



SOUTHWEST BORDER
REGIONAL COMMISSION

Strategic Plan 2025 Southwest Border Regional Commission



Executive Summary

The Southwest Border Regional Commission (SBRC) is a congressionally chartered partnership between the federal government and the four southwestern border states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. The SBRC was established to drive economic development, improve infrastructure, and address disparities in one of the nation's most dynamic regions. Covering Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, the SBRC works to empower distressed communities, strengthen regional competitiveness, and enhance the quality of life for residents. The SBRC targets its investments to areas with the greatest need, including counties with high poverty and unemployment rates, tribal communities, and colonias. By fostering collaboration between federal, state, and local governments, as well as private and non-profit sectors, the Commission ensures that its resources are strategically deployed to maximize economic outcomes. With a focus on catalytic projects, economic equity, sustainability, and addressing barriers to economic development. The SBRC is committed to creating a thriving and resilient Southwest region that benefits all its residents.

At the core of SBRC's strategy is the belief that strategic investments can generate tangible, measurable returns for both the region's economy and its residents. By prioritizing infrastructure, workforce development, and community resilience, SBRC aims to empower local economies, reduce disparities, and foster regional collaboration. This plan balances ambitious goals with pragmatic, actionable objectives that will yield significant social and economic outcomes.

This Five-Year Strategic Plan outlines the SBRC's targeted approach to fostering long-term economic growth, enhancing resilience, and improving quality of life for residents—especially those in underserved and economically distressed communities. The plan centers on leveraging the region's unique strengths to build a competitive, inclusive, and sustainable future.



Key Goals of the SBRC

1. Addressing Barriers to Growth and Opportunity

Many communities in the SBRC region face systemic obstacles—limited infrastructure, insufficient local capacity, and economic isolation. The SBRC works to level the playing field by creating an agile grant program, investing in underserved areas, and providing technical assistance to help communities maximize the impact of federal and state programs.

2. Amplify Regional Comparative Advantage

The SBRC will focus on investments that strengthen the Southwest Border's role as a global trade gateway and a leader in clean energy. Infrastructure improvements in transportation, energy, and broadband will support trade efficiency, expand the clean energy sector, and boost the region's economic competitiveness.

3. Generate Workforce and Economic Mobility

The SBRC will invest in workforce development programs aligned with the region's high-demand industries, such as healthcare, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing. These initiatives will ensure that local workers are equipped with the skills needed to participate in and benefit from the region's economic transformation.

4. Build Resilient and Self-Sustaining Communities

The Commission will prioritize projects that address infrastructure gaps in underserved areas, including access to clean water, affordable housing, and broadband. Additionally, the SBRC will focus on enhancing climate resilience to prepare communities for the effects of environmental challenges like droughts, floods, and wildfires.

5. Maximize Investment Efficiency and Impact

The SBRC will employ data-driven strategies to maximize the effectiveness of its investments. Prioritizing high-ROI projects, using performance-based metrics, and fostering public-private partnerships will ensure that the SBRC resources are utilized efficiently, delivering sustainable results.

Key Strategies for Success

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** The SBRC will collaborate with the private sector to leverage additional capital, de-risk projects, and enhance economic growth. This approach ensures that public investments attract further investment and innovation, especially in critical sectors like clean energy, infrastructure, and technology.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The SBRC's success depends on close collaboration with state and local governments, tribal communities, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. Through ongoing engagement, SBRC will ensure that investments align with regional priorities and address the unique needs of communities.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The SBRC will continuously assess the effectiveness of its projects through key performance indicators (KPIs) that track job creation, economic growth, infrastructure improvements, and social mobility. This will ensure that the Commission's investments have tangible, measurable outcomes and that the strategic plan remains adaptable to evolving regional needs.



This Plan is designed to unlock the full economic potential of the Southwest Border region. By focusing on infrastructure, workforce development, and equitable growth, the SBRC aims to create a competitive, inclusive economy that provides lasting opportunities for all residents. With a focus on catalytic investments, collaboration, and sustainable outcomes, the SBRC is poised to drive positive, transformative change in the region, ensuring a prosperous future for generations to come.

