respond to these requirements.”

The next report will be VVC’s Midterm Report, due on March 15, 2021. The next comprehensive review will occur in the spring term of 2024. Having satisfied all accreditation recommendations, VVC is poised to exceed the educational standards set forth by ACCJC.

Student Services Center

Victor Valley College’s new, state-of-the-art Student Services Center officially opened on January 23, 2020. The 27,000-square-foot “One Stop” building houses many departments in one convenient location, enhancing the student experience and streamlining essential services. Departments now located in the building include Admissions & Records, Assessment, ACCESS, Bursar’s Office, CalWORKS, Career Center, Counseling, EOPS, Financial Aid, and the Transfer Center.

The \$17 million center features an open air environment, modern architecture, and interactive, user-friendly technology available for student use. Touted as the new structural and symbolic “front door” to the campus, the building faces Bear Valley Road and acts as an inviting entry plaza for students and visitors. The total cost for the project was about \$20 million, including all soft-cost (architect, inspection, furniture) for the Center.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony and plaque unveiling was held on February 7, 2020, with community leaders and elected officials in attendance, including San Bernardino County First District Supervi-

sor Robert Lovingood and the mayors of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Hesperia, and Victorville. Former VVC Trustee Joe Range attended the event, receiving an honorary plaque in recognition of his years committed to the College. Range served from 2003 until 2012 and was a key advocate and visionary for the development of a One Stop center.

The Student Services Center was in full operation in time for the start of the Spring 2020 semester, which began February 18. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent closure of the VVC campus on March 20, 2020, students were only able to visit the center in person for about two months before services were moved to an online format. VVC looks forward to the future day of reopening, when students will once again be welcomed to take full advantage of the resources available in the Center.

Stadium & Educational Event Center

Victor Valley College continues to move forward with its plans for a Stadium and Educational Event Center. Project concepts were presented to the board of trustees by architect LPA Inc. during the Sept. 8, 2020, board meeting.

The stadium will replace the existing track on VVC’s lower campus and will feature a new synthetic track and field, a re-crowned football field, and bleacher seating for 4,000 (2,500 home and 1,500 visitor). Modern stadium lighting and an advanced sound system will also be installed, as well as new parking stalls.

The educational event center will be built overlooking the field and will be used to host various events and meetings, not just for the benefit of VVC staff and students, but also for the High Desert community. The plans show that three adjacent conference rooms can be combined for round table banquet events with a seating capacity of 592.

The center will also feature a new board room for trustee meetings, a kitchen and concession area, two sets of bathrooms, a ticket center, lobby, and multiple storage areas.

The key goals of the project center around design, function, and sustainability, ensuring that the new facilities will be used daily to serve students and the community, will serve multi functional purposes, and will be energy efficient and economically solvent.

The college anticipates sending the project to the Division of the State Architect for approval by the end of 2020. The approval process could take up to six months. The estimate cost for the project is about \$20 million.

Bond Funds

At the April 14, 2020, VVC Board of Trustees meeting, the issuance of the fourth series of Measure JJ bond funds was authorized. Measure JJ, approved by local voters in 2008, authorized the trustees to issue and sell a total of \$297.5 million in bonds to fund college construction projects and campus repairs and upgrades.

Resolution #20-06 to authorize the issuance of the 2008 General Obligation Bonds (Series D), was unanimously approved by the board,

On May 14, the amount of \$34,914,917 was issued. On June 4, the final closed amount was \$31,355,000 as the County Treasury deposit to VVC.

The selling of bonds will fund VVC’s Stadium and Educational Event Center, for which construction could begin within three years.

Enrollment & Graduation

Although the pandemic and consequent movement of classes to an online format has affected community college enrollment across California, with most colleges down in enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester, VVC’s enrollment is

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Transit Continues Moving Forward Through a Pandemic

By Chris Ackerman, Marketing Manager/PIO

2020 was shaping up to be a banner year for Victor Valley Transit. Over 1.4 million residents of the High Desert used Transit in 2019. In February of this year, numbers were already up, despite a nationwide rider drop-off over the last five years. January 2020 saw over 134,000 riders aboard, and February saw almost 138,000 residents use Victor Valley Transit to get where they needed to go. Then COVID-19 came to San Bernardino County and put the brakes on everything.

From the outset of the pandemic, the federal government recognized Transit as an essential service and critical part of the national infrastructure. Indeed, public transit helped keep the national economy moving by transporting essential workers to jobs and others to shopping, medical appointments, and more. Despite this acknowledgment, the truth was Transit was severely affected due to stay-at-home orders and restaurants and malls closing. What hit VVTA the hardest, though, was the closing of area schools and colleges. Local students make up approximately 50% of the VVTA rider base, and within just two months, the numbers reflected that with a 55% drop in riders. But this did not stop Victor Valley Transit from moving forward.

VVTA made the necessary service adjustments, both for safety and fiscal responsibility. Mandatory face coverings, rear boarding, and fare suspensions were implemented for the safety and well-being of the operators and their passengers. The biggest challenge VVTA faced was in their reduced service hours and what to do with staff.

With ridership down and reduced service implemented, fewer bus operators were needed for fixed route and ADA paratransit services. Normal weekday service hours run from 6:00 am through 10:00 pm, but the decision was made to run Sunday service 7 days a week from

8:00 am – 5:00 pm, leaving many bus operators without a route to drive. Not wanting drivers to be sent home and go on unemployment, VVTA used available CARES Act Funding and formatted a two-team scenario to ensure drivers continued to have a full paycheck.

On even and odd days throughout the week, one team would drive the limited-service routes. In contrast, the other team cleaned and sanitized high touch-points at bus stops and transfer centers, as well as their facilities in Hesperia and Barstow. Then the teams would reverse positions the following day. The tricky part was that operators needed to volunteer to work on the cleaning team, so Victor Valley Transit presented two options to their staff. If the operator worked on both teams, no matter how many part-time hours were put in, the Agency would pay the employee for a full 40-hour workweek irrespective of how many part-time hours were put in. Those who decided to work only as drivers were paid for their driving time only and allowed to collect unemployment for their remaining hours. Victor Valley Transit was pleased that a significant portion of bus operators chose to work on both teams, showing that even though drivers may have made more money staying at home and collecting unemployment, they chose the integrity path and continued working. A true example of Frontline Heroes.

While still operating under reduced service hours, other community areas continued to grow, albeit at a slower pace. The addition of the popular ALDI Supermarket on the Hesperia side of Bear Valley Road facilitated a need for a stop so passengers could take care of their shopping needs. The new Stop No. 40261 is now located on Bear Valley Road and Fish Hatchery Road for travelers heading eastbound.

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COVID-19 RESPONSE

Continued

still strong, with about 11,000 students enrolled in Fall 2020 classes.

VVC held a drive-thru celebration for its largest-ever graduating class in June 2020, which may have set a new standard for graduation. Graduates and their families had raving reviews after driving around the lake with decorated cars and being cheered on by VVC staff and faculty.

It was the earlier of two VVC celebratory events, followed by another first-ever, the “Virtual Commencement Ceremony,” live streamed from the Performing Arts Center. The college also had a record number of valedictorians this year, with 22 students graduating with a perfect 4.0 grade-point average.

Aspen Award Progress

VVC has recently rekindled the efforts of the Aspen Congress, an advisory group established to lead the college in its pursuit of the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. The group meets monthly to review and make recommendations about college practices, with the aim of helping VVC earn the nation’s most distinctive award for community colleges.

There are about 1,500 community colleges in the U.S., 927 of which are eligible for the Aspen, a \$1 million prize awarded every two years. Once in the top 900 community colleges, VVC’s next goal is to be in the top 15 percent. After that, the 10 colleges, and finally, the number one community college in the nation.

In this endeavor, VVC is working with the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping education stakeholders use data to increase student success.

President/CEO of IEBC, Brad C. Phillips, leads the monthly meetings alongside VVC Superintendent/President Dr. Dan Walden.



Transit Continues Moving Forward Through a Pandemic

Continued

While the coronavirus pandemic was wreaking havoc across the state, work was completed on the new VVTA maintenance & operations facility in Barstow. In August the organization officially opened its doors to a new 5.5-acre facility located on Route 66. Since VVTA merged with Barstow Area Transit in 2014, the previously leased facility was utilized beyond its designed capability. As the need for transit has continued to grow year after year in Barstow, the new space was needed to facilitate current and future expansion and promote a livable, sustainable, and economically viable community in the Barstow area. The 9,998 sq. ft. facility began construction in June 2019, with doors officially opening on August 11, 2020.

The new facility has already brought numerous benefits to VVTA operations as well as the community. One of the most significant benefits is that the facility is adjacent to the Liquefied Compressed Natural Gas (LCNG) and gas station, making it easier and quicker to fuel Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and gasoline-operated vehicles. Previously, drivers had to travel approximately 12 miles roundtrip to refuel the buses, adding 38,880 unnecessary miles annually. The relocated fueling stations will save more than \$100,000 annually. The facility was also approved for the SCE Charge Ready Transport Program, which will help save thousands in costs and allow Victor Valley Transit to introduce zero-emission, battery-electric buses into the Barstow fleet. The new facility is also equipped with the proper flammable-gas detection and ventilation system requirements for working on compressed natural gas vehicles. On the technology side, the facility includes wi-fi in the service bay and yard, allowing mechanics to utilize tablets for inspections and repair manuals while working on the vehicles.

The location also includes a 2,515 sq. ft. Westmatic Viking Bus Wash that does

not use chemical additives and features a water reclamation system designed to achieve the highest economical level of water recycling, reusing approximately 85% of used water. Other benefits include three modern service bays, updated equipment, a backup generator for power outages, a driver's lounge, and a workout room, plus a brand-new customer lobby.

Technology is central to the mission of VVTA. In early September 2019, the agency began a successful pilot of a TouchPass electronic fare collect (EFC) system that was developed by Delerrok. Since then, VVTA migrated many of its popular paper bus passes to TouchPass smart cards and made TouchPass available to all passengers. In January 2020, Victor Valley Transit launched its TouchPass EFC system, enabling passengers using a smart card or mobile app to purchase fare products online to ride VVTA buses. The new hassle-free payment options streamline the passenger boarding process and help maintain on-time performance. Using the TouchPass Card or Mobile App (available on the App Store (iOS) and Google Play (Android), riders can load a stored value or a pass to ride, then simply tap their card or show their smartphone to the TouchPass reader by the farebox and then board, which eliminates the need for cash or paper passes.

Outreach continued throughout the year within VVTA's Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) and the programs they monitor, making life easier and more convenient for seniors and disabled community members. Immediately after the 2019 Trona earthquakes, VVTA dispatched staff and buses to provide emergency transportation for individuals who needed to get to Ridgecrest and other nearby areas. As a result, VVTA continues to provide weekly transportation services, in conjunction with the Trona Community Senior Center, for transporting any Trona resident

to Ridgecrest for needed essential services, including shopping, banking, and medical appointments. This year Victor Valley Transit supplied the center with a brand-new handicap-accessible van and assists the center by reimbursing transportation costs, not only for the existing Senior Transportation program but for the Trona-to-Ridgecrest service as well. Funded by Measure I, the new 2020 Dodge Caravan with wheelchair accessibility provides Trona residents aged 60 years or older and ADA disabled passengers with transportation to essential medical appointments, shopping, airport pick up & drop off, and to various locations throughout Southern California. On its maiden transport, a Trona resident was taken to Loma Linda Medical Center in San Bernardino for medical testing.

The 5-passenger 2020 Dodge Caravan Transit Van also includes space for two wheelchairs with commercial side entry, manual loading ramp, Q'Straint tie-downs, roll out co-pilot seat, rear storage area, and a foldaway double seat. On the technology side, the vehicle is equipped with an Ecolane Mobile Data Tablet and mount, allowing the driver to accept trips from any location.

In other areas of the CTSA Division, the Fare Media Subsidy Program has been approved again for its next cycle of passes to be donated to eligible non-profits who apply for this program. VVTA donated over 5,000 passes to non-profit partners in the High Desert to give to residents in need of transportation. Although the coronavirus has caused a lower-than-average ridership, this program has still provided over 1,500 trips since January.

For the underserved ADA clients in the Mojave River Valley, VVTA's Brokerage Program has been a welcome relief. Participating non-profit organizations receive a donated cutaway-style bus, and passengers pay a lower cost per

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High Desert Looks to Educated Workforce for Promise of Strong Economic Future

By Ted Alejandre, San Bernardino County Superintendent

Preparing students from cradle to career and retaining their talents within their own communities is essential to improving the quality of life for all residents. An educated and prepared workforce has the potential to transform any economy.

The partnership between the business and industry sector and public education is the critical link that sets the foundation for regional growth and provides the pipeline of skilled workers who have the technical, academic and hands-on training that are needed to fill essential jobs.

As leaders throughout the High Desert work to capture the collective vision of the region, today's youth will be the torchbearers for the future. Key to the area's maturation is educating tomorrow's workers and leaders by providing them a pathway to maximize their skills

and knowledge while growing their own earning potential.

That relationship is being driven by the collaborative efforts of the Mountain Desert Career Pathways and Mountain Desert Economic Partnership, which, along with San Bernardino County Workforce Development and the Alliance for Education, are identifying and providing the skills students need to be productive citizens in a global economy through multiple career pathways and career technical education opportunities. Thousands of students have been able to gain hands-on educational and career training from employers across the area.

This partnership, along with the region's school districts, is helping High Desert businesses fill their job openings with talented local students, while also boosting

the area's high school graduation rate for all seniors in career technical education programs.

With more and more local companies struggling to find enough skilled employees, Mountain Desert Career Pathways assists in aligning technical educational programs to local businesses to establish pipelines of students ready for careers. MDEP is a collective impact approach to transforming the region, and its mission goes hand in hand with the long-term outcomes of the Mountain Desert Economic Partnership, which engages a broader range of businesses, government agencies, and higher-education partners in an effort to build economic prosperity and notoriety for the region over the next 15 years and brand the High Desert as a place where residents can learn, work,

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Transit Continues Moving Forward Through a Pandemic

Continued

ride. Interest in the Brokerage Program is continuing to increase. VVTA has given two of its non-profit partners in the program an additional vehicle to expand their brokerage efforts. All of the donated buses in the brokerage program and those in use through the former Vehicle Donation Program, continue to have early preventive maintenance performed with no cost to the participating non-profit organization.

The Agency's Vanpool program continues making getting to work feel less like work. The Vanpool program lets groups of five or more share the commute and cost of leasing and maintaining a brand-new vehicle. All Vanpools can receive a subsidy of up to \$500 to help pay the lease each month, as well as the ability to upgrade to a brand-new vehicle every year. There has been a 20% growth for the Vanpool program over the last 5 years, and VVTA's vanpool program is the 16th largest vanpool program in the entire nation. Due to COVID-19, participant numbers are now affecting the

program, with a 15% decline as of September 1, 2020, while other agencies are seeing decreases as high as 50%. Many of VVTA's Vanpool participants are "essential workers" saving VVTA's Vanpool program from experiencing more significant losses.

In much the same way, VVTA's Transportation Reimbursement and Information Program (TRIP) also saw a decline in participation due to the pandemic. TRIP is a self-directed, practical, and empowering mileage reimbursement service that complements public transportation. Older adults, people with disabilities, and residents who are too frail or ill to use public transportation recruit drivers from friends, neighbors, and family members they know and trust. Both parties agree on a schedule and track mileage for each trip. The passenger turns in mileage at the end of the month and receives a reimbursement. The goal of TRIP is to ensure that those with limited transportation options make

it to appointments, services, and events as needed. As of June 30, 2020, VVTA reported a decline in participation of 22%. The drop in participation mileage directly correlates with COVID-19, as those participating in TRIP fall into the "high risk" category and are not traveling unnecessarily. As of September 1, with medical services opening back up, TRIP coordinators saw a slow uptick in reporting and an increase of applicants being referred to the program by Social Services.

In September, VVTA returned to full operating service hours, and while the organization has not yet gained back the entire ridership loss, most recently there has been an 18% increase going into the final quarter of the year. All in all, the pandemic may have slowed down Victor Valley Transit but did not stop its growth, outreach, or service to the residents of the High Desert.



