

Clean Economy Innovation

Why is this topic important?

Clean economy innovation shows significant potential for quality job creation and new climate solutions that leverage the region's industry strengths, research institutions, and strategic location. The cluster has connections to advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, and other key sectors as well as major assets such as UCR's research facilities, entrepreneurial programming, and expertise and CARB's world-class air quality labs. The region's geographic location represents another competitive advantage. California's leadership on climate action is creating new markets for clean economy innovations while Inland SoCal's extensive logistics infrastructure and proximity to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach make it easier to get goods to market.

This sector has sizable potential for equitable economic impact, provided that career pathways are accessible and support student and worker success. UCR's Opportunity to Advance Sustainability, Innovation, and Social Inclusion (OASIS) initiative has an important role to play in this regard. The initiative's emphasis on social inclusion pushes researchers and companies to take the needs of historically disadvantaged communities into account when developing clean economy innovations. Its involvement in regional workforce development reinforces this inclusive approach by establishing accessible pathways into quality jobs in the clean economy.

What we have heard from the community ...

"... highlight the air quality issue affecting our region as we have consistently ranked among the worst in the nation according to the American Lung Association."

Inland SoCal "... struggles with extreme heat, and we will need a local workforce to meet our cooling needs with upgraded air conditioners. These are important jobs as part of the clean economy and are usually small business owners."

"Small businesses that do energy-efficiency work should also be included, such as ... electricians and plumbers. There's a lot of funding from the state and feds to decarbonize and electrify. We will need more energy efficiency professionals who can install the equipment needed to reduce GHG emissions and/or energy demand on the grid."

Key data findings...

Although the Inland SoCal clean economy innovation cluster is still in its early stages, it presents an opportunity for the region to establish itself as an ideal place for cleantech companies to launch and grow.

Lack of early-stage capital is a core concern for the Inland SoCal clean economy innovation cluster. The region has a the limited pool of investors interested in funding young cleantech startups.

The availability of skilled workers in Inland SoCal that meet the needs of clean economy innovation companies remains a limiting factor for cluster growth.

Strategies and tactics

Clean Economy Innovation Cluster Development: Establish a formal collaboration across industry, the public sector, and universities to tackle issues that call for regional cross-sector solutions, including cluster growth initiatives, tech commercialization, business growth acceleration, global branding and business attraction, and workforce development.

OASIS Clean Tech Park: Follow through on the development of this dedicated space for applied research, proof-of-concept testing, and startup incubation. Once complete, the Park will provide a physical hub for clean economy innovation in the region.

Clean Economy Adoption

Why is this topic important?

The clean economy aims to address the effects of climate change, boost climate resilience, and accelerate the transition to clean energy. It includes a wide range of industries, products, and services that touch almost every aspect of daily life.

Supercharging regional adoption of clean economy solutions will accelerate the energy transition, strengthen local businesses, and improve quality of life for Inland SoCal residents, with emphasis on communities hardest hit by climate impacts and industrial pollution. It will also give Inland SoCal an advantage over other regions that underinvest in this sector, particularly as the pace of the energy transition increases.

Adoption of clean economy solutions can have an outsized impact on struggling families' financial self-sufficiency, health outcomes, and overall quality of life, but only if they are involved in this transition. Community-based organizations will play a role in ensuring that community members' priorities and the distinctive histories and cultural knowledge within these communities are taken into account.

What we have heard from the community ...

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Key data findings...

Over the next 30 years, Inland SoCal is expected to have hotter weather and longer heatwaves. Climate-related heat events intensify poor air quality in the region and increase risk of overheating and heat stroke, with serious implications for people's health.

California has one of the most ambitious climate mandates in the nation. Achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 will require growing the clean economy fast enough and large enough to meet rising demand.

Many clean economy occupations—including solar installers, EV technicians, HVAC professionals, and energy auditors—require less than one year of training and offer opportunities for career advancement.

Rooftop community solar puts unused square footage to work by installing solar panels on the roofs of houses, apartment buildings, commercial spaces, warehouses, and factories.

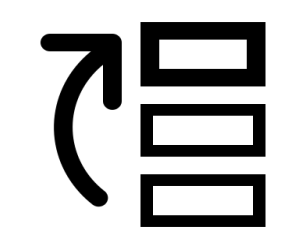
Strategies and tactics

Warehouse rooftop community solar: Community solar installations on warehouse roofs can begin to compensate for environmental harms caused by these facilities by expanding lower-income households' access to low-cost clean energy, reducing GHG emissions, and creating new quality jobs that are accessible to struggling workers in the community—all at no cost to residents and without need for public-sector funding. This effort will require collaboration among community solar developers, community-based organizations, community members, building owners, and workforce development providers.

Clean Economy Business Initiative: Help local small businesses benefit from the energy transition by identifying how they can contribute to the clean economy and connecting them with new customers and the support services they need to succeed.

Small Business Climate Transition Network: Establish an easy-to-navigate climate transition support network to help local small businesses access the assistance they need. By leveraging existing programs and expanding regional outreach, climate transition planning, technical assistance delivery, and other critical functions, Inland SoCal can ease the path for smaller companies during this disruptive period.

Clean Logistics Consortium: Convene a consortium of companies, ports, railroads, utilities, regulators, and public-sector actors to co-design a path to wholesale logistics decarbonization in the region and implement the investments and actions needed to accomplish this unparalleled task.

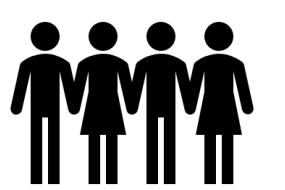


Why is this topic important?

Inland SoCal shows strength—and recent moderate growth—in subsectors of manufacturing and related services, providing opportunities to both grow more quality and promising jobs accessible to residents, and advance the diversification of the region’s economy beyond its current overreliance on logistics and local -serving industries.

Regional manufacturing specializations encompass a range of activities. These include high-value materials relatively competitive to make in California, such as industrial and commercial equipment, machine components, microelectronics, instrumentation, and fabricated metals, reflecting the legacy aerospace and defense supply chain. Activity also includes some areas overlapping with the clean economy (e.g. battery and electric vehicle production). The sector also encompasses heavier manufacturing activity, such as chemical and building components production, with more significant environmental impacts.

