



BLUE ZONES[®]

**ASSESSMENT, READINESS,
AND FEASIBILITY REPORT**

City of Coachella
Riverside County, CA

April 2023

Thank You

We want to thank Riverside University Health System - Public Health for partnering with us in this assessment. We applaud them in their ongoing commitment to improving well-being in Riverside County by bringing the best innovations to the region. We also want to acknowledge the support of our assessment contributors, who share our vision of a healthier, happier future for Riverside County.

Ben Leedle, CEO Blue Zones



Anne Mayer

Executive Director
Riverside County
Transportation Committee



Cindy Roth

Former CEO
Greater Riverside
Chamber of Commerce



Columbus Batiste

Chief of Cardiology
Kaiser Permanente



Conrado Barzaga (Dr.)

CEO
Desert Healthcare
District & Foundation



David Brinkman

Executive Director
DAP Health



Dayne Brassard

CEO
Tilden-Coil
Construction



Diana Fox

Executive Director
Reach Out



Edward Coronado

Advisor to Mayor:
Policy and Advocacy
City of Riverside



Edwin Gomez (Dr.)

Superintendent
Riverside County
Office of Education



Gabriel Martin (Dr.)

City Manager
City of Coachella



Geoff Kors

Former Mayor
City of Palm Springs



Jarrod McNaughton

Chief Executive Officer
Inland Empire
Health Plan (IEHP)



Jeff Van Wagenen

Chief Executive Officer
Riverside County -
Executive Office



Jennifer Cruikshank

Chief Executive Officer
RUHS Medical
Center



Jodie Wingo

President &
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Association
Inland Southern Region



Lauren Bruggemans

Director of Sustainability &
Community Engagement
Palm Springs Convention
& Visitor Center



Linda Evans

Chief Strategy Officer
Community Advocacy for
Desert Care Network



Lisa Wright

President
Inland SoCal United
Way, 211+ Connect IE



Mark Wolfson

Chair & Professor
UC Riverside



Martin (Marty) Massiello

President &
Chief Executive Officer
Eisenhower Health



Michele Finney

CEO
Desert Regional
Medical Center



Rafael Guzman

Assistant City Manager
City of Riverside



Rusty Bailey

Former Mayor
City of Riverside



Silvia Paz

Executive Director
Alianza



Tom Dolan

Executive Director
Inland Congregations
United for Change



Wes Winter

Executive Director
Mizell Center



Zareh Sarrafian

Assistant CEO
RUHS



**Riverside
County -
Steering
Committee**



**BLUE ZONES®
ACTIVATE**



Activate Coachella Keynote — December 7, 2022

Activate Coachella - By the Numbers

KEYNOTE EVENT



36

key community stakeholder attendees

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/
SCHOOLS FOCUS GROUPS



11

individuals engaged

POLICY FOCUS GROUPS



42

individuals engaged

How to read this report:

The report is divided into the following sections:

- The Executive Summary contains a high-level look at our major findings and recommendations.
- The next section outlines the Blue Zones approach to community well-being transformation.
- The next three sections provide detailed findings and recommendations for the Policy, Places, and People sectors we explored.
- The last section is the Appendix with additional data, references, policy scans, and other supplemental information.

This report builds upon what we have learned from Riverside. It is not exhaustive of what is going on in all these arenas, but an assessment of the feasibility of applying the Blue Zones model to Riverside.

The complete report on Riverside County, including detailed findings and recommendations at the county level, can be found in the Appendix of this report.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 8

THE BLUE ZONES MODEL

What is Blue Zones 16

- Power 9.....17
- Life Radius..... 19

What We Do 20

- The Blue Zones Approach..... 20
- Transformation is Possible24
- Value Delivered and Measured25
- Well-Being Imperative26

THE STATE OF WELL-BