



**SOUTHERN BORDER  
COALITION**

# California Jobs First Southern Border Coalition

# Regional Plan Part 2

Submitted: August 31, 2024



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## FORWARD

First, we must acknowledge that structural requirements for developing this plan have created inequities and perpetuated certain disadvantages for those not historically involved in regional plan processes. The Southern Border is a diverse region in terms of geography and socio-economic conditions. While we've taken steps to account for these issues, more work is needed to ensure an inclusive planning and implementation process.

Each chapter of Part 2 of the Regional Plan identifies challenges and barriers that must be addressed to achieve inclusive economic prosperity in the region. We have also dedicated Chapter 2 to equity limitations encountered by the Coalition in developing this plan.

One indication of the extreme challenges faced by the Coalition in preparing Part 2 is that no research firm agreed to support our work. While the Southern Border Coalition actively solicited an economic development consulting firm to bridge the gaps in economic development terminology and lived experience by sharing socioeconomic data and facilitating meaningful community engagement in developing Part 2 of the Regional Plan, **no proposals** were received.

This document represents an all-community effort to research, analyze, and ground-truth the data, current conditions, and future opportunities of the region.

It's important to note that this draft of Part 2 of the Regional Plan is not the final version. Our elected sector representatives, the Sector Leads, have agreed to submit this draft to meet the August 31 deadline set by the state. However, the Coalition will continue to refine and finalize the plan until the end of September. This timely submission allows us to maintain momentum, complete the Planning Phase by September, and proceed with the Catalyst Program as planned through 2026.

As this document moves forward, we want to acknowledge the significant efforts made by Southern Border Coalition Sector Leads and our community partners who stepped up to make Part 2 of the Regional Plan a reality. Special recognition goes to our Chapter, Priority Industry, and Cross-Sector Strategy Leads, including:

- Czar Apothecara Tide, Imperial County Sector Lead for the LGBTQIA Sector
- Elly Brown, San Diego County Sector Lead for the Environmental Justice Sector
- William Cooper, Imperial County Sector Lead for the Disinvested Communities Sector
- Sally Cox, San Diego County Sector member for the Training and Education Providers Sector
- Arin Domier, Research Assistant with SDSU Research Foundation
- Malik Glasgow, Imperial County Sector Member for the Disinvested Communities Sector
- Hilton Smith, Imperial County Sector Lead for the Grassroots and CBOs Sector
- Sergio Ojeda, Imperial County Sector Lead for the Disinvested Communities Sector
- Connie Rascon Gunther, San Diego County Sector Lead for the Grassroots and CBOs Sector
- Stephanie Saavedra, San Diego County Sector Lead for the Disinvested Communities Sector
- Kristian Salgado, Imperial County, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Megan Thomas, San Diego County Sector Lead for the Philanthropic Organizations Sector

Again, Part 2 of the Regional Plan is still being determined and should be considered a work in progress. During September, we will continue to share information with community members and revise and update Part 2 as necessary. We are committed to overcoming structural barriers and operational inequities to ground this regional plan in community input and priorities.

## CHAPTER 1: VISION AND GOALS

Creating inclusive economic growth demands policies and actions that transcend safety nets and conventional poverty alleviation programs. Equity-based solutions acknowledge and rectify historical inequities, ensuring that individuals and families have access to essential resources such as eco-friendly neighborhoods, sustainable and smart growth, affordable housing, health care, safe neighborhoods, quality education, and opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment with family-sustaining compensation.

For the Southern Border Region of the California Jobs First Initiative to empower the Imperial and San Diego communities, government policies and power structures need to be realigned, integrated, and offer new ways of accessing public funding and private capital. Achieving inclusive economic growth is more than enacting another new program; it requires a transformative shift in mindset and actions.

In developing a vision for the Southern Border Region, the Coalition believes that each subregion should be provided the opportunity and platform to share its own distinct perspective. For too long, the Imperial Valley has been assigned, relegated, and artificially aligned to San Diego County. While both counties share a common border with Mexico, the population's resources, environment, demographics, and needs are very different.

### Mission Statement

The Southern Border Coalition's mission is to develop a comprehensive regional economic plan that supports high-road jobs, an inclusive transition to a net-zero economy and empowers and uplifts disinvested communities by fostering equity and creating sustainable opportunities for growth.

The Southern Border Coalition believes that every individual deserves the chance to reach their full potential. We are committed to addressing the systemic barriers to inclusive community engagement and building a future where everyone has equitable access to resources, opportunities, and a thriving quality of life.

To fulfill our mission, we will actively engage with historically disinvested communities, listening to their needs and perspectives on the future they want for their families and neighborhoods. We will work collaboratively with community leaders, local organizations, and individuals to co-create solutions that address the root causes of economic, health, and environmental inequity to ensure lasting impact.

We advocate for policies and practices that promote social and economic justice, challenging systems that perpetuate inequality. Through community education, empowerment, access to capital, and ownership in decision making, we seek to create agency and resilience within disinvested communities, enabling them to actively participate in shaping their future. Equity is at the core of our values and decision-making processes. We prioritize inclusivity, diversity, solidarity, and cultural humility, recognizing that true equity can only be achieved by acknowledging historical inequities, honoring and celebrating the unique experiences and perspectives of all individuals.

As Southern Border Coalition Members, we commit ourselves to transparency, accountability, and accessibility, regularly assessing and evaluating the impact of our initiatives. We continuously learn, reflect, adapt, and improve our strategies to ensure that our efforts lead to meaningful and sustainable quality-of-life improvements to the region, and especially to those who live and work in disinvested communities.

Each subregion should be provided with the opportunity and platform to share its own perspective. By focusing on disinvested communities and striving for equity, we believe we can build a more economically just and inclusive society for all.

## Vision Statement



***"Our vision is to foster inclusive and sustainable economic development in the Southern Border Region by empowering and uplifting disinvested communities and ensuring equitable access to opportunities, resources, and growth."***

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California Jobs First Southern Border Coalition

The Southern Border Coalition envisions a future where every individual, regardless of their background or circumstances, has equal access to opportunities that can enhance their quality of life and support them to pursue economic prosperity. We firmly believe that a thriving economy is built upon the principles of equitable access, fair representation, and social cohesion. Our vision emphasizes the importance of upliftment and community ownership in decision making, and equity lies at the heart of our vision.

We recognize that disadvantaged communities often face systemic barriers and lack access to the resources necessary for sustainable development. Therefore, the Southern Border Coalition, through the California Jobs First (CJF) Planning Process, has been committed to providing the support, tools, and training required to empower individuals and communities to unlock their full potential. Our focus is on addressing the root causes of economic inequality and advocating for policies and investments that promote fairness and justice.

By implementing inclusive practices that support meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making, we aim to bridge the gaps that hinder the progress of marginalized groups and create a level playing field for all. Individuals can be the leaders in their economic landscape, fostering self-sufficiency and long-term success within their communities. We strive to create an environment where everyone has an opportunity to thrive, contribute, and benefit from sustainable economic development.

## Key Outcomes & Metrics of Success

The Southern Border Coalition understands the importance of measuring the impact and success of our efforts in promoting inclusive economic development. By employing a comprehensive set of metrics, we ensure accountability, transparency, accessibility, and continuous improvement in our initiatives. These metrics serve as indicators of progress and guide our decision-making process, enabling us to create lasting positive change in disinvested communities.

Key Outcomes and Metrics of Success include:

1. The Regional Roadmap, produced by the Coalition through an ongoing dialogue with the public, includes tangible high-quality job creation targets in sustainable industries, informed on the needs of disinvested communities.
2. The Regional Roadmap and planning process identifies key investment areas and workforce development needs to prepare for green transitions and emerging sustainable industries.
3. The Regional Roadmap specifically addresses how to build wealth in disinvested communities.
4. At least 50 members of the community at large (non-Coalition Members) are engaged in the Phase I and Phase II Planning activities.
5. Hold at least four (4) meetings per Subregional Sector to get a deeper understanding of each sector's needs and opportunities.
6. The composition of Sector Leads will be at least 50% of participants from entities representing or working with disinvested communities.

7. Tracking participation of marginalized individuals and disinvested communities and, as necessary, deploying additional resources to increase participation to ensure nontraditional players are involved and empowered in making decisions.
8. Tracking the number of public meetings and events held to share information about the regional planning process and gather input on the needs and priorities for inclusion in the Regional Plan.
9. Tracking the level of engagement in the decision-making process by residents and businesses located in disinvested communities and, as necessary, deploying resources to improve engagement.
10. Requiring that all Coalition-related documents are translated into Spanish and other languages relevant to community members within the region.
11. Requiring that all Coalition meetings have interpretation services for Spanish and other relevant languages of attendees as needed.

## Accumulative Outreach and Coalition Sessions

The Southern Border Coalition is dedicated to reaching and engaging diverse stakeholders in the economic development planning process and commits to facilitating community outreach, education, and participation in the ongoing process.

From April 1, 2024 until now, we held approximately 218 meetings, presentations, trainings, and community outreach events:

- 65 Working Group Meetings
- 76 Sector Meetings
- 15 Sector Lead Meetings with Regional Plan Part 1 contractors
- 20 Subregional Co-Convener meetings
- 26 Co-Convener meetings
- 8 Subregional Task Group meetings
- 4 Regional Task Group meetings
- 4 Education and Training events

We aspire to create economic opportunities for our communities to thrive and prosper for generations to come.

## CHAPTER 2: EQUITY AND DATA LIMITATIONS

This chapter documents the equity and data limitations encountered by the Coalition in developing this plan based on the community engagement during the planning phase. In the context of this report, "equity" means fairness and impartiality. It refers to the idea that everyone, regardless of their background, should have equal opportunities and resources. In the case of the Coalition, it means ensuring that the plan is developed in a way that addresses the needs of all community members, especially those who may be marginalized or disadvantaged. More specifically, this chapter highlights data challenges and other inequities of traditional economic development approaches. Many of these challenges are not unique to the Southern Border Region, however, the solutions require new data collection, documentation, ground-truthing, and distribution approaches.

The Southern Border Coalition recognized these challenges and provided guardrails and processes in its Bylaws to address these limitations proactively. For example, the Coalition Bylaws (*Article 1, Section 4*) provide the following:

- Regional and Subregional Task Groups may recommend data, research, and other information to be included in the Regional Summary of the Regional Plan – Part 1 and be considered when crafting the roadmap in Part 2 of the Regional Plan;
- Hyperlocal data, oral histories, and other research methodologies historically excluded from local planning processes shall be brought into the research and/or plan development process;
- Data drawn from prior studies, especially information related to disinvested communities, the study methodology will be vetted by the Subregional Task Groups to ensure misconceptions, inappropriate generalizations, and inaccurate collection models are not amplified and brought into the regional planning process;
- The Subregional Task Groups may develop further policies that meet the unique needs of their area and facilitate input and engagement about stakeholders, emphasizing disinvested communities.

The guardrails included in the Bylaws provide strategies to prevent further exclusion of critical data necessary to inform of the challenges and needs disinvested communities have historically faced. These guardrails also prescribe data collection policies that are tailored to communities to foster a more equitable and inclusive approach. The Coalition has taken other steps towards engaging the community in an inclusive and equitable manner. In April 2024, the Coalition hired Balmir Inclusive, as equity consultancy, to provide consultation on planning and implementation of activities in support of the Coalition's mission and values.

The following subsections further identify and discuss the data and research challenges.

### Intersectional Barriers in Underrepresented and Disinvested Populations

A significant amount of the barriers and challenges to data collection are not limited to each specific section or population. On the contrary, these barriers are present in different sections with the common denominator being disinvestment. The following categories explain further the challenges in data collection for each of these sections, but it is important to note the issues that are common among disadvantaged populations. Some of these include, environmental justice, access to healthcare, digital divide, education disparities, cultural competency in public service, impact of gentrification, criminal justice disparities, barriers to civic engagement, economic disparities, job accessibility, community resilience, and adaptability. (*Keokham, 2022*)

To make the data collection process more equitable, it is important to conduct equity assessment reports to identify and remove barriers in data gathering. The Equitable Data Working Group created by an executive order from President Biden studied existing federal collection policies, programs, and infrastructure to identify inadequacies and provide recommendations. The overview of this report calls for disaggregated data which is, data that can be broken down and analyzed by race, ethnicity, gender, disability, income, veteran status, age, and other key demographic variables. Specifically, this work group identified uses for equitable data which are, generating disaggregated statistical estimates to characterize experiences, increasing non-federal research and community access to disaggregated data, and conducting robust equity assessments of federal programs. (Nelson, 2022)

The Coalition also made efforts in providing equity driven data by hiring independent equity consultants to conduct their own assessment report. Balmir Inclusive reviewed, evaluated, and provided recommendations on the current Regional Plan development process through a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lens. This report has been instrumental in identifying disparities in data collection and solutions moving forward. The analyses provided identified challenges in this Regional Plan that match intersectional barriers faced by underrepresented and disinvested communities. For example, areas of focus were disbursement of funds, governance structure, feedback and information flows, documentation usability, technology access, and language access. (Balmir Inclusive, 2024)

#### Sources:

1. [Keokham, C. \(2022\). Intersectionality and Inclusivity: Breaking Barriers in Underserved Communities — Future Leaders in action. \*Future Leaders in Action\*.](#)
2. [Nelson, Alondra Nelson and Schwab, Margo. \(2022\). A Vision for Equitable Data Recommendations from the Equitable Data Working Group.](#)
3. Balmir Inclusive (2024) Equity Assessment Report. Equity Assessment [Report English](#) and Equity Assessment [Report Spanish](#)

## Weighted Civil Liberties

Civil liberties, which are the basic rights and freedoms that protect individuals, are often assessed by counties based on population size, regional concentration, and "legal" full-time residency. This approach has led to handicapped and mismatched cultural norms of growth, overlooking the actual needs of communities. It creates a significant delay in addressing those needs because individuals without traditional mailing addresses or proper documentation are often excluded from being counted as residents, which hinders their access to necessary resources. The lack of updated technology further worsens this delay, making it challenging for communities to respond to their needs promptly. Therefore, the focus should shift from merely counting population size, which can be inaccurate, to recognizing and addressing the true needs of the population (Smith, 2020; U.S. Census Bureau, 2023; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2023; Executive Order 13107, 1998).

In the text, "weighted civil liberties" suggests that the recognition and application of civil liberties are unevenly distributed, with some communities or individuals having their rights considered based on specific criteria like residency status or population concentration. This uneven consideration can lead to disparities in how communities are treated and whether their needs are adequately met.

Furthermore, the lack of commitment to implementing equity solutions is deepened by discordant cultural norms regarding time, communication, and moral apathy. The region would grow away from being disadvantaged if people listened to those with various skill levels and education levels on the ground in areas of need. The regions are not disinvested by the people; rather, they are mismanaged due to discordant cultural norms between people in need and people with opportunities to support them. The people are heavily invested in their communities' sustainability, and their voices should be heard and implemented in decision-making processes (Walker & Devine-Wright, 2008, Smith et al., 2023; U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2014).

#### Sources:

1. [U.S. Census Bureau. \(2023\). Imperial County, California.](#)
2. [U.S. Department of Homeland Security. \(2023\). FY 2022 Annual Report.](#)
3. [U.S. Customs and Border Protection. \(2014\). What are Civil Rights and Civil Liberties?](#)
4. [Executive Order 13107. \(1998\). Implementation of Human Rights Treaties.](#)
5. [Walker, G., & Devine-Wright, P. \(2008\). Community Renewable Energy: What Should It Mean?](#)
6. [Smith, J., Doe, A., & Johnson, M. \(2023\). Sustainable ... Equity and Inclusion. \\*Sustainability\\*](#)

## Undercounting the Imperial County Population

Fundamental errors in calculations in traditional counting regarding Imperial County population continue to hinder the attempts for representative data collection. The Census Bureau estimates that 43% of census tracts in Imperial County are very hard to count for various reasons. An overwhelming majority of residents comprise demographic groups that have been historically undercounted, e.g. Latinas/os, Tribal, African American, and Noncitizen populations.

Daytime population, also known as commuter-adjusted population, is not being accounted adequately. Imperial County's unique border dynamics result in a large portion of the population living in Mexico and crossing the border on a regular basis for work, family, recreation, commerce etc. To illustrate, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics stated that in 2023, the Calexico port of entry has 2,815,354 pedestrians and 5,014,733 personal vehicles. A simple calculation dividing each of these numbers by the number of days in a year (365) can give us a daily average of border crossings: 7,713 pedestrians and 13,739 personal vehicles per day (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2024). In a county with a total population of about 180,000, the number of people crossing the border daily is a significant portion of the total population. As a result, local physical infrastructure and finances are significantly impacted while accommodation and further considerations continue to be left unattended.

Housing conditions related to high shares of renters, overcrowded units, mobile homes, and high unsheltered rates increase the difficulty for counting; especially when it comes to the Colonias of Imperial County. For example, in Slab City, an unincorporated area of Imperial Valley, the population dwindles between 150 in the summer and 4000 in the winter. Similarly, migrant workers move in and out of the county on a seasonal and sometimes a daily basis. A significant portion of the agricultural workforce in the Imperial Valley lives in Mexicali due to the lower cost of living and proximity to work. However, precise numbers are challenging to determine because they fluctuate with the agricultural seasons, and many workers are undocumented or work through informal arrangements. To put things into perspective, the EDD estimates there were approximately 19,751 migrant and seasonal farm workers employed in Imperial County, over the year, from 2022-23. (*Employment Development Department, 2023*) These numbers are significantly undercounted by limitations in census reporting.

In the Colonias of Imperial County, "colonia" refers to a community within the mainly rural US-Mexico border region with marginal conditions related to housing and infrastructure, a significant portion of the population is composed of migrants, immigrants, and those experiencing homelessness (*HUD, 2020*). These communities face numerous challenges, including limited access to basic infrastructure, utilities, modern services, inadequate housing, and economic instability. Despite the pressing need for support, data limitations often hinder efforts to address these issues effectively. Accurate and comprehensive data collection is crucial for understanding the full scope of the challenges faced by residents and for developing targeted interventions that promote equity and improve living conditions. However, barriers such as language differences, mistrust of authorities, and the transient nature of the population complicate data gathering efforts.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (*HUD, 2020*) and the Imperial County Public Health Department, these communities often lack essential infrastructure and services (*HUD, 2020*;

*Imperial County Public Health Department, 2021*). Reports from local non-profits, such as the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA, 2007), highlight the need for culturally sensitive data collection methods to build trust and accurately capture the needs of residents (CRLA, 2007). By addressing these data limitations, we can work towards a more equitable future for the Colonias of Imperial County.

**Sources:**

1. [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\). \(2020\).](#)
2. [Imperial County Public Health Department. \(2021\).](#)
3. [California Rural Legal Assistance \(CRLA\). \(2007\).](#)
4. [U.S Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics. \(2024\) Border ...](#)
5. [Employment Development Department. \(2023\) EDD ... of California Agricultural Workers](#)
6. [Public Policy Institute of California. \(2019\) 2020 Census: Counting Imperial County.](#)

## Undercounting of Tribal Populations

Efforts to collect data on Tribal populations are facing substantial challenges, impacting the accuracy and comprehensiveness of their demographic information and experiences. The Tribal population is significant and growing, notwithstanding, the community is undercounted by 5.64%. Not only is it the largest census undercount of any population group, but it is also substantially more than any other population group. Additionally, there is a shortage of consistent, coordinated, and disaggregated data on this population. Consequently, representation in non-Tribal governments has been denied to hundreds of thousands of Tribal citizens nationwide.

Unique challenges to this population include lack of traditional mailing addresses and high rates of homelessness. According to the American Community Survey, the Tribal population experiences the highest rate of poverty. This population also confronts higher rates of homelessness, significant educational barriers, and has one of the youngest population groups.

**Sources:**

1. [The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. \(2023\) Why Collecting Disaggregated Data for Native Communities Matters.](#)
2. [A Vision for Equitable Data \(2022\) Recommendations from the Equitable Data Working Group](#)
3. [The United States Census Bureau. \(2022\) Census Bureau Releases Estimates of Undercount and Overcount in the 2020 Census](#)

## Undercounting of LGBTQIA+

In Imperial and San Diego Counties, the LGBTQIA+ community remains significantly undercounted, a reality that obscures their true presence and needs. LGBTQIA+ people are ignored in census counts. Flawed census questions lead to inaccurate data on gender identity. This underrepresentation stems from a combination of social stigma, fear of discrimination, and inadequate data collection methods (*Human Rights Campaign, 2020*). Many individuals within the community choose to remain invisible, wary of the potential repercussions of revealing their identities (*Williams Institute, 2019*). Given the recent media (*New York Post, 2024; LA Times, 2024*) regarding the state's first elected openly trans Mayor of Calexico, Raúl Ureña, and his impeachment due to suggested transphobia, identifying LGBTQIA+ individuals has increased in difficulty. Consequently, the lack of accurate data hinders the allocation of resources and the development of supportive policies, leaving the LGBTQIA+ population without the quality care and compassion they deserve (*National LGBTQ Task Force, 2021*). This invisibility perpetuates a cycle of neglect and marginalization, further diluting the rich cultural tapestry of Imperial and San Diego Counties.

In addition, individuals within the communities of Imperial and San Diego Counties have engaged in premeditated violence and the spread of lifelong illnesses. These factors deter those in need from seeking help due to known apathy regarding recognition, education, and protection of the LGBTQIA+ population (*Human Rights Campaign, 2020; Williams Institute, 2019*). These actions have a devastating impact, silencing voices and eroding data-driven support critical for our community's well-being (*National LGBTQ Task Force, 2021*).

**Sources:**

1. [Human Rights Campaign. \(2020\). "The State of LGBTQ Data Collection."](#)
2. [Williams Institute. \(2019\). "LGBT Demographic Data Interactive."](#)
3. [National LGBTQ Task Force. \(2024\). "Data Equity Coalition Health Inequities."](#)
4. [New York Post. \(2024\). "Trans mayor whines about being 'bullied' out of office..."](#)
5. [Los Angeles Times. \(2023\). "A California border town's first transgender mayor... gender the reason?"](#)

## Undercounting the Unhoused

In Imperial and San Diego Counties, the lack of equity and continuous unmet needs of homeless individuals remain a pressing issue. According to the 2022 Point-in-Time Count, there were over 1,200 homeless individuals in the county, a number that has steadily increased over the past five years (*AHAR: Part 1, 2022; San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness, 2022*). Despite this growing crisis, resources and support services remain insufficient and are declining rapidly. Many homeless individuals face barriers to accessing healthcare, mental health services, sober facilities, and housing with basic amenities like a roof or electricity, due to systemic inequities and a lack of coordinated holistic efforts. The absence of equity in comprehensive data solutions further exacerbates the problem, making it difficult to allocate resources effectively and develop targeted interventions. This persistent neglect leaves the homeless population vulnerable and marginalized, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and instability that undermines the overall well-being of the community.

**Sources:**

1. [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. \(2022\). "2022 AHAR: Part 1."](#)
2. [Regional Task Force on Homelessness San Diego. \(2022\). "2022 Data Performance Report."](#)
3. [U.S. Department of Housing and Community development. "\(2022\) Point-in-Time Count"](#)

## Impact of Cultural Dilution on Regional Prosperity

In both Imperial and San Diego counties, the effects of economic growth on cultural preservation are becoming increasingly evident, particularly when it comes to the limitations of data collection in capturing the rich diversity of these regions. Cultural Dilution refers to the diminishing or weakening of a culture's unique elements when they are adopted or exploited by others, often for profit. This can happen through cultural appropriation, where aspects of a culture are taken out of context and used commercially, stripping them of their original meaning and significance. In Imperial County, long-standing cultural traditions are at risk as economic development initiatives often rely on data that simplifies complex identities into broad racial and ethnic categories. This oversimplification leads to policies and programs that fail to address the specific needs of various cultural groups, resulting in a slow but steady erosion of the community's unique heritage (*Labor Market Research Centers, SANDAG*).

San Diego County faces a similar challenge, where efforts to promote equity through initiatives like the Equity Impact Grant, are undermined by outdated data collection methods that are usually not culturally or linguistically responsive to the local community. The reliance on old standards for reporting race and ethnicity can dilute the representation of smaller, distinct cultural groups. As a result, the rich cultural history of these communities is

increasingly overshadowed by economic growth that does not fully recognize or support the diversity of its residents. This lack of nuanced data not only impacts the effectiveness of equity-driven programs, including in healthcare and education, but also contributes to the gradual disappearance of cultural practices and identities that have defined these communities, in both counties, for generations. (*San Diego County News Center, Data San Diego County*)

In Imperial County, the cultural heritage is inextricably linked to both its communities and its remarkable natural landscape, highlighted by multiple natural wonders, like the world's only wandering geyser. The colonias, often sidelined in economic development efforts, are rich in tradition, with families maintaining their cultural practices despite facing significant socio-economic barriers. From farming to the historical rodeos, the resilience and spirit of the people plays a crucial role in preserving local culture. At the same time, natural landmarks such as the Salton Sea and the five lava dome volcanoes, with their critical role in the Pacific Flyway, and locations such as Bombay Beach and East Jesus in Slabs City, are more than mere aesthetic features: they are integral to the region's identity. Yet, the data used to guide development frequently fails to recognize these cultural and ecological nuances, leading to policies that threaten to erase the undeniably rich essence of Imperial County while displacing the people. The oversight in data collection and interpretation results in economic strategies that neglect the very factors that make the region distinct and prosperous (*Labor Market Research Centers, SANDAG, Data San Diego County*).

#### Sources:

1. [County News Center. \(2023\). "County launches community-driven initiative to address inequity."](#)
2. [San Diego County. \(2024\). "Equity Indicator Report Methods."](#)
3. [County News Center. \(2023\). "County launches community-driven initiative to address inequity."](#)
4. [San Diego Association of Governments. \(2024\). "Data and Research."](#)
5. [Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research. \(2023\). "COE ...Equity Gaps Report."](#)

## Underrepresentation of the Immigrant, Migrant, and Non-Citizen Population

Although the question regarding citizenship status was removed from the U.S. Census, willingness to participate for many individuals in the Immigrant, Migrant, and Non-Citizen population remains low. According to the California Budget & Policy Center, California is home to over 11 million immigrants comprising 28% of the state's population—the largest percentage of immigrant residents compared to any other state. Immigration status exclusions continue to affect the invaluable cultural and economic wealth immigrants bring to the state. Demographic, educational, and linguistic characteristics specific to this population have not been fully accounted for in the past and the repercussions are continuing to have a damaging effect on participation and representation. Many in this population have limited voting rights and have low representation in decision-making policies. This impedes their ability to influence policies that directly affect their lives. Additional barriers in representation include access to healthcare and social services, education, underfunding, employment, career advancement, social and cultural inclusion, and legal and institutional discrimination. Community and Coalition members that are part of this population continue to struggle when it comes to accessing information critical for participation.

A specific part of this population is considered migrant, or temporary resident. These individuals and families migrate across our border and within our state in search of employment and opportunities for advancement. The underrepresentation of migrant populations is a significant issue that manifests in various areas such as political participation, access to services, education, and employment. Regarding access to services and education, requirements make it difficult for children in this population to continue their education. Seasonal migrant workers are required to move across county lines increasing absences and in some cases school drop-out rates.

Exclusions are applied to migrants limiting access to affordable housing programs. Undercounting of this population also affects services like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Early Head Start home visitation programs, home-delivered meals for seniors, Section 8 Housing, free and reduced-priced meals in schools, and Federally Qualified Community Health Centers. In Los Angeles alone, an estimated \$117 million to \$586 million dollars in federal funding could be lost across all these programs if Latinos are undercounted by 2% to 10% (*Center for Health Policy Research*).

The generational impact of immigration requirements can deeply affect immigrant families and their long-term economic and social outcomes. Key aspects affected by this are economic mobility and wealth building, family separation, educational opportunities, legal and social status insecurity, access to social services and benefits, impact on citizenship and civic participation, inherited disadvantages, cultural identity and assimilation pressures, and long-term economic contributions and growth.

One example of the generational impact of immigration requirements is the wealth of immigrant households. In 2021, immigrant households had significantly much less wealth, \$104,400, compared to those headed by a U.S. born person, \$177,200. Furthermore, household wealth varies in the U.S. depending on whether the head of the immigrant household is Latino or not. For example, in 2021 the median net worth of a Hispanic immigrant household was \$35,400, the lowest among those analyzed. The median almost doubled for households headed by U.S.-born Latino people at \$68,000. Immigrant households that were non-Latino had a median net worth of \$234,000 and U.S.-born households \$194,900 (Pew Research Center or SIPP). This difference is magnified in San Diego and Imperial County given that the Latino immigrant population in each county is 21.5% and 30.5% respectively, which is significantly higher compared to the national average of 13.6% (*US Census Bureau*).

Refugees and asylum seekers need access to information to navigate cumbersome systems while also needing support with mental health, social services, employment, education, and career pathways for them and their children. This specific population faces extreme dangers stemming from or aggravated by Border Patrol requirements. In San Diego County, refugees in Jacumba are geographically exposed and want to turn themselves in to ask for asylum. However, they're taken to primitive campsites that lack shelter, food, water, and restrooms (*Gars, 2024*). In Imperial Valley, Border Patrol policies route asylum seekers through deadly desert areas resulting in preventable deaths (*Rios, 2023*).

Addressing the underrepresentation of this population requires comprehensive policies that promote inclusion, protect migrant rights, and ensure equal access to opportunities and services. This involves not only legal reforms but also initiatives aimed at improving cultural understanding, reducing discrimination, and empowering migrant communities to participate fully in society. None of this is attainable when limitations to language access exist and this population is especially struggling from it.

#### **Sources:**

1. Public Policy Institute: [https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/#:~:text=California%20has%20large%20numbers%20of,%20and%20Vietnam%20\(521%2C100\)](https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/#:~:text=California%20has%20large%20numbers%20of,%20and%20Vietnam%20(521%2C100))
2. Case Study of Census Undercount of Latinos and Immigrants in Los Angeles: <https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/our-work/publications/health-and-social-service-implications-census-undercount-los-angeles>
3. Undercount of Children of Immigrants: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/better-census-data-children-immigrants-would-help-them-and-nation>
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5. [Garsd, J. \(2024, June 24\). "This is America?" Migrants keep arriving at the border, despite tougher asylum rules. NPR.](#)
6. [Rios, P. \(2023, September 27\). Border Patrol policies route migrants through deadly Imperial Valley desert. California Local.](#)

## Literacy, Language Access, and Technology Access

Dissemination and collection of data is limited by different aspects of illiteracy that were not previously accounted for through the coalition bylaws. Measures ensuring interpretation are facing challenges from a lack of translation devices and technical language barriers related to online platforms. For context, the Coalition language access via oral communication (interpretation) and written communication (translation) of documents had an estimated total cost of \$135,087. Translation services include materials such as Google forms, meeting materials, Regional Plan Part 1 drafts and associated materials, Sector Lead applications, newsletters, public comments, etc. Interpretation services include interpretation for in-person, Zoom, and hybrid meetings: community, sector, Subregional and Regional Task Group meetings, and any 'special' one-time meetings (e.g. Solidarity Economics events). Incoming translation for the Regional Plan Part 1 and 2 is estimated to cost between \$125,000-\$150,000.

Coalition members such as Co-Conveners and Sector Leads with sophisticated levels of experience related to simplifying communication have taken the role of mediators to bridge communication gaps. Further efforts to dismantle communication barriers related to simplifying language, providing alternative formats, support services, and user-friendly environments are needed. Literacy is one of the major civil rights issues of the current era. It is a deeply concerning crisis across the U.S. affecting our children's future and our nation's democracy. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) showed that less than half (43%) of fourth graders in the U.S. scored at or above proficient level and the numbers are worse for marginalized students: only 17% Black students, 21% Latino students, 11% students with disabilities, and 10% multilingual learners in fourth grade can read proficiently (*Radhika, 2022*). What's more is that the case can be made for why illiteracy is totally preventable (*Socol, 2024*).

Current measures regarding language accessibility are not representative of the specific needs for disinvested communities and tend to assume technical and technological literacy. In California, literacy-challenged populations' needs transcend literal translation. Additional efforts to translate technical information to accessible information back and forth is critical and necessary. Barriers are not limited to previous access to language education, they are all encompassing. These include challenges in literacy as it pertains to health, technology, race, language, numerical, financial, and cultural, among many others. There continues to be a lack of investment and access to resources related to different aspects of education, continuing a cycle of misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

Sector leads and members are encouraged to participate in meetings with high levels of sophisticated language and digital literacy that can be inaccessible for those who have been excluded from education and training services. Incentivizing digital literacy training has been suggested and is in the process of being accepted. The Employment Development Department provides services for resource-challenged individuals including workshops targeting support related to resume building, job search skills, and training sessions (*Employment Development Department, 2024*). Further development regarding vocational and skills training, employment support with mentorships, and mental health services related to literacy challenges would be greatly beneficial.

Understanding the needs of literacy-challenged populations involves recognizing the diverse factors that contribute to literacy difficulties and addressing them through comprehensive, accessible, and inclusive approaches.

**Sources:**

1. [Kapur, Radhika. \(2022\). \*Types of Illiteracy: Unfavorable to the Individuals, belonging to all Categories and Backgrounds.\*](#)
2. [Employment Development Department. \(2024\). \*Jobs and training.\*](#)
3. [2022 READING STATE SNAPSHOT REPORT. \(2022\). In CALIFORNIA GRADE 4 PUBLIC SCHOOLS.](#)

## Catalysts of Bias and the Pursuit of Equity

Statistics, as a field, has a complex history that is deeply intertwined with issues of racism and social discrimination. Originating in the 19th century, many statistical methods and data collection practices were developed during a time when racial and social biases were prevalent. These biases often influenced the way data was collected, interpreted, and used, leading to skewed results that reinforced existing social hierarchies. For example, early census data often undercounted marginalized communities, leading to a lack of representation and resources for these groups. Additionally, statistical methods were sometimes used to justify discriminatory policies, such as eugenics and segregation, further entrenching social inequalities. Inequities the “disinvested” people of the southern border have persistently endured. (Gould, 1996); (Jackson & Weidman, 2004).

Despite advancements in the field, the legacy of these discriminatory practices continues to impact modern statistics. One significant limitation is the potential for bias in data collection and analysis. Even today, data can be influenced by social perspectives and culture of those who collect and interpret it, leading to results that may not accurately reflect the experiences of all communities. To address these issues, it is crucial to adopt a holistic and equity-focused approach to statistics. This involves critically examining the origins and methodologies of statistical practices, ensuring diverse representation in data collection, and actively working to eliminate biases. By doing so, we can create more accurate and inclusive statistical analyses that better serve all members of society, especially those powering America at the Southern Border. (Anderson & Fienberg, 1999)(Rothstein, 2017)(Stone, 2020)(Hersh, 2023)(California Employment Development Department, 2021)

**Sources:**

1. [Gould, S. J. \(1996\). \*\\*The Mismeasure of Man\\*\*. W.W. Norton & Company.](#)
2. [Jackson Jr., J. P., & Weidman, N. M. \(2004\). \*\\*Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction\\*\*. Rutgers University Press.](#)
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5. [Rothstein, R. \(2017\). \*\\*The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America\\*\*. Liveright Publishing Corporation.](#)
6. [Hersh, A. \(2023, October 4\). Turns out investing in disinvested communities isn't very risky. \*\\*Next City\\*\*.](#)
7. [California Employment Development Department. \(2021\). \*\\*Workforce Services Information Notice WSIN21-06: Questions and Answers\\*\*.](#)

## CHAPTER 3: OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL PROFILE AND SWOT

This chapter includes a summary of the regional profile and the Coalition's assessment of the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and trends (SWOT). For more detailed information on these topics, please refer to Part 1 of the Regional Plan, which can be found on the Coalition's website at <https://cajobsfirst.sdsu.edu/>.

### Overview of the Southern Border Regional Profile

California's Southern Border Region encompasses San Diego County and Imperial County. The region is home to nearly 3.5 million people, representing approximately nine percent of California's population. Although both counties are located along California's southern border, they are distinct in their demographics, heritage, geography, and economy.

San Diego County has a population of 3.3 million, while Imperial County has 180,000 residents. Most of the population in this region consists of people of color, with Hispanic or Latinos/as are the largest non-White group comprising 35% of the population in San Diego County and 85% in Imperial County.<sup>1</sup>

#### General Overview

Despite educational attainment, wage gaps persist, with Latino/a workers being disproportionately affected. Nearly 8% of the region's workforce earns poverty wages, with this rate nearly doubling to 15% for Latino/a workers. Occupational segregation contributes to these disparities, as Latino/a workers are overrepresented in lower-paying industries such as agriculture, construction, and retail trade.<sup>2</sup>

High levels of poverty are concentrated in communities of color, with census tracts where poverty rates exceed 20% being 74% people of color. In contrast, areas with poverty rates below 4% are only 47% people of color. This geographic inequality also leads to differences in environmental health risks and life expectancy, with Black and Native American residents having shorter life expectancies, by four to six years, compared to the regional average.

The availability of "good jobs" that are stable, provide family-sustaining wages, and are resistant to automation is limited. Only 27% of the jobs in the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area qualify as good jobs, and access to them is highly dependent on educational attainment. Workers of color face additional challenges, with lower educational attainment rates and significant underrepresentation in those positions, especially those not requiring a college degree. White workers are overrepresented in these good jobs, exacerbating racial disparities in employment opportunities.

### Population

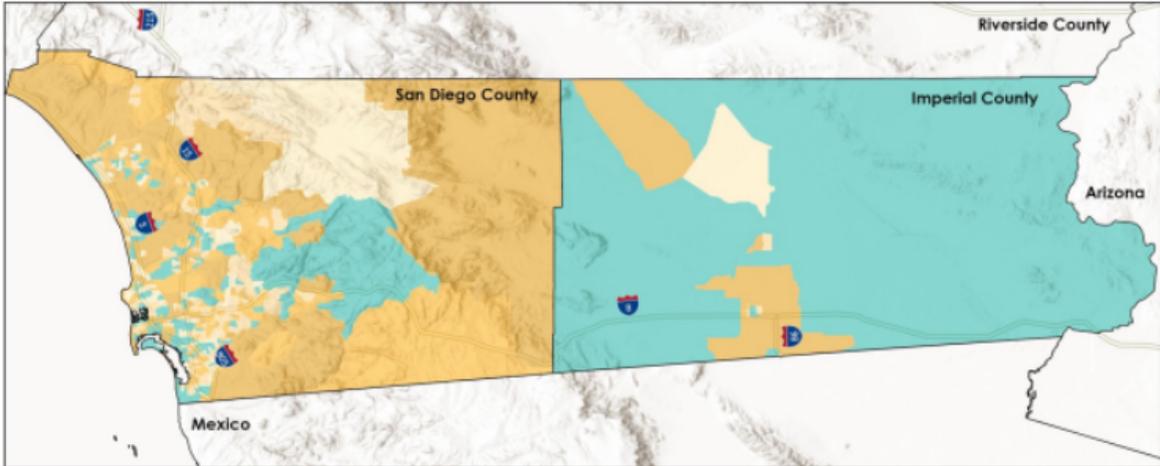
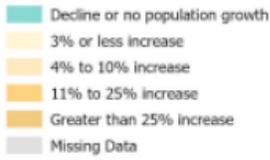
Over the past two decades, San Diego County has experienced substantial population growth in most areas. Some western and central parts, including areas near Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and Cleveland National Forest, have seen little or no growth. In contrast, Imperial County's population growth has been mainly concentrated around the El Centro area, while the rest of the county has seen stagnant or declining in growth.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/>.

<sup>2</sup> National Equity Atlas. (2024). *Data portrait of the Southern Border region: Supporting the California Jobs First program*. California Jobs First. Retrieved from <https://nationalequityatlas.org/cjf/southern-border>

## Population Growth by Census Tract, 2000 to 2020



Source: National Equity Atlas Analysis of 2020 ACS Summary File Data. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

## Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 to 2020



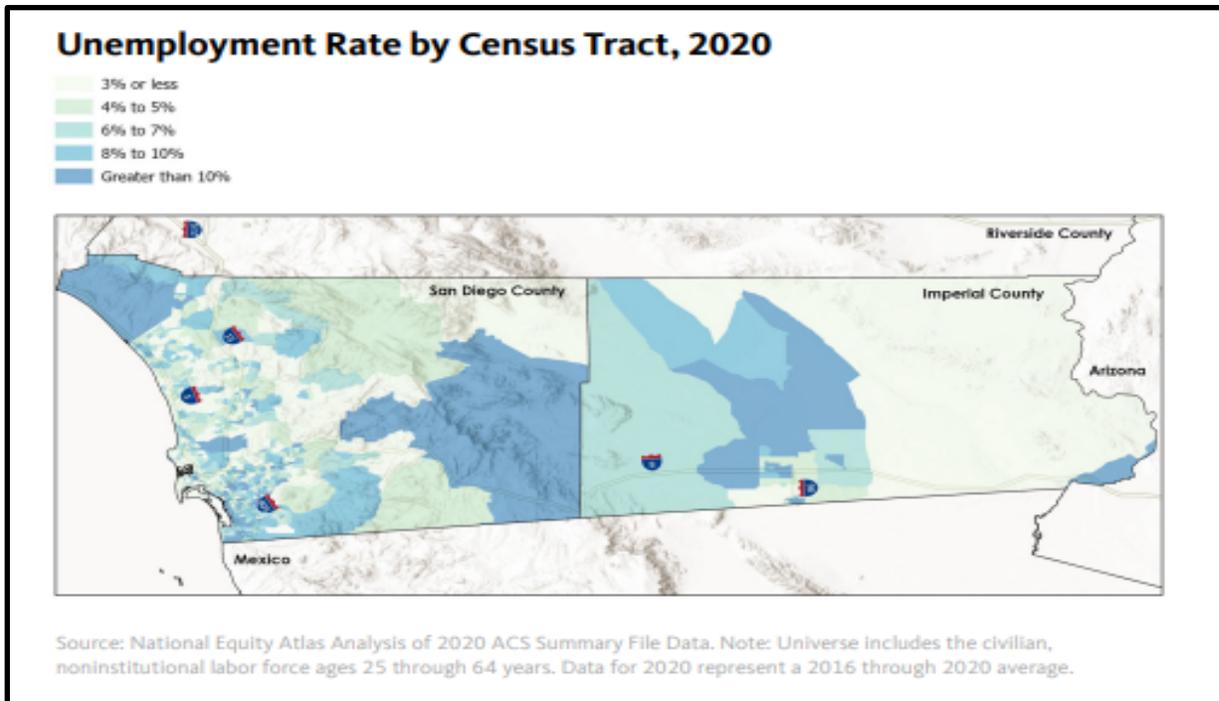
Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64 years. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 - 2020 average. Values are in 2020 dollars.