High Desert Looks to Educated Workforce for Promise of Strong Economic Future

Continued

stay, and play. Four MDEP teams continue their work to:

- Provide innovation, incubation, and entrepreneurship opportunities for new and existing businesses and residents.
- Graduate all seniors with college credit and provide them access to post-secondary education, including driving a four-year presence to the region.
- Cultivate highly skilled students and educate them about the variety of local career opportunities available, connect them with resources, and provide a direct pipeline to employers.
- Embed a common set of essential soft skills among all education, industry, and community organizations to ensure higher job-retention rates and long-term success in all areas.

MDCP and MDEP understand the value of training local youth to fill local job openings. At the core of that pursuit is the building of strong, lasting relationships between industry and education. Relationships are built through a variety of touchpoints including, virtual web chats where industry partners can connect with students from their offices or other work-sites, career exploration activities like field trips and virtual tours where students can see firsthand the exciting work being done in their backyards, advisory committee meetings in all sectors where industry can share about their ever-evolving work practices and equipment needs, student seminars featuring industry panelists and guest speakers, and teacher job shadowing and externships.

Externships are a means to providing teachers with an intimate understanding of what the industry looks like today, including current practices, work conditions, standard current equipment/hardware/software, and what skills their students will need to be competitive in that environment. Teachers get the opportunity to work side by side with industry professionals in actual work set-

tings, giving teachers a glimpse into a “day in the life” of that profession. This immersive experience equips teachers with the knowledge they need to enhance their curriculum with the most up-to-date industry standards.

Another great benefit of an externship is learning about different careers within an industry sector. Students in a medical program may only be considering becoming a doctor or nurse, but when their teachers can share with them the vast array of jobs at local High Desert hospitals, for example, that could make a tremendous difference in a student’s career trajectory. Employers know best when it comes to their current and future job needs. Tapping into that knowledge through an externship better prepares students for the variety of career options that exist in their backyards.

In July, three externships took place with industry partners at The Southwest Carpenters Union, Kranbox Video and Photography, and Grand Mobil. Through these experiences, teachers identified skills needed in the occupations observed and developed strategies to bring those skills back into their classroom instruction.

Professional development opportunities like externships are made possible in part through state and federal grant funds that aim to improve the quality of High Desert CTE programs. California’s Career Technical Education Incentive Grant awarded the program \$1.86 million in grant funding last year, with an additional \$1.86 million coming from the California Community Colleges’ K12 Strong Workforce Program. These funds will support the growth and improvement of CTE programs and pathways by providing students with the skills and understanding necessary to thrive in employment and post-secondary education. This takes place through a variety of touchpoints, including purchasing industry standard equipment for classroom use,

placing highly qualified teachers in classrooms, and offering students a pipeline of opportunities designed to expose them to local industry settings and professionals.

Relationships with local community colleges are also of critical importance to the success of high school CTE programs and their students. Through robust partnerships with Barstow Community College and Victor Valley Community College, more than 3,000 high school students received college credits last year through articulation.

Even with the challenges of distance learning being thrust upon school districts last school year, the High Desert region still achieved a monumental success of awarding college credits to 13% of all 9th-12th grade students while still in high school. These students are positioned perfectly to continue their education at a local community college and pursue certification and degrees towards a career.

Many of the students who received articulated credits also earned industry-recognized certificates in a variety of industry sectors. Not only can students add these certificates to their resumes and portfolios, but the skills they mastered to earn the certificates show potential employers that they have real-world experience and have mastered hands-on skills, and this sets them apart from other job candidates.

MDCP and MDEP have found that local industry partners who invest heavily in the local community would like nothing more than to employ as many talented local students as possible. Expanding educational partnerships is the best way to achieve that outcome. Connecting our K12 system, community colleges, and business partners will catapult the economic growth of the Mountain Desert region, allowing for further expansion and abounding career opportunities for our students.



High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

High Desert Property Values Continue Gains with COVID Impacts Unknown

By Bob Dutton, San Bernardino County Assessor-Recorder-Clerk

With the unprecedented set of events that have transpired due to COVID-19, there still remains many unknowns as to the long-term impacts that it will have on our economy and housing markets. It is important to note that county assessors do not forecast property values. County assessors determine the value of property as of January 1st to be placed on the annual roll, as mandated by the state constitution. I wanted to highlight this because it is unknown whether COVID-19 will have any long-term impacts on property valuations.

With this in mind, the 2020 annual roll showcased the continuation of steady property valuation growth seen continuously since 2010. In fact, some High Desert regions have surpassed the 2007 recession values that had seen historic losses in value.

The 2020 San Bernardino County Assessment Roll contains 815,482 taxable parcels valued at \$247,963,569,588, which is a 5.7% net increase as compared to the 2019 Assessment Roll. San Bernardino County's annual property

valuation growth has been averaging around 5.5% to 6.5% in the past five years, indicating a steady increase for the county. We will have to wait to see if this holds true for the 2021 annual roll, set to be delivered next summer.

According to the 2020's Annual Property Assessment Roll:

- The City of Adelanto's total property is valued at \$2,490,780,941. The value is a 8.4% increase from the 2019 Assessment Roll.
- The Town of Apple Valley's total property is valued at \$6,594,854,243. The value is a 5.9% increase from the 2019 Assessment Roll.
- The City of Barstow's total property is valued at \$1,489,886,293. The value is a 3.2% increase from the 2019 Assessment Roll.
- The City of Hesperia's total property is valued at \$6,808,647,581. The value is a 6.6% increase from the 2019 Assessment Roll.
- The City of Victorville's total property is valued at \$9,737,083,197. The

value is a 6.3% increase from the 2019 Assessment Roll.

As mentioned previously, we still do not know what long-term impacts COVID-19 will have on property values. Please visit our website with information regarding the latest tax savings and relief programs available to property owners. Visit my website: sbcountyarc.org/services/tax-savings or call our toll-free number at 1-877-885-7654.

Also, note that the State Controller's Property Tax Postponement Program is currently accepting applications. This program allows homeowners who are seniors and those who are blind, or have a disability to defer current-year property taxes on their principal residence. To qualify they will need to meet certain criteria, including at least 40 % equity in the home and an annual household income of \$45,000 or less (among other requirements). For more information, visit the State Controller's website at: www.sco.ca.gov.



High Desert Industrial Coming Of Age In Hesperia

By Covington Capital

The year was 2003 and principals for the Covington Group had been searching in the High Desert region of Southern California for opportunities to purchase industrial land. Prices for land in the Inland Empire had increased significantly in recent years as the area became known locally, regionally, and nationally as a main hub of industrial activity. The Inland Empire industrial market saw growth related to several factors, one of them being the tightening supply in counties such as Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura as opportunities to build new industrial sites dried up and the existing buildings were largely leased, leading to record low vacancy

rates. In addition to supply issues, the continued growth in container volume coming through the ports of L.A. and Long Beach placed further pressure on the need for additional warehouse space that simply did not exist in some of the more infill markets and, as a result, went to cities like Ontario, Mira Loma, Fontana and Redlands. With these market dynamics in play in the L.A. basin, Covington saw the High Desert region as a viable alternative.

Covington believed that the next logical step for adding to the industrial footprint in the Inland Empire was in the High Desert because it was only approximate-

ly a 30-minute drive north on Interstate 15 from the Ontario airport, ground zero for the Inland Empire market. The bulk of their acquisition efforts were focused on Hesperia and they made their first purchase in 2004. Over the course of the following five years, they acquired a total of about 232 contiguous acres from various ownerships and began planning what is known today as the Hesperia Commerce Center (HCC), which is the preeminent industrial park destination for businesses looking to operate in the High Desert region of Southern California.

The project sits just west of the High-

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High Desert Industrial Coming Of Age In Hesperia

Continued

way 395/I-15 interchange and is the only freeway-adjacent industrial park in the entire High Desert, with 2,600' of Interstate 15 frontage. The location is ideal for companies looking to do business throughout California as well as the Western region. As it sits today, the project is entitled for approximately 3.5MM-square-feet of industrial buildings, most of which is contained in three separate +/- 1MM-square-foot bulk-distribution buildings designed for high-throughput, Class A product that can accommodate e-commerce users. These buildings feature the commercial/industrial business park zoning, a maximum height of up to 60 feet, cross-dock capabilities, and 180' + feet truck-court depths, as well as ample extra trailer and auto parking. The remaining approved square footage will be built on a separate 15-acre site located on the east side of Caliente Road, which has direct frontage on Interstate 15 and can accommodate smaller industrial users.

In October of 2020, the Hesperia Com-

merce Center saw its first significant transaction with the sale of a 60-acre site to Exeter Property Group, a Pennsylvania-based development and management firm. They are already under construction on a build-to-suit for Modway, Inc., a major distributor of lighting and living, dining, bedroom, outdoor, and office furniture. The building will feature 1,055,360 square feet of industrial space and will increase Modway's ability to serve regional and national distribution requirements and further scale their business to expand e-commerce capabilities going forward. Modway's current West Coast distribution is being handled from a 310,550-square-foot facility in Fontana, California, so the move will constitute both a relocation and an expansion of their existing operations, ultimately bringing 200 jobs to the new location. Exeter plans to move swiftly through the construction stage and deliver the building to allow Modway to be operation by the fall of 2021. As evidenced by the Exeter transaction,

the project is well on its way to seeing the vision come to fruition. HCC still has two sites left that can accommodate two, 1MM-square-foot buildings and is currently marketing them to users and/or developers.

About Covington Group, Inc.

Covington Group, based in Dallas, Texas, is an entrepreneurial real estate investment firm that specializes in value-add light industrial, warehouse, and bulk-distribution investments across the United States. Covington focuses on the acquisition of corporate dispositions, REOs, and other types of vacant or distressed industrial properties with the goal of recycling and re-tenanting the asset. Covington owns and manages approximately 6 million square feet of buildings and 15,000 acres in various markets around the country. They have developed or redeveloped over 25 million square feet of commercial and industrial property in their 40-year history.

IECF: Your Partner in Charitable Giving for the High Desert Region

By Jose A. Marquez, CSPG, Director of Planned Giving, Inland Empire Community Foundation



Inland Empire Community Foundation (IECF) is the oldest and largest community foundation serving Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Founded in 1941, IECF has deep roots here and

is committed to working with donors of all sizes and types—individuals, families, businesses, and local government—who care passionately about improving their community. Our mission is to “Strengthen the Inland Empire through philanthropy.”

Today, IECF manages charitable assets

of nearly \$108 million from more than 394 funds. It invests and stewards these assets then makes grants to nonprofit organizations that provide critical services to people in need. These organizations do everything from offering youth programs to supporting low-income families to helping students reach their dream of a college education.

In 2019, IECF awarded over \$15.7 million in grants, including \$4 million that was for scholarships and education. Locally, IECF has granted over \$3.6 million to charities and educational institutions in the High Desert over the past decade.

Did you know that IECF partners with local, High Desert organizations such as

Academy for Grassroots Organizations (AcademyGO)? Based in Oak Hills, AcademyGO offers vital training and resources to help nonprofits in the Inland Empire to strengthen their organizational structure, service delivery, and fund raising. With funding from IECF, AcademyGO has been able to offer its programming either free or at low cost.

Another IECF partner is the High Desert Community Foundation (HDCF). HDCF's goals are to build and strengthen the High Desert community by assisting donors to create funds to meet critical community needs. Together, we are working to improve the quality of life in the High Desert region.

In addition to IECF's core roles of rais-

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

IECF: Your Partner in Charitable Giving for the High Desert Region

Continued,

ing, stewarding and distributing funds, the foundation plays an important role in community leadership and rapidly mobilizing funds when disasters strike. These include the following efforts:

Census 2020

IECF was one of 10 organizations selected by the State Census Office to ensure the most complete count of all residents in the IE. As the Administrative Community-Based Organization, IECF dispersed \$2.4 million in state funds and \$1.5 million in pooled private philanthropy to empower community-based organizations in their outreach in hard-to-count communities. Over 33 organizations received grants and sub-contracts to ensure an accurate Census 2020, including Victorville-based Community Health Action Network (CHAN).

IE COVID-19 Resilience Fund

In response to COVID-19, IECF established the IE COVID-19 Resilience Fund to support nonprofits assisting IE residents impacted by the crisis. The



fund raised over \$721,000 in donations, distributing \$704,000 in relief grants to 55 nonprofits. A number of the nonprofits that received funding in the High Desert include: Academy for Grassroots Organizations, Lesly's CPR (Compassion, Power & Relief) and Assistance League of Victor Valley and St. Mary Medical Center Foundation.

San Bernardino County Nonprofit Assistance Fund

The San Bernardino County Nonprofit Assistance Fund is a partnership between San Bernardino County and IECF to help nonprofits survive the impacts of COVID-19 on their operations. The fund was developed after the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors approved \$5 million in financial support to the nonprofit community, using CARES Act funding.

While IECF managed the application and review process, the county dispersed over \$3 million in relief grants to 216 IECF-approved nonprofits toward the end of December 2020.

If you would like to make an impact in the High Desert, consider a gift to IECF or collaborate with us. Contact Darcy McNaboe, Regional Charitable Giving Officer, San Bernardino, at dmcnaboe@iegives.org. Also visit our brand new website at www.iegives.org for more information.

Inland Empire City Profile 2020

By John E. Husing, Ph.D.

What does the most-recent comparable data say about the 52 cities of the Inland Empire? The annual City Profile (Exhibits 1 & 2, see pages 33 and 34) provides information to answer this question. The sources are the most recently available data for population, taxable sales, assessed valuation, poverty, housing prices and volumes, income, and jobs/housing balance.

Population. From 2010-2020, the CA Finance Department reports that the Inland Empire added 397,990 people to reach 4,622,841 (9.4%). The gain represented 15.7% of California's population growth of 2,528,884. The area continues to exceed the populations of 25 U.S. states. From 2019 to 2020, the

area added 31,731 people (0.7%). In 2020, twelve cities have over 100,000 people, led by Riverside (328,155) and San Bernardino (217,946), followed by Fontana (213,000) and Moreno Valley (208,838). The smallest cities were Indian Wells (5,403), Needles (5,248), and Big Bear Lake (5,206). Six cities added over 15,000 people from 2010-2020: Riverside (24,284), Menifee (19,574), Ontario (18,947), Fontana (16,931), Corona (15,874), and Moreno Valley (15,473). Five cities added under 500 people: Indian Wells (445), Canyon Lake (439), Needles (404), Grand Terrace (386), and Big Bear Lake (187). One city shrank: Blythe (-1,562).

Of California's 482 cities in 2020, five

Inland Empire places were among the top 25 populations: Riverside (12th), San Bernardino (19th), Fontana (20th), Moreno Valley (21st), and Ontario (25th). The housing slowdown continued reducing population growth from 2019-2020. Still, the area had five of the state's 20 fastest growth rates: Calimesa (5.7%; 2nd), Norco (4.3%; 5th), Beaumont (3.7%; 9th), Twenty-nine Palms (2.7%, 14th), and Menifee (2.5%, 18th). Five Inland cities ranked in the top 20 in absolute growth: Ontario (2,377; 11th), Menifee (2,361; 12th), Beaumont (1,845; 16th), Victorville (1,790; 17th), and Riverside (1,728; 19th) [not shown].

Taxable Retail Sales. Taxable sales are *continued on page 32*

Inland Empire City Profile 2020

Continued

a major revenue source for cities. Its growth is under pressure due to the public's increasing use of e-commerce. The CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration now reports the data quarterly a few months after they occur. In calendar year 2019, San Bernardino County's sales rose 2.9% to \$41.8 billion. Riverside County's sales increased 4.0% to \$40.5 billion (Exhibit 1). The combined Inland Empire growth (3.4%) was just below that of California (3.7%). The COVID-19 impact during first and second quarter 2020 showed San Bernardino County's sales rose by 1.1% but then fell by -7.8%. Riverside County's sales rose by 1.3% but then declined by -6.5%. California's rates were respectively -0.2% and -17.5% (not shown).

