

CJF Community Engagement Appendix

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Thrive Inland SoCal Outreach and Engagement Vision and Goals

The mission, vision, and values statements for Thrive Inland SoCal were developed by the governance committee in open weekly meetings during April and May 2023, and were then shared with the Equity Council and the full collaborative for additional feedback before being added to our governance document. They read as follows:

Mission: Our mission is to build an equitable and inclusive region where all residents have a say in shaping our collective economic future and addressing historical inequities.

Vision: Our collaborative envisions an Inland Southern California where everyone, regardless of background or circumstance, has access to the resources and opportunities necessary to thrive. We are committed to closing equity gaps and dismantling systemic barriers that prevent individuals and communities from realizing their full potential. Ultimately, our goal is to create an

Inland Empire where every community prospers in a sustainable and innovative economy, and every individual has the opportunity to live a healthy, quality life.

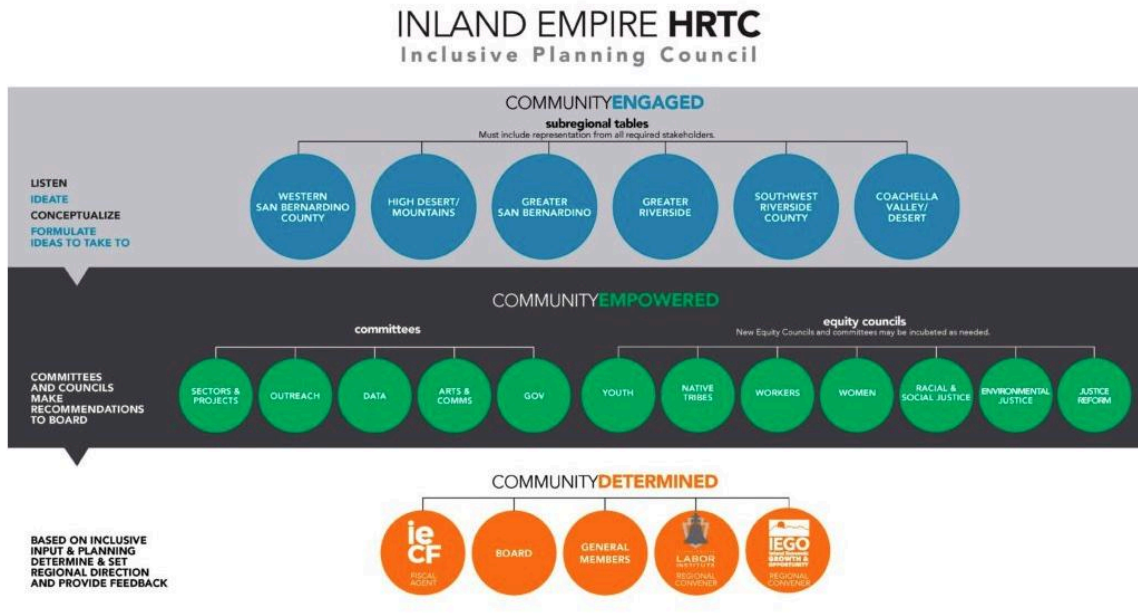
Operating Values: Thrive Inland SoCal achieves this by prioritizing:

- Cooperative Culture: We engage with each other in a spirit of mutual respect and build consensus around solutions. Everyone's voice deserves to be heard.
- Following the High Road: As part of this cooperative culture, we share a commitment to equitable hiring practices and business operations. All private business partners and subcontractors must meet the minimum California Jobs First-defined standards of a high road employer, including:
 - Family-sustaining wages
 - Clearly defined routes to advancement into higher-wage jobs
 - Benefits (such as paid sick and vacation time)
 - Adequate hours and predictable schedules
 - Access to training
 - Occupational health and safety
 - Worker representation or right to organize
 - No record of wage theft, ongoing labor dispute, health/safety violations, or other violations of labor law.
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Recognizing that innovation and entrepreneurship can be a powerful regional engine for equitable economic growth, we leverage assets and attributes unique to Inland Southern California. This includes both growth areas where local educational institutions play a leadership role (such as clean transportation, cybersecurity, and agriculture), as well as small businesses serving immigrant and historically marginalized communities. We empower innovators across multiple sectors to create synergies and leverage local talent from disadvantaged communities.
- Addressing Historical/Structural Inequalities: We center anti-racist approaches, power sharing, and inclusive decision making in each phase of the planning process. We define inclusion broadly to incorporate communities impacted by discrimination based on many factors, including race, sex, gender, sexuality, religion, color, physical/developmental ability, immigration status, and prior history of incarceration.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: We collect, review, and evaluate relevant quantitative and qualitative data as part of our cooperative decision-making process. Guided by our commitment to equity, we seek out and incorporate equity-focused data analysis methods and tools.
- Accountability: We are transparent in our communications and responsible to each other for the outcomes of our decision.

Thrive Inland SoCal Outreach and Engagement Structure

The structure for Thrive Inland SoCal laid out in the final approved proposal to the state derived from the merger of two competing applications. One, led by IEGO and the Inland Empire Community Foundation, emphasized a task-based committee structure while the other, led by the Inland Empire Labor Institute, emphasized equity and subregional committees as well as

sector-based committees. The merged application combined these approaches, with seven topic- or affiliation-based equity councils, six (6) subregional tables, and a group of five task-based committees. Chairs and leads from each of these bodies, along with a limited number of at-large members, would make up a steering committee known as the Inclusive Planning Council.