Strategic Planning Framework

The SBRC operates within one of the most dynamic and economically vital regions in the country. Spanning four states—Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas—the region’s communities are as diverse as the challenges and opportunities they face. The SBRC’s strategic planning framework is designed to guide high-impact investments, align resources with priorities, and create measurable improvements in both regional economic resilience and residents’ quality of life. This framework ensures SBRC investments are targeted, equitable, and catalytic, fostering sustainable development and long-term economic returns.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Catalytic Investment for High-Impact Returns**

The SBRC prioritizes investments that generate measurable economic and social outcomes. Funding is directed toward projects with clear potential to multiply economic activity, unlock private capital, and enhance regional competitiveness. This approach ensures that each dollar spent delivers significant and lasting value to the Southwest region.

- 2. Regional Comparative Advantage**

With its unique position as a global trade gateway and a hub for energy innovation, the Southwest region holds immense potential. SBRC investments are designed to strengthen this comparative advantage by supporting critical infrastructure, workforce readiness, and binational collaboration.

- 3. Equity and Inclusive Growth**

Economic progress must benefit all communities, particularly those historically left behind. The SBRC commits at least 50% of its funding to distressed counties and 5% to tribal areas. By addressing disparities in access to infrastructure, services, and economic opportunities, the SBRC strengthens the foundation for long-term regional prosperity.

- 4. **Evidence-Driven Decision-Making**
SBRC employs data to inform investments and measure outcomes, ensuring accountability and adaptability. Continuous monitoring and evaluation enable the Commission to refine its strategies and respond effectively to evolving regional needs.

Methodology

The SBRC's approach is rooted in rigorous analysis and broad stakeholder engagement, ensuring its investments are both grounded in data and reflective of community priorities.

- 1. **Data-Driven Regional Assessment**
The SBRC analyzes economic indicators, infrastructure needs, and demographic trends to identify high-impact investment opportunities.
- 2. **Stakeholder Engagement**
A broad array of stakeholders, including state and local officials, tribal leaders, business representatives, and non-profits, are consulted. Their insights were instrumental in shaping the SBRC's priorities and funding criteria.
- 3. **Investment Prioritization**
Funding is allocated based on a scoring system that emphasizes ROI, job creation, economic equity, and alignment with regional goals. Distressed counties and tribal communities receive priority consideration, ensuring resources address the greatest needs.
- 4. **Partnerships and Leveraged Funding**
The SBRC collaborates with state agencies, local governments, and private investors to multiply the impact of its investments. By de-risking projects through initial funding, SBRC attracts additional capital to the wider region.



Key Goals and Objectives

The Southwest Border Regional Commission (SBRC) has identified five strategic goals to guide its investments over the next five years. These goals reflect the region's unique economic opportunities and challenges, prioritizing projects that deliver measurable returns for communities and the broader regional economy. The objectives within each goal are actionable, evidence-based, and designed to maximize both macroeconomic impact and microeconomic improvements for residents.

Goal 1: Addressing Barriers to Growth and Opportunity

Economic opportunity should reach every corner of the SBRC region. This goal focuses on investments that reduce disparities and uplift historically underserved communities. Communities across the commission's region face systemic barriers to accessing the benefits and opportunities of government and private investments. We conducted extensive stakeholder engagement and researched and analyzed existing economic development plans. This process engaged hundreds of community stakeholders across four states, including mayors, healthcare professionals, economists, nonprofit organizations, universities, chambers of commerce, tribal representatives, industry groups, state agencies, and local development districts.

Through our engagement, we identified the most significant barriers to economic development and infrastructure project completion. In response, the commission's first goal and priority is to implement the following strategies to help communities overcome these barriers.

- **Capacity Barrier:** Many distressed communities lack the technical, managerial, or financial capacity to pursue development projects. Unincorporated areas, like colonias, often have no governing structure, while distressed communities with minimal staff are overwhelmed with administrative duties, regulations, and post-award project management.
 - **Targeted Strategies:**
 - Building Local Capacity: The SBRC's new agile grant program will increase the allowable funding for administrative support. The program also allows local development districts to co-apply with distressed communities and serve as administrative agents.
 - Establish University Research and Assistance Centers to address the local capacity gap, perform ongoing asset management capacity building, and enact training tied to project-specific progress.
 - Fund local researchers to localize and increase data availability.
 - Provide technical assistance to navigate grant applications.

