



# ECONOMIC VITALITY STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

*JUNE 2019*





*Photo credits: Bill Nash*



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## ICON LEGEND



*Business Climate, Land Use*



*Infrastructure*



*County Services; Safety Net*



*Marketing; Branding*



*The Creative Economy;  
Arts & Crafts*



*Recovery & Resiliency*



*Diversity & Inclusion*



*Workforce Development*



*Economic Development*



*Work in Progress*

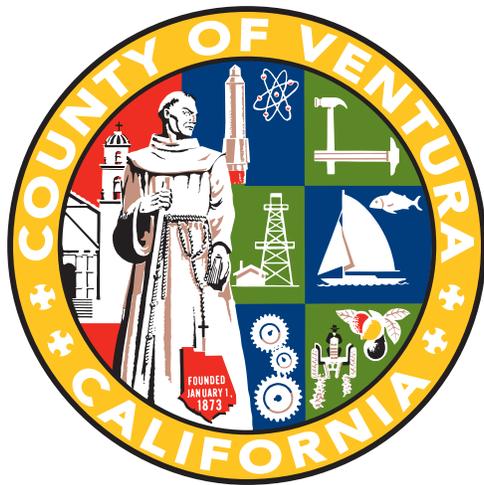


*Housing & Homelessness*



*Completed*





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The County of Ventura has always recognized the importance of economic vitality as an essential component of a thriving community with resources and opportunity for all. County leadership understands and embraces local government's role and the significant impact it has on the local economy. While this role manifests as primarily regulatory in nature, the County places equal importance on acting as a convener of public- and private-sector partners, promoting a business-friendly environment and acting as a champion for shared prosperity, equitable access to economic opportunities, and a high quality of life for all residents. The Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP), approved by the Board of Supervisors in November 2017, outlines thirty (30) different actionable steps that the County has undertaken in order to support the above-mentioned roles. These actionable steps complement and support the existing efforts of the Economic Development Collaborative, the Ventura County Economic Development Association, and all of the incorporated cities, focusing on promoting regional collaboration. This report is intended to highlight and recognize activities and accomplishments found throughout the County that support the region's overall economic vitality. While some of these initiatives were already undertaken prior to the implementation of the EVSP (and have received recognition and support), other activities were initiated directly because of EVSP and its partners.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

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The purpose of the EVSP is to provide a strategic framework for the County of Ventura government to support Ventura County's long-term economic vitality. Whereas the plan is primarily intended to outline a course of action for the County of Ventura Government (led by the County Executive Office), it recognizes that a wide array of public- and private-sector entities have important roles in the overall process of encouraging economic vitality in Ventura County. In this regard, the EVSP is intended to position the County's involvement in a way that will support and complement (rather than replace or duplicate) these existing efforts, thereby promoting regional collaboration. Thus, while the scope of the plan is broad in the sense that it considers the overall "landscape" of economic vitality in Ventura County (including an assessment of needs and a review of the existing programs that are addressing those needs), it is ultimately focused on defining specific activities that the County can lead, coordinate, or support existing efforts within the region's larger network of economic vitality partners.

### ***Our Goals are to:***

1. Proactively foster economic growth in a manner that is consistent with the County's longstanding commitments to quality of life, sustainability, and broadly-shared prosperity.
2. Elevate the profile of the County's programming and capital investments related to economic vitality, increasing public awareness of the importance of these functions.
3. Continue to leverage the County's investments in economic vitality through partnerships with a wide array of public- and private-sector partners.
4. Systematically coordinate County operations and capital projects (across all departments and agencies) to prioritize investments that facilitate quality economic growth.
5. Continue the focus of all County agencies on providing excellent customer service to the public and a business-friendly environment.
6. Continually monitor and refine the County's economic vitality initiatives to remain responsive to the evolving needs and opportunities of the local economy, as these arise, based on both internal and external changes.
7. Leverage and support coordinated efforts of economic vitality partners.



## EVSP ACTION ITEMS

The EVSP identified 30 specific actionable steps to improve regional economic vitality through coordinated efforts with existing economic vitality partners.

It should be noted that the EVSP plan was adopted just before the outbreak of the Thomas Fire and the subsequent Borderline shooting and Hill/Woolsey Fires. Due to these local disasters, the Steering Committee added recovery and resiliency efforts as essential activities in the EVSP implementation.

For the purposes of implementation, the EVSP Action Items were organized into groups that correspond with the primary leaders and community organizations that are active in that area. Here is a list of the Focus Areas and their corresponding Action Items as they have been grouped:

- **Economic Development** – A4, A7, A8, A9, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6  
Agricultural sector; Spin-offs (Navy, Port, Airports, Education);  
Target Industries (retain, expand); Entrepreneurs; Access Capital
- **Workforce Development** – A10, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5  
Education/Industry partnerships; Job/training awareness;  
Education to meet employer needs; Training-Employment path; Internships;  
ID workforce readiness issues; COV partner with workforce development
- **Housing & Homelessness** – A2, F1, F2  
Housing Solutions Coalition; Housing affordability; Homelessness
- **Business Climate, Land Use** – A5, F3  
Optimize land use; Business friendly permitting
- **Infrastructure** – A3, E1, E2, E3, E4  
Infrastructure investment; Water; Transportation; Broadband; Energy
- **County Services; Safety Net** – A3  
County service; Safety net
- **The Creative Economy; Arts and Culture** – A6  
Arts and culture collaborative; Quality of life; Bicycle friendly
- **Marketing; Branding** – D1, D2  
Marketing collaborative; Marketing campaigns
- **Recovery & Resiliency** – (\*New)  
Recovery from disasters; Resiliency to withstand future challenges and disasters
- **Diversity & Inclusion** – (\*New)  
Promoting shared prosperity and improved quality of life for all residents

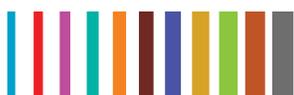


## EVSP STEERING COMMITTEE AND CONTRIBUTORS

The first action item identified in the plan was to convene an EVSP Steering Committee to coordinate implementation of the EVSP. This Steering Committee was established, a charter was developed, and the committee has been meeting monthly and collaborating outside of meetings to work on the EVSP implementation. We wish to express our thanks to the following Steering Committee members who have stepped up to lead different focus areas within the EVSP implementation plan:

<b>TALIA BARRERA</b>	<i>County of Ventura – Farmworker Resources Program</i>
<b>VANESSA BECHTEL</b>	<i>Ventura County Community Foundation</i>
<b>CLARE BRIGLIO</b>	<i>Economic Development Collaborative</i>
<b>GARY CUSHING</b>	<i>Camarillo Chamber of Commerce</i>
<b>MATTHEW FIENUP</b>	<i>California Lutheran University</i>
<b>PHIL HAMPTON</b>	<i>California State University, Channel Islands</i>
<b>TRACY HUDAK</b>	<i>Creativity Works</i>
<b>JOEY JUHASZ-LUKOMSKI</b>	<i>BikeVentura</i>
<b>MELISSA LIVINGSTON</b>	<i>Workforce Development Board</i>
<b>MIKE PETTIT</b>	<i>County of Ventura – County Executive Office</i>
<b>MIKE POWERS</b>	<i>County of Ventura – County Executive Office</i>
<b>KIM PRILLHART</b>	<i>County of Ventura – Resource Management Agency</i>
<b>STACY ROSCOE</b>	<i>Ventura County Civic Alliance</i>
<b>SANDY SMITH</b>	<i>Ventura County Economic Development Association</i>
<b>PAUL STAMPER</b>	<i>County of Ventura – County Executive Office</i>
<b>BRUCE STENSLIE</b>	<i>Economic Development Collaborative</i>
<b>RIGO VARGAS</b>	<i>County of Ventura – Public Health</i>
<b>BRYAN WENDT</b>	<i>Matter Labs</i>
<b>ERICK WENDT</b>	<i>Matter Labs</i>
<b>DENISE WISE</b>	<i>Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura</i>
<b>ALEXANDRA WRIGHT</b>	<i>Ventura Community College District</i>

Additionally, we wish to thank the wide variety of other community partners who attend the Steering Committee meetings and/or are actively engaged in the EVSP implementation. Partners in the EVSP have repeatedly stated that there has been incredible value in this process from the networking alone. These partners include but are not limited to: Haider Alawami (City of Thousand Oaks); Sabrina Anderson (County of Ventura – County Executive Office); Bill Bartels (Economic Development Collaborative) Supervisor Steve Bennett (Board of Supervisors, District 1); Stephanie Bertsch-Merbach (Ventura County Community