In total, manufacturing accounts for about 99,000 jobs in the region, with roughly 28,000 positions (or 28.3%) counting as quality jobs and roughly 16,000 (or 16.1%) counting as promising jobs. This is slightly higher than the share of quality and promising jobs in the regional economy and traded sector overall, while significantly exceeding the performance of local -serving industries, among which only 37.5% of jobs count as quality or promising.



What we have heard from the community ...

Community members emphasized the importance of targeting workforce efforts with culturally -responsive approaches and support services to maximize equity outcomes.

These include adapting outreach and hiring processes to engage workers who may not be familiar with traditional recruitment mechanisms (e.g. resume development); specifically targeting priority groups such veterans, the disabled, and justice-involved individuals; considering non-traditional credentials (i.e. skills-based hiring); and offering employer -subsidized support services (e.g. childcare).



Key data findings...

Nearly 75% of the opportunity jobs in the region’s manufacturing sector are held by workers with less than a bachelor’s degree.

Almost 67% of opportunity jobs are held by a worker without an associate’s degree. 48% are held by a Hispanic worker.

This means that the sector offers significant potential to improve the livelihoods of a share of the nearly 40% of Inland Southern California residents belonging to a family that struggles to cover basic costs of living; workers with lower levels of traditional education and people of color are disproportionately represented in this group.



Strategies and tactics

Strengthen the capacity of small and mid -sized manufacturers for ongoing growth in the region:

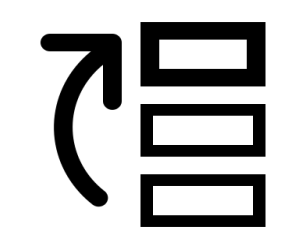
- Expand technical assistance for adoption of product and process innovations to improve overall productivity, competitiveness, and energy efficiency, building on existing supports offered by California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTC) and through the Manufacturers’ Council of the Inland Empire (MCIE).
- Institute an “innovation voucher” program to subsidize employer collaboration with regional or national university experts on problem -solving or application of new technologies and methods.
- Expand and target export promotion efforts to provide access to new markets and opportunities for expansion.
- Better showcase and connect firms to available supports offered by the economic and workforce development systems (e.g. Employment Training Panel funding for incumbent worker training).
- Evaluate the current landscape of maker spaces, prototyping, contract, and pre -commercial scale production facilities, and other supports for manufacturing -focused startups to ensure sufficient scale.

Bolster the regional manufacturing talent pipeline and improve access for underserved populations:

- Expand the scale of existing demand-driven interventions (e.g. short -term training programs, apprenticeships) positioning residents for mid -skill opportunity jobs not requiring a bachelor’s degree.
- Deepen partnerships between the workforce/educational system and community -based organizations to recruit priority groups (e.g. justice -involved individuals) and provide culturally -responsive supports spanning program start, completion, and job placement.
- Launch a coordinated longer-term campaign to improve awareness of manufacturing and other STEM careers among regional youth, particularly in disinvested communities and among people of color, expanding on efforts currently underway through County Offices of Education.
- Advance adoption of employer best practices around skills -based hiring, incumbent worker training, and creation of internal pathways for workers to achieve career mobility.
- Promote employer -sponsored childcare and/or multi -employer childcare collaboratives to reduce worker barriers to employment.
- Pursue community benefit agreements for new manufacturing enterprises guaranteeing opportunity job employment outcomes and requiring worker support services.

Improve coordination of regional economic and workforce supports to serve the industry:

- Bolster organizing of regional manufacturers to collectively inform regional strategy, building on the MCIE.
- Convene county, local, and other economic and workforce development interests to set shared objectives and align programs and services (e.g. business attraction, retention, and expansion) in support of advanced manufacturing growth.
- Establish a regular table for undertaking special initiatives to boost sector growth (e.g. conversion of warehouses to manufacturing facilities).

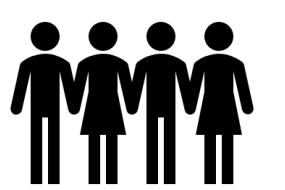


Why is this topic important?

The increase in digital threats has created significant demand for cybersecurity technologies and services. Meeting this moment requires a dedicated cybersecurity workforce; the United States currently has a gap of about 225,000 cybersecurity workers.

Over the last fifteen years, Inland Southern California has made significant nationally recognized, first-mover strides assembling this labor pool. The Cybersecurity Center at California State University – San Bernardino (CSUSB) is the recipient of multiple high-profile federal training excellence designations awarded by the National Security Agency, Department of Homeland Security, and National Science Foundation. The Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium has also contributed to the buildout of the region's cybersecurity workforce; initiatives include a two-year degree program and cybersecurity center at Chaffey College and programs at Riverside and Moreno Community Colleges.

Inland SoCal has the potential to apply its talent base to spark greater local firm activity. This, in turn, would promote additional opportunity job creation and economic diversification beyond the region's current reliance on logistics and local serving industries.



What we have heard from the community ...

Feedback from Thrive's Sub-Regional Tables (SRTs) stressed the need to ensure graduates can find local jobs and stay in the region after program completion. CSUSB estimates that approximately 60% of its cybersecurity graduates currently find relevant employment in Inland Southern California. The continued buildout of industry presence through this strategy will boost this number.



Key data findings...

Cybersecurity falls within overarching categories of tech-driven business services that concentrate opportunity jobs for local Inland Southern California residents. Encompassing subsectors of technical services, administrative services, and publishing, the region boasts nearly 30,000 opportunity jobs in business services, while accounting for nearly \$6 trillion in gross regional product.



Strategies and tactics

Accelerate efforts to build a diverse Inland SoCal cybersecurity workforce: Bolster and scale existing workforce pipeline initiatives led by CSUSB and the region's community colleges, with special attention to ensuring access for people of color and women.

- Deepen partnerships with campus and community-based organizations to ensure diverse pipelines to training programs, including through K-12 exposure.
- Elevate remote-work opportunities that enable flexibility for workers with family responsibilities and/or barriers that make it difficult to commute.
- Provide support services, such as childcare, to ensure equitable participation in apprenticeships and other programs.

Build the firm and customer base for a more robust regional cybersecurity market presence:

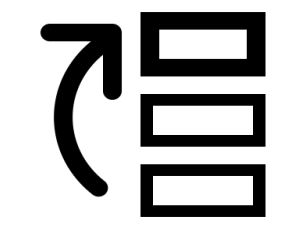
Facilitate business growth to boost opportunities for local employment and deepen the region's foothold in the industry.