The original structure was as follows:

TASK-BASED COMMITTEES	Governance and Budget
	Data and Accountability
	Outreach and Engagement
	Multimedia, Comms, and Culture
	Sectors and Projects
EQUITY COUNCILS	Youth
	Native American Tribes/Tribal Organizations
	Workers/Labor
	Women
	Racial and social Justice
	Environmental Justice
	Justice Reform

SUBREGIONAL TABLES	Western San Bernardino County
	Greater San Bernardino
	High Desert and Mountains
	Greater Riverside
	Southwest Riverside County
	Coachella and Morongo

When the conveners began to build the actual collaborative, participants expressed concern about maintaining seven separate equity councils for a number of reasons, including but not limited to: 1) the fact that people would be forced to choose a single topic or affiliation when they might identify with several; 2) the time commitment for both participants and staff of maintaining seven additional weekly or biweekly meetings; and 3) that the range of perspectives on equity might be diluted through multiple, separate meetings as compared to having the opportunity to share multiple equity-related conversations in the same meeting space.

As a result, after an initial meeting in April 2023, the seven equity committees were merged into a single Equity Council that continues to meet on a biweekly basis. However, to ensure that the degree of steering committee participation by equity council members was not impacted, the number of seats (7) on the Inclusive Planning Council set aside for equity council chairs did not change. The Equity Council is tasked with advocating for specific actions related to representation, equity, and inclusion. Participation on the Council is open to anyone, and in May 2023 seven (7) members were democratically elected through a public nomination process and online ballot to serve as voting members of the Inclusive Planning Council. The voting members represent organizations serving disinvested communities such as the [Warehouse Workers Resource Center](#), [Alianza Coachella Valley](#), and [Just San Bernardino](#), among others.

Their responsibilities include providing review and feedback on:

- outreach and engagement
- data development
- data collection
- planning document content
- project assessment,
- project development
- project qualification
- and consultant approval

In addition, the conveners found continuing confusion among collaborative participants over the distinction between the scope of work for the Outreach and Engagement Committee and the Multimedia, Comms, & Culture committee. In order to clarify the work and goals of each

committee, their names were changed to the Business and Community Leaders Outreach Committee and the Community Engagement, Arts, & Culture committee in January 2024. The Business and Community Leaders Outreach committee focuses on bringing participants into Thrive who are leaders in local industry and also of local community-based organizations (CBOs). The Community Engagement, Arts & Culture (CEAC) committee has been particularly tasked with outreach to youth and disinvested communities.

These changes have produced the current structure of Thrive Inland SoCal:



The collaborative as a whole, with input from the Equity Council, has emphasized accessibility and inclusion. Simultaneous Spanish/English translation is available at all committee meetings, the Equity Council meetings, and biweekly general Thrive meetings. The website is also available in both languages and we have translated core documents such as our bylaws into Spanish and made them available through the website. An Equity Council subcommittee also developed a set of Community Guidelines to ensure that our interactions are guided by considerations of equity and access.

Phases of Outreach and Engagement

Community outreach and engagement as part of the Thrive Inland SoCal collaborative was separated into three phases to ensure community members and key affinity groups were engaged throughout each step of developing the regional strategies and the regional economic development plan.

Phase 1: Defining a Quality Job, October 2023 - February 2024

- **Objective:** Community members were tasked with defining what constitutes a quality job in their communities.
- **Outcome:** People transitioned from using the term “good job” to using the term “quality job.” The definition of a quality job included, but was not limited to, family-sustaining and mortgage-sustaining wages, benefits, and access to career growth opportunities to live, work, and play in the region with financial stability. This definition helped establish foundational values that were incorporated in Phase 2 of the work..

Phase 2: Identifying Barriers to Quality Jobs and Solutions, March - April 2024

- **Objective:** Community members were tasked with identifying barriers to quality jobs, wealth building, and entrepreneurial opportunities in the region. Additionally, community members identified existing solutions within the region that assist residents in accessing and maintaining quality jobs.
- **Outcomes:** This identification exercise focused the proposed strategies to further reduce the impact of these barriers and highlighted already existing organizations and initiatives providing solutions to these barriers in the region.

Phase 3: Reviewing Regional Strategies, May 2024

- **Objective:** Community members provided feedback on the proposed strategies to support priority tradable industry clusters and wealth-building and economic mobility as well as to address community-identified concerns and needs.
- **Outcome:** The feedback collected by the subregional tables was incorporated into the proposed strategies as the regional economic development plan was drafted and finalized.

The community outreach and engagement process was integral to developing an inclusive and comprehensive regional economic development plan. The insights gained from community members across Inland Southern California during each phase helped shape the strategies that are intended to be responsive to the needs and desires of the community. Engaging with the community in each phase increased and improved understanding and collaborative problem solving, fostering an increased sentiment of co-ownership and commitment across the entire region.

Overview of Outreach and Engagement Committees

Since the inception of Thrive in April and May 2023, the Business and Community Leaders Outreach Committee (BCLO, formerly Outreach and Engagement) and Community Engagement, Arts and Culture Committee (CEAC, formerly Multimedia, Comms, & Culture) have hosted biweekly virtual meetings that were open to the general public. Key tasks for both committees have included assisting Thrive Inland SoCal (Thrive) with outreach to priority populations for the gathering of qualitative data on strategies to increase high-road jobs in Inland SoCal. In May 2023, both committees conducted a democratic selection process to

choose their committee chairs. The nomination and voting process was open to the entire Thrive collaborative.

The BCLO Committee selected Pamela Deans, a local entrepreneur, as chair. Pamela Deans stepped down from the position in late April 2024, near the end of her one-year term, due to the need to commit more time to her business. An application to fill the vacancy was opened to the region, leading to Monica Robles, another local entrepreneur who had long served as unofficial committee co-chair, becoming our current BCLO committee chair.