## Wages

Since 1980, the median wage in the region has only slightly increased from \$25 to \$26 per hour, but significant disparities exist across racial and ethnic groups. Wages for Asian American and white workers rose by \$10 and \$7 per hour, respectively, while Black workers saw only a \$1 per hour increase. Wages for Latino/a and Native American workers have declined, with these groups, along with Black workers, now earning median hourly wages below the regional average. The wage gap between Latino/a and white workers has widened significantly, with the median wage for Latino/a workers dropping from 77% of white workers' wages in 1980 to just 58% in 2020.

## Unemployment

Across the Southern Border, high unemployment rates are prevalent in many of the region's population hubs. In and around San Diego, areas with low unemployment often border communities with double-digit unemployment rates. Unemployment is consistently high throughout Imperial County. This economic insecurity disproportionately affects communities of color, as census tracts with over 10% unemployment are 73% people of color, while those with 3% unemployment or less are 46% people of color. Additionally, 20% of the region's residents of color live in areas with over 10% unemployment, compared to just 10% of white residents.



## Summary

California's Southern Border Region, encompassing San Diego and Imperial Counties, is a diverse area with significant demographic and economic disparities. Despite being home to nearly 3.5 million people, the region faces challenges such as wage inequality, high unemployment rates, and concentrated poverty, particularly among communities of color. Addressing these issues will require targeted efforts to promote equitable economic development and improve access to quality jobs across the region.

## Imperial County SWOT Analysis

To access the full Imperial County SWOT analysis, please click [here](#).

### STRENGTHS

- Comprehensive Planning Aligned with California Jobs First
- Environmental Commitment
- Emerging Technology Adoption
- Cross-Border Dynamics
- Strong Agricultural Production
- Foreign Trade and Ports of Entry
- Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC)
- FourFront Initiative
- Construction Materials and Heavy Metals
- Rich Agricultural Heritage

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Lithium Valley High Road Partnership
- Imperial County's Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA)
- Green Economy
- Border Proximity
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Cross-Border Economic Synergies
- Renewable Energy Potential
- Agricultural Innovation
- Opportunities that Support Public Arts and Narrative Change
- Accessible Transportation (Imperial County & San Diego)
- Training for the Green Economy

### WEAKNESSES

- Persistent High Unemployment and Overdependence on Social Services
- Stigma in Key Sectors (Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Construction, and Utilities)
- Workforce Skills Mismatch
- Infrastructure Gaps (Transportation, Housing, Emergency Preparedness)
- Sustainable Water Resource Management Challenges
- Limited Diversification in Certain Areas
- Digital Divide (Inconsistent Internet and Cell Service)
- Limited Access to Higher Education Opportunities
- Limited Public Transportation
- Lack of Safe, Free Youth Programming and Facilities
- Lack of Resources for Unhoused
- Inadequate Access to Healthcare
- Insufficient Resources for Refugees (Political)
- Northend Communities Lack Basic Infrastructure (Post Office, Frequent Public Transportation, Grocery Stores)
- Lack of Climate Resilience Infrastructure
- Insufficient Senior Resources (Affordable Housing, Healthcare, Accessibility)

### THREATS

- Climate Change Impacts
- Economic Instability
- Political and Regulatory Uncertainty and Constraints
- Social Inequities and Health Disparities
- Small Businesses Have Difficulty Competing for Workers as Wages Increase
- Rapid Technological Changes and Automation
- Salton Sea and New River
- EPA and CEQA Delays

## San Diego County SWOT Analysis

To access the full San Diego County SWOT analysis, please click [here](#).

### STRENGTHS

- Diverse Economic Sectors
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Innovation and Research Hub
- Quality of Life
- Project Labor Agreements in Building Industries
- Regional Consortium of Community Colleges
- Educational Opportunities, Including Dual Immersion Programs
- Cross-Border Dynamics
- Comprehensive Planning Aligned with California Jobs First
- Military Presence
- Strong Presence of Arts and Culture
- Diverse and Robust Food Industry
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
- Supportive Political Policies
- Health and Wellness Policies
- Climate Policies

### WEAKNESSES

- Coordination Among Multiple Plans
- Economic Disparities and Income Inequality
- Inaccessible Housing and High Cost of Living
- Environmental Challenges and Water Resource Management
- Lack of Transportation Infrastructure and Rural Communities' Lack of Infrastructure
- Lack of Resources for Unhoused, Refugees, and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals
- Insufficient Healthcare, Mental Health, and Senior Resources
- Lack of Childcare, Educational, and Business Opportunities
- Need for Centralized, Culturally Relevant Community Spaces with a Holistic Approach

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Creative Industries
- Workforce Development
- Apprenticeship Programs for Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism, and Education and Human Development
- Alternative Career Pathway Development for Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism
- Sustainable Industry Growth
- Developing More Parking Areas Near Housing
- Accessible Transportation
- Enhance Fair Compensation and Local Hiring Practices

### THREATS

- Widening Inequality
- Climate Change Risks
- Rapid Technological Changes and Automation
- Small Businesses Struggling to Compete for Workers
- Lack of Adequate Infrastructure
- Tijuana Sewage Issues
- Wildlife Protection Regulations
- Labor Policy Challenges
- Hazardous Waste and Pollution

## CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY INDUSTRY SECTOR STRATEGIES

This chapter outlines an inclusive economic development strategy for ten priority industry sectors, including five priority sectors for Imperial County and five for San Diego.

### Selecting Priority Industry Sectors

In identifying priority industry sectors, the Coalition used positive and negative screens. For example, it identified industries most likely to produce benefits for disinvested community members and industries most at risk of having negative consequences for disinvested community members absent intentional and focused interventions.

The selection of the priority industry sectors was informed by a region wide survey in English and Spanish that solicited feedback on the selection criteria and specific priority industries for each county-level subregion. The Coalition received 227 responses, including 113 from Imperial County and 114 from San Diego County.

Based on the survey and their own deliberations, the Subregional Task Groups selected criteria for their county. The chart below identifies the criteria used to select the priority industry sector.

Criteria	Imperial County Subregion	San Diego Subregion
<b>Career Pathways:</b> Industries with Career Pathways to Quality Jobs for Individuals with Less Formal Education than a Two-Year Degree	X	X
<b>Future Economic Growth:</b> Industries Anticipated to Have Significant Future Economic Growth	X	X
<b>Career Advancement:</b> Industries with Good Career Advancement Opportunities	X	X
<b>High Wage-High Demand:</b> Industries with High-Wage, High-Demand Jobs	X	X
<b>Address Significant Trends:</b> Industries that Address Significant Trends or Issues Impacting the Subregion	X	X
<b>Local Economy:</b> Industries that Support a Localized Economy	X	
<b>H RTP:</b> Industries that have a High Road Training Partnership in the Region	X	X
<b>Equity:</b> Industries that Advance Justice and Equity	X	
<b>Support Energy Transition:</b> Industry Supports the Region's Transition to a Lower Carbon-Emitting Economy	X	X
<b>Current Employment:</b> One of the Largest Industry Sectors in the County based on Employment (five largest for Imperial County and ten largest for San Diego County)	X	X

<b>Current GDP<sup>3</sup>/High Economic Value:</b> One of the Ten Largest Industries in the County based on Revenues	X	X
<b>Economic Resilience:</b> Industries that Demonstrated Economic Resilience in the Face of Economic Shocks. (The analysis identified top industry sectors based on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.)	X	X
<b>Competitive for State Funds:</b> Industries that will be Competitive in Drawing Down State Implementation Grant Funds	X	X

Sector Leads voted to select the priority industries. One hundred percent (100%) of Sector Leads voted. The approved list of priority industries is listed below by county subregion.

Imperial County Subregion	San Diego County Subregion
1. Training, Retraining, Trade Schools, and All-inclusive Forms of Education	1. Agriculture + Sustainable Food Systems (Agriculture, AgTech, Ag tourism, Fisheries, Food Business)
2. Agriculture - Sustainable Practice, Equitable Food Systems, and Technology	2. Energy (Energy Democracy, Renewable Energy Generation, Energy Transmission & Distribution, Cleantech Manufacturing, New Technologies, Sustainable Natural Resources)
3. Holistic Community Health and Interventions	3. Arts, Culture, & Heritage (Pottery, Art, Entrepreneurship, Spaces, Education)
4. Non-profits and Community-Based Organizations	4. Water (Resources, Infrastructure, Waste Water Treatment, Technology- desalination, reuse, Affordability, Sustainability, Green Water)
5. Infrastructure - Sidewalks, Broadband, Waste Management, and Other Public Works	5. Manufacturing (Advanced Manufacturing, Precision Manufacturing, Biotech, Cleantech, Hardware, Defense)

## Enhancing Our Priority Industry Sectors

Below are worksheets for each priority industry, which provide background, research, analysis, and strategy recommendations. As noted in this plan, these preliminary documents will be further socialized and developed in September 2024.

### Imperial County Priority Industry Sectors

#### IC Priority Industry 1 - Training, Retraining, Trade Schools, and All-inclusive Forms of Education

<sup>3</sup> GDP is defined as the total monetary value of final goods and services produced in the county. This includes consumption, investment, government spending, and net exports. Industry sectors with high GDPs can support quality jobs, reinvestments in the local economy, and expansion.

Worksheet: Training, Retraining, Trade Schools, and all-inclusive forms of Education

[Link to Writer's Full Worksheet- includes additional information.](#)

**Describe the Sector**

<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description -</b></p>	<p>The Retraining, Trade Schools and other inclusive forms of the Education sector are designed to identify educational gaps, train for highroad jobs with the potential for upward mobility and develop sustainable practices for future job creation in Imperial Valley. This sector responds to a lack of diversity in trades and training, technological advances that create risks for the workforce, language barriers, and a high number of workers with limited education.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of workers being displaced by technological advances in the Agriculture sector provides an immediate and robust potential for training and retraining the future Ag workforce. <a href="#">The impact of technology on farm labor and employment - The Agrotech Daily</a></li> <li>• Current occupational training programs in Imperial Valley, i.e. <a href="#">Imperial Valley Regional Occupation Program - Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (ivrop.org)</a>, <a href="#">Job Training Programs   Imperial County Workforce Development Board (ivworkforce.com)</a></li> <li>• An abundant number of unused, underused, and/or abandoned properties and dwellings in Imperial Valley provide an opportunity for the creation of new training centers, without the overhead cost of building facilities from scratch. <a href="#">Disadvantaged Communities in Imperial Valley (desertreport.org)</a></li> <li>• National attention from potential Lithium extraction.</li> <li>• Government-based training opportunities. <a href="#">Development Strategies</a></li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow - help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three of the current five fastest-growing industries in Imperial County (Logistics and Warehousing, Historical Tourism and Recreation, and Aquaculture and Sustainable Fish Farming), are not currently being trained for but have the potential for immediate positive impact for both unemployed workers and environmental sustainability in Imperial Valley.</li> <li>• There has been an expressed desire for more diverse career training.</li> <li>• Once the language barrier and lack of translated educational materials have been addressed, citizens can receive targeted instruction based on current industry trends for growth, diverse career opportunities, and job sustainability.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Centralized training encourages career mobility and promotes industry resilience by being able to train, retrain, and hire from within individual industries and/or sectors.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends - What current trends are impacting this Sector?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The expansion of Renewable Energy projects is creating demand for specialized job training. Energy Efficiency Training, including optimizing cooling systems, using renewable energy sources, and implementing energy-conserving technologies.</li> <li>• Given Imperial Valley's strong Agriculture base, there is an increased need for Agriculture Technologies training. Agriculture Technologies; Alternate and precision farming, drone operation, and data analytics to optimize crop yields and water usage.</li> <li>• Ongoing and planned infrastructure improvements around border crossings and transportation corridors are driving the need for training in construction, logistics, and transportation management.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Significance of Continuous Learning [10 Statistics of Why Continuous Learning is Significant Today \(trainingindustry.com\)](#)

<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies -</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government incentives and subsidies can attract new businesses and new training methods to Imperial County.</li> <li>• Government funding for infrastructure can stimulate job creation in construction and related energy sectors. Improved infrastructure attracts businesses by reducing transportation costs and improving access to markets.</li> <li>• Potential partnerships with Government workforce development training.</li> <li>• Local government policies can enhance or hinder the potential for development.</li> <li>• Improved infrastructure attracts businesses by reducing transportation costs and improving access to markets.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://ivworkforce.com">Job Training Programs   Imperial County Workforce Development Board (ivworkforce.com)</a></li> <li>• Issue 23: Lithium Valley faces significant obstacles in the region, a new report finds (substack.com)</li> <li>• <a href="http://prod.azureedge.net">Research Presentation, What's Next Intro + Close (PPT) (cw-gbl-gws-prod.azureedge.net)</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://newamerica.org">Energy Department Funds First IACs at Community Colleges, Trade Unions (newamerica.org)</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A focus on specialized education and training of residents assures citizens have up-to-date knowledge and skill sets which will make each individual more competitive in the future workforce and confident in their ability to complete work-related tasks with alternate degrees of difficulty.</li> <li>• Creating infrastructure centered around specified training and education of a potential workforce, and then employing that workforce in fields related to their prior training and education, is a model for self-sustainability in any sector. <a href="#">Advancing a Just Transition Across Sectors   Blog   Sustainable Business Network and Consultancy   BSR</a></li> <li>• Starting workforce training at an earlier age increases the likelihood of an individual working in that field.</li> <li>• Having all educational materials translated into multiple languages assures inclusivity, consideration, and equity for those traditionally excluded from highroad or technically advanced positions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>8. <b>Community Benefit - What <i>strategies</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is currently low engagement and participation amongst migrant workers and residents in the Imperial Valley with low English-language or digital literacy. Removing the language barrier and offering access to education and new industrial technology training will heighten community engagement across all sectors and result in a more prepared and well-informed workforce.</li> <li>• Prioritizing selection of individuals from historically marginalized communities for program participation will ensure equitable access to educational and vocational opportunities, leading to the ability to earn a sustainable income in Imperial County.</li> <li>• Implementing early education pilot programs provide entry-level experience to Imperial Valley youth exploring new career paths. <a href="http://brookings.edu">Importing the German Approach to Career Building (brookings.edu)</a></li> <li>• Create pre-development partnerships with existing industries to ensure that training programs are aligned with the most relevant skills and qualifications to local job opportunities and employment.</li> </ul>
<p>9. <b>More on Community Benefits - What</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early industry education for pre-teen and high school students, including mentorship in marginalized communities and pre-career development for jobs in the renewable</li> </ul>

<p><b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<p>industry sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prioritizing educational accessibility and training of both gender-neutral and gender-specific industries and careers to individuals from historically marginalized communities diversifies the economy, boosts participation in the workforce, offers new pathways to employment and sustainability, and spurs reinvestment into our communities.</li> <li>● Education, Infrastructure, Partnerships.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>● Design programs that are geographically accessible and flexible, offering both in-person and online learning options to accommodate varying schedules and locations.</li> <li>● Translating all educational documents into Spanish and Native languages enhances inclusion, fosters diverse innovation, and helps overcome the language barrier that has increasingly impacted Imperial County's agricultural workforce.</li> <li>● Implementation of pre-development grants for green conversion projects.</li> <li>● Leveraging pre-existing programs and partnerships both with the community and identified priority industry sectors.</li> <li>● Creation of independent economic zones and project management to protect the integrity of California Jobs First and the proposed investments and strategies for building community wealth and equity, inclusive training, environmental health, and sustainability in Imperial County.</li> <li>● Continued outreach and engagement to ensure the community vision is being achieved.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taxation on program profiteers for reinvestment into programs trades and training.</li> <li>● Emphasis on investment in the Child Support Services sector meets the dual need of child support services for working families and provides opportunities for careers in the cooperative childcare sector which does not require formal education.</li> <li>● Highroad jobs provide higher wages, which will allow for shorter workdays and more time at home with family. The median income in Imperial County is \$54,000 per year, median income for seasonal farmworkers is below \$20,000. <a href="#">Imperial Valley: Agriculture and Farm Labor -- Philip Martin - Changing Face   Migration Dialogue (ucdavis.edu)</a></li> <li>● The proposed strategies have a built-in support system for local or family-owned businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>11. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Translation of all educational documents into multiple languages.</li> <li>● Preferential enrollment for members of traditionally marginalized communities.</li> <li>● Committees comprised of members from the disinvested communities California Jobs First has committed to serve.</li> <li>● Recognize, Acknowledge, Adjust.<sup>6</sup></li> <li>● Individualized entry-level learning courses to ensure every citizen who participates in our proposed training has the required understanding of both novice and complex subjects.</li> <li>● Creation of inclusive policies. <a href="#">National Equity Atlas   PolicyLink</a></li> <li>● Preferential consideration developments with the most positive impact in at-risk (frontline), and/or disinvested communities. <a href="#">Economic Inclusion   PolicyLink</a></li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup>This includes: A. Educate individuals from diverse communities on specific subjects. B. Create infrastructure directly related to the industries we create or train in. C. Develop or leverage partnerships with innovative industries to assure immediate employment upon completion of one of the proposed designated training or retraining courses.

<sup>6</sup>[Recognize Privilege, Acknowledge Injustice, and Reframe Perspective to Reach Equity-PAIRE Model | OT Theory](#)

<p>12. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community-centered planning, outreach, and engagement.<sup>7</sup></li> <li>• Participatory planning.</li> <li>• Organization of Community Leaders and Resources.</li> <li>• Establish comprehensive training on new agricultural technologies to combat the dwindling seasonal farmworker jobs.<sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Establish new forms of agricultural production that leverage farm workers' current skill set, while preparing the region for the integration of lithium, geothermal, and other renewable energies.<sup>9</sup></li> <li>• Targeted and diverse recruitment methods focused on disinvested communities including the use of the Arts as an outreach tool.</li> <li>• Development of a sustainable job creation template<sup>5</sup> to replicate positive results in other sectors and adjust for action where there may be data gaps.</li> <li>• Design initiatives that allow communities to own stakes in clean energy projects to address the systematic, traditional practice of established entities [from outside of disinvested communities], owning a community product and promoting community wealth-building. <a href="#">IHRB - What is Community Ownership for Renewable Energy?</a></li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skill development and training, upskilling, and reskilling in in-demand sectors.</li> <li>• On-the-job training to develop partnerships with priority industry employers, while earning a livable wage.</li> <li>• Job placement and career support services - Job matching services to introduce risk workers to suitable job opportunities and career counseling mentorship.</li> <li>• Offer financial and transportation support services, assistance with enrolling in California's EV for all program which helps citizens exchange outdated or environmentally unsafe vehicles for new electric vehicles and implementing new green transportation technologies to ensure reliable and flexible transportation for families and workers. Implement income support measures such as wage subsidies and stipends for those in training programs. Assure access to health insurance and other social benefits.</li> <li>• Promote flexible work arrangements - Remote or part-time jobs with flexible hours to accommodate caregivers and individuals with personal health challenges.</li> <li>• Creation of supportive workplace policies.</li> <li>• Mental Health and wellbeing programs.</li> <li>• Development of independent green energy transportation to accommodate the schedules of seasonal workers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>14. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of policies that promote zero emissions construction throughout each priority sector.</li> <li>• Leverage government incentive programs for the implementation of green energy technologies.<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Creation of environmental restoration programs and clean climate education.</li> <li>• Benefits for companies who implement clean energy construction and green technologies for project restorations.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Beginning of Construction for Purposes of the Renewable Electricity Production Tax</a></li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> Consistent and diverse outreach designed to engage and educate disinvested communities.

<sup>8</sup> [NAWS-Data-FactSheet-05-13-2019-final.pdf \(farmworkerjustice.org\)](#) and [Farmworkers could be replaced by robots sooner than we think - The Washington Post](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Workforce Development | SDSU](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Beginning of Construction for Purposes of the Renewable Electricity Production Tax Credit and Energy Investment Tax Credit](#)

	<p><a href="#">Credit and Energy Investment Tax Credit</a></p>
<p>15. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental health surveillance and water monitoring to assure clean potable drinking water for residents with water insecurity and those with no clean water accessibility.</li> <li>• Continuous air monitoring and mitigation measures to combat the rampant respiratory disease that currently affects over 12,000 Imperial Valley youth.</li> <li>• Crop and Environmental disease surveillance.</li> <li>• Anti-dumping measures.</li> <li>• Safe waste removal and disposal.</li> <li>• Hazardous chemical education and farmworker safety. <a href="#">Ill Harvest In Rural California, Farmworkers Fend For Themselves For Health Care - Random Lengths News</a></li> <li>• Public education and awareness campaigns.</li> <li>• Partner with public and private healthcare organizations to ensure access to comprehensive healthcare for our most vulnerable.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in the creation of community-based health centers to treat the respiratory issues exacerbated by decades of exposure to dust, farm chemicals and air pollution.</li> <li>• Introduce innovative technologies and partnership programs that promote community-based zero emissions mobility projects. <a href="#">New California program awards 21 communities, tribes \$20 million to launch shared, zero-emission mobility projects</a></li> <li>• Creation of weatherization training to teach communities how to combat current air pollution trends.</li> <li>• Creation of A weatherization workforce to help mitigate the negative impacts of air pollution and environmental waste.</li> <li>• Implement Certified Data Center Technician and Certified Data Center Professional training programs, with a focus on data center management, including H.V.A.C courses, fire suppression technologies, and energy management in order to boost local participation in those industries and better prepare Imperial Valley for a safe and sustainable energy transition. <a href="#">Certified Data Centre Technician Professional (CDCTP®)   CNet Training (cnet-training.com)</a></li> <li>• Apply zero emissions job creation principles to all future construction, projects, and developments in Imperial Valley.</li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Training, Retraining, Trade Schools, and all other inclusive forms of the education sector align with the goals outlined in AB 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and SB 32 (2016)<sup>11</sup> on the need for greenhouse gas reduction measures.</li> <li>• Priority sector Education and Training will have an exclusive focus on clean energy job creation and new zero-emissions technologies to help California meet its clean energy transition goals.</li> <li>• The Training and Retraining sector plans to leverage government incentive programs to promote solar power and energy-efficient construction in significant industry growth sectors<sup>12</sup>.</li> <li>• Create independent alternative/clean energy transportation, with mandates requiring the vehicles or fleets to have zero emissions.</li> <li>• Several training facilities will be established in/on previously used or abandoned property, restoring dilapidated buildings and reducing environmental waste.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	

<sup>11</sup> [AB 32 Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 | California Air Resources Board](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Solar Investment Tax Credit: What Changed? | Department of Energy](#) and [EERE Funding Opportunities | Department of Energy](#)

<p>18. <b>Implementation - <i>What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</i></b> your strategies and support the enhancement of the priority sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community partnerships to understand community goals and needs, provide advice, and assess willingness to be trained in new career sectors.</li> <li>• Community-based organization: partnerships with CBO's must be strengthened to bridge the divide between community members and potential industries and act as liaisons to the California Jobs First Initiative as a catalyst to community empowerment.</li> <li>• Government entities: partnerships with local Behavioral and Social Health services to address other adjustment issues associated with living in communities that have been traditionally underinvested and underserved.</li> <li>• Government Agencies: partnerships assure the Training and Education sector is always in alignment with governmental policies, make industry coordinators aware of possible government agency collaborations and grant opportunities.</li> <li>• Training and Learning institutions: partnerships to understand training logistics and current available curriculum and help identify gaps and investment and training opportunities. <a href="#">National Farmworker Jobs Program   SER National (ser-national.org)</a></li> <li>• Employers: partnerships help provide proof of concept, assure training leads to highroad job employment, and offer needed on-job training experience and education to make workers more competitive in future job markets.</li> </ul>
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**IC Priority Industry 2 - Agriculture - Sustainable Practice, Equitable Food Systems, and Technology**

<p>Worksheet: Agriculture - Sustainable Practice, Equitable Food Systems, and Technology</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Link to Writer's Full Worksheet</a> - includes additional information</p>
<p><b>Describe the Sector</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector</p>	<p>The Imperial County (IC) Agricultural industry or "Agribusiness" includes producing, processing, and distributing farm-based goods. This sector largely encompasses the main areas of agriculture, livestock, and forestry. The Coalition's focus on this priority industry is on sustainable practices, equitable food systems, and the impact and opportunities of technology.</p>
<p>2. <b>A. Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Farmable land:</b> Imperial County is home to 500,000 farmable acres.</li> <li>• <b>Surface Water:</b> The Colorado River is the only source of water that brings life to this desert region. The 80-mile-long All-American Canal delivers water to the southeast corner of the Imperial Valley. Roughly 2.8 million acre-feet of water is used per year to grow the crops and livestock that help feed the nation.</li> <li>• <b>Annual Farming Weather:</b> Winters are mild and dry, with daily maximum temperatures in the 65 to 75°F (18-24°C) range. Summers are extremely hot, with daily maximum temperatures of 104 to 115°F (40-46°C). The annual rainfall is just over 3 inches (7.5 cm), most of which comes in late summer or midwinter.</li> <li>• <b>Community College:</b> Imperial Valley College's Business &amp; Agriculture Department offers several plant science and agricultural business programs at both the associate degree and certificate levels of achievement.</li> <li>• <b>University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR):</b> Imperial County University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and the Desert Research Extension Center (DREC) located in Holtville, California, are committed</li> </ul>

	<p>to agricultural research and education in the Imperial Valley desert and specialize in vegetable crops, alfalfa, desert cattle feeding, irrigation and drainage management, and pest management.</p>
<p><b>2B. Additional Background</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IC Agriculture industry ranks in the top ten agricultural counties in California.</li> <li>• The agriculture industry is Imperial County's largest industry, contributing \$5.095 billion to the county's economy.</li> <li>• The IC Agriculture Industry is the second largest employer in Imperial County. Directly supporting 14,537 employees.</li> <li>• Key commodities produced in this region are cattle, alfalfa, lettuce, Bermuda grass hay, spinach, onions, alfalfa seed, and carrots.</li> <li>• The IC Agriculture industry receives <a href="#">70% of California's Colorado River</a> allocation.</li> <li>• The IC Agriculture industry depends on the region's natural resources, such as water, climate, and farmable land (an estimated 475,000 acres) to produce agricultural commodities shipped worldwide.</li> <li>• Imperial County's proximity to Mexicali, the capital city of the state of Baja California in northern Mexico, allows for the employment of migrant and seasonal farm workers. <a href="#">Approximately 19,571 migrant and seasonal farm workers were employed in Imperial County during 2022-23.</a></li> <li>• In 2022, the IC Agriculture industry's organic operations had an operational gross value of \$132,269,478.</li> <li>• Imperial County's thriving agriculture industry contrasts starkly with its regional food insecurity, with one in five <a href="#">residents unable to access enough affordable and nutritious food.</a></li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture is an essential pillar of the Imperial County economy.</li> <li>• According to the <a href="#">Imperial County Ag. Commission Crop Report Plus Series June 2024</a>, agriculture production in Imperial County has “exceptionally high levels of economic diversification, which provides important economic resilience to the industry and the larger county economy.”</li> <li>• The IC agriculture Industry processes most, if not all, of its raw agricultural products outside the county. The industry can add local value by developing the infrastructure needed to process these products within the county. While this is done for a few commodities, these practices can be expanded.</li> <li>• Further research is needed to understand the relationship between the agriculture industry in Imperial County and other industries, such as Geothermal production and Lithium Valley.</li> <li>• Increase agriculture entrepreneurship in Imperial County by creating farming opportunities for new, minority, veteran, and women producers to establish financially viable businesses.</li> <li>• Increase the adoption of <a href="#">Climate-Smart Agricultural practices.</a></li> <li>• Open new markets for small to medium size farms.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends? If your strategies include making affiliated investments explain why that is relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Water:</b> Water from the Colorado River is vital to Imperial County agriculture. The Imperial Irrigation District holds the largest single allocation of the Colorado River water. Policies focused on reducing water use directly affect Imperial County agriculture. Industry investments in water efficiency and enhancement technology at this region's local, state, and federal levels are essential to conserving water use and sustaining agriculture in Imperial County.</li> <li>• <b>Aging Producer Population:</b> The average age of a US farm producer in 2022 was 55.1. A significant majority of Imperial County agriculture producers are older than 65.</li> <li>• <b>Sectors Demographics:</b> According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profile, many agricultural producers in Imperial County are identified as white males. In contrast to, <a href="#">90 percent of California-hired farm workers were born in Mexico.</a></li> <li>• <b>Fewer and larger farms:</b> 45% of Imperial County's farm size is 1,000+ acres.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Beginning Farmer/Producer:</b> Access to land is one of the most significant barriers many aspiring farmers/producers face when deciding whether to farm.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Law of the River:</b> The Colorado River is managed and operated under numerous compacts, federal laws, court decisions and decrees, contracts, and regulatory guidelines. This collection of documents apportions the water and regulates the use and management of the Colorado River among the seven basin states and Mexico.</li> <li>● <b>Imperial Irrigation Districts:</b> The Deficit Irrigation Program (DIP) incentivizes deficit irrigation practices to be performed under a voluntary agreement by farmers on land cultivating either Alfalfa, Bermuda grass, or Klein grass. The goal is to reduce IID’s consumptive use of Colorado River water. On August 12, 2024, IID executed the 2024 – 2026 System Conservation Implementation Agreement (SCIA) to fund the creation of up to 300,000 acre-feet per year of System Conservation Water to be left in Lake Mead, with a cumulative total of up to 700,000 acre-feet of conservation during those three years.</li> <li>● <b>Farm Bill:</b> The <a href="#">farm bill</a> is a package of legislation passed roughly once every five years that tremendously impacts farming livelihoods, how food is grown, and what kinds of foods are grown. The farm bill sets the stage for our food and farm systems by covering programs ranging from crop insurance for farmers to healthy food access for low-income families, from beginning farmer training to support for sustainable farming practices.</li> <li>● <b>California Department of Food and Agriculture:</b> <a href="#">AG Vision for the next decade</a></li> <li>● <b>U.S Department of Agriculture:</b> <a href="#">The USDA’s Strategic Goals for 2022-2026</a></li> <li>● <b>Imperial County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office:</b> This local government body is responsible for the enforcement of pesticide laws, weight and measurement standards, and the detection and eradication of pests harmful to our agricultural industry, human health, and other plant resources.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any existing plans or reports for this sector?</p>	<p><a href="#">Report:</a> Economic Contributions of Imperial County Agriculture – June 2024</p> <p><a href="#">Report:</a> Imperial County Agricultural Crop and Livestock Report 2022</p> <p><a href="#">Report:</a> California Agricultural Statistics Review</p> <p><a href="#">Report:</a> Farm Labor Issues in the 2020s – Summary Report</p> <p><a href="#">Report:</a> California Farm Labor 2024</p> <p><a href="#">Report:</a> Imperial County Regional Climate Action Plan</p> <p><a href="#">Data:</a> Employment Development Department State of California</p> <p><a href="#">Data:</a> 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profile</p> <p><a href="#">Data:</a> Food Insecurity among the overall population of Imperial County</p> <p><a href="#">Policy:</a> Reclamation Lower Colorado Region, “The Law of the River”</p>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Remove Barriers for New Agriculture Producers/Farmers:</b> Create a community land trust partnership between nonprofits and farmworkers so a new generation can own land and start their agricultural businesses.</li> <li>● <b>Beginner Farmer Training Program:</b> Create a program to mentor farmworkers in skills to maintain and operate agricultural businesses sustainably. An example is the Center for Land-Based Learning, whose mission is to inspire, educate, and cultivate future generations of farmers, agricultural leaders, and natural resource stewards.</li> <li>● <b>Improve Career Opportunities:</b> Collaborate with education and training agencies to provide farmworkers with opportunities to learn new skills, qualify for higher wages, and enhance their career prospects in Imperial County. This includes offering courses in new technologies and English language learning.</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Farm Incubators:</b> Establish a farming incubator program to create opportunities for</li> </ul>

<p><b>proposed investments and strategies</b> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<p>farm workers and other residents to pursue agriculture careers within Imperial County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Diversifying Farm Size:</b> Conduct research and involve stakeholders to create a plan for diversifying farm sizes, adopting new technologies, and implementing sustainable practices in Imperial County. This will help to expand market opportunities, support the next generation of farmers, and build a more robust farm economy. Farming in Imperial County is distinct because the arid desert conditions call for innovative and specialized equipment, methods, and infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reimagine our food system needs to ensure that it meets the nutritional needs of all Imperial County residents, particularly those in food-insecure neighborhoods. A mobile farmers market that connects growers with reliable customers in food-insecure neighborhoods.</li> <li>● Increase representation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color in leadership positions. This will help to ensure that the industry reflects the diversity of the community it serves and that decision-making processes are inclusive.</li> <li>● Prioritize hiring local residents, especially those from disinvested communities, for agricultural operations, processing and distribution.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imperial County needs to improve its community food environment.</li> <li>● <b>Expand Integrated Nutrition and Food Security:</b> Develop community-centered solutions to address food insecurity and promote equitable access to local, affordable, sustainably grown, and culturally relevant food. This may include initiatives such as farmers markets, food co-ops, community gardens, and food education programs.</li> <li>● Provide technical assistance and training to small-scale farmers, particularly those from marginalized communities, to improve their agricultural practices and productivity.</li> <li>● Involve community members in environmental monitoring and advocacy to ensure that their concerns are addressed.</li> <li>● Help small-scale farmers connect to markets and distribution channels to ensure that their products reach consumers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Flexible Childcare Solutions:</b> Create flexible childcare arrangements for families working nontraditional work hours during agricultural seasons.</li> <li>● According to Philip Martin in California Farm Labor 2024, “Dividing total wages paid by average FTE employment suggests that California farm workers earn an average of \$800 a week and \$42,000 if employed for 52 weeks in 2022. However, California farm workers earned an average of \$20,000 because most did not work year-round.</li> <li>● <b>Farm Employment:</b> Provide more secure and regular job opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased farm ownership by people of color, women, and people who identify as LGBTQIA is an effective pathway toward financial independence and wealth generation, especially for individuals who face historic barriers to becoming producers in the farming industry.</li> <li>● Support community-led agriculture initiatives that empower marginalized communities to control their food systems.</li> <li>● Promote and protect Indigenous food systems and traditional agricultural practices.</li> <li>● Advocate for food policies that prioritize equity, sustainability, and community self-determination.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> -</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advocate for food policies that prioritize equity, sustainability, and community self-</li> </ul>

<p>What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<p>determination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the preservation of traditional agricultural practices and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Promote the revitalization of Indigenous foodways and the cultivation of traditional crops.</li> <li>• Facilitate cultural exchange and collaboration between different agricultural communities.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Farmworker Protection:</b> Create a program to provide financial compensation, skills training, and replacement work opportunities for farm workers dismissed due to water conservation efforts.</li> <li>• <b>Leverage Technology:</b> Mechanical aids are a potential interim solution to increasing worker productivity without replacing manual workers with machines.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Imperial County Agriculture Industry needs to adopt irrigation technology that reduces farm water use. This would reduce the county’s overall need for Colorado River water.</li> <li>• Ecosystem services credits related to soil, water, and air quality, might be used to pay for protecting these natural resources.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Food insecurity:</b> The agricultural commodities produced in Imperial County are not accessible to the residents of the region. This has caused the most disinvested communities in the region to lack accessible and affordable food.</li> <li>• <b>Air quality:</b> Emissions are generated through agricultural activities from stationary sources such as irrigation pumps, off-road equipment, and agricultural processes. This impacts the health of people living near these agricultural activities. One analysis found that agricultural burning is linked to more wheezing and bronchitis symptoms<sup>13</sup>.</li> <li>• <b>Pesticide use and public health impacts in Imperial County:</b> Compared to children with no pesticide exposure in the past 12 months, those with the highest level of pesticide exposure reported greater wheezing (OR=1.86, 95%CI 1.01, 3.45) and medication usage (OR=2.43, 95%CI 1.14, 5.35).<sup>14</sup></li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fertilization Guidelines:</b> Adopt best practices identified by CDFA Crop fertilization guidelines to reduce the overapplication of nitrogen fertilizers in agriculture.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:</b> Provide incentives for replacing gas—or diesel-powered agricultural equipment with electric and alternatively fueled equivalents.</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> [“Agricultural burning in Imperial Valley, California and respiratory symptoms in children: A cross-sectional, repeated measures analysis,”](#) 2023, Science of the Total Environment.