In 2019, retail sales were again led by Ontario (\$8.19 billion) and Riverside (\$5.79 billion), followed by Corona (\$3.84 billion), Fontana (\$3.71 billion), and San Bernardino (\$3.34 billion). Temecula (\$3.32 billion) ranked sixth, followed by Rancho Cucamonga (\$2.76 billion), Chino (\$2.50 billion), Perris (\$2.10 billion), and Victorville (\$2.05 billion). Of the 52 cities, the five largest 2018-2019 percentage gains were in Perris (15.4%), Needles (14.0%), Jurupa Valley (13.5%), Canyon Lake (12.7%), and Adelanto (10.2%).

Per capita sales reveal how well sales taxes can finance city services for each resident. In 2019, the five leaders were unchanged: Ontario (\$44,765), Big Bear Lake (\$43,565), Palm Desert (\$33,993), Loma Linda (\$31,262), Montclair (\$30,537), and Chino (\$29,946). The weakest per capita sales were in Canyon Lake (\$3,344), Twentynine Palms (\$3,870), Wildomar (\$4,744), Highland (\$4,798), and Adelanto (\$5,251). [Inmates not used in per capita calculations].

Assessed Valuation. Assessed valu-

ation is important since property taxes are also a major municipal revenue source. On July 1, 2020, San Bernardino County's valuation was \$248.0 billion, up 5.7% and 36.4% above its 2008 high (\$181.8 billion). Riverside County's was \$310.6 billion, up 5.9% and 31.1% over its 2008 high (\$236.9 billion). From 2008-2020, the inflation rate was 24.0%, meaning that the purchasing power of property taxes in both counties is at record levels.

For cities, assessed valuation tends to follow industrial and housing development. In 2020, the top five cities and their annual assessed valuation growth rates were: Riverside (\$33.3 billion; 5.7%), Ontario (\$29.5 billion; 7.4%), Rancho Cucamonga (\$28.8 billion; 4.6%), Corona (\$23.0 billion; 5.6%), and Fontana (\$22.4 billion; 6.4%). Although San Bernardino is second in population and has an industrial base, its low home values kept its valuation (\$16.3 billion; 5.6%) at eighth. Each of the 52 cities saw their FY 2020 assessed valuation increase. Annual assessment growth was led by Calimesa (15.3%), Beaumont (14.2%), Needles (11.8%), Perris (10.4%), Desert Hot Springs (9.1%), and Menifee (8.6%).

Assessed value per capita measures the ability of property taxes to support city services for each resident. Here, five Coachella Valley cities continued to be strong, led by Indian Wells (\$1,175,765) and third-ranked Rancho Mirage (\$485,398), followed by La Quinta (\$353,293), Palm Desert (\$304,848), and Palm Springs (\$303,789). Two smaller cities did well: Second-ranked Big Bear Lake (\$733,351) and eighth-ranked Canyon Lake (\$175,419). Several cities near Los Angeles County ranked high: Chino (7th; \$180,578), Rancho Cucamonga (9th; \$166,512), Chino Hills (10th; \$163,854), Eastvale

(11th; \$163,292), and Ontario (12th; \$161,225). Three East SB Valley cities remained weak: San Bernardino (40th; \$77,076), Colton (44th; \$73,637), and Highland (45th; \$71,531). Outlying desert cities ranked in the bottom tier: Twentynine Palms (52nd, \$32,650), Coachella (51st, \$44,308), Blythe (50th, \$57,642), and Barstow (49th, \$61,393).

Poverty. The levels of poverty in the Inland Empire are recognized by public health officials as the primary threat to the region's wellness. The good news is that these rates have fallen as the area's economy has aggressively expanded. In 2019, the American Community Survey showed that 13.3% of San Bernardino County's population was below the federal poverty level, down from 18.0% in 2010. It was 18.4% for the county's children under 18, down from 24.7% in 2010. In Riverside County the share of all people was 11.3%, down from 16.3% in 2010. It was 14.0% for the county's children, off from 2010's level of 23.5%.

Data for all cities was only available for 2018. The highest poverty levels (all; under 18) were found in Barstow (36.6%; 51.3%), Adelanto (35.4%; 47.3%), Desert Hot Springs (33.5%; 40.7%), Blythe (28.4%; 42.2%), Needles (27.7%; 44.9%), and Twentynine Palms (23.5%; 29.7%). Among cities of over 100,000 people, the difficulty was most prominent in San Bernardino (20.3%; 30.6%) and Victorville (19.5%; 27.3%). The least poverty occurred in Chino Hills (3.6%; 2.9%), Canyon Lake (5.0%; 5.7%), Murrieta (6.3%; 7.7%), Eastvale (6.4%; 6.0%), and Temecula (6.6%; 7.9%).

Home Sales Volumes. CoreLogic affiliate Dataquik provides home deed recordings by zip code using county recorders's data. In 2019, existing-home sales were still slow due to lack of

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Inland Empire City Profile 2020

Continued

EXHIBIT 1.-INLAND EMPIRE CITY PROFILE																		
City	Population				Taxable Retail Sales				Assessed Valuation				Poverty					
	2020	Rank	2010-2020 Change	2010-2020 Rank	2019 (mil)	2019 Rank	2019 % Chg.	Per Capita	Per Capita Rank	July 1, 2020 (mil)	July 1, 2020 Rank	July 1, 2020 % Chg.	Per Capita	Per Capita Rank	All People 2018	All People 2018 Rank	Under 18 2018	Under 18 2018 Rank
Adelanto	35,663	37	3,898	31	\$177	43	10.2%	\$5,251	48	\$2,491	40	8.4%	\$73,775	43	35.4%	51	47.3%	51
Apple Valley	74,394	21	5,259	25	\$604	33	2.5%	\$8,119	40	\$6,595	27	5.9%	\$88,648	34	11.6%	23	16.8%	26
Barstow	24,268	43	1,629	41	\$620	32	-5.5%	\$25,538	12	\$1,490	47	3.2%	\$61,393	49	36.6%	52	51.3%	52
Big Bear Lake	5,206	52	187	51	\$227	42	4.9%	\$43,565	2	\$3,818	35	3.9%	\$733,351	2	17.1%	35	29.6%	41
Chino	89,109	16	11,126	15	\$2,498	8	-1.8%	\$29,946	6	\$15,061	10	5.5%	\$180,578	7	6.7%	6	6.2%	7
Chino Hills	82,409	18	7,610	19	\$715	30	-0.9%	\$8,680	38	\$13,503	14	4.7%	\$163,854	10	3.6%	1	2.9%	3
Colton	54,118	27	1,964	39	\$897	22	3.9%	\$16,570	21	\$3,985	33	6.7%	\$73,637	44	15.8%	33	22.2%	33
Fontana	213,000	3	16,931	4	\$3,713	4	9.0%	\$17,434	18	\$22,355	5	6.4%	\$104,951	24	11.4%	20	15.3%	21
G. Terrace	12,426	47	386	50	\$71	50	7.4%	\$5,718	45	\$1,194	48	4.3%	\$96,052	30	8.9%	14	14.5%	19
Hesperia	96,393	14	6,220	23	\$890	23	3.0%	\$9,235	34	\$6,809	26	6.6%	\$70,634	46	14.1%	32	16.7%	25
Highland	55,323	26	2,219	37	\$265	40	5.9%	\$4,798	49	\$3,957	34	4.1%	\$71,531	45	20.0%	42	27.7%	40
Loma Linda	24,535	42	1,274	45	\$767	29	1.0%	\$31,262	4	\$2,413	41	3.8%	\$98,331	29	17.9%	37	20.3%	31
Montclair	39,490	35	2,826	35	\$1,206	18	-1.2%	\$30,537	5	\$3,668	38	4.8%	\$92,893	33	17.0%	34	25.4%	37
Needles	5,248	51	404	49	\$45	51	14.0%	\$8,600	39	\$398	52	11.8%	\$75,773	41	27.7%	48	44.9%	50
Ontario	182,871	5	18,947	3	\$8,186	1	3.1%	\$44,765	1	\$29,483	2	7.4%	\$161,225	12	11.8%	24	17.2%	28
R. Cucamonga	175,522	6	10,253	17	\$2,756	7	-1.1%	\$15,959	23	\$28,757	3	4.6%	\$166,512	9	7.5%	10	5.7%	4
Redlands	70,952	22	2,205	38	\$1,202	19	3.4%	\$16,935	19	\$10,225	20	5.3%	\$144,119	15	7.4%	9	2.7%	2
Rialto	104,553	12	5,382	24	\$1,880	11	6.9%	\$17,983	16	\$10,761	18	8.1%	\$103,365	25	13.5%	31	20.9%	32
San Bernardino	217,946	2	8,022	18	\$3,336	5	2.8%	\$15,778	24	\$16,296	8	5.6%	\$77,076	40	20.3%	43	30.6%	44
29 Palms	29,258	40	4,210	30	\$113	48	-0.9%	\$3,870	51	\$955	50	4.4%	\$32,650	52	23.5%	47	29.7%	42
Upland	78,814	20	5,082	26	\$1,232	17	-0.9%	\$15,637	25	\$10,307	19	5.6%	\$130,781	17	7.3%	8	7.9%	9
Victorville	126,432	8	10,529	16	\$2,045	10	4.2%	\$16,731	20	\$9,737	21	6.3%	\$79,643	39	19.5%	40	27.3%	39
Yucaipa	55,712	25	4,345	29	\$349	36	0.2%	\$6,259	44	\$4,879	32	4.5%	\$87,567	35	12.3%	28	13.6%	18
Yucca Valley	22,236	44	1,536	42	\$328	38	1.9%	\$14,738	26	\$1,866	46	5.1%	\$83,938	37	19.9%	41	26.5%	38
SB County	2,180,537		145,327		\$41,769		2.9%	\$19,343		\$247,964		5.7%	\$114,852		13.3%		18.4%	
Banning	31,125	38	1,522	43	\$240	41	-4.6%	\$8,077	41	\$2,405	42	4.3%	\$80,829	38	23.2%	45	36.4%	47
Beaumont	51,475	30	14,598	8	\$475	35	4.2%	\$9,229	35	\$5,972	30	14.2%	\$116,014	20	10.4%	16	10.1%	13
Blythe	19,255	45	(1,562)	52	\$142	46	3.1%	\$10,557	33	\$776	51	3.2%	\$57,642	50	28.4%	49	42.2%	49
Calimesa	9,329	49	1,450	44	\$85	49	5.1%	\$9,061	36	\$1,108	49	15.3%	\$118,776	19	11.3%	18	10.7%	15
Canyon Lake	11,000	48	439	48	\$37	52	12.7%	\$3,344	52	\$1,930	45	4.0%	\$175,419	8	5.0%	2	5.7%	5
Cathedral City	53,580	28	2,380	36	\$863	26	2.0%	\$16,106	22	\$5,018	31	5.9%	\$93,652	32	20.7%	44	30.1%	43
Coachella	47,186	33	6,482	22	\$335	37	2.2%	\$7,095	43	\$2,091	43	6.1%	\$44,308	51	23.4%	46	34.0%	46
Corona	168,248	7	15,874	5	\$3,842	3	-0.4%	\$22,837	13	\$22,954	4	5.6%	\$136,427	16	8.7%	13	12.1%	16
Dsr Hot Spr.	29,660	39	3,722	32	\$163	45	6.1%	\$5,495	47	\$2,061	44	9.1%	\$69,476	47	33.5%	50	40.7%	48
Eastvale	66,413	23	14,413	9	\$838	27	6.4%	\$12,611	30	\$10,845	17	4.8%	\$163,292	11	6.4%	4	6.0%	6
Hemet	85,175	17	6,518	21	\$1,124	20	7.0%	\$13,200	29	\$6,383	28	4.7%	\$74,936	42	19.1%	39	23.2%	35
Indian Wells	5,403	50	445	47	\$114	47	3.3%	\$21,145	15	\$6,353	29	3.5%	\$1,175,765	1	6.8%	7	0.0%	1
Indio	90,751	15	14,715	7	\$1,082	21	3.8%	\$12,042	31	\$9,187	23	5.0%	\$102,272	26	11.3%	19	16.8%	27
Jurupa Valley	107,083	11	12,083	11	\$1,260	16	13.5%	\$11,762	32	\$11,366	15	8.4%	\$106,145	23	12.1%	27	16.4%	24
Lk Elsinore	63,453	24	11,632	14	\$871	25	-0.1%	\$13,734	28	\$6,923	25	5.6%	\$109,100	22	8.1%	12	8.9%	12
La Quinta	40,660	34	3,193	33	\$874	24	6.0%	\$21,491	14	\$14,365	13	2.7%	\$353,293	4	10.8%	17	15.7%	23
Menifee	97,093	13	19,574	2	\$776	28	4.4%	\$7,988	42	\$11,168	16	8.6%	\$115,025	21	9.3%	15	10.4%	14
Moreno Vly.	208,838	4	15,473	6	\$1,851	12	3.6%	\$8,865	37	\$18,212	6	7.1%	\$87,208	36	12.0%	25	15.6%	22
Murrieta	115,561	9	12,095	10	\$1,629	14	3.0%	\$14,100	27	\$14,596	11	4.8%	\$126,307	18	6.3%	3	7.7%	8
Norco	27,564	41	501	46	\$656	31	4.3%	\$26,165	11	\$3,678	37	5.1%	\$146,734	14	7.6%	11	8.3%	11
Palm Desert	52,986	29	4,541	28	\$1,801	13	2.8%	\$33,993	3	\$16,153	9	3.5%	\$304,848	5	13.3%	30	19.6%	30
Palm Springs	47,427	32	2,875	34	\$1,321	15	5.6%	\$27,863	9	\$14,408	12	5.2%	\$303,789	6	17.3%	36	30.7%	45
Perris	80,201	19	11,815	13	\$2,104	9	15.4%	\$26,238	10	\$7,526	24	10.4%	\$93,835	31	13.2%	29	18.3%	29
Rancho Mirage	19,114	46	1,896	40	\$553	34	5.7%	\$28,910	8	\$9,278	22	3.7%	\$485,398	3	12.0%	26	22.5%	34
Riverside	328,155	1	24,284	1	\$5,786	2	0.1%	\$17,632	17	\$33,342	1	5.7%	\$101,833	27	11.5%	21	12.5%	17
San Jacinto	51,028	31	6,829	20	\$284	39	2.4%	\$5,564	46	\$3,440	39	6.4%	\$67,415	48	18.2%	38	24.0%	36
Temecula	111,970	10	11,873	12	\$3,318	6	1.6%	\$29,633	7	\$17,386	7	4.3%	\$155,273	13	6.6%	5	7.9%	10
Wildomar	37,183	36	5,007	27	\$176	44	-0.8%	\$4,744	50	\$3,713	36	4.4%	\$99,958	28	11.6%	22	14.8%	20
Riv County	2,442,304		252,663		\$40,538		4.0%	\$16,671		\$310,647		5.9%	\$127,788		11.3%		14.0%	
Inl. Empire	4,622,841		397,990		\$82,306		3.4%	\$17,927		\$558,610		5.8%	\$121,704		12.2%		16.1%	

Source: CA Finance Dept., E-5 Population Report; CA Bd. of Equalization, Taxable Retail Sales; San Bernardino/Riverside Co. Assessors, American Community Survey

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The Bradco High Desert Report

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Inland Empire City Profile 2020