The BCLO team has organized several engagements, including the Small Business Roundtable event. The Thrive Small Business Roundtable featured entrepreneurs from the region offering their perspectives on barriers and opportunities for owners while providing space for networking and connecting to regional assets. BCLO members wanted to leverage this opportunity to amplify voices not often heard in economic development spaces including street vendors, women, and people with disabilities, and to highlight opportunities for communities of color in emerging industries. Previous engagements for BCLO have included a convening in December 2023 at Chaffey College Chino Community Center. Our target audience were business and industry community members. The panel portion of the event included representatives from small business, government, industry, labor, and chambers of commerce, among others. We had nearly 100 participants that attended. The event was in partnership with Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce and Chaffey Community College District. Our panelists represented various sectors in our region, such as the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, Chino Airport Business Development Manager, Small Business Majority, Chair of the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs, IE Black Worker Center, Assistant City Manager of the City of Chino, among others. The qualitative data gathered on industry sectors through these events has helped us develop targets for the Regional Economic Plan (REP).

Additionally, in August of 2023, the BCLO committee held an Appreciative Inquiry session in partnership with the Mexican Consulate of San Bernardino. This event was filled with over 40 community members, community-based organizations, small business owners, and youth. Simultaneous Spanish/English translation was available, lunch was served, and gift cards were made available as participant compensation. Attendees reimaged their communities and the data gathered helped formulate our ongoing engagement strategies and informed the Phase 1 Planning Report submitted to the state on December 31, 2023.

Despite changes in leadership, the Community Engagement, Arts and Culture Committee has also been able to effectively implement initiatives for the project that offer lively opportunities for Inland SoCal residents to connect with Thrive. CEAC was originally led by Tim Dupree, a local creative entrepreneur, who was elected through the same process as Pamela Deans in May 2023. Tim Dupree stepped down from his post in March 2024 in order to take on video marketing and social media work with the collaborative. During Tim's tenure, the CEAC held two events, both reflecting the creative arts economy that is prospering here in the region. The first event was held in December 2023 in Downtown Riverside and drew a large crowd through co-scheduling with the city's annual Festival of Lights and its monthly Artswalk event. The

committee collected survey responses from over one hundred local residents. All materials, including the survey, were available in both English and Spanish and Spanish-speaking volunteers were on site. The second event was held in February 2024 in the City of Ontario in conjunction with the Western San Bernardino County subregional table during a monthly artswalk event. Community members were able to stop by to learn about Thrive and fill out the community insights survey. We found that meeting community members where they are has been an effective method to increase engagement and participation.

Upon Tim's departure, an open application was made available to Inland SoCal residents to fill the vacancy. Noraly Sainz was selected as chair. Noraly has been leading the committee through their next venture, a Thrive Arts Contest. The Thrive Arts Contest was launched in Spring 2024 to engage artists across the two county region in an effort to share their vision of what it means to thrive in their communities. Partners for this initiative have included the Riverside Arts Community Association, Arts Connection, KVCRC and the Boys and Girls Club of Inland Empire. Live, in-person announcements of the winners served as additional engagement opportunities with exhibitions of art submissions at multiple locations throughout the region. Prior to serving as chair, Noraly had worked with the committee to expand Thrive outreach in our local high schools - for example, convener staff member Esmeralda Vazquez visited San Geronimo High School in November 2023 to discuss California Jobs First and collected nearly 100 surveys from the students. Several of the students then volunteered at the CEAC's December 2023 event in Downtown Riverside, where they extended their participation in the Thrive regional collaborative. Additional youth engagement included sponsoring and gathering feedback at the Youth Career and Trades hosted by Uplift San Bernardino in July 2024, a nonprofit consortium in the region. Approximately 300 high school San Bernardino students were invited to hear panels related to local career pathways while connecting with various community based partners through a resource fair.

Overview of Subregional Tables

Geography and Subregional Table Designation

The Inland SoCal Region was divided into six subregional tables through a comprehensive process considering various factors. This division aimed to promote governance and geographic equity in Inland Southern California. The subregional divisions were determined based on economic, transit, management, and environmental factors to ensure a balanced and fair approach.

The geography of the subregions can be mapped as follows:



Subregional Table Backbone Organization Selection and Chair Selection

Greater San Bernardino Fontana, Rialto, Colton, San Bernardino, Redlands, Highland, Loma Linda, and Yucaipa

Backbone: San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
Chair: Susan Gomez, Inland Empire Community Collaborative

High Desert Adelanto, Victorville, Hesperia, Barstow, Apple Valley and Needles

Backbone: Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Chair: Maria Okpara, Apple Valley Unified School District

Western San Bernardino Chino Hills, Chino, Ontario, Upland, Montclair, and Rancho Cucamonga

Backbone: Reach-Out
Chair: Karen May, SEIU 1000

Greater Riverside Eastvale, Jurupa Valley, Norco, Corona, Riverside, Perris, Moreno Valley, Beaumont, Banning, San Jacinto, and Hemet

Backbone: Amplify Communities
Chair: Aicherria Bell, entrepreneur

Coachella Valley/ Morongo Basin Yucca Valley, 29 Palms, Desert Hot Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indio, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Blyth, and Coachella

Backbone: IBEW Local 440
Chair: Bryan Barrera, entrepreneur

Southwest Riverside County Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, Menifee, Wildomar, Murrieta, and Temecula

Backbone: Economic Development Coalition
Chair: Gabrielle McClanahan, youth representative

During the summer of 2023, an application process was finalized through an iterative process incorporating several components of our Thrive structure, including the governance committee and the Equity Council. An online application form was created so that organizations in the various subregions could apply to be a backbone organization. All applications were then read and scored by a selection committee consisting of volunteers from the governance committee. To ensure transparency, inclusivity, fairness, and equity, members of the selection committee could not review applications if a conflict of interest existed. After being reviewed, the top two applicants for each subregion were interviewed by the conveners and selection committee members via Zoom. Once those interviews were completed, the selection committee voted and then all applicants were notified of determinations.