- Establish core infrastructure to support the industry, such as a Secure Compartmentalized Information Facility (SCIF) required for working with federal classified material.
- Explore a regional procurement strategy (e.g. hospitals, defense installations) to aggregate local demand for cybersecurity services and build industry capacity.
- Market and provide cybersecurity services to the region's small and medium-sized businesses – who are typically less protected from cyber threats – to both further aggregate market demand and improve resiliency of the region's locally-grown companies.
- Evaluate and then market cybersecurity specializations tied to other regional industry assets or presence (e.g. gaming, logistics).
- Organize collective efforts to promote regional cybersecurity services to customers in other California markets, where Inland Southern California has a cost advantage.
- Launch an accelerator program to support and attract cybersecurity entrepreneurs to the region.
- Convene existing regional cybersecurity employers in an alliance to establish a center of gravity for the industry, leveraging existing hubs of activity (e.g. CSUSB).

Economic Mobility Strategies



Access to Transportation



Why is this topic important?

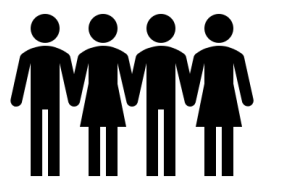
This strategy aims to reduce transportation barriers, increase economic opportunities, enhance community engagement, and improve access to transportation by expanding public transit options, creating pedestrian -friendly areas, and establishing transit -oriented industries.

Why is transportation access important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

A lack of reliable transportation poses significant barriers to economic mobility in Inland SoCal by limiting people’s access to education, training, and job opportunities. In a region where many people rely on cars, limited public transit options and lack of access to a car make it harder to get and keep a job, especially in rural areas. Better access to transportation expands people’s economic opportunities by making it easier to get to school, work, the grocery store, doctor appointments, and other activities of daily life. Transportation access ensures that people can participate in the economy and the world around them, which contributes to more inclusive and broadly prosperous communities.

How will transportation access contribute to a more equitable Inland SoCal?

Enhancing transportation access will significantly improve equity by ensuring that all residents, especially those from economically disadvantaged communities, have reliable means to reach essential services and job opportunities. Investing in infrastructure can expand transportation options and reduce barriers to economic mobility. Implementing smart transit technologies, such as real-time arrival information and mobile ticketing apps, further enhances accessibility. Subsidies, programs, and private sector collaborations, in addition to advocating for policies that improve public transportation funding, can additionally ensure that all residents have access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation.



What we have heard from the community ...

Ryan^[1] recounted that they lost their job due to lack of reliable transportation, that *“Again, transportation, I lost it because I didn't have transportation. I was missing too many days. So yeah. Yeah, they have to [have a car], so I said, "understandable. ""*

Miini, who splits a vehicle with their fiancée, shared that *“sometimes he would have to do overtime, which in turn would make me late for work because we only have one car. ”*

“Disinvested communities struggle to get from place to place. Cars are expensive to maintain, and communities may need to rely on public transportation; which diminishes job opportunities.” - Western San Bernardino participant

“I think that the lack of both good public transportation and nearby job training programs is really hurting the ability for people to get entry level skills and work.”



Key data findings...

Many workers in Southern California commute by car. Workers from Riverside and San Bernardino counties **overwhelmingly commute alone by private automobile**, at approximately 73.5% in Riverside and 74.4% in San Bernardino.

Commute times in the two-county region were also higher than that of both Los Angeles and Orange counties, with a **greater percentage of the population commuting 60 minutes or more** .

While the majority of households in both counties have access to at least one private vehicle, **almost 2% of Riverside County households, and 2.3% of San Bernardino County households did not have access to a private vehicle** .



Strategies and tactics

Invest in infrastructure for bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, and smart transit technologies : These investments will expand transportation options, which currently hinder economic mobility; restrict access to jobs, education, and essential services; and contribute to traffic congestion and environmental issues.

Provide subsidies or vouchers for public transportation, car ownership, and need -based gas subsidies: These solutions address the challenge of limited access to affordable and reliable transportation, which restricts economic mobility, job access, and participation in education and essential services, particularly for low -income and underserved populations.

Establish ride-sharing and carpooling programs : These initiatives can expand transportation options and reduce costs for commuters, especially those who have few public transit options.

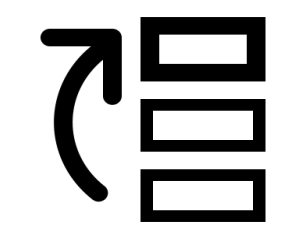
Work with employers to offer transportation benefits, shuttle services, and flexible work arrangements : Expanding workers’ transportation options increases access to job opportunities and reduces daily single -driver commutes.

Advocate for policies to improve public transportation funding, expand routes, increase service frequency, and prioritize equity and accessibility : Strong and well-funded public transit systems expand and enhance transportation services for everyone, including those with disabilities.

Develop electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in residential, commercial, and industrial areas : Greater access to EV charging infrastructure will be essential as the state transitions away from fossil fuels.



Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



Why is this topic important?

Developing an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem aims to support high -growth startups and Main Street businesses, particularly those led by underrepresented entrepreneurs, by providing tailored programs, funding initiatives, mentorship, financial literacy, and networking opportunities to foster innovation, job creation, and economic growth in the region.

Why is an entrepreneurial ecosystem for high -growth startups and main street businesses important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

A strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is a vital component of any inclusive regional economic development strategy. When entrepreneurs start new companies, they also create jobs, new business for suppliers, and new products and services for potential customers. Making it easier for would-be entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and launch their companies means more economic activity for the region and a chance at wealth-building for company founders. This is especially true for those from historically underrepresented groups that were systematically excluded from entrepreneurial opportunities in the past.

How will an entrepreneurial ecosystem for high -growth startups and main street businesses contribute to a more equitable Inland SoCal?

This strategy offers significant equity impact potential by ensuring that historically underrepresented entrepreneurs have access to tailored programs, funding, mentorship, financial literacy, and networking opportunities, aiming to dismantle barriers that have historically limited their entrepreneurial success. Providing targeted support such as financial management training, marketing skills, and business planning workshops ensures that these entrepreneurs are well-equipped to start and grow their businesses. Ultimately, fostering diverse entrepreneurial talent strengthens the regional economy, making it more dynamic and competitive, and ensures that all residents of Inland Southern California have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity.