Continued

EXHIBIT 2.-INLAND EMPIRE CITY PROFILE																	
City	Existing Homes						New Homes						Income				
	2019 Volume	2018-19 Rank	2018-19 % Chg	2020 3 rd Q Median P	2019-20 Rank	2019-20 % Chg	2019 Volume	2018-19 Rank	2018-19 % Chg	2020 3 rd Q Median P	2019-20 Rank	2019-20 % Chg	2018 Median	2018 Rank	2018 Tot. (mil)	2018 Rank	Job/ HH
Adelanto	81	41	-30.2%	\$259,000	46	12.6%	12	29	500.0%	\$301,500	46	-0.1%	\$40,018	47	\$391	47	0.74
Apple Valley	304	12	-14.4%	\$295,579	42	9.5%	13	26	62.5%	\$439,333	26	47.7%	\$51,314	35	\$1,725	24	0.59
Barstow	100	40	-3.8%	\$155,000	49	12.3%	0	45	0.0%	\$245,500	49	NA	\$39,585	49	\$448	45	0.98
Big Bear Lake	105	38	-21.6%	\$466,000	21	29.8%	2	39	NA	\$597,000	10	27.7%	\$51,014	36	\$167	51	1.74
Chino	115	37	-19.6%	\$556,379	11	7.9%	57	12	-25.0%	\$548,800	14	9.7%	\$87,090	9	\$2,527	15	2.15
Chino Hills	148	28	-3.3%	\$704,500	3	4.4%	7	33	-53.3%	\$854,250	3	-30.9%	\$103,473	3	\$3,580	10	0.61
Colton	73	43	-30.5%	\$355,000	37	11.5%	10	30	233.3%	\$423,000	30	9.7%	\$50,063	40	\$1,021	33	1.36
Fontana	401	5	-7.8%	\$470,082	19	9.4%	109	7	91.2%	\$517,790	19	2.1%	\$80,800	12	\$5,241	4	1.21
G. Terrace	24	52	-20.0%	\$420,000	24	13.5%	1	41	0.0%	\$507,500	21	21.1%	\$66,912	25	\$352	48	0.51
Hesperia	282	14	-20.8%	\$293,786	44	6.2%	24	21	9.1%	\$384,135	38	-0.0%	\$50,271	39	\$1,735	23	0.53
Highland	125	32	-3.1%	\$396,500	28	8.6%	5	36	-50.0%	\$496,000	22	10.5%	\$59,395	30	\$1,310	29	0.79
Loma Linda	40	47	17.6%	\$461,400	22	24.7%	0	45	0.0%	\$629,500	6	-21.8%	\$87,090	33	\$653	39	2.27
Montclair	31	49	-40.4%	\$480,000	18	9.1%	0	45	-100.0%	\$760,000	4	49.0%	\$58,012	31	\$703	37	1.29
Needles	25	51	56.3%	\$126,500	52	48.8%	1	41	0.0%	\$170,000	50	150.0%	\$31,843	52	\$95	52	0.61
Ontario	198	21	-25.0%	\$483,889	16	9.5%	180	2	16.1%	\$545,120	15	8.3%	\$75,266	18	\$4,351	5	2.46
R. Cucamonga	201	19	-4.3%	\$467,291	20	-0.1%	8	32	33.3%	\$618,074	9	6.7%	\$92,773	8	\$6,556	2	1.37
Redlands	157	26	-22.3%	\$408,462	26	10.0%	16	24	1500.0%	\$433,500	27	4.4%	\$72,410	21	\$2,726	13	1.64
Rialto	315	11	-1.3%	\$631,319	5	9.8%	50	14	11.1%	\$532,855	17	3.5%	\$70,188	24	\$2,076	19	0.88
San Bernardino	630	2	-8.3%	\$353,795	38	12.9%	55	13	-3.5%	\$393,364	36	-4.3%	\$49,721	41	\$4,015	7	1.78
29 Palms	119	34	26.6%	\$150,000	50	7.1%	0	45	0.0%	\$120,000	51	-40.0%	\$41,668	45	\$453	44	0.58
Upland	135	30	-12.3%	\$613,547	6	3.7%	25	20	-10.7%	\$574,750	11	3.7%	\$82,426	11	\$2,827	12	1.08
Victorville	408	4	-15.9%	\$293,851	43	13.0%	66	10	46.7%	\$347,813	43	5.8%	\$60,391	29	\$2,089	18	0.88
Yucaipa	141	29	-0.7%	\$405,000	27	6.6%	1	41	0.0%	\$430,000	29	10.3%	\$63,657	28	\$1,504	28	0.54
Yucca Valley	123	33	-14.6%	\$247,500	48	20.4%	5	36	25.0%	\$349,000	41	7.4%	\$45,277	43	\$555	41	0.45
SB County	24,849		-0.4%	\$369,500		10.8%	3,080		-0.4%	\$506,000		6.1%	\$67,903		\$55,665		1.21
Banning	117	35	-9.3%	\$279,000	45	7.3%	0	45	0.0%	\$310,500	44	-4.5%	\$41,038	46	\$584	40	0.58
Beaumont	160	24	-7.5%	\$375,000	34	7.9%	135	3	31.1%	\$417,500	32	12.8%	\$78,111	14	\$1,206	31	0.48
Blythe	26	50	-21.2%	\$140,000	51	-13.7%	0	45	-100.0%	\$75,000	52	NA	\$43,141	44	\$308	49	1.28
Calimesa	33	48	50.0%	\$375,000	33	-1.3%	37	19	208.3%	\$414,750	33	6.6%	\$53,366	34	\$229	50	0.35
Canyon Lake	79	42	-8.1%	\$482,500	17	7.5%	0	45	-100.0%	\$349,000	42	0.0%	\$97,237	5	\$486	43	0.33
Cathedral City	134	31	-11.3%	\$383,250	32	15.2%	13	26	-7.1%	\$353,500	40	-25.1%	\$46,370	42	\$1,263	30	0.58
Coachella	54	46	20.0%	\$296,500	41	13.2%	0	45	0.0%	\$302,000	45	-8.5%	\$33,870	51	\$662	38	0.92
Corona	530	3	-9.7%	\$586,314	9	10.8%	115	6	36.9%	\$527,685	18	1.1%	\$86,790	10	\$5,448	3	1.80
Desert Hot Spr.	158	25	0.0%	\$256,960	47	11.1%	2	39	NA	\$299,000	47	6.8%	\$34,814	50	\$432	46	0.43
Eastvale	181	23	-25.8%	\$606,833	7	8.7%	70	9	48.9%	\$508,290	20	-3.7%	\$114,230	1	\$1,878	21	0.37
Hemet	372	7	-7.0%	\$300,568	40	11.3%	22	23	46.7%	\$286,333	48	-5.0%	\$39,653	48	\$1,567	27	0.68
Indian Wells	56	45	86.7%	\$852,000	1	10.3%	6	35	50.0%	\$895,000	2	-7.5%	\$104,522	2	\$523	42	1.41
Indio	276	15	-17.6%	\$361,159	35	8.2%	41	18	-30.5%	\$412,318	34	-0.3%	\$74,774	19	\$2,995	11	0.69
Jurupa Valley	117	36	-22.0%	\$445,000	23	7.2%	7	33	-12.5%	\$539,500	16	29.1%	\$76,090	17	\$2,237	16	1.38
Lk Elsinore	201	20	-16.6%	\$417,308	25	10.2%	49	15	4.3%	\$421,818	31	1.1%	\$77,090	15	\$1,721	25	0.75
La Quinta	292	13	11.9%	\$562,500	10	23.6%	12	28	0.0%	\$933,000	1	42.9%	\$79,889	13	\$1,836	22	0.92
Menifee	353	10	-13.7%	\$395,035	29	12.5%	242	1	48.5%	\$445,086	25	5.2%	\$77,033	16	\$2,707	14	0.39
Moreno Vly.	394	6	-14.2%	\$386,624	30	10.6%	108	8	68.8%	\$432,085	28	15.0%	\$65,449	27	\$4,116	6	0.84
Murrieta	366	8	-19.0%	\$487,534	14	8.4%	130	4	17.1%	\$474,051	23	6.1%	\$100,080	4	\$3,924	9	0.92
Norco	56	44	-24.3%	\$605,000	8	6.2%	1	41	0.0%	\$567,000	12	56.0%	\$95,441	7	\$824	35	2.29
Palm Desert	253	16	15.5%	\$484,324	15	13.8%	9	31	0.0%	\$621,938	8	35.8%	\$57,578	32	\$2,125	17	1.32
Palm Springs	243	17	13.0%	\$691,272	4	10.3%	16	24	6.7%	\$689,031	5	-20.0%	\$50,361	38	\$1,940	20	1.16
Perris	187	22	-17.6%	\$383,478	31	14.0%	42	17	100.0%	\$393,000	37	-3.1%	\$66,545	26	\$1,582	26	1.35
Rancho Mirage	101	39	24.7%	\$732,500	2	12.0%	24	21	4.3%	\$561,614	13	2.4%	\$71,227	23	\$1,130	32	1.68
Riverside	650	1	-15.1%	\$517,487	13	19.8%	117	5	62.5%	\$625,303	7	10.5%	\$71,967	22	\$7,815	1	1.67
San Jacinto	148	27	-8.1%	\$326,828	39	9.7%	58	11	28.9%	\$361,565	39	9.3%	\$50,483	37	\$812	36	0.56
Temecula	361	9	-7.7%	\$532,807	12	7.8%	44	16	46.7%	\$469,333	24	-24.4%	\$95,918	6	\$3,992	8	1.56
Wildomar	218	18	-4.0%	\$358,071	36	13.3%	5	36	-37.5%	\$409,125	35	18.9%	\$73,282	20	\$878	34	0.49
Riv County	30,630		1.2%	\$452,000		13.0%	5,997		11.4%	\$445,500		2.4%	\$73,260		\$70,235		1.03
Inl. Empire	55,479		0.5%	\$414,200		11.9%	9,077		3.0%	\$470,600		4.9%	\$70,757		\$125,899		1.11

Source: Dataquick, U.S. Census Bureau, Economics & Politics, Inc.

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The Bradco High Desert Report

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available supply. San Bernardino County's 2019 existing-home sales recordings fell -0.4% to 24,849 units; Riverside County's sales rose 1.2% to 30,630 sales (Exhibit 2). The five cities with the largest volumes were: Riverside (650; -15.1%), San Bernardino (630; -8.3%), Corona (530; -9.7%), Victorville (408; -15.9%), and Fontana (401; -7.8%). There was sales growth in only 10 of 52 cities. They were led by Indian Wells (86.7%; 56 sales), Needles (56.3%; 25 sales), Calimesa (50.0%; 33), Twentynine Palms (26.6%; 119), and Rancho Mirage (24.7; 101). The largest declines in growth were in Montclair (-40.4% to 31 sales), Colton (-30.5% to 73), Adelanto (-30.2% to 81), Eastvale (-25.8% to 181), and Ontario (-25.0% to 198).

Riverside County's 2019 new-home sales rose 11.4% to 5,997; San Bernardino County's sales fell -0.4% to 3,080. The largest city volume was in Menifee (242; 48.5%). It was followed by Ontario (180; 16.1%), Beaumont (135; 31.1%), Murrieta (130; 17.1%), and Riverside (117; 62.5%). Twenty-nine of 52 cities had increased new home sales. Growth rates were led by Rialto (1,500% to 16 sales). Next were Adelanto (500.0% to 12 sales), Colton (233.3% to 10 sales), Calimesa (208.3% to 37 sales), Perris (100.0% to 42 sales), and Fontana (91.2% to 109 sales).

Home Prices. From third-quarter 2019-2020, Riverside County's median existing-home price rose 13.0% to \$452,000; San Bernardino County's rose 10.8% to \$369,500. These homes were affordable to 43% of Riverside County's families and 54% of those in San Bernardino County. The highest existing-home prices and their annual changes for third-quarter 2020 were led by Indian Wells (\$852,500; 10.3%), Rancho Mirage (\$732,500; 12.0%), Chino Hills (\$704,500; 4.4%), Palm

Springs (\$691,272; 10.3%), and Rancho Cucamonga (\$631,319; 9.8%). Outlying desert cities continued to be the most affordable: Needles (\$126,500; 48.8%), Blythe (\$140,000; -13.7%), Twentynine Palms (\$150,000; 7.1%), Barstow (\$155,000; 12.3%), and Yucca Valley (\$247,500; 20.4%). Prices increased in 49 of 52 cities, led by Needles (48.8%), Big Bear Lake (29.8%), Loma Linda (24.7%), La Quinta (23.6%), and Yucca Valley (20.4%).

San Bernardino County's median new-home price from third-quarter 2019-2020 rose 6.1% to \$506,000; Riverside County's increased 2.4% to \$445,500. The highest prices were in La Quinta (\$933,000; 12 sales), Indian Wells (\$895,000; 6 sales), Chino Hills (\$854,250; 7 sales), Montclair (\$760,000; 2 sales), and Palm Springs (\$689,031; 16 sales). Priced under \$300,000 were six cities: Blythe (\$75,000, 2 sales), Twentynine Palms (\$120,000, 1 sale), Needles (\$170,000; 1 sales), Barstow (\$245,500, 2 sales), Hemet (\$286,333; 22 sales), and Desert Hot Springs (\$299,000; 2 sales). The greatest 2019-2020 price increases were in Needles (150.0% to \$170,000), Norco (56.0% to \$567,000), Montclair (49.0% to \$760,000), Apple Valley (47.7% to \$439,333), and La Quinta (42.9% to \$933,000).

Income. 2019 median household income in Riverside County was \$73,260 and gross county income was \$70.2 billion. Those levels were \$67,903 and \$55.7 billion for San Bernardino County. Incomes for all 52 Inland cities were only available for 2018. The highest median incomes were in Eastvale (\$114,230), Indian Wells (\$104,522), Chino Hills (\$103,473), Murrieta (\$100,080), and Canyon Lake (\$97,237). For comparison, Irvine was \$111,574; Santa Monica was \$92,490. The lowest were: Needles (\$31,843), Coachella (\$33,870),

Desert Hot Springs (\$34,814), Barstow (\$39,585), and Hemet (\$39,653). Total 2018 personal income was led by Riverside (\$7.81 billion), Rancho Cucamonga (\$6.56 billion), Corona (\$5.45 billion), Fontana (\$5.241 billion), and Ontario (\$4.35 billion).

Jobs/Housing Balance. Often, the fastest growing Inland Empire cities see population surges before job growth, creating commuting issues. Within the region, one city may be the job hub for its neighbors. The ratio of city-based jobs to occupied homes is a measure of this with 1.26 being a balance ratio for Southern California. San Bernardino County is closer to that level (1.21) than faster-growing Riverside (1.03). The five highest city ratios, meaning heavy job nodes, were: Ontario (2.46), Norco (2.29), Loma Linda (2.27), Chino (2.15), and Corona (1.80). The five lowest, meaning major commuter locations, were: Canyon Lake (0.33), Calimesa (0.35), Eastvale (0.37), Menifee (0.39), and Desert Hot Springs (0.43). Nineteen of the region's 52 cities exceeded the 1.26 balanced ratio.

Most Prosperous? Which Inland Empire cities are the most economically prosperous? Summing city rankings for per capita retail sales, per capita assessed value, and poverty share, as well as rankings for absolute 2010-2019 population growth, median income, and median price of all homes, plus jobs/housing balance could yield a perfect score of "7" for seven first places or a worst score of "364" from seven 52nd places. In 2019-2020, the best 10 scores on these criteria were: Chino (58), Temecula (67), Corona (72), Ontario (73), Indian Wells (85), Norco (98), Rancho Cucamonga (101), Murrieta (104), Riverside (1093), and Chino Hills (109).