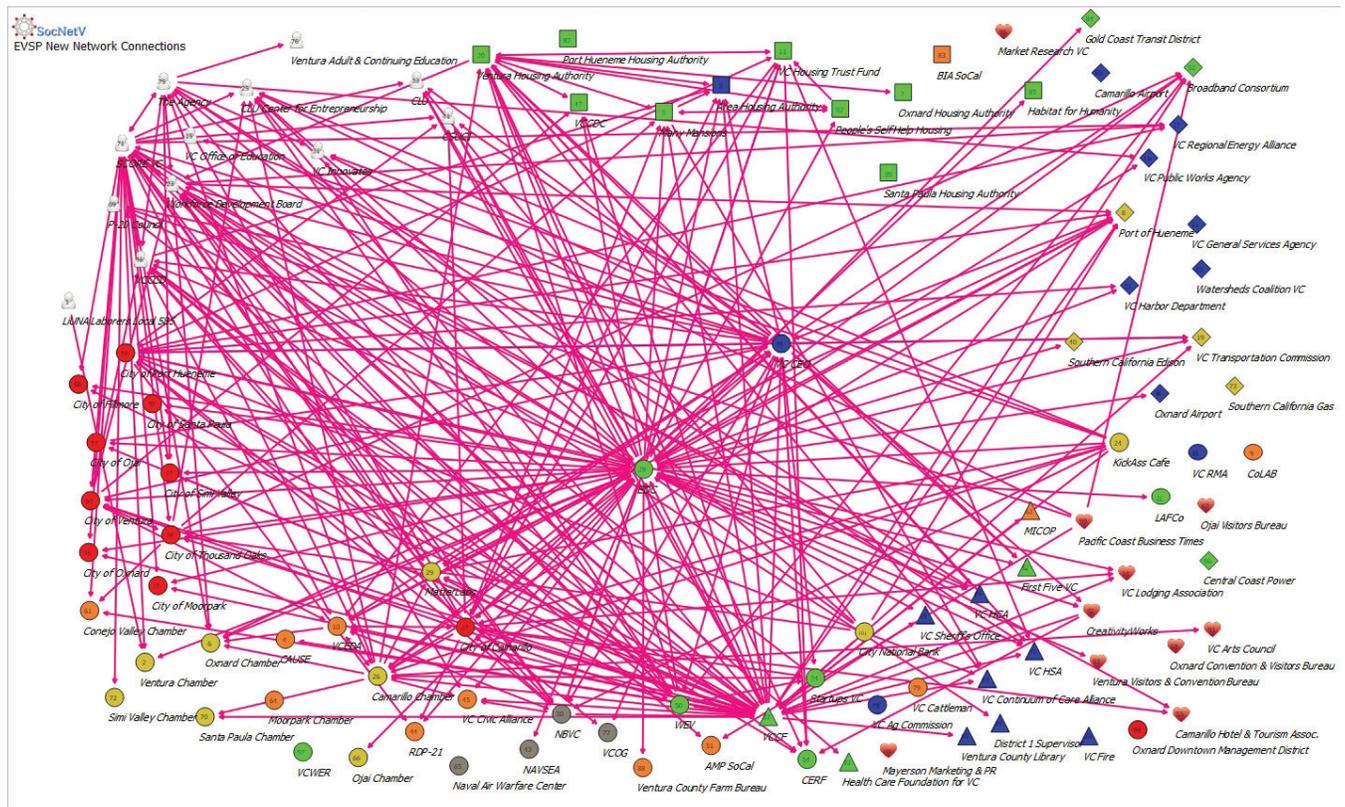


Foundation); Brian Brennan (Board of Supervisors – District 1); Estelle Bussa (City of Ventura); Cindy Cattle (Board of Supervisors, District 1); Brian Chong (City of Moorpark); Tully Clifford (City of Camarillo); Susan Curtis (County of Ventura – Resource Management Agency); Rebecca Evans (Workforce Development Board); Amanda Fagan (Naval Base Ventura County); John Frazier (City of Camarillo); Brian Gabler (City of Simi Valley); Matt Guthrie (Board of Supervisors – District 3); Heidi Hayes (The Agency); Jeff Lambert (City of Oxnard); Kym Horner; Dr. Rachel Linares (County of Ventura – County Executive Office); Tracy McAulay (County of Ventura – County Executive Office); Brian Miller (Board of Supervisors – District 3); Anthony Mireles (Local Laborer’s Union 585); Doug Parker (Kickass Café); Hugh Riley (Ventura Council of Governments); Jessica Ruiz (County of Ventura – County Executive Office); Lourdes Solorzano (Board of Supervisors – District 5); Chris Stephens (County of Ventura – retired); Ikani Taumoepeau (City of Santa Paula); Alejandra Tellez (County of Ventura – County Executive Office); Phylene Wiggins (Ventura County Community Foundation); Trevor Zierhut (Ventura County Economic Development Association); Barry Zimmerman (County of Ventura – Human Services Agency).

## EVSP SOCIAL NETWORK MAP

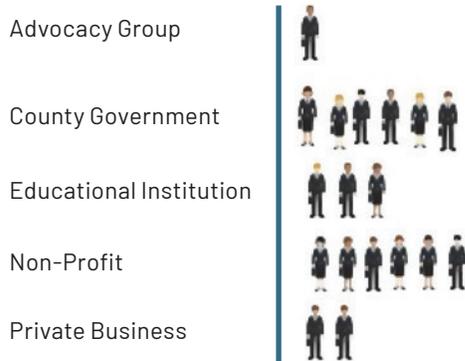
The EVSP has led to the creation of a county-wide network that spans organizations and industry sectors, bringing them together in a united forum to communicate and create new economic, equity and environmental opportunities. From the beginning the focus of the County has been to act as a convener, connecting organizations and programs already in at work and connecting them to additional support and resources. Comments were made at multiple Steering Committee meetings regarding the increase in connections and communication between participants. Based on these comments, County staff worked to illustrate and quantify these connections through the use of a social network mapping tool. This tool highlighted that through the convening of the EVSP, 229 connections between organizations have either been created or strengthened. This increase and strengthening of connections is arguably the most valuable outcome of the EVSP.

### NEW/STRENGTHENED CONNECTIONS SOCIAL NETWORK MAP



# EVSP QUICK FACTS

## EVSP Steering Committee Composition by Organization Type



## EVSP Steering Committee Composition by Focus Area

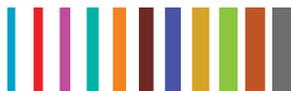
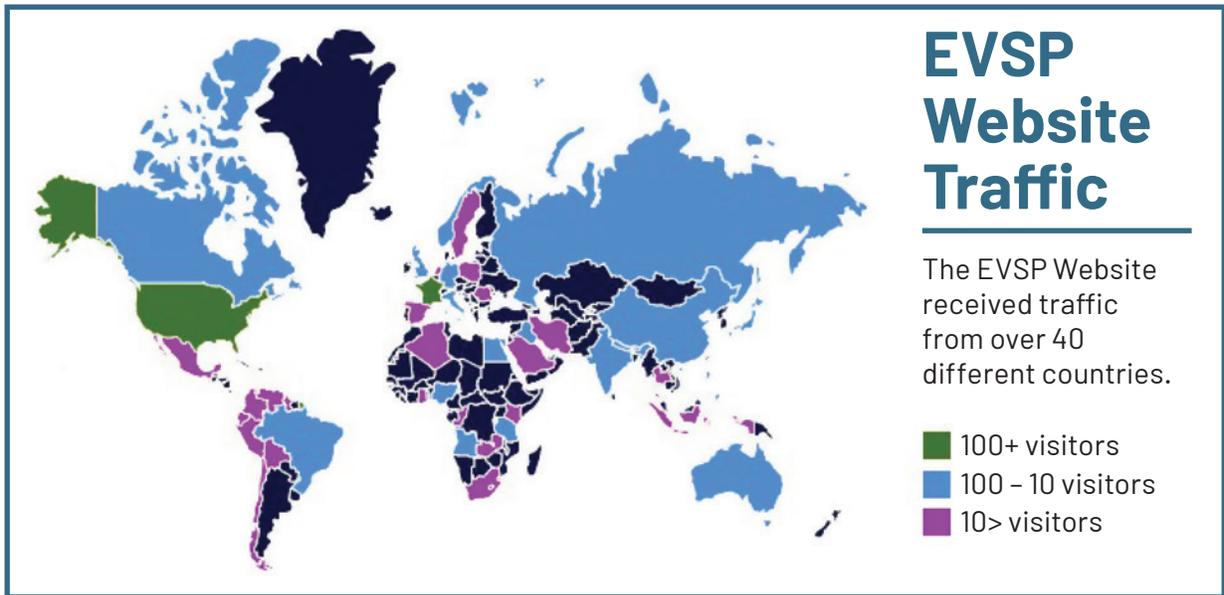


Completed Accomplishments:

43

Activities In Progress:

41



## INITIATIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The initiatives and accomplishments provide detailed descriptions of the many activities that support economic vitality throughout Ventura County. Some of the initiatives and accomplishments were already underway or completed before the initiation of the EVSP, but are included in the report because they contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region, are undertaken by EVSP partners, or have received additional support/recognition through the EVSP and its members. Other initiatives and accomplishments were inspired and enacted because of the collaboration and connections inspired by the EVSP.