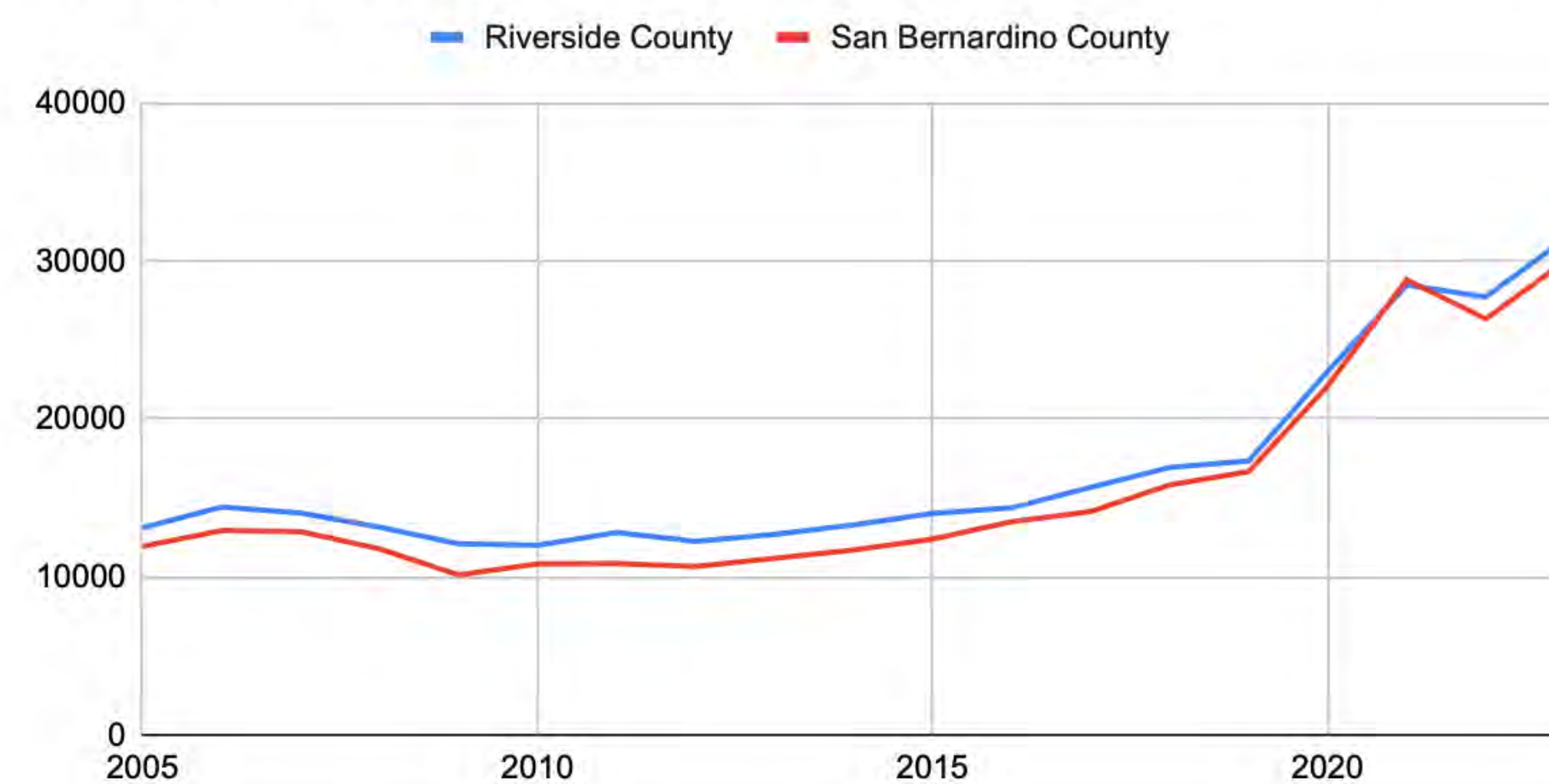
What we have heard from the community ...

Ede^[1] spoke at length about the impact resources aimed at small business owners can have. They described, “My wife is an at home baker. She went to the Small Business Development Center to get the education on how to do it. I'll lay out a business plan, you know, ask for loans and all that stuff. And there's resources, and we'll be sharing those resources, providing an avenue of education . . . that, hopefully, empowers our business owners . . . And so she sells to other coffee shops. So she does business-to-business sales. And that's all because of the programs that are available through you know, the Small Business Development Center, the Inland Empire Women's Business Center. She does a lot of workshops. There's just a lot of resources that people don't know about.”



Key data findings...

Number of Business Applications, Riverside County and San Bernardino County



Strategies and tactics

Improve access to funding and capacity -building programs for historically underrepresented groups facing barriers : Offering tailored capacity -building initiatives and skills development opportunities can better meet the needs of entrepreneurs from historically underrepresented communities.

Improve access to mentorship, training programs, and networking opportunities, especially for small business owners from historically underrepresented groups : Improve access to mentorship, training programs, and networking opportunities for small business owners from historically underrepresented groups.

Tailor funding initiatives, mentorship programs, training programs, and other entrepreneur supports to meet the needs of historically underrepresented entrepreneurs : Designing programs with historically underrepresented entrepreneurs in mind can help address barriers that hinder their ability to start, sustain, and grow successful businesses.

Promote co -ops to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem for high -growth startups and Main Street businesses owned by individuals from equity -seeking groups : Co-ops provide shared resources, democratic decision -making, and mutual support, improving access to capital, training, and market reach while fostering community engagement and resilience.

Showcase success stories from historically underrepresented entrepreneurs in the region in order to provide examples and role models for others to follow : Highlighting these success stories will inspire and motivate new entrepreneurs, demonstrating the potential for business growth and community impact.

Pathways To Careers (Healthcare, Trades, IT, & Management)

Why is this topic important?

Why are pathways to quality jobs in healthcare, construction & related trades, information technology (IT), and management important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

This strategy can contribute to inclusive regional economic development by providing pathways to stable employment and upward mobility for individuals from different backgrounds. Strengthening pathways into these careers will expand Inland SoCal residents' access to quality jobs, even for those without a four-year degree. Because many of these occupations offer opportunities for career advancement, including leadership roles, this can foster long-term economic stability and wealth-building for those from equity-seeking groups, especially as individuals from equity-seeking groups secure high-demand, well-paying jobs that help reduce disparities in income and opportunity. Combined with efforts to diversify the healthcare workforce, this can also increase sector innovation and adaptability.