INLAND EMPIRE EMPLOYMENT ... COVID's Impact

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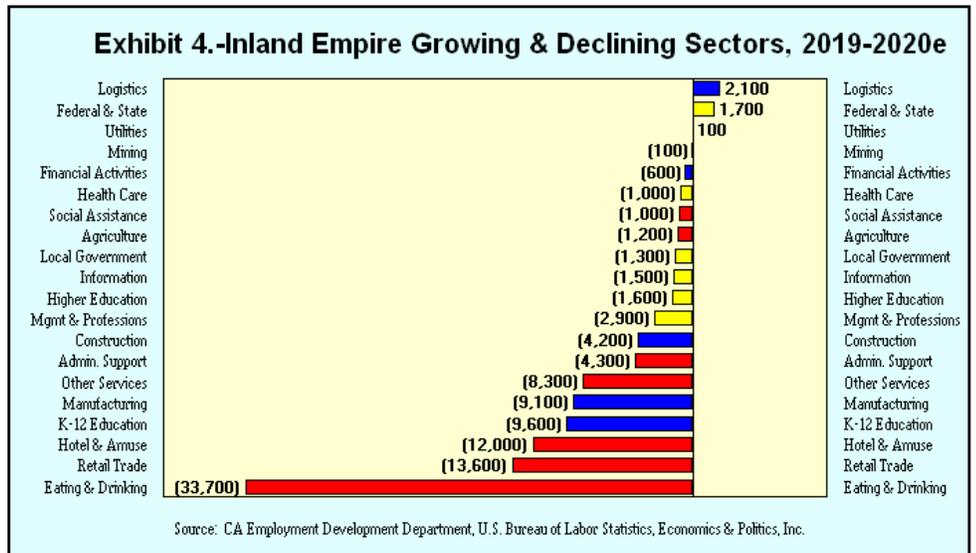
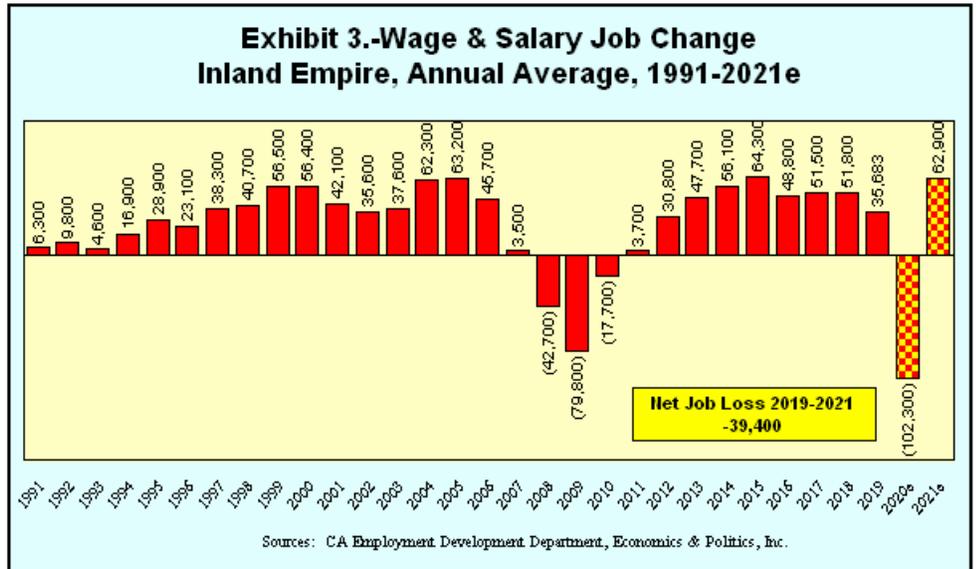
Inland Empire City Profile 2020

Continued

As of December 2020, the Inland Empire is on track down to be -102,300 jobs or -6.56% below its 2019 employment level (Exhibit 3). That said, this would be an improvement over the -195,500 job decline at the low point in April 2020. This view assumes that Congress will agree to a stimulus package of some kind now that the November election is over. Looking ahead to 2021, hard-hit population-serving sectors are assumed to recover: eating and drinking (15.0%), retailing and consumer services (5.0%), and travel and entertainment (16.5%), based on their growth from April to September 2020. Those high growth rates are assumed given that these sectors have been artificially restrained by state-mandated shutdown due to COVID-19. Other sectors are assumed to grow at the compound annual rates they did in the post-Great Recession period from 2011-2019 except where this appeared to be too fast for current conditions (i.e., logistics, construction, health care). The QER predicts 62,900 jobs will be added in 2021. That would still leave 39,400 jobs to be recovered in 2022.

MAJOR LOSING SECTORS: -86,200 Jobs; -84.3% of Loss

Primarily, the COVID-19 shutdown has hurt service sectors where people interact closely together. By December 2020, assuming some growth after September, those losing the most jobs compared to 2019 would be eating and drinking (-33,700; -24.6%) and retailing (-13,600; -7.4%). The largest shares of jobs were lost in hotel and entertainment (-12,000; -31.6%). Also hit hard was the consumer services group (-8,300; -18.1%), which included sectors like automotive repair, hair stylists, and personal trainers. Each of these is a relatively low-paying sector (Exhibit 4). Two other badly hit sectors were K-12 education (-9,600; -6.9%) and manufac-



turing (-9,100; -8.9%). The education decline was limited to private schools, as the K-12 public sector-jobs were protected by the state. The manufacturing decline was a continuation of consolidation in that sector, pushed harder by the COVID recession.

MODERATE LOSING SECTORS: -19,700 Jobs; -19.3% of Loss

Most of the other sectors in the Inland Empire's economy also will have lost jobs in 2020 compared to 2019. This included three sectors somewhat related

to the housing market. Of these, two are moderate paying groups: construction (-4,200; -4.0%) and financial activities (-600 jobs; -1.4%). Also, the small, well-paying mining sector was down (-100; -8.3%).

Several high-paying sectors also lost jobs led by management & professions (-2,900; -5.6%), and higher education (-1,600; -8.3%). Information was down -1,500 (-13.0%). Local government is expected to be down -1,400 (-1.7%). The important healthcare sector will have lost jobs for the first time in recent

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memory (-1,000; -0.7%).

Lower-paying sectors in decline included administrative support (-4,300; -4.1%), agriculture (-1,200; -7.9%), and social services (-1,000; -1.2%).

GROWING SECTORS: 3,700 Jobs; +3.6% of Loss

Three sectors will likely average a little growth by the end of 2020. Logistics (2,000; 1.0%) will do so because so many people are buying online and propelling the Inland counties' e-commerce sector. It will be dampened by the impact of tariffs and COVID-19 on imports. Federal and state government will grow (1,600; 4.1%) because of the impact of census workers. Finally, utilities will add 100 jobs (2.1%) as they must still serve the region.

SUMMARY

It is likely that 2020 will go down in history as the worst year economically in the lives of most Americans as well as most inland residents. Even 2021 is unlikely to bring the area back to the job levels seen in 2019. It will take 2023 to accomplish that.

JOB CREATION

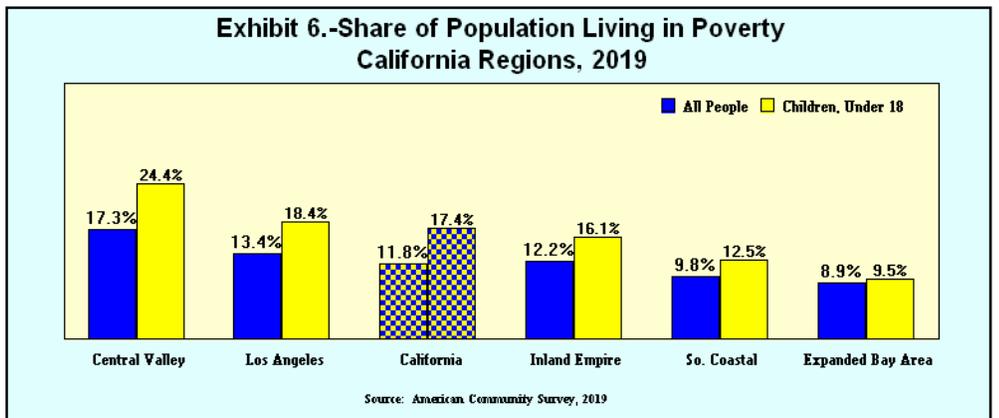
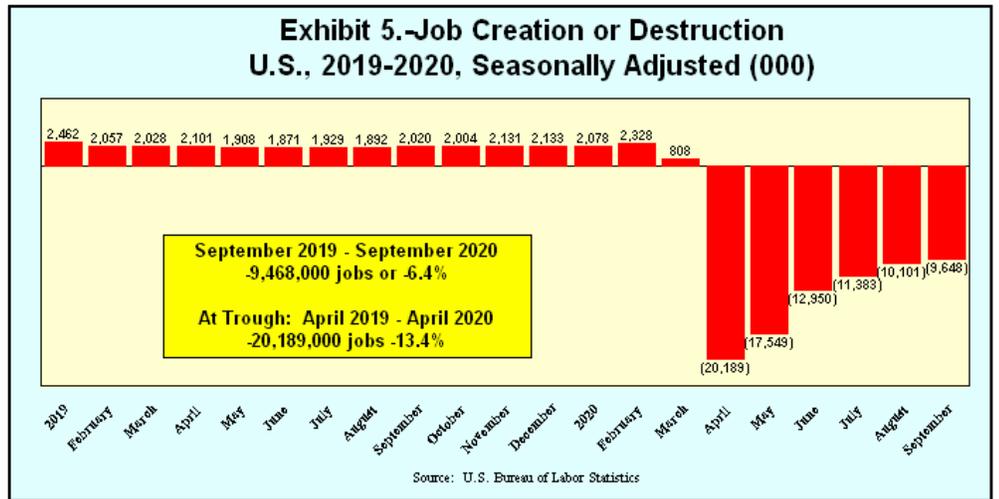
U.S. COVID-19 Impact. Job changes during 2019 showed the U.S. economy growing in every month compared to 2018. These job increases continued into 2020 compared to 2019, with 2,078,000 more year-over-year jobs in January and 2,328,000 in February. When COVID-19 became an issue, the growth fell to 808,000 in March. April 2020 saw the great shutdown due to the pandemic, with -20,159,00 jobs lost compared to 2019 (-13.4%). Since then the U.S. economy has come back somewhat, with September employment down -9,648,000 (-13.4%) versus that month of 2019. This gradual decrease in the relative job decline has occurred as some sectors have partially reopened while others have barely done so. This

national environment has been reflected in the partial comeback of the Inland economy since April 2020.

Poverty. A continuing difficulty impacting the Inland Empire has been the share of its population living in poverty. Fortunately, economic forces in the Inland Empire have succeeded in taking many people out of poverty by 2019. As a result, the American Community Survey has found that the level of poverty has dropped significantly. Thus, the share of children under 18 living below the federal poverty line has fallen from 24.1% in 2010 to 16.1% in 2019. Poverty for all people has dropped from 17.1% in 2000 to 12.2%. Poverty levels for the Inland Empire now rank below Los Angeles County and California. While still unacceptably high, poverty levels were definitely moving in the right direction

before the COVID-19 setback.

Educational Attainment. A competitive difficulty for the Inland Empire is its modest level of educated adults. In 2019, Inland residents with community college (AA) or higher degrees were only 31.2% of adults (not shown). This was below the shares in the coastal counties: Los Angeles (40.7%), San Diego (48.2%), Orange (48.7%). However, some Inland cities do offer firms strong shares of educated workers. Thus, soaring coastal home prices have forced educated adults with AA or higher degrees to migrate inland for upscale housing. That, plus local colleges, has given these cities strong levels of AA or higher educated residents: Chino Hills (62.5%), Redlands (59.8%), Loma Linda (48.9%), and Temecula (48.9%) above Orange County. Rancho



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Cucamonga (46.5%), Eastvale (45.8%), and Upland (42.5%) above Los Angeles County and Murrieta (39.3%) just below it.

Median Pay By Sector. The Inland Empire median incomes had strengthened by 2019 but was still less than most California markets. Its 2019 median incomes for all households was \$70,575 (half above/half below). This was higher than incomes in the Central Valley (\$59,872). However, it was below other major state regions, starting with Los Angeles (\$72,759). The southern coastal counties, including San Diego, Orange, Ventura, and Santa Barbara, were at \$89,184. The expanded Bay Area from San Luis Obispo to Marin across to Sacramento stood at \$107,958. Interestingly, when the lower housing costs in the inland counties are taken into account, the Inland Empire's net median income after housing costs stood above Los Angeles County.

HOME MARKETS: Price Increases Mixed, Volume Recovers

In third quarter 2020, the Inland Empire recorded 18,603 seasonally adjusted existing- and new-home sales. Volume was the highest since 2009 (Exhibit 9). This was a reaction to the decline in second quarter 2020 when sales dried up due to the COVID-19 shutdown. Meanwhile, the median existing-home price in the two-county area reached \$414,207, up 11.9% from \$370,036. For the first time, it exceeded the \$389,924 record in third quarter 2006, up 6.8% (Exhibit 10). The new-home price of \$470,603 was 7.6% above the 2006 record of \$437,208.

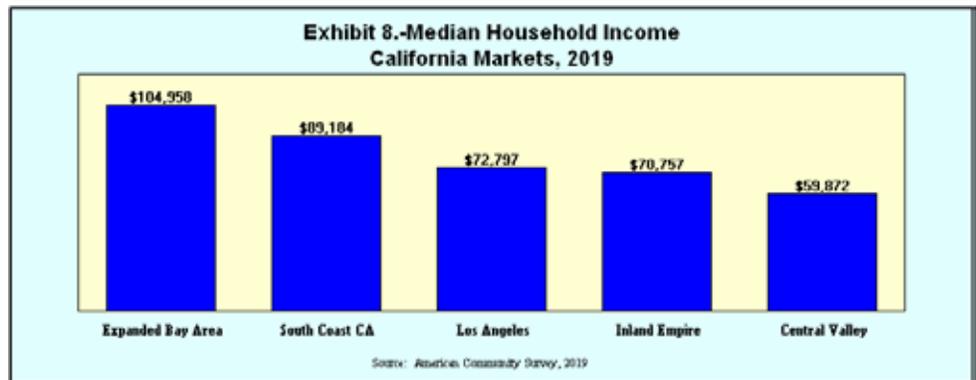
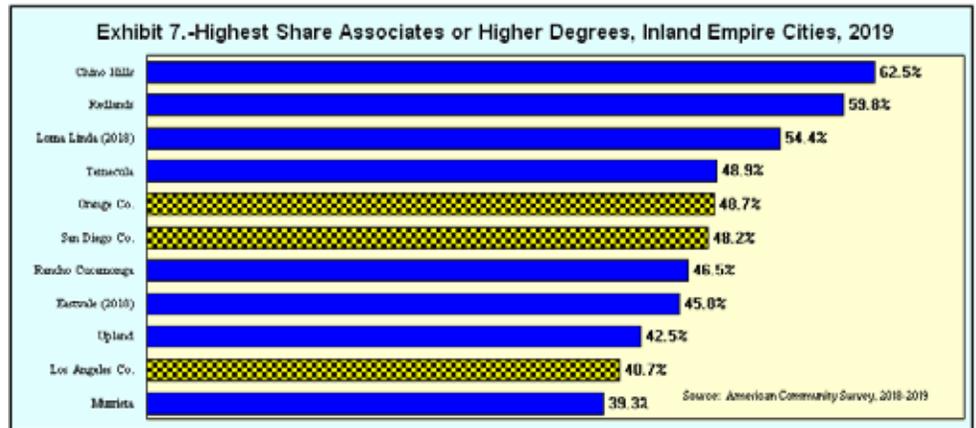
Sales. Riverside County had 9,389 existing-home sales in third quarter 2020, up 7.3% from 2019. As recordings come at the end of escrow, this included some second quarter sales. Coachella Valley had the highest total and percentage gains (1,722 units;

28.8%). The county's 1,481 new-home sales were down -11.1% from 2019. The rural desert area had the fastest growth (104 units, 55.2%). Southwest counties had the most volume (431; -14.3%) (Exhibit 11).

San Bernardino County's existing-home sales rose 13.1% to 7,522 units. The county's mountain area led in volume

and sales gains (1,686 sales; 84.7%). New-home sales in third quarter 2020 rose 29.0% to 1,051 units. The area around Fontana along the I-10 freeway between the I-15 and I-215 had the fastest growth (100 units; 455.6%). Cities west of the I-15 continued to lead in sales (504 units; 29.9%).