- **Cost-Prohibitive Matching Requirements & Pre-development Costs:** Economically distressed communities often lack the tax base to secure matching funds required for federal and state grants, making it difficult to compete for funding. Local government officials noted that most pre-development costs are not eligible for grant funding by federal grant programs, requiring local governments to finance these costs themselves.
 - **Targeted Strategies:**
 - Reducing Matching Requirements & Funding Pre-development: The SBRC is committed to reducing the burden of matching funds utilizing its authority under 40 USC §15506 to allow applicants to utilize commission funds to meet state and federal program matching requirements.
 - The commission's agile grant programs make pre-development feasibility, environmental, engineering, architectural, or archeological studies eligible.

- **High-cost Infrastructure Projects:** Communities face significant challenges in completing high-cost infrastructure such as water and wastewater systems, roads, and broadband. Limited financial support and increasing costs result in long-term planning timelines that lead to outdated budgets and cost overruns.
 - **Targeted Strategies:**
 - Forming Partnerships and Leveraging Funds: Through interagency and private sector collaborations, the commission seeks to co-invest with various partners, aligning investment policies and contributing to capital staking to complete projects in the commission's communities.
 - The commission will support pilot programs and research focused on easing financial burdens and reducing costs through innovation, efficiencies, systems improvement, and new technology.

These structural biases and a lack of resources and technical support for disadvantaged, distressed communities result in an uneven playing field when competing for grants and private funding. The SBRC will invest in underserved communities by allocate at least 50% of its grant funds to distressed areas and 5% to Tribal communities. Grant scoring criteria will prioritize these areas.

Goal 2: Amplify Regional Comparative Advantage

The SBRC region's location and resources make it a vital economic corridor for trade, innovation, and energy production. This goal focuses on investments that strengthen the Southwest Border's competitiveness in national and global markets.

- **Modernize and expand transportation infrastructure to enhance logistics and trade efficiency.**

- *Example Projects:*

- Upgrades to key highways and border crossings to reduce congestion and streamline logistics.
- Example: Development of intermodal facilities that connect rail, road, and ports for seamless freight movement.

- **Invest in resilient energy infrastructure to enhance the region as an all-the-above energy leader.**

- *Example Projects:*

- Regional leadership in oil & gas extraction and related industries.
- Solar and wind farms with integrated battery storage systems.

- **Strengthen cross-border economic collaboration with Mexico.**

- *Example Projects:*

- Binational manufacturing clusters enhance competitiveness.
- Example: Workforce training programs for industries critical to cross-border trade.

“These goals reflect the region’s unique economic opportunities and challenges, prioritizing projects that deliver measurable returns for communities and the broader regional economy.”

Goal 3: Generate Workforce and Economic Mobility

A skilled and resilient workforce is essential to sustained economic growth. This goal aims to equip residents with the tools they need to participate in and benefit from the region's economic transformation.

- **Expand training programs in high-demand industries, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and technology.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Apprenticeship programs for renewable energy technicians.
 - Healthcare certification programs to address provider shortages in underserved areas.
- **Support small business development and entrepreneurship in distressed counties.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Grants for minority-owned businesses in rural areas.
 - Business incubators focused on agriculture technology and sustainable tourism.
- **Foster partnerships between employers and educational institutions to create career pipelines.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Collaborative programs between community colleges and local industries.
 - Internships and co-op opportunities for high school and college students.



Goal 4: Build Resilient and Self-Sustaining Communities

Economic growth depends on strong foundational infrastructure and equitable access to services. This goal addresses long-standing gaps in water, broadband, housing, and local capacity.

- **Provide critical infrastructure, including clean water, broadband, and affordable housing.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Water treatment facilities for colonias and tribal lands.
 - High-speed internet expansion in rural areas.
- **Strengthen local governance and administrative capacity.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Regional Assistance Centers at universities to provide grant-writing support.
 - Training programs for local officials to manage federal and state funds.
- **Invest in infrastructure that reduces vulnerability to climate risks.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Flood mitigation systems for high-risk areas.
 - Renewable energy installations to enhance community resilience.