Once subregional backbone organizations were selected and onboarded in September 2023, they began working on their first contract deliverable – selecting a subregional table chair. To ensure that all subregions were given autonomy and space to create their unique respective tables, they were only provided with a few guidelines for their selection process: 1. The chair selection must be a democratic process. 2. The selection process must be open and accessible to the community. 3. The process must follow overarching Thrive guidelines as outlined in the governance document. Subregional table chairs were selected between September 2023 and January 2024. To ensure fairness and accuracy, members of the convener team assisted with counting the votes. Following the chair selection process, all chairs received an onboarding session to launch into their work. These chairs represent key local organizations such as labor unions, CBOs, and educational entities.

Subregional Table Initial Affinity Group Outreach Process

Once selected, every subregional table (SRT) backbone organization and subregional table (SRT) chair were tasked with building their SRT. Multiple mediums of outreach and communication were launched simultaneously, in order to bring people to their respective SRT. Each of the SRT meetings occur at a mix of days and times to accommodate different working schedules, and typically have a Zoom or hybrid component. Simultaneous Spanish/English translation is typically offered and food is often provided. Participant compensation is available via gift cards.

The SRTs also are tasked with making an effort to successfully outreach to our state-designated affinity groups and all community members in their subregion. These tables are open, inclusive, and accessible to everyone. Each organization began by reaching out to their existing networks to invite people to the first meeting. They also used social media and information outlets (i.e. newsletters) to reach people. During each meeting, the SRT leads have a call to action: invite a friend. This has helped grow the engagement and participation throughout the six SRTs. Our SRT leads also use community events as an opportunity to invite community members to their next gathering; meeting people where they are at remains an effective method. Subregional table leads also have time during our general regional Thrive meeting to provide updates and

invite members to their local subregional table gatherings. Each SRT meeting date/time and location is also noted on the calendar on the Thrive Inland SoCal website.

Contractual Obligations

Central to the planning process were six backbone organizations, each of which received a \$100,000 grant to serve as subregion conveners. To ensure geographic equity, each table had to include participation from all 12 affinity groups or make efforts to include them. Additionally, each subregion had to hold open meetings to incorporate individuals who typically did not participate in such planning processes.

All subregional table backbone organizations must:

1. Be open and accessible to all community members
2. Hold at least one subregional table meeting per month
3. Attend monthly Community of Practice meeting
4. Attend general regional Thrive meeting to provide updates
5. Submit monthly narrative report with expenditures

Meeting Structure and Frequency

The Subregional Tables (SRTs) and the two (2) outreach committees held a total of 95 events between October 2023 - August 2024 throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The table below shows meetings held during this timeframe.

	Business & Community Leaders Outreach	Coachella Valley/ Morongo Basin	Community Engagement, Arts & Culture	Greater Riverside	Greater San Bernardino	High Desert	Southwest Riverside	Western San Bernardino
Aug	Appreciative Inquiry Session - 8/22/2023		Committee Meeting - 8/31/24					
Sept		Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24	Committee Meeting - 9/7/24 9/14/24	Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24	Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24	Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24	Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24	Community of Practice-Subregional Backbones - 9/28/24
Oct			Committee Meeting - 10/5/24 10/12/24 10/19/24 10/26/24	SRT Meeting- 10/18/24	SRT Meeting - 10/24/2023	SRT Meeting 10/26/2023		SRT Meeting - 10/5/2023
Nov			Committee Meeting -	SRT Meeting-	SRT Meeting -			SRT Meeting - 11/2/2023

	Business & Community Leaders Outreach	Coachella Valley/ Morongo Basin	Community Engagement, Arts & Culture	Greater Riverside	Greater San Bernardino	High Desert	Southwest Riverside	Western San Bernardino
			11/2/24	11/2/24	11/1/2023			
Dec	Business Leaders Event - 12/13/2023	SRT Meeting 12/9/2023	Thrive Unplugged Events - 12/2/2023 and 12/9/2023				SRT Meeting - 12/27/24	SRT Meeting - 12/7/2023
Jan	Committee Meeting - 1/12/2024	SRT Meeting 1/9/2024	Committee Meeting - 1/11/2024		SRT Meeting - 1/16/2024	SRT Meeting 10/26/2023	SRT Meeting - 1/31/24	
Feb				44th Annual Black History Expo & Parade - 2/10/2024	SRT Meeting - 2/20/2024		SRT Meeting - 2/28/24	SRT Meeting - 2/1/2024 Art Walk Outreach Event - 2/17/2024
Mar	Committee Meeting - 3/22/2024	SRT Meeting - 3/29/2024	Committee Meeting - 3/7/2024 and 3/21/2024	Starting Over Inc Event - 3/7/2024 Listening Session - Reentry Conference - 3/28/2024	SRT Meeting - and Post-Secondary Student Panel: Voices on the Region's Economy 3/19/2024		SRT Meeting - 3/19/2024	SRT Meeting - 3/7/2024
Apr	Committee Meeting - 4/8/2024 and 4/22/2024	SRT Meeting - 4/15/2024	Committee Meeting - 4/4/2024 and 4/18/2024	Listening Session - Staff at California Indian Manpower Consortium - 4/5/2024 SRT Meeting - 4/10/2024 Boys & Girls Club Listening Session - 4/16/2024	Barriers & Solutions Workshops 4/2/2024 and 4/3/2024 SRT Meeting - 4/25/2024	SRT Meeting - 4/2/2024	SRT Meeting - 4/16/24	SRT Meeting - 4/4/2024 SRT Meeting - 4/30/2024
May	Committee Meeting - 5/3/2024, 5/17/2024, and 5/31/2024	SRT Meeting - 5/8/2024	Committee Meeting - 5/2/2024, 5/16/2024, and 5/30/2024	Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 5/15/2024 SRT Meeting- 5/30/24	Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 5/13/2024 SRT Meeting and Community Insights Panel:	Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 5/30/2024	Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 5/21/2024	Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 5/24/2024