How will pathways to quality jobs in healthcare contribute to a more equitable Inland SoCal?

Pathways to quality jobs in healthcare, construction and related trades, IT, and management can open doors for individuals from equity-seeking groups to secure high-paying, stable jobs, which reduces income disparities. These pathways promote social mobility and wealth-building for individuals from equity-seeking groups. These various pathways additionally create career advancement opportunities through apprenticeships and continuous training, fostering mobility into higher-level positions and providing multiple ways to remain competitive in the job market.

What we have heard from the community ... Key data findings...

Valeria Cordoba (pseudonym), a county labor division employee in Riverside, emphasized the potential wrap around services can provide for high road careers that require long-term training. She stated, “*You'd have to have something to help you cover housing and utilities. I think it would be doable for maybe two months with services that are out there, but for the short term training to high level jobs, and you might make a little bit more than minimum wage - if you become like a phlebotomist or a medical assistant, or even in construction. I mean, they get overtime and everything . You really need a longer, more intense career technical training to make higher wages.*”

As one former executive put it “*There are no opportunities in the High Desert. For instance, there are no consulting firms; there is no Deloitte. You have to go to Vegas or LA to find that. There are a lot of people that have to leave the community. There is an overabundance of entry-level positions - like 90 to 95% of the roles in the area. Very few leadership roles.*”

Benni (pseudonym) an organizer, similarly felt that reskilling can help an individual move into a higher paying job. The impact of paid training and upskilling support was also highlighted when considering that internships that are unpaid, however good, are not always a realistic option. As a government relations manager for a major company put it, “*you have to be able to afford that sacrifice [...] and that eliminates a lot of people* ”.

Sam, who trained as a nurse and worked in physical therapy, mentioned that she would be interested in seeing more apprenticeships in construction. “*Yeah. I would like to see more apprenticeships, like, you know, for building homes and stuff like that . . . I'm sure there's a lot of young men, you know, that will be more than interested in trying to get jobs doing that, you know, if they had training for them.*”

Gary Resvaloso, Youth Council Advisor and Tribal Council Member from the Torres Martinez tribe, spoke to the power of hands-on learning, recounting that some who participated in “*our carpenter class went on to actually become frame makers or building houses.*”

Strategies and tactics

Create Pathways

Encourage individuals to pursue long-term careers in healthcare, construction and related trades, IT, and management in Inland SoCal : Create clear pathways into quality jobs in these fields that offer professional development and advancement opportunities.

- **Introduce the trades as a viable career option in K-16**: Exposing students to different career paths and giving them opportunities to acquire relevant hands-on skills will increase awareness of career possibilities and build interest early.
- **Train the workforce needed to accelerate the region's transition to zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) and related green economy jobs** : By starting programs early and addressing community support gaps, hands-on training programs will put more people into quality jobs and ensure that the region has the skilled workers it needs in electrical trades, construction, and ZEV automotive technology, among others..

Investment in education and relevant training opportunities

Increase investment in higher education (e.g., university satellite campuses, online distance learning, continuing education programming) : This will provide more accessible and flexible education opportunities for residents, increase education attainment rates, and meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in various sectors.

- **Partner with local colleges, universities, and vocational schools to develop tailored training programs for in-demand roles**

Support & Training

Connect people with employment search support and career training services

- **Provide scholarships, tuition reimbursement, and other financial incentives to help individuals overcome barriers to careers** : Addressing financial barriers will make it easier for individuals from lower-income households to pursue high-road careers.
- **Address employment stability and develop solutions to ensure consistent employment for tradespeople** : Collaboration between companies and unions can help workers find continuous employment, improving their job security and financial stability.

Expand people's awareness of postsecondary education and training to include trade, technical, and vocational programs : Broaden awareness in order to attract a more diverse workforce, address regional staffing shortages, and ensure a steady supply of skilled workers .

Connect aspiring professionals with mentors in the sector : Mentors can support early-career workers in navigating challenges and achieving career goals.

Offer financial support & wraparound services such as childcare, mental health support, transportation, technology access, & legal assistance to lower barriers to participation in training and education programs : Offering support and services can increase access to education and training opportunities for individuals from historically underrepresented and low-income communities, supporting their successful participation and completion of these programs.

Redirect workforce training towards quality jobs that complement workplace automation : Focusing on emerging markets and aligning training programs with industry demands can prepare the workforce for the future economy and ensure sustainable, high-quality employment opportunities.

Entrepreneurial and Small Business Support : Support such as programming, access to capital and resources, and networking opportunities can help entrepreneurs and small businesses drive job creation and innovation.

Outreach & recruitment - equity

Launch outreach and recruitment efforts targeting individuals from equity-seeking groups

Expand access to pre-apprenticeship programs : By using established models and partnering with local unions, schools, and community colleges, these programs seek to create clear pathways to quality jobs and meet the future workforce needs of the region.

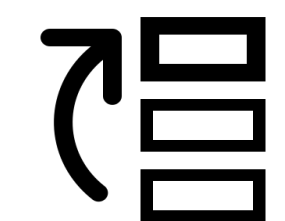
Enforce anti-discrimination policies, combat implicit bias, and establish mentorship programs with ongoing support services that incorporate continuous improvement and regular feedback : Incorporating continuous improvement and regular feedback opportunities can create an inclusive and supportive environment for all individuals, especially those from historically underrepresented communities.

- **Promote diversity and inclusion by actively recruiting and supporting individuals from equity-seeking groups** : Implementing public awareness campaigns, adjusting policies to improve early career support, and increasing access and advocacy will create a more supportive, inclusive, and equitable working environment.
- **Actively recruit and support individuals from equity-seeking groups and connect aspiring professionals with mentors** : Improved recruitment, support, and mentorship programs for workers from equity-seeking groups will help them navigate their careers and achieve their goals.





Access to Technology



Why is this topic important?

This strategy aims to bridge the digital divide by enhancing technology access for all residents of Inland SoCal by improving internet connectivity, providing access to digital devices, and offering digital literacy programs to ensure everyone can participate in the digital economy.