<sup>14</sup> [“Exposure to Pesticides and Respiratory Health Outcomes in Children Residing in Imperial Valley, CA,”](#) 2022, SEE 2022: 34th Annual Conference of the International Society of Environmental Epidemiology

<p>align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sustainable Water Management:</b> Provide grants and incentives to adapt water conservation technologies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>19. <b>Implementation - <i>What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</i></b> your strategies and support enhancing the priority sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Just Food System:</b> Establish coalitions between organizations and stakeholders to build a roadmap to a more just food system in Imperial County.</li> <li>● <b>New Farmer Revolving Loan Fund:</b> Establish a revolving loan fund to support the startups of smaller-size farms and first-generation farmers.</li> </ul>

IC Priority Industry 3 – Holistic Community Health and Interventions

Worksheet: Holistic Community Health and Interventions (i.e. Affordable Housing & Homelessness)	
Key Questions and Information	<a href="#">Link to Writer’s Full Worksheet - includes additional information</a>
Describe the Sector	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector</p>	<p>Holistic, community health involves integrated and comprehensive approaches to health that address physical, mental, social, and environmental factors. This includes community-based interventions that focus on prevention, wellness, and equitable access to health services, as well as interconnected issues of affordable housing, homelessness, and economic stability.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hospitals and community healthcare providers: ECRMC, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District, Innercare</li> <li>● Community Health Plan of Imperial Valley (CHPIV) is a locally managed healthcare plan under Medi-Cal Managed Care Program, focusing on comprehensive healthcare services, preventive care, and health education programs.</li> <li>● Imperial Valley College (IVC): The local community college offers healthcare-related programs, including nursing and allied health fields. While the traditional healthcare focus is prominent, the school has started incorporating more elements of holistic care in their training, including courses on wellness and mental health.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nursing Assistant Program: Includes training, which aligns with holistic approaches.</li> <li>○ Behavioral Science and Social Services Programs: While not exclusively focused on holistic care, these programs provide the foundation for careers in community health, with an emphasis on understanding and addressing the broader determinants of health.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Nonprofits             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comite Civico del Valle (CCV): A community-based nonprofit that works to improve the environmental health of the Imperial Valley. They provide health education and advocate for policies that impact health.</li> <li>○ Imperial Valley LGBT Resource Center: Provides not only social support but also focuses on mental health and wellness, addressing the specific needs of the LGBT community through a holistic health lens.</li> <li>○ The Imperial Valley Food Bank provides healthy, nutritious food to vulnerable populations, addressing food insecurity as a key determinant of overall health and preventing chronic diseases.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Economic Diversification: Reduces reliance on agriculture by expanding into healthcare and wellness industries.</li> <li>● Economic Resilience: Lowers healthcare costs and boosts productivity, stabilizing the economy.</li> <li>● Enhanced Public Health: Addresses social determinants of health, leading to better outcomes.</li> <li>● Support for Vulnerable Groups: Reduces inequality and strengthens social cohesion.</li> <li>● Integrated Healthcare Models: Expansion of community health initiatives that</li> </ul>

	<p>integrate primary care, mental health, and social services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Telehealth Expansion: Leveraging technology to provide remote healthcare services, especially in rural and underserved areas.</li> <li>● Increased access to health education programs that empower individuals to take control of their health.</li> <li>● Workforce Development: Training a diverse healthcare workforce that reflects the community it serves and addresses language and cultural barriers.</li> <li>● Integration of services provides comprehensive support, reducing the burden on emergency services.</li> <li>● Expansion of affordable housing</li> <li>● Arts and Culture as drivers of Holistic Community health.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Post-Pandemic Recovery: Addressing the long-term impacts of COVID-19 (<a href="#">Long COVID</a>) on mental and physical health.</li> <li>● Mental Health Awareness</li> <li>● Chronic Disease Management</li> <li>● Health Disparities: Continued efforts to address racial and socioeconomic disparities in health outcomes.</li> <li>● American Art Therapy Association (<a href="#">AATA</a>) Use of arts and culture in promoting mental and social well-being, preserving cultural heritage, empowering communities, driving urban development, advocating for environmental sustainability, and enhancing accessibility through innovation.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Affordable Care Act (ACA): Expansion of Medicaid and insurance coverage impacting access to more healthcare. This expansion includes preventive services such as nutritional counseling and screenings that align with holistic health principles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">National Prevention Strategy</a> focuses on shifting the nation's healthcare system from a focus on sickness and disease to wellness and prevention including elements of holistic health by promoting physical activity, healthy eating, mental well-being, and substance abuse prevention.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health Federal(NCCIH) funding initiatives aimed at strengthening public health infrastructure and community-based programs.</li> <li>● Policies that promote health equity, such as the implementation of social determinants of health (SDOH) strategies in healthcare planning.</li> <li>● Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)</li> <li>● <a href="#">AB 2835 &amp; AB 3057</a> aim to streamline access to state-local funds for effective homelessness prevention and intervention.</li> <li>● <a href="#">AB 918</a> consolidates medical services to improve healthcare access</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Healthy People 2030: National framework for improving health outcomes across the U.S., with a focus on health equity</li> <li>● Center for Disease Control (CDC) Community Health Assessments: Data-driven reports that provide insights into local health needs and disparities.</li> <li>● World Health Organization (WHO) Social Determinants of Health: International guidelines and data on addressing the root causes of health inequities.</li> <li>● National Institutes of Health (NIH) Reports: Research on chronic diseases, mental health, and preventive care.</li> <li>● Imperial County Public Health Department(ICPHD) <a href="#">Health Status Report</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Foster partnerships between healthcare providers, social service agencies,</li> </ul>

<p><b>proposed investments and strategies</b> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<p>and community organizations to provide comprehensive care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the presence of community health workers (CHWs) who serve as liaisons between healthcare providers and the community.</li> <li>● Develop and expand programs focused on nutrition, physical activity, and mental wellness.</li> <li>● Encourage investments in health tech startups, wellness centers, and research facilities.</li> <li>● Develop programs that offer preventative care and early intervention to reduce long-term healthcare costs.</li> <li>● Establish systems where primary care, specialty care and social services are integrated.</li> <li>● Expand telehealth options to reach remote and underserved areas.</li> <li>● Invest in Digital Infrastructure: Improve internet access and digital literacy to support telehealth use.</li> <li>● Develop programs to train and retain healthcare workers in the region.</li> <li>● Integrate affordable housing with community health services and amenities.</li> <li>● Use cultural events and programs to promote mental health and community well-being.</li> <li>● Incorporate art and cultural elements into healthcare facilities to improve patient experience within the environment.</li> <li>● Increase capacity for utilization of <a href="#">prevention strategies</a> through training</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <b>proposed investments and strategies</b> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize technology to provide telemedicine, remote monitoring, and health apps that promote wellness and self-management of chronic diseases.</li> <li>● Support community-driven health projects that address specific local needs, such as food security, mental health services, and housing interventions.</li> <li>● Integrate mental health and substance use services into primary care and community health settings.</li> <li>● Integrate inclusive design, therapeutic spaces, and accessible infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community Benefits and Inclusion</li> <li>● Focus on providing healthcare access to historically marginalized and disinvested communities, including people of color, low-income populations, and rural residents.</li> <li>● Ensure that healthcare providers are trained to understand and respect the cultural and linguistic needs of diverse populations, fostering trust and effective communication.</li> <li>● Involve community members in the planning and implementation of health interventions to ensure that they meet/address local needs, preferences, and cultural values.</li> <li>● Create job opportunities in community health, housing, and arts sectors to empower individuals and improve economic conditions in marginalized communities.</li> <li>● Expanding opportunities for people with disabilities by supporting (i.e., inclusive housing, community spaces, and recreational activities).</li> <li>● Community and recreation spaces.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement strategies to reduce barriers to healthcare access, such as providing transportation, language services, and expanding support for Telehealth options, particularly for those without broadband access expansion.</li> <li>● Increase broadband for those without the means to access Telehealth</li> </ul>

	<p>services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop outreach programs to educate underserved groups, including historically marginalized populations.</li> <li>● Available health services and preventive care.</li> <li>● Tailor health education and prevention strategies to address the specific needs of youth, emphasizing teaching national prevention strategy initiatives.</li> <li>● Utilize Public Art to raise awareness.</li> <li>● Tailor health services to meet the specific needs of marginalized populations, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, immigrants, and people with disabilities.</li> <li>● Implement accessible and comprehensive holistic care for mothers before, during, and after pregnancy, prenatal care and postpartum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Train and employ residents in growing holistic healthcare roles, from <a href="#">community health workers</a> to nurses and doctors. (i.e. Doulas)</li> <li>● Advocate for healthcare jobs that offer competitive wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement.</li> <li>● Ensure that healthcare workers have safe, supportive working conditions, especially during public health emergencies.</li> <li>● Collaboration with State and Federal agencies with funding for research to fill gaps needed to provide more holistic support to the region.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Translate translation of educational health materials documents into multiple languages to ensure that all community members, regardless of their language proficiency, can access vital information.</li> <li>● Expand transportation options to ensure all community members, including individuals with disabilities, can easily access healthcare providers and community resources.</li> <li>● Expand broadband access and implement regulations to ensure that all community members, especially those in underserved areas, can connect to digital health resources and participate in telehealth services.</li> <li>● Advocate for and support the creation of regulations to ensure people with special needs can have safe and inclusive spaces within the community that accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities and other groups.</li> <li>● Deploy health navigators to assist individuals, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, in understanding and navigating the healthcare system, insurance options, and accessing necessary services.</li> <li>● Expand and improve infrastructure for community clinics in underserved areas to ensure everyone has access to high-quality primary and preventive care.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on reducing healthcare disparities through <a href="#">targeted preventative strategies</a> in areas with high rates of chronic disease, poverty, and limited access to care.</li> <li>● Implementation of access to recreational areas that reflect the climate, such as (cooling centers, and aquatic centers,) to promote health and well-being in underserved communities.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide mental health support and professional development for holistic healthcare workers, especially those working in high-stress or high-risk environments.</li> <li>● Offer retraining programs to transition into new roles within the health sector for workers displaced by healthcare system changes or agricultural automation.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure that healthcare workers in small clinics or public health settings have job security and protection from displacement</li> <li>● Creation of supportive workplace policies.</li> <li>● Include parameters to accommodate the higher anticipated risk for this industry since COVID</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Climate Change</b>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote the use of energy-efficient technologies and sustainable practices in healthcare facilities.</li> <li>● Implement community-based environmental health programs that address issues like air and water quality.</li> <li>● With this sector, we would seek to expand our positive impact on the environment, as it aligns with sector goals, for holistic community health and the physical environment social determinant of health.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on holistic preventative care including screenings, and health education, to improve long-term public health outcomes.</li> <li>● Promote access to nutritious food and safe recreational spaces.</li> <li>● Expand access to mental health services, particularly in areas with high levels of stress, trauma, or substance abuse.</li> <li>● Build infrastructure to support the implementation of <a href="#">community-based prevention vs community-placed activities</a></li> <li>● Monitoring of air and water quality through existing systems.</li> <li>● Promotion of awareness art, particularly, in public spaces.</li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support Infrastructure for net zero transportation to and from healthcare facilities.</li> <li>● Utilization of Telehealth to support the reduction of emissions needed to travel, when applicable.</li> <li>● Provide resources to help small businesses and healthcare providers transition to low-carbon energy sources.</li> <li>● Integrate <a href="#">climate adaptation strategies</a> into community health and housing initiatives</li> <li>● Build/support infrastructure to identify and address any gaps not monitored by existing systems.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<p>Several Assembly and Senate bills support the holistic community health sector as it pertains to environmental justice, quality of life, and economic growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">AB 617</a>: Focuses on reducing air pollution in disadvantaged communities through community air monitoring and emission reduction programs. It also emphasizes community engagement in environmental decision-making.</li> <li>● AB 74: Provides funding for air quality improvement projects.</li> <li>● SB 552: Ensures safe and affordable drinking water, focusing on disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>● AB 685: Establishes the human right to water, driving efforts to address water contamination.</li> <li>● AB 1550: Ensures climate investments benefit disadvantaged communities - health equity. (i.e. <a href="#">lithium tax</a>)</li> </ul>

**IC Priority Industry 4 - Non-profits and Community-Based Organizations**

Worksheet: Non-Profits and Community-Based Organizations	
Key Questions and Information	<a href="#">Link to Writer's Full Worksheet</a> - includes additional information
1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector	Nonprofits and community-based organizations are organizations that fill services/responses/programmatic and other gaps for communities in need. Organizations also serve as community advocates, capacity-building centers, and community resource hubs.
2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Center for Community Energy and Environmental Justice</a>: CCEEJ is one of 16 centers in the EPA's Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (EJ TCTAC) Program and was established to serve Region 9. CCEEJ is powered by a network of collaborative institutions and organizations across the region.</li> <li>• Imperial County has been investing in pipeline programs to train and grow the nonprofit workforce`</li> </ul>
3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPOs/CBOs serve as quick response organizations in times of need, they commit to responding to needs at a faster pace and have always had roles to play in response efforts.</li> <li>• From 2020 to 2024, established organizations have built asset portfolios for long-term sustainability and focused on intersectional issues that relate to resilience.</li> <li>• The rate of NPOs establishing post-COVID-19 pandemic as a response to service gaps has increased with more active organizations taking leadership since 2020.</li> </ul>
4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends? If your strategies include making affiliated investments explain why that is relevant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Funding restraints</b>; reduced funding opportunities in the foreseeable years due to CA's state budget restraints.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of capacity</b>; a key challenge identified by local organizations is the lack of grant writers, fundraisers, administrators, and other technical skills that advance mission objectives.</li> </ul>
5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gatekeeping opportunities</b>: most government grant programs function on reimbursement terms, which is not a feasible model for many community organizations</li> <li>• <b>Restricting policies</b>; many programs are now implementing new policies to limit allowable expenses, forcing organizations to tap into other funds to fulfill goals or restrict the services they provide. In general, many grants are asking nonprofits to do more with less.</li> </ul>
6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Imperial County Local Workforce Development Plan 2021-2024</a> (list of partnerships with NPOs for services)</li> <li>• <a href="#">CausalQ - El Centro area NPOs</a> (inventory of NPOs in the IV)</li> <li>• <a href="#">State of Nonprofits 2024</a> (NPO challenges re: burnout, talent acquisition)</li> <li>• <a href="#">CNH 2024 Service Report</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">BSF - I Am Able</a></li> </ul>
Steps to Enhance the Sector	
7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <b>proposed investments and strategies</b> support sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased capacity-building opportunities</b>; leverage new strategies by the State to build capacity with local NPOs through programs such as Activate Imperial/BOOST.</li> </ul>

<p>growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Change funding mechanisms at local scale</b>; remove barriers to mission driven work by asking local philanthropy to update funding opportunities for services, social justice, and offer flexibility in disbursements.</li> <li>● <b>Remove/reduce barriers to participation</b>; categorically, one of the first groups local agencies reach out to during emergencies are community organizations. Technical assistance and channels of communication should be in place for quick response activities that don't rely on only traditional organizations to participate.</li> <li>● <b>Create collaborative tables/improve coordination</b>; borrow the model of regional collaborative bodies that leverage individual bodies of work plus experience to bigger pots of funding for greater impacts on the ground.</li> <li>● <b>Helps develop trust and coordination</b>; the nonprofits often must compete for funding and can keep some nonprofits from collaborating with one another. Boosting this sector helps nonprofits get out of the scarcity mentality if there are more resources for everyone.</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to CCEEJ as a capacity building resource will unlock the potential of established and new organizations to other sources of funding that will diversify services they can provide.</li> <li>● Emergence of data from CA Jobs First will be a tool/resource for organizations to provide updated data post-COVID for future funding opportunities.</li> <li>● “<i>Activate Imperial/BOOST</i>” will bridge philanthropic-grantee connections to diversify resources for organizations that have innovative approaches to problem-solving and have successful models for implementation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <i>strategies</i> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Formal education is not a requirement to form an organization.</li> <li>● Flexibility in delivering services, working with clients, training, and hiring practices.</li> <li>● This strategy will elevate local-solution frameworks without relying on agencies which do not have the custom support structures in place to serve the most disadvantaged.</li> <li>● Leverages the understanding among State and Federal programs that the most effective deliverers of messaging and services are nonprofits/CBOs due to their on-the-ground connections.</li> <li>● Helps foster career opportunities and pathways that are currently limited.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What <i>strategies</i> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lifeline of disadvantaged communities as they fill service gaps often due to lack of resources/flexibility from government services.</li> <li>● Elevating organizations to resources/sustainability creates a supportive community ecosystem that addresses short-term and long-term inequities.</li> <li>● Team members in organizations have an opportunity to identify long-term career goals in supportive industries/services, and other practices that create more local professional capacity (behavioral health, public health, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <i>strategies</i> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inequities have created many positions in organizations that serve to fill service gaps, organizations are always in need of additional staff that can mature into professional roles.</li> <li>● Implementing new funding strategies and increased capacity-building will expand organizations' reach and improve career pathways in the sector.</li> <li>● Due to the diverse tasks individuals in organizations must perform, many staff are able to develop a range of skills and knowledge that transfers to multiple career</li> </ul>

	paths.
12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most NPOs/CBOs are founded to serve communities in need which are historically disadvantaged, of color, or another specific community identifier.</li> <li>• Increasing the capacity of organizations led by people of color can be a creative way to enhance community wealth-building pathways through career-pathways and services.</li> <li>• Removing barriers to technical and other skills training through language-access, culturally relevant technical assistance, and developing a workforce with lived-experience.</li> </ul>
13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service gaps are apparent because government funded support programs are not able to address all issues in Imperial County due to historical disinvestment.</li> <li>• Compensation for individuals who may not have traditional education but can share from lived experiences to benefit community organization services</li> <li>• Remove traditional language barriers to employment. Given the proximity of Imperial to the California-Mexico border there is a vital need for Spanish-speaking individuals to be prioritized for hiring and reduce the barriers to employment based on English- level.</li> <li>• Many service organizations focus on band-aid or “charity” focused work like upstream factors and there is a need for organizations that are focused on addressing root causes.</li> </ul>
14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBOs can be a hub for upskilling workers from industry sectors at risk of disappearing, such as agricultural workers from water shortages/transfers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example, the Colorado River multi-state agreement is proposed to result in the intermittent fallowing of agricultural lands for years. While farmers are anticipated to be financially compensated, there is currently no plan to assist, or transition impacted field workers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Starting an organization to serve a specific population and provide direct services is an opportunity to also create new employment/employers in areas of need that qualify for many funding sources, but not enough organizations exist to implement the work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example, the GO Biz immigration programs funds were not used to maximum effect to support vulnerable populations due to bandwidth of local organizations and lack of awareness from agency to potential applicants.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Climate Change</b>	
15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most organizations are sensitive to environmental impacts and are usually the first to adopt strategies that limit/mitigate impacts in materials used/provided to limit their carbon footprint.</li> <li>• An environmental impact assessment of materials most commonly used for direct services can be implemented to reduce impacts of community organizations.</li> </ul>
16. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for employment with benefits such as regular access to health care will have a long-term impact on health outcomes for employees in the sector, many who often work in sensitive environments impacted most by climate change.</li> <li>• Burnout in CBO/NPO spaces is a workplace issue to be considered as the sector gets built out further</li> </ul>

<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the ability of organizations who wish to grow to be able to engage/participate in the just transition space/climate advocacy.</li> <li>• Current funding strategies from State &amp; Federal programs trend towards organizations that can provide communities with pathways to climate-friendly strategies such as weatherization.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations are highly sought after entities by State climate programs to disseminate, implement, or inform climate policy goals, projects, and recommendations. <sup>15 16</sup></li> <li>• <b>Strategy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Environmental organizations create training/upskilling programs to prepare displaced workers for green projects (weatherization, climate resilience centers, cooling centers).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>19. <b>Implementation</b> - <b>What partnerships</b> and <b>resources</b> are <b>needed to implement</b> your strategies and support the enhancement of the priority sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map of priority areas; CBOs can be territorial; context and tact is required to navigate service areas without tripping over each other and/or duplicating efforts.</li> <li>• CBO hub/communication table assessment to identify ways to collaborate and areas of work.</li> <li>• Collaborative funding table: CBOs have identified a regional approach to fundraising where a collaborative of organizations with similarly aligned work can do more together than each in a silo.</li> </ul>

**IC Priority Industry 5 - Infrastructure - Sidewalks, Broadband, Waste Management, and Other Public Works**

<p>Worksheet: Infrastructure - Sidewalks, broadband, waste management, and other public works</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Link to Writer's Full Worksheet</a> - includes additional information</p>
<p><b>Describe the Sector</b></p>	
<p><b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Short Description of the Sector</p>	<p>Installation of infrastructure such as sidewalks, broadband, waste management, and other public works to address the challenges and needs of disadvantaged and disproportionately affected communities.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imperial County has an unemployment rate of 17.3%, a poverty level of 21.2%, higher than the national average of 12.2%, and a low 16.8% have a bachelor's degree or higher, about half the rate in California with 37%<sup>17</sup>. These factors are crucial in developing the infrastructure needed to bring high-paying jobs, develop heavy industrial parks, and attract large manufacturing companies to the county.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Most cities struggle to meet the minimum required infrastructure improvements (sidewalks, waste management, and other essential services) for their residents, putting the industrial infrastructure needed for development in second place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> [AB32 Scoping Plan](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Community Air Protection Program](#)

<sup>17</sup> [2023-24 Annual Report](#), 2024, Imperial County Office of Education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cities and the County are struggling to secure funding to develop the needed infrastructure to promote development due to the lack of skilled personnel to secure funding and implement projects.</li> <li>○ Infrastructure in rural communities is inadequate, lacking sidewalks, street improvements, and other essential services. Some remote rural communities still use septic tanks, and their water plants need repairs and enhancements to improve water quality.</li> <li>● <b>Large Land Base:</b> Imperial County is almost as large as San Diego County in terms of land.</li> <li>● <b>Access to Water:</b> The Colorado River is the only source of water that hydrates and propagates life to this arid desert region. The 80-mile-long All-American Canal delivers water to the southeast corner of the Imperial Valley. Roughly 2.8 million acre-feet of water is used per year to grow the crops and livestock that help feed the nation. Imperial Irrigation District diverts and delivers Colorado River water to nine cities and maintains ten fully operational reservoirs in Imperial.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>● <b>Manufacturing Opportunities and the Border with Mexico:</b> The proximity to the border with Mexico is another asset that has not been fully explored. International manufacturing companies located in Mexicali want to expand their manufacturing business to Imperial County, but the lack of infrastructure prevents them from doing so.</li> <li>● <b>Limits to Accessing Funding:</b> The County of Imperial and its seven cities are experiencing challenges in securing funding to develop basic infrastructure needed by their residents. While the State and federal governments have funding available in the form of grants, the cities and the county lack capacity due to a shortage of qualified personnel for grant management.</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - The potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Better Infrastructure = Economic Growth:</b> There is a need for a plan to identify specific infrastructure needs in each city and county. The plan should identify sectors in the cities and remote areas of the county that need basic services. The plan should also include personnel training to understand the complexity of securing funding and implementing projects. Including nonprofit organizations is crucial in developing this plan as they have more access to the residents living in deplorable conditions that distrust government agencies. Nonprofit organizations can also use their strong community connections to share information about the plan and gather neighborhood-level data on their needs and desires.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends? If your strategies include making affiliated investments explain why that is relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imperial County and all its cities fall under the category of small rural communities that lack the funding to invest in preliminary planning activities and environmental reports. These are needed to become competitive for grant funding to promote infrastructure development.</li> <li>● A closer relationship between the funding agencies and the applicants must be developed to create a strategy that allows Imperial County to succeed with grant applications. This effort may include local government agencies and nonprofit organizations to identify the challenges and opportunities available to secure grant funding.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Historically, much of the funding available at the federal and state levels for infrastructure improvements has been targeted to large entitlement communities, and only small funding allocations have been made to small rural communities.</li> <li>● Another structural impediment to accessing state and federal funds is the multiple requirements and complicated grant applications that make it</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> [Agua y Salud: Water Quality & Environmental Health Community Study](#)

	<p>challenging for cities and counties to apply. Additionally, the local government's lack of personnel and funding to prepare preliminary plans for infrastructure improvement prevents the submission of successful grant applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As previously mentioned, small rural counties and cities lack the funding to invest in preliminary planning activities and environmental reports needed to become competitive for grant funding.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <a href="#">County of Imperial</a> has Specific Plan Area Studies that could help develop a plan to attract funding for infrastructure improvements. The county also has reports prepared by the Workforce and Economic Development Department identifying industries interested in locating their businesses in Imperial County.</li> <li><a href="#">Imperial County Local Workforce Development Plan 2021-2024</a>: This document is intended to be a comprehensive local workforce strategy for Imperial County for Program Years 2021-2024.</li> <li><a href="#">Lithium Valley Baseline Report</a>: This document was drafted to provide a snapshot of Imperial County in preparation for drafting the Lithium Valley Specific Plan. It represents the most recent evaluation of the county's infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies - Proposed investments /strategies</b> support sector growth, businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Southern Border CJF Regional Plan must uplift investments and strategies that support all areas of the county, especially those areas that have been historically underserved. While infrastructure development occurs mainly in cities, the workers are from every point in the county, including remote, unincorporated communities in Imperial County. Transportation and communication are vital to promote safe commuting to work for those living in remote communities. Without these elements, any strategy would fail to be inclusive, promoting unfair treatment to residents living in remote communities who need jobs.</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <b>proposed investments and strategies</b> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many unincorporated communities have similar characteristics, including sporadic, non-compliant sidewalks, minimal bicycle path availability, and minimal transit access.</li> <li>Various road rehabilitation projects are needed to connect the more remote areas of Imperial County to the main city areas.</li> <li><b>Proposed Strategy:</b> Build the workforce within Imperial County Public Works to be able to manage rehabilitation projects internally.</li> <li>Imperial County's water management needs to be upgraded, maintained and managed by the county and cities, including but not limited to canal infrastructure to the public waste management system.</li> <li>Every city and unincorporated area in Imperial County is unique in its community needs and current land use structure that would require individual plans for infrastructure improvements and development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence has shown that built environment factors are important in supporting healthy behavior and reducing rates of chronic diseases and obesity. For example, improved active transportation infrastructure, better accessibility to recreational open space, and the development of more walkable communities enhance opportunities for physical exercise and thereby reduce obesity rates and the chronic diseases associated with physical inactivity.</li> <li><b>Proposed Strategies:</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Invest in infrastructure that supports walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation, making it safer and more convenient for residents to get around.</li> <li>o Expand and improve public transportation options to connect residents to jobs, healthcare, and other essential destinations.</li> <li>o Develop and maintain accessible recreational spaces with facilities that support people's use, such as parks, trails, shade equipment, WIFI connectivity, restrooms, and community centers and gardens, to promote physical activity and social connection.</li> <li>o Design and build communities and neighborhoods prioritizing walkability, with sidewalks, bike lanes, complete streets, and shorter distances between homes, workplaces, and amenities.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● According to the Southern California Association of Government (SCAG), in 2018, 37.5% of Imperial County households own one or no vehicles, while 62.5% of households own two or more cars. Residents in the region depend on a vehicle to travel to work, doctors, and grocery stores, just to name a few. Seven percent (7%) of the population do not own a vehicle.</li> <li>● Most individuals in Imperial County drive alone to work. Very few people use carpooling, public transportation, bicycle, or walking. Furthermore, the average person drives about 30 minutes to get to work, which is higher than the California average.<sup>19</sup></li> <li>● <b>Proposed Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Prioritize infrastructure projects in areas with high concentrations of historically marginalized and disinvested communities. Involve community members from marginalized groups in the planning and designing of infrastructure projects to ensure that their needs and priorities are reflected.</li> <li>o Design and build accessible infrastructure for all residents, including those with disabilities, limited mobility, or language barriers.</li> <li>o Support affordable housing development near public transportation and other essential amenities.</li> <li>o Prioritize local hiring and local suppliers for infrastructure projects, creating job opportunities for residents of marginalized communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - <b>Strategies</b> that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improving public transportation would allow more individuals to participate in the workforce, creating economic opportunities for those households.</li> <li>● Increased opportunities for trades to build accessible infrastructure as outlined above.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imperial County needs to prioritize affordable broadband technology for unserved and underserved areas. Lack of access prevents residents from meeting their basic needs of paying bills, accessing health services, pursuing education, and communications.</li> <li>● <b>Proposed Strategy:</b> Increase the job market for individuals who can do remote work. Key elements could include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Develop training programs that address residents' specific needs and skills gaps in disinvested communities.</li> <li>o Ensure that training materials and instruction are available in multiple languages to accommodate individuals with limited English proficiency.</li> <li>o Offer flexible learning options, such as online courses, evening classes, or weekend workshops, to accommodate individuals with different schedules</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> [2018 Imperial Economic & Demographic Profile](#), 2018, County of Imperial

	<p>and commitments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Provide guidance and career counseling services to help residents identify appropriate educational pathways and training opportunities.</li> <li>o Offer scholarships, grants, or loans to help individuals afford education and training.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">13.9% of Unincorporated Imperial Co.'s households are experiencing poverty</a>, Vs. to 7.9% of households in the SCAG region.</li> <li>• <b>Proposed Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify specific gaps in infrastructure services and prioritize areas for investment.</li> <li>o Allocate resources to address areas with the most significant infrastructure deficits, such as underserved communities, rural areas, and communities with high concentrations of marginalized populations.</li> <li>o Establish performance metrics to track progress towards achieving universal service levels and identify improvement areas.</li> <li>o Conduct equity impact assessments to evaluate infrastructure projects' potential benefits and drawbacks on different regional groups.</li> <li>o Develop equity indicators (such as access and usage, quality of services, environmental impact, economic impact, health, and well-being) to measure the effectiveness of infrastructure projects in addressing disparities and promoting inclusion.</li> <li>o Report on infrastructure outcomes disaggregated by race, ethnicity, income, and other relevant factors to identify areas where additional efforts are needed.</li> <li>o Seek ongoing feedback from marginalized communities to ensure that infrastructure projects are meeting their needs and addressing their concerns.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>14. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - <b>Strategies</b> that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A climate action plan is needed to address adverse health outcomes caused by higher summer temperatures and a lack of infrastructure to provide reasonable access to cooling centers and/or shaded spaces.</li> </ul>
<p>15. <b>Public Health- Strategies</b> to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unincorporated parts of Imperial County are surrounded by and in closer proximity to agriculture fields; therefore, those residents face the brunt of the public health impact (e.g., asthma) of this industry (pesticide and poor air quality exposure).</li> <li>• <b>Salton Seas</b>—The State needs to invest in environmental restoration projects to remediate any adverse health outcomes caused by the depleting water and exposed playa. The communities closest to this area will be the most affected by the high levels of particulate matter impacting air quality.</li> <li>• The built environmental potential influences Imperial County residents having <a href="#">higher rates of obesity (38.9%) and low levels of physical activity (24.8%)</a> compared to other parts of southern California.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - <b>Strategies</b> to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unincorporated parts of Imperial County are especially challenged to adapt to climate change and are environmentally and socially burdened with inadequate transportation growth.</li> <li>• SCAG has envisioned strategically integrating land use and transportation planning to meet better transportation demand through sustainable alternatives like walking, cycling, and transit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</li> </ul>

<p>17. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transportation is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. In California, transportation is the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for more than 40% of the state's total.</li> <li>● Public transportation is a low-emissions alternative. Public transportation produces fewer emissions, per passenger mile, than private vehicles.</li> <li>● Public transportation can reduce the need to travel long distances. Public transportation can help facilitate compact land use, reducing the vehicle miles traveled (VMTs).</li> <li>● Public transportation can reduce a household's carbon footprint.</li> <li>● California is prioritizing next-generation transit, particularly the transition to zero-emission buses and the expansion of rail systems, particularly in communities most affected by pollution.</li> <li>● <b>Proposed Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Utilizing <a href="#">urban greening funds</a> can reduce the urban heat island effect, allowing community residents to be more prepared for heat waves.</li> <li>○ <b>Public Transportation:</b> Increase public transportation to reduce the number of vehicles on the road. Leverage funds for electrified buses and ZEV for public transit.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## San Diego County Priority Industry Sectors

**San Diego Priority Industry 1 - Agriculture + Sustainable Food Systems** (Agriculture, AgTech, Ag tourism, Fisheries, Food Business)

<p>Worskheet: Agriculture + Sustainable Food Systems (Agriculture, AgTech, Ag Tourism, Fisheries, Food Business)</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Link to Full-Length Text</a></p>
<p><b>Describe the Sector</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector</p>	<p>Cultivating an equitable and sustainable agricultural and food system sector in San Diego County through 1) Preserving agricultural land and soils and committing to long-term production, 2) Increasing the viability of local farms, fisheries, and food businesses, 3) Scaling up local, sustainable, and equitable food value chains, 4) Elevating wages and working conditions, and improving career pathways, and 5) Improving community food environments.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that</p>	<p>San Diego County has unique agricultural and food system assets<sup>20</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● San Diego County has an active farm and fishing industry. No county in the United States with a population as large, ~3.34M, has higher combined agricultural and seafood sales, at over \$1.8 billion annually.<sup>21</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> Source for majority of content in this section and other sections come from San Diego County Food Vision 2030 report: <https://sdfoodvision2030.org/>

<sup>21</sup> Many U.S. counties generate either higher agricultural sales or seafood sales. For example, the New Bedford port in Bristol County, Massachusetts has the highest value of fishery landings in the United States (\$451 million in 2018 compared to \$10.8 million in San Diego). Five ports in Alaska ranked in the top 10 for the value of fisheries landings. But no county with a population as large as San Diego County has higher combined agricultural and seafood sales.

<p>support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector. Regional assets include but are not limited to, special skills in the workforce, local services, natural resources, and community spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Diego County’s food system is a major contributor to the regional economy, generating over \$35 billion in economic output.<sup>22</sup></li> <li>• San Diego County has a diverse restaurant and retail industry, generating more than \$17.5 billion in sales.</li> <li>• More than 217,000 San Diegans are employed in the food system, equivalent to ~12% of all jobs in the county.</li> <li>• San Diego County is the twelfth largest county in California by agricultural sales and has the highest number of farms and producers—and the most relatively diverse producers—of any county in the state. Nursery and greenhouse production have generated most sales for several decades, but San Diego County is also the top avocado and fresh tomato producer in the country, and has 545 organic farms, the most of any county.<sup>23</sup></li> <li>• San Diego County has an active fishing community and diverse catch, with California spiny lobster, spot prawn, and red sea urchin generating the most sales. Dozens of other species are also caught by fishermen in San Diego County. The value and total pounds of seafood landings in the region have consistently averaged over 2 million pounds and \$9 million in sales for the past 20 years. Seafood today is 0.6% of total agricultural and seafood sales in the County.<sup>24</sup></li> <li>• The region’s Farm-to-School network is considered a national model, it is the most established network in California.</li> <li>• San Diego County is one of the most diverse regions in the country, with dozens of distinct food communities, featuring the racial and ethnic diversity of our region.</li> <li>• Robust coalition of local, county, and state advocates advancing food justice, health equity, and environmental justice.</li> <li>• Rural communities connected to an urban population could purchase local farm and fisheries products.</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a tremendous opportunity to transform our agricultural and food system into one that is equitable, sustainable, and locally supported. According to the San Diego Regional EDC, San Diego County’s food system is a major contributor to the regional economy, generating over \$35 billion in economic output. Increasing local purchases of products creates a multiplier effect in our local economy through increasing jobs and business growth. Currently, it is estimated that close to 90% of local seafood and local farm products are exported.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to ensure equity for workers and small businesses in disinvested communities through targeted support.</li> <li>• Building an integrated, inclusive, and more diverse local food &amp; agricultural economy provides pathways to opportunities for many communities.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Diego County faces serious challenges that need to be addressed: agriculture sector is shrinking; marketing local food is difficult; support for food businesses is limited; workers struggle to maintain health and viability; and the same neighborhoods continue to be underinvested decade after decade, leading to persistent food insecurity.</li> <li>• Global, national, and state trends all highlight declines in both agriculture land and commercial fisheries landings. Farmers and fishermen in San Diego County are no exception, and the resources they depend on are at risk. Most farms and fisheries in the region are small and generate low sales. In addition to increasing market concentration, there are also several challenges to sustaining food production in the region, including growing development pressure, declining agricultural lands, water stress and increasing costs of water, the changing</li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> The San Diego County Regional Economic Development Corporation performed a baseline 2019 economic impact analysis of San Diego County’s food system.

<sup>23</sup> California Department of Food and Agriculture, State Organic Program, <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/organicprogram/reports.html>.

<sup>24</sup> California Sea Grant, South Coast, <https://caseagrants.ucsd.edu/project/discover-california-commercial-fisheries/regions/south-coast>

	<p>climate, limited succession planning among aging producers, limited business and technical support services, and rising inequality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Small and midsize farmers, fishermen, and food business owners in San Diego County—including food processors, food manufacturers, restaurants, and retailers—struggle to make a living and maintain viable businesses. Their businesses are also at the mercy of ever-changing conditions, such as those caused by climate change and COVID-19.</li> <li>● Food and farm workers in the region receive some of the lowest wages—and the most minimal health care, retirement, and paid leave benefits—of any sector of our economy. The median annual income for farm workers in California is \$7,500 - \$9,999.<sup>25</sup></li> <li>● Shrinking agricultural sector due to development pressure, declining agricultural lands, water stress and increasing costs of water, the changing climate, limited succession planning among aging producers, limited business and technical support services, and rising inequality.</li> <li>● Climate change and increasing cases of natural catastrophes (floods, fires, drought) impacting agricultural and fisheries operations and safety and well-being of workers.</li> <li>● Food and farm workers in the region receive some of the lowest wages—and the most minimal health care, retirement, and paid leave benefits—of any sector of our economy. The median annual income for farm workers in California is \$7,500-\$9,999.<sup>26</sup></li> <li>● Historically redlined neighborhoods continue to be underinvested decade after decade, leading to persistent food insecurity, chronic disease, and wealth gaps.</li> <li>● As estimated by the San Diego Hunger Coalition, approximately 1 in 3 San Diegans were experiencing nutrition insecurity as of November 2020. Black, Indigenous, and people of color have been disproportionately impacted.</li> <li>● Communities of color across our region have limited access to healthy food and limited agency over their food environments. As a result, they experience significant nutritional inequities and diet-related health disparities.</li> <li>● And finally, our culture of wasting food and resources is having a dramatic impact on our environment. Food waste is the third largest source of landfilled waste in San Diego County.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Federal:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ USDA Farm Bill - a multiyear law that Congress passes every five years to outline US agricultural and food policies. It governs a range of programs, including disaster assistance, crop insurance, conservation, and international trade.</li> <li>○ Economic Development Administration funding for innovative industry growth and workforce development in the state of California - Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. § 3722).</li> <li>○ Federal policies related to decarbonization definitions and goals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● County:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Food Justice Community Plan - unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors, currently in development.</li> <li>○ Regional Decarbonization Framework.</li> <li>○ Microenterprise home kitchens (MEHKOs).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● State:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SB 946 - Sidewalk vendors.</li> <li>○ AB 626 - Microenterprise home kitchens (MEHKOs).</li> <li>○ AB 32 - SB 1383 organics recycling mandate, agricultural programs.</li> <li>○ Labor policies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>25</sup> Coming out of the Dark: Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworker Communities in San Diego County, Konane M. Martinez, Ph.D., Anna Hoff, Arcela Núñez-Alvarez, Ph.D (2009)

<sup>26</sup> Coming out of the Dark: Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworker Communities in San Diego County, Konane M. Martinez, Ph.D., Anna Hoff, Arcela Núñez-Alvarez, Ph.D (2009)

<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego County Food Vision 2030</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Exploring Community Wealth Building</a> in SDC's Food System, SDFSA (2021)</li> <li>● <a href="#">Cultivating Agricultural Livelihoods</a>, San Diego County Aglivelihoods Taskforce (2023)</li> <li>● <a href="#">Coming out of the Dark</a>: Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworker Communities in San Diego County</li> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego Firestorm 2007 Report</a>: Fire Impact on Farmworkers &amp; Migrant Communities in North County</li> <li>● <a href="#">City of Escondido Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">County of San Diego Crop Statistics Report</a> (2022)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<p>Strategies for investing in Local Agriculture &amp; Equitable and Sustainable Food Systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preserve Agricultural Land and Soils and Commit to Long-term Production.</li> <li>● Increase the Viability of Local Farms, Fisheries, and Food Businesses.</li> <li>● Scale Up Local, Sustainable, and Equitable Food Value Chains.</li> <li>● Elevate Wages and Working Conditions and Improve Career Pathways.</li> <li>● Improve Community Food Environments.</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> help to connect to local innovation? This includes local resources, the movement of new technologies to market, or incubation of early-stage businesses, etc?</p>	<p>Examples of creative and innovative strategies in agriculture and fisheries to support with viability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adopt climate-smart and traditional ecological practices.</li> <li>● Invest in indoor production (hydroponics and aquaponics).</li> <li>● Invest in aquaculture.</li> <li>● Identify niche markets.</li> <li>● Adopt community supported models.</li> <li>● Expand agritourism.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <i>strategies</i> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The agricultural and food system, healthy food access, food and farm labor, and land and business ownership are all divided along racial and ethnic lines. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) experience the highest rates of poverty, food insecurity, and diet-related illness.</li> <li>● Food and farm workers—many of whom are people of color—generally receive low wages, have few labor protections, and work under compromised conditions on a regular basis. BIPOC communities also experience significant disparities in farm, business, and land ownership, dramatically limiting opportunities for community wealth building, power, and leadership.</li> <li>● <i>Access to Land and Land Tenure</i>: BIPOC, socially disadvantaged, young, and beginning farmers experience significant disparities finding and affording quality farmland and securing land tenure, dramatically limiting opportunities for community wealth building, power, and</li> </ul>

leadership. For example, Black Americans make up 12.3% of the U.S. population but only 1.4% of farmers on 0.5% of land in agriculture. The number of Black farmers is estimated to have peaked in the 1910s. Black farmers only received 0.1% (\$20.8 million) of \$26 billion allocated via the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. In response, there is growing awareness and energy behind the movement from disparity to parity for BIPOC and socially disadvantaged producers. In 2017, the state of California passed the Farmer Equity Act since “California’s farmers and ranchers are made up of a diverse group of people, and not all have historically had access to resources and information in order to successfully run their businesses.” Recommendations from the Farmer Equity Act include greater education and outreach, materials translated into multiple languages, greater BIPOC representation on boards, and grant funding support.