	Business & Community Leaders Outreach	Coachella Valley/Morongo Basin	Community Engagement, Arts & Culture	Greater Riverside	Greater San Bernardino	High Desert	Southwest Riverside	Western San Bernardino
					Amplifying the Voices of Our Non-Profit Business Leaders 5/28/2024			
Jun	Committee Meeting - 6/14/2024 and 6/28/2024 Small Business Roundtable - 6/20/2024	SRT Meeting - 6/6/2024 Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 6/26/2024	Committee Meeting - 6/13/2024 and 6/27/2024 Art Contest - Launched 6/2024	SRT Meeting - 6/20/2024	SRT Meeting 6/25/2024	SRT Meeting - 6/6/2024 Strategy Reviewer Meeting - 6/13/2024	SRT Meeting - 6/18/2024	SRT Meeting - 6/6/2024

Activities at Monthly Subregional Table Meetings and Key Takeaways

Meetings were held in-person, virtually, and in hybrid formats and included: open discussions, breakout rooms, individual interviews, group share-outs, a youth panel, a nonprofit panel, and presentations and talks. The topics discussed included: strategies for economic mobility and wealth building, prioritizing quality jobs, the language of equity, expanding access to childcare, transportation, and housing as well as the importance of collaboration with relevant organizations with an emphasis on barriers and solutions to improving quality of life within the region. In-meeting conversations were made accessible through online plug-ins and virtual translation as well as on-site translation services.

Across each of the 6 SRTs, community members discussed questions, such as:

- How do we reach out to the community to engage a variety of affinity groups, or targeted sub-groups historically excluded from the planning process?
- How can we incentivize quality healthcare jobs and upward mobility in our region?
- What are the biggest barriers that residents face?
- Which barriers are being or not being addressed effectively?
- Which barriers are most challenging for historically disinvested communities in your subregion?
- What efforts already exist in the region to address the barriers identified?
- Which efforts should be expanded?
- What's stopping people from getting quality jobs and living well in our area?
- What are some barriers to getting and keeping a quality job, and what barriers to advancing might come up in the next 5 years in that job?
- What are some barriers to starting and maintaining a business, and what type of support might you need in the next 5 years to grow that business?

- What kinds of cities and opportunities for play on our days off do we want to see in the region if we are to keep our trained workers in the region?

The SRTs also explored the strategies presented in this Regional Plan when they were initially drafted. The convener team asked SRTs to create reviewer groups with regular attendees that have been participating in the Thrive Inland SoCal collaborative. These reviewer groups provided targeted feedback on the tradable sectors strategies and the wealth-building and economic mobility strategies. For the tradable sectors strategies, reviewer groups explored a variety of questions, for example:

- Advanced Manufacturing
 - What advanced manufacturing training programs and supports exist in the region? How effective are they? Do they meet firm needs? What else is needed?
- Business Services
 - To what extent is the region advancing innovation in cybersecurity (for example, by developing new methods and technologies) as opposed to meeting customer needs for standard cybersecurity services?
- Cleantech
 - What are the best ways to encourage cleantech adoption, especially for smaller businesses that may not have much background knowledge or resources?
- Sustainable supply chains
 - How would rapid decarbonization of this cluster affect environmental outcomes for residents of the region's most disinvested communities?

For the wealth-building and economic mobility strategies, reviewers were asked to consider the extent to which similar past efforts were successful and how they could be improved, and, for those efforts that were successful, how scalable or broadly applicable the approaches were. Reviewers commented on the extent to which the strategies focused on expanding residents' access to quality jobs and encouraging entrepreneurship and small business success while addressing day-to-day barriers in the region.

Valuable input and feedback was collected through the SRT monthly meetings and reviewer group discussions. Some of the key topics that emerged from these activities and discussions included: barriers to accessing public transportation, affordable childcare and housing, accessible transportation, building social capital, and jobs with career growth and training opportunities. SRTs and their attendees also discussed solutions to these barriers including resources needed in the region and expansion of already existing solutions. Brookings and UCR utilized this feedback to update the proposed strategies in the regional plan.

Activities organized by SRTs in addition to monthly SRT meetings

The table below highlights additional outreach events and activities organized by the SRTs and convener team.

Date	Event Name	SRT or Committee	Event Type	Agenda	Target Audience	Location	Number of Attendees
8/22/2023	Appreciative Inquiry Session	Business and Community Leaders Committee	In-person panel and breakouts event	Asset-based approach Inquiry: - What is a quality job?	Business and Community Leaders and Spanish speakers	San Bernardino	40+
12/2/2023 12/9/2023	Thrive Unplugged	Community Engagement , Arts & Culture Committee	2 in-person arts and culture outreach events	Inquiry: - What is a quality job? - Health - Arts and culture as placekeeper	General and disinvested community and Spanish speakers	Riverside	500+
12/13/2023	Thrive Inland SoCal Workforce Event	Business and Community Leaders Committee	In-person panel and breakouts event	Inquiry: - What is a quality job? - Regional resources	Small Businesses, Workforce Development , and Community Leaders	Chino	40+
2/17/2024	We Are All Community Developers	Western SB County	In-person arts and culture outreach event	Inquiry: - Community Insight Survey - Arts and culture as placekeeper	General and disinvested community and Spanish speakers	Ontario	75+
7/21/2024	Thrive Art Contest	Community Engagement , Arts & Culture Committee	Online	Inquiry: What does it mean to thrive in our region?	General community and Spanish speakers	Online	40+
6/20/2024	Small Business Roundtable	Business and Community Leaders Committee	In-person panel and breakouts event	Inquiry: - Barriers and solutions for small businesses - Resource fair	Small businesses and entrepreneurs and Spanish speakers	San Bernardino	60+
6/19/2024	Thrive Juneteenth Mixer	Convener	In-person panel	Inquiry: - Barriers and solutions for African American residents	African American residents, providers, organizations	Moreno Valley	60+

Activities outside of monthly SRT meetings

Additional engagement sessions were conducted with partners representing key populations that elicited feedback on barriers and solutions to accessing quality employment in the region.