Why is technology access important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

Technology is an increasingly large part of everyday life. All sorts of activities—searching for a job, paying bills, obtaining government services—now require internet access and some level of digital literacy. Unfortunately, the digital divide remains a challenge for some in the Inland Empire, particularly those from low-income households and / or rural communities. Improving internet connectivity and access to laptops and tablets can advance inclusive regional economic development by ensuring that everyone has the resources and skills they need to make use of technology in their daily lives. Enhanced connectivity can also attract more businesses to the region and encourages innovation.

How will technology access contribute to a more equitable Inland SoCal?

This strategy can improve equity by ensuring that all residents, particularly those from underserved communities, have the tools and skills needed to participate in the digital economy. Providing subsidies for access points (e.g., personal internet subscriptions, devices, community centers that provide computers and internet, community device lending programs) helps enable more people to access job opportunities, education, and vital services. Encouraging employers to provide technology allowances and partnering with tech companies for device donations further bridges the digital divide, supporting remote work and online learning. Investing in broadband infrastructure and advocating for digital inclusion policies will expand internet access in underserved areas, creating a more connected and resilient region.



What we have heard from the community ...

Kelly^[1], a citizen of the Torres Martinez tribal community, talked at length about the barriers faced by those who don't have the technological skills to apply to jobs online. She described that, although most job applications are online, "*They don't know how to do it online. [...] And that's another reason why they see how come we can just turn it in, you know, how can [we] fill it out like we used to? Because everything's computerized now. ...Most people don't even know what online means* , you know, the people that are out here? I mean, I know they try to go for jobs. And they go well, we tried to ask for applications. They told us no, go online. . . . Because that happens a lot. ... the ones that were out there, *the tribal members who are certainly searching for employment, they're the ones that are like, so used to doing it on paper, and they need help doing it online* . And they get frustrated too, because they can't get it on their phone or they can't do it. They don't know how to send it. They don't know how to, you know, attach it or whatever. "

With the increasing importance of technology in the workforce, programs that offer digital skills training can greatly improve job prospects. These initiatives teach participants essential computer skills, coding, digital marketing, and other tech -related competencies.



Key data findings...

While most households in the region have access to a computer and internet, there are still pockets of areas with low technological access. 2021 ACS data shows that **approximately 3.2% of Riverside County and approximately 2.9% of San Bernardino County households did not have a computer** , and **approximately 6.9% of Riverside County and approximately 6.2% of San Bernardino County residents did not have any type of internet subscription** . Households making less than \$20,000 were also almost twice as likely to not have any type of internet subscription as compared to households making \$20,000 - \$74,999, across both counties.



Strategies and tactics

Provide subsidized internet and device access : Subsidized internet access and refurbished devices can help ensure that low -income families have the necessary tools to participate in the digital economy and access essential services.

Enhance community resources : Bridge the digital divide by establishing community centers with free computer labs and Wi-Fi access and partnering with local libraries to create laptop and tablet lending programs. These resources will provide essential technology access and support to underserved communities, enabling them to participate in the digital economy and access vital services.

Expand digital skills training : Enhance digital literacy and technical skills in underserved communities by offering technology training workshops and classes and improving access to affordable or free software and online tools for skills development and entrepreneurship.

Implement mobile technology solutions : Deploying mobile technology units will bring internet access and technology resources directly to remote and underserved areas, ensuring that residents have the tools and connectivity they need for education, employment, and daily activities.

Encourage employer -supported tech access : Encouraging employers to provide technology allowances or reimbursements for remote work setups and collaborating with tech companies to donate refurbished devices can help bridge the digital divide that afflicts underserved and low -income communities in the region.

Invest in broadband infrastructure and advocate for digital inclusion : Infrastructure investments and government efforts to prioritize digital inclusion can expand broadband access in underserved areas and address the digital divide.

Access to Pathways Into Quality Jobs

Why is this topic important?

By partnering with educational institutions and integrating career awareness initiatives into K - 16 schooling, we can expose students to a broad range of job possibilities early, helping them make informed decisions about their futures.

Why is access to pathways into quality jobs important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

Increasing access to education, apprenticeships, and other skills training opportunities will contribute to inclusive regional economic development by lowering barriers to quality jobs. Partnering with educational institutions and integrating career awareness initiatives into K-16 schooling can expose students to the broad range of job possibilities early, which will help them make more informed decisions in the future. Efforts to challenge stereotypes and increase awareness of high-road job opportunities—particularly in the trades and healthcare—can also help individuals pursue fulfilling careers and contribute to a more resilient regional economy.

How will access to pathways into quality jobs contribute to a more equitable Inland SoCal?

Expanding access to education and training programs promotes equity by providing opportunities for underrepresented and low-income communities to pursue quality jobs. Offering training in accessible locations such as libraries can make these programs more approachable and inclusive. Financial incentives such as scholarships and tuition reimbursement can also help overcome barriers to entry.

What we have heard from the community ...

Justin Shing, who is currently an industrial mechanic, is in the final stages of an electrical apprenticeship. This will allow him to *“be able to become a journeyman electrician.[...] and then from there. I honestly feel like I could go anywhere with that .”* Justin recounted that they started out with a business degree and had gone through several sales jobs before embarking on this new path, stating that *“I've recommended this program to a lot of people because it's just changed. It changed my life .”*

Collaborations with local employers are essential for ensuring that training programs align with industry needs. When employers are actively involved in the design and implementation of training initiatives, they are more likely to hire program graduates, leading to better job placement rates.

Work with educational institutions to provide working residents with flexible continuing education opportunities, such as evening classes, online courses, or part-time graduate programs, giving them the opportunity to earn higher academic or professional qualifications.

Key data findings...

“In my community, efforts to provide entry -level job training and placement have had mixed results. On the positive side, there are programs that offer valuable skills training and connect participants with job opportunities. These programs often collaborate with local businesses to ensure that the training aligns with industry needs, which increases the likelihood of participants finding employment. However, there are also challenges and areas where these efforts could improve. One issue is the accessibility of these programs, as not everyone in the community may be aware of them or have the resources to participate. Additionally, there may be gaps in the types of skills training offered, with some programs focusing more on traditional industries while overlooking emerging sectors. Overall, while there have been effective initiatives to provide entry -level job training and placement, there is room for improvement in terms of accessibility, diversity of offerings, and alignment with evolving job market demands.”