### Economic Development

-  **EDC Invest Connects Firms to Capital Investment:** EDC Invest creates a pathway to identify early stage firms, prepare for investor presentations and business plans, and ultimately secure capital investment through a network of over 200 capital groups. Partner organizations include EDC Small Business Development Center, Matter Labs, and OCTANE LaunchPadTM. (EVSP Action Items: C.2; C.3; C.4; C.5; C.6)
-  **Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Analysis:** EDC, the County of Ventura, and VCCF cosponsored a study of the local entrepreneur ecosystem in order to assess the ecosystem's strengths and weaknesses as well as identifies gaps in assets and resources. (EVSP Action Items: C.1; C.2; C.3; C.4)
-  **Startups Ventura County Supports Local Entrepreneurs:** Startups Ventura County provides local entrepreneurs with technology startup ideas connect with local professionals, subject matter experts and mentors, fine tune proof of concepts, and present business plans to potential investors. (EVSP Action Items: A.9; C.4; C.5)
-  **Ventura County Film Commission Facilitates Filming Permits:** EDC dedicated resources to facilitate communication between industry and location representatives and regional permitting jurisdictions to support film production in Ventura County and increase visibility and ease of obtaining filming permits. (EVSP Action Items: C.2; C.3; C.6; F.3)
-  **Ventura County Air Pollution Control Board Engine Replacement Grant Program:** The Ventura County Air Pollution Control Board (APCB) oversaw a \$4.4M grant program focused on replacing heavy-duty diesel engines (used in the agricultural and fishing industries) with new lower-polluting equipment. (EVSP Action Items: A.4; C.2; C.3; E.4)
-  **Reduced Fees for Electronic Payment of County Fees:** The County Treasurer-Tax Collector reduced cost for electronic payments by 50% for eCheck payments, and 14% for Credit Card payments. This reduces the financial burden placed on constituents when trying to conduct business and make payments utilizing current technology. (EVSP Action Item: F.3)



 **Technology Exchange Consortium Connects Naval Base Ventura County with Local Businesses:** EDC, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, the Port of Hueneme and Matter Labs are creating an agreement to facilitate connections with local businesses to commercialize technology, conduct research and development, prototype technology and possibly move prototypes into production. EDC is further supporting the partnership by leasing a warehouse from the Port of Hueneme, which will provide access to laboratory space as well as research and development equipment. (EVSP Action Items: A.7; A.9; C.2; C.3; C.4; D.2; E.3)

 **Opportunity Zone Taskforce Coordinates Investment in Local Opportunity Zones:** EDC has formed an Opportunity Zone Taskforce to rally local partners and resources and support the investment, development and optimized use of Opportunity Zones located within Ventura County. (EVSP Action Items: A.5; C.4; C.5; F.1; F.3)

 **County of Ventura General Plan Update:** The County of Ventura is working on a comprehensive update to its General Plan for the first time in almost 30 years. The general plan represents the community's view of its future and expresses the community's development goals. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; E.2; E.3; E.4; F.1)

 **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Created:** EDC and the Ventura County Community College Districts (VCCCD) have partnered to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Ventura County. A CEDS is a key component of establishing a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; C.1; C.2; C.3)



## Workforce Development

 **Ventura County Apprenticeship Consortium:** This grant-funded consortium was established in fall of 2018 with the specific purpose of scaling the apprenticeship model as a priority approach to workforce development by providing venues for employer exposure to the model and sponsoring initiatives that provide awareness of the model to youth and adult workers. (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.2; B.3; B.4; D.2)

 **VCCCD Exclusive Online Job Board:** VCCCD has developed an exclusive online job board for employers to advertise employment and internship opportunities to students within the entire community college district free of charge. (EVSP Action Item: B.1)

 **Ventura County Education Summit and 2018 Education Report to the Community:** The P-20 Council coordinated the first annual summit which highlighting innovative ways our K-12 schools, community colleges, and universities are expanding educational opportunity and achievement, with the emphasis on preparing students for the working world by providing the knowledge and skills sought after by local employers. (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.2; B.3; B.4)

 **Workforce Development Guide Outlines Educational Resources:** VCCCD, EDC and the Ventura County P-20 Council developed a comprehensive outline of all employer and worker education and training resources found within the County. The guide details resources for customized training, a guide to starting apprenticeship programs, resources for employee recruitment, information on government subsidies, and an overview of education and training programs available through local community colleges and adult schools. (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.2; B.3; B.4; C.2; C.3)



- 
**Ventura County Health Occupations Pipeline Education (HOPE) Program:** The HOPE program is a collaborative partnership between the Ventura County Health Care Agency, Ventura County High School Districts, VCOE and the South-Central Regional Consortium, Community College Collaborative. High school, community college and university students are selected to participate in this summer program and are exposed to a large variety of healthcare service lines. *(EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.3; B.4)*
  
- 
**Oxnard College Automotive Program School-to-Work Program:** The County of Ventura Fleet Operations Department partnered with the Oxnard College Automotive Department to provide local students with experience and a potential path to employment with the county. The program aligns education with industry to provide a curricular path leading to viable employment and career opportunities. *(EVSP Action Items: A.9; A.10; B.1; B.2; B.3; B.5)*
  
- 
**Growing Works Vocational Training Program:** Growing Works is a non-profit wholesale plan nursery that is the site for a vocational training program. The program assists people with mental health challenges on a path to wellness with horticultural therapy, employment, and future job placement in the workforce. *(EVSP Action Items: A.4; B.1; B.5)*
  
- 
**Ventura County Library STEM Maker Spaces:** The Ventura County Library has dedicated Maker Spaces to offer STEM activities and teach students of all ages 21st century skills in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, to promote workplace readiness. Programs and activities often incorporate teaching youth about specific careers related to STEM skills. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; B.1; B.3)*
  
- 
**Ventura County Mock Trial Competition:** The competition is sponsored through a partnership between the VCOE, the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) and volunteers from the County's Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office and County Counsel and other organizations. Student teams study a hypothetical case, conduct legal research, receive guidance from volunteer attorneys in courtroom procedure and trial preparation, and present their case before volunteer judges. *(EVSP Action Items: B.1; B.3)*
  
- 
**Ventura County Library READ Literacy Program:** The READ Literacy Program provides reading and writing instruction through various methods and resources, including the Career Online High School diploma program, one-to-one basic adult literacy instruction, English as a Second Language instruction, classes focused on helping those with Learning Disabilities and Dyslexia, Workplace Literacy, Family Literacy, and for youth and young adults within the County's correctional facilities. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; A.10; B.1; B.2; B.3; B.5)*
  