- **Farm, Fishery, and Food Business Viability:** “Achieving profitability/making a living” was the top challenge cited by farms, fisheries, and food businesses through Food Vision 2030 interviews and surveys. Overcoming this challenge requires addressing a daunting mix of everyday issues like navigating permits, finding workers, and accessing markets that are intertwined with an increasingly concentrated marketplace that makes it difficult to compete and achieve profitability. Most San Diego County farms, fisheries, and food businesses are small or midsize in terms of scale, sales, or employment. For example, 84.7% of farms in San Diego County had sales of less than \$50,000 in 2017 and these farms generated only 4.3% of total sales. Farms with sales above \$500,000 accounted for 4.8% of farms but 86.5% of sales. In other words, the largest farms account for most sales while smaller farms have access to only a small fraction of the sales. Nationally, USDA maps show that small farms with low sales are disproportionately concentrated in regions with Indigenous, Black, and Hispanic/Latinx producers.
- **Health Outcomes:** Public health research documents disparities in diet quality by race/ethnicity, education level, income, and use of food assistance programs in the United States. Differences in diet quality contribute to disparities in cardiovascular disease (the leading cause of death), obesity, Type II diabetes, and other diet-related problems among BIPOC and low-income Americans. For example, in San Diego County, Indigenous (52.71%) and Black (50.14%) San Diegans have the highest rates of death from Type II diabetes. Body mass index trends in San Diego County also show disparities: About 54% of Indigenous adults are obese, 36% of Blacks, 33% of Hispanic/Latinx, 23% of Whites, and 20% of Asians. The California Healthy Places Index aggregates many community indicators—including exposure to air pollution and access to health care—to paint a picture of disparities stretching from the City of San Diego down to the border, as well as rural areas.
- **Food Insecurity:** About 26 million Americans are food insecure today. The San Diego Hunger Coalition estimates that about 616,000 San Diegans were food insecure prior to the pandemic. That number nearly doubled, to 1,230,000 San Diegans in May 2020, and was down to a little more than 1 million in August 2020. Food insecurity is concentrated in low income and BIPOC communities, including in southeastern neighborhoods in the City of San Diego, an area that was redlined nearly 90 years ago.
- **Access to Healthy Food:** Access to healthy food varies by zip code—BIPOC and other historically marginalized neighborhoods experience disproportionately poor access to essential goods and services, including food. San Diego County’s 18 Indigenous reservations have very limited access to grocery stores and restaurants, and several southeastern neighborhoods of the City of San Diego are characterized as “low income, low access.”
- **Wages and Career Opportunities:** Most food system workers are employed in food services (i.e., restaurants, fast food, stores) or agricultural labor, are BIPOC and women, receive extraordinarily low wages, have few labor protections, and work under challenging circumstances on a regular basis. Analyzing wage gaps by race and ethnicity shows that BIPOC San Diegans are much more likely than White San Diegans to work in low-wage occupations, including many food system jobs.
- **Highlight of Strategies:**
  - Targeting support and investment for local farms, ranches, fisheries, food businesses, and workers—especially those owned by Indigenous, Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern, North African, Pacific Islander, and other people of color—as well as the

	<p>relationships and infrastructure needed to produce, store, aggregate, process, distribute, and market local food and agriculture products in our region will foster greater community wealth and create a more resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create de-risked investment and lending opportunities to disadvantaged community entrepreneurs to increase their access to angel funding, startup capital and low-interest loans.</li> <li>○ Create templates for local government agencies to adopt procurement incentives to purchase from under-represented business owners.</li> <li>○ Building pathways for community wealth-building and ownership through support of models such as worker-owned businesses, cooperatives, community land trusts, and cooperative housing creates opportunities to create sustainable and equitable solutions for different models of ownership.</li> <li>○ Invest in community food projects and food sovereignty initiatives in communities of color.</li> <li>○ Uplift wages and working conditions for workers and improve career pathways.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<p>To create Family Sustaining Jobs, the sector must focus on elevating wages, improving working Conditions, and creating career pathways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set livable minimum wages.</li> <li>2. Provide guaranteed basic income.</li> <li>3. Increase labor protections, benefits, and occupational protections.</li> <li>4. Protect the legal status of immigrants and undocumented individuals and create pathways to citizenship.</li> <li>5. Ensure access to safe &amp; affordable housing and adequate healthcare.</li> <li>6. Promote worker ownership.</li> <li>7. Create pathways for career advancement and opportunities.</li> </ol>
<p>11. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<p>In addition to strategies above to support the viability and well-being of workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target support and investment for local farms, ranches, fisheries, food businesses, and workers—especially those owned by Indigenous, Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern, North African, Pacific Islander, and other people of color.</li> <li>2. Build pathways for community wealth-building and ownership through support of models such as worker-owned businesses, cooperatives, community land trusts, and cooperative housing.</li> <li>3. Invest in community food projects and food sovereignty initiatives in communities of color.</li> </ol>
<p>12. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>? This includes workers potentially impacted by at-risk industries, preventing the displacement of incumbent workers, or replacing high-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Across supply chains, agricultural and food system workers—and their working conditions—are often hidden as they labor in fields, on waterways, in processing facilities, and in the backs of restaurants and stores. They receive some of the lowest wages—and the most minimal health care, retirement, and paid leave benefits—of any sector of our economy. As a result, agricultural and food system workers disproportionately depend on public benefits like Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). They also experience some of the highest fatal injury rates of any occupation: Commercial fishing reports the highest fatal injury rate in the country, with truck driving and agricultural labor seventh and ninth highest, respectively.</li> <li>● Most agricultural and food system workers are people of color and immigrants and receive significantly lower wages than those working in White-dominated occupations. In 2019, food preparation and service occupations had the lowest median earnings (\$18,822) of any occupation in San Diego County. Since most San Diego County food system workers are Hispanic/Latinx (47%), they are disproportionately impacted by food insecurity, nutrition insecurity, housing insecurity, and other challenges associated with low wages and incomes.</li> </ul>

<p>road jobs with low-quality jobs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the United States, agricultural and food system workers face the highest amount of labor law violations, specifically associated with wage theft (i.e., receiving wages below minimum wage; not receiving overtime pay). Agricultural and food system workers also lack union representation, and San Diego as a region lacks adequate labor law and regulatory enforcement.</li> <li>● Sub-strategies support: Setting livable minimum wages, providing guaranteed basic income, increasing labor protections and benefits, protecting the legal status of immigrants and undocumented individuals and creating pathways to citizenship, ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, creating access to adequate and affordable healthcare, promoting worker ownership models, and developing pathways for career advancement and opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>13. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Globally, food systems are a major driver of climate change. They generate approximately 21–37% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the cultivation of crops and livestock, land use changes, energy use along supply chains, and waste. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is the primary greenhouse gas emitted by human activities, but two other gases have higher global warming potentials: Methane has 28-36 times the heating potential of CO<sub>2</sub>, while nitrous oxide has 265-298 times the heating potential. Food systems are the largest contributors of methane and nitrous oxide emissions since they rely on fossil fuels, synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, monoculture farming, and produce a significant amount of waste.</li> <li>● Investing in a local, equitable, and sustainable agricultural and food system is the solution to fighting climate change. We must reimagine our relationship with nature and land. We must pursue opportunities to adapt and invest in sustainable agriculture, carbon sequestration, traditional ecological practices, seasonal and plant-rich diets, zero waste initiatives, indoor food production, community-based food systems, and more to create a more sustainable food system in San Diego County.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The San Diego inequitable food system is a public health issue. Access to healthy food varies by zip code—BIPOC and other historically marginalized neighborhoods experience disproportionately poor access to essential goods and services, including food. San Diego County’s 18 Indigenous reservations have very limited access to grocery stores and restaurants, and several neighborhoods in southeastern neighborhoods of the City of San Diego are characterized as “low income, low access.”</li> <li>● Public health research documents disparities in diet quality by race/ethnicity, education level, income, and use of food assistance programs in the United States. Differences in diet quality contribute to disparities in cardiovascular disease (the leading cause of death), obesity, Type II diabetes, and other diet-related problems among BIPOC and low-income Americans. For example, in San Diego County, Indigenous (52.71%) and Black (50.14%) San Diegans have the highest rates of death from Type II diabetes. Body mass index trends in San Diego County also show disparities: About 54% of Indigenous adults are obese, 36% of Blacks, 33% of Hispanic/Latinx, 23% of Whites, and 20% of Asians. The California Healthy Places Index aggregates many community indicators—including exposure to air pollution and access to health care—to paint a picture of disparities stretching from the City of San Diego down to the border, as well as rural areas.</li> <li>● The following strategy should be prioritized in neighborhoods that have historically suffered from public health and environmental issues:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve Community Food Environments.</li> <li>○ Expand land use policies and economic development incentives to encourage local food production and healthy food retail.</li> <li>○ Invest in community food projects and food sovereignty initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>15. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agriculture and food systems are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate. As one California farmer wrote in the New York Times, “We don’t need to read the science—</li> </ul>

<p>do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<p>we're living it.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The most recent U.S. National Climate Assessment warns: “Rising temperatures, extreme heat, drought, wildfire on rangelands, and heavy downpours are expected to increasingly disrupt agricultural productivity in the United States. Expected increases in challenges to livestock health, declines in crop yields and quality, and changes in extreme events in the United States and abroad threaten rural livelihoods, sustainable food security, and price stability.”<sup>27</sup></li> <li>● The assessment for ocean and marine resources is equally dire: “The Nation’s valuable ocean ecosystems are being disrupted by increasing global temperatures through the loss of iconic and highly valued habitats and changes in species composition. Ecosystem disruption will intensify as ocean warming, acidification, deoxygenation, and other aspects of climate change increase...Marine fisheries and fishing communities are at high risk from climate-driven changes in distribution, timing, and productivity of fishing-related species.”<sup>28</sup></li> <li>● Mitigating against the anticipated impacts of climate change require:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase labor protections, benefits, and occupational protections.</li> <li>○ Ensure access to safe &amp; affordable housing and adequate healthcare.</li> <li>○ Expand climate-smart &amp; traditional ecological practices.</li> <li>○ Invest in aggregation, processing, storage, distribution, marketing infrastructure, producer collaboratives, and food hubs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● California Climate Adaptation Strategy             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Goal A: Increase the pace and scale of nature-based climate solutions.</li> <li>○ Goal B: Improve understanding of climate impacts on California’s communities, including what drives vulnerability.</li> <li>○ Goal C: Build resilience in climate vulnerable communities through state programs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● California Climate Scoping Plan (AB32)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The food system and agriculture strategies within this plan are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance carbon sequestration, and promote sustainability in the state’s agricultural sector, including:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Climate Smart Agriculture, Sustainable Land Management, Water Efficiency and Management, Support for Innovation and Research, Farmer and Rancher Assistance Programs, Integration with Broader Climate Goals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ These strategies aim to address the challenges posed by climate change while supporting the agricultural sector’s ability to thrive in a changing environment. The Scoping Plan emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that includes both mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of California’s food systems and agriculture.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ San Diego County is not flagged as a region that requires a Groundwater Sustainability Plan. However, drought and water issues remain a top issue for the viability of agriculture and the food system in our region.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● California’s 30x30 Initiative             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements: “Conservation easements provide financial incentives to private landowners aiming to conserve wetlands, agricultural lands, grasslands, forests, and other critical ecosystems throughout California. Currently, demand</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>27</sup> Gowda, P., J.L. Steiner, C. Olson, M. Boggess, T. Farrigan, and M.A. Grusak, 2018: Agriculture and Rural Communities. In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II* [Reidmiller, D.R., C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock, and B.C. Stewart (eds.)]. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 391–437. doi: 10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH10.

<sup>28</sup> Pershing, A.J., R.B. Griffis, E.B. Jewett, C.T. Armstrong, J.F. Bruno, D.S. Busch, A.C. Haynie, S.A. Siedlecki, and D. Tommasi, 2018: Oceans and Marine Resources. In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II* [Reidmiller, D.R., C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock, and B.C. Stewart (eds.)]. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 353–390. doi: 10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH9.

	<p>for conservation easements outstrips available funding and the technical review process needed for recording easements can be complex and time consuming. Addressing these challenges is important to expand and accelerate private land conservation"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Natural &amp; Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy: "Conserve and manage lands and coastal waters to remove and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, consistent with the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy &amp; Scoping Plan."</li> <li>○ Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship: "6.11 Incentivize restoration and enhancement of working lands that improve drought resilience and protect California’s food security through conservation easements and improved management."</li> <li>○ Core commitments: "Sustain our economic prosperity, clean energy resources, and food supply."             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ "Support programs that enhance the sustainability of our food systems, including improvements to soil health, water quality, and protections for pollinators."</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Implementation**

<p><b>17. Implementation - What partnerships and resources are needed to implement your strategies and support the enhancement of the priority sector? Explain the Collaborative's and/or other partners' roles in the management and governance of the strategy.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Partnerships w/ Policymakers &amp; Funders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Government Agencies</i>: It is critical for government agencies at multiple levels (County, Cities, State, and Federal) to commit to the goal of cultivating an equitable and sustainable agricultural and food system sector by adopting policies, creating a supportive environment, and investing in this sector.</li> <li>○ <i>Philanthropy</i>: Visionary and long-term philanthropic support is critical to address needs, solutions, and trailblazing progressive action.</li> <li>○ Robust branding, marketing and social media and outreach strategy to ensure regular and lasting community and partner engagement.</li> <li>○ Seed funding for a revolving loan fund for strategies related to capital access; collaboration with trust lending and financing institutions such as Mission Driven Capital or Accessity.</li> <li>○ University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR), regional partnership through The Vine network to leverage federal funding for state implementation of best practices for workforce development, disinvested community engagement, innovation, and technology adoption.</li> <li>○ San Diego World Trade Center to promote cross-border and international learning for best practices adoption and export market expansion.</li> <li>○ City of Escondido’s <a href="#">AgX Initiative</a> which brings together farmers, growers, packers, food distributors, academics, and entrepreneurs to discuss advancements in the Agriculture and AgTech space.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Centering Communities Most Impacted</b> - Following priority communities are most impacted in the agricultural and food system sector nationally, as well as in our region. There is a critical need to center their voices, elevate the leadership of those with “power of proximity” around the issues on the ground, and partner together in changemaking.</li> <li>● <b>Networked Nonprofits/ Producer Cooperatives</b> - Networked nonprofits/producer cooperatives working to support this field and bring groups together can be leveraged for regional changemaking work.</li> </ul>
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**San Diego Priority Industry 2 - Energy** (Energy Democracy, Renewable Energy Generation, Energy Transmission & Distribution, Cleantech Manufacturing, New Technologies, Sustainable Natural Resources)

Worksheet: Energy - Energy Democracy, Renewable Energy Generation, Energy Transmission & Distribution, Cleantech, New Technologies, & Sustainable Natural Resources

**Key Questions**

[Link](#) to Writer’s Full Worksheet - includes additional information

and Information	
<b>Describe the Sector</b>	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b></p>	<p>The energy industry sector in San Diego is focused on clean and renewable energy solutions, grid resilience, energy storage, clean transportation and startup activation to promote sustainable practices that meet the region's growing energy needs while reducing environmental impact and supporting equitable economic growth. This sector is pivotal in driving the transition to a low-carbon economy, fostering innovation, and creating family-sustaining jobs in the region. The Cleantech industry in San Diego produces \$9.9B in economic impact, through \$5.8 Billion direct impact, \$2.1 Billion in indirect impact, and \$2B in induced impact. San Diego is home to more than 925 cleantech companies, supporting 11,772 jobs with average annual earnings per job of \$124,000. Additionally, there are ~9,744 solar installation jobs, which brings the total for cleantech and solar supported jobs to ~21,516 direct jobs, 9,322 indirect jobs, and 10,823 induced jobs, for a total of 41,663 jobs supported by Cleantech and Solar.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Climate Action Plans</b> - Seventeen cities in San Diego County have adopted CAPs; the County is finalizing its CAP.</li> <li>● <b>San Diego Gas &amp; Electric</b> - SDG&amp;E has been energizing the region for over 140 years supporting the shift to electric vehicles, contracting with diverse local suppliers, and investing in K-12 education and workforce training.</li> <li>● <b>Community Choice Aggregators</b> - San Diego has 2 CCAs - Clean Energy Alliance and SD Community Power</li> <li>● <b>General Atomics DIII-D Fusion Facility</b>: A DOE plasma physics and fusion research facility that hosts researchers from more than 100 institutions worldwide.</li> <li>● <b>General Dynamics NASSCO</b>: NASSCO is the only major shipyard on the west coast and is launching a new effort to build installation and support ships to support 4.6GW of offshore wind projects.</li> <li>● <b>Port of San Diego</b>: The Port of San Diego is a critical asset for the import and export of energy-related goods, including renewable energy components and technologies.</li> <li>● <b>Southern CA Energy Innovation Network</b> - Cleantech accelerator supporting companies in San Diego.</li> <li>● <b>Clean Transportation</b> - San Diego has 131,407 light-duty EVs on the road, supported by 8,600+ charging stations.</li> <li>● <b>Expertise in Renewable Energy</b>: San Diego County is home to a growing workforce with expertise in renewable energy technologies, driven by labor unions, universities, community colleges and the K12 system.</li> <li>● <b>Natural Resources</b>: San Diego County boasts significant solar and wind (including offshore) resources, making it an ideal location for expanding renewable energy projects. San Diego ranks #2 in the nation for solar deployment.</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Expansion of Renewable Energy Projects</b>:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Utility-Scale Solar and Wind: These projects create jobs in construction, maintenance, and operations while attracting investments from renewable energy companies, contributing to economic diversification.</li> <li>○ Microgrid and Distributed Energy Resources (DER): Microgrids and DER increase energy independence for communities, reduce strain on the grid, and provide backup power during emergencies, enhancing resilience.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Workforce Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training and Certification Programs: Expanding training programs focused on renewable energy installation, energy efficiency, and EV infrastructure advance the skilled workforce. Partnerships with education, labor unions, and employers to develop new certification programs, providing pathways to high-paying, family-sustaining jobs.</li> <li>○ Energy Workforce Diversity: Targeted recruitment and tailored training for underrepresented groups can ensure equitable access to opportunities in the energy sector, fostering a more</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>resilient?</p>	<p>diverse and inclusive workforce. This can include specific initiatives for women, minorities, disabled and veterans to enter and advance in the energy industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Innovation and Technological Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Smart Grid and Energy Storage Solutions: San Diego is a leader in innovation for smart grid technologies and advanced energy storage solutions. Integrating these innovations can optimize energy distribution, improve grid reliability, and accommodate the increasing share of renewable energy. The growth of these technologies will attract tech companies, startups, upcycling, and research institutions, further diversifying the economy.</li> <li>○ Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Expansion: As the demand for EVs rises, EV charging infrastructure must be expanded, which creates new jobs in construction, installation, and maintenance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Resilience Planning and Infrastructure Upgrades</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Integrate energy resilience into broader infrastructure upgrades. Investing in resilient infrastructure, such as fire and flood resilient power systems, fire and flood ecosystem management, and transportation infrastructure, can protect the local economy from disruptions and make the region more adaptable to future challenges.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Energy, Environment, &amp; Economics</b> - Poor environmental quality is strongly correlated with economic disadvantage, indicating regional responsibility for social equity in addition to environmental justice. Tackling climate change has created an opportunity for San Diego to do well for our environment while also boosting our economy. Strategies for supporting this industry are intended to promote job creation through capital improvements and corresponding research, development and innovation. These jobs are primarily in high growth “green job” or “clean tech” with corresponding well-paying wages. A natural synergy exists between climate action and equity. Equity is fundamental for inclusive economic growth and development because our region and economy improve when everyone does better. When a San Diegan with a low or moderate income has better access to affordable transportation or lower utility bills, the money they save can be dedicated to other necessities.</li> <li>● <b>California Public Utility Commission Net Metering 3.0</b> - NEM 3.0 is a policy update to the state's net metering program, which governs how rooftop solar customers are compensated for the excess electricity they generate and send back to the grid. NEM 3.0 introduced several significant changes, including reduced compensation rates, time-of-use rates, grid participation charge, and emphasizes energy storage. NEM 3.0 has significantly impacted the residential solar industry, residential solar sales are down ~80% year over year, interconnection applications are down ~75% year over year, 22% of solar jobs have been lost, and 59% of the state’s residential solar and storage contractors expect layoffs. However, battery deployments have increased, there is now a 60% battery attachment rate to residential solar projects, compared to only 10% before 2023.</li> <li>● <b>Electrification and Decarbonization</b> - The growing adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) requires an expansion of EV charging infrastructure. Investments in EV infrastructure supports the transition to a low-carbon economy and create new business opportunities within the sector. Decarbonization of buildings through the adoption of electric heating, cooling, and cooking systems reduces reliance on natural gas.</li> <li>● <b>Advances in Energy Storage and Smart Grid Technologies</b> - The integration of energy storage technologies is crucial for balancing renewable energy supply and demand. San Diego’s energy sector is investing in large-scale battery storage projects and smart grid technologies that enhance grid reliability and resilience. The trend towards smarter, more resilient grid systems is being addressed through the implementation of advanced grid management tools, such as real-time data analytics and automated demand response systems. These investments are relevant as they enable better integration of renewable energy sources, improve energy efficiency, and reduce operational costs.</li> <li>● <b>Climate Change Mitigation and Resilience</b> - With climate change increasing the frequency of extreme weather events, there is a growing need for building climate-resilient energy infrastructure. San Diego’s energy sector is investing in infrastructure that can withstand wildfires, high winds, heatwaves, and flooding, minimizing energy supply disruptions during emergencies.</li> </ul>

	<p>To include touch fire preventative measures led by indigenous firefighters and cultural preservationists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Engagement and Equity</b> - The energy sector must ensure that all communities, particularly those historically marginalized, have equitable access to clean energy solutions. The sector is addressing this by implementing programs that target disinvested communities, such as community-owned solar projects and energy efficiency upgrades for low-income households. Investments in these areas are important because they contribute to social equity and community empowerment while driving the overall growth of the energy sector. Increased collaboration between energy companies, local governments, tribal governments, and community organizations creates more inclusive energy policies and projects that reflect the needs and priorities of diverse communities, ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are shared broadly across the region.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>CA Renewable Portfolio Standard</b> - Requires utilities to procure 60% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030, with a long-term goal of 100% clean energy by 2045.</li> <li>● <b>CA Climate Action Plan</b>: Outlines the strategy for reducing GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030.</li> <li>● <b>CA Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24)</b> - Mandates energy efficiency standards for new buildings and major renovations, requiring the integration of energy-efficient technologies and on-site renewable generation.</li> <li>● <b>CA Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)</b> - The LCFS program requires a reduction in the carbon intensity of transportation fuels, encouraging the use of cleaner alternatives like electricity and hydrogen. This policy drives investment in electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and clean fuel technologies in San Diego County.</li> <li>● <b>CA Advanced Clean Cars Program</b> - Require automakers to produce a certain percentage of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), until combustion engines are phased out completely, driving demand for EV charging.</li> <li>● <b>Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC) for Renewable Energy</b> - Tax credit for the installation of renewable energy systems, which has been instrumental in driving renewable energy projects by improving financial viability.</li> <li>● <b>Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act</b> - Allocate funding for energy and utility infrastructure improvements and support for consumer adoption of energy efficiency technologies.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego Association of Governments - Regional Energy Strategy (SDRES)</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego County Climate Action Plan</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">SDG&amp;E Integrated Resource Plan</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego Community Power Implementation Plan</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego Regional EDC - Cleantech Fact Sheet</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/wo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Investment in Renewable Energy Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Energy Storage: Investing in utility scale storage creates demand for local construction companies, equipment suppliers, and maintenance services, which supports businesses in the value chain and creates jobs in engineering, logistics, and project management.</li> <li>○ Microgrid Development: Supporting microgrid projects can stimulate the growth of local electrical contractors, technology providers, and energy management services. This strategy enhances energy resilience while creating new market opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the energy sector.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Expansion of Energy Efficiency Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Building Retrofit Initiatives: Funding programs to retrofit existing buildings with energy-efficient technologies (e.g., LED lighting, HVAC systems, insulation) directly benefits local contractors,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<p>manufacturers, and suppliers of energy-efficient products. This strategy also creates jobs in construction, energy auditing, and facilities management, contributing to workforce development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Residential Energy Efficiency Upgrades: Targeting residential buildings for energy efficiency improvements, particularly in low-income and disinvested communities, can stimulate the local economy by engaging small businesses that specialize in home energy audits, retrofits, and weatherization. These programs provide family-sustaining jobs and support small businesses throughout the value chain.</li> <li>● <b>Workforce Development and Training Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Green Jobs Training: Establishing training programs focused on renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency, and smart grid systems ensures a steady pipeline of skilled workers ready to meet the demands of a growing energy sector. These programs can be tailored to support workers transitioning from at-risk industries (e.g., fossil fuels) to green jobs, thereby strengthening the overall workforce and supporting sector growth.</li> <li>○ Apprenticeship Programs: Expanding apprenticeship programs in partnership with labor unions, community colleges, and trade schools can provide hands-on training for electricians, solar installers, and technicians. This strategy helps build a local workforce equipped to handle the growing demands of the energy sector and supports equitable access to career opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Development of Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EV Charging Station Deployment: Investing in the widespread deployment of EV charging stations across San Diego County creates opportunities for businesses involved in electrical installation, network management, and hardware manufacturing. This strategy supports the growth of the clean transportation sector and drives demand for skilled workers in EV infrastructure development.</li> <li>○ Fleet Electrification Programs: Supporting the electrification of public and private vehicle fleets (e.g., buses, delivery trucks) can stimulate demand for local businesses that provide EVs, charging solutions, and maintenance services. This strategy not only reduces emissions but also strengthens the supply chain by engaging local manufacturers, dealerships, and service providers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Support for Clean Technology Innovation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CleanTech Incubators and Accelerators: Investing in incubators and accelerators that support clean energy startups can foster innovation in renewable energy technologies, energy storage, and grid management solutions. These initiatives help emerging companies scale their operations, creating new jobs and contributing to the diversification of the energy sector.</li> <li>○ Public-Private Partnerships: Encouraging collaboration between government entities, academic institutions, and private companies to develop and deploy new clean energy technologies can lead to breakthroughs that benefit the entire sector. These partnerships support research and development, pilot projects, and commercialization efforts, driving sector growth and creating high-tech jobs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Community-Based Renewable Energy Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community Solar Programs: Community solar projects that allow multiple households or businesses to share the benefits of a single solar array can increase access to renewable energy for those who cannot install solar panels on their own properties. These projects engage local developers, solar installers, and maintenance providers, contributing to the growth of the renewable energy value chain.</li> <li>○ Energy Cooperatives: Establishing energy cooperatives where communities collectively invest in and manage local renewable energy resources can empower residents, create local jobs, and ensure that the economic benefits of clean energy stay within the community. This strategy promotes social equity while supporting sector growth at the grassroots level.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation - How do proposed investments and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Collaborative Research Projects:</b> Invest in partnerships with local Universities to conduct cutting-edge research on renewable energy technologies, energy storage solutions, and smart grid innovations. These collaborations can lead to the development of new technologies that can be rapidly commercialized.</li> <li>● <b>Technology Transfer Programs:</b> Support technology transfer programs that help bring</li> </ul>

<p><b>strategies</b> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<p>innovations from university labs to the market. This can involve providing funding for prototype development, pilot testing, and commercialization of promising energy technologies, such as advanced battery systems or new solar panel materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Incubator &amp; Accelerator Programs:</b> Develop and support programs that help scale up energy-focused startups.</li> <li>● <b>Invest in Pilot Programs for Emerging Technologies:</b> Fund demonstration projects that test emerging energy technologies.</li> <li>● <b>Develop Living Labs:</b> Establish “living labs” where new energy technologies can be tested in real-world environments.</li> <li>● <b>Support Advanced Manufacturing Facilities:</b> Invest in advanced manufacturing facilities that can produce components for new energy technologies, these facilities can create local jobs and strengthen the regional supply chain for energy technologies.</li> <li>● <b>Enhance Local Supply Chain Development:</b> Support initiatives that connect local manufacturers and suppliers with innovative energy startups. This can help ensure that new technologies are developed and produced locally, boosting the regional economy and reducing reliance on imported components.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Job Training and Employment Programs</b> - Establish job training initiatives focused on equipping residents of disinvested communities with skills needed for employment in the selected target sector. This could include partnerships with local educational institutions and businesses to provide certifications, apprenticeships, and direct job placements.</li> <li>● <b>Local Hiring Requirements</b> - Implement policies that prioritize hiring residents from disinvested communities for projects within the target sector. This approach provides immediate employment opportunities and stimulates local economic growth.</li> <li>● <b>Small Business Support</b> - Provide grants, low-interest loans, and services to local entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly those in disinvested areas, to help them contract with large organizations.</li> <li>● <b>Educational Partnerships and STEM Programs</b> - Partner with local schools and educational institutions to promote STEM education and career pathways in the target sector, encouraging youth from disinvested communities to pursue relevant careers.</li> <li>● <b>Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms</b> - Establish regular community engagement sessions to ensure that the voices of disinvested communities are heard and that their feedback is incorporated into ongoing projects and strategies.</li> <li>● <b>Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness</b> - Develop outreach and communication strategies that are culturally and linguistically tailored to the diverse populations within disinvested communities, ensuring that they have equal access to information and opportunities related to the target sector.</li> <li>● <b>Alignment with Community Priorities:</b> The strategy focuses on sectors that align with the specific economic, social, and environmental priorities identified by disinvested communities.</li> <li>● <b>Equity-Focused Economic Development:</b> The strategy was designed to address economic inequities by prioritizing sectors that provide meaningful opportunities for wealth creation and economic stability for marginalized and underserved populations.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Solar Programs:</b> Develop community solar initiatives that allow residents, especially those who cannot install solar panels on their homes (e.g., renters, low-income families), to access renewable energy.</li> <li>● <b>Energy Efficiency Retrofits:</b> Provide grants or low-cost loans to homeowners and renters in disinvested communities for energy efficiency upgrades to reduce energy costs and improve home comfort.</li> <li>● <b>Energy Resilience Programs:</b> Develop community energy resilience projects (microgrids, solar, storage) in neighborhoods that are prone to power outages or have higher energy burdens. Prioritize critical facilities - schools, community centers, health clinics.</li> <li>● <b>Collaborations with Local Energy Advocacy Groups:</b> Partner with local energy justice</li> </ul>

<p>and disinvested groups?</p>	<p>organizations and environmental groups that have established trust within marginalized communities to co-design and promote energy programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Advisory Panels on Energy Projects:</b> Establish advisory panels comprising community members to guide the development and implementation of energy projects, ensuring that local needs and concerns are addressed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Comprehensive Workforce Training Programs:</b> Develop robust training programs in partnership with community colleges and trade schools focused on high-demand energy sector skills, such as solar panel installation, wind turbine maintenance, energy efficiency auditing, and smart grid technology.</li> <li>● <b>Partnerships with Union and Labor Organizations:</b> Collaborate with unions and labor organizations to ensure new energy sector jobs provide fair wages, healthcare, retirement benefits, and opportunities for collective bargaining. Promote unionization as a pathway to securing better working conditions and job security.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Small and Minority-Owned Energy Businesses:</b> Provide technical assistance to small and minority-owned businesses in the energy sector to help them grow and create new, family-sustaining jobs within local communities.</li> <li>● <b>Worker Cooperatives and Employee Ownership Models:</b> Support the creation of worker cooperatives or employee-owned businesses in the renewable energy sector. These models give workers a direct stake in the business, ensuring that profits are shared, and workers have a say in the company's direction and decision-making processes.</li> <li>● <b>Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs):</b> Implement CBAs with energy companies to guarantee that projects provide family-sustaining jobs to local communities, including commitments to hiring locally, offering training and apprenticeship opportunities, and providing health and retirement benefits.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Tailored Training Programs:</b> Develop training programs specifically designed for members of disinvested communities, focusing on energy sector skills such as solar installation, indigenous cultural monitors, energy efficiency assessments, project managers, traffic operators, and wind turbine maintenance. These programs should be accessible, offering flexible scheduling and support services like childcare and transportation.</li> <li>● <b>Clear Pathways to Education and Skills Attainment:</b> Establish partnerships with local schools, community colleges, and training centers to create clear pathways for residents of disinvested communities to attain the education and skills needed for energy sector jobs, including scholarships, financial aid, and bridge programs to help participants transition into technical training.</li> <li>● <b>Inclusive Recruitment Practices:</b> Implement inclusive recruitment strategies that prioritize hiring from disinvested communities. Work with community organizations and local job centers to actively recruit candidates and ensure job postings are accessible to everyone, including those without internet access.</li> <li>● <b>Partnerships with Local Community Organizations:</b> Collaborate with local non-profits, community groups, and faith-based organizations to connect with residents of disinvested communities and facilitate their entry into energy sector programs and jobs.</li> <li>● <b>Financial Support for Training and Certification:</b> Offer grants, stipends, or other financial support to cover the costs of training, certification, and licensing for residents of disinvested communities, reducing economic barriers to entry into the energy sector.</li> <li>● <b>Work-Based Learning Opportunities:</b> Develop work-based learning programs specifically targeting disinvested communities to provide hands-on experience and build a pipeline into the energy workforce.</li> <li>● <b>Equity-Focused Policy Advocacy:</b> Advocate for policies that require energy companies and projects to include equitable access initiatives in their hiring and training practices, ensuring that disinvested communities benefit from the energy transition.</li> </ul>

<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Outcome Tracking and Accountability Measures:</b> Implement systems to track employment and training outcomes aggregated by race, ethnicity, and other demographics to identify disparities and ensure programs are effectively closing gaps.</li> <li>● <b>Equity-Focused Business Support Programs:</b> Offer tailored support to minority-owned and disadvantaged businesses within the energy sector to help them overcome barriers and access growth opportunities, fostering a more inclusive industry cluster.</li> <li>● <b>Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) with Equity Provisions:</b> Support CBAs that include equity-focused provisions - hiring targets for underrepresented groups, investment in local workforce development, and commitments to fair labor practices.</li> <li>● <b>Data-Driven Policy Advocacy:</b> Use data from regional profiles and labor market analyses to advocate for policies that address systemic inequities in the energy sector, such as wage disparities and access to career advancement for marginalized groups.</li> <li>● <b>Focus on Intersectional Equity Challenges:</b> Address intersectional equity issues by designing programs that consider the compounded barriers faced by individuals belonging to multiple marginalized groups (e.g., race, gender, disability, etc.) to ensure truly equitable access and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>? This includes workers potentially impacted by at-risk industries, preventing the displacement of incumbent workers, or replacing high-road jobs with low-quality jobs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Transition Assistance Programs:</b> Develop comprehensive transition assistance programs for workers impacted by the decline of at-risk industries (like pipefitters working in natural gas). These programs could include retraining and upskilling opportunities in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, career counseling, and job placement services to help workers transition into sustainable energy jobs.</li> <li>● <b>Guaranteed Employment in New Energy Projects:</b> Work with energy companies and developers to guarantee employment opportunities for displaced workers in new renewable energy projects. This could involve setting hiring quotas or prioritizing workers from at-risk industries for new job openings.</li> <li>● <b>High-Road Employment Standards:</b> Advocate for high-road employment standards in all new energy sector jobs, ensuring that these jobs provide fair wages, health and retirement benefits, career advancement opportunities, and safe working conditions. This prevents the replacement of high-quality jobs with low-quality ones.</li> <li>● <b>Worker Retraining Grants and Scholarships:</b> Offer grants and scholarships to at-risk workers to cover the costs of training and certification programs in emerging energy sectors. This financial support helps workers gain the skills needed to transition to new roles without facing economic hardship.</li> <li>● <b>Collaboration with Labor Unions:</b> Partner with labor unions to develop retraining programs and negotiate fair transition terms for workers impacted by industry changes.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Worker Cooperatives and Employee Ownership Models:</b> Encourage the formation of worker cooperatives or employee-owned businesses in the energy sector giving at-risk workers greater control over their employment and job quality.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Renewable Energy Sources:</b> Prioritize the development and use of renewable energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Net-Zero Energy Buildings:</b> Advocate for and support the construction of net-zero energy buildings, providing incentives and technical assistance for builders and developers to adopt net-zero standards.</li> <li>● <b>Electrification of Transportation:</b> Encourage the electrification of public and private transportation through the expansion of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, incentives for purchasing EVs, and investment in electric public transit options. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.</li> <li>● <b>Carbon Sequestration and Offset Programs:</b> Support carbon sequestration projects, such as reforestation and soil carbon management, to offset emissions generated by the energy sector. Encourage local businesses and residents to participate in carbon offset programs to mitigate their</li> </ul>

<p>change?</p>	<p>carbon footprints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Waste Reduction and Recycling:</b> Implement waste reduction strategies and recycling programs within the energy sector, especially for hazardous materials used in energy technologies (solar panels, batteries) to prevent environmental contamination.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Public Health</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Access to Clean and Affordable Energy:</b> Develop programs to ensure disinvested communities have access to clean and affordable energy options, such as community solar programs and subsidies for energy-efficient appliances. Reducing energy costs and reliance on polluting sources can improve overall health and well-being.</li> <li>● <b>Health Impact Assessments (HIAs):</b> Require HIAs for new energy projects, especially those near disinvested communities. These assessments should evaluate potential public health impacts and propose mitigation strategies to protect residents' health.</li> <li>● <b>Emergency Response and Resilience Planning:</b> Develop emergency response plans specifically for disinvested communities to address potential health impacts from energy-related environmental incidents, such as power plant malfunctions or toxic spills. Ensure these plans include accessible communication and resources for vulnerable populations.</li> <li>● <b>Local Health Organizations:</b> Collaborate with local health organizations and clinics to provide health screenings, education, and services related to pollution exposure and environmental health risks for communities affected by energy sector activities.</li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<p><b>Strategies to Avoid Exacerbating Climate Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Renewable Energy &amp; Energy Efficiency Adoption:</b> Accelerate the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and implement robust energy efficiency programs targeting residential, commercial, &amp; industrial sectors.</li> <li>● <b>Carbon Neutrality:</b> Support strategies for achieving carbon neutrality in the energy sector by investing in carbon capture and storage technologies and supporting projects that offset emissions, such as reforestation and wetland restoration.</li> <li>● <b>Adopt Sustainable Practices in Energy Projects:</b> Ensure that all new energy projects incorporate sustainable practices, such as minimizing land and water use, using eco-friendly materials, and reducing waste during construction and operation phases.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategies to Mitigate the Effects of Anticipated Climate Impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Infrastructure Resilience:</b> Upgrade energy infrastructure, including power lines and substations, to withstand extreme weather events like heat waves, wildfires, and flooding. Implement climate-resilient designs and materials to enhance the durability and reliability of energy systems.</li> <li>● <b>Implement Climate Risk Assessments:</b> Conduct regular climate risk assessments to identify vulnerabilities in the energy sector, including supply chain disruptions and infrastructure risks. Use these assessments to develop proactive strategies for mitigating climate impacts on energy operations and workforce safety.</li> <li>● <b>Engage in Collaborative Planning and Policy Development:</b> Work with local government agencies, community organizations, and industry stakeholders to develop comprehensive climate adaptation plans for the energy sector. Ensure that these plans include strategies for protecting both the infrastructure and the workforce from climate impacts.</li> <li>● <b>Enhance Community Preparedness and Awareness:</b> Conduct community outreach and education programs to raise awareness about climate impacts and resilience strategies in the energy sector. Encourage community involvement in climate adaptation planning to ensure that local needs and concerns are addressed.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Clean Energy</b> - The energy sector supports California's goal of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2045 (SB100)</li> <li>2. <b>Air Pollution Reduction</b> - Transitioning away from natural gas for power generation, aligns with California Air Resources Board's (CARB) strategies to improve air quality.</li> <li>3. <b>Electric Vehicle (EV) Adoption</b> - Expansion of EV charging infrastructure and incentives supports the state's Zero-Emission Vehicle Program, aiming to reduce vehicular emissions and improve air quality.</li> </ol>

to Climate?	<p>4. <b>Transportation Electrification</b> - Decarbonizing transportation through increased EV infrastructure, promotion of electric public transit, and incentives for EV adoption aligns with CA Clean Transportation Program</p> <p>5. <b>Public Transit Electrification</b> - Initiatives to electrify San Diego's public transit system supports the state's broader objectives under Executive Order N-79-20 to transition all public transportation to zero-emission technologies.</p> <p>6. <b>Climate Adaptation</b> - San Diego's investments in climate-resilient energy infrastructure aligns with California's Climate Adaptation Strategy, which emphasizes preparing communities and infrastructure for climate impacts like wildfires, heatwaves, and flooding.</p>
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**San Diego Priority Industry 3 - Arts, Culture, & Heritage** (Pottery, Art, Entrepreneurship, Spaces, Education)

Worksheet: Arts, Culture, & Heritage (Pottery, Art, Entrepreneurship, Spaces, Education)	
<b>Key Questions and Information</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> to Writer's Full Worksheet - includes additional information
<b>Describe the Sector</b>	
1. <b>A. One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector	The Art, Culture, and Heritage Sector is a key contributor to San Diego's creative economy. This economic ecosystem includes for-profit and nonprofit creative industries, artists, and a creative workforce of educators, entrepreneurs, vendors, policymakers, and funders. Together, they produce or enable the production of artistic-based goods and services for public consumption. The creative economy is essential in developing vibrant communities and growing a thriving region.
<b>B. Additional Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Diego is home to a wide variety of industry groups in this sector, including Digital Media, Printing and Publishing, Communication Arts, Visual &amp; Performing Arts, Fine and Performing Arts Schools, Music, Architecture, Interior Design, Fashion and many others.</li> <li>• The Sector generates \$10.8 billion dollars in total economic impact, roughly 3.7% of San Diego's GDP.</li> <li>• The industry supports 170,000 direct and indirect jobs, through 6,179 businesses, 80% of which are small businesses.</li> <li>• Additional strengths include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Creates Jobs.</b> Nurtures artists and small cultural organizations as businesses to increase employment.</li> <li>○ <b>Stimulates Trade.</b> Creates the right conditions for cultural tourism to bring new resources to the community.</li> <li>○ <b>Attracts Investment.</b> Supports artists and artists' living/work spaces as anchors for building local economies.</li> <li>○ <b>Diversifies the Economy.</b> Clusters of arts organizations attract and support other enterprises, acting as retail anchors and activity generators.</li> <li>○ <b>Enhances Value.</b> Creative communities increase property values.</li> <li>○ <b>Builds Trust.</b> Creates and strengthens the bonds between people of different backgrounds to enable communities and enterprises to grow.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talent Pool of Creative Professionals:</b> San Diego County is home to a large and highly educated talent pool of workers who earn income from creative, cultural, or artistic pursuits. The talent pool includes artists who work independently or via an employer, commercially or in a community - shaping, commenting on, critiquing, developing, and evolving the community, cultural practice, and economy in which they live. San Diego's creative</li> </ul>

<p>or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<p>professionals include cultural practitioners, such as curators, producers, and presenters, who enable artists to bring their work to audiences of all ages; culture bearers who possess the skills and techniques to use their craft to celebrate, preserve, and educate others about their culture; and creative entrepreneurs who employ their creative talents to develop and market an artistic product or service for personal profit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations:</b> San Diego’s Arts, Culture, and Heritage sector is supported by an established network of hundreds of nonprofit organizations that develop and promote the work of artists in various visual and performing art forms, such as film, sculpture, dance, painting, multimedia, poetry, and performance. These organizations operate from modern, state-of-the-art, brick-and-mortar facilities or charming, historic houses – all to educate and promote a deeper understanding of a region’s science, history, and culture.</li> <li>• <b>Cultural Districts, Parks, and Heritage Sites:</b> The San Diego region has several established and burgeoning cultural districts, well-defined areas with a high concentration of cultural activities and resources where art and culture happen. They include state-designated cultural districts in the City of San Diego’s Balboa Park and Barrio Logan neighborhoods, as well as city-designated hubs such as Arts District Liberty Station in Point Loma and the Black Arts and Culture District in southeast San Diego. They help strengthen local economies, improve the quality of life for residents, revitalize neighborhoods, and attract tourists and businesses to parts of communities in need of vibrancy and vitality. Other resources include a network of regional and open space parks for exploring the outdoors and connecting to nature. Several significant historic places, such as the Mission San Diego de Alcalá, possess exceptional value in illustrating the heritage of San Diego’s region.</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural Planning:</b> Nearly three years in the making, the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture is releasing a new cultural plan that will guide the development of new programs and initiatives over the next several years. The most expansive and comprehensive cultural plan in the City of San Diego’s history will center support for artists and cultural organizations through affordable spaces, expanded funding, and capacity building. It will guide the development of programs and services that increase access to arts and culture throughout the city, with a focus on historically under-resourced areas; foster growth of the creative economy through business support, workforce development, and industry partnerships, and elevate San Diego’s profile as an international hub for arts, culture and creativity.</li> <li>• <b>Programs and Services:</b> San Diego’s Art, Culture, and Heritage sector is supported by several mission-driven organizations to advocate and serve the sector’s needs. These organizations, working individually and cooperatively across sectors and with various partners, conduct research, convene with artists and representatives of nonprofit arts and culture organizations for networking events, function as intermediaries, and gather and share information that keeps the sector connected to issues that matter.</li> <li>• <b>Leadership Shifts:</b> As the “baby-boomer” generation of cultural leaders heads into retirement, a new and young generation of leaders is stepping up and filling the gap. Many have taken the helm of long-standing cultural organizations. They are bringing new perspectives and approaches in arts management to local theaters, museums, and concert halls. It is hoped that their fresh outlook will attract new audiences and supporters.</li> <li>• <b>New Facilities:</b> New facilities planned and completed over the next few months and years have the potential to change San Diego’s cultural landscape and create new job opportunities. This all bodes well for the Art, Culture and Heritage sectors. The Horton Plaza Lyceum Theatre’s \$6 million makeover is part of an effort to reimagine San Diego’s theater district as it rejoins the Civic Theatre, Spreckels Theatre, and Balboa Theatre as a hub for culture and entertainment in downtown San Diego. Just blocks away, the San Diego Symphony is scheduled to open The Jacobs Music Center, home of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra and a world-class facility for concerts, comedy shows, corporate &amp; civic events, film screenings, and more.</li> </ul>