Strategies and tactics

Increase investment in higher education (e.g., university satellite campuses, online distance learning, continuing education programming) : Increasing investment will provide more accessible and flexible education opportunities for residents, address low education attainment rates, and meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in various sectors.

Launch outreach and recruitment efforts targeting individuals from equity -seeking groups : Outreach and recruitment efforts can attract individuals from historically underrepresented and equity -seeking groups and help these communities effectively navigate professional environments.

Expand access to pre -apprenticeship programs : By using established models and partnering with local unions, schools, and community colleges, these programs seek to create clear pathways to quality jobs and meet the future workforce needs of the region.

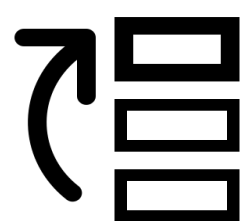
Offer financial support & wraparound services such as childcare, mental health support, transportation, technology access, & legal assistance to lower barriers to participation in training and education programs : Offering support and services can increase access to education and training opportunities for individuals from historically underrepresented and low -income communities, supporting their successful participation and completion of these programs.

Enforce anti -discrimination policies and combat implicit bias and establish mentorship programs with ongoing support services that incorporate continuous improvement and regular opportunities to gather feedback : Incorporating continuous improvement and regular feedback opportunities can create an inclusive and supportive environment for all individuals, particularly those from historically underrepresented communities.

Redirect workforce training towards quality jobs that complement workplace automation, and consider the potential for High -Road Training Partnerships to help meet these goals : Focusing on emerging markets, aligning training programs with industry demands, and leveraging successful models, can prepare the workforce for the future economy and ensure sustainable, high-quality employment opportunities.



Access to Childcare



Why is this topic important?

Improving affordable childcare in Inland SoCal supports job retention and fosters career advancement, particularly for women and single parents, ultimately strengthening the overall regional economy.

Why is Access to Childcare important for a strong and inclusive regional economy?

Accessible child care enables more people to pursue education and training, boosts productivity and entrepreneurship by alleviating caregiving burdens faced by many workers in low income families.

Reliable childcare boosts the labor pool and competitiveness while supporting educational or career advancement pursuits, leading to greater economic mobility and a more resilient economy.

Expanding accessible, affordable and reliable childcare can significantly reduce economic disparities and support equity-seeking groups in Inland Southern California including women, single parents, and minority entrepreneurs. Affordable childcare accessibility would increase and foster job retention and productivity, entrepreneurship and career advancement efforts by reducing major financial burdens, especially within low-income families.



What we have heard from the community ...

For example, Len noted that childcare can hinder access to education for young parents, that “sometimes it's just like, Oh, we don't get enough money. I don't qualify for this. I don't qualify for that. So financing is a main obstacle. *And especially if it's a young girl who's had a child early, then there's that. ... How is she going to make it to the school and still look after her kid even though they have the online stuff now? ... Sometimes it's like, what if what they want is not offered online?* ”

Connie Stopher, Executive Director of the Economic Development Coalition in Temecula, noted that affordable access to quality childcare impacts all parties - both in terms of youth outcomes but also in terms of helping parents in terms of time and finances. Stopher even went so far as to suggest that *“if we could somehow tackle this childcare system societally in a systemic sort of way, that it would have transformational impacts upon our workforce* , and on you know, in the future, our future workforce.”



Key data findings...

“People don’t always have money to afford additional training and childcare that could be needed to attend school outside of their already long work hours.”

“We need more community -based day care facilities to allow workers to work.”

In the two-county region, the financial impact of childcare is particularly evident when considering **the substantial costs of full-time care for infants** . In Riverside County, the annual cost for full-time infant care in a child care center is approximately \$15,504, while in San Bernardino County, it's slightly lower at about \$15,240. In family child care homes, these costs are \$11,472 in Riverside and \$11,292 in San Bernardino, as reported by the Regional Market Rate Survey of California child care providers in 2021.^[1] These figures highlight the substantial financial burden placed on families, especially those with younger children.

Source: <https://rrnetwork.org/research/child-care-data-tool#!0>



Strategies and tactics

Collaborate with local childcare providers to expand capacity to offer reliable and affordable childcare options : Collaborating with and supporting local entrepreneurs in childcare businesses to expand reliable and affordable childcare by providing financial and wraparound services, such as transportation and legal assistance to meet local demand.

Provide incentives for businesses that offer on -site childcare facilities and/or subsidies for employees : Tax incentives or grants to businesses that establish on -site childcare facilities and/or develop subsidy programs, would enhance workforce development while integrating with broader industrial policies and wealth building efforts.

Advocate for policy changes to increase funding for childcare subsidies and infrastructure : Advocacy for increased state and federal funding for childcare subsidies and infrastructure to integrate funding and training resources while also securing grants to expand existing facilities and improve the quality of existing childcare.

Establish government -funded childcare assistance programs for low -income families : Increased government funding towards childcare would establish eligibility criteria and streamline the application process for families, foster partnerships with local childcare providers to ensure high -quality care and follow through on state and federal initiatives to support early childhood education.

Invest in training and certifying more childcare professionals to meet demand : Efforts to invest and train and certify more childcare professionals through comprehensive programs, financial incentives and collaboration with local institutions or agencies to address the shortage of childcare providers and improve service quality.

Partner with community organizations to provide childcare vouchers or scholarships : Partnering with community organizations to provide childcare vouchers or scholarships and incentivizing employer collaboration would address the challenges faced by childcare providers and support them in providing affordable local childcare access for low income families.

Building Social and Cultural Capital

Why is this topic important?

This strategy aims to break down barriers historically underrepresented communities face in their pursuit of economic opportunity, career advancement, and wealth-building through implementing social and cultural capital enhancing programs and initiatives emphasizing financial literacy, networking, and exposure to different career paths.

Social and cultural capital- which includes social connections, exposure to different paths, access to training and education, familiarity with workplace norms, and more- play a major role in determining an individual's economic situation. Helping historically underrepresented groups increase their social and cultural capital can help break down barriers to economic mobility, and thus create a stronger and more inclusive regional economy.

What we have heard from the community ...