Typically a partner would recruit a group of participants that would agree to answer key questions in an informal group discussion either in-person or over Zoom. Sessions lasted approximately 30 - 40 minutes and feedback was gathered through online collaboration tools or through facilitator and participant notes. Some of the partners that co-hosted these sessions included:

- Back to the Future Youth Conference (San Bernardino high school students)
- Reentry Conference: Barriers and Solutions Workshop
- African American Family Wellness Advisory Group Presentation on Thrive/Barriers and Solutions
- Barriers and Solutions Sessions w/Greater San Bernardino SRT
- Thrive Presentation at Oak Tree Learning Center
- Barriers and Solutions session with the Child Care Resource Network
- Youth Career and Trades Fair, Uplift San Bernardino
- Thrive Juneteenth Mixer event in partnership with the African American Family Wellness Advisory Group
- Union Local SEIU 2015 focus group with members on Thrive/Barriers and Solutions (2 sessions)
- Union Local United Auto Workers focus group with members on Thrive/Barriers and Solutions
- Union Local ATU 1704 focus group with members on Thrive/Barriers and Solutions (2 sessions)
- Southwest Carpenters union focus group with members on Thrive/Barriers and Solutions

Inland SoCal is home to the largest Labor Council in the state which is the umbrella organization for approximately 93 local unions. Because unions are key to the discussion of high quality jobs and employment, we have engaged locals to further integrate the voices of workers in the region into strategy development. With these goals in mind we were able to conduct additional union focus groups with SEIU, UAW, ATU and the Southwest Carpenters to gather feedback.

Overview of Outreach and Community Engagement Process

The convener team and CSE provided support to the outreach committees and the SRTs to plan and coordinate events, provide guidance, and to gather community insights. The image below provides an overview of the elements of this process. Additionally included is a retrospective summary of the successes and challenges that occurred.



Outreach & Engagement Support

- Create Outreach & Engagement Plan Template
- Support with gathering community insights through various methods (e.g., group activity, survey, interview)
- Summarize community insights and share with SRTs and committees for transparency and feedback
- Provide guidance on any outreach gaps/opportunities
- Be a sounding board for new ideas



Thrive Engagement Map

- Combine stakeholder lists from SRTs, committees, general Thrive meetings
- Create interactive map to show Thrive participant activity by cities, opportunity zones, organization names
- Provide downloadable lists of participating organizations
- Update periodically with new participants



Event/Meeting Planning Facilitation

- Planning – Agenda, activities, event layout, other support
- Material creation – Presentation, survey creation, interactive sticky note boards, marketing/display materials
- Moderator/facilitator support
- Local students can be engaged to support planning and facilitation
- Event set up and breakdown
- Event debrief and notes

One of CSE's key roles within the Thrive Inland SoCal project was supporting the six subregional tables (SRTs) as well as the Community Engagement, Arts & Culture Committee and the Business and Community Leaders Outreach Committee. This critical support ensured effective communication, timely information sharing, and steady progress toward achieving the project's objectives.

Breakdown of CSE's Outreach and Engagement Responsibilities:

1. Monthly SRT Meeting Support

- CSE collaborated with SRT leads, at the SRT leads' discretion, to define meeting agendas, identify key discussion points, plan and support in-meeting activities, and prepare any necessary materials (e.g., presentations, reports) to facilitate productive meetings.
- CSE ensured comprehensive documentation of all discussions, decisions, and action items discussed during the meetings. This included capturing key points from both in-person and virtual attendees.
- CSE met with SRT leads and discussed the previous SRT meeting. Any lessons learned were incorporated into the next SRT meeting.

2. Monthly and Weekly Check-In's

- CSE proactively reached out to each SRT weekly to confirm receipt of important project information and updates, and met at least once a month to discuss meeting support and facilitation needs. This two-way communication helped identify any gaps and address them promptly.
- CSE served as a resource for SRT members. By addressing their questions and concerns, CSE fostered an environment of open communication and knowledge sharing, which was crucial for project success.

Stakeholder and Affinity Group Participation

Stakeholder Demographics

See “Thrive Engagement Map” section below.

CBOs Receiving CJF Funding and Services Provided

See “Overview of Subregional Tables” section above.

Thrive Engagement Map

The Thrive Engagement Map is a community resource developed by Center for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to assist community members in identifying and locating organizations and services that can support potential partnerships, funding opportunities, and workforce development initiatives. This map aims to foster collaboration and connection within the community, enhancing access to valuable resources and support networks in the Inland Southern California region.

Key Features

- **Interactive Map:** Users can hover over the map to view additional details such as: definitions, organization lists, affinity group identifications, and accessibility tools.
- **Keys and Definitions:** The map has a key to easily identify areas and markers, and definitions are available where necessary.
- **Available Filters:** Users can use a variety of filters to narrow down results as well as the map view.

Community Inclusion

- **Ability to Opt-In:** Community members that participate in the Thrive Inland SoCal collaborative have the ability to opt-in to be included on the map.
- **Continuous Participation:** Any new community members that participate in the Thrive Inland SoCal collaborative will be able to opt-in to be included on the map.