<p>4. <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends? If your strategies include making affiliated investments, explain why that is relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While overall perceptions of doing business in San Diego are positive, there are areas where additional support could benefit both for-profit and nonprofit organizations within the art, culture, and heritage sectors.</li> <li>• The community looks to the Art, Culture, and Heritage sector for a variety of needs related to community development, promoting safety, increasing vibrancy, and enhancing the built environment through public art.</li> <li>• Additionally, there is a demand to augment the awareness of local arts and culture and differentiate the region from Los Angeles by better promoting and marketing existing assets through establishing a Film Commission.</li> <li>• While overall perceptions of doing business in San Diego are positive, there are areas where additional support could benefit both for-profit and nonprofit organizations producing creative work.</li> <li>• Specifically, contracting assistance and additional physical space for theaters, dance, and art studios are all in demand but unaffordable given San Diego’s high cost of living. This is particularly true for the nearly 13,000 self-employed creative workers, who are growing in numbers but lacking in earnings.</li> <li>• Artists living and working on both sides of the border seek greater opportunity and support. They want barriers to travel, and artistic collaboration lessened.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the City of San Diego, its City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture is responsible for administering and allocating funds for arts and culture programs set aside from Transient Occupancy Taxes, Ordinance 100-3. The ordinance was established to enable the allocation of one cent of the City’s annual TOT fund for arts and culture, but to date – and since the Ordinance was approved nearly 30 years ago – the City Council has never fulfilled that promise. Total funding has continued to decrease, rather than increase. This trend persists despite the Art, Culture, and Heritage sector having good data to demonstrate its economic impact, and TOT funds have steadily increased year-over-year since the Ordinance’s inception. If the promise to adhere to the stated guidelines in the ordinance were kept, it would make millions of additional dollars available to leverage new job opportunities for San Diego’s creative workforce through grants and contracts for service.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any Existing Plans or Reports on this Sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Diego County – Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6 Report - <a href="#">Link</a></li> <li>• San Diego County - Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6 Explainer Video - <a href="#">Link</a></li> <li>• City of San Diego Cultural Plan - <a href="#">Link</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Centering Artists:</b> Support artists and cultural organizations through affordable spaces, expanded funding, and capacity building.</li> <li>• <b>Arts in Community:</b> Increase access to arts and culture throughout the city, with a focus on historically under-resourced areas.</li> <li>• <b>Creative Entrepreneurship:</b> Foster creative economy growth through business support, workforce development, and industry partnerships.</li> <li>• <b>Global Creative City:</b> Elevate San Diego’s profile as an international hub for arts, culture and creativity.</li> </ul>

<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <b>proposed investments and strategies</b> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity-building initiatives funded by civic-minded philanthropic organizations and advanced by local advocacy and service organizations help connect creative workers to information, opportunities, and access to resources that can launch new ventures and sustain thriving businesses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with local research-oriented universities to conduct San Diego County-wide research on the status of artists and other creative workers, including housing, jobs, health, professional development needs, and other issues related to their welfare. Establish a database of information that will inform cultural policy and advocacy efforts.</li> <li>Advocate cultural planning as a central dimension of regional planning. Implement a cultural plan for the entire San Diego County and its eighteen incorporated cities to extend the impact of the City of San Diego's cultural plan, which centers artists and communities of color.</li> <li>Help artists and other creative workers establish ownership of underutilized spaces that have the capacity for mixed-use development, so they become active community contributors.</li> <li>Build mutually beneficial relationships or “horizontal” networks across sectors and between artists, trades, developers, local businesses, arts groups, and policymakers from tourism and economic development agencies.</li> <li>Through targeted marketing campaigns, reframe the narrative regarding the arts, culture and heritage sector as a significant contributor to San Diego's economy. Nurture artists and small cultural organizations, not as charitable endeavors but as job-creating businesses with the capacity to increase employment and boost the local economy. A major study conducted by Americans for the Arts – the Arts and Prosperity Study 6 – San Diego County – found that San Diego's creative economy is large and growing, generating \$10.8 billion in economic impact and nearly 170,000 jobs.</li> <li>Engage the sector in economic development efforts such as cultural tourism that strengthen marginalized communities, stimulate demand for local products, and support the economic activities of other local businesses, such as restaurants, retail stores, and transportation.</li> <li>Develop living/workspaces as anchors around which to build local economies. Artists' lofts and artistic communities bring a new and different excitement to blighted, underutilized buildings and surroundings.</li> <li>Incentivize efforts that enable the arts, tourism, community participation, and regional economic redevelopment to reinforce each other. Rather than “big fix” or “grand plans,” encourage small projects that make meaningful impacts on building stronger communities; not entice larger institutions, more affluent investors, and bigger corporate chains that exhaust resources and do not build upon threads of the existing social fabric.</li> <li>Support passing legislation that incentivizes artist housing and livable wages for creative workers. For example, AB-812 authorizes a city or county to require, as a condition of approval, that a certain percentage of units of a residential development be reserved for artists. SB 628, the California Creative Workforce Act, seeks to establish creative arts workforce development programs across California.</li> <li>Support the designation of more cultural districts in San Diego County, creating a network of creative hubs synergistically linked across the region.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - What</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Diego's art, culture, and heritage sector includes a large and growing representation of historically marginalized and disinvested artists and other creative workers. Many young, highly educated but emerging practitioners, as well as older, seasoned creatives who are</li> </ul>

<p><b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>directly serve</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups?</p>	<p>self-taught, share the challenge of having to make choices about how and if they can continue to live and work in San Diego County due to its high cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs and initiatives enabled by public funding prioritize those living and working in the lowest quartile of the California Healthy Places Index (HPI). The HPI is an interactive online data and GIS mapping tool that allows users to easily visualize the social and economic conditions that shape health in each neighborhood in California. In this way, we reach and serve those with the greatest financial need and history of disenfranchisement.</li> <li>• We also seek funding and programmatic partnerships with nonprofit arts and culture organizations located in HPI areas, as they will most likely seek to hire artists working near their organizations and are most familiar with the needs of their constituents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay and advocate for livable wage jobs for all artists and creative workers living and working in San Diego based on the Living Wage Calculator created by MIT.</li> <li>• Advocate for guaranteed income programs like Springboard for the Arts' Guaranteed Income for Artists, which offers 75 Minnesota-based artists \$500 per month for 18 months, and San Francisco's Guaranteed Income Pilot for Artists, which dispersed \$1,000 per month for 18 months to 130 artists. Both recognize the economic value that artists contribute to communities and provide subsidies through regular cash payments with no strings attached.</li> <li>• Replicate the success of a San Diego-based funding collaborative and workforce development program inspired by the depression era WPA called Far South Border North. With a \$4.5 million grant from the state-funded California Arts Council and additional funds from a local foundation, nearly \$6 million was allocated to San Diego and Imperial County artists as salaries. This was part of a burgeoning movement to value and pay artists fairly.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<p>Practice and encourage partners to employ human-centered hiring practices, shifting the focus from the organization's needs to the candidate's and employers' needs. It's not only about filling positions but also about building long-lasting relationships, understanding the needs of the candidates, and creating a sense of belonging.</p>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>13. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stakeholders within San Diego County's art, culture, and heritage sector will be invited to participate in the Arts &amp; Climate CA, a new statewide initiative that will educate cohorts of small to mid-sized frontline cultural organizations on climate change, assess the impacts of climate change on their work and their communities, and help arts organizations design pathways to better climate resiliency through de-carbonization and community activation strategies.</li> <li>• The backbone of Arts &amp; Climate CA is that the needs (and subsequent strategies) are co-created by the cultural organizations, their communities, and artists.</li> <li>• Additional outcomes include linking arts organizations to existing State and Federal funds for decarbonization projects as well as activating the artists and cultural workers in San Diego County and throughout the State to create work that contributes to the visibility and narrative around climate change.</li> </ul>

<p>14. <b>Public Health -</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Air quality disparities:</b> Addressing issues like high levels of air pollution in neighborhoods with high concentrations of creative workers and minority residents due to proximity to factories or busy highways.</li> <li>• <b>Access to green spaces:</b> Ensuring equitable access to parks and green areas for all communities can improve mental health and overall well-being.</li> <li>• <b>Chemical waste management:</b> Preventing the dumping of hazardous waste in low-income communities and advocating for proper disposal practices.</li> <li>• <b>Lead exposure mitigation:</b> Taking action to reduce lead exposure in homes, especially in older housing, which creative workers may find more affordable but more detrimental to their health and their children's health.</li> <li>• <b>Climate change vulnerability:</b> Addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities and where artists and other creatives are known to live, such as extreme weather events and sea level rise.</li> <li>• <b>Environmental education:</b> Providing accessible environmental education to empower artist communities to understand and join with others to advocate for their environmental rights.</li> <li>• <b>Community engagement:</b> Actively involve artists and other creatives in environmental decision-making to ensure their voices are heard.</li> </ul>
<p>15. <b>Climate Impacts -</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer workshops to educate artists and creative workers on environmental sustainability and how participation can benefit their lives.</li> <li>• Connect artists and creative workers with access to free energy audits offered locally by utility companies that provide concrete examples of where to make substantive changes to save energy and therefore money.</li> <li>• Provide consultant teams to conduct research and assessment of their environmental risks and opportunities and funds to assist with implementing greening plans that are easy and inexpensive to implement at a hyper-local level.</li> <li>• Create messaging campaigns within the artist/creative communities about the value of environmental sustainability to reinforce commitments to change and adapt new greening habits.</li> <li>• Find ways to publicly recognize those who champion the cause through demonstrable action.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>State Climate Policy -</b> How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists create art that sends a clear message about the urgency of addressing climate change, pushing for policy changes, and advocating for sustainable practices. Many artists are also activists. They use their work to raise awareness and mobilize support for climate action.</li> <li>• Provide funding opportunities that enable artists to use a variety of mediums to tell stories about climate change, such as paintings, sculptures, photos, performance art, illustrations, infographics, video work, documentaries, and comics. These stories can help make climate change more relatable and personal and can show people what sustainability can look like. For example, artists can document the natural world, tell the stories of communities affected by climate change, or depict animals that no longer exist to show how the environment has changed.</li> <li>• To contribute to the state's goal of being carbon neutral, San Diego's cultural sector will require capital and operational improvements to facilities. Strategies will be needed to facilitate countywide platforms for resource exchange, guidance on best practices for events and theater productions, and shared vendor and purchasing power to enable the selection of sustainable goods and services when producing artworks, exhibitions, performances, and educational programming.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	

<p>17. <b>Implementation - What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</b> your strategies and support the enhancement of the priority sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Secure resources: Alliances can help artists and other creative businesses survive funding shifts and obtain resources to pursue new opportunities.</li> <li>● Expand their reach: Alliances can help creative businesses expand their services and programs and increase stakeholder influence.</li> <li>● Streamline operations: Alliances help gain efficiencies by sharing resources, reducing costs, and eliminating redundant processes.</li> </ul>
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**San Diego Priority Industry 4 - Water** (Resources, Infrastructure, Waste Water Treatment, Technology-desalination, reuse, Affordability, Sustainability, Green Water)

<p>Worksheet: Water (Resources, Infrastructure, Waste Water Treatment, Technology- desalination, reuse, Affordability, Sustainability, Green Water)</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Link to Writer’s Full Worksheet</a> - includes additional information</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Describe the Sector</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b> - Provide a short Description of the Sector</p>	<p>A safe and reliable water supply is crucial to sustain the San Diego region’s \$268 billion economy and quality of life for 3.3 million residents. This industry is a dynamic and essential component of the region’s infrastructure, focusing on the management, storage, distribution, and treatment of water resources. It encompasses a range of activities including water supply, wastewater treatment, desalination, and water conservation efforts to address the challenges of a growing population and a semi-arid climate. The sector is characterized by innovative technologies and practices aimed at ensuring sustainable water use, improving efficiency, and safeguarding water quality, but the sector is challenged by a complex governance structure, with 31 water districts and regional agencies</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this sector or that can be leveraged to support this sector.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Specialized Workforce Skills:</b> San Diego has a strong base of professionals with expertise in water resource management, civil engineering, and environmental sciences, from schools such as UC San Diego, San Diego State University, Palomar and Cuyamaca Colleges. With a vibrant tech industry, there is a skilled workforce adept in software development, data analysis, and automation, which can be leveraged to develop advanced water management systems, predictive analytics, and IoT-based monitoring solutions.</li> <li>2. <b>Local Services and Infrastructure:</b> San Diego is home to several state-of-the-art water treatment and desalination facilities, not only providing advanced water purification capabilities but also serving as hubs for research and development in water technologies. The region has invested in water recycling and reclamation systems, which can be expanded and improved to reduce reliance on imported water and enhance local water sustainability. San Diego is implementing smart water grid technologies, integrating advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) that allows for real-time water use monitoring and leak detection. This infrastructure can be further expanded and optimized to enhance water efficiency across the region.</li> <li>3. <b>Natural Resources:</b> San Diego’s proximity to the Pacific Ocean and several inland water bodies, like reservoirs and rivers, provides a diverse range of surface water sources. These natural resources are vital for desalination, recreation, and ecological conservation, all of which contribute to a sustainable water management strategy.</li> </ol>

	<p>Southern California has relatively small groundwater basins in comparison to the rest of California and those basins are being depleted, making effective management critical and identifying opportunities for managed aquifer recharge techniques.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this sector to grow, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Diversification of Water Supply Sources</b> Decreasing regional dependency on non-renewable water sources, increasing the diversification of the water supply and improving the efficiency, conservation, and procurement of water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In 1991, the County received 552-thousand-acre feet, composition: 95% - Metropolitan Water District and 5% - Local Surface Water. In 2023, the County received 444-thousand-acre feet, composition: 36% - Conserved Water/ IID, 16% - Conserved Water/ Canal Lining, 14% - Metropolitan Water District, 10% - Seawater Desalination, 10% - Local Surface Water, 6% - Recycled Water, 6% - Groundwater, 2% - San Luis Rey Water Transfer.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Green Infrastructure, Sustainable Urban Design, Water Reuse and Recycling Programs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Investment in Infrastructure:</b> Potential to expand water reuse and recycling programs by investing in infrastructure for advanced water purification and distribution systems, San Diego can reduce its usage and dependence on imported water, ensuring a more sustainable local supply.</li> <li>● <b>Stormwater Capture and Management:</b> Expanding green infrastructure, such as permeable pavements, rain gardens, and bioswales, can help manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and recharge aquifers. This initiative supports sustainable urban design while creating new job opportunities in construction, landscaping, and maintenance.</li> <li>● <b>Incentive Programs for Water-Efficient Technologies:</b> Encouraging the adoption of water-efficient appliances, irrigation systems, and drought-resistant landscaping through rebates and incentives can reduce overall water usage and support local businesses offering these products and services.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Further Development of Desalination Technologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Enhanced Desalination Capacity:</b> San Diego has a growing expertise in desalination, exemplified by the Claude “Bud” Lewis Carlsbad Desalination Plant. Further investment in R&amp;D for more efficient, cost-effective desalination processes could make this technology more viable and scalable, fostering economic diversification and growth.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Support for Innovative Water Management Solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Digital Water Management Systems:</b> There is potential to grow the sector through the adoption of digital technologies such as smart meters, IoT sensors, and data analytics platforms for predictive maintenance and efficient water use. This would create jobs in software development, data analysis, and IT, while also improving water management efficiency, especially if technology could be utilized to solve issues with Tijuana River flow into San Diego’s coastal areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Workforce Development and Training Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Specialized Training Programs:</b> Establishing training programs focused on water management, conservation, and upskill/retraining for new technology could prepare a new generation of workers for emerging opportunities in the sector. Support transition of retiring generational workers with cross-mentoring programs. Collaborations with local educational institutions could provide pathways for underrepresented communities into well-paying, stable jobs. Many public agencies cite high vacancies for their water utility jobs.</li> <li>● <b>Certification and Apprenticeship Programs:</b> Developing certification and apprenticeship programs for water treatment, conservation, and management can ensure a skilled workforce ready to meet the growing needs of the water sector.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Current Trends</b> - What current trends are impacting this</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Climate Change and Increased Water Scarcity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> Climate change is leading to more frequent and severe droughts, altering precipitation patterns, and increasing the unpredictability of water supply. This is</li> </ul>

<p>Sector? How is the sector aligned with or addressing these trends? If your strategies include making affiliated investments explain why that is relevant.</p>	<p>particularly relevant for regions like San Diego, which rely on imported water and are already facing challenges with water scarcity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sector Response:</b> The water sector is increasingly focusing on sustainable water management practices, such as water recycling, desalination, and stormwater capture. Investments in these areas are relevant because they reduce dependence on traditional water sources, enhance local water resilience, and provide a buffer against future climate variability.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated Investments:</b> Investing in advanced water recycling facilities, desalination technology, and storm water containment is crucial. For instance, expanding the capacity of existing plants or developing new ones can provide a more reliable and climate-resilient water supply, addressing both current and future needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Technological Advancements in Water Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> The rise of digital technologies, including the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning, is transforming water management by improving efficiency, reducing waste, contingency planning for water security risk, managing water trends in climate and enhancing predictive capabilities.</li> <li>● <b>Sector Response:</b> The water sector is increasingly adopting smart water management systems that utilize real-time data for monitoring and controlling water usage. This trend aligns with investments in digital infrastructure and software development, enabling more efficient water use and reducing costs.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated Investments:</b> Investment in smart water grids and digital water management platforms is relevant because these technologies help utilities optimize operations, detect leaks early, measure utilization, and make data-driven decisions. This not only conserves water but also reduces operational costs and improves service reliability, contributing to risk mitigation planning for emergency services.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Regulatory Changes and Environmental Compliance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> Increasingly stringent environmental regulations are being implemented at both the state and federal levels to protect water quality and manage water resources more sustainably.</li> <li>● <b>Sector Response:</b> The water sector is aligning with these regulations by investing in green infrastructure, pollution control technologies, and sustainable water management practices. This is crucial for compliance and for avoiding penalties or restrictions that could impact water supply and quality.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated Investments:</b> Investing in sustainable infrastructure, such as permeable surfaces and natural water filtration systems, is relevant because it helps meet regulatory requirements while enhancing urban resilience to flooding and improving water quality.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Increasing Focus on Water Resilience and Security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> There is a heightened focus on developing resilient water systems that can withstand both natural and human-made disruptions, including extreme weather events, cyberattacks, and infrastructure failures.</li> <li>● <b>Sector Response:</b> The sector is prioritizing investments in diversified water sources, such as groundwater recharge, desalination, and recycled water, to enhance resilience and security. This approach ensures a more stable and reliable water supply, even during times of crisis.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated Investments:</b> Relevant investments include the development of resilient infrastructure projects, such as upgrading aging water pipes, building redundancies into water supply systems, creating decentralized water treatment facilities to prevent service disruptions and improve emergency response capabilities and improving cybersecurity. Adding infrastructure or innovative water solutions to rural areas where disinvested communities live.</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Adoption of Integrated Water Management Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> There is a shift towards integrated water management approaches that consider the entire water life cycle, from supply and treatment to distribution and waste, as well as the interconnections between water, land use, and the environment.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sector Response:</b> The sector is adopting integrated water management practices that combine different water sources and use holistic planning to balance competing needs, such as urban development, agriculture, and ecosystem conservation.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated Investments:</b> Investing in integrated water management frameworks, including tools and platforms for data integration and decision support, allows for more efficient management of water resources across multiple sectors and stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) Regional Water Management Plans</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The SDCWA, which is responsible for providing a safe and reliable water supply to the region, develops regional water management plans that outline strategies for water conservation, supply diversification, and infrastructure investments.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Local Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Each water agency in San Diego County must develop and maintain a UWMP. These plans provide local strategies for water use efficiency, demand management, and supply reliability, particularly during droughts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">California Water Action Plan</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The California Water Action Plan provides a comprehensive strategy for sustainable water management across the state, emphasizing actions such as improving water use efficiency, expanding water storage, enhancing water recycling, and investing in ecosystem restoration.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SGMA requires the formation of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and the development of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) to prevent the over-extraction of groundwater.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) Vallecitos Water District</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This act requires urban water suppliers to prepare and regularly update Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) to ensure efficient use and conservation of water.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ WIFIA provides low-interest loans for water infrastructure projects that address community water needs, including projects focused on water recycling, desalination, and stormwater management. San Diego County can leverage this funding for significant and critical infrastructure and economic growth projects.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Existing Reports</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">San Diego County Water Authority Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP)</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Climate Action Plan (CAP) by the San Diego County Water Authority</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Tijuana River Sewage Crisis - Pollution Status Report</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Growth Strategies</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Expanding Water Recycling and Reuse Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Developing advanced water treatment facilities that purify wastewater to potable standards, creating a sustainable, drought-resistant water source.</li> <li>● <b>Investment:</b> Enhancing infrastructure for water recycling and reuse.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Sector Growth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Businesses:</b> This investment supports businesses in the water treatment and technology sectors by increasing demand for water purification equipment, chemicals, and services. Companies specializing in advanced filtration, membrane technology, and UV treatment systems will benefit from contracts and sales.</li> <li>○ <b>Workers:</b> Creates jobs in construction, engineering, operations, and maintenance of new recycling facilities. Skilled workers in the fields of water treatment, environmental engineering, and technology development are particularly in demand, fostering a workforce that is more specialized and well-compensated.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. Implementing Smart Water Management Systems</b></li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Use technology to reduce water loss, detect leaks early, and optimize water distribution systems.</li> <li>● <b>Investment:</b> Deploying smart water meters, IoT devices, and advanced analytics platforms to monitor and manage water use.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Sector Growth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Businesses:</b> Boosts the market for tech companies providing IoT solutions, software developers for analytics platforms, and consultants specializing in smart water management systems. It opens opportunities for start-ups and established firms alike to develop and supply smart grid technology.</li> <li>○ <b>Workers:</b> Expands jobs in data analysis, software development, and system maintenance, as well as in the installation and service of smart meters and IoT devices. This growth supports a technologically skilled workforce and encourages upskilling in digital and data-focused roles.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Enhancing Stormwater Capture and Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Manage stormwater as a resource by capturing and reusing it to recharge aquifers and support non-potable uses.</li> <li>● <b>Investment:</b> Building infrastructure for stormwater capture and storage, such as permeable pavements, green roofs, and retention basins.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Sector Growth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Businesses:</b> Creates opportunities for companies in construction, landscaping, and environmental consulting to design and implement stormwater management solutions. Businesses providing green infrastructure products and services, like rainwater harvesting systems, will see increased demand.</li> <li>○ <b>Workers:</b> Generates employment in construction, landscaping, and environmental management. It also provides roles for civil engineers, hydrologists, and urban planners, supporting the development of a diverse and specialized workforce.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>4. Fostering Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Innovation Hubs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Drive innovation in water technology, create a supportive ecosystem for startups, and leverage private capital and expertise for public water projects.</li> <li>● <b>Investment:</b> Creating innovation hubs for collaboration between public entities, private companies, and research institutions.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Sector Growth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Businesses:</b> PPPs provide funding and collaboration opportunities for startups and established companies focused on water technology innovation. They encourage risk-sharing and resource pooling, which can lead to breakthroughs in water management solutions.</li> <li>○ <b>Workers:</b> Supports job creation in research, innovation, and high-tech fields. PPPs often include training and workforce development components, enhancing skills and employability in the water sector.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation</b> - How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<p><b>Leveraging Local Research Institutions, Colleges, Universities and Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Collaborate with local universities such as the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), San Diego State University (SDSU), CSU San Marcos, and the community colleges (which have water-focused programs), research institutions, Tribal Alliances, and grassroots community efforts to drive innovation in water technology and management.</li> <li>● <b>Connection to Innovation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Research and Development (R&amp;D):</b> These institutions have strong engineering, environmental science, and technology programs that can contribute to R&amp;D in areas such as water purification, desalination, smart water systems, and climate resilience. Collaborative research initiatives can lead to breakthroughs that enhance water management and conservation.</li> <li>○ <b>Technology Transfer:</b> Universities often have technology transfer offices that help move new technologies from the lab to the market. Investments in collaborative projects with these institutions can accelerate the commercialization of innovative</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>water technologies, such as advanced filtration systems or AI-driven and Machine Learning water management tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Student Engagement &amp; Startups:</b> Engaging a diverse representation of students and faculty in water-related research can foster innovation and entrepreneurship. Supporting student-led projects and startups through grants, competitions, and incubator programs can lead to the development of new water technologies and solutions.</li> <li>○ <b>Grassroots Innovation:</b> Community engagement programs can foster grassroots innovation by encouraging residents to participate in water monitoring, conservation efforts, and local decision-making. This approach can lead to the development of low-cost, community-driven solutions that address local water challenges.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Community Benefit</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have to provide indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities?</p>	<p><b>1. Targeted Water Affordability Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Develop targeted water affordability programs that provide financial assistance, discounts, or subsidies to low-income households in disinvested communities. This can include lifeline rates for basic water usage, bill forgiveness programs, and emergency assistance funds to help households struggling to pay their water bills.</li> <li>● <b>Direct Benefit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Immediate Financial Relief:</b> Reduces the financial burden of water costs on low-income households, ensuring that they have continuous access to essential water services.</li> <li>○ <b>Preventing Shutoffs:</b> Helps prevent water shutoffs due to non-payment, which can have severe health and safety implications for families.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Infrastructure Improvements in Disinvested Communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Prioritize investments in upgrading water infrastructure in disinvested communities. Focus on replacing aging pipes, installing new water filtration systems, and addressing lead and other contaminant issues in these areas.</li> <li>● <b>Direct Benefit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Improved Water Quality and Reliability:</b> Ensures safe and reliable drinking water for all residents, reducing health risks associated with contaminated water supplies.</li> <li>○ <b>Community Health Enhancement:</b> Improves overall community health outcomes by addressing long-standing water quality issues that disproportionately affect marginalized communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Green Infrastructure and Climate Resilience Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Implement green infrastructure projects, such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavements, specifically in disinvested neighborhoods to manage stormwater, reduce flood risks, and improve environmental conditions.</li> <li>● <b>Direct Benefit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Flood Risk Reduction:</b> Protects vulnerable communities from flooding, which can cause property damage and health hazards.</li> <li>○ <b>Environmental Improvements:</b> Enhances local environments, reduces urban heat islands, and improves air and water quality, creating healthier and more livable neighborhoods</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-sustaining Jobs</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-</b></p>	<p><b>1. Investment in Workforce Development and Training Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Develop and expand comprehensive workforce development and training programs that equip workers with the necessary skills to thrive in the water sector. These programs should be tailored to include both entry-level workers and those seeking to advance their careers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Support for Family-Sustaining Jobs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Access to Training:</b> Provide access to training and certification programs in areas such as water treatment, infrastructure maintenance, green infrastructure, and smart water technologies. These programs should be offered through partnerships with local community colleges, trade schools, and industry associations.</li> <li>○ <b>Career Advancement Opportunities:</b> Include pathways for career advancement by offering tiered certification levels and continuous learning opportunities that enable workers to move up the career ladder, increasing earning potential and job security.</li> <li>○ <b>Inclusive Access:</b> Focus on recruiting individuals from disinvested communities, ensuring that training programs are accessible to underrepresented groups, thereby promoting diversity and equity within the water sector workforce.</li> <li>○ <b>Collective Worker:</b> Enable workers to have a collective voice in negotiations related to wages, benefits, working conditions, and job security. This ensures that workers are compensated and have access to the benefits and protections they need.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Implementing Apprenticeship and Internship Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Develop apprenticeship and internship programs that provide on-the-job training and experience in various roles within the water sector, from engineering and environmental management to operations and maintenance.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Family-Sustaining Jobs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Hands-On Experience:</b> Offer practical, hands-on experience that allows individuals to learn while earning a wage, making it easier for them to enter and advance in the water sector.</li> <li>○ <b>Pathways to Permanent Employment:</b> Structure apprenticeship and internship programs to lead to permanent, full-time employment opportunities, ensuring that participants have clear pathways to family-sustaining jobs.</li> <li>○ <b>Skill Development:</b> Focus on skill development in areas of high demand, such as advanced water treatment technologies, smart water grid management, and environmental compliance, thereby increasing job security and earning potential.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Implementing Employee-Owned Models and Cooperative Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Support the development of employee-owned businesses or cooperatives within the water sector, particularly for maintenance and service companies, to provide workers with ownership stakes and a direct say in company governance.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Family-Sustaining Jobs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Shared Prosperity:</b> Employee ownership can lead to more equitable distribution of profits, higher wages, and better benefits, contributing to economic stability for workers and their families.</li> <li>○ <b>Empowerment and Engagement:</b> Employees who are co-owners are more likely to be engaged and invested in the success of the company, leading to improved job satisfaction and workplace culture.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>11. Equitable Access</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<p><b>1. Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Conduct outreach campaigns that are culturally and linguistically tailored to the diverse populations within disinvested communities. Use multiple languages, culturally relevant messaging, and trusted community messengers to effectively communicate information about water programs, services and careers in this industry.</li> <li>● <b>Engagement Approach:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Partner with Local Organizations:</b> Collaborate with local community organizations, various types of institutions, and cultural groups that have established trust and relationships within the community.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Community Workshops and Training Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Organize workshops and training sessions within the community to educate residents about water conservation, water quality, and available financial assistance programs. These sessions should be accessible, interactive, and tailored to address specific community concerns.</li> <li>● <b>Engagement Approach:</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Hands-On Learning:</b> Provide practical demonstrations and hands-on activities that allow residents to learn by doing, which can be more effective than traditional lecture-style education.</li> <li>○ <b>Incorporate Local Knowledge:</b> Integrate local knowledge and experiences to ensure that the content is relevant and resonates with the community's daily realities.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Regular Community Forums and Feedback Mechanisms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Hold regular community forums and town hall meetings to provide updates on water sector projects, gather feedback, and answer questions. Create formal mechanisms for residents to submit feedback and suggestions outside of these meetings.</li> <li>● <b>Engagement Approach:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Facilitate Open Dialogue:</b> Create a safe and welcoming environment where community members feel comfortable sharing their views and concerns. Ensure that forums are accessible in terms of location, time, and language.</li> <li>○ <b>Responsive Feedback Loop:</b> Actively use the feedback received to adjust and improve water programs and strategies, demonstrating that community input is valued and has a tangible impact on decision-making.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<p><b>Youth Engagement and Education Programs</b></p> <p>Increased number of youth unable to complete a college education while earning an income, due to the high cost of living in San Diego. The apprenticeship program will resolve this issue. We will also be able to provide childcare programs for working women and men with childcare needs interested in a water technology career.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Develop programs that engage youth in disinvested communities in water-related education and activities. This can include school programs, internships, and community service projects focused on water conservation and environmental stewardship.</li> <li>● <b>Engagement Approach:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>School Partnerships:</b> Partner with local schools to integrate water education into the curriculum and provide extracurricular opportunities for students to engage in water conservation projects.</li> <li>○ <b>Youth Leadership Opportunities:</b> Create leadership councils or ambassador programs that empower young people to take active roles in promoting water sustainability within their communities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<p>San Diego County has prepared workforce recommendations for climate workers and the transition of the industries being affected. This study was prepared in 2020 for the State of California, entitled “Putting California on the High Road: A Jobs and Climate Action Plan for 2030”. Worker displacement is in this study and this study recommends a toolkit of social policies, capital investments, mentoring and wrap-around services to support at-risk workers. Supporting this study is the legislature pursuant to Assembly Bill AB398 (E. Garcia, Chapter 135, Statutes of 2017).</p>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>14. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate</p>	<p><b>1. Promoting Water Conservation and Efficiency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Implement comprehensive water conservation and efficiency programs to reduce water use and minimize the energy required for water treatment and distribution.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Water-Saving Technologies:</b> Encourage the adoption of water-saving technologies, such as low-flow fixtures, high-efficiency irrigation systems, and smart water meters, through incentives, rebates, and public awareness campaigns.</li> <li>○ <b>Water Audits and Leak Detection:</b> Conduct water audits for residential, commercial, and industrial customers to identify opportunities for water savings. Implement leak</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>change?</p>	<p>detection and repair programs to prevent water loss and reduce unnecessary water extraction and treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Environmental Impact:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Reduced Water Extraction:</b> Minimizes the need for water extraction from natural sources, protecting aquatic ecosystems and maintaining water levels in rivers, lakes, and reservoirs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Expanding Water Recycling and Reuse Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Increase the use of recycled and reclaimed water to reduce the demand for freshwater and minimize the environmental impact of water extraction and wastewater discharge.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Advanced Water Treatment Plants:</b> Invest in advanced water treatment plants that can recycle wastewater to potable standards, providing a sustainable source of water for non-potable and potable uses.</li> <li>○ <b>Dual Plumbing Systems:</b> Encourage the installation of dual plumbing systems in new developments to separate potable and non-potable water, making it easier to use recycled water for irrigation, cooling, and other non-potable applications.</li> <li>○ <b>Recycled Water Distribution Networks:</b> Expand recycled water distribution networks to increase the availability of reclaimed water for agricultural, industrial, and landscape irrigation purposes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Environmental Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Reduced Freshwater Demand:</b> Decreases the demand for freshwater extraction from natural sources, protecting ecosystems and maintaining water availability for future generations.</li> <li>○ <b>Lower Wastewater Discharge:</b> Reduces the volume of wastewater discharged into natural water bodies, decreasing pollution and protecting aquatic habitats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Implementing Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Promote green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to manage stormwater, enhance groundwater recharge, reduce urban heat islands, and protect natural ecosystems.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Permeable Pavements and Bioswales:</b> Install permeable pavements, bioswales, and rain gardens in urban areas to capture and filter stormwater, reduce runoff, and promote groundwater recharge.</li> <li>○ <b>Urban Tree Planting and Green Roofs:</b> Encourage urban tree planting and the installation of green roofs to reduce heat islands, improve air quality, and enhance stormwater management.</li> <li>○ <b>Wetland Restoration and Conservation:</b> Restore and conserve wetlands and riparian areas to enhance natural water filtration, provide habitat for wildlife, and increase resilience to flooding and sea-level rise.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>15. <b>Public Health -</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<p><b>1. Improving Water Quality and Reducing Contaminants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Implement measures to improve water quality by reducing contaminants in drinking water and addressing pollution sources that impact water bodies, with a focus on areas serving disinvested communities.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Upgrading Water Treatment Facilities:</b> Invest in modernizing water treatment facilities to enhance their ability to remove contaminants such as lead, nitrates, PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), and other harmful chemicals that pose health risks, particularly to children and pregnant women.</li> <li>○ <b>Lead Pipe Replacement Programs:</b> Identify and replace lead service lines and other aging infrastructure in disinvested communities to prevent lead contamination in drinking water.</li> <li>○ <b>Source Water Protection Initiatives:</b> Implement source water protection programs that reduce pollution from agricultural runoff, industrial discharges, and stormwater</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>in watersheds serving disinvested communities, thereby preventing contaminants from entering water supplies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Health Data Collection and Analysis:</b> Collect and analyze health data related to water quality and environmental exposures, including incidences of gastrointestinal illnesses, skin infections, and respiratory conditions, particularly in communities with known environmental risks.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Ensuring Equitable Access to Clean and Affordable Water</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Develop programs to ensure that all residents, particularly in disinvested communities, have equitable access to clean and affordable water.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Water Affordability Programs:</b> Establish water affordability programs that provide subsidies, discounts, or tiered rates based on income, ensuring that all households can afford adequate water services without financial hardship.</li> <li>○ <b>Emergency Water Distribution and Assistance:</b> Set up emergency water distribution centers and provide bottled water, filters, and financial assistance during water quality crises or service interruptions, with a focus on disinvested communities.</li> <li>○ <b>Community Education on Water Safety:</b> Launch education campaigns to inform residents about the importance of water safety, potential contaminants, and available resources for testing and treatment, particularly in neighborhoods with a history of water quality issues.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Addressing Flooding and Stormwater Management in Vulnerable Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Strategy:</b> Improve stormwater management and flood control measures in disinvested communities to reduce the risk of flooding, which can lead to contamination of drinking water sources and create conditions conducive to waterborne diseases.</li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Green Infrastructure Projects:</b> Implement green infrastructure projects, such as permeable pavements, bioswales, rain gardens, and constructed wetlands, to manage stormwater, reduce runoff, and enhance groundwater recharge in flood-prone areas.</li> <li>○ <b>Flood Mitigation Infrastructure:</b> Upgrade and maintain critical flood mitigation infrastructure, such as levees, storm drains, and retention basins, particularly in areas that are more susceptible to flooding due to outdated or inadequate systems.</li> <li>○ <b>Community-Based Flood Preparedness Programs:</b> Develop community-based flood preparedness programs that educate residents on flood risks, emergency response plans, and actions they can take to protect their homes and families during flooding events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>16. Climate Impacts -</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have to <b>avoid</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and <b>mitigate</b> the effects of anticipated <b>climate impacts</b> on the priority industry and occupations?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Increase Water Supply Resilience:</b> Invest in diverse water supply sources such as recycled water, desalination, and stormwater capture to reduce reliance on vulnerable freshwater sources and enhance resilience to droughts and changing precipitation patterns.</li> <li><b>2. Implement Energy-Efficient and Renewable-Powered Water Operations:</b> Transition water infrastructure to energy-efficient systems and renewable energy sources (such as solar and wind) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the water sector's contribution to climate change.</li> <li><b>3. Adopt Advanced Water Management Technologies:</b> Utilize smart water management technologies, such as IoT devices and AI-driven analytics, to optimize water distribution, detect leaks early, and improve overall system efficiency, thereby reducing waste and energy use.</li> <li><b>4. Enhance Green Infrastructure for Climate Adaptation:</b> Develop green infrastructure projects like wetlands restoration, urban greening, and permeable surfaces to manage stormwater, reduce flood risks, and mitigate the urban heat island effect, improving climate resilience in urban areas.</li> </ol>

<p>17. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sustainable Water Management:</b> Promotes sustainable water management practices by investing in water recycling, stormwater capture, and desalination, aligning with state goals for water conservation and reducing dependence on imported water, thus supporting California's climate adaptation and resilience strategies.</li> <li>● <b>Clean Energy and Air Pollution Reduction:</b> Integrates renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, into water treatment and distribution processes, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the state's clean energy and air pollution reduction goals.</li> <li>● <b>Climate Adaptation and Resilience:</b> Develops climate-resilient water infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and sea-level rise, aligning with state climate adaptation strategies to protect communities and critical resources from climate impacts.</li> </ul>
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**San Diego Priority Industry 5 - Manufacturing** (Advanced Manufacturing, Precision Manufacturing, Biotech, Cleantech, Hardware, Defense)

<p>Worksheet: Manufacturing (Advanced Manufacturing, Precision Manufacturing, Biotech, Cleantech, Hardware, Defense)</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b> <a href="#">Link to Full Length Text</a></p>	
<p><b>Describe the Sector</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>One-two Sentence Description</b></p>	<p>The highly skilled workforce, robust training programs, and immediate proximity to Mexico make San Diego the ideal hub for advanced manufacturing companies, biotech, aerospace, defense, and cleantech, and other manufacturers encompass high-tech production. These processes involve robotics, automation, and cutting-edge materials instrumental to innovative products. This sector drives significant economic growth and technological advancement by tooling sophisticated technologies plus expertly skilled labor. This sharpens California's global competitiveness and sustainability with advanced manufacturing, which drives significant economic growth through high-value production and innovation that enhances local and state revenues and job creation. San Diego is home to 4,548 manufacturing businesses, 90% of these businesses have fewer than 50 employees supporting ~121,000 available jobs. Such jobs will provide livable wages, with an average annual income of ~\$103,000. Manufacturing generates \$28B in economic activity, representing 11% of San Diego's GDP.</p>
<p>2. <b>Regional Assets</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Highly skilled workforce</li> <li>● Educational institutions and research centers</li> <li>● Innovation ecosystem</li> <li>● Advanced manufacturing clusters</li> <li>● Access to ports and logistics</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>California Advanced Manufacturing Initiative</b> is a state-level initiative providing funding and resources to support the growth of advanced manufacturing sectors, emphasizing innovation, sustainability, and high-tech manufacturing.</li> <li>● <b>Partnerships with educational and research institutions</b> will support innovation, entrepreneurship and educational development opportunities for sustainable technologies.</li> <li>● <b>Investment in inclusive workforce development and education</b> generates opportunities to support diversity in hiring and open career and educational pathways.</li> <li>● <b>Promotion of tribal enterprises and business diversification</b> leverages traditional knowledge of environmental stewardship by implementing sustainable resource management and energy use.</li> </ul>