Monét Warren of the IE Black Worker Center acknowledged “*a general knowledge gap in communities of color. My worker experience is my experience, and my knowledge with working with workers is limited to Black and Latinx [workers]. **There seems to be a knowledge gap in hard and soft skills** . I'm blown away by how many people don't know how to write a resume and cover letter...*”

Target Facility Attendant Marco Perez explained how his upward trajectory was the result of knowing the right people: “*After a few years there, you know, just networking, talking to management and all that, they recommended, ‘Hey man, we know you have experience doing this and that. We think you'd be perfect for engineering facilities department. You can start up as a [apprentice] and work your way up to a mechanic.’ He kind of helped me get my foot in the door, helped me cross train and, in a couple months, I ended up switching over within a couple months of me talking to them* .”

Ryan, who grew up on a tribal reservation, recalled that “*they put us through these classes, explaining like . . . how to fill out all of your application, and . . . like, how to talk to people now, because a lot of us here, like I said, we don't know how to speak to people. We don't know what I need to get to those classes. It helped me understand how to speak and how to socialize with a boss or coworker* . And I went to a class that teaches how to have these . . . soft skills. I was able to take a class, and they hooked me up before I went and got this job. I learned how to speak to these people. I mean, it wasn't that big of a class . . . I paid attention. And it helped me immensely, like, you know, how to write a resume stuff like that.”

Key data findings...

“It just gets hard when you don't have resources as far as like finances or just like even knowing what to do building credit, stuff like that, just like figuring out life and not really having anyone to show you if your like, parents aren't showing you.” - Greater San Bernardino participant

Many people need assistance in understanding what jobs are available to them, how to apply for those jobs, and how to make themselves stand out from other applicants. Career counseling can provide this type of support.

Strategies and tactics

This strategy boosts the region's competitive advantage by increasing workforce readiness, building stronger community networks, and expanding local engagement. By fostering entrepreneurship and small business development, long -term economic stability is promoted and investment into local communities encouraged - strengthening their overall economic resilience and diversifying the region's economic base.

Building social and cultural capital can help reduce disparities by providing underrepresented groups with the tools and knowledge needed for economic success. It can also promote social mobility and wealth building for marginalized populations, since this strategy aims to enhance social inclusion and cohesion within the community.

Proposed Actions:

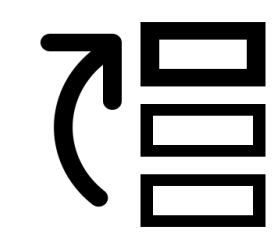
Foster Community Mentorship Programs: Develop mentorship programs and networks facilitating professional development and support systems

Offer Workshops & Seminars : Prepare individuals by offering guidance on how to secure jobs, navigate professional environments successfully, and financial literacy skills.

Enhance Career Counseling: Strengthen partnerships between educational institutions and their career counseling programs to include more comprehensive coaching and social equity training programs.

Expand Grants and Programing: Increase support of current organizations and initiatives already increasing social and cultural capital in local communities.

Employer Investments into Housing



Why is this topic important?

Employer investments into housing is important for communities to have access to a variety of housing types as well as affordable options.

Investments by employers into ensuring that there is an adequate supply of housing is crucial for inclusive regional economic development as it directly addresses the housing affordability crisis.

A workforce that has equitable access to housing can result in shorter commute times, stronger community bonds, and more opportunities to increase disposable income. This strategy helps address the housing affordability crisis by increasing the available stock of housing types and entry price points, reducing the displacement of residents due to rising housing costs and short-term rental markets.

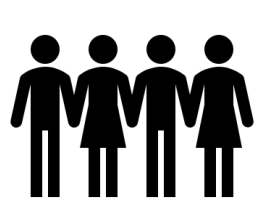


Strategies and tactics

Collaborate and incentivize employers to invest in housing: Incentivizing major employers to develop affordable employee housing programs will encourage employers to invest in their employees and increase housing opportunities near large employment centers.

Partner with local governments to implement zoning requirements for employer -supported housing to ensure it is prioritized to provide affordable housing: Collaborating with the local government to coordinate employer - supported housing will help companies abide by and prioritize affordable housing zoning laws.

Leverage public private partnerships for housing development: Leveraging public private partnerships for employee-supported housing would secure better funding and coordination between local companies and local government.



What we have heard from the community ...

Amy, who has a background in early childhood education, mentioned that a lot of **the housing that's being built in the region is out of financial reach for residents** and that they end up being AirBnBs or sitting empty. Amy said that even as part of a dual-income household, purchasing was still impossible.

Nowadays when you even try to go for an apartment, they say you need to make three times rent just to get a down payment or anything like that. And that's honestly ridiculous, especially as a federal worker, I still don't qualify, which makes no sense because I try to do the best I can. I work overtime. Sometimes when we're at a specific fires, we're gone for 14 days and we're home for six days. And even though we get a big payout for those specific jobs and the time and travel and everything, my family still struggles with trying to find an apartment. - Greater San Bernardino



Key data findings...

According to 2022 ACS data, **almost 60% of Riverside County renters and almost 61% of San Bernardino County renters spend 30% or more of their household income on rent.** Similarly, the National Low Income Housing Coalition identified the hourly wage needed to rent a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rent in the region at \$33.67. **Considering that California minimum wage is \$15.50, that equates to 1.8 (Riverside County) and 1.7 (San Bernardino County) full -time jobs.**



Quality job creation



Economic mobility



Vitality and quality of life

TODAY

Diversify the region's economy, strengthening industries with high-potential for quality job creation (the clean economy, manufacturing, and cybersecurity)

Enable more Inland SoCal residents to prosper and build wealth through access to quality jobs and small business ownership

Issues such as housing, food security, and mental wellness are beyond CJF scope but important for an inclusive regional economy

5 – 10 YEARS

Companies that offer quality jobs expand in Inland SoCal

Inland SoCal attracts venture capital, philanthropic interest, and public funding to support continued growth

More residents can participate in the economy because they have access to childcare and other assistance

Inland SoCal attracts additional philanthropic and public-sector investment to address these critical concerns

Clear, well-supported career pathways help more residents get quality jobs in high-potential industries

More residents pursue pathways into quality jobs in healthcare, the public sector, and other local-serving industries

The growing regional economy generates more tax revenue, which provides more funding for regional social services

LONG TERM

More Inland SoCal residents have quality jobs with family-sustaining wages and other benefits

More residents are able to start and grow their own businesses

Demand for social services falls as more residents move into quality jobs and open successful businesses

RESULT: Inland SoCal is a more inclusive, climate-ready region that offers all residents access to opportunity.