“Economic growth depends on strong foundational infrastructure and equitable access to services.”

Goal 5: Maximize Investment Efficiency and Impact

To ensure the greatest return on its investments, SBRC employs a rigorous approach to funding decisions, focusing on projects with clear economic and social ROI.

- **Prioritize projects based on ROI and long-term benefits.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Transportation upgrades with quantifiable reductions in shipping costs.
 - Workforce programs tied directly to job creation metrics.

- **Attract private investment through public-private partnerships.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Matching grant programs for energy and infrastructure projects.
 - Incentives for private investment in underserved areas.
- **Establish continuous monitoring and evaluation systems.**
 - *Example Projects:*
 - Development of a dashboard tracking project outcomes.
 - Annual impact reports with data on job creation, income growth, and community improvements.

Funding Priorities

The Southwest Border Regional Commission (SBRC) focuses its investments on high-impact projects that foster sustainable economic development, increase competitiveness, and improve living standards in underserved communities. The SBRC's funding priorities reflect the region's most pressing needs while also promoting long-term growth across the Southwest. These priorities are designed to catalyze investment, create jobs, and enhance resilience, with a focus on generating both economic and social returns for communities.

The SBRC's funding priorities are carefully designed to support the region's economic growth, promote sustainability, and improve quality of life for all residents. By focusing on infrastructure, workforce development, economic diversification, housing, and climate resilience, the SBRC's investments will create lasting change that drives prosperity across the Southwest Border region.

Infrastructure for Economic Growth

A strong infrastructure foundation is critical for enabling regional economic development. SBRC targets infrastructure investments that enhance the region's connectivity, trade efficiency, energy resilience, and quality of life for residents.

- **Priority Areas:**
 - **Transportation Infrastructure:** Upgrade and expand roadways, bridges, and border-crossing facilities to facilitate trade and reduce logistical delays.

- **Water and Wastewater Infrastructure:** Focus on projects that address the acute need for clean water in colonias and tribal lands, improving public health and quality of life.
- **Broadband Expansion:** Expand high-speed internet access in underserved areas to ensure that rural communities and small businesses can participate in the digital economy.
- **Example Projects:**
 - Interstate highway upgrades to enhance the flow of goods and services.
 - Water treatment plants and sewer systems in underserved communities.
 - Broadband infrastructure projects to enable remote work and online education in rural regions.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Reduced transportation and logistical costs, contributing to improved economic efficiency.
 - Increased access to clean water and improved public health outcomes.
 - Increased internet access, driving business growth, educational opportunities, and job creation in rural communities.

Workforce Development

Investing in workforce development is a cornerstone of SBRC's strategy to elevate economic mobility in the Southwest region. The goal is to equip residents with the skills needed to participate in, and benefit from, the region's economic transformation.

- **Priority Areas:**
 - **Skills Training and Certification Programs:** Develop targeted workforce development programs to meet the growing demands in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and information technology.
 - **Small Business Development:** Support local entrepreneurs, particularly in underserved areas, with access to capital, mentorship, and technical assistance.
 - **Job Placement and Career Pipelines:** Establish career pipelines in collaboration with educational institutions and employers to ensure that workers can transition smoothly into high-demand sectors.
- **Example Projects:**



- Extractive and renewable energy workforce development programs in partnership with local industry and community colleges.
- Job placement programs that connect graduates with small- and medium-sized businesses in the region.
- Mentorship and capacity-building programs for small businesses, particularly in rural areas.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Skilled workers entering high-demand sectors, particularly in clean energy and healthcare.
 - Business growth through increased entrepreneurial activity and access to support resources.
 - Reduced unemployment rates and increased income levels through job placement initiatives.

Economic Diversification and Small Business Ecosystem

Diversifying the region's economic base is essential for long-term sustainability. SBRC aims to foster innovation, support entrepreneurship, and promote sectors that can drive sustainable economic growth.

- **Priority Areas:**
 - **Business Incubators and Accelerators:** Invest in business incubators, particularly in sectors such as clean technology, sustainable agriculture, and digital services, to nurture the next generation of small businesses.
 - **Industry Clusters:** Build industry-specific clusters, such as manufacturing hubs or tech innovation districts, to drive concentrated economic activity and attract investment.
 - **Access to Capital:** Improve access to funding for small businesses, especially in distressed areas, through grants, low-interest loans, and venture capital partnerships.
- **Example Projects:**
 - Incubators that provide resources for technology start-ups, including co-working spaces and mentorship.