<p><b>4. Current Trends</b></p>	<p><b>Increasing demand for sustainable and green manufacturing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> There is a growing global and regional demand for sustainable manufacturing practices that reduce environmental impact, decrease carbon footprints, and use renewable resources.</li> <li>● <b>Alignment and response:</b> Both Tribal and non-Tribal communities in San Diego are adopting green manufacturing practices. Tribes apply their traditional knowledge of environmental stewardship for sustainable resource management and energy use. Non-Tribal communities increasingly invest in clean technologies and adopt circular economy principles in manufacturing processes to minimize waste and resource use.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated investments:</b> Investing in green technology and sustainable practices positions the region as a leader in sustainable manufacturing, attracting businesses that prioritize environmental responsibility and appealing to environmentally conscious consumers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Growing importance of workforce development and upskilling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trend:</b> The shift towards more advanced manufacturing technologies requires a workforce with specialized skills in areas like robotics, drones, solar, wind, energy such as microgrids, electrification, data analytics, and sustainable practices.</li> <li>● <b>Alignment and response:</b> Both Tribal and non-Tribal communities can invest in education and training programs to upskill workers, ensuring they are prepared for the evolving demands of the manufacturing sector. For example, partnerships between local universities, community colleges, and industry are creating tailored training programs that focus on the skills needed for modern manufacturing roles.</li> <li>● <b>Affiliated investments:</b> Investments in workforce development are essential for building a skilled labor force that can adapt to new technologies, enhance productivity, and drive innovation in the manufacturing sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Impact of Government Policies</b> - Are there any local/state/federal policies that impact the success of this sector in your county?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>City of San Diego Climate Action Plan:</b> Ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase renewable energy.</li> <li>● <b>San Diego County Regional Decarbonization Framework:</b> A countywide effort to facilitate action that moves the entire San Diego region to zero carbon emissions by mid-century in buildings, transportation, energy, food systems, and land use sectors.</li> <li>● <b>San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Initiatives:</b> The EDC promotes policies that support business growth, innovation, and workforce development in key sectors like advanced manufacturing. Local incentives, grants, and partnerships facilitated by the EDC help attract investments and support the expansion of manufacturing businesses, especially those contributing to economic diversification and sustainability.</li> <li>● <b>California Clean Energy Policies and Standards</b> California's stringent environmental regulations and clean energy mandates require manufacturers to comply with high standards for emissions, energy use, and waste management. These policies drive manufacturers to adopt greener practices and invest in energy-efficient technologies. While this can increase costs, it also creates opportunities for innovation in green manufacturing.</li> <li>● <b>Federal tax incentives and credits:</b> Federal tax incentives, such as the Research and Development (R&amp;D) Tax Credit and the Section 179D Energy Efficient Commercial Building Deduction, encourage investment in innovation, technology, and energy-efficient practices. These incentives can lower costs and enhance competitiveness for manufacturers in San Diego.</li> <li>● <b>Federal funding for innovation and research:</b> Programs through agencies like the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Energy (DOE) fund research and development in advanced manufacturing technologies. Access to federal R&amp;D funding can spur innovation and technological advancements in the San Diego manufacturing sector.</li> </ul>

<p>6. <b>Existing Reports</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">"Future of Growth in San Diego"</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">"Priority Sector: Advanced Manufacturing in San Diego County"</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">"City of San Diego Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025"</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">"Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the County of San Diego"</a></li> <li>● <b>"California Manufacturing: A Legacy of Innovation and Sustainability"</b></li> </ul> <p>Additional reports can be found on the expanded worksheet.</p>
<p><b>Steps to Enhance the Sector</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Growth strategies:</b> How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> support sector growth, including businesses/workers in the value chain of the proposed sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Enhancing workforce development and training programs:</b> Develop and expand workforce training programs that align with the skills needed for advanced manufacturing, focusing on areas like energy related products, precision engineering, and sustainable practices. A well-trained workforce reduces the skills gap, improves operational efficiency, and fosters innovation within companies. Access to skilled workers attracts new manufacturing firms to the region and supports the growth of existing ones. Tailored training programs provide workers with opportunities for career advancement and higher wages. As workers gain specialized skills, they become more valuable to employers and have better job security.</li> <li>● <b>Fostering an innovation-friendly regulatory environment:</b> Advocate for regulatory reforms that support innovation, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and streamline the approval processes for new technologies and products. An innovation-friendly regulatory environment reduces time-to-market for new products, lowers compliance costs, and encourages companies to invest in new ideas and technologies. This fosters a dynamic and competitive manufacturing sector. As businesses grow and innovate under supportive regulations, they create new jobs and opportunities for career advancement, contributing to a robust and dynamic workforce.</li> </ul>
<p>8. <b>Innovation:</b> How do <i>proposed investments and strategies</i> help to connect to local innovation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community-based master planning:</b> Economic development includes the voice of the community. This would include engagement with industries, businesses, housing, health and wellness, and schools. The plan should be built to ensure we grow with the infrastructure and resources to support the manufacturing industries.</li> <li>● <b>Local Chambers of Commerce and community organizations:</b> Engage the pulse of the community, conduct benchmarking, assessments, workshops and other services. This work should be detailed and include economic data and analysis specific to San Diego, which will be useful for stakeholders involved in planning and supporting the growth of the manufacturing sector for both non-Tribal and Tribal communities alike.</li> <li>● <b>Strong collaboration between industry and educational institutions:</b> San Diego benefits from robust partnerships between local and new manufacturers, universities, and community colleges. These collaborations provide tailored workforce training programs and foster innovation by connecting students and researchers with industry needs and developing a curriculum/program to support industry. Ensuring a steady pipeline of skilled workers, innovative thinkers, and advancing cutting-edge technologies.</li> <li>● <b>Technology Hub:</b> Collaborate with UC San Diego, San Diego State University, community colleges, and new facilities in Tribal lands or collaborative centers to create a dedicated space within their innovation labs for advanced manufacturing R&amp;D. The creation of a Technology Hub would enable a continuous flow of innovative ideas and technologies into the manufacturing sector, creating opportunities for companies to adopt cutting-edge solutions that improve efficiency, sustainability, and product quality.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	

<p>9. <b>Community benefit:</b> disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Focus workforce development programs on disinvested communities:</b> Implement targeted training and apprenticeship programs in advanced manufacturing specifically designed for residents of disinvested communities, which will include Tribes. These programs provide access to reskilling, retraining, and high-quality jobs and career advancement opportunities in the manufacturing sector, addressing unemployment and underemployment in these areas and promoting economic mobility.</li> </ul>
<p>10. <b>More on community benefits and strategies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Partnerships with local community organizations:</b> Collaborate with local community organizations to understand the specific needs and interests of disinvested communities. By integrating feedback and insights from these communities into the development of sector strategies, the advanced manufacturing sector can ensure that initiatives are inclusive and responsive, such as creating accessible pathways to employment and entrepreneurship within the sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Family-sustaining jobs:</b> What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Comprehensive benefits:</b> Advocate for policies and incentives to encourage companies to offer competitive healthcare and retirement benefits, including tax incentives and subsidies. Develop culturally relevant benefits packages in partnership with Tribal leaders, addressing the specific needs and values of Tribal communities.</li> <li>● <b>Career advancement:</b> Collaborate with educational institutions to provide relevant training and certifications and implement clear career pathways with mentorship and counseling services. Work with Tribal organizations to create culturally tailored training programs and career advancement opportunities, supporting sustainable job creation within Tribal lands.</li> <li>● <b>Access to training:</b> Utilize state-funded workforce development programs for ongoing training and upskilling and promote on-the-job training and apprenticeships. Prioritize hiring and training Tribal members while creating pathways for local youth and community members to enter the manufacturing workforce.</li> <li>● <b>Flexible scheduling:</b> Promote flexible work arrangements and predictive scheduling to enhance work-life balance and provide advance notice of work schedules. Implement flexible scheduling options that respect traditional practices and community needs, ensuring work-life balance for Tribal employees.</li> <li>● <b>Safe working conditions:</b> Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, provide ongoing safety training, and update safety protocols regularly. Collaborate with Tribal enterprises to establish and maintain high safety standards, incorporating traditional knowledge and practices into safety protocols.</li> <li>● <b>Collective input and representation:</b> Support labor unions or worker councils for collective bargaining and implement regular employee feedback mechanisms. Encourage collaborative approaches and joint ventures between manufacturing companies and tribal enterprises, ensuring Tribal input and representation in decision-making.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Equitable access:</b> What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing that ensure <b>equitable access</b> for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Closing gaps:</b> Allocate resources and investments specifically aimed at addressing data gaps and disparities identified in regional profiles, such as funding for infrastructure (i.e. electricity, water, and internet for learning virtually) or programs in underserved areas. This may include transportation services for education, training, and job placement with a focus on reaching our historically marginalized communities. Access to multi-language services as part of our programs and centrally located facility to serve communities.</li> <li>● <b>Tailored training programs:</b> Design training programs that specifically address unique needs and barriers faced by disinvested communities, including language support and culturally relevant content.</li> <li>● <b>Partnerships with local organizations:</b> Collaborate with local community organizations and nonprofits to deliver training programs that are accessible and responsive to community needs.</li> <li>● <b>Clear pathways for attaining education or skills:</b> Provide scholarships and financial</li> </ul>

	<p>assistance to support education and training for individuals from disinvested communities. Offer career counseling and guidance services to help individuals navigate educational and training opportunities and set clear career goals. Offer shorter certification programs with lower costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Inclusive recruitment practices:</b> Ensure that hiring panels and recruitment teams are diverse and inclusive, reflecting the communities being served. Engage in targeted outreach efforts to inform disinvested communities about job opportunities and training programs, using accessible channels such as community centers and local media, flyers, and outreach events.</li> <li>● <b>Accessible job information:</b> Streamline job application and hiring processes to reduce barriers for individuals from disinvested communities. These processes should be multi-language and support applicants with understanding terminology to reduce process complexity.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other equity Issues:</b> What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Support for small and diverse businesses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Business support services:</b> Offer support services such as grant writing, technical assistance, and mentoring to small and minority-owned businesses to bolster growth and competitive advantages in the marketplace.</li> <li>○ <b>Inclusive procurement practices:</b> Implement procurement practices that prioritize contracting with diverse and minority-owned businesses. This could leverage best practices, such as those currently used by the City of San Diego to ensure opportunities for minority, women-owned, and other criteria as supplier companies.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Community engagement and feedback:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Engage with affected communities:</b> Actively engage with communities that are most affected by inequity issues and gather feedback on strategies and solutions.</li> <li>○ <b>Advisory committees:</b> Establish advisory committees with representation from diverse communities to guide the development and implementation of equity and justice-focused initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Education and awareness campaigns:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Awareness programs:</b> Launch awareness campaigns to educate targeted employers, policymakers, and the public about the importance of equity and inclusion and the specific issues identified in the analyses. This strategy should include a pledge for commitment to community needs and being a leader.</li> <li>○ <b>Training for stakeholders:</b> Provide training for stakeholders on equity issues and best practices for creating inclusive and equitable opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Policy and advocacy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Support equity-focused policies:</b> Advocate for and support the implementation of policies that address identified equity issues and promote fair and equitable treatment across all sectors.</li> <li>○ <b>Legislative engagement:</b> Work with legislators to address gaps and disparities through targeted policy changes and funding allocations. These gaps present opportunities to develop better tools that center community voices.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-risk workers:</b> What <b>strategies</b> are you proposing to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Early identification and support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Industry analysis:</b> As a community and collaborative, continuously analyze industry trends and identify sectors at risk of downturns or significant changes. Additionally, identify and develop proactive support systems for workers in these sectors.</li> <li>○ <b>Economic diversification:</b> Support efforts to diversify local economies to reduce reliance on at-risk industries and create a broader range of employment opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Training and reskilling programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Tailored reskilling:</b> Develop and offer reskilling programs that are specifically designed to equip at-risk workers with the skills needed for emerging industries and high-quality jobs. Focus funding priority industries where advanced manufacturing serves as a growth industry to produce parts/products/services for water, energy,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>biotech, health, and transportation services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Job placement and transition support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Career transition services:</b> Provide career transition services, including job placement assistance, resume workshops, and interview preparation to help our disadvantaged community secure new employment opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Workforce development initiatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Funding for programs:</b> Secure funding for workforce development initiatives that support at-risk workers, including grants for training programs and subsidies for employers who hire displaced workers.</li> <li>○ <b>Support for small businesses:</b> Offer support to small businesses and startups that are hiring displaced workers, such as tax incentives or subsidies.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Support for workers in transition:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Temporary assistance programs:</b> Establish temporary assistance programs, such as unemployment benefits or emergency financial aid, for workers impacted by industry disruptions or job losses.</li> <li>○ <b>Mental health support:</b> Offer mental health support and counseling services to help workers cope with the stress and uncertainty of job displacement.</li> <li>○ <b>Personalized support plans:</b> Contribute to the development of personalized support plans for workers in at-risk industries. Ensure services are offered such as career counseling, financial assistance, and access to training programs. Improve the displacement of workers with a safety net of services, as their income has a direct impact on the communities where they live and work. Also use a community mitigation strategy to reduce homelessness due to unemployment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental impacts:</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have that limit the <b>impact</b> of the priority sector on the natural environment, including climate change?</p>	<p>The advanced manufacturing industry sector is moving from being high-energy usage and fossil fuel oriented toward implementing sustainable practices. The following strategies address the impact on our natural environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Energy efficiency:</b> Implement energy-efficient technologies and processes in manufacturing operations to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>● <b>Waste reduction:</b> Promote practices that minimize waste generation, such as recycling, reusing materials, and implementing zero-waste strategies.</li> <li>● <b>Renewable energy sources:</b> Transition to renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, or geothermal, to power manufacturing operations and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.</li> <li>● <b>Energy purchase agreements:</b> Encourage advanced manufacturing companies to enter into power purchase agreements (PPAs) with renewable energy providers.</li> <li>● <b>Adaptation planning:</b> Understand the climate change and adaptation plans to address the potential impacts on manufacturing operations and infrastructure.</li> <li>● <b>Resilience measures:</b> Ensure advanced manufacturing innovation and R&amp;D careers focus on serving this market. Invest in resilience measures, such as infrastructure upgrades and climate-resilient materials, to protect against climate-related disruptions. Repairs should use new, resilient technologies rather than existing legacy technologies.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Public health:</b> What <b>strategies</b> do you have to address <b>public health needs</b> related to environmental degradation, with special attention to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Health impact assessments:</b> Regularly conduct health impact assessments to evaluate how environmental degradation affects public health in affected disinvested communities.</li> <li>● <b>Use data to inform policy:</b> Work with EPA and other state and local agencies to utilize assessment findings and hone public health policies and interventions that mitigate adverse health effects.</li> <li>● <b>Community health programs:</b> Develop and support health programs that focus on common health issues related to environmental degradation, such as respiratory diseases, water, or heat-related illnesses. Partner with mobile health clinics to provide accessible health services to communities that lack nearby healthcare facilities.</li> </ul>

<p>the needs of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Environmental remediation:</b> Ensure new manufacturing industries consider the support of environmental cleanup and remediation projects to reduce exposure to pollutants and contaminants in disinvested communities. Conduct regular soil and water testing to identify and address contamination issues affecting public health.</li> <li>• <b>Access to clean air and water:</b> Enhance infrastructure to ensure access to clean air and water, upgrading water treatment facilities and reducing industrial emissions. Enact pollution control measures, for emissions standards and monitoring air quality.</li> <li>• <b>Community engagement and education:</b> Provide education on the health impacts of environmental degradation and preventive measures that individuals and communities can take. Indoor air quality can also affect our communities.</li> <li>• <b>Emergency preparedness and response:</b> Create and implement emergency preparedness plans to address environmental health emergencies, such as fire, chemical spills or extreme weather events.</li> <li>• <b>Community training:</b> Provide training for community members on how to respond to environmental health emergencies and access available resources.</li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate impacts:</b> What <i>strategies</i> do you have to <i>avoid</i> exacerbating and <i>mitigate climate impacts</i>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Climate adaptation planning:</b> Conduct comprehensive climate risk assessments to understand potential impacts on industries and occupations and develop adaptation strategies accordingly. Develop resilience plans that include measures to protect infrastructure, operations, and workers from climate-related disruptions, such as extreme weather events or rising temperatures.</li> <li>• <b>Infrastructure improvements:</b> Invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, including flood defenses, heat-resistant building materials, and climate-adapted facilities.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State climate policy:</b> How does this Sector align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<p><b>Innovation and technology development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in and adopt green technologies that contribute to the state’s environmental goals, such as carbon capture and storage or advanced recycling technologies.</li> <li>• Collaborate with state initiatives focused on advancing climate goals and environmental sustainability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy compliance and advocacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align with regulations related to climate change, air quality, water management, and other environmental issues.</li> <li>• Support policy development and advocacy efforts to strengthen state climate policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>19. <b>Implementation:</b> <i>What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</i> your strategies and support the enhancement of the priority sector?</p>	<p><b>Partnerships and resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Industry partners:</b> Collaborate on technology development, share best practices, and provide insights into sector-specific needs and challenges.</li> <li>• <b>Government agencies:</b> Provide funding, regulatory guidance, and support for policy implementation.</li> <li>• <b>Research institutions:</b> Conduct research and provide data on environmental impacts, technological innovations, and best practices.</li> <li>• <b>Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):</b> Advocate for policy changes, provide expertise on environmental and social issues, and support community engagement.</li> <li>• <b>Community organizations:</b> Facilitate outreach and engagement with local communities, provide feedback on needs and concerns, and support implementation of community-focused initiatives.</li> <li>• <b>State and federal grants and industry investments:</b> Provide funding, investment, and business development support for implementing sustainability initiatives.</li> <li>• <b>Tribal lead agency:</b> Oversee the implementation of strategies within Tribal lands, ensure adherence to Tribal sovereignty, and coordinate with other partners.</li> <li>• <b>Tribal advisory council:</b> Provide guidance and support based on Tribal needs and cultural considerations and ensure that strategies align with Tribal values.</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 5: SECTOR NEUTRAL, ECONOMIC MOBILITY, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

This chapter provides information on the Sector-Neutral, Economic Mobility, and Community Development strategies approved by the Coalition. The final Sector Lead selection of these cross-sector strategies was made by ballot, and all 100% participated. Below is a summary list of the five selected strategies.

1. **Community Ownership and Respectful Engagement:** Commit to inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities.
2. **Career Pathways to Real Opportunity:** Enhance education and training resources to facilitate career pathways leading to high-quality jobs.
3. **The Small Business, Cooperative, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem:** Provide capital, technical assistance, and other resources to enhance the small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem.
4. **Community Infrastructure Supports Healthy Communities:** Invest and enhance infrastructure that supports healthy neighborhoods, economic vitality, and a cleaner environment.
5. **Climate Resilience:** Taking actions to support a sustainable environment, transition to a net-zero emission economy, and adapt to climate impacts.

### Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategies

Below are worksheets for the five approved strategies, which provide background, research, analysis, and strategy recommendations. As noted in this plan, these preliminary documents will be further socialized and developed in September 2024.

#### Cross-Cutting Strategy 1 - Community Ownership and Respectful Engagement

<i>Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy</i> Worksheet: Community Ownership and Respectful Engagement	
Key Questions and Information	Your Answers
1. <b>Strategy</b> - Provide the text of the strategy.	1. <b>Community Ownership to Ensure Sustained and Respectful Engagement:</b> Commit to inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities. This includes, but is not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Uplift Community Voices through Respectful Engagement:</b> Enhance community participation in creating strategies and projects to ensure the most significant benefit to disinvested communities. Cultural humility and respectful cultural engagement are essential to implementing the regional plan. This includes</li> </ol>

	<p>respecting workers, residents, and business owners by adhering to their community norms and customs when engaging with them.</p> <p>b. <b>Regional Partnerships:</b> Facilitate regional partnerships among disinvested communities, local governments, tribal governments, small and large businesses, other community members, nonprofits, and philanthropy to co-create strategies and take action to implement community priority projects, policies, and programs. Community ownership is augmented when partnerships continue from the design to the implementation of programs, and where community partners not only consult but co-create policies and programs.</p> <p>c. <b>Enhance Quality of Life:</b> Increase wrap-around services to ensure the health and well-being of all families and neighborhoods, particularly in disinvested communities, foster a sense of inclusivity and support, strengthen climate resilience, and improve quality of life. This includes access to 24-hour childcare, physical and mental health care, drug and alcohol programs, senior day care, public transportation, and government services.</p> <p>d. <b>Community Voices Shape Future:</b> Commit to and practice inclusive and equitable practices that promote social and economic justice, challenge systems that perpetuate inequality, and emphasize an open, accessible, and transparent implementation process that ensures community voices actively participate in shaping their future.</p>
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**Deeper Look**

<p><b>2. Explain the Need/Opportunity -</b> Describe why this strategy was selected. Use data and information from Part 1 or new information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure Community Ownership, Sustained and Respectful Engagement</b> in our economic development planning process that adopts inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities.</li> <li>• Advance the Coalition’s vision for equity, justice, and civil rights as described in Chapter 2: Equity and Data Limitations.</li> <li>• Enfranchise workers, community members, indigenous residents, farmworkers, recent immigrant families, Spanish-speakers, among other groups and sectors who have been disenfranchised from decisions over economic development and civic life.</li> <li>• Engage immigrants and Spanish-speaking segments of the community who are excluded from meaningful participation in civic life and economic planning.</li> <li>• Community ownership shifts the long-standing development paradigm that excludes existing sectors from conversations, planning, and implementation of economic and community development as well as from the benefits from this development.</li> <li>• Address existing disparities in the region and of this historical context and all supporting information to pave the road for robust participation by disinvested communities</li> <li>• Design processes and outcomes that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities as described in the meeting notes appendices.</li> <li>• Bridge the equity gap to create a pathway for the community to lead planning and implementation of projects in economic and community development.</li> <li>• Adopt participatory community ownership in economic development. Vote to prioritize a strategy to operationalize the Coalition’s commitment to an inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities. California Jobs First described in the Coalition Bylaws, and in the Coalition’s efforts to honor them during the Planning Phase Community Engagement. See Bylaws.</li> </ul>
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<p>3. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this strategy, or that can be leveraged to support it. Regional assets include but are not limited to, – local services, expertise, natural resources, community spaces and networks, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Comprehensive Planning Aligned with California Jobs First:</b> The region benefits from robust regional planning, as evidenced by Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) detailed climate action plans, and county-specific general plans. These efforts lay a strong foundation for <i>coordinated growth and sustainable development</i>. For example, the Imperial County General Plan (ICGP) prioritizes land use, mobility, housing, conservation and open space, safety, noise, and environmental justice. These priorities are aligned with California Jobs First.</li> <li>• The new launch of the FourFront Initiative is a partnership between Mexicali, San Luis Rio Colorado, Yuma County (Arizona), and Imperial County established to focus on environmental protection, economic development, public safety, and tourism development.</li> <li>• <b>Cross-regional Involvement</b> to foster collaboration between regions like the Imperial Valley and San Diego County, two regions that vary significantly and have historically operated separately, despite geographic proximity.</li> <li>• <b>Span of Co-Convener Impact.</b> The project has a team of eight Co-conveners, each possessing a unique skill set capable of addressing the needs of diverse populations across multiple regions. Their combined expertise positions the initiative to catalyze significant social innovation within the sector. This collective capacity presents a promising foundation for achieving widespread and transformative change.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainability and Environmental Justice Lens.</b> Beyond the project’s purpose of creating jobs in the regions, this project has a key requirement that sustainability and environmental justice are to be integrated into the strategies.</li> <li>• <b>Sector Collaboration for Community Impact.</b> By bringing together diverse sectors representing both population segments and industries, the project fosters unprecedented collaboration among stakeholders. Sector Leads, selected for their community commitment and leadership, are instrumental in building partnerships and driving positive change.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this strategy to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Equity Assessment Report recommended “Opportunities to Grow” to enhance Regional Assets such as cross-regional Involvement and strengths and opportunities to enhance equity and inclusivity to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and workforce, and to make the economy more resilient.</li> <li>• <b>Community Engagement and Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Center the Community:</b> Make sure community voices, especially those often overlooked, are heard and valued in all steps of the project. Ensure processes reflect and support community values and center the voices of community members, especially those most marginalized. Foster an environment where everyone involved can easily share their thoughts and get information.</li> <li>• <b>Ongoing Community Input:</b> Create opportunities for community input and feedback throughout the project lifecycle. Hold open, participatory meetings and workshops where community members can actively help plan and carry out the project. Facilitate authentic, meaningful involvement of community members in planning and implementation.</li> <li>• <b>Build Community Skills:</b> Offer support, training, and resources to help community members get involved in decision-making. Source experts from the community showcase the talents and strengths within communities, to help boost their profiles, businesses, and reputation, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Governance and Decision-Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Share the Power:</b> Give everyone involved – community members, leaders, and partners – a fair voice in decisions. Within the Southern Border Coalition, distribute decision-making authority more equitably among Sector leads, Co-conveners, and community members.</li> <li>• <b>Update the Rules:</b> Review and update how the group is organized and makes decisions to include everyone’s input. Socialize the Bylaws, with full participation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>and feedback from all Sector Leads, outlining responsibilities and decision-making processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simplify Approval Processes:</b> Allow Sector Leads more autonomy in implementing community-driven initiatives. Simplify administrative tasks and reduce bureaucratic burdens.</li> <li>• <b>Check How It's Working:</b> Regularly assess how well decisions are being made and make changes as needed. Assess the governance structure's impact on equity and inclusivity, making necessary adjustments.</li> <li>• <b>Support Everyone's Involvement:</b> Help community members, especially those who face challenges and have been most overlooked/marginalized, get involved in decision-making.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transparency and Accountability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adhere to Roles and Responsibilities:</b> Clearly outline everyone's roles, strengths, and capabilities, and delineate how they contribute to the goals, including equity goals. Address any shortcomings and gaps in skills and capabilities promptly.</li> <li>• <b>Be Open About Money:</b> Clearly, and consistently, explain how money is spent and how decisions are made, to build trust.</li> <li>• <b>Improve Voting Processes:</b> Regularly evaluate voting processes and procedures to identify barriers to equity and ensure that structured voting is built into the decision-making process. Regularly review how votes are counted to make sure everyone has a fair chance. Incorporate best practices on voting and motions, such as Robert's Rules of Order.</li> <li>• <b>Share Resources Fairly:</b> Make sure everyone gets a fair share of resources and that the help provided fits their specific needs.</li> <li>• <b>Help with Technology:</b> Offer devices and training to help people use technology, and ensure the training is designed for multiple levels of competency in technology. Implement technology loan or grant programs and provide technical support and training.</li> <li>• <b>Simplify Forms, Communication, and Documentation:</b> Make forms and reports easier to fill out by removing confusing terms. Write in easy-to-understand language. Remove unnecessary legalese or jargon, providing summaries or key points for clarity. Find alternatives to email threads for communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>Creating a Welcoming Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fairness for Everyone:</b> Provide clear rules and training to help prevent unfairness and conflicts of interest. Make sure everyone feels included when working together.</li> <li>• <b>Share Conversation Guidelines:</b> Regularly remind everyone about the importance of fairness, respect and inclusion. Set clear expectations for meetings and discussions, for how to talk and act in meetings so everyone feels respected and understood. Reinforce these guidelines, and that it is everyone's responsibility to embody these guidelines and redirect the group to them.</li> <li>• <b>Effective Meetings:</b> Use helpful tools and approaches to make sure meetings run smoothly and everyone can share their ideas. Check that the objectives of the meeting are centered, and that equal airtime is implemented.</li> <li>• <b>Handling Tough Situations:</b> Equip people to handle disagreements effectively and understand each other's points of view.</li> </ul> <p><b>Regional Plan Part 1 identified the following Opportunities to Grow relevant to this strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Lithium Valley High Road Partnership is an opportunity within Advanced Manufacturing to connect labor councils with UC San Diego and Comite Civico del Valle</b> to "identify the short-term and long-term supportive services needs that will ensure employment success for local residents." Members of the Disinvested Communities sector in Imperial County suggested that the</li> </ul>
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	<p>environmental activists and Lithium Valley investors have a regular dialogue where perspectives are shared, seeking to strike a balance between quality job creation and environmental impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased collaboration through High Road Training Partnerships (HRTPs) and other community-led initiatives offers a pathway to more cohesive and inclusive regional development.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Current Trends</b> - Does this strategy respond to current trends or issues? If so, briefly document this.</p>	<p><b>San Diego County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Coordination Among Multiple Plans:</b> With numerous plans and strategies in place, there is a potential for overlapping objectives or conflicts between different regional efforts, which could lead to inefficiencies or diluted focus (page 161).</li> <li><b>Economic Disparities and Income Inequality:</b> Low unemployment and thriving high-tech sectors mask the persistent inequalities in disinvested communities, creating stark disparities in income, health, and quality of life in San Diego County. These disparities are further amplified by uneven wealth distribution, with coastal and northern areas enjoying greater affluence, while some southern and eastern neighborhoods struggle with economic hardship (page 161).</li> <li><b>Inaccessible Housing and High Cost of Living:</b> Rising housing costs impacting workforce retention and quality of life. High costs and inequality can impede economic mobility, making it challenging for lower-income residents to move into higher-paying jobs or more affluent areas. Along with an overall lack of housing, (316) San Diego County faces a “missing middle” housing gap, (317) where the developers who are building are focusing on subsidized low-income projects and expensive luxury housing, but very limited housing that is affordable for middle-income workers. These middle-income workers include firefighters, teachers, nurses, and other essential workers (page 162).</li> <li><b>Widening inequality across the county worsens quality of life and suppresses the economic growth potential</b> of the county (page 163).</li> </ul> <p><b>Imperial County (165-169)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>High unemployment rates continue to persist in Imperial County.</b> Overdependence on social services to support low-income residents signifies deeply rooted systemic issues within the region, hindering affordability and access to economic opportunities.</li> <li><b>Digital Divide:</b> In some areas, particularly in underinvested communities, there are communities without consistent access to the internet or cell services. This gap affects access to education, job opportunities, and digital healthcare services.</li> <li><b>Lack of safe, free programming and facilities for youth to exercise after school and in the summer.</b> This also includes places to go in the summer with air conditioning, swimming facilities, or other ways to stay cool during the very hot summers.</li> <li><b>Social Inequities and Health Disparities:</b> If social inequities and health disparities continue to widen within the county and between Imperial county residents and other Americans, it could lead to societal challenges and impact overall social stability.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Is this strategy impacted by local/state/federal policies? If so, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The status of the cross-regional involvement and the ability of the Coalition to create sustainable capacity and strengthen the trust and collaboration across the sectors represented in the Southern Border Coalition in California Jobs First.</li> <li>The Coalition’s ability to successfully receive fund investments for the Competitive Round of Grants during the California Jobs First Implementation.</li> <li>California Jobs First criteria, rubrics, application process, existence of application technical assistance, among other government policies, during the competitive implementation phase impact the investments that are secured by the Coalition.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Coalition has chosen to prioritize a strategy to commit to inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities given the significance and impact of Implementation Funds awarded to a region can increase the chances of successful collaborations that lead to projects being awarded.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>7. <b>Community Benefit</b> - Describe how the strategy provides indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities. Describe how the needs and interests of disinvested communities impacted the selection of the Strategy.</p>	<p>Increased capacity by investing time, resources, and energy in the Coalition’s strategy to center the commitment for inclusive and equitable implementation practices that empower, create agency, and place ownership in the decision-making within disinvested communities.</p> <p>Enhanced cross-regional partnerships and local sub-regional partnerships across the fifteen Southern Border Coalition California Jobs First sectors.</p> <p>Commitment to the Southern Border Coalition Vision for equity, justice, and civil rights.</p>
<p>8. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - Describe how this strategy <b>directly serves</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups. Include data and analysis to support your statements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uplifting historically marginalized community voices through respectful engagement helps make it possible to ensure that the needs, dreams, and solutions proposed are documented, included, and that this input is actionable.</li> <li>Community ownership is augmented when partnerships carry from the design to the implementation of programs, and where community partners not only consult but co-create policies and programs.</li> <li>Increase civic participation to help communities thrive. (Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>9. <b>Family-Sustaining Jobs</b> 1 - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs? Family-sustaining jobs include healthcare and retirement benefits, career advancement opportunities, access to training, consistent scheduling, safe working conditions, and collective worker input and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strategy for Community Ownership to Ensure Sustained and Respectful Engagement helps foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision making between community and governance.</li> <li>Assist community to identify barriers and support equitable access to family sustaining jobs. This includes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childcare: stipends or discounts to support single parents and families.</li> <li>Reimbursements for mileage and workers' time.</li> <li>Measure travel distances for reimbursement.</li> <li>Make transportation more accessible to mitigate inflation (gasoline costs).</li> <li>Higher wages because living standards cannot be maintained with low wages.</li> <li>12-hour shift cap (12-hour shifts should not be mandatory).</li> <li>Health and mental health services.</li> <li>Wages must increase, housing and accommodation should be provided</li> <li><b>Example from Sector Meeting:</b> “No discrimination to people regardless of their past jobs or disabilities.” - Farmworker Sector Meeting Participant 8/26/24</li> <li>Increasing pathways for collaboration, connection, and worker organizing can help build worker power and promote enhanced collaboration with employers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>representation opportunities.</p>	
<p>10. <b>Skills Match</b> - Explain how the strategy plans to match skills to available jobs, address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc. If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<p>Conversations during sector meetings have helped workers collectively collaborate, communicate, organize and identify some of the barriers that would support skill matching to available jobs, address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc.</p> <p>As identified in the Opportunities for Growth section, the Lithium Valley High Road Partnership is an opportunity within Advanced Manufacturing to connect labor councils with UC San Diego and Comite Civico del Valle to “identify the short-term and long-term supportive services needs that will ensure employment success for local residents.”</p> <p>Members of the Disinvested Communities sector in Imperial County suggested that the environmental activists and Lithium Valley investors have a regular dialogue where perspectives are shared, seeking to strike a balance between quality job creation and environmental impact. There are opportunities for collaborative partnerships with increased collaboration through High Road Training Partnerships (HRTPs) and other community-led initiatives offering a pathway to more cohesive and inclusive regional development.</p> <p><b>Example from Sector Meeting:</b> “Work as a team to be able to get good credit and make a good partnership that guarantees good wages and a good life.” - Farmworker Sector Meeting Participant 8/26/24</p>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>11. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy will limit the impacts of economic development activities on the natural environment. If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower community members to advocate for themselves to improve and protect their health, community and environment.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigate Health Risks, Health Disparities, and Environmental Justice in</b> historically, disinvested communities, which often include a high proportion of minorities and low-income families, are more likely to be situated near sources of pollution, leading to higher exposure and associated health risks.</li> <li>• <b>Improve Air Quality and Respiratory Problems that are</b> exacerbating asthma, respiratory diseases, allergies, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease in addition to all-cause mortality and an increase in hospital admissions.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Public Health</b> - Explain how the strategy addresses <b>public health needs</b>, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities. If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize the public health issues that impact marginalized families and communities.</li> <li>• Address health disparities that exist are well documented and Coalition members have identified specific workplace issues that impact their well-being and public health.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy <b>avoids</b> exacerbating the</p>	<p>Bring awareness of climate impacts that are affecting disinvested communities. Prioritizing this strategy helps impacted communities voice the climate related issues in the workplace and in communities.</p>

<p>effects of climate change and includes pathways for mitigating the effects of anticipated climate impacts on targeted industries and occupations.</p>	<p><b>Sector meeting participants identified the following information about issues related to climate impacts to the region that can be addressed relevant to this strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure buses/trucks are closer to the field.</li> <li>• Hydration liquids/IV.</li> <li>• Summer climate is unbearable; higher wages should be given to workers during this season.</li> <li>• Adding cooling stations for farmworkers to prevent heat strokes.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does the strategy align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies. This includes such things as clean energy, air pollution reduction, transportation decarbonization, climate adaptation, sustainable water management, and natural and working lands.</p>	<p>The strategy is aligned with the following state climate policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">California Climate Adaptation Strategy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">California Climate Scoping Plan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Community Air Protection Program by the California Air Resources Board</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Lithium Valley Vision by the California Energy Commission</a></li> </ul> <p><b>From the Regional Part 1 - Environmental Factors:</b> Socioeconomic status also intersects with environmental factors, with lower-income neighborhoods often exposed to higher levels of pollution and having limited access to green spaces and recreational facilities. Stakeholder meetings elevated transportation access, housing and food costs, caregiving, and the inability to stop or reduce working hours to access healthcare.</p>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Implementation</b> - <i>What partnerships</i> and <i>resources</i> are <i>needed to implement</i> strategy and support enhancing the priority sector? Explain the Collaborative's and/or other partners' roles in the management and governance of the strategy. Include a budget.</p>	

**Cross-Cutting Strategy 2 - Career Pathways to Real Opportunity**

<p><i>Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy</i> Worksheet: Career Pathways</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	<p><b>This is the full worksheet.</b></p>
<p>1. <b>Strategy:</b> Provide the text of the strategy.</p>	<p>1. <b>Career pathways to real opportunity:</b> Enhance education and training resources to facilitate career pathways leading to high-quality jobs. This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Strategic partnership tables:</b> Facilitate collaboration between industry, community organizations, government, education and training providers, philanthropy, and stakeholders to lower barriers to participation in career pathways to high-road jobs.</li> <li><b>Improve resource alignment:</b> Align federal, state and philanthropic programs to supplement funding and other resources for career pathways supported with K-16 instruction and on-the-job training.</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. <b>Upskill workers:</b> Create accessible opportunities to increase wages and access new career pathways through workforce training and education, including for individuals who face barriers to employment, including single parents, older adults, justice-involved individuals, farmworkers, immigrants, refugees, workers without work authorization, and youth in the foster care system.</li> <li>d. <b>Increase awareness of available opportunities:</b> Promote the availability of education and training programs that lead to high-road career pathways for students and families from disinvested communities.</li> <li>e. <b>Enhance apprenticeships:</b> Increase apprenticeship opportunities by aligning federal and state funding and streamlining the articulation of high school and adult education programs that lead to pre-apprenticeships.</li> <li>f. <b>Local hire policies:</b> Advocate for and expand the use of local hire policies by, among other things, requiring businesses and nonprofits that receive public funding to share job openings with the local workforce board and undertake other local outreach activities to identify qualified local workers.</li> <li>g. <b>Invest in refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs:</b> Develop and implement programs that provide targeted investments and support for refugee and newcomer entrepreneurs, facilitating the creation and growth of immigrant-owned businesses. This strategy leverages the economic potential of refugee entrepreneurs to drive wealth building and upward mobility.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deeper Look</b></p>	
<p>2. <b>Explain the need/opportunity:</b> Describe why this strategy was selected. Use data and information from Part 1 or new information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Address current and projected gaps in qualified labor shortages by creating career pathways to real opportunities across priority industries and beyond.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In addition to career pathways that require traditional degrees and certifications, workers and employers need non-traditional, innovative, and responsive pathways to meet demands.</li> <li>○ Employers across priority industries report labor shortages, exacerbated in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic’s “Great Reshuffle.” Workers have been transitioning to other jobs in search of an improved work-life balance and flexibility, increased compensation, or a strong company culture.<sup>29</sup> This shortage is impacting all industries in nearly every state and hinders workers, businesses, and communities from growing and thriving.</li> <li>○ Many workers are struggling to find good jobs due to limited English proficiency, technology literacy, limited formal education, transportation, or limited availability of employment opportunities in the neighborhoods where they live.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Address structural, institutional, and cultural barriers such as<sup>30</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Economic disparities and income inequality</li> <li>○ Persistent inequalities in disinvested communities</li> <li>○ Stark disparities in income, health, and quality of life</li> <li>○ Unemployment and underemployment in San Diego County is higher in inner cities and some rural areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>29</sup> [Understanding America’s Labor Shortage: The Most Impacted Industries](#), 2024, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

<sup>30</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, pp. 161-162

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In San Diego County, disparities are amplified by region where coastal areas enjoy greater affluence, southern and eastern neighborhoods struggle with economic hardship and the north inland region has pockets of disinvested communities</li> <li>○ Rising housing costs and high costs of living impact workforce retention and quality of life</li> <li>○ Lack of transportation infrastructure limits access to education and employment opportunities</li> <li>○ Digital divide impacting disinvested communities that lack consistent access to the internet or cell services. This gap affects access to education and job opportunities.</li> <li>● Increase wages across priority industries. Improving education and training will increase household income and support and improve quality of life. For example,             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Imperial County ranks among the lowest wages in California.</li> <li>○ High unemployment rates persist in Imperial County.</li> <li>○ High poverty creates overdependence on social services to support low-income residents.</li> <li>○ Insufficient access impinges key education pathways in business, advanced medicine, engineering, and sciences. This is even more lacking for the Black community.<sup>31</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Diversify strategic partnership tables and democratize decision-making that currently lack adequate representation and engagement from community-based organizations (CBOs) and voices from disinvested communities and vulnerable populations.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Including representation from impacted individuals and communities with lived experience will provide a space to provide input into the process, design, and implementation of programs and activities.</li> <li>○ CBOs are often excluded from participating within the adult education consortia but are critical partners to bridging connections and supporting adult education services for immigrants and refugees. CBOs may support their clients by engaging local workforce boards and adult education stakeholders to provide or build access to training and education programs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Reduce barriers to upskill workers by creating tangible opportunities. Populations such as single parents, older adults, justice-involved individuals, farmworkers, immigrants, refugees, workers without work authorization, and youth in the foster care system face most barriers.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One out of every three workers in California is an immigrant, and nearly half of all children in California have at least one immigrant parent.<sup>32</sup></li> <li>○ In San Diego County, one quarter of all residents are considered New Americans—immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers—and many struggle to find work because of limited English proficiency.<sup>33</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ They lack adequate access to adult education programs, job referrals, assessments, career counseling, on-the-job training, upward mobility and other services.</li> <li>■ Low-income and English language learner workers experience barriers and discrimination.</li> <li>■ Immigrant workers are barred from accessing workforce development due to unnecessary work authorization requirements.</li> <li>■ They represent an untapped talent pool of workers who have language and cultural assets to serve their respective communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<sup>31</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, p. 166

<sup>32</sup> [Advancing Economic Opportunity for California's Immigrant & Refugee Workforce](#), 2021, California Immigrant Policy Center