- 
**Ventura County Science Fair:** The Science Fair draws hundreds of Ventura County students in grades 6-12, presenting a wide variety of scientific projects. The fair is presented by the Ventura County Office of Education and include a STEM Expo that will feature scientific exhibits and expose students to career opportunities in STEM-related fields. *(EVSP Action Items: B.1; B.3)*
  
- 
**Research on the Need and Potential Impact of Early Childhood Education:** The Ventura County Community Foundation commissioned a report by Dr. Jamshid Damooei of California Lutheran University to explore the need and potential impact of free Early Childhood Education programs in Ventura County. *(EVSP Action Item: B.3)*
  
- 
**Dual Language Training for Early Childhood Educators:** CSUCI Associate Professor Dr. Carola Olivia-Olson received a \$1.1 million-dollar grant from the California Department of Education to support a CSUCI project called the "Dual Language Learning Professional Development for the California Early Childhood Workforce." This training program trains leaders and teachers currently working in early childhood programs best practices in teaching children who speak a language other than English at home. *(EVSP Action Items: B.1; B.2)*



 **Internship and Student Worker Program Inventory:** The County is working to create an inventory of all Internship and Student Worker programs offered throughout its agencies. Once the inventory is complete, it can be reviewed to look for opportunities to streamline and standardize processes. (EVSP Action Items: A.9; A.10; B.1; B.3; B.4; B.5)

 **Prison to Employment Initiative (P2E) Promotes Work-Readiness of Justice-Involved and Formerly-Incarcerated Individuals:** The P2E program aims to strengthen collaboration between local workforce development and corrections systems in order to improve outcomes for justice-involved and formerly-incarcerated individuals by providing access to jobs that can provide a living wage. Some of the overall goals include: creating a regional employer outreach and training program; providing micro-contracts to sober living houses; development of a mandatory pre-release resources file and toolkit; develop a registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship in manufacturing program; and develop a joint Day Reporting Center for Probation and Parole. (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.4; B.5)

 **Linking of CalFresh Benefits to Work Opportunities:** The WDB is working to link participants in the CalFresh Program with employment and training opportunities funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.1; B.4; B.5)

 **Development of kidSTREAM Children’s Museum:** kidSTREAM is fundraising and gathering support to open a children’s museum in Camarillo, focused on providing creative, active learning opportunities for children of all ages, abilities and background. (EVSP Action Item: B.1)

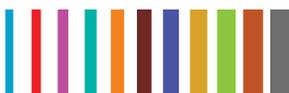
 **Coordinated Services Through WDB and Ventura County Department of Child Support Services (VDCSS):** WDB supports families working with the Ventura County Department of Child Support Services (VDCSS) by providing employment skills, employment opportunities and other services resulting in sustained employment and the ability to provide for their families through the payment of reliable, monthly child support. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; B.1; B.5)



## Housing

 **Thousand Oaks Increases Ability to Develop New Residential Units:** The City of Thousand Oaks City Council initiated amendments to the land use element of the General Plan in order to implement zone changes to seven neighborhoods, adjusting the residential density to match the existing density and in effect allowing 1,088 new residential units to be developed elsewhere in the city. (EVSP Action Items: A.2; A.5; F.1)

 **Funding To Support Long-Term Recovery Activities:** The County of Ventura is applying to receive Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding to support long-term recovery efforts following the devastating wildfires, flooding, mudflows and debris flows that occurred in October and December of 2017. The proposed funding will address needs related to housing, infrastructure, and economic impacts to the Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas, which includes Ventura County. (EVSP Action Items: F.1; F.2)



 **Permanent, Year-Round Homeless Shelter:** The County of Ventura is partnering with the Cities of Ventura and Oxnard to open permanent, year-round homeless shelters, supported by wrap-around services including a variety of health care services, job counseling and other supportive services. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; F.2)*

 **Housing Solutions Group Advocates For Greater Housing Availability and Affordability:** The Ventura County Housing Solutions Working Group is a diverse group of stakeholders focused on advocating for housing in a manner that is consistent with their shared values, working to identify and implement housing solutions that can be implemented in Ventura County under existing land use policy; and advocating for local policy changes that facilitate infill development and other reasonable new construction while maintaining open space and farm land. *(EVSP Action Items: A.2; A.5; F.1; F.2)*

 **New Farmworker Housing Built in Saticoy:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB) is building 24 units of new farmworker housing in Saticoy. The units are planned to open for occupancy by the end of April 2019. *(EVSP Action Items: A.4; F.1)*

 **Expanded Broadband Access at Public Housing Units:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura received grant funding from ConnectHome and AT&T to provide broadband and Wi-Fi access to housing developments so that residents have better and increased access. *(EVSP Action Item: E.3)*

 **Collaboration Between All Housing Authorities Located Within Ventura County:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura is coordinating efforts with all other county housing authorities to create a regional informational database. The database will include information about participants and housing availability in each area, to assist in creating a snapshot of housing assistance for the entire county. *(EVSP Action Items: A.5; F.1; F.2)*

 **Housing Matters Awareness Campaign and Scholarship Program:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura has created the Housing Matters program, which is focused on bringing awareness to the importance of housing across all income spectrums and the impact that housing has on attainment of health, education and other services, as well as providing scholarship opportunities to youth within the Ventura Unified School District. *(EVSP Action Items A.10; B.1; B.3; F.1; F.2)*

 **Mainstream Housing Vouchers focused on Housing Non-Elderly Disabled:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura has partnered with the Area Housing Authority and Oxnard Housing to administer 45 Mainstream Vouchers, specifically targeted for housing non-elderly disabled. *(EVSP Action Items A.10; B.1; B.3; F.1; F.2)*

 **Permanent Supportive Housing Building in Ventura:** The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura is in the process of acquiring a blighted building in the City of Ventura. Extensive renovation will be conducted in order to establish the building as permanent supportive housing. Units will be set aside for the most vulnerable (e.g., homeless, emancipated youth, veterans, etc.). *(EVSP Action Items A.10; B.1; B.3; F.1; F.2)*



 **Housing Trust Fund Capital Campaign to Match Proposition 1 Funds:** The Ventura County Housing Trust Fund is undertaking a \$10M fundraising campaign to be matched 1 to 1 by the CA Department of Housing & Community Development from Proposition 1 Bond funds, and to provide early/short term financing of new affordable housing throughout Ventura County. (EVSP Action Items: F.1; F.2)