Prices. Riverside County's third quar-



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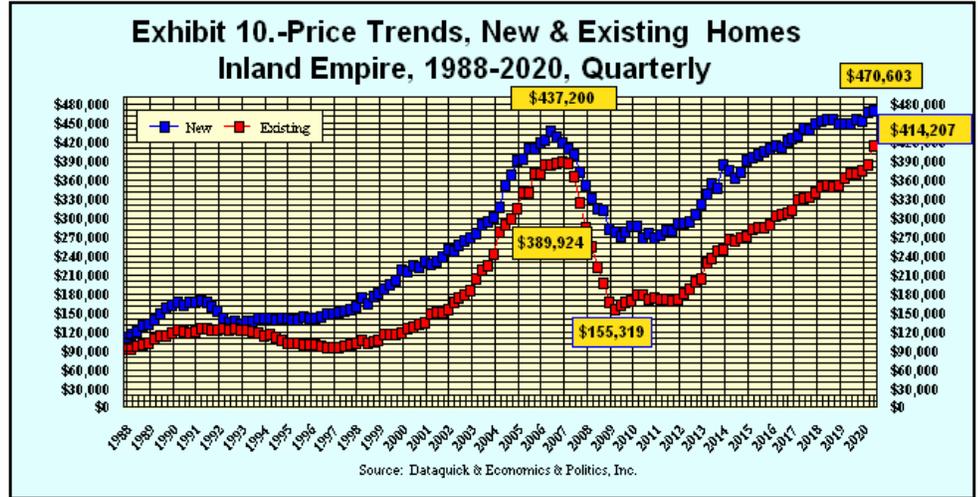
An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

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ter 2020 median new-home price was \$445,500, up from \$435,000 in 2019 or 2.4%. It was up slightly from \$445,000 in the second quarter 2020 (Exhibit 12). The median existing-home price of \$452,000 was 13.0% above 2019's \$400,000 and well above second quarter's \$423,500. San Bernardino County's 2020 median new-home price of \$506,000 was up 6.1% from \$477,000 in 2019 and just above second quarter's \$504,00. Its existing-median-home was \$369,500, up 10.8% from \$333,500 in 2019, well above the prior quarter's \$339,000 median price. Southern California's new-home price of \$625,200 was up 3.9% from 2019 (\$602,100). The larger region's 2020 existing-home price of \$642,200 was up 12.9% from \$568,900 the prior year.

Summary. In third quarter 2020, volume in the Inland Empire's housing markets was the strongest in the past eight years, due to very low interest rates and potential buyers coming out to look for homes. They had been reluctant to engage in the second quarter when the COVID-19 crisis hit. Still, the lack of available homes for sale kept the volume down. High demand but limited supply has propelled prices to levels beyond the prior records in 2006. Still, compared to other markets, affordability remains high in San Bernardino County where 54% of local families could afford median-priced existing homes in second quarter 2020 (half priced above/below). It was 43% in Riverside County. By contrast, just 25% of Orange County families could afford their county's median-priced homes. It was 30% in San Diego County and 32% in Los Angeles County. The lack of affordability in coastal county markets has historically driven buyers inland, but lack of homes for sale has slowed this phenomenon.



NEW HOMES				EXISTING HOMES			
Area	3rd-2019	3rd-2020	% Chg.	Area	3rd-2019	3rd-2020	% Chg.
East of I-215	18	100	455.6%	SB Mountains	913	1,686	84.7%
SB Mountains	4	14	250.0%	SB Desert	647	825	27.5%
SB Desert	5	11	120.0%	East of I-215	517	565	9.3%
Victor Valley	130	172	32.3%	Victor Valley	1,348	1,419	5.3%
I-15 to I-215	180	238	32.2%	West of I-15	1,389	1,443	3.9%
West of I-15	388	504	29.9%	San Bdn-Highland	836	743	-11.1%
San Bdn-Highland	90	12	-86.7%	I-15 to I-215	999	841	-15.8%
SAN BDNO COUNTY	815	1,051	29.0%	SAN BDNO COUNTY	6,649	7,522	13.1%
Rural Desert	67	104	55.2%	Coachella Valley	1,337	1,722	28.8%
Corona, Norco	216	266	23.1%	Rural Desert	587	678	15.5%
Coachella Valley	111	128	15.3%	Southwest Co.	2,380	2,622	10.2%
Perris, Hemet, S.Jacinto	242	220	-9.1%	Corona, Norco	924	983	6.4%
Southwest Co.	503	431	-14.3%	Perris, Hemet, S.Jacinto	1,328	1,338	0.8%
Pass Area	247	178	-27.9%	Pass Area	480	481	0.2%
Riverside	169	112	-33.7%	Riverside	1,174	1,109	-5.5%
Moreno Valley	111	42	-62.2%	Moreno Valley	544	456	-16.2%
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	1,666	1,481	-11.1%	RIVERSIDE COUNTY	8,754	9,389	7.3%
INLAND EMPIRE	2,481	2,532	2.1%	INLAND EMPIRE	15,403	16,911	9.8%

Source: Dataquik

County	3 rd -2019	3 rd -2020	% Chg.
New Homes			
Riverside	\$435,000	\$445,500	2.4%
San Bernardino	\$477,000	\$506,000	6.1%
Los Angeles	\$670,750	\$720,000	7.3%
Orange	\$935,000	\$952,500	1.9%
San Diego	\$680,500	\$700,000	2.9%
Ventura	\$615,000	\$609,000	-1.0%
So. California	\$602,100	\$625,600	3.9%
Existing Homes			
Riverside	\$400,000	\$452,000	13.0%
San Bernardino	\$333,500	\$369,500	10.8%
Los Angeles	\$655,000	\$750,000	14.5%
Orange	\$787,500	\$875,000	11.1%
San Diego	\$625,000	\$710,000	13.6%
Ventura	\$645,000	\$720,000	11.6%
So. California	\$568,900	\$642,200	12.9%

Source: Dataquik

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Forecasting during the COVID-19 Crisis

By John E. Husing, Ph.D.

Those of us forecasting in the current economic environment face several unusual challenges. First, we have no experience with a situation where a significant part of the economy has been shut down by government direction. We have no parallel situation of how various sectors will occur going forward with the likely slow introduction of a vaccine in 2021. There is also no consensus of whether or when a new COVID-19 stimulus package will emerge from negotiation between the president and the two branches of Congress.

Given this situation, you may wonder how the forecast shown in the employment sector of this report was developed. First, we do have a substantial amount of information on the speed with which various sectors recovered during 2011-2019 after the Great Recession. This varied from 7.31% a year for logistics and 6.58% compounded for construction. Healthcare grew at a strong 3.92% per year. These sectors were expected to slow down from those rates in 2021. Tariff issues will likely continue to plague logistics which was forecasted at 5.0%. Construction was slowed to 3.0% because its 2011-2019 rate was extraordinarily strong given the depth its employment reached in the Great Recession. Healthcare was slowed to 3.0% given people's fear of close one-on-one contact.

Other than those shifts, the balance of the economy, with the exception of the four sectors hit extremely hard by the pandemic, were forecasted for 2021 at their compound annual rates from 2011-2019. These varied from a high of 5.0% for social assistance to a low of 0.4% for tax-starved local governments.

In the Inland Empire, employment in the four sectors hit the hardest by the

COVID-19 pandemic have seen very large declines. Travel and amusement jobs appear that they will be down -31.4% fell by the end of 2020 or -12,000 jobs. Eating and drinking outlets will be down -24.6% or -33,700 positions. Consumer services like hair salons and gyms will be off by -18.1%, or -8,300 jobs. And retailers will drop by -7.5%, or -13,600 workers.

To forecast these sectors, a hard look was taken at how well they recovered in the four months from the low in April 2020 to September 2020. Those rates were then used as a guide for how much they might be expected to recover in 2021. Travel and amusement jobs recovered by 9.7% in the four-month period. Given the great fear of being in close proximity to people in confined locations in that period, plus the fact that the period missed all of the Fall-Winter-Spring surge in the Coachella Valley, this rate was almost doubled to 16.5% to forecast 2021. Eating and drinking grew 32.0% in the April-to-September period as many restaurants and bars were allowed to somewhat reopen. That surge was lowered to 15.0% in forecasting 2021, given the latent fears that will likely continue to impact the sector.

Consumer service employment grew only 4.4% in the earlier four-month period as the governor opened and closed these outlets that put people in very close contact with workers. That was nearly doubled to 8.5% for 2021, assuming that these activities will begin to normalize. Finally, retailers grew by 11.1% from April to September as many stores reopened. That was lowered to 5.0%, as many of these operations will have already resumed full operations by December. However, there will be a loss, as some boutique shops have closed.

With these assumptions, the -102,300 annual average job decline anticipated for all of 2020 would be offset by 62,900 jobs recovered in 2021, leaving 39,400 jobs that must be recovered in 2022 to get the economy back to its 2019 level.

Note, to make a forecast like this, some information and a lot of instinct about how the various sectors will likely move in the coming months has been required. How accurate will the forecasts be? That truly remains to be seen.



High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Mojave River Valley Commercial Industrial Office and Retail Update February 2021

By Joseph W. Brady, CCIM, SIOR - President of The Bradco Companies, Publisher Bradco High Desert Report

As President of Joseph W. Brady Inc., dba The Bradco Companies, the longest standing, full-service commercial industrial land brokerage company, I am glad to give an overview of data that we have compiled through CoStar, a company that we have subscribed data from for multiple years. We are also proud that CoStar, the largest aggregator of commercial and industrial office retail data in the world, has changed the High Desert name to recognize the "The Mojave River Valley" name that many of us in the High Desert (Mojave River Valley) are now promoting.

Industrial

The industrial market for the Mojave River Valley, which encompasses the cities of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville, consists of 937± buildings, with an inventory at the end of 2020 of 22,202,024± sq. ft., a vacancy of 949,069± sq. ft., or 4.3%, and a total available square footage of 1,276,983 sq. ft., or a total available in a marketplace of 5.8%.

People ask what the difference is between a property that is noted as "vacant" and a property that is noted as "available." Companies like CoStar keep data on tenant square footages, lease rates, when leases occur, when they terminate, etc. So in this particular case, at the end of 2020, CoStar was able to tell us that we had 949,069 ± sq. ft. of actual space that was vacant but that in the marketplace there was 1,276,983± sq. ft. available. (That means there was property that was coming to the market fairly soon). Unfortunately, the net absorption in the fourth quarter of 2020 was a negative (41,855± Sq. ft.), with an overall rental rate of \$0.55± NNN. That compares to a net absorption in the third quarter of 190,555± sq. ft., in the second quarter of 2020 of 92,510±,

and 55,412 ± sq. ft. in the first quarter of 2020.

We have a very healthy industrial market, and the challenge is that we have very little product that ranges between 2,500 and 50,000 sq. ft. that has any type of clear height, 24 to 30 sq. ft., concrete tilt up, ESFR (sprinklers), loading docks, etc. We believe that as the market progresses, we will start to see more industrial development by more sophisticated industrial developers from Southern California recognizing that in the Southern California market we have nearly 2 billion± sq. ft. of space; yes that is with a "b."

To give you an idea of the amount of square footage of industrial space in Southern California, and why industrial is the "hottest commodity" in real estate nationally, please take a look at the square footages to see what 2 billion± sq. ft. totals as follows.

County	Inventory Sq. Ft.
Imperial County	4,674,942± SQ. FT.
Kern County	51,515,013± SQ. FT.
Los Angeles County	878,085,686± SQ. FT.
Orange County	232,272,442± SQ. FT.
Riverside County	228,351,153± SQ. FT.
San Bernardino County	420,286,969± SQ. FT.
San Diego County	146,574,679± SQ. FT.
Ventura County	65,164,748± SQ. FT.
Total:	2,026,925,632 Sq. Ft.

Industrial

Let's take a look at each one of the High

Desert (Mojave River Valley) cities to see where we were at the end of the fourth quarter 2020.

Also note that the Vacant Space SF for the City of Victorville includes a building located at 17300 Silica Rd. which is a ±357,000 sq. ft. former glass manufacturing plant. If we remove this building, that leaves us with ±89,767 sq. ft. of vacant space and a vacancy rate of ±1.04% in Victorville.

For those who are local to the Mojave River Valley or those who own property here in the Mojave River Valley, or those who wish to travel to the Mojave River Valley and take a look at the industrial market, we strongly suggest that you spend 30 minutes and take a look at the industrial buildings that have been developed by Stirling Development (Lake Forest, CA) under the leadership of Mr. Dougall Agan, Mr. Chris Downey, Mr. Brian Parnoe, and Mrs. Anita Tuckerman.

This company builds only LEED Certified industrial buildings, with a minimum clear height of 28 feet, and now most of their new buildings have clear heights of 32 feet, The largest building they have developed at the base is just a tad over 1 million square feet.

As publisher of the Bradco High Desert Report and president of The Bradco Companies, I am pleased to say that I am the only Mojave River

Industrial							
City	Inventory Bldgs	Ending Inventory SF	Vacant Space SF	Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption SF Past Twelve Months	12 Month Const. Starts SF	NNN Rent Overall
Adelanto	±170	±4,305,151	±362,208	±8.4%	±276,055	±44,500	\$0.96
Apple Valley	±119	±4,033,947	±35,158	±0.9%	(±11,894)	0	\$0.77
Barstow	±81	±1,149,619	±16,230	±1.4%	(±1,550)	0	\$1.00
Hesperia	±344	±3,865,341	±84,458	±2.2%	(±24,914)	0	\$0.91
Victorville (Including SCLA)	±194	±8,626,660	±446,767	±5.2%	±49,073	0	\$0.41

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Mojave River Valley Commercial Industrial Office and Retail Update February 2021

Continued

Valley broker that has ever done an industrial lease over 100,000± sq. ft. We were able to negotiate the United Furniture Industries lease of 505,192± sq. ft. nearly nine years ago and have had three successful renegotiations with Stirling. Stirling is an exceptional developer; United Furniture is an exceptional tenant, and we are very proud to be responsible for these opportunities.

Lease Comparables

We have selected some lease comparables that have recently occurred within the marketplace to give you an idea of what constitutes a quality industrial building. In the middle of Victorville, located at 12176 Industrial Blvd., a 5,330± sq. ft. building was leased for \$0.70± a sq. ft., (modified gross). The owner was asking \$0.80± a sq. ft., (modified gross). It was a four-year lease. The entire building is 24,883± sq. ft., built in 1989, and the leasing rep. was Paul Tann of MGR Real Estate.

In the Barstow region, a 7,000± sq. ft. metal industrial building, located at 1612 State St., leased by G&M Towing through The Bradco Companies, had an asking rent of \$0.61 ± per sq. ft., a starting rent of \$0.56± per sq. ft., (modified gross), and the property was represented by Randy Sanchez of MGR Real Estate and leased through Joseph W. Brady of The Bradco Companies. It was a three-year lease commencing September 2020.

Lastly a property in the unincorporated portion of the county, just north of Barstow, a 14,100± sq. ft. industrial lease, was signed in August 2020 by Yermo Investments, LLC, located at 34760 Daggett/Yermo Rd., and a five-year lease with a starting rent of \$0.40± per sq. ft.

Office							
City	Inventory Bldgs	Ending Inventory SF	Vacant Space SF	Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption SF Past Twelve Months	12 Month Const. Starts SF	Office Base Rent Overall
Adelanto	±32	±149,349	±2,171	±1.5%	(±2,171)	0	\$1.20
Apple Valley	±185	±1,286,353	±59,962	±4.7%	±11,595	0	\$1.33
Barstow	±143	±616,557	±1,269	±0.2%	(±1,269)	0	\$1.25
Hesperia	±161	±916,818	±22,195	±2.4%	(±4,849)	0	\$1.37
Victorville (Including SCLA)	±331	±2,601,604	±135,526	±5.2%	±7,273	0	\$1.27

Retail							
City	Inventory Bldgs	Ending Inventory SF	Vacant Space SF	Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption SF Past Twelve Months	12 Month Const. Starts SF	NNN Rent Overall
Adelanto	±61	±305,544	±10,336	±3.4%	±80	0	\$1.36
Apple Valley	±250	±3,182,686	±187,709	±5.9%	±106,498	0	\$1.08
Barstow	±357	±2,917,798	±179,000	±6.1%	±30,989	±6,200	\$1.10
Hesperia	±402	±3,232,976	±213,932	±6.6%	±78,383	±102,054	\$1.33
Victorville (Including SCLA)	±608	±7,468,819	±885,581	±11.9%	(±161,649)	0	\$1.27

Office

The Mojave River Valley office market, consisting of the cities of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville, consists of 877± buildings, 5,623,523± sq. ft., and a total current vacancy of 221,123± sq. ft., or 3.9%. Slightly above that is a total available square footage of 277,287± sq. ft., or 4.9% vacancy. The overall base rent within the Mojave River Valley marketplace during the fourth quarter of 2020 was \$1.30± a sq. ft. There was a total of 6,213± net feet absorbed in the marketplace during the quarter.