- Manufacturing hubs that aggregate resources for small producers in the region.
- Microloans and grants for underserved entrepreneurs to help them scale their businesses.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - New businesses and innovations that diversify the regional economy and create long-term growth opportunities.
 - Industry-specific economic hubs that strengthen the region’s economic base and attract outside investment.
 - Increased access to capital for underserved businesses, facilitating expansion and job creation.

Affordable Housing and Community Resilience

Creating resilient, thriving communities requires providing stable and affordable housing. SBRC supports initiatives that ensure residents have access to housing, utilities, and community services that allow them to live and work in the region.

Unfortunately, all SBRC states fall into the top 20 highest states by median home price, with one of them as the highest in the country. Three of four are in the top 20 for median rental price.

Housing Affordability (2023), SBRC States

State	Median Home Price (National Rank)	Median Rental Price (Rank)
Arizona	\$471,300 (11)	\$1,097 (17)
California	\$843,800 (1)	\$1,586 (2)
New Mexico	\$518,300 (10)	\$857 (36)
Texas	\$389,100 (20)	\$1,082 (19)

Note: 2023 figures; national median home price is \$395,126, and national median rental price is \$1,037/month.
Source: WiseVoter.org.

Priority Areas:

- **Affordable Housing Development:** Focus on expanding affordable housing stock in underserved and high-growth areas to prevent displacement and support workforce retention.
- **Disaster Resilience:** Invest in housing and infrastructure projects that enhance resilience to natural disasters, particularly in flood-prone areas.
- **Community Development Projects:** Enhance public spaces, recreational areas, and civic infrastructure that support quality of life.
- **Example Projects:**
 - Multi-family housing developments designed for low-income workers.
 - Green infrastructure initiatives, such as flood barriers and drought-resistant landscaping, in vulnerable communities.
 - Community centers and public parks in underserved neighborhoods to enhance livability and community cohesion.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Increased affordable housing options, supporting workforce stability and retention.
 - Improved disaster preparedness and recovery capacity.
 - Enhanced community spaces that foster local engagement and quality of life.



Energy Resilience and Innovation

As the region faces increasing energy and environmental challenges, SBRC is committed to promoting energy resilience through multi-modal energy initiatives and climate-resilient infrastructure. The SBRC service area is not only a world-leading region for oil and gas extraction and development, but also one of the most promising regions for renewable energy in the continental United States.

Renewable Energy Potential, SBRC States (GW)

State	Solar PV	CSP	Wind	Biopower	Hydropower	Total
Arizona	5,215	3,528	11	<1	<1	8,755.00
California	4,197	2,726	689	4	7	7,623.00
New Mexico	7,122	4,860	492	<1	<1	12,475.50
Texas	20,625	7,743	2,173	3	<1	30,544.50

Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy

- **Priority Areas:**
 - **Multi-Modal Energy Projects:** Continue to invest in electrical grid resilience and incentivize energy expansion from inexpensive, resilience-maximizing energy sources.
 - **Energy Efficiency Programs:** Support initiatives that help businesses and households reduce energy consumption and costs, promoting long-term sustainability.
 - **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation:** Invest in projects that address the impacts of climate change, such as droughts, wildfires, and flooding, especially in vulnerable communities.
- **Example Projects:**
 - Micro-grid pilot projects in rural communities.
 - Solar power installations on public buildings and low-income homes.
 - Community-scale climate adaptation projects to protect local agriculture and infrastructure from climate risks.
 - Energy audits and upgrades for small businesses and households to improve efficiency and lower costs.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Increased energy capacity, contributing to a more robust local economy.
 - Reduced risk through adaptation projects that protect vulnerable infrastructure and communities.
 - Lower energy costs for businesses and residents through increased and more resilient power generation and uptake of energy efficiency programs.