## Business Climate and Land Use

 **Permit Navigator Assists in Improving County Permitting Processes:** The County of Ventura created a new position, Permit Navigator, focused on providing value-added customer service on individual projects and facilitating process improvements within the County permitting process. The navigator works county-wide and across departments, agencies and divisions, providing a single point-of-contact for customers needing assistance with unresolved permitting issues. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; F.3)

 **Thomas Fire Expedited Building Permit Process:** The County's Service Excellence Staff worked with representatives from the Resource Management Agency, Public Works Agency and Fire Department to create a streamlined process for wildfire survivors to receive building permits to replace damaged or destroyed homes. The process is open to those affected by the Thomas, Hill and Woolsey fires. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; F.3)

 **Standardized Building Plans Reduce Permit Application Processing Time:** The Resource Management Agency, Building and Safety Division, drafted standard plans that can be used for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or for Farmworker Housing units. The three plan configurations (ranging from 700-1,200 square feet) allow the building permit application to be processed in a quicker manner (thereby reducing the cost and wait time for the applicant). (EVSP Action Items: A.4; F.1; F.3)

 **Agricultural Well Water Monitors Allow Tracking and Sale of Groundwater Allocations:** The County of Ventura Public Works Agency works with local farmers to install monitoring hardware on agricultural wells. This hardware monitors water usage and produces real-time reports. By monitoring, farmers know if they have any unused groundwater allocation, which can then be sold to a different farmer on the Groundwater Market. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; A.4; C.2; C.3; C.4; E.1)

 **Development Capacity Analysis Allows for Optimization of Vacant or Underutilized Land:** RMA is conducting a Development Capacity Analysis as part of the General Plan Update. This analysis focuses on identifying vacant and underutilized parcels within the County unincorporated area that have potential for development. (EVSP Action Items: A.5; C.2; C.3; F.1)

 **Support to Implement Permitting/Regulatory Best Practices:** The Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) is working to create a guidebook for cities to use when completing a general plan update in order to incorporate business-friendliness into permitting processes. During the general plan update zoning guidelines and requirements can be adjusted to allow for innovative land use practices. (EVSP Action Item: F.3)





## Infrastructure

-  **Clean Power Alliance Provides Consumer Choice In Energy Sources:** The Clean Power Alliance (CPA) was created to serve 31 communities within Ventura and Los Angeles counties, offering energy created through renewable resources at rates competitive to those using fossil fuels. The energy is created through renewable resources but delivered by Southern California Edison (SCE). Customers can choose three different combinations of renewable/traditionally produced energy. *(EVSP Action Items: D.2; E.4)*
-  **3C-REN Business Plan Provides Residential Energy Efficiency Financing and Outreach Services:** The Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) promotes energy efficiency in residential buildings by offering Energy Coach services, energy efficiency upgrade options, and financing mechanisms to reduce up-front costs and barriers to upgrades. *(EVSP Action Item: E.4)*
-  **New Bus Routes Connecting Ventura to Simi Valley and Moorpark:** The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) implemented two new routes that provide greater connectivity of public transportation throughout the County: a fixed-route transit service between Simi Valley, Moorpark and West Ventura (East-West Connector); and service to Somis, using the East-West Connector. *(EVSP Action Items: C.2; E.2)*
-  **Free Bus Rides for Any College Students in Ventura County:** The College Ride Pilot program allows students enrolled at any Ventura County college can ride any VCTC bus for free during the 2018-2019 academic year. The program is funded by a grant obtained through the state of California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program. *(EVSP Action Item: E.2)*
-  **Identification and Prioritization of County Infrastructure Projects:** County Agencies have worked to identify current and proposed infrastructure projects within the County that directly and indirectly support the region's economic vitality. Identification of the projects allows greater visibility, the ability to promote the projects outside of the County, and potentially consideration or assistance connecting with funding opportunities. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; C.2; C.3; E.1; E.2; E.3)*
-  **Ventura County Broadband Consortium Works to Expand Access to High-Speed Internet:** The Ventura County Broadband Consortium continues to advocate for and work to expand access to high-speed Internet throughout the County. The Consortium sponsors the annual Broadband Summit in order to promote the wide-spread proliferation of high-speed Internet access throughout Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. *(EVSP Action Items: C.2; C.3; C.4; C.6; E.3)*
-  **Hangar Expansion Project at the Camarillo Airport:** The Camarillo Airport has entered an agreement to construct four new hangars (with office space) on 6.2 vacant acres on the airport property. The land will be leased for 40-years, with the option to extend for an additional 10 years. Each hangar will be about 25,000 square feet in size, will have 5,000 square feet of office space, and will hold up to eight planes. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3, A.8; C.3; C.6)*
-  **Creation of A Regional Traffic Collision Database:** The Ventura County Public Works Agency Transportation Department has received a grant (from the California Office of Traffic Safety) to create a county-wide traffic collision database, focused on improving the region's traffic safety. The database will be shared by all the county's police departments, public works departments and traffic engineers. It will provide them with the tools to perform analysis of traffic collision data patterns both county-wide and on an individual agency basis. *(EVSP Action Item: E.2)*



 **Electric Drive 805 Promotes Use of Affordable Electric Cars:** Ventura County is a partner in launching the “Electric Drive 805” initiative, which focuses on leading location actions to increase access to affordable electric vehicles. In addition to promoting awareness of the available financial incentives for purchasing or leasing a new electric vehicle, the group will focus on expanding access to vehicle chargers at key locations. *(EVSP Action Items: D.2; E.2)*

 **Harvest at Limoneira Built as Digital Community, Bringing Greater Broadband Access to Santa Paula:** Harvest @ Limoneira, the new housing development, is engineered as a digital community, incorporating smart technologies and providing increased broadband and internet access, not only to the individual community but to the greater city of Santa Paula.

 **County Pavement Condition Index Maintained:** The County of Ventura has maintained a pavement condition index in the mid 70’s for the past four decades, protecting and reinforcing vital routes of transportation that connect the incorporated cities.