Retail

The Mojave River Valley retail market for the cities of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville consists of 1,840± buildings, 17,942,938± sq. ft., with a vacancy rate of 1,523,867±, or 8.5%, a total available square footage of 1,720,724, or 9.6%, and a total absorption in the fourth quarter of 2020 of 12,470± sq. ft. The overall rent in the Mojave River Valley for a retail building was \$1.23± a sq. ft.

I chose to use the fourth quarter of 2020

to show the total number of buildings, the total inventory, and the total vacancy, rather than comparing the first quarter to the fourth quarter, due to COVID-19 and other issues that we believe were important, but we wanted to be constant in our analysis.

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

High Desert (Mojave River Valley) 2020 Residential Resales Report

For many years Joseph W. Brady Inc., dba The Bradco Companies, and its publication of The Bradco Companies, High Desert Report has subscribed to Core Logic and has purchased data from it on how the High Desert has done as a region for home sales. Initially, I want to take a look at home sales in 1985 (I moved to the High Desert on May 13th, 1988) and then compare it every five years until 2020. What I found interesting is in 1985.

We track 21 zip codes within the portion of the High Desert that we call the Mojave River Valley. Not only do they include the Town of Apple Valley and the cities of Adelanto, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville, they also include Fort Irwin, Helen Dale, Hinkley, Lucerne Valley, Newberry Springs, Oro Grande, Phelan, Pinon Hills, and Wrightwood. In 1985—remember in 1985 what is now the City of Hesperia and the Town of Apple Valley were not incorporated—there were 3,017 total homes sold that year within these zip codes. Those transactions amount to \$194,704,450. By 2005, (20 years later), we sold 16,511 residential units, and the total consideration was \$4,536,491,000. That was an increase of 447.26% in the number of dwelling units and an increase of nearly 2,229.93%. The aggregate difference was 13,494 dwelling units (2005-1985), but more importantly, it was a difference of \$4,341,786,550.

We all know what happened with the downturn of Lehman Brothers and our banking system in October of 2008. If you reflect on what happened to 2010, we had dropped nearly 7,611 units less than we did in 2005. The most staggering, we had a sales decrease in the aggregate number of sales, an aggregate volume of nearly 77.46%. To put things in their proper light, and for those who remember those dark days, we lost, in

Mojave River Valley Single Family Residential Permits

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Adelanto	0	96	327	368	900	1,040
Apple Valley	277	362	542	642	1,019	1,351
Barstow	0	0	7	2	36	67
Hesperia	210	540	469	965	1,478	1,752
Victorville	419	655	986	2,102	2,699	2,258
HD UNINC AREAS	17	16	490	851	1,212	1,181
Totals	923	1,669	2,821	4,930	7,344	7,649
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Adelanto	329	307	1	31	54	24
Apple Valley	904	149	56	40	67	22
Barstow	47	107	22	6	11	6
Hesperia	1,061	319	188	2	2	0
Victorville	3,078	1,090	185	260	283	112
HD UNINC AREAS	841	313	61	36	45	16
Totals	6,260	2,285	513	375	462	180
Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Adelanto	14	58	36	110	1	90
Apple Valley	62	91	116	110	148	225
Barstow	29	20	0	0	2	2
Hesperia	4	13	75	99	189	172
Victorville	84	82	44	83	130	170
HD UNINC AREAS	23	45	60	68	146	55
Totals	216	309	331	470	616	714
Year	2018	2019	2020	Totals for 2000 - 2020		
Adelanto	21	63	132	4,002		
Apple Valley	67	76	110	6,436		
Barstow	1	0	0	365		
Hesperia	238	180	261	8,217		
Victorville	318	437	505	15,980		
HD UNINC AREAS	129	113	182	5,900		
Totals	774	869	1,190	39,710		

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

High Desert (Mojave River Valley 2020 Residential Resales Report

a matter of five years, on an annual basis, \$3,514,246,230.

When I spoke to the High Desert Association of Realtors in August of 2020 about the importance of the High Desert Survey, I gave them some indications that when you see that much movement in home sales, you also see commensurate decrease in the amount of available dollars for real estate agents, escrow companies, title companies, general contractors, home inspection companies, home warranty companies, appliance companies, etc. So if you look at the decrease between 2005 and 2010 (a decrease of 3,514,246,230), and just assume that amounted to an average 4% commission, it was \$140,569,849.20 less in the local economy, with local real estate agents, and the money they generate. I like to remind people in our region that the High Desert Association Realtors and the High Desert Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service is why I consider them to be second largest group of professionals outside the California Teachers Association and all the teachers who are employed within our local school districts, community colleges, etc.

So where are we today? Through the work of our local Real Estate companies (we have seen a dramatic shift between some of the major names), we are now at 4.55% (December 31, 2020) of where we were on December 31, 2005. But to give encouragement to everybody in the region, from 2019 – 2020, we finished 2020 with a total amount of sales of 7,778 residential units, totaling \$2,247,871,750.

We are up by 6.694% over 2019 in total dwelling units sold (7,078 vs 7,290, increase of 488 units, and we are up 19.83% in value). In 2019 we did \$1,875,869,250 vs \$2,247,847,871,750 in 2019. This is an increase of \$372,002,500.

Is the High Desert housing market coming back? Yes. I think we all appreciate the low interest rates that we received. We see 2021 as an even

better year for all those in Real Estate and all those homeowners who wish to participate in this great market.

I hope you enjoy looking at the numbers we have supplied and if you have any comments, feel free to email me at:

jbrady@thebradco.com

Mojave River Valley Total Permit Valuation

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Adelanto	\$7,966,961	\$10,779,986	\$24,594,816	\$33,564,475	\$139,882,328	\$197,089,307
Apple Valley	\$47,062,723	\$58,058,318	\$105,427,496	\$87,039,936	\$132,638,948	\$215,724,420
Barstow	\$3,719,391	\$4,542,930	\$16,766,063	\$2,895,060	\$12,495,387	\$14,126,254
Hesperia	\$40,661,871	\$87,976,861	\$86,919,942	\$187,782,203	\$361,473,040	\$498,012,766
Victorville	\$95,147,633	\$141,985,841	\$221,548,115	\$390,961,644	\$594,013,794	\$469,032,158
HD UNINC AREAS	\$3,149,955	\$3,310,909	\$75,363,274	\$133,051,491	\$198,457,105	\$194,388,704
Totals	\$197,708,534	\$306,654,845	\$530,619,706	\$835,294,809	\$1,438,960,602	\$1,588,373,609
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Adelanto	\$79,117,034	\$91,389,992	\$17,724,977	\$11,831,806	\$13,055,554	\$12,943,591
Apple Valley	\$149,243,766	\$47,384,953	\$39,502,250	\$15,740,574	\$20,506,672	\$10,313,472
Barstow	\$26,379,379	\$28,474,924	\$9,430,225	\$17,400,974	\$5,482,999	\$9,298,962
Hesperia	\$364,872,736	\$174,353,688	\$100,489,661	\$18,661,338	\$8,528,465	\$722,712
Victorville	\$636,180,650	\$339,476,573	\$105,393,410	\$101,000,000	\$69,314,709	\$59,175,026
HD UNINC AREAS	\$134,476,748	\$50,635,308	\$9,868,463	\$5,831,726	\$7,255,911	\$3,041,059
Totals	\$1,390,270,313	\$731,715,438	\$282,408,986	\$170,466,418	\$124,144,310	\$95,494,822
Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Adelanto	\$2,641,563	16,137,339	\$58,669,784	\$29,005,403	\$60,000.00	\$16,302,703.00
Apple Valley	\$16,814,510	28,665,847	\$36,314,910	\$42,037,973.00	\$19,749,520.00	\$31,567,929.00
Barstow	\$6,234,920	6,675,811	\$26,155,748	\$11,728,008.72	\$370,000.00	\$280,000.00
Hesperia	\$8,466,907	6,092,385	\$19,131,064	\$20,146,137.60	\$79,472,792.21	\$63,728,777.14
Victorville	\$91,577,872	35,931,964	\$36,660,095	\$44,500,148.00	\$37,224,352.00	\$44,464,847.00
HD UNINC AREAS	\$3,779,780	8,047,029	\$10,671,607	\$11,360,757.00	\$24,903,096.00	\$10,391,916.00
Totals	\$129,515,552	\$101,550,375	\$187,603,208	\$158,778,427	\$161,779,760	\$166,736,172
Year	2018	2019	2020	Totals for 2000 - 2020		
Adelanto	\$2,641,563	\$12,614,429	\$18,921,923	\$796,935,533.59		
Apple Valley	\$12,610,924	\$12,429,535	\$18,101,364	\$1,146,936,040.00		
Barstow	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$202,607,035.72		
Hesperia	\$52,499,711	\$54,989,356	\$56,211,382	\$2,291,193,794.41		
Victorville	\$91,577,872	\$128,784,912	\$153,377,100	\$3,887,328,714.86		
HD UNINC AREAS	\$50,009,575	\$46,319,616	\$73,322,484	\$105,763,651,307.00		
Totals	\$209,489,645	\$255,137,848	\$319,934,253	\$9,382,637,631.65		

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Publishers Message

Continued

Fangjan Stoner's husband, Dale Stoner; Flo Collier's son Glenn Collier; Hank McGill's wife, Pat McGill; Hans Soo Kim's mother; The Hurst family with the loss of their father, Norm Hurst; the Carpino family's loss of their father and husband, Tom Carpino; Jerry Ellsworth's wife, Linda Ellsworth; Lee Farley's wife, Mary Parks; Lisa Weldy's father, Llyod Cagle; Lynda Thomasson's mother, Ruth; Margaret Smith's brother, Steve Diaz; Michelle Henderson's husband, Steve Tyrell's brother; Jay Obernolte's stepmother; Mary Waller's husband, Bob Waller; Peggy Sue's husband, Champ; Bonnie Lanyon's husband, Tom; Karen Davis' father, Gerry Allen; Lori Hitt's daughter; Nikki Salas' husband; Omar Alfaro's father, Gus; Roberto Torrez's youngest brother; Dee Tidwell, Sherry Thompson's husband; and Tom Smith, who lost both Peter and Christy.

The Bradco High Desert Report is not intended to be a newsletter or a summary of obituaries, but in my 32 years in the High Desert region, I have met some incredible people who have not only touched my life, but I believe have touched the lives of the readers of the Bradco High Desert Report or are influenced by some of the things that we do.

I am proud to still be a member of the Board of Trustees at Victor Valley Community College District, where I finished my second term as President of the Board on December 8, 2020. I greatly ap-

preciate the leadership we have with Dr. Daniel Walden, who took over for our good friend Dr. Roger Wagner, who retired and is enjoying life in Yucca Valley and playing golf every few days.

Victor Valley Community College, the Mojave River Valley's premiere educational venue, is striving to become an Aspen prize winner, we hope in 2026-2027. The Aspen prize is awarded to the number one community college out of 921 community colleges nationwide.

Our Board of Trustees, as led by Mr. Brandon A. Wood, President; Ms. Jennifer Tarpley, Vice President; Mr. Dennis Henderson, Clerk; Ms. Sharon Pinkerton and me, are striving to not only be sure that we win that award but we believe it will have a great impact on employers looking to move to the region and job creation.

Again, I thank all those who read our publication, and I hope you enjoy it. This 59th edition is our largest newsletter since we began publication in May 1983. Hopefully, it makes up for the extra few months it took to put together as we worked to collect some of the major reports regarding housing, housing permits, housing resell numbers, etc.

If we can ever be of help to you in the future, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (760) 951-5111 x100. If I can ever be of any help to you as publisher of The Bradco High Desert Re-

port or president of The Bradco Companies, the longest standing, full-service, commercial, office, retail and land brokerage firm in the region, please let me know. I can be reached by phone at (760) 951-5111 x101 and via email at jbrady@thebradcocompanies.com.

Lastly, we would like to welcome Kevin Peterson of RentSource who recently purchased Alliance Management Group from us in Barstow. The sale of Alliance Management Group will allow my wife to focus on projects that she wants to in the coming years and design our second home in Prescott, AZ. (No, I am not going anywhere, and I do not plan on going anywhere for many years to come!)

We wish you the very best in 2021, pray that COVID-19 will be behind us soon, pray that we will gain our political stability and, most importantly, do not lose our freedom of speech.

Joseph W. Brady, CCIM, SIOR

President of Joseph W. Brady, Inc. dba

The Bradco Companies

Publisher, The Bradco High Desert Report



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For more information contact: Joseph W. Brady, CCIM, SIOR Co-Managing Member of Barstow Spanish Trail
www.theshopsatspanishtrail.com • jbrady@thebradcocompanies.com • (760)951-5111 x101

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2020 New Home Permits High Desert (Mojave River Valley)

We all remember the robust amount of construction that took place between 2004 and 2006 within the High Desert (Mojave River Valley) economy. With information that we obtained through the cities of Adelanto, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville, and the Town of Apple Valley, and through the San Bernardino County First District and a portion of San Bernardino County Third District (we include areas such as Lucerne Valley in our calculations), we saw a peak of new-home construction in 2005 of nearly 7,649 dwelling units.

If you look at the average number of people per dwelling unit at 2.8 people per household, in 2005 we would have moved in roughly 21,417 new or potentially relocated residents.

By 2009, (after the Lehman Bros. debacle and the Wall Street correction) we saw severe reduction of new-home sales to 180 dwelling units, or a reduction of nearly 97.64%.

In 2020, we were up to 1,190 dwelling units, and while that was 84.44% less than we were in 2005, we were up by 36.93% over 2019, when we sold 869 dwelling units.

The High Desert (Mojave River Valley Region) is continuing to increase, and it will be very interesting to see what the impact will be from Tapestry, the fully entitled Master Planned Community in Hesperia consisting of 9,633± acres, 15,633± approved homes.

According to Mr. John Ohanian, the

developer hopes to start grading nearly 10 million cubic feet of dirt in April of 2021 and have six major homebuilders (the homebuilders have all been picked, and they will be a part of Tapestry's model complex that will open on Super Bowl Sunday in February of 2023).

The initial plans are to grade 2,104 lots, put all the infrastructure, including double purple pipe, wiring, gas lines, sewer, and water, and then improve with asphalt the first 500 lots each time they need to open up a new phase.

I wish to congratulate John Ohanian and his partners at Terra Verde Group and welcome them to the Mojave River Valley.

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

2020 New Home Permits High Desert (Mojave River Valley)

Continued

Mojave River Valley Single Family Residential Permits & Total Permit Valuation Summary

2000 -2009 Data Evaluation Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, Victorville & MRV UNINC Areas

Total Permits 34,769
Total Permit \$7,472,473,260
Valuation \$7,302,006,842

2010 - 2020 Data Evaluation Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, Victorville & MRV UNINC Areas

Total Permits 6,603
Total Permit Valuation \$2,031,671,300

2000 -2009 & 2010 - 2020 Permit Data Comparison Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, & Victorville

Total Permits Decrease of 81% between 2010-2020 compared to 2000 -2009
Total Permit Valuation Decrease of 72.81% between 2010-2020 compared to 2000 -2009

Town of Apple Valley Update

By Orlando Acevedo, Economic Development Director, Town of Apple Valley



In the last year the Town of Apple Valley moved full speed ahead on many projects that are paving the way for thousands of jobs, greater economic opportunities, improved roads, and a better way of life. Part of this success can be attributed to the joint Planning Commission and Town Council workshops hosted to listen to the concerns of our development community. The result was a more flexible development process that makes it easier to do business here while maintaining Apple Valley's high-quality standards.

Recent additions to our local economy included the opening of the High Desert's first Corky's Kitchen and Bakery, a new Starbucks, Chase Bank, the reuse of the former Lowe's building for a new RV and boat storage facility, the ground-breaking of several fuel stations, and the High Desert's first Dutch Bros Coffee.

One of the largest projects in the region,

both in size and economic impact, Big Lots opened its 1.3 million-square-foot, \$120 million distribution center, adding 500 jobs to the regional economy.

An additional 500 permanent jobs and 10,000 construction jobs are expected to stem from Brightline's XpressWest high-speed rail line, station, and maintenance facility that is expected to break ground in mid-2021. News of the project made national headlines and could begin moving passengers between Apple Valley and Las Vegas in about 90 minutes in late 2023.