Implementation and Accountability

To ensure the success of the Commission’s strategic investments, a robust framework for implementation, monitoring, and accountability is essential. This section outlines the processes SBRC will use to ensure that funds are allocated efficiently, projects are executed successfully, and outcomes are measured transparently. It emphasizes the importance of data-driven decision-making, continuous evaluation, and adaptability to ensure long-term positive impacts for the region.

Partnerships for Successful Implementation

The effective implementation of SBRC’s strategic plan requires collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including state and local governments, tribal authorities, educational institutions, private sector partners, and non-profit organizations. These partnerships will amplify the impact of SBRC funding and ensure that projects align with local priorities.

- **State and Local Government Collaboration:**
 - SBRC will work closely with state and local governments to ensure alignment with regional and local economic development plans.
 - Local governments will be instrumental in identifying community priorities and providing insights into potential funding needs.
- **Private Sector Engagement:**
 - SBRC will actively seek private sector partnerships to leverage additional funding and expertise, particularly in areas such as infrastructure development and technology innovation.

- Public-private partnerships (PPPs) will be pursued to reduce project risk, share costs, and drive economic growth.
- **Tribal and Community Engagement:**
 - Special emphasis will be placed on working with tribal governments and community organizations to ensure that investments are culturally appropriate and directly benefit underserved populations.
 - SBRC will support capacity-building for local organizations, enabling them to better access and manage federal and state funds.
- **Educational and Research Institutions:**
 - Collaboration with universities and research centers will be crucial for developing and deploying innovative solutions, particularly in the fields of clean energy, technology, and workforce development.
- **Example Projects:**
 - Public-Private Partnerships in broadband infrastructure where SBRC funding is matched with private capital to increase high-speed internet availability.
 - University-Led Workforce Development Programs for renewable energy training in partnership with local businesses.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment

To ensure that SBRC investments are delivering on their promises, a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework will be employed. This process will track the progress of each project, assess outcomes, and adjust as needed to maximize impact.

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**

In partnership with grantees, states, and localities, the SBRC will define clear KPIs for each funded project, allowing for consistent tracking of progress. Key metrics may include:

 - Job creation and retention in target sectors (e.g., energy, healthcare, manufacturing).
 - Infrastructure improvements (e.g., miles of road paved, number of homes with improved water access).
 - Economic growth in distressed counties (e.g., GDP growth, increases in local business activity).
- **Data Collection and Reporting:**
 - SBRC will collect data from project leads, stakeholders, and beneficiaries to assess the effectiveness of investments.
 - Regular impact reports to provide clear evidence of project outcomes and financial accountability.
 - Annual Impact Reviews will track the progress of key goals and suggest mid-course adjustments if necessary.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:**
 - A system for collecting feedback from local communities and stakeholders will be established. This feedback will be used to improve ongoing projects and shape future funding decisions.

- The SBRC will use this data to fine-tune future investments, ensuring resources are directed where they will have the most impact.

Adaptive Strategy and Continuous Improvement

As the needs of the region evolve, too must SBRC's strategies. The Commission will maintain flexibility and responsiveness in its approach to funding, ensuring that the most effective solutions are implemented.

- **Quarterly Strategy Reviews:**

The SBRC leadership will conduct quarterly reviews of the strategic plan to assess progress against objectives and KPIs. These reviews will allow SBRC to adjust funding priorities and strategies based on the latest data, emerging trends, and community feedback.

- **Annual Strategic Planning Sessions:**

These sessions will engage stakeholders in a collaborative review of the year's results, lessons learned, and emerging challenges. This process will inform adjustments to the five-year strategic plan as needed.

- **Emerging Trends and Opportunities:**

- SBRC will actively monitor regional, national, and global trends that may affect its strategy. These may include new technologies, regulatory changes, or shifts in economic conditions.
- For example, the rise of green technologies and climate resilience programs may prompt SBRC to increase investment in renewable energy or climate adaptation projects.

Transparency and Public Accountability

Maintaining public trust is essential for the success of the SBRC's strategic plan. SBRC will ensure transparency in its funding decisions, project execution, and impact reporting, and will hold itself accountable to the residents and communities it serves.

- **Publicly Accessible Data:**

- SBRC will create a public-facing dashboard to track the status of funded projects, providing real-time updates on progress, expenditures, and impact metrics.
- Annual Reports will summarize the results of SBRC's investments, featuring clear explanations of financial allocations and the outcomes achieved.