Benefits of the Thrive Engagement Map

- **Enhanced Visibility:** Organizations and individuals who opt-in gain increased visibility within the community making it easier to form partnerships and access resources.
- **Resource Accessibility:** The map provides a centralized location for finding information on workforce development services and potential partnerships or funding opportunities.
- **Community Connectivity:** By highlighting various community centers and organizations, the map promotes a more connected and collaborative community.

The Thrive Engagement Map is a living resource available to community members for the foreseeable future. The convener team plans to update the map on a regular basis through September 2026 to include new Thrive Inland SoCal participants and stakeholders in the region.

Overview of Community Insights Survey & Results

Survey Purpose and Administration

The Thrive Inland SoCal Community Insights survey was created to gather community responses to key questions that sub-regional tables (SRTs) and researchers wanted to ask the broader communities of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Its purpose was to ensure that members of the community who may have been unable to join the meetings were still able to provide input and participate in the inclusive economic development process. It was intended to serve as a feedback form; it was not designed to be a survey that would generate generalizable results.

The survey was open and available from February 13 to April 15, 2024. The survey was distributed through Thrive Inland SoCal SRTs and committees at meetings, events, and via email. The survey was also made available in Spanish. Respondents typically took the survey on a mobile phone or computer.

A total of 711 responses were collected, but it is important to note that the survey results are based on an opportunistic sample; it was not administered in a way to ensure representativeness by subregion, age, affiliation, or any other group. 289 surveys were excluded from this analysis as they were found to be duplicate (more than one response submitted by the same individual), laconic (little to no effort was taken to answer, such as listing “NA” for all questions), or fraudulent (completed by the same individual and submitted with identical or AI-generated responses).

The remaining 422 surveys were spread across the six sub-regional tables and two committees with the majority of responses concentrated in the four metropolitan SRTs of San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The rural SRTs of High Desert and Coachella Valley & Morongo Basin had the lowest survey participation rates, making up only 18 and 12 of the 422 responses, respectively.

The survey consisted of four main sections and, given the nature of the survey response results and the intention to use survey results to inform the economic development plan, CSE analysts focused analysis of the 422 survey responses primarily on the job availability, job training, and workforce advancement/preparedness survey questions.

Survey Structure	
Demographic and firmographic information	Mostly multiple-choice response options to inquire about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where people lived and worked • How they were involved with Thrive Inland SoCal • Contact information • Age • Which of 13 affinity groups they identified with, • Whether they would like to be represented on the Thrive Engagement Map
Thrive Engagement Map opt-in	
Community insights regarding job availability, worker resources for job access, and partnerships	Open-ended questions to gather survey respondents' perspectives on employment and economic development in the Inland SoCal region.
Additional thoughts	Partnerships section sought to gather names and information on local organizations relevant to Thrive Inland SoCal's efforts in Inland Southern California.

Responses were divided between barriers and solutions based on the tone and wording of the response. Respondents were more likely to present solutions and it is important to note that most survey responses were short and concise in their wording, such as providing one or two word responses. Where more than one theme was present, a response was coded with multiple themes.

Survey Findings by Subregional Table and Outreach Committees

The following themes and definitions are a result of a meta analysis conducted on 150 survey responses.

Theme	Definition
Building Cultural and Social Capital	This theme includes responses related to knowledge of existing services and programs, information silos and language barriers, competition and scarcity mindsets, and lack of involvement with disadvantaged communities and minority groups
Career Pathways	This theme includes responses related to a lack of job opportunities in the region, especially entry level jobs without higher education requirements, career support such as resume building and career planning, and quality jobs with livable wages
Childcare Access	This theme includes responses related to the high costs of childcare and the opportunity costs of utilizing childcare, distance to childcare facilities, and lack of knowledge on good childcare programs

Education and Training Access	This theme includes responses related to barriers to higher education due to tuition costs, location and commute times, and lack of knowledge about existing resources for tuition assistance and education planning
Housing	<p>This theme includes responses related to affordable housing, rent control policies, and services for homelessness.</p> <p>Employer supported housing was a theme the strategy authors wanted feedback on, but most survey respondents discussed affordable housing in general, not employer supported housing specifically.</p>
Entrepreneurship	This theme includes responses related to financial barriers including access to capital, high insurance costs, and access to investors
Technology Access	This theme includes responses related to lack of internet access or poor connectivity and lack of technology devices such as cell phones to access public transportation and computers to access online job interviews and applications
Transportation Access	This theme included responses related to insufficient public transportation, commute times, the inability to rely on highways due to weather events and construction, gas prices, and insufficient infrastructure for electric vehicles

Theme breakdowns by subregional table and committees reflect the percentage of responses indicating one or more of the themes that emerged from the analysis of barriers and solutions. Significance tests were not conducted for these results.

Notable Barriers	
Building Cultural and Social Capital	All but 2 SRTs, High Desert and Coachella Valley/Morongo Basin, indicated some level of barrier related to building cultural and social capital.
Career Pathways	<p>Every SRT indicated that Career Pathways was a barrier.</p> <p>35% of Unaffiliated respondents, 30% of respondents in Greater Riverside and Western San Bernardino respectively, were in the top 3 of SRTs listing Career Pathways as a barrier.</p> <p>Within their respective SRTs, Greater San Bernardino, Southwest Riverside and High Desert had the highest percentage of respondents who indicated Career Pathways was a barrier.</p>
Childcare Access	Business and Committee Leaders Committee had the highest percentage of respondents indicating that Childcare Access was a barrier.