Similar to its South Florida rail stations, the Brightline station in Apple Valley is expected to attract transit-oriented commercial and residential development in the surrounding area. The project will create more than 1,200 housing units and inject \$2.13 billion into California's economy, including \$275 million in federal, state, and local tax revenue. To learn more visit, av.town/train.

On the opposite end of Apple Valley, we

have partnered with the Village Property and Business District Association to commission the development of a Village Specific Plan. This planning tool aims to improve infrastructure, expand development opportunities, increase ADA accessibility, and cultivate a unified character and architecture in the area, making it an attractive place to shop, dine, and do business at the many restaurants, antique and gift shops, service businesses, and the U.S. Post Office there.

In a partnership with CalTrans, work has already commenced on the intersection of Apple Valley Road and Highway 18 that will level out and expand the intersection, replace traffic signals, construct retaining walls, add sidewalks with ADA improvements, and more when complete in late 2021. For more information, including exhibits and to watch a project overview video, visit av.town/avroads

Shopping centers near the Apple Valley Road and Highway 18 intersection, along with centers near Dale Evans Park-

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High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Town of Apple Valley Update

Continued

way and Highway 18, the Village Business District, and pockets of open desert, were among the areas identified by the County Sheriff's Homeless Outreach and Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) team as experiencing an uptick in transient and homeless activity.

The HOPE program uses a proactive community policing approach intended to reduce calls for service and resources required in addressing the homeless population. HOPE links homeless persons with resources and service providers throughout the county. Apple Valley police and code enforcement officers offer HOPE services to homeless individuals they encounter and will sometimes transport them to nearby shelters or family members.

To learn more about HOPE, visit: wp.sbcounty.gov/sheriff, where you can find a helpful Resource Guide and list of nonprofits providing services in mental health, transitional youth, shelters, domestic violence, and more.

To report homelessness in Apple Valley, call Sheriff's Dispatch at (760) 956-5001, contact Code Enforcement at (760) 240-7560, email code@applevalley.org, or use the town's mobile app "Apple Valley Connect" to send location information and photos.

Businesses and individuals may also use the app or call Code Enforcement to report illegal dumping. It was a concerned resident who recently reported an illegal dump in progress in the area of Del Oro and Kiowa roads. Apple Valley Police and Code Enforcement officers issued criminal citations to the violators and towed their rented U-Haul truck that got stuck in the sand while illegally dumping the truck's content into the desert. Reporting persons are eligible to receive a \$500 reward from Burrtec Waste as part of the town's continued efforts to prevent illegal dumping.

The town's free Community Enhancement Programs make illegal dumping unnecessary. We are on pace to surpass

the 674,500 pounds of trash and 3,400 tires collected at our free cleanup and tire drop-off events in 2019. Large-item pickup, graffiti removal and more are also available. For more information visit www.AVCode.org.

After nearly 10 months, testimony in the trial to acquire the Liberty Utilities water system concluded in mid-July. The town asserts that the Apple Valley water system will be better managed locally, by the town, and not by a foreign corporation focused on shareholder returns. As a bench trial, The Honorable Judge Donald Alvarez will ultimately decide whether the town has the right to acquire the water system by eminent domain after additional documentation and closing arguments conclude. If the judge finds in favor of the Town, a valuation trial will be scheduled for a jury to determine the value of the water system.



City of Barstow Update

By Nikki Salas, City Manager, City of Barstow



Located in the heart of a transportation nexus, the City of Barstow continues to exemplify itself as the "Crossroads of Opportunity." Each year Barstow supports vehicle traffic in excess of 30 million and truck traffic in excess of 7.5 million. This makes the Barstow region appealing to developers that are interested in proximity to suppliers and customers.

Barstow is the major Burlington-Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) mainte-

nance hub for California, with nearly all trains leaving or arriving in California passing through the BNSF Barstow Railyard. Construction of the \$27 million dollar Barstow intermodal facility at the BNSF railyard was completed in 2019, expanding the movement of goods from the Port of Long Beach to the East Coast, a route vital to the national and global economy. The City anticipates BNSF playing a key role in the continued growth of the community.

One of the most significant additions to the local economy over the last year is American Quartz, a quartz countertop manufacturing company that chose to locate a facility in the Lenwood area.

This company did not let COVID put a halt to their development process. They are on schedule to successfully meet their anticipated operation date next year. Job opportunities in the entire Mojave River Valley region will grow because of American Quartz's dedication to hire local employees, which includes a significant focus on local veterans.

Residential development is on the horizon for the community. The City of Barstow was recently recognized by LendEDU as the # 2 location one of the most affordable California cities for veteran homebuyers. Two substantial pending projects are gaining traction and taking steps to present the develop-

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An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

City of Barstow Update

Continued

ment process to the City Council. The Lenwood Estates proposal is anticipated to close escrow in 2020, which will spark the growth of new single-family homes, with an expected total of nearly 150 new homes when the project is fully constructed. We are also excited for new housing developments in the area of the old Barstow Community Hospital. The City Council recently approved the demolition and abatement of the old hospital, which will give way for diverse development in the area on Seventh Avenue.

An ongoing mission of the Council and the City is to increase the housing supply in the community, improve the quality of life for residents, and create a sustainable environment and culture. A specific plan is in development for the area encompassing the old hospital site, which will include an opportunity for building housing in this location.

This Seventh Avenue proposed housing location is entirely in an Opportunity Zone, which can grant new investments, under certain conditions, eligibility for preferential tax treatment (www.Op-Zones.com). A large portion of the Barstow downtown area is a qualified Opportunity Zone. We anticipate investors capitalizing on the three possible benefits of Opportunity Zones, including capital gains tax deferral, a capital gains tax reduction, or an elimination of taxes on future gains.

The Barstow region has benefited from the economic growth in the area near the Wal-Mart Supercenter. The adjacent retail center now hosts a Gamestop, a Great Clips, a Verizon Wireless store, and a drive-through Jack in the Box.

The Lenwood area will welcome new hotels in the coming month with both Home-2-Suites and Fairfield Inn work-

ing on project completion. The Barstow Fairfield Inn will be the first dual brand of its kind in California and will feature the Fairfield Inn and the Towneplace Suites by Marriott. The design concept allows for a blend of transient and extended-stay guests.

Our community is supported considerably by the retail successes throughout the Barstow region, including at the Barstow Station, the Outlets, and the Walmart retail center. These successes are even more critical to our community this year, given the drawbacks of an unpredictable pandemic. In 2018, the voters approved a 1% sales tax to be collected in the general fund, which granted our Council the ability to bolster the efforts of our Fire and Police Departments. Since the inception of the tax, we have been able to spend 81% of the nearly \$7.3 million collected through September 2020 on public safety measures, including hiring new police officers, new firefighter-paramedics, new police cars, and updating the dispatch center. The other 19% was allocated towards community youth programs, parks and recreation expenses, and senior programs. Barstow is a safer and happier place to call home because of the efforts of the voters who supported Measure Q.

I want to commend my staff for securing grants to help us serve the residents of Barstow, especially through the pandemic. The following grants are just a few:

- Local Early Action Planning
- SB 2
- Community Development Block Grant and CDBG-Coronavirus
- Local Road Safety Plan
- JAG

I am thrilled for the future of Barstow. With so many exciting opportunities on the horizon, I only expect positive changes developing here. The City is a proud recipient of the State of California Employment Development Department's 2020 Veterans Employer of the Year Award, which commended our efforts for being a proactive and supportive employer for veterans. My goal is to continue building up the community by building up our employees, whether they are veterans, long-time locals, or new to the Mojave River Valley Region. We welcome the best talent to our team.

I invite you to contact our office with any questions at 760-256-3531.

Fast Facts:

- Population of the Barstow region: 52,337
- Number of households: 20,453
- Average income: \$52,650
- Median Home Value in Barstow: \$137,400





City of Hesperia Update

By Rod Yahnke, Economic Development Manager, City of Hesperia

The City of Hesperia is thrilled to be the new home of a three-story, 55,000 square foot Kaiser Permanente medical office building on Escondido Avenue, south of Main Street. Residents can anticipate primary care offices, specialty care, a nurse treatment center, optometrists and optical dispensing, physical therapy, and ancillary services upon project completion, which is slated to fully open in 2021. Some limited services, however, will be offered as early as December 2020.

More Business Development:

- DD's Discounts on Main Street at Ninth Avenue is now open
- Bath & Body Works on Main Street is now open
- Brentwood Products on Hercules Street at E Avenue is now open
- Fatburger on Fashion Court at the Rancho Interchange is now open
- Chronic Tacos on Fashion Court at Rancho Interchange is now open
- Chop Stop on Main Street at Cataba Road is now open
- Mexico Lindo Restaurant on Main Street at Cataba Road is now open
- Culichi Town on Main Street at Cataba Road is now open

Construction has completed for Texas Roadhouse Grill, Kahoots Feed and Pet Store, Mag Bay Yachts, La Verne Elementary School, and the new Aldi on Bear Valley Road and Fish Hatchery Road.

The city successfully completed a Specific Plan Amendment to increase the maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) and maximum allowable building height limitations within the Commercial Industrial Business Park (CIBP) zone of the Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan (MSFC-SP). Specifically, the Amendment increases the maximum floor area ratio from 0.35 to 0.50 within the CIBP zone. Moreover, the Amendment increases the maximum building height from 60 feet to 150 feet for certain properties that could be eligible

within the CIBP zone.

The Specific Plan Amendment allows the flexibility to meet current industry needs for taller buildings. Currently, the city has over 5 million square feet of industrial buildings going through planning and entitlements.

Numerous city-wide infrastructure projects have been planned and some are well underway, such as the extension of sewer and water lines around the Interstate 15 and Rancho corridor. This project is expected to be completed in Spring 2021 with the installation of a lift station.

Main Street from C Avenue to I Avenue received new paving this year, and rehabilitation of Rancho Road from Seventh Avenue to Danbury was completed. Main Street near Pyrite received new pavement as well as a box culvert under the road to mitigate future flooding and to ultimately open the area up for future housing development.

In July 2021, a much-anticipated road widening will take place on Rancho Road from Mariposa to Seventh, increasing two lanes to four in each direction. The estimated completion of this project is approximately one year.

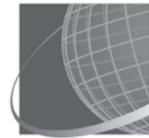
Residential growth has continued with 235 single-family housing permits issued, and 194 total apartment units have gone through entitlements for future building.

Tapestry is a 9,366-acre planned community that will eventually consist of 15,000 homes ready for sale at the end of 2022. Construction is estimated to add new homes for the next 30 years.

With a thriving population of more than 95,000 residents, Hesperia's community is continuously growing. Attracting development that will add to the strength and character of the community continues to be a priority with Hesperia's Economic Development team. Contact us at econdev@cityofhesperia.us if you have questions about these projects or other opportunities.

Victorville City Update

By Keith Metzler, City Manager



VICTORVILLE
California

As you would expect, the coronavirus pandemic has dominated the City of Victorville's efforts the past several months. We declared a local emergency in March and activated our emergency operations center. From day one of the pandemic, the City of Victorville's greatest priorities have been to safeguard our community, continue essential city services, and assist our local businesses with their economic recovery. We continue to be in communication with public health officials and stand ready to assist our community.

Remarkably, building activity continues through this unprecedented time, with permitting activity surpassing last year's totals. Commercial retail development projects and key infrastructure projects also continue, and the city continues to collaborate with our community to find solutions to key issues like homelessness.

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Looking for the Perfect Fit?

Hesperia, CA could be the perfect fit for your business, because,

Quite Simply, Hesperia Works for Business.

- Pro-business Southern California community
- 17 miles of freeway (average) ripe for development
- Interstate 15 daily traffic count: 202,000
- Huge selection of prime sites
- A City Council committed to commerce
- Stable area population: 205,000
- Average household income: \$62,000
- Retail Potential \$2.5 billion

City of Hesperia
Rod Yahnke, EIDP
econdev@cityofhesperia.us

To learn more about how Hesperia can work for you, visit www.hesperia.com/economic



VICTORVILLE
California

City Hall Access & Remote Customer Service Options

Victorville City Hall is open with limited access and safety protocols in place to protect our community and city employees. Walk-ins are permitted to our customer service counters for water, sewer, and animal licensing business. All other city departments are accessible by appointment only, which can be scheduled at vv.city/appointment or by phone at (760) 955-5000.

As a precautionary measure, visitors to Victorville City Hall are required to wear a face covering and participate in a health screening to include a temperature check via a contactless thermometer. Visitors must also practice social distancing and public health hygiene.

Phone and online customer service options are available for individuals who prefer to conduct business with us remotely, including online bill pay, plan submissions, business license applications, and much more.

Business Assistance & Recovery Programs

The City of Victorville has taken several steps to assist our local businesses through the economic downturn caused by the pandemic.

Our City Council approved the allocation of \$445,791 in COVID-specific Community Development Block Grant dollars from HUD for a grant program to help Victorville small businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19.

We assisted 16 small businesses in phase one of this grant program, and the application period for phase two closed on Oct. 11. The grant awards are up to \$15,000 each. Additional information about this grant program is available at vv.city/re-open.

We also launched a Business Assistance & Recovery section of our website to help our local businesses take advantage of the many federal, state, and local grant and assistance programs available. And when

High Desert Report

An economic overview of the Mojave River Valley

Victorville City Update

Continued

the state issued guidance allowing businesses to operate outdoors, we quickly revised our permitting guidelines to help our local businesses adjust to this quickly changing landscape.

All these resources and more information about the City's COVID-19 response are available at VictorvilleCA.gov/coronavirus.

Building Permit Activity Has Increased

Despite the coronavirus, building activity in Victorville has increased with, the number of permits issued and finalized through September of this year surpassing the numbers from this same timeframe last year. As of Sept. 30, we have issued 319 permits for single-family residences compared to 316 permits issued as of this same time last year. Commercial building permits are also up, with 10 permits issued through the third quarter of this year, which is double the number issued through third quarter 2019.

Commercial Development Continues

We are extremely fortunate to see commercial development continue in Victorville. The high-line, used car dealership, CarXChange, will soon move into the large commercial space that once housed the Target store on Palmdale Road. Plans to repurpose the vacant building have been approved, and the large 104,000-square-foot structure will be divided into two retail spaces, allowing for a future tenant to occupy the additional space.

Plans for an 87-bed Avid Hotel to be located near Cottonwood Avenue and Mariposa Road have been approved by our Planning Commission. Plans have also been approved for a multitenant building to be constructed at 14788 Bear Valley Road near the corner of Mariposa Road. This retail building will house a new Dutch Brothers and have room for additional tenants.

Plans also continue for the High-Desert's first-ever Chick-fil-A to be located here in

Victorville. The company has been issued a demolition permit to raze the building that formerly housed Marie Callender's on Mariposa Road to make way for the Chick-fil-A restaurant and two drive-thru lanes.

Green Tree Extension Update

We continue to make good progress on our Green Tree Extension project. Right now, work is focused in the area of Hesperia Road and Green Tree Boulevard, where crews are moving a sewer line located in the path of the future roadway. This phase of construction is expected to continue through mid-November. We will put the construction contract for the new roadway out to bid soon, and we expect construction of the Green Tree Extension to begin in 2021.

Homelessness Solutions Webpages & Resources

In May 2019, the City of Victorville formed our Homelessness Solutions Task Force at the direction of our City Council. This group is assisting the city with identifying local issues associated with homelessness and working collaboratively to focus efforts and resources to address these issues. We just launched a new section of our city website at VictorvilleCA.gov where you can track the work of our Homelessness Solutions Task Force as well as resources available to assist our local businesses in dealing with the issues presented by homelessness in our city, including trespass agreements.

New Digital Newsletter

In September, we launched our first-ever digital newsletter to increase connections with our community. Victorville Connect is a quick and easy way to stay informed of important city happenings like road improvement and infrastructure upgrades, city services, new business development, small business resources, recreational programs, special events, and much more. I invite you to subscribe to our newsletter by visiting our website at VictorvilleCA.gov.



The Bradco High Desert Report

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High Desert Report

An economic overview

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