 **Develop and Revitalize Channel Islands Harbor:** Promote development and revitalization of the Channel Islands Harbor to incorporate additional housing as well as businesses including Hyatt House.



## County Services; Safety Net

 **Farmworker Resource Program Supports Local Agricultural Workers and Employers:** The County of Ventura has created the Farmworker Resource Program, which provides outreach resources to farmworkers and their employers. The program is focused on assisting farmworkers with prompt resolutions to workplace issues and navigating the wide array of available public services. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3, A.4; B.5)*

 **Residential Addresses Updated in Preparation of 2020 Census:** RMA assisted with the 2020 Census preparations by updating and correcting addresses (LUCA 2020 review). These updated addresses will ensure that new residential buildings constructed since the last Census will be included in the Census roster. *(EVSP Action Item: D.2)*

 **Ventura County Treasury Pool Receives Highest Rating From Standard & Poors:** Standard & Poor’s has reaffirmed the “AAAF” and “S1+” ratings of the Ventura County Treasury Pool. Ventura County is one of only three pools in California to be awarded this highest rating. The County’s Treasury Portfolio was awarded the top ratings due to the safety of the principle investments, its liquidity and a competitive rate of return. *(EVSP Action Item: A.3)*

 **Community Events Website Promotes Awareness of Local Events:** HSA updated its website to include a page featuring community events and resources. The page includes information and links to workshops, community events and resources related to health, social and basic needs services. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; B.1)*

 **Updated Website Provides Customer-Friendly Resources:** Ventura County Department of Child Support Services (VCDSCS) has added a video to their public facing website, providing details of their services, educating the public on the challenges of parenting separately, child support, court dates, visitation, and custody. *(EVSP Action Item: A.3)*



 **2020 Census Complete Count Committee Promotes Census Awareness and Completion:** Ventura County is at high risk of experiencing an undercount during the 2020 Census. Championed by VCCF and supported by the County, the Complete Count Committee is working to mobilize community leaders, promote awareness of the Census, and strategically orient resources to help gain an accurate count.

 **VCCF Oversees Regional 2020 Census Activities:** VCCCF was awarded administrative responsibilities for the state grant monies allocated to Region 5 (includes Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Ventura). (EVSP Action Item: D.2)

 **Study Focuses on the Future of Caregiving for an Aging Population:** VCCF has commissioned a report by Jamshid Damooei, PhD, Professor and Director of Economics Program at California Lutheran University, entitled “The Future of Caregiving for an Aging Population: Increasing Community and Economic Vitality in Ventura County.” The final draft has been received and the report will be prepared for publication. (EVSP Action Item: B.1)

 **Expansion of CalFresh Food Benefits:** Beginning June 1, 2019, CalFresh food benefits will be available to seniors and people with disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Payment (SSI/SSP) benefits. This change will increase nutrition and health and reduce hunger and poverty among California’s low-income seniors and people with disabilities. (EVSP Action Item: A.3)



## Creative Economy; Arts & Culture

 **Online Reservation System Expanded to Cover All County Camping Areas:** The General Services Agency implemented an online reservation system for the Hobson, Faria and Rincon camping areas. Previously, the areas operated on a first-come, first-served system. GSA estimates that the change will create almost \$160,000 in savings, due to park rangers no longer needing to collect and deposit cash parking payments as well as the reduced number of calls to mediate disputes over camping spaces. (EVSP Action Item: A.3)

 **TripAdvisor Awards Channel Islands Harbor Certificate of Excellence:** The Channel Islands Harbor was awarded a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for 2017, celebrating businesses and destinations that have earned great traveler reviews on TripAdvisor over the past year. This is the second year in a row that the Harbor has received this award. (EVSP Action Item: D.1)

 **Relocation and Stabilization of the Skateboard Museum and Hall of Fame:** The Skateboard Museum and Hall of Fame relocated to the Simi Valley Town Center. This central location provided better visibility and accessibility to the Museum and Hall of Fame. (EVSP Action Item: C.2)

 **AMGEN Bike Tour Brings Tourism and Spotlight to Ventura County:** The AMGEN Tour of California returned to Ventura County for another year, bringing professional cyclists from all over the world. For the 2019 race, the City of Ventura was featured as the end point of Day 5. (EVSP Action Item: C.2)



 **Thomas Fire Artist Recovery Fund Assists Local Artists:** CreativityWorks and the Ventura County Arts Council secured \$40,000 from the State of California to support artists affected by the Thomas Fire. *(EVSP Action Item: C.2)*

 **Expansion of Bike Paths Throughout Ventura County:** The PWA Transportation Division is extending existing bike paths throughout the County, specifically along Potrero Road for the stretch between Trentwood Drive and Hidden Valley Road. An estimated 3.5 miles of bike path, this will enhance bike rider safety in a particularly accident-prone stretch of road. *(EVSP Action Items: A.3; E.2)*

 **Creation of the Creative Economy Initiative:** Due to its collaborative cross-sector nature, the EVSP Steering Committee has caused a paradigm shift in our county regarding the definition and understanding of the entirety of the Creative Economy. The accomplishments listed below reflect this shift, and include:

- Reframing “arts & culture” to the broader term “creative economy” which encompasses fine art, cultural and commercial creative practices;
- Shifting from amenity-based thinking about the arts to a strategic alignment of creative economy development goals with the EVSP focus areas;
- Developing an actionable three-year plan for developing a county-wide Creative Economy Initiative, aligned with EVSP principles;
- Activating partnerships with the EDC and VCCF to identify funding sources for first steps;
- Securing a proposal from the Los Angeles Economic Development Collaborative for a stand-alone report on Ventura County’s creative economy (thanks to EDC);
- Forming a preliminary group of advisors from regional agencies, nonprofits and businesses;
- Highlight job paths and training that augment involvement in the creative economy;
- Facilitate entrepreneurial development in the creative sector.