- **Public Stakeholder Engagement:**

- The SBRC will conduct regular stakeholder engagements to discuss the progress of the strategic plan and gather community input. These meetings will ensure that the voices of residents and local leaders are heard and incorporated into future planning.
- Online platforms, including social media and community forums, will be used to foster ongoing engagement with the public.

Reporting and Accountability Mechanisms

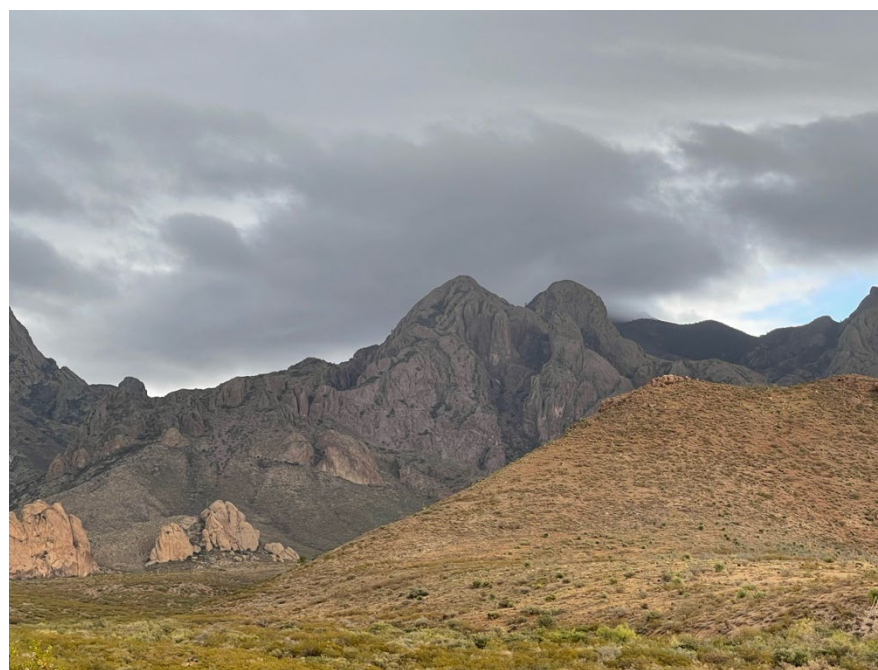
SBRC will establish clear reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure the efficient use of public funds and the achievement of strategic goals.

- **Internal Oversight:**

- An internal audit process will be conducted periodically to ensure that the SBRC's investments are aligned with its mission and goals.
- SBRC will also maintain oversight of contractors, ensuring that they meet performance standards and that public funds are used responsibly.

- **External Review:**

Independent third-party evaluations will be commissioned periodically to assess the impact of SBRC-funded projects. These evaluations will provide unbiased insights into the effectiveness of SBRC's strategies.



The SBRC's commitment to implementation excellence and accountability ensures that its investments lead to meaningful, sustainable outcomes for the Southwest Border region.

Through strategic partnerships, rigorous monitoring, adaptive strategies, and transparent reporting, SBRC will empower communities, foster economic resilience, and build a competitive, equitable future for all residents.

Conclusion

The Southwest Border Regional Commission has the opportunity to catalyze long-term economic growth, enhance regional resilience, and improve the quality of life for millions of residents across the Southwest Border region and beyond. Through targeted, data-driven investments, the SBRC's strategic plan seeks to address the region's most pressing challenges while fostering a more competitive and inclusive economy.

This five-year plan outlines a path forward that capitalizes on the region's unique strengths—its strategic location as a trade hub, its growing workforce, and its potential as a leader in renewable energy and technology innovation. At the same time, it acknowledges and actively addresses the disparities that persist in many communities. The Commission's focus on infrastructure, workforce development, economic diversification, and resilience is designed to ensure that no community is left behind as the region advances into a new era of prosperity.

Driving Economic Competitiveness and Innovation

SBRC's strategic investments in critical infrastructure, including transportation, energy, and broadband, are designed to strengthen the region's comparative advantage in global trade and regional economic activity. By modernizing infrastructure and investing in renewable energy and clean technologies, SBRC will foster sustainable economic growth, ensuring the Southwest Border region remains competitive on the national and international stage.