<sup>33</sup> [Lessons Learned from the Pathways for Immigrants Program](#), 2023, San Diego Workforce Partnership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Refugees and other disinvested communities are overrepresented in industries—such as retail, hospitality, and tourism—that are most vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather.<sup>34</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Extending workforce development opportunities for youth.</li> <li>● Extend workforce development services to undocumented workers who currently lack access to services. Undocumented immigrant workers comprise one in sixteen California’s workforce who generally lack access to adult education programs, job referrals, assessments, career counseling, on-the-job training, and other tools with the potential to improve job quality and expand access to good jobs for California’s workers.<sup>35</sup> They are excluded due to work authorization requirements. CWDB can remove barriers to workforce services for immigrants without work authorization by doing the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update state guidelines to remove work authorization requirements that categorically exclude immigrant workers</li> <li>○ Train staff to understand new work authorization policies and not turn away immigrant workers without work authorization</li> <li>○ Fund workforce development services and programs that center equity and inclusion</li> <li>○ Expand worker and community-based organization (CBO) representation on workforce boards</li> <li>○ Analyze, develop, and incorporate equity metrics into workforce development evaluations</li> <li>○ Support work models that allow workers without work authorization to gain good jobs</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Engage employers to adopt technology-enabled tools to support the growth and development of their workers.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support tools workers and jobseekers can use to develop their English language skills, learn domain specific terms, and train for job-related certification.</li> <li>○ Offer programs that supply engaging, micro-learning lessons that can be accessible virtually and via cell phone.<sup>36</sup></li> <li>○ Build and support access to technology and grow literacy.</li> <li>○ Offer stipends for workers to validate their professional development.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Develop certification programs to meet the needs of emerging industries and occupations, especially in Imperial County.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Higher incomes allow for better housing, transportation options, and health care.</li> <li>○ Gaps in services offered through traditional agencies</li> <li>○ Reduce barriers and increase awareness of available opportunities by addressing challenges to participation:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English classes are held during work hours.</li> <li>■ Job centers do not provide linguistically or culturally competent services.</li> <li>■ There is a lack of vocational English classes.</li> <li>■ Existing services are insufficient for people with trauma or mental health needs.</li> <li>■ People are not placed in jobs that effectively match their cultural skills and previous work experience.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● Providing investments such as seed capital, technical assistance, and other targeted support to refugee and newcomer entrepreneurs in San Diego not only addresses the challenges faced by immigrant business owners but also strengthens the region's economic diversity and resilience, ultimately promoting sustained economic prosperity.</li> </ul>
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<sup>34</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, p. 157

<sup>35</sup> [Can You Verify? Addressing Work Authorization Restrictions As Obstacles to Workforce Development Equity for Immigrant Workers](#), 2022, California Immigrant Policy Center

<sup>36</sup> [Lessons Learned from the Pathways for Immigrants Program](#), 2023, San Diego Workforce Partnership

	<p>Immigrant-owned enterprises contribute significantly to the local economy, generating approximately \$1.4 billion in annual business income and constituting nearly one-third of the entrepreneurial activity within the county.</p>
<p>3. <b>Regional assets:</b> Describe specific regional assets that support this strategy, or that can be leveraged to support it. Regional assets include but are not limited to, – local services, expertise, natural resources, community spaces and networks, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● San Diego County has many regional assets that support this strategy:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diverse economic sectors: The presence of a wide range of robust economic sectors that provide the region with a resilient economic base.</li> <li>○ The region is home to renowned academic and research institutions that foster innovation and develop the workforce. These institutions contribute to cutting-edge research and attract businesses looking for innovative solutions and skilled workers.</li> <li>○ Regional consortium of community colleges that coordinates education and workforce development among the 11 community colleges in San Diego County. Many of these colleges offer apprenticeships programs and work-based learning opportunities.</li> <li>○ The county benefits from having robust regional plans including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), climate action plans, and city and county-specific general plans.</li> <li>○ Local Workforce Board (North San Diego Economic Development C, San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego Economic Development Corp)</li> <li>○ After school youth programs</li> <li>○ Industry Collaboration: Partner with local employers in high-growth industries to develop apprenticeship and paid internship programs (including those for high school students)</li> <li>○ Community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs)</li> <li>○ Career Technical Education (CTE)</li> <li>○ San Diego County Regional Occupation Program</li> <li>○ San Diego County has a rich culturally diverse population where 100+ languages are spoken. The top non-English languages are Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Other languages include Arabic, Somali, and Amharic.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Imperial County has many assets that support this strategy.<sup>37</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The county benefits from having robust regional plans including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), climate action plans, and city and county-specific general plans.</li> <li>○ Various climate action plans and sustainability initiatives demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental stewardship.</li> <li>○ Openness to adopting new technologies, especially in sectors such as renewable energy and digital infrastructure.</li> <li>○ Unique position near the U.S. - Mexico border offers distinct economic and cultural advantages. The designation as a Foreign Trade Zone #257 offers unique advantages and opportunities.</li> <li>○ Agricultural production and resources provide local employment and significant contributions to the nation’s food supply.</li> <li>○ The Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC)</li> <li>○ The new launch of the FourFront Initiative, a partnership between Mexicali, San Luis Rio Colorado, Yuma County and Imperial County</li> <li>○ After school youth programs</li> <li>○ Community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs)</li> <li>○ Imperial Valley Regional Occupation Program (IVROP)</li> <li>○ Career technical education (CTE)</li> <li>○ Future Farmers of America (FFA)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>37</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, pp. 163-164

<p>4. <b>Opportunities to grow:</b> What is the potential for this strategy to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow job opportunities through career planning services, workplace education, and skills training.</li> <li>• Prepare the workforce to transition from fieldwork to energy jobs with new certificate programs</li> <li>• Enhance economic mobility</li> <li>• A better-educated workforce is a competitive advantage.</li> <li>• The strategy has significant potential to support economic growth in both Imperial County (IC) and North San Diego County (NSDC). For example, in NSDC, the expansion of healthcare and technology sectors creates opportunities for workers to transition into higher-paying roles through targeted training programs. Additionally, by focusing on certifications rather than traditional four-year degrees, the strategy enables quicker workforce readiness, which is vital for regions experiencing rapid industrial growth like IC's "Lithium Valley." Both regions stand to benefit from a better-educated workforce, offering a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining high-quality industries.</li> <li>• Supporting refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs will further diversify the region's economy and reduce dependence on a narrow range of industries while enhancing overall economic stability. In addition, increasing support for immigrant-owned businesses can lead to the creation of more jobs and innovation and strengthen immigrant businesses to grow, strengthening their sustainability and ability to withstand economic downturns such as the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Current Trends:</b> Does this strategy respond to current trends or issues? If so, briefly document this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development of "Lithium Valley" will fundamentally change the workforce needs and IC's economy.</li> <li>• The strategy responds to current trends, particularly the development of Lithium Valley in IC, which will fundamentally change workforce needs. In NSDC, there is a growing demand for healthcare professionals and tech workers, necessitating a strategy that aligns education and training with these industry demands. By preparing the workforce for these emerging trends, the strategy ensures that both regions remain economically resilient and capable of sustaining long-term growth.</li> <li>• In 2018, the State issued a policy directive clarifying the flexibility that Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) must determine when to verify work authorization for certain services. These boards are central touchpoints in their communities, providing publicly funded workforce services. However, this flexibility has been utilized inconsistently across regions. Instead of creating a consistent pattern of inclusive and minimally restrictive policies around access to services, the result is a patchwork system where immigrants' opportunity to access services depends on where they live.<sup>38</sup></li> <li>• In 2021, California committed \$245 million towards workforce development services to expand access to good jobs. Given these significant investments, it is important to understand who has access to these services, what barriers persist, and how to ensure that all Californians can benefit in our growing and changing economy.</li> <li>• The San Diego Workforce Partnership developed a pilot program to serve immigrants and English-language learners by helping them gain the English skills they need in the workforce. The program helped increase the level of literacy skills, career path and industry knowledge. Additionally, the program helped workers feel more empowered to drive their own career progress and have a better understanding of what to look for in a quality job.<sup>39</sup></li> <li>• Supporting refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs aligns with and advances the principles of inclusive economic development, ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are more equitably distributed across the region and accessible to everyone.</li> </ul>

<sup>38</sup> [Can You Verify? Addressing Work Authorization Restrictions As Obstacles to Workforce Development Equity for Immigrant Workers](#), 2022, California Immigrant Policy Center

<sup>39</sup> [Lessons Learned from the Pathways for Immigrants Program](#), 2023, San Diego Workforce Partnership

	<p>This strategy not only promotes innovation and job creation but also strengthens the economy by making it more robust and adaptable to future challenges. Immigrant entrepreneurs, who are often at the forefront of economic activity in regions like San Diego, account for 25% of the region's GDP, contributing over \$54 billion annually<sup>40</sup>.</p>
<p>6. <b>Impact of government policies:</b> Is this strategy impacted by local/state/federal policies? If so, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The governor is developing a new CTE strategy as part of this CJF Initiative.</li> <li>● This strategy is aligned with the Governor's new Career Technical Education (CTE) strategy, part of the California Jobs Initiative, and will benefit from state-level support. In NSDC, local policies that promote workforce development and education are also aligned with this strategy, ensuring that both regions can leverage governmental resources to enhance their workforce training efforts.</li> <li>● Funding for workforce development and adult education that is traditionally funded through the federal program Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides opportunity to increase collaboration with state and local governments. Bring additional private and public funding sources that directly support or are leveraged to enhance workforce development and adult education services. As the primary public investment designated for addressing workforce training, education, and job placement, WIOA has the potential to have a broad impact on successful immigrant and refugee equity.</li> <li>● California recently utilized WIOA discretionary funds for the development of a Workforce Navigator pilot. This pilot project, through partnerships between local workforce development boards and CBOs, is intended to help refugees and LEP residents navigate employment and job training services.</li> <li>● In 2018, the State issued a policy directive clarifying the flexibility that Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) must determine when to verify work authorization for certain services. These boards are central touchpoints in their communities, providing publicly funded workforce services. Further State administrative action that creates definitive, inclusive policy language, varying interpretations of existing guidelines by the local boards will continue to create regional inequities where undocumented immigrant workers' economic mobility is determined by where they live.</li> </ul>
<p>7. <b>Existing reports:</b> Are there any plans or reports related to this strategy that should be mentioned? If so, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● H RTP Lithium Valley, 2024, published by H RTP Lithium Valley Workforce Report</li> <li>● IC Workforce Assessment</li> <li>● New Energy Nexus Landscape Analysis</li> <li>● IC and SD: Update to the Workforce Development, San Diego Workforce Partnership</li> <li>● <a href="https://caimmigrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CA-Workforce-Development-Assessment-2022-r2.pdf">Advancing Economic Opportunity for California's Immigrant &amp; Refugee Workforce</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://caimmigrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CA-Workforce-Development-Assessment-2022-r2.pdf">https://caimmigrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CA-Workforce-Development-Assessment-2022-r2.pdf</a></li> <li>● In Demand Careers:</li> <li>● <a href="https://careered.org/">https://careered.org/</a></li> <li>● Career Education Program Finder</li> <li>● <a href="https://careered.org/k14-program-finder/">https://careered.org/k14-program-finder/</a></li> <li>● Advancing San Diego</li> <li>● <a href="https://www.sandiegobusiness.org/about-edc/our-initiatives/advancing-san-diego/">https://www.sandiegobusiness.org/about-edc/our-initiatives/advancing-san-diego/</a></li> <li>● San Diego &amp; Imperial Community Colleges Regional Consortium-Regional Annual Plans</li> <li>● <a href="https://sdiregionalconsortium.org/strong-workforce-program/regional-annual-plans/">https://sdiregionalconsortium.org/strong-workforce-program/regional-annual-plans/</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://coecc.net/san-diego-imperial/2024/02/opportunities-for-apprenticeships-in-san-diego-imperial-counties/">https://coecc.net/san-diego-imperial/2024/02/opportunities-for-apprenticeships-in-san-diego-imperial-counties/</a></li> <li>● San Diego Imperial COE Child Care Report findings</li> <li>● <a href="https://coecc.net/san-diego-imperial-coe-presents-child-care-report-findings-at-kpbs-event/">https://coecc.net/san-diego-imperial-coe-presents-child-care-report-findings-at-kpbs-event/</a></li> </ul>

<sup>40</sup> [Immigrants in San Diego Contributed \\$54 Billion to County GDP in 2016](#), 2018, New American Economy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statewide Analysis of Water and Wastewater Occupations</li> <li>● <a href="https://coecc.net/statewide-analysis-of-water-and-wastewater-occupations-released/">https://coecc.net/statewide-analysis-of-water-and-wastewater-occupations-released/</a></li> <li>● Report on Childcare industry workforce needs</li> <li>● <a href="https://coecc.net/new-report-on-childcare-industry-workforce-needs/">https://coecc.net/new-report-on-childcare-industry-workforce-needs/</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>8. <b>Community benefit:</b> Describe how the strategy provides indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities. Describe how the needs and interests of disinvested communities impacted the selection of the Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This strategy directly benefits disinvested community members by improving educational outcomes by removing barriers.</li> <li>● Career Pathways significantly impact first-generation college students, breaking the initial barrier.</li> <li>● This strategy directly benefits immigrants and refugees, increasing access to and participation in life-improving opportunities.</li> <li>● This strategy will directly benefit marginalized communities by increasing access to education and training for high-demand jobs. By focusing on sectors that offer family-sustaining wages, it will help lift families out of poverty.</li> <li>● Apprenticeship programs to increase wages of traditionally perceived low-wage paying sectors by partnering employers and employees and building worker skills.<sup>41</sup></li> <li>● Alternative career pathway development in compatible occupations.</li> <li>● Increasing access to capital and technical assistance will directly benefit new immigrants and refugees in the informal economy, formalize their businesses, and drive growth.</li> </ul>
<p>9. <b>More on community benefits:</b> Describe how this strategy <b>directly serves</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups. Include data and analysis to support your statements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programs will be designed to serve first-generation college students, farmworkers, and justice-involved individuals, offering them pathways to stable, high-paying jobs. Data shows that targeted training can significantly improve job prospects for these groups, leading to increased economic mobility.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research supports the statement that targeted training programs can significantly improve job prospects for first-generation college students, farmworkers, and justice-involved individuals, leading to increased economic mobility.</li> <li>○ For first-generation college students, targeted support and career-focused training have been shown to bridge gaps in social networks and job search skills. This often hinders their ability to secure high-paying jobs despite having the same credentials as their peers. Tailored programs, such as those offering mentorship and career counseling, have demonstrated a positive impact on their employment outcomes (<a href="#">First-Gen Success</a>, <a href="#">THE FEED</a>).</li> <li>○ Similarly, justice-involved individuals benefit from specialized job training programs designed to address the specific barriers they face when re-entering the workforce. These programs significantly increase their chances of obtaining stable employment, which is critical for reducing recidivism and promoting economic mobility (<a href="#">First-Gen Success</a>).</li> <li>○ For farmworkers, targeted vocational training programs focused on upskilling have been linked to higher earnings and better job stability, enabling them to transition from low-wage, seasonal work to more secure, well-paying positions (<a href="#">Forage</a>).</li> <li>○ These findings underscore the importance of designing programs that specifically address the needs of these groups to enhance their job prospects and economic opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>41</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, p. 162

<b>Jobs</b>	
<p><b>10. Family-Sustaining Jobs</b> 1 - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs? Family-sustaining jobs include healthcare and retirement benefits, career advancement opportunities, access to training, consistent scheduling, safe working conditions, and collective worker input and representation opportunities.</p>	<p><b>New Jobs:</b> The strategy emphasizes training and educational resources that align with emerging sectors such as clean energy (e.g., Lithium Valley), healthcare, and advanced manufacturing. By focusing on these high-growth areas, the strategy will help generate new jobs that come with healthcare and retirement benefits, career advancement opportunities, and consistent scheduling, all of which are crucial components of family-sustaining employment.</p> <p><b>Existing Jobs:</b> For existing jobs, the strategy promotes upskilling and reskilling opportunities, particularly for workers in industries at risk due to economic transitions (like agriculture workers moving into clean energy roles). This will enable workers to transition into higher-paying roles that offer safer working conditions and better benefits, which are vital for long-term economic stability.</p> <p><b>Training and Career Advancement:</b> By leveraging partnerships with local community colleges, workforce development boards, and industry leaders, the strategy ensures that workers have access to continuous training and clear career advancement pathways. This supports the development of a competitive workforce that can secure and retain family-sustaining jobs within the region.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access:</b> The strategy also targets disinvested communities, ensuring that historically marginalized groups have equal access to these opportunities. Tailored training programs and inclusive recruitment practices will be implemented to help close the gap in economic disparities.</p>
<p><b>11. Equitable Access to Jobs:</b> What is the potential for the strategy to enhance <b>equitable access</b> to jobs for members of disinvested communities? Examples include but are not limited to tailored training programs, clear pathways for attaining necessary education or skills, and inclusive recruitment practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce barriers for immigrant workers who face barriers such as discrimination, limited English proficiency, and an inability to transfer foreign diplomas or professional licenses to the U.S.</li> <li>● Tailored training for immigrant workers who encounter difficulty accessing culturally competent job training and services through publicly funded structures.</li> <li>● Build immigrant equity and inclusion that go beyond traditional measures of economic success.</li> <li>● Clear pathways for attaining necessary education or skills. Many programs have strict criteria and job training, and placement services are available only to persons with valid work authorization depending on funding structures. Some services are available to immigrants with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and refugees while others are available to LEP and migrant and farmworker populations. Availability is inconsistent.</li> <li>● Inclusive recruitment to reach culturally diverse and disinvested communities, ensuring that historically marginalized groups have equal access to these opportunities. Tailored training programs and inclusive recruitment practices will be implemented to help close the gap in economic disparities.</li> <li>● Tailored training programs that take into consideration workers' level of education, technology literacy, and language and provide accommodations.</li> <li>● Apprenticeship and other training programs that are welcoming of LGBTQIA communities and respect equitable opportunity to diversify the pool of qualified workers.</li> <li>● Supporting refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs with flexible capital loans, grants, and technical assistance must address the critical need for financial products that align with the cultural and religious needs of new immigrants and refugees. Many refugees, particularly those from Muslim-majority backgrounds, face barriers in accessing traditional financial products due to religious prohibitions against paying or receiving</li> </ul>

	<p>interest (riba). This creates a form of financial redlining, excluding individuals from capital markets and hindering their ability to start or grow businesses. Providing no-interest loans, grants and other culturally appropriate financial support is essential to overcoming these barriers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is essential to create co-ops and other employee- and community-owned businesses that offer an alternative to extractive economic models. These cooperative structures not only provide accessible and culturally appropriate financial products but also empower refugees and new immigrants by giving them a stake in their enterprises.</li> <li>○ Partnering with community-based organizations that understand the unique financial needs and challenges of these communities can enhance the development of these initiatives.</li> <li>○ By providing these tailored financial resources and fostering cooperative business models, the strategy supports equitable access to capital, enabling refugees and new immigrants to actively participate in and benefit from the local economy, driving sustainable growth and economic empowerment within disinvested communities.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Skills Match:</b> Explain how the strategy plans to match skills to available jobs, address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connecting California’s immigrant rights and refugee-serving organizations to existing public structures for job training services and economic opportunities.</li> <li>● Equipping trusted community-based organizations to effectuate a systems-wide change to help immigrants and refugees access the existing workforce development system and grow tailored programs within the CBO network.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues:</b> Explain the potential for the strategy to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fast-paced employment metrics do not capture critical outcomes related to equity and inclusion and indirectly incentivize the quick achievement of education, skills, and jobs. This does not always match the appropriate pace of persons who face multiple barriers related to immigration status, limited English proficiency, and/or mental health and trauma-related issues.</li> <li>● Moves forward the goal of reaching universal levels of service by extending workforce services to undocumented workers who currently lack access to services. Undocumented immigrant workers comprise one in sixteen California’s workforce who generally lack access to adult education programs, job referrals, assessments, career counseling, on-the-job training, and other services—it is one tool with the potential to improve job quality and expand access to good jobs for California’s workers.<sup>42</sup> They are excluded due to work authorization requirements.</li> <li>● The current reality for many immigrants and refugees, particularly those with undocumented status and/or specific religious and cultural obligations, is one of exclusion from formal financial systems, leading to financial redlining that limits their access to capital. Supporting immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs and creating cooperative business models addresses barriers by establishing a model for capital access that respects cultural and religious practices, while offering an inclusive alternative to the extractive traditional models. This approach ensures that all</li> </ul>

<sup>42</sup> [Can You Verify? Addressing Work Authorization Restrictions As Obstacles to Workforce Development Equity for Immigrant Workers](#), 2022, California Immigrant Policy Center

	<p>individuals, regardless of their background or status, can participate fully in economic opportunities and contribute to sustainable economic growth.</p>
<p><b>14. At-Risk Workers:</b>                  What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?                  This includes workers potentially impacted by at-risk industries, preventing the displacement of incumbent workers, or replacing high-road jobs with low-quality jobs. <i>If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</i></p>	<p>The strategy has strong potential to support at-risk workers, particularly those in industries vulnerable to economic shifts, such as agriculture and traditional manufacturing, which are prominent in North San Diego and Imperial Counties. As these sectors face increasing automation and the transition to cleaner energy sources, many workers are at risk of displacement or being relegated to low-quality jobs without the benefits and security necessary for long-term economic stability. Workers in the food industry are at risk of automation in San Diego and Imperial Counties.</p> <p><b>Preventing displacement</b>                  Through targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives, this strategy directly addresses the needs of at-risk workers by preparing them for high-demand jobs in emerging industries like clean energy, healthcare, and advanced manufacturing. For example, the development of Lithium Valley in Imperial County represents a significant economic shift aligned to equip workers with the necessary certifications and skills to transition from declining sectors—such as agriculture—into these new, high-road opportunities. Among the highest percentages of retiring workers are concentrated in priority industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, food systems, civic organizations, and social assistance.<sup>43</sup></p> <p><b>Replacing high-road jobs</b>                  The strategy also emphasizes the creation and maintenance of high-road jobs, which include positions that offer family-sustaining wages, healthcare benefits, and career advancement opportunities. By focusing on quality job creation, the strategy prevents the replacement of high-road jobs with low-quality alternatives, ensuring that workers who transition from at-risk industries are moving into roles that provide long-term economic security and upward mobility.</p> <p><b>Specific impact on disadvantaged workers</b>                  The strategy includes targeted support for workers facing additional barriers to employment, such as single parents, older adults, and justice-involved individuals. By creating accessible education and training opportunities tailored to these groups, the strategy helps mitigate the risk of these workers being left behind in the evolving labor market.</p> <p><b>Data support</b>                  According to regional labor market analyses, sectors such as agriculture and traditional manufacturing in Imperial County are already experiencing job losses due to automation, retirement and economic shifts. By providing training that aligns with the skills required in growing sectors like clean energy, the strategy not only prevents displacement but also promotes the economic mobility of workers who might otherwise be trapped in low-quality, insecure jobs.</p>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p><b>15. Environmental impacts:</b> Explain how the strategy will limit the impacts of economic development activities on the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The strategy prioritizes creating local employment and career opportunities thereby reducing travel time, distance and emissions.</li> <li>● Align career pathways to match the expansion of green sustainable industries, leveraging regional strengths in clean tech and innovation.</li> <li>● Promote local hire policies that provide opportunities for local workforce and reduce travel across the region.</li> </ul>

<sup>43</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1 pp. 158-159.

<p>natural environment. If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	
<p>16. <b>Public health:</b> Explain how the strategy addresses <b>public health needs</b>, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities. If relevant, briefly document this; otherwise, leave it blank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Best practices and pilot programs that improve economic opportunity positively influence public health outcomes. For example:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Diversity in Health Training Institute in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties supports immigrants and refugees to be more successful in healthcare careers. The institute provides services that healthcare educators say their students need and enhance job placement and performance in collaboration with healthcare employers. The organization also engages in efforts to improve workforce development and adult education systems, so immigrants and refugees are better served.</li> <li>○ Through a partnership with the Santa Rosa Junior College, the Graton Day Labor Center (Sonoma, CA) has developed pathways for day laborers and domestic workers to access vocational training, including a curriculum that is tailored to workers’ learning needs. Collaborating with stakeholders, like community colleges, can leverage public funding and resources to uplift strategies that integrate unique community needs to create successful economic development programs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate impacts:</b> Explain how the strategy <b>avoids</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and includes pathways for mitigating the effects of anticipated climate impacts on targeted industries and occupations.</p>	<p>Workforce training can emphasize an equitable green transition-first approach, something traditional models have more difficulty incorporating.</p>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy:</b> How does the strategy align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.</p>	<p>This strategy prioritizes State Climate Policies that promote clean energy, clean air, transportation decarbonization, climate adaptation, sustainable water management, and natural and working lands. The strategy supports environmental justice.</p>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>19. <b>Implementation:</b> <b>What partnerships and resources are needed to</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This strategy fosters collaboration across federal, state, local governments and with private and public partners. California’s community colleges and schools receive most of the state funding for workforce while various departments and agencies receive state and federal funding to support employment training through alignment with existing</li> </ul>

<p><b>implement</b> strategy and support enhancing the priority sector? Explain the Collaborative's and/or other partners' roles in the management and governance of the strategy. Include a budget.</p>	<p>programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourages partnerships between local boards to partner with immigrant and refugee-serving CBOs. CBOs are best situated geographically and are often trusted entities for California's ethnically diverse immigrant and refugee population.</li> <li>● Strategic partnership tables i.e. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) become representative and inclusive of CBOs and disinvested communities that reflect the service community.</li> <li>● Foster partnerships and collaboration between industry and CBOs, particularly in disinvested communities.</li> <li>● Community-centered approaches and strategies that are reflective and responsive to community residents include community members in partnerships and collaborations.</li> </ul>
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**Cross-Cutting Strategy 3 - The Small Business, Cooperative, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem.**

<p><i>Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy</i> Worksheet: The Small Business, Cooperative, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem</p>	
Key Questions and Information	
<p>1. <b>Strategy</b> - Provide the text of the strategy.</p>	<p><b>The Small Business, Cooperative, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem:</b> Provide capital, technical assistance, and other resources to enhance the small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem, including, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Remove Barriers to Entrepreneurship:</i> Remove barriers to small business growth and stability through culturally relevant technical assistance, including issues related to accessing capital, hiring a skilled workforce, participating in all contracting opportunities, and negotiating regulatory constraints.</li> <li>2. <i>Leverage Contracting Opportunities:</i> Encourage and facilitate local businesses, nonprofits, and governments to increase small business participation within their supply chains.</li> <li>3. <i>Training Pipeline to Underserved Businesses:</i> Build a local talent pipeline to meet the specific workforce needs of local small business employers.</li> <li>4. <i>Climate Change Transition:</i> Assist small businesses in transitioning to lower-carbon emission-producing energy sources and reducing their use of limited resources.</li> </ol>
Deeper Look	
<p>2. <b>Explain the Need/Opportunity</b> - Describe why this strategy was selected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employers create jobs, generate taxes, support other high road industry sectors, and revitalize communities.</li> <li>● While their small size allows them to be more flexible in meeting niche foreign and domestic market needs, it also results in certain market challenges. These challenges include having difficulty meeting the procedural requirements of the state's complex regulatory structure and mainstream financial institutions' traditional credit and collateral requirements. Access to capital remains a mainstay challenge for small businesses.</li> <li>● Specialized technical assistance, access to credit enhancements, and targeting of procurement activities can help small businesses overcome or minimize these difficulties.</li> <li>● Imperial County is home to 4,094 businesses, with 30.8% having fewer than five</li> </ul>

	<p>employees and 80% having fewer than 20 employees.<sup>44</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Diego County is home to 379,000 small businesses employing 60% of San Diegans.<sup>45</sup></li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this strategy or that can be leveraged to support it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Small Business Technical Assistance Centers:</b> Imperial and San Diego County are served by various small business technical assistance centers where small businesses can receive free and low-cost technical assistance, including Small Business Development Centers, APEX Accelerators, Veteran Business Service Centers, and Manufacturing Partnership.</li> <li><b>Community Colleges:</b> The Community College Districts in Imperial and San Diego Counties offer low-cost business development courses for credit and not-for-credit, technical assistance on workforce preparation, and noncredit contract-based training to support the individual needs of employers of all sizes.</li> <li><b>State Small Business Credit Initiative:</b> California is eligible to draw down up to \$1.2 billion in credit enhancement from the federal government, prioritizing businesses with less than ten employees and owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. These funds can be accessed through local community development financial institutions and regional small business financial development corporations. The program aims to leverage every program dollar with \$10 of private or other public funding.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this strategy to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small businesses serve as economic engines in the economy. They fill niche supply chain gaps, offer stable employment, hire workers faster during economic growth periods, and let workers go more slowly during downturns. Enhancing the local entrepreneurship ecosystem will help strengthen the economy, assist it in better adapting to periods of economic shock, and generate property, sales and use, and income taxes. Small businesses are more likely to reinvest revenues into the local economy than national chains.</li> <li>On average, minority-owned small businesses in California generate \$28.7 billion in tax revenue every year. Of that amount, \$13.6 billion are state and local tax receipts, and \$15.1 million are Federal tax receipts.<sup>46</sup></li> <li>From 2018 to 2023, the San Diego &amp; Imperial Small Business Development Center network helped strengthen regional small businesses, creating 6,900 jobs, assisting 1,161 businesses to open, contributing to \$1.2 billion in sales/contracts, serving 16,600 small business clients, and helping small companies raise \$1.7 billion in capital.<sup>47</sup></li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Current Trends</b> - Is this strategy responding to current trends or issues?</p>	<p>According to the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy, key challenges faced by small businesses coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Most Impacted Still Face Biggest Challenges:</b> Data suggests that women- and minority-owned businesses were hardest hit and continue to face the most significant challenges in accessing technical and financial assistance.</li> <li><b>With So Many Options, It Can Be Confusing:</b> The variety of programs makes it difficult for businesses and workers to know where to start.</li> <li><b>Complex Documentation Requirements:</b> Many of the state's smallest businesses find the documentation requirements for applying for COVID-19 resources to be a significant barrier.</li> </ul>

<sup>44</sup> Emsi Economy Overview - Imperial County ([link](#))

<sup>45</sup> San Diego County [Inclusive Growth - San Diego Regional EDC \(sandiegobusiness.org\)](https://sandiegobusiness.org)

<sup>46</sup>The State of Diverse Business in California Executive Summary ([link](#)), published in 2023 by the Governor's Office of the Small Business Advocate

<sup>47</sup> San Diego Imperial SBDC [website](#), accessed 8/6/2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Old Problems Become Greater Challenges:</b> COVID-19 is amplifying old business operation challenges, including local broadband capacity, supply chain disruptions, the cost of regulatory compliance, and access to capital and a qualified workforce.</li> <li>● <b>Fast-Tracked Procurement Resulted in Less Small Business Participation:</b> Accessing state and local procurement opportunities was challenging with the number of contracts being made under disaster declarations and budget exemptions, as well as the loss of in-person events to meet primes.</li> <li>● <b>Eroding Purchasing Power and Lack of Skilled Workforce:</b> Small businesses express concern over job vacancies. Higher costs of materials and inflation are also impacting businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Is this strategy impacted by any local/state/federal policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Funding for technical service centers, such as through the state Small Business Technical Assistance Program, is a needed adjunct to the funding provided by federal appropriations.</li> </ul>
<p>7. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any plans or reports related to this strategy that should be mentioned?</p>	<p><a href="#">Report:</a> State of Diverse Small Businesses in California  <a href="#">Data:</a> US Census Nonemployer Firms  <a href="#">Data:</a> US Census Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics series  <a href="#">Data:</a> US Census Legal Form of Organization  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Family-owned Businesses  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Small Businesses in Rural Areas  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> An Analysis of Immigrant Employer Ownership  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Black-Ownership Statistics 2024  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Women-Owned Businesses  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Native American-Owned Businesses  <a href="#">Fact Sheet:</a> Veteran-Owned Businesses  <a href="#">Small Business 2024 Survey Report</a></p>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>8. <b>Community Benefit</b> - Describe how the strategy provides indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Entrepreneurship is a recognized strategy that supports wealth creation. It offers many business opportunities and low entry barriers. Unlike employment, individuals can set their hours to accommodate their unique needs, including caring for elderly parents and children.</li> <li>● Microenterprises (under five employees) have many unique features and provide essential benefits to local communities, according to a recent study from the Microenterprise Fund for Innovation, Effectiveness, Learning, and Dissemination (FIELD) at the Aspen Institute<sup>48</sup>. These benefits include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing products and services tailored to meet local and neighborhood needs.</li> <li>○ Stimulating an inflow of revenues to and within local communities.</li> <li>○ Serving as catalysts for neighborhood re-engagement.</li> <li>○ Revitalizing neighborhoods that may otherwise have vacant storefronts.</li> <li>○ Providing role models and support for future entrepreneurs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● This strategy takes a holistic approach to small business development by looking at the overall ecosystem, including increasing access to capital, skilled workforce, and technical assistance.</li> </ul>
<p>9. <b>More on Community Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Many disinvested communities lack access to goods and services due to</li> </ul>

<sup>48</sup> [California Small Business Economy](#), 2022, Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development and the Economy

<p>- Describe how this strategy <b>serves</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups.</p>	<p>remote locations and/or limited public transportation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing local neighborhood commercial districts increases access, filling gaps, and generating and recirculating local dollars.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-Sustaining Jobs</b> 1 - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business ownership provides great flexibility in economic earnings.</li> <li>Small businesses generate new jobs. Two studies, one by the US Census Bureau and another by the Kauffman Foundation, found that net job growth was strongest among companies with less than 20 employees<sup>49</sup>.</li> <li>Due to their small size, workers in small businesses have opportunities to develop a range of skill sets. Small businesses can play an essential role in helping workers access career pathways to high road jobs.</li> </ul>
<p>11. <b>Equitable Access to Jobs</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to enhance <b>equitable access</b> to jobs for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studies show that small businesses owned by individuals from historically disinvested communities hire individuals of similar backgrounds at higher rates than white male-owned businesses.</li> <li>Increasing business ownership by people of color, women, and people who identify as LGBTQIA+ is a positive strategy for increasing employment for individuals in those historically disadvantaged groups.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Skills Match</b> - Explain how the strategy plans to match skills to available jobs, address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One aspect of the strategy is workforce development to meet the needs of small businesses in the region. Small businesses often need to be made aware of the available resources to support their success. Local workforce development boards, community colleges, and other education and training entities only reach these businesses with focused and intentional work.</li> <li>This is a missed opportunity for both workers and businesses. As noted above, small businesses are the region's net new job generators.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - Explain the potential for the strategy to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unemployment is significantly high in Imperial County and within certain population groups in San Diego County.</li> <li>Entrepreneurship offers a clear alternative to those unsuccessful in accessing and retaining employment within the traditional job market.</li> <li>Small businesses in remote rural areas with emerging new industries can help grow these industries and fill important roles within their supply chain.</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurship and employment in small businesses should be one component of a multi-prong approach to assist at-risk workers.</li> <li>For example, the Colorado River multi-state agreement is proposed to result in the intermittent fallowing of agricultural lands for years. While farmers are anticipated to be financially compensated, there is currently no plan to assist impacted field workers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy will limit the impacts of economic development activities on the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses receiving services can also be required to participate in an energy audit and assess how to lower their carbon footprint. Implementation of the strategy will support the transition to a lower carbon economy and the development of less environmental impact.</li> </ul>

<sup>49</sup> [2021-22 End of Session Report](#), 2022, California State Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy

natural environment.	
16. <b>Public Health</b> - Explain how the strategy addresses <b>public health needs</b> , with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stable local employment and local business development help to build more resilient families, which impacts access to health care and other necessities to contribute to healthy families.</li> </ul>
17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy <b>avoids</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and includes pathways for mitigating the effects of anticipated climate impacts on targeted industries and occupations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy supports small businesses' equitable transition to a lower carbon economy.</li> <li>Current programs to help businesses reduce energy use and other limited resources generally focus on more significant emitters or users or require the submission of complicated applications. Technical assistance and help accessing funding provide a concrete pathway, accountability, and aid in overcoming barriers.</li> </ul>
18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does the strategy align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the California Air Resources Board,<sup>50</sup> small businesses must play a critical role in helping the state meet its climate change goals.</li> <li>Key strategies include but are not limited to: Adopting sustainable business practices such as energy, fuel, and water efficiency, material reuse, and changes in transportation and packaging.</li> <li>In addition to emission reductions, many of these changes lead to greater financial stability and reduce operational risk associated with legacy technologies.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	
19. <b>Implementation</b> - <i>What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</i> strategy and support the enhancement of the priority sector?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Stakeholder Map identified partners and resources related to small businesses.</li> <li>Key steps include developing a plan and commitment to align resources, address gaps, and provide ongoing monitoring of progress, which will be necessary for the strategy's success.</li> <li>Designate lead partners for strategy components based on improved cooperation among invested stakeholders.</li> </ul>

**Strategy 4 - Community Infrastructure Supports Healthy Communities**

<i>Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy</i> Worksheet: Community Infrastructure Supports Healthy Communities	
<b>Key Questions and Information</b>	
1. <b>Strategy</b> - Provide the text of the strategy.	<p><b>Community Infrastructure Supports Healthy Communities:</b> Invest and enhance infrastructure that supports healthy neighborhoods, economic vitality, and a cleaner environment, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Improve the reliability, speed, and access to affordable broadband through collaborative actions, better data and</li> </ul>

<sup>50</sup> California Air Resources Board, [link](#), accessed 8/9/2024

	<p>analysis, and the development of middle-mile and last-mile connectivity strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Affordable Housing:</b> Work collaboratively with local governments, philanthropy, and community stakeholders to increase the availability of housing affordable to Refugee and immigrant families, and lower-wage and entry-level workers in walkable, bikeable, climate-friendly neighborhoods within reasonable proximity to shopping and services.</li> <li>● <b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> Increasing access to health care will increase longevity and quality of life, particularly for low-income and communities of color. By increasing and diversifying the health care workforce, health care infrastructure, and access to these services in the region, improved health outcomes will be achieved.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Facilitate Community-Led Development to Revitalize Main Streets and Cultural Corridors:</b> Provide technical assistance and funding for community-led development projects focused on revitalizing main streets and cultural corridors.</li> <li>○ <b>Safe Streets:</b> Expand public transit routes and facilities and install new and upgrade existing sidewalks, streetlights, roads, bike lanes and bridges to support disinvested communities.</li> <li>○ <b>Water Infrastructure and Access to Clean Water:</b> Expand, upgrade, and replace systems, structures, and equipment that move, store, treat, distribute, or dispose of water to ensure reliability, affordability, sustainability, and quality.</li> <li>○ <b>Community Accessible Spaces:</b> Remove barriers to siting and operating programs and services targeted to at-risk youth, formerly incarcerated individuals, and others who historically face challenges accessing public health, housing, and other safety-net services such as halfway houses and sober living facilities.</li> <li>○ <b>Enriched Community Spaces:</b> Support vibrant communities and neighborhoods by providing opportunities for maker spaces, community art spaces, sports fields, community and recreation centers, and parks with amenities that welcome people and encourage use, including shade over play areas, water foundations, and restrooms.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Deeper Look</b></p>	
<p>2. <b>Explain the Need/Opportunity -</b> Describe why this strategy was selected.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> According to the <a href="#">Regional Plan part 1</a>, significant racial inequities exist in access to high-speed internet (exhibits 11 and 29). Lack of access to high-speed internet directly reduces an individual and a community’s access to education, job opportunities, ability to access services and telehealth and access connection to online communities. From the <a href="#">Public Policy Institute of California</a></p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> According to the <a href="#">Regional Plan part 1</a>, significant racial inequities exist in housing equity. In exhibit 18, data shows that more than 27% of Black San Diegans spend more than 50% of their income on housing, compared to 15% of White San Diegans. Exhibit 36 shows that multiple communities in Imperial County experienced double digit housing price increases in just one year, making access to homeownership even harder to reach. <a href="#">Affordable housing</a> is increasingly threatened with rising rents, consolidation in the apartment industry, limited construction and increasing property insurance rates. According to a <a href="#">report</a> by the University of San Diego, only 1 in 10 residents in San Diego County can afford a median-priced home.</p>

	<p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> The <a href="#">Regional Plan, part 1</a> discusses the many health disparities for low-income, historically marginalized and disinvested communities. Some causes of these health disparities include poverty, lack of access to health care and health care facilities, pollution, climate change, lack of cultural competence in health care providers, stress, racism, lack of access to green space, food insecurity and many more impacts. There are great disparities in health outcomes and access in the region and concerning disparity in premature death between San Diego and Imperial Counties. The ratio of patients to physicians is more than three times higher in Imperial County. In Imperial County, hospital services have been reduced, causing a significant impact on the community. BIPOC communities face higher rates of chronic diseases, mental health challenges and maternal and child health risks. There is a lack of geriatric services for the elderly, particularly those with dementia. Native tribes, farmworkers and LGBTQIA communities all face serious, but unique health challenges that must be addressed in the region.</p> <p><b>Strategies to Prevent Gentrification:</b> to prevent gentrification, it is essential that we invest in communities while keeping with the community’s culture and history. Examples of such strategies include cultural districts and hubs.</p> <p><b>Vibrant Main Streets &amp; Safe Streets:</b> Improving infrastructure in older downtowns, main streets and improving public transit and existing road infrastructure creates a people-centered, livable and safe community.</p> <p><b>Water Infrastructure and Access to Clean Water:</b> See the industry strategy section on water in this report.</p> <p><b>Community Accessible Spaces &amp; Enriched Community Spaces:</b> In this plan, stakeholders are prioritizing community space for historically marginalized communities and disinvested communities to engage, be creative, learn, play and recreate. Stakeholders identified the need for services for targeted groups. The need for high-quality safety net services including halfway housing and sober living facilities will improve the quality of life in our region.</p> <p>The Regional Plan, part 1 details the impact of climate change and the temperature increase in the region, particularly in the very hot Imperial County. There is a critical need for cool-zones for vulnerable people, including those without air conditioning, to have a place to safely escape from high temperatures throughout the year. San Diego County has established <a href="#">cool-zones</a> and Imperial County has <a href="#">cool centers</a> to provide a safe refuge for vulnerable residents to escape high temperatures.</p>
<p>3. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this strategy, or that can be leveraged to support it.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> The <a href="#">Southern Border Broadband Consortium</a> (SBBC) leverages the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF). Representatives from all economic sectors collaborate to improve the availability and adoption of affordable broadband technology for unserved and underserved areas of Imperial and San Diego counties. (Imperial Valley EDC)</p> <p>SANDAG has a <a href="#">Regional Digital Equity Strategy</a> that monitors San Diego County’s progress in closing the Digital Equity gap.</p> <p>The CBO <a href="#">San Diego Futures Foundation</a> provides technology to low-income students so that they can complete homework and families connect online.</p> <p>Several large and powerful high-tech companies including Qualcomm and Intuit have</p>