Education and Training Access	<p>Business and Community Leaders Committee had the highest percentage of respondents among all SRTs (26%) who indicated an Education and Training access barrier.</p> <p>Community, Arts & Culture Committee had the second highest percentage at 25% of respondents</p> <p>Within a single SRT, 21% of respondents within Western San Bernardino cited Education and Training access as a barrier.</p> <p>Within their respective SRTs, Greater San Bernardino, Southwest Riverside and High Desert had the highest percentage of respondents who indicated Education and Training was a barrier.</p>
Housing	Greater Riverside and Western San Bernardino were the only two SRTs in which respondents noted housing as a barrier.
Entrepreneurship	Greater San Bernardino and Unaffiliated respondents were the top two groups listing Entrepreneurship as a barrier.
Technology Access	<p>17% of respondents in Coachella/Morongo Basin noted technology access as a barrier.</p> <p>3% in Greater Riverside noted technology access as a barrier</p>
Transportation Access	Western San Bernardino and Coachella Valley/Morongo Basin respondents were the top two groups listing Transportation Access as a barrier.

Notable Solutions	
Building Cultural and Social Capital	Community, Arts & Culture Committee had 29% of responses and Business and Community Leaders Committee had 26% of responses indicating Building Cultural and Social Capital as a solution, the two highest among the SRTs.
Career Pathways	<p>Within their respective SRTs, Greater San Bernardino and Greater Riverside had the highest percentage of proposed solutions related to Career Pathways.</p> <p>The highest percentage of proposed solutions for Southwest Riverside were related to Career Pathways.</p>

Childcare Access	With the exception of High Desert, Southwest Riverside and Unaffiliated respondents, all SRTs proposed Childcare Access as a solution.
Education and Training Access	<p>56% of the High Desert SRT respondents proposed or indicated a need for solutions to Education and Training Access – the highest among all SRTs.</p> <p>Within their respective SRTs, Southwest Riverside, Greater San Bernardino, Western San Bernardino, Greater Riverside as well as respondents who were Unaffiliated had the highest percentage of proposed solutions related to Education and Training Access.</p>
Housing	With the exception of the Business and Community Leaders Committee, Coachella Valley/Morongo Basin, and Unaffiliated respondents, all SRTs proposed affordable housing programs as a solution.
Entrepreneurship	Business and Community Leaders Committee and Community, Arts & Culture Committee had the two highest percentages of solution-oriented responses for Entrepreneurship.
Technology Access	Community, Arts & Culture and High Desert had the highest percentage of respondents offering solution-oriented responses for Technology Access.
Transportation Access	Coachella Valley/Morongo Basin had the highest percentage of proposed transportation access solutions.

Next Steps

Having built the Thrive Inland SoCal structure and completed the Phase 1 Planning Report in 2023, the focus in 2024 has been on using that structure to engage the region in the Phase 2 strategy development process through tailored outreach led by the committees and subregional tables and a range of mechanism to collect feedback and use it to inform the decision-making processes. As noted above, the collaborative has engaged small business, CBOs, and industry through events and outreach led by the Business and Community Leaders Outreach (BCLO) committee, and has engaged youth, grassroots and arts communities through arts events and school outreach led by the Community Engagement, Arts & Culture (CEAC) committee.

Additional engagement and outreach has been solicited in partnership with community events and through targeted “barriers and solutions” sessions with labor unions, reentry populations,

and other valued community members. The subregional tables have participated in this process by sharing and facilitating use of our community insights survey, hosting informative panels and speakers, and convening a subcommittee to review multiple iterations of the core economic development and mobility strategies. Finally, our CSE partners developed both short-term (the survey) and long-term (the engagement map) tools to gather information and feedback and track engagement.

Following the close of strategy development in September 2024, Thrive will enter the Catalyst/Implementation phase of California Jobs First from October 2024 through September 2026. During this period, we must maintain some of the already-developed mechanisms and also develop new ones to foster engagement with inclusive economic development and gather feedback on specific projects and overall strategies. A key ongoing engagement mechanism will be the SRTs. Although they will be moderately reconfigured to operate more efficiently and in line with current economic affinities and transportation opportunities, they will continue to lead the process of sharing information out and gathering ideas and responses back in. The backbone organizations will hold two public forums each year as well as eight meetings with subregional steering committees, new entities made up of members of affinity groups and the Inclusive Planning Council based in that region. The SRTs will do the core work of sharing information about Catalyst and Implementation funding and updates on Catalyst-funded projects, as well as continue to foster connections and partnership-building that will empower the region to successfully pursue additional funding opportunities and provide alignment across regional strategies.

In addition, the Thrive engagement map will continue to be updated and available as a data source and partnership resource, and a range of data tools and other resources will be available to regional organizations on the Thrive and IEGO websites. With CSE, the conveners have carefully archived findings and materials from throughout the engagement process that will be made available (where PII is not involved) to regional stakeholders. The Equity Council will also continue to meet and provide feedback on our efforts going forward.

As part of these efforts, we have put in place a set of transparent and accessible decision-making processes. For example, on the Catalyst fund, all applications will be scored by committees of volunteers drawn from our collaborative who sign conflict of interest statements to ensure they are not scoring any applications they have a personal connection to. The committee volunteers were chosen through an online form available and publicized to the entire collaborative. Similarly, the members of the Inclusive Planning Council that is responsible for voting on projects and making other key decisions have either been democratically elected through a process open to the entire collaborative, or are at-large members chosen through an application process open to the entire collaborative. Typically, by the time information or an issue is brought to the Inclusive Planning Council it has already been vetted by the governance and sometimes other (data, projects & sectors) committees as well as the equity council and sometimes one or more SRTs as well. In this way, we are able to (and will continue to) maintain broad-based engagement and feedback collection with regards to the strategy

development process and opportunities to sustain and expand the work of Thrive beyond the term of California Jobs First.