

CONVERSATIONS WITH WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Southern Nevada Strategic Infrastructure Development Working Group June 24, 2021

Overview

Over the preceding weeks, RCG Economics (“RCG”) & Working Group Chair, Kris Sanchez, conducted two-on-one interviews with the members of the Working Group. The following slides reflect salient themes & issues that emerged during those conversations, not the opinions of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development (“GOED”) nor RCG .

Major Themes

Infrastructure & Economic Development

Major Themes

- Infrastructure
 - Is the built environment, everything it takes to support that built environment & the social infrastructure
 - Connects people—to places, to opportunities &, most importantly, to a job
 - “Nontraditional” infrastructure is also important
- Economic Development
 - Must reflect the values of the community (diversity, equity, inclusion, etc.)

Theme: Beginning with the End in Mind

Opportunities

Beginning with the End in Mind

- Opportunities

1. Southern Nevada is a bit of a blank slate; we have relatively little to demolish & redevelop/replace compared to other states
2. Lead from a unified—rather than siloed—perspective on policy, implementation, investment & collaboration with both public & private partners
3. Invest where we want growth to go by being proactive rather than reactive, including incentives for specific industries we want to recruit within the context natural resource constraints (e.g., water)

Beginning with the End in Mind (cont.)

- Opportunities

4. Do something “magnificent” with the ARPA funding—a BIG, strategic project that “moves the needle”
5. Employ planning models, impact analysis & rigorous timelines to make the best decisions possible
6. Create a bipartisan, private-public independent group tasked with planning & decision-making relative the a regional infrastructure strategy, starting with a mutually agreed-upon definition

Theme: Southern Nevada Jobs

& Attracting New Employers

Southern Nevada Jobs & New Employers

- The role of the Federal Government is a key issue in any talk of growth in Nevada
- That said, the quality of jobs produced can be more important (as a metric) than the price or scarcity of land
- So. Nevada has a vulnerable economy, but we must keep the hospitality industry strong as we diversify & become more resilient
 - In the illustration to the right, Southern Nevada's hospitality industry could be considered a "Cash Cow" (mature industry with slower growth), while manufacturing might be a up & coming "Question Mark" moving towards a "Star" economic sector



Diagram by Kindredgrey, [Creative Commons License](#)

Southern Nevada Jobs (cont.)

- Workforce Development

1. Among the factors influencing employers' decision to relocate to Southern Nevada, the size & "quality" (e.g., skill set) of the workforce remains the concern most voiced
2. We need to give greater attention to preparing our K-12 students with the right skills for high-demand, 21st-century jobs & occupations in Southern Nevada that have less chance of being automatable
3. We need a retention strategy that matches our college programming to reduce the region's "brain drain"

Southern Nevada Jobs (cont.)

- Utilities

1. Need to reduce employer relocation costs & accelerate permitting, utilities, etc.
2. Need to be strategic about the next capital improvement plan for the SNWA in southern Clark County (Sloan, Jean & the Ivanpah Valley)

Theme: Transportation & Distribution

Transportation & Distribution

- Our funding for public transit is the same as it was in the early 2000s
- NDOT currently has a \$530M annual budget shortfall
- Have to invest in public transportation to & from areas with affordable workforce housing
- Interstate 15: where possible, consider a designated lane for trucks
- Consider light rail for access to the colleges, universities, large employment centers, etc.

Theme: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Infrastructure improvements need to be accessible & equitably distributed
- Childcare & access to transportation: solving these is key to solving other problems down the line
- Need to do workforce building in diverse communities at the outset of projects
- Broadband & Wi-Fi are now critical components of education & daily life & are often considered as “critical infrastructure” especially for vulnerable communities

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (cont.)

- Housing

1. As a neighbor to California, combined with quickly declining land inventory in the Las Vegas Valley, Southern Nevada faces potentially critical challenges with having sufficient workforce housing
2. A contributor to this is the size of Southern Nevada's low wage workforce
3. Las Vegas is falling behind in addressing housing needs (single & multifamily housing) in a united way, including a coordinated infill strategy
4. The question of the proper "jobs-housing" strategy going forward is critical to effectively addressing residents' quality of life concerns

Theme: Conservation & the Environment

Conservation & the Environment

- Need to balance the water shortage acceleration with the need to create jobs
- Construction materials used in infrastructure development affect the heat we experience; include urban reforestation in discussions of infrastructure
- Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (“BRIC”) funding for “resilient infrastructure” is available, particularly for underserved communities

Conservation & the Environment (cont.)

- “Good conservation goes hand in hand with good planning & smart economic growth.”
- Sustainable & resilient economic growth will require a combination of technology & creative conservation practices

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