	<p>a significant footprint in the region. The Technology Industry employees a high number of regional professionals in high-wage, high-demand careers. These tech leaders could help to support the region in closing the digital divide.</p> <p>Local education institutions have adopted technology in learning with nearly all local schools using technology as a cornerstone for delivering instruction. As a result, many young people in our region are proficient in technology. Local colleges and universities offer highly competitive education programs in technology-related programs.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> In the region, there are several collaborative bodies supporting access to affordable housing, providing housing support and providing services to those who are unhoused. Despite these efforts, homelessness continues to <a href="#">increase</a>. Collaboration from community groups, nonprofits, government, industry and regional planning groups needs to be supported, monitored and improved to ensure access to housing into the future. Low-income, middle-class, historically marginalized, disinvested groups, seniors, families and so many groups are facing housing challenges. A massive effort at a community level will need to take place to realize affordable housing access for all in our community.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> The region has a premiere health research institution with UCSD located in San Diego. The region also has other world-class research institutions with expertise in health including the Scripps Research Institute and the Salk Institute, among others. In addition, San Diego’s thriving Biotech hub is supported by many biotech companies including Illumina and Pfizer. These expert organizations in health and health care could center and support initiatives to close equity gaps in health care outcomes.</p>
<p>4. <b>Opportunities to Grow -</b> What is the potential for this strategy to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Leveraging digital equity provides an important opportunity to grow our region’s economy. Tech companies in the region must recruit talent from outside of the region. These are among the best paying jobs in the region. Job growth is projected in both counties in the tech industry. Connecting education to the tech industry and increasing the number of students prepared for tech industry careers is an opportunity to fill more tech jobs with local students who are more likely to stay in the region with high salaries. To ensure equitable access to these careers, a first step is ensuring that low-income, rural and divested communities have digital access and technology resources.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Affordable housing is a cornerstone in building a vibrant community in the region. Because housing is quickly becoming more unaffordable in the region, the cost of housing is a barrier to our economic growth. Housing costs are diverting investment, pushing low-income and middle-class workers out of the community, increasing commute times (and pollution) and deterring prospective talent from moving to San Diego.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> As previously stated, health milieu in our region can provide a launching point to begin an effort to close health care equity gaps. One opportunity is to increase the number and diversity of the healthcare workforce in the region. This would not only improve access to health care, the quality of health care and increase the number of people employed in high-wage, high-demand jobs in the region. Research by the <a href="#">Commonwealth Fund</a> confirms that diversity in health care professionals has a significant impact on health care outcomes. The American Hospital Association has recommendations for <a href="#">Strengthening the Health Care Workforce</a>. There is an opportunity to expand health care infrastructure to close geographic barriers to accessing health care services. In</p>

	<p>addition, the region has been working on creating new health care pathways to better support mental health, substance abuse and community health needs in the region.</p>
<p>5. <b>Current Trends</b> - Does this strategy respond to current trends or issues? If so, briefly document this.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Yes, digital equity is a hot topic nationally and in California. Regional collaboration and a strategic commitment to closing the digital divide is an important way to ensure that low-income, rural and divested communities and community members have access to jobs, education, economic opportunity, health care, services and community.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Yes, this strategy is critical because housing costs have increased, making housing less accessible in San Diego and Imperial Counties.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> Yes, this follows current trends, including mental health paraprofessionals to support increasing mental health needs in the region and the strategy responds to the healthcare workforce shortage in the region.</p>
<p>6. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Is this strategy impacted by local/state/federal policies?</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Local governments must commit to closing the digital divide and monitor and evaluate progress in this area. SANDAG’s online progress tracker is a tool that can be leveraged and possibly shared with Imperial County to provide transparency to achieve this goal. The state of California has an <a href="#">initiative</a> that can support this effort locally.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Government must be a partner in any solution, as this problem is intractable without an infrastructure approach and changes to policy.</p>
<p>7. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any plans or reports related to this strategy that should be mentioned?</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> This report from <a href="#">USD</a> is comprehensive: <a href="#">San Diego Housing Commission</a>; <a href="#">Equity Gaps in Housing in California</a>; <a href="#">Imperial County Housing Element</a></p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> <a href="#">San Diego County Report on Health Care Utilization</a>; <a href="#">San Diego Foundation Report on Health Disparities</a>; <a href="#">Population Health in San Diego</a>; <a href="#">Imperial County Health Status Report</a>; <a href="#">Imperial County Health Care and Green Energy</a></p> <p><b>Vibrant Main Streets &amp; Safe Streets:</b> <a href="#">Mainstreet America</a>; <a href="#">Mainstreet California</a>; <a href="#">Sandag Vision Zero</a>; <a href="#">Sandag Traffic Safety Dashboard</a>; <a href="#">El Centro Streets Plan</a>; <a href="#">Imperial County Office of Education Walk and Bike to School</a>; <a href="#">A Sense of Belonging</a>; <a href="#">Understanding ‘Inclusiveness’ in Public Space: Learning from Existing Approaches</a></p>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>Building a thriving community requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes digital equity, affordable housing, health care access, and vibrant infrastructure. Leveraging digital equity can fuel regional economic growth by connecting local students to tech careers, thereby addressing both job shortages and retaining talent within the area. Affordable housing is crucial for fostering a dynamic community; as housing costs rise, they create barriers that push low-income and middle-class workers out of the region, which can stifle economic development. Equitable access to health care is another cornerstone; increasing diversity in the healthcare workforce not only improves health outcomes but also creates high-wage job opportunities. Moreover, investing in vibrant main streets and safe streets, particularly in disinvested communities, can enhance local economies and integrate marginalized voices into planning processes. By focusing on these areas through a</p>

	<p>transformational strategy, we can build a more inclusive, resilient, and economically vibrant region.</p>
<p>8. <b>Community Benefit</b> - Describe how the strategy provides indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Expanding digital and technology access empowers disinvested communities to access jobs, education, economic opportunity, health care and services. Another important consideration is how powerful online communities can be to provide support, resources, services, research and connection. For example, an individual experiencing diabetes can research their disease to educate themselves, meet others dealing with the disease including with similar language and cultural backgrounds, research ways to adapt cooking to meet their new dietary needs and then share this information with others in their community. Disinvested community members can find each other when they may be geographically isolated. Ensuring full access to the digital world can improve our economic development and the resiliency and health of our community.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Divested communities are most directly affected by the lack of affordable housing in our region. Improving access to affordable housing will dramatically improve the quality of life for disinvested communities.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> Increasing access to health care services, health care providers and health care infrastructure of low-income, historically marginalized and disinvested communities would have a positive and direct benefit to the community and in particularly divested communities.</p>
<p>9. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - Describe how this strategy <b>directly serves</b> historically marginalized and disinvested groups.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> Our region must strategically prioritize historically marginalized and disinvested groups in closing the digital divide. Inequities will persist without prioritizing these communities. Connecting CBOs, schools and churches to the existing efforts to close the digital divide is an important way to connect this effort to historically marginalized and divested groups.</p>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-Sustaining Jobs</b> 1 - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> There is an inspiring opportunity to grow family-sustain jobs through digital equity and strengthening the pipeline to careers in technology for our region. As shown in the <a href="#">Regional Plan, part 1</a>, jobs in technology are high-wage, high-demand. Technology careers span all industry sectors with a need for technology specialists in every nearly every single company and enterprise in the region. Our region’s largest employers all have tech as the cornerstone of their operations. Employers continue to recruit tech talent from outside of the region. Our greatest potential to build the economy through technology is to better prepare local students and incumbent workers for careers that use technology. The San Diego Regional EDC recently published a <a href="#">study</a> that showed that there were nearly 5,000 job postings for entry level computing jobs in 2023. There are disparities in the education pipeline for these careers for women, Latinx and Black students.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> One of the most important solutions to increasing access to affordable housing is to increase housing stock. This will provide many high-wage, high-demand jobs in building and construction and utilities and energy,</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> This strategy would actually add to the healthcare workforce with a focus on diversifying health care professionals. Health care jobs are high-wage and high-demand. Health care careers have natural career ladders providing ample opportunity for advancement and social mobility.</p>

<p>11. <b>Equitable Access to Jobs</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to enhance <b>equitable access</b> to jobs for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> There are several local initiatives with goals to increase access to technology careers for disinvested communities. One region-wide initiative is the <a href="#">K16 Collaborative</a>, which is connecting education to industry to ensure that our education programs are preparing students for future careers. This initiative is also funding programs in technology to prepare students. Throughout the education ecosystem, there are tremendous efforts to prepare students for tech careers. Barriers persist in limiting access to these careers. A careful analysis of each component of the education pipeline for technology identifying off-ramps would help the region determine the next steps in this goal. A focus on women and girl’s access to tech careers is critical.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> See answer to #10.</p>
<p>12. <b>Skills Match</b> - Explain how the strategy plans to match skills to available jobs, address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc.</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> The K16 Collaborative, Strong Workforce/K12 Strong Workforce and Advancing San Diego work on skills match directly along with many other initiatives. Strategic investment in analyzing skills to match challenges and identifying solutions would benefit this strategy.</p>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - Explain the potential for the strategy to address <b>specific issues</b> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis.</p>	<p>Please refer to Chapter 2: Equity and Data Limitations</p>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<p><b>Digital Equity and Online Communities:</b> There is a terrific opportunity to support at-risk workers in this industry. Particularly, <a href="#">women</a> are <a href="#">at risk</a> of leaving <a href="#">tech careers</a>. A collaboration of industry and community organizations could build mentoring and support programs for women in technology careers with the goal of changing work environments to be more supportive of women and providing women with support.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Access to affordable housing can help at-risk workers stabilize their careers, access the career ladder and increase social mobility. Housing insecurity and homelessness make it increasingly difficult for workers to maintain stable employment. With considerably high amounts of homelessness in both counties, untapped talent is unable to contribute and work.</p>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy will limit the impacts of economic development activities on the natural environment.</p>	<p>Please refer to the Climate Resilience - Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy.</p>
<p>16. <b>Public Health</b> - Explain how the strategy addresses <b>public health needs</b>, with</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> According to the <a href="#">Center for Disease Control</a>, “homelessness affects both physical and mental health and makes accessing health care difficult.” Recent outbreaks of infectious disease among the homeless population in the City of</p>

<p>special attention to the needs of disinvested communities.</p>	<p>San Diego prove the great risks that unhoused individuals are exposed to. Women, children, seniors and other vulnerable populations are at particularly risk of violence and abuse when they are on the streets. Mental health and substance abuse are particularly hard to treat when an individual is unhoused.</p> <p><b>Equitable Access to Health Care Services:</b> This strategy would have a direct impact on public health. By increasing access, public health of disinvested communities would be improved.</p>
<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy <b>avoids</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and includes pathways for mitigating the effects of anticipated climate impacts on targeted industries and occupations.</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> Green building and construction strategies should be used in new housing construction to reduce negative climate impacts. These strategies also support green jobs that align with the regional plan.</p>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does the strategy align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing:</b> see response to 17.</p>

**Cross-Cutting Strategy 5 - Climate Resilience**

<p><i>Sector Neutral and Economic Mobility Strategy</i> Worskheet: Climate Resilience</p>	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>Strategy</b> - Provide the text of the strategy.</p>	<p><b>Climate Resilience:</b> Taking actions to support a sustainable environment, transition to a net-zero emission economy, and adapt to climate impacts, which includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Net Environmental Benefit:</b> Plan, develop, and expand infrastructure and communities in a manner that reflects the increasing impacts of climate change and results in a net environmental benefit.</li> <li>• <b>Green and Emerging Technology and Innovation:</b> Invest in innovation, research, and industry cluster development in green and emerging technologies, including energy, transportation, infrastructure, and nature-based and climate adaptation solutions.</li> <li>• <b>Equity and Justice:</b> Acknowledge the economic, public health, and environmental impacts being borne by disinvested communities in the Southern Border for a national transition to cleaner energy production, and equitably allocate benefits arising from the emergence of lithium extraction and processing. This includes improving affordable access to health facilities and job training to ensure community members are prepared for local jobs, and enhanced civic infrastructure, such as libraries, community centers, and auditoriums.</li> <li>• <b>Green Job Growth:</b> Invest in workforce development programs that support the region’s transition to a net-zero emission economy, including entry- and next-level jobs in</li> </ul>

	<p>industries like: lithium extraction, green construction, battery manufacturing, energy generation and transmission, sustainable agriculture, natural resources, and environmental monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Recharging Station:</b> Expand the network and capacity of EV recharging stations serving disinvested communities through streamlined permitting, fee reductions, or other methods to reduce the installation and operation costs.</li> <li>● <b>Adapting to Climate Impacts:</b> Collaborate on subregion climate resilience strategies to identify projects and financing to provide facilities to assist disinvested community members in adjusting to extreme heat conditions, including, but not limited to, cooling centers, free access to water, and hydration stations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deeper Look</b></p>	
<p>2. <b>Explain the Need/Opportunity</b> - Describe why this strategy was selected.</p>	<p>Climate resilience aims to protect existing industries from future disruptions due to extreme weather, rising temperatures, and resource scarcity while positioning the region to lead in new, high-growth sectors such as renewable energy, green infrastructure, and sustainable agriculture. The strategy aligns with state goals, such as those outlined in California’s SB 100 and the Safeguarding California Plan, which emphasize the importance of resilience and sustainability in future economic planning.</p>
<p>3. <b>Regional Assets</b> - Describe specific regional assets that support this strategy or that can be leveraged to support it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>SCEIN:</b> Promoting cleantech solutions that align with California’s climate goals. The network draws on the expertise of 37 companies, which have collectively raised over \$546 million in follow-on funding from both public and private sources. This funding not only supports the growth of innovative technologies but also strengthens the region’s capacity to lead in sustainable industry development.</li> <li>● <b>Advanced Water Purification Programs:</b> As a response to growing concerns about overreliance on the Colorado River, San Diego area water agencies are pursuing multiple advanced water purification projects to improve water supply reliability in the region. The Pure Water San Diego program is a pioneering initiative that aims to provide 50% of the city’s water needs through advanced reclamation technology.</li> <li>● <b>Robust EV Charging Network:</b> While San Diego’s existing EV charging infrastructure currently meets existing demand through its numerous networks, and the Lithium Valley Charger Equity Initiative is working towards fulfilling the current need for the Imperial County area, there still exists a need for investment. Minor investments in reliability and expansion could significantly enhance this network, facilitating a broader transition to electric vehicles.</li> <li>● Additional information can be found on the expanded worksheet.</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Opportunities to Grow</b> - What is the potential for this strategy to support economic growth, help the region diversify the economy and/or workforce, and/or make the county economy more resilient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Job Creation and Economic Diversification:</b> Investment in climate resilience offers significant potential for economic growth by creating jobs across multiple sectors, including clean energy, construction, and technology. Continued investment in cleantech clusters can drive further growth, fostering a more diversified and resilient economy. This diversification is crucial for reducing the region’s reliance on traditional industries and preparing for future economic challenges.</li> <li>● <b>Equitable Distribution of Economic Benefits:</b> A certification system similar to those used in federal contracting, 8A, could be established to ensure contractors more equitably distribute funding, particularly to small and disadvantaged businesses.</li> <li>● <b>Infrastructure and Utility Reliability:</b> Measures taken to adapt to extreme heat, wildfire, and other severe weather conditions, such as grid hardening which will improve the reliability of essential utilities in the most disadvantaged areas. Reliable infrastructure is a cornerstone of a resilient economy, particularly in the face of increasing climate-related challenges.</li> </ul>

<p>5. <b>Current Trends</b> - Does this strategy respond to current trends or issues?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Climate Change Impacts:</b> According to the Fifth National Climate Assessment, California is projected to experience significant climate-related changes in the coming decades. The strategy directly responds to these trends by emphasizing climate resilience measures to mitigate the impacts of these anticipated changes.</li> <li>● <b>Advancements in Low-Carbon Technologies:</b> This trend supports the strategy’s focus on expanding renewable energy infrastructure and promoting the adoption of clean technologies, which are essential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving long-term sustainability goals.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <b>Impact of Government Policies</b> - Is this strategy impacted by local/state/federal policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Government Policy Impact:</b> Given the increasing urgency to address climate change, government policies at all levels are driving the need for proactive approaches to climate adaptation and mitigation. California’s SB 100 mandates 100% clean electricity by 2045. Similarly, federal policies like the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act provide funding and support for climate resilience projects.</li> <li>● <b>Water Management and the Colorado River:</b> The ongoing situation with the Colorado River, where cuts to water allocation are anticipated due to decreasing basin levels, underscores the importance of aligning local strategies with federal water management policies.</li> </ul>
<p>7. <b>Existing Reports</b> - Are there any plans or reports related to this strategy that should be mentioned?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Co-benefits of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Indicators for Monitoring Urban Climate Change</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change</a></li> <li>● Additional reports can be found on the expanded worksheet linked in the top line of this worksheet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Benefits and Inclusion</b></p>	
<p>8. <b>Community Benefit</b> - Describe how the strategy provides indirect and/or direct <b>community benefits</b>, particularly to disinvested communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Urban Natural Environment:</b> Includes the implementation of urban green spaces, which provide multiple community benefits. The placement of green spaces in these areas helps reduce the urban heat island effect by shading building surfaces, lowering indoor temperatures, and reducing the likelihood of heat-related illnesses.</li> <li>● <b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Beyond temperature regulation, these green spaces serve as recreational areas and social gathering places, which are crucial for community cohesion. Access to safe, outdoor spaces can reduce the incidence of cardiovascular and stress-related diseases, offering long-term health benefits to residents.</li> <li>● <b>Focus on Marginalized Communities:</b> These communities often reside in areas that are more prone to environmental risks, such as poor air quality, flooding, and extreme heat. The strategy prioritizes investments in these neighborhoods to ensure that the benefits of climate resilience are equitably distributed and prioritized in communities most impacted by these environmental risks.</li> <li>● <b>Equitable Access to Resources:</b> By focusing on historically marginalized communities, the strategy ensures that the benefits of climate resilience, such as improved public health, safer living conditions, and greater economic opportunities, are distributed in a way that addresses past injustices.</li> </ul>
<p>9. <b>More on Community Benefits</b> - Describe how this strategy <b>directly serves</b> historically marginalized and disinvested</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Targeted Investment in Vulnerable Areas:</b> The strategy directly serves historically marginalized and disinvested groups by prioritizing investments in communities that have been systematically underfunded and are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards. For instance, neighborhoods which have higher concentrations of low-income and minority residents, are prioritized for urban greening projects and infrastructure improvements.</li> <li>● <b>Health Equity Improvements:</b> Data from Public Health agencies indicates that residents in these marginalized communities experience higher rates of asthma, cardiovascular</li> </ul>

<p>groups.</p>	<p>disease, and heat-related illnesses compared to more affluent neighborhoods. By implementing strategies such as expanding green spaces, improving air quality through increased vegetation, and retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency, the strategy aims to reduce these health disparities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Economic Opportunities and Workforce Inclusion:</b> The strategy also addresses economic inequities by creating job opportunities in these communities. For example, the Pure Water San Diego project not only contributes to water security but also provides job training and employment opportunities for residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods.</li> <li>● <b>Community Engagement and Representation:</b> The strategy ensures that historically marginalized groups have a voice in the planning and implementation process. This is achieved through partnerships with community-based organizations which advocate for environmental justice and work directly with residents to ensure that their needs and concerns are addressed.</li> <li>● <b>Infrastructure Resilience:</b> Investments in infrastructure improvements are specifically designed to protect these vulnerable communities from the impacts of extreme weather events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jobs</b></p>	
<p>10. <b>Family-Sustaining Jobs</b> 1 - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support family-sustaining jobs</b>, including new and existing jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Growth in Renewable Energy Jobs:</b> Expanding renewable energy projects, such as solar installations in San Diego County and lithium extraction through geothermal energy in Imperial County, presents significant opportunities for creating family-sustaining jobs. These initiatives offer stable employment with competitive wages, healthcare benefits, and opportunities for career advancement in the rapidly growing green energy sector.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Disadvantaged Communities:</b> Targeted initiatives to create job opportunities in disinvested communities where unemployment and poverty rates are significantly higher than the regional average. Partnerships with organizations can ensure that recruitment and training efforts prioritize residents from these communities.</li> </ul>
<p>11. <b>Equitable Access to Jobs</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to enhance <b>equitable access</b> to jobs for members of disinvested communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Tailored Training Programs:</b> Partnerships with local educational institutions to offer tailored training programs specifically designed for residents of disinvested communities.</li> <li>● <b>Inclusive Recruitment Practices:</b> Companies such as SDG&amp;E are committed to implementing inclusive recruitment practices. These include outreach to underrepresented groups, setting hiring targets for individuals from disinvested communities, and creating mentorship programs that support long-term career development.</li> <li>● <b>Clear Educational Pathways:</b> Collaborations with institutions provide clear educational pathways, including scholarships, internships, and apprenticeships, specifically aimed at members of disinvested communities.</li> <li>● <b>Community-Based Support:</b> Community-based organizations are working to ensure that job opportunities are communicated effectively within disinvested communities. These organizations also provide job readiness workshops, resume assistance, and interview preparation, helping residents navigate the job market and secure employment in new sectors.</li> <li>● <b>Supportive Policies and Incentives:</b> Local government policies, supported by State initiatives like the California Climate Investments program, include incentives for companies to hire from disinvested communities. These policies ensure that the economic benefits of the green transition are equitably distributed and that job creation efforts prioritize those who have been historically marginalized.</li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Skills Match</b> - Explain how the strategy plans to match skills to available jobs,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Collaborative Training Programs:</b> Collaboration between businesses, training institutions, and labor organizations works to ensure that the skills being developed match the demands of emerging industries.</li> <li>● <b>Industry-Driven Skill Development:</b> Initiatives like SDG&amp;E's Workforce Development Program, which is directly informed by the needs of the energy sector, provides targeted</li> </ul>

<p>address talent and recruitment, and facilitate strategic collaboration among businesses, training and education institutions, labor, etc.</p>	<p>training for specific job roles, ensuring that participants are job-ready upon completion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Early Engagement and Workforce Alignment:</b> Ensures a strong match between skills and available jobs by engaging students early through partnerships with high schools in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Schools introduce specialized STEM programs focused on renewable energy, equipping students with foundational skills and early exposure to careers in the green economy.</li> </ul>
<p>13. <b>Other Equity Issues</b> - Explain the potential for the strategy to address <i>specific issues</i> identified in the Regional Profile, Labor Market Analysis, and Industry Cluster Analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Closing Racial and Ethnic Gaps in Employment:</b> Prioritize workforce development programs aimed at closing employment gaps that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities. These efforts are designed to ensure equitable access to new job opportunities created by the transition to a green economy.</li> <li>● <b>Addressing Income Inequality:</b> Initiatives to address income disparities by ensuring that jobs created in the green economy offer competitive wages and benefits. This helps bridge the income gap and provides long-term economic stability for individuals and families in disinvested communities</li> </ul>
<p>14. <b>At-Risk Workers</b> - What is the potential for the strategy to <b>support at-risk workers</b>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Transition Programs for At-Risk Industries:</b> Specific transition programs for workers in industries that are likely to be impacted by the shift to a low-carbon economy, such as those in fossil fuel-based energy sectors.</li> <li>● <b>Preventing Displacement:</b> Preventing the displacement of incumbent workers by offering retraining and upskilling programs.</li> <li>● <b>Reinvestment in Worker Support:</b> Targeted reinvestment of tax revenue generated from green energy projects, such as solar installations and geothermal operations, directly into workforce development initiatives.</li> <li>● <b>Support for Disinvested Communities:</b> Special attention is given to workers in disinvested communities who are more vulnerable to the economic shifts caused by climate policies. The strategy includes targeted employment programs that offer stable, well-paying jobs in green sectors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Climate Change</b></p>	
<p>15. <b>Environmental Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy will limit the impacts of economic development activities on the natural environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Green Infrastructure:</b> San Diego’s Advanced Water Purification programs reduce reliance on imported water by recycling wastewater into potable water. Solar energy in the region is championed by companies driving the growth of residential and commercial solar installations.</li> <li>● <b>Innovative Technologies:</b> In San Diego County, the expansion of microgrids and advanced energy storage systems offers a cutting-edge solution to reduce the environmental impact of economic development.</li> <li>● <b>Equity-Focused:</b> Management practices that enhance biodiversity.</li> <li>● <b>EV Infrastructure:</b> Expanding the network of electric vehicle charging stations reducing emissions from transportation. Passenger vehicles account for roughly 16.4% of the U.S. Greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>● <b>Heat Adaptation:</b> San Diego’s Urban Greening Program and cool roofing initiatives in neighborhoods like City Heights help mitigate the urban heat island effect, reducing the environmental impacts of urbanization and economic growth.</li> </ul>
<p>16. <b>Public Health</b> - Explain how the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Heat-Related Health Issues:</b> Expanding urban tree canopies and implementing cool roofing in neighborhoods more vulnerable to extreme heat.</li> </ul>

<p>strategy addresses <b>public health needs</b>, with special attention to the needs of disinvested communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Air Quality Improvement:</b> Transitioning to EVs and expanding EV infrastructure through companies will reduce emissions from transportation, a significant source of air pollution in urban areas. Improved air quality directly benefits public health by reducing respiratory issues such as asthma and other chronic lung diseases.</li> <li>● <b>Access to Clean Water:</b> Advanced Water Purification initiatives address public health by ensuring a reliable supply of clean, safe drinking water, which is crucial during drought conditions that disproportionately affect low-income communities.</li> <li>● <b>Health Equity Focus:</b> Efforts to reduce pollution and improve access to green spaces in these areas are aligned with California’s Climate Change Scoping Plan, which aims to address health disparities exacerbated by climate change.</li> <li>● <b>Emergency Preparedness:</b> The strategy also includes enhancing emergency preparedness for extreme weather events, such as heat waves, flooding or wildfires, which are expected to increase in frequency due to climate change.</li> </ul>
<p>17. <b>Climate Impacts</b> - Explain how the strategy <b>avoids</b> exacerbating the effects of climate change and includes pathways for mitigating the effects of anticipated climate impacts on targeted industries and occupations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Mitigating Climate Change:</b> Investments in renewable energy and other decarbonization strategies support both mitigation and adaptation goals, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions contributed to the atmosphere and enhancing the resilience of buildings and infrastructure to withstand climate-related weather events.</li> <li>● <b>Adaptation and Resilience:</b> Advanced Water Purification initiatives not only address current water needs but also prepare the region for future droughts, which are likely to increase due to climate change. This proactive adaptation strategy protects the region’s water supply and supports local industries dependent on water.</li> <li>● <b>Industry-Specific Pathways:</b> In Imperial County, direct-lithium extraction companies are developing geothermal projects that provide a sustainable source of lithium for the electric vehicle industry, aligning economic growth with climate resilience.</li> <li>● <b>Equity-Focused Adaptation:</b> Climate resilience strategies emphasize infrastructure upgrades in vulnerable communities, ensuring that these areas are better protected against extreme weather events and other climate-related impacts.</li> <li>● <b>Job Creation in Climate-Resilient Sectors:</b> Achieving local climate goals requires a skilled workforce and resources to train this workforce.</li> <li>● <b>Urban Cooling:</b> Expanding the Urban Greening Program and implementing cool roofing materials in heat-vulnerable neighborhoods helps reduce the impact of extreme heat on public health and energy.</li> </ul>
<p>18. <b>State Climate Policy</b> - How does the strategy align with and support existing state environmental strategies related to Climate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Clean Energy:</b> The development of solar farms by companies like SDG&amp;E and the geothermal energy initiatives in Imperial County directly support this goal.</li> <li>● <b>Air Pollution Reduction:</b> The expansion of electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure aims to reduce air pollution by increasing the number of EVs on the road.</li> <li>● Additional content can be found on the expanded worksheet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>19. <b>Implementation - What partnerships and resources are needed to implement</b> the strategy and support enhancing the Sector Neutral</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Renewable Energy Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>State Grants:</b> \$200 million from California Climate Investments (CCI) and other state programs aimed at supporting renewable energy projects.</li> <li>○ <b>Federal Support:</b> \$100 million from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, allocated for clean energy infrastructure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Workforce Development and Training:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>State Workforce Grants:</b> \$20 million from programs like the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) targeting skills development in green jobs.</li> <li>○ <b>Local Education Budgets:</b> \$15 million allocated by institutions such as UC San</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>Strategy? <a href="#">Links</a> to state Climate Policies.</p>	<p>Diego, San Diego Continuing Education, and Imperial Valley College.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Outreach and Equity Initiatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Local Government:</b> \$10 million from San Diego and Imperial County budgets for public engagement and equity programs.</li> <li>○ <b>Community Grants:</b> \$5 million from foundations and philanthropic organizations focused on environmental justice and community development.</li> <li>○ <b>Philanthropic Donations:</b> \$5 million from local businesses and community donors supporting inclusive climate initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Public Health and Resilience Projects:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>State Public Health Grants:</b> \$15 million from California’s public health funds directed towards climate resilience and public health interventions.</li> <li>○ <b>Local Government:</b> \$10 million from municipal budgets focused on enhancing public health infrastructure, such as cooling centers and urban greening projects.</li> <li>○ <b>Federal Support:</b> \$5 million from federal public health and resilience programs targeting climate adaptation in vulnerable communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## Additional Regional and Community Development Strategies

Below is a worksheet for the approved Community Development strategy - Housing, which provides background, research, and strategy recommendations. As noted in this plan, this preliminary document will be further socialized and developed in September 2024.

<i>Community Development Strategy</i> Worksheet: Housing	
<p><b>Key Questions and Information</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Provide the text of the strategy.</p>	<p>This strategy directly serves historically marginalized and disinvested communities to overcome chronic unemployment and poverty and contributes to improving housing security and quality of life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Promote Community Ownership Models:</b> Support the development of community-owned housing models that are permanently affordable and operate outside of the speculative housing market.</li> <li>● Invest in nonprofits led-by and serving historically disinvested communities to preserve existing affordable housing units through small sites acquisition and rehabilitation programs.</li> <li>● Invest in community ownership models where residents and community-based organizations led by disinvested in communities own and manage housing using cooperatives, community land trusts, and other innovative models.</li> <li>● Invest in community-led initiatives to <b>Produce New, Sustainable, and Affordable Housing.</b></li> <li>● Prioritize investments in community-driven projects that focus on creating new affordable housing using sustainable practices, prioritizing environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, and resilience.</li> <li>● Provide technical and legal assistance to help navigate zoning laws, establish cooperative agreements, and secure tax benefits for community-owned housing models.</li> <li>● Establish public-private partnerships for creating housing on Public Lands.</li> <li>● Identify state-owned land for affordable housing. Identify underutilized land and establish a statewide land-bank to designate it for affordable housing development. Incentivize local governments to also contribute surplus land through grants and other support.</li> <li>● Partner with historically underinvested communities to support the development of affordable and transitional housing projects.</li> </ul>

### Deeper Look

<p><b>Explain the need/opportunity:</b> Describe why this strategy was selected. Use data and information from Part 1 or new information.</p>	<p>Economic disparities and income inequality create housing insecurity that can lead to homelessness. San Diego and Imperial Counties are facing housing issues.<sup>51</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inaccessible housing and high cost of living impact workforce retention and quality of life.</li> <li>● High costs and inequality can impede economic mobility, making it challenging for workers to move into higher-paying jobs or more affluent communities.</li> <li>● Workers are struggling to access affordable housing and spend the majority of their incomes covering housing costs.</li> <li>● Housing infrastructure gaps impact quality of life and economic efficiency. This is especially notable in Imperial County and in rural and disinvested areas across San Diego County.<sup>52</sup></li> <li>● Providing historically marginalized communities with land for affordable housing development significantly reduces the cost of developing affordable housing and creates more equitable, sustainable, and resilient housing solutions that directly serve the needs of historically marginalized and disinvested communities.</li> <li>● Cooperative and alternative community ownership models ensure that housing remains affordable and that the benefits of development are shared by those most impacted.</li> <li>● Across San Diego County, people who rent are disproportionately impacted by overcrowding compared with those who own their own homes (6.4% versus 2% across the county as a whole).<sup>53</sup></li> <li>● California is one of the most rent-burdened states in the country, and San Diego County has the fourth-largest number of renters in the U.S and second largest in California.<sup>54</sup> In 2019, almost 60% of California immigrant renters and two-thirds of undocumented renters were burdened.<sup>55</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities to grow:</b> What is the potential for this strategy to support the region?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support worker housing initiatives, especially for farmworkers.</li> <li>● Reduce income inequality and help improve quality of life.</li> <li>● Invest in community-driven projects that focus on creating new affordable housing using sustainable practices and community ownership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation:</b> What partnerships and resources are needed to implement strategy and support enhancing the priority sector? Explain the Collaborative's and/or other partners' roles in the advancement of the strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This strategy requires multi-agency partnerships and broad collaboration across federal, state, and local governments and with private and public partners, including community members.</li> <li>● San Diego County and its cities can identify and make available surplus land, provide grants, technical assistance, and streamline planning and permitting processes for affordable housing development.</li> <li>● Government and philanthropy partnerships provide technical assistance and support to draw down funding resources to impacted communities.</li> <li>● Include participation from community leadership and decision-making and prioritized projects for state funding programs.</li> <li>● Create community-government partnerships that streamline and accelerate housing projects on public and community-owned land.</li> </ul>

<sup>51</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, pp. 161-162

<sup>52</sup> CJF SBC Regional Plan Part 1, p. 166

<sup>53</sup> Planning Department & Services. County of San Diego General Plan [Internet]. 2011 [cited 2024 Mar 8]. Available from: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/generalplan.html>

<sup>54</sup> Bureau UC. Renters More Likely Than Homeowners to Spend More Than 30% of Income on Housing in Almost All Counties [Internet]. Census.gov. 2022 [cited 2024 Mar 8]. Available from: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2022/12/housing-costs-burden.html>

<sup>55</sup> Housing Burden California [Internet]. California Immigrant Data Portal. 2020 [cited 2024 Apr 1]. Available from: <https://immigrantdataca.org/indicators/housing-burden>

## CHAPTER 6: A PATH FORWARD: INSTITUTIONALIZING COMMUNITY-LED, CLIMATE FORWARD PLANNING

This chapter includes information on how the Coalition envisions implementing the policies, strategies, and actions recommended in the Regional Plan. It includes proposals for a revised governance structure, a process for facilitating funding and projects identified in the plan, and a timeline, metrics, and monitoring to ensure the plan's compliance and vitality.

### Revised Governance Structure

While the governance structure of the Southern Border Coalition has worked in expansive community engagement and education, voices have emerged for how structural changes could improve future work, namely:

- Discuss how to fill the Imperial County Worker Center Sector Lead seat. There is no eligible Worker Center in Imperial County, so the Coalition will identify where the seat can shift based on equitable representation.
- Solidify the roles and responsibilities of Co-Conveners and Sector Leads for implementing the Catalyst Program. Currently, all Co-Conveners are tasked with identical statements of work, but there is an opportunity to reprioritize what activities co-conveners take on to leverage their organization's strengths. During the Catalyst Phase, each Co-Convener organization will revisit and revise convening role in the Catalyst process.
- Consider restructuring the deployment of the Industry Sector Coordinators through contracting agencies/groups and individuals per the region's needs. The current plan involves hiring five individuals: two who will support Imperial County, two who will support San Diego County, and one who will work across the Southern Border and its adjacent regions. In reviewing how other regions allocate these resources, the Coalition intends to review how we might change our structure to involve a contractor for targeted work instead of hiring five individuals. An example of this structure could include - two individuals in Imperial County, two in San Diego County, and one contractor who can support regional activities. This final structure will be determined in October.
- Address the Sector Lead body's request to create an executive/steering committee that can facilitate discussions and streamline communications.
- Identify the participation gaps of underrepresented groups before Catalyst implementation.
- Modify our governance structure to resolve communication issues we have been experiencing through committee recommendations, advisory, or new messaging processes.
- Areas of improvement to be addressed during the transition to Catalyst:
  - Improving the flow of information through a simultaneous feedback loop between Co-Conveners and sector leads.
  - Improved training opportunities for technology, conflict resolution, and facilitation.
  - Improved language access.
  - Simplified materials for transparent decision-making processes.
  - Short-form and long-form documentation to improve readability and accessibility independent of educational and professional backgrounds.

### Facilitating Funding and Project Development

- Develop an Outreach and Engagement plan for discussing the Catalyst phase with communities in the Southern

Border to ensure that project ideas are originating from many communities throughout the Southern Border Region.

- Develop a project proposal intake platform that facilitates the curating of project proposals for the Catalyst phase.
- Develop a criteria process for project submissions that aligns with selected Priority Industry Sectors and Strategies for the region, criteria to be adopted by the Southern Border Coalition before the project submittal period.
- Close Gap funding -
  - First step: Work with philanthropy to develop gap financing for project applicants who lack the cash flow to engage with cost-reimbursable contracts like the Catalyst Program.
  - Month-to-month: Provide a finance program that covers operational and heavy expenditures in project pre-development activities.
  - Longer term - social innovation/impact financing for selected projects.
- Sector Investment Coordinator (SIC) - technical assistance and hands-on support through the subregional and regional Sector Investment Coordinator(s) to support project activities or identify external resources to shepherd projects along with applicants/awardees.
- Pre-development pipeline to ready-to-fund/last mile project development activities through SIC assistance, Coalition-led educational sessions, and curated resource guide.

## Timeline

### Short-term (Months 1-6)

- Engage in comprehensive review and arrive at an agreement of the changes to the SBC governance structure.
- Continue with community capacity-building activities
- Support the Sector Leads for the Imperial County and the San Diego County Tribes to further develop their research and strategies to address the priority issues and opportunities selected by their sector. Background materials can be found Here: [Imperial County Subregion](#) and [San Diego Subregion](#).
- Develop selection criteria for the Catalyst pre-development funds.
- Adopt criteria for the project intake process for Catalyst pre-development grants.
- Develop and implement an outreach plan to disseminate the criteria, goals, metrics, and process for project intake.
- Develop and implement a project review process for approving State Implementation grant applications from the region.
- Launch intake portal in multiple languages to facilitate the project submission process.
- Identify how SIC will be implemented (hiring personnel, contracting with a group, mixed) and bring SIC body into the Coalition.
- Work with potential project applicants to develop proposals for the intake portal (offer technical assistance).
- Identify the schedule of Catalyst fund distribution for pre-development projects and corresponding amounts for different types of projects.
- Convene Priority Industry Tables.
- Develop a funding opportunity distribution list targeted for the Southern Border.

### Mid-term (Months 6-24)

- Continue with community capacity-building activities
- Award first Catalyst projects based on the criteria adopted by the Coalition.
- Identify additional funding opportunities for exploratory projects that advance projects that align with the Regional Plan.
- Continue to implement a project review process for approving State Implementation grant applications from the region.
- Shepherd Catalyst exploratory projects into developed project plans/strategies for additional funding opportunities (internal/external).

- Create a repository and alert system for external funding opportunities that align with the Regional Plan.
- **Long-term (Post-Catalyst)**
  - Work with Coalition members, including project awardees, to apply to external funding opportunities that advance projects that help implement the Regional Plan.
  - Assist with implementing projects that have been awarded external funding overlapping the Catalyst period.
  - Develop an external document to inform updates to future CEDS, regional plans, etc., that align with the SBC goals from Planning + Catalyst.

## Metrics and Monitoring

- Identify whether current SBC materials (bylaws, working documents, etc.) have metrics for success and a vision for implementation.
- Develop a tracking for success metrics system that includes funding awarded, pre-development project deliverables for exploratory and other categories, timelines for project plans to submit for other funds, and funding secured from external sources.
- Reporting for projects receiving catalyst funding, including benefit commitments.
- Technical assistance requests supported by the Investment Coordinators
- Number of Catalyst project proposals received
- Number of community meetings held

## Regional Plan Implementation Strategies

- Leverage the regional plan to access state, federal, local, and philanthropy funding.
- Require ongoing community engagement and participatory policymaking throughout the implementation of the regional plan and individual project development.
- Cultivate regional partnerships among disinvested communities, local governments, tribal governments, small and large businesses, other community members, nonprofits, and philanthropy to co-create strategies and take action to implement community priority projects, policies, and programs.
- Seek opportunities to use community ownership models to advance the plan's implementation, including support for community land trusts, cooperative housing, employee-owned businesses, and other similar cooperative entities.
- Through continuous community engagement and monitoring, ensure the regional plan continues to serve the region's needs, especially disinvested communities and neighborhoods.