At the same time, workforce development initiatives tailored to the needs of industries like renewable energy, healthcare, and advanced manufacturing will ensure that local residents are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in a changing economy. These efforts will create new pathways to economic mobility, enhance job security, and reduce unemployment in the region's most distressed areas.

- **Key Outcome:** SBRC's investments in infrastructure and workforce development will strengthen the region's role in global trade, drive innovation, and create sustainable economic opportunities for all.

Promoting Inclusive Growth and Regional Resilience

Central to SBRC's plan is its commitment to equity. Investments will be specifically targeted at distressed counties and tribal communities, addressing critical gaps in infrastructure and services. By focusing on underserved populations, including low-income residents, communities of color, and rural areas, SBRC ensures that the benefits of economic growth reach those who have traditionally been excluded from mainstream economic opportunities.

In parallel, SBRC is committed to improving variable weather resilience by supporting infrastructure projects that protect vulnerable communities from the effects of extreme weather and climate-driven events, such as droughts, floods, and wildfires. Investments in renewable energy and green technologies will increase economic opportunities while reducing the region's environmental footprint.

Key Outcome: SBRC's focus on equity and resilience will empower underserved communities, reduce regional disparities, and prepare the Southwest Border for a future shaped by both opportunity and environmental change.

Strengthening Collaboration and Building Partnerships

The success of the SBRC's strategy hinges on its ability to collaborate with a diverse range of stakeholders. Strong partnerships with state and local governments, tribal leaders, businesses, and educational institutions are essential for driving impact and ensuring that investments are aligned with regional and local priorities.

The SBRC will also continue to engage the private sector to leverage additional funding and expertise, particularly through public-private partnerships (PPPs). This collaborative approach will help de-risk projects, maximize the impact of SBRC investments, and foster long-term economic development.

Key Outcome: By building strong partnerships and collaborating with stakeholders across sectors, the SBRC will increase the scale and effectiveness of its investments, ensuring that the region's economic growth is sustainable and inclusive.

Measuring Success and Ensuring Accountability

The SBRC's commitment to monitoring and accountability will ensure that the Commission's investments deliver tangible outcomes. Through a rigorous system of data collection, impact assessments, and reporting, the SBRC will track progress on key performance indicators (KPIs), such as job creation, economic mobility, and infrastructure improvements.

SBRC will regularly review its strategies, leveraging stakeholder feedback and adapting its approach as needed to meet the region's evolving needs. This flexibility ensures that SBRC remains responsive and effective in its mission to drive equitable, long-term prosperity for the Southwest Border region.

Key Outcome: Transparent reporting and continuous evaluation will help SBRC refine its investments, ensuring they deliver measurable economic and social benefits to residents across the region.

The Path Forward

As the Southwest Border region faces the future, SBRC's strategic investments will act as a catalyst for transformation. By focusing on critical infrastructure, workforce development, and economic diversification, SBRC will empower communities to meet today's challenges while preparing for the opportunities of tomorrow.

Together with its partners, the SBRC will ensure that the region's economic growth is not just robust and competitive, but also equitable, inclusive, and resilient. The five-year strategic plan represents the first step toward building a thriving Southwest Border that serves as a model for sustainable, inclusive development in the 21st century.



As the SBRC moves forward with this ambitious plan, it invites communities, businesses, governments, and all stakeholders to work together toward a shared vision—a vision where every resident has the opportunity to thrive, and where the Southwest Border region is recognized as a leader in innovation, equity, and sustainability.

The SBRC's five-year strategic plan is a roadmap for transforming the Southwest Border region into a model of economic vitality, equity, and resilience. With a strong foundation in data-driven decision-making and a commitment to partnerships, SBRC is positioned to tackle the region's most pressing challenges and capitalize on its abundant opportunities. Through careful, targeted investments, SBRC will foster a competitive, inclusive, and sustainable economy that benefits all residents—now and in the future.

By emphasizing the importance of collaboration, accountability, and measurable impact, SBRC investments will drive positive, lasting change across the Southwest Border region.