## Marketing and Branding

 **Economic Vitality Strategic Plan Website Created:** The County of Ventura created a dedicated website to the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, providing an overview of the plan, details on specific focus areas, and a library of associated documents. *(EVSP Action Item: D.1)*

 **EDC Relaunches Website to Feature Core Programs:** After undergoing a rebranding initiative, EDC launched a streamlined, eye catching website. Featuring success stories from businesses assisted through EDC initiatives, the website outlines the five core programs: Loan, Grow, Global, Invest and Film. Business owners and entrepreneurs in need of guidance, support, training and assistance can now easily access EDC resources. *(EVSP Action Items: C.2; C.3; C.4; C.5; C.6; D.2)*

 **WDB Translates Outreach Materials and Expands Marketing to Better Reach Spanish-Speaking Population:** WDB was better able to support the Spanish-speaking population during the aftermath of the Thomas, Hill and Woolsey Fire by conducting additional, targeted outreach including the use of Spanish radio stations and creating recover resource pages, available in both languages.

 **Business Services and Workforce Study Helps Identify Unmet Business Services Needs:** The Workforce Development Board worked with The Agency to complete an online survey of Ventura County business executives to gauge the awareness, use and need for business services and resources. This research will be used to help improve the coordination and provision of business services, to promote the benefits of our region and to encourage local businesses to stay and grow. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; C.2; C.3; C.6; D.1)

 **Rebranding of the Ventura County Department of Child Support Services:** The Ventura County Department of Child Support Services is rebranding the program, establishing new Vision and Mission statements, and is creating a Strategic Plan which will guide the department through an expansion of services and focus on innovation, courage and community. (EVSP Action Items: A.3; D.2)

 **Business Resource Providers Meet to Strategize Offering of Support Services:** EDC is gathering Business Resource providers from throughout the County to convene on a bi-monthly basis. The meetings will be used to discuss opportunities for collaboration, referral and marketing to better promote all resources and opportunities, and to better support our business community. (EVSP Action Items: A.10; B.2; B.4; C.2; C.3; C.4; D.1; D.2; F.3)



## Recovery and Resilience

 **Disaster Recovery Efforts Support Local Businesses:** EDC took a lead role in supporting business recovery efforts and acting as a convener for local stakeholders after the Thomas Fire, Santa Barbara Mudslide, Borderline Shooting, and the Hill and Woolsey Fires. EDC is currently working with 60 businesses to create short and long-term recovery strategies. Activities included:

- Co-sponsored of multiple events for local stakeholders and government officials to create a strategy for business outreach and support;
- Created and distributed a Business Recovery Guide to over 8,600 businesses and 7,760 individuals;
- Hosted the SBC Business Recovery Center;
- Conducted over 600 hours of direct engagement with impacted businesses;
- Created a Disaster Recovery Resources page on the EDC website;
- Offer a variety of lending programs including micro-loans, larger-scale financing to help businesses recover from the impacts of multiple disasters. (EVSP Action Items: C.2; C.3; C.5)

 **Business Recovery Grant Program Aids Local Businesses Affected by Thomas Fire:** Women's Economic Ventures (WEV), in partnership with Wells Fargo, developed a Business Recovery Grant Program to aid small businesses suffering in the wake of the Thomas Fire. Selected businesses received grants ranging from \$5,000-\$10,000 as well as training and consulting designed to help recover from the economic impacts of the natural disaster.

 **Focused Donation Campaign Aids Responsible Collection and Distribution of Funds to Support Disaster Survivors:** In the aftermath of the Borderline Incident and the Hill and Woolsey Fires, the Ventura County Community Foundation launched a focused donation collection campaign. This campaign allowed disaster donors to donate to a centralized location, with the assurance that the funds would be distributed directly to the disaster survivors.





**County After-Action Review Provides Guidance for Improved Disaster Resiliency:** The County of Ventura utilized an After-Action Review to analyze the disaster recovery activities implemented in the wake of the Thomas Fire. The review gathered input from County personnel, recovery partners from the City of Ventura, and Community Based Organizations that participated in the Long-Term Recovery Group. The analysis resulted in a 21-point Improvement Plan, to be implemented over the next 18 months. Improvement items were designed to not only improve recovery activities in response to a wildfire disaster, but also a variety of other natural disasters.



## Diversity & Inclusion



**Development of Spanish Materials to Support Spanish-Speaking Business Owners:** EDC is in the process of translating all program materials in Spanish to support Spanish-speaking business owners. This supports around 20% of EDC’s business clients. (EVSP Action Items: C.3; F.3)



**2020 Census Complete Count Committee Seeks to Represent Entire County Population:** VCCF is assisting with the coordination of the Census 2020 Complete Count Committee, which includes community leaders throughout the entire County population. Efforts are underway to reduce barriers to census completion including language, technology and internet access.



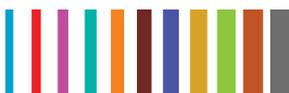
**Expansion of Business Services Support in Multiple Languages:** Business Service Providers are starting to offer bilateral translation, multi-lingual materials and children’s activities at workshops and events, in an effort to draw attendance meetings and workshops.

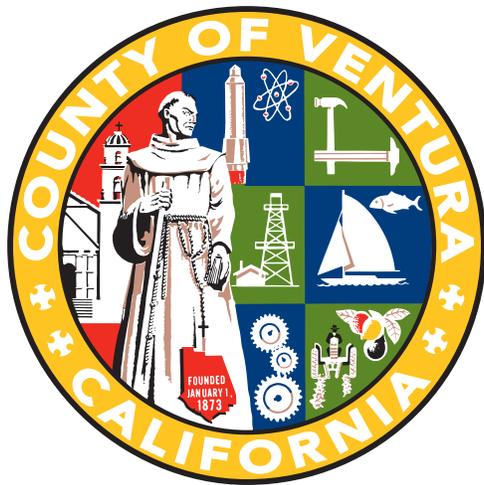


**CLU and the Center for Economic Forecasting To Produce the 2019 Latino GDP Report:** CLU and the Center for Economic Research and Forecasting have executed a research agreement to create the 2019 Latino GDP report. This will focus on the firm and household level self-reported data to estimate the contribution of Latino households to the overall California economy.

## CONCLUSION

The EVSP has already proven to be a catalyst for communication, inspiration, and action throughout Ventura County. These efforts would not be possible without the vision and direction provided by the Board of Supervisors, the hands-on leadership provided by County leadership, and the time, dedication and resources provided by the EVSP Steering Committee, partners and participants. This is an exciting first step towards creating a more equitable and resilient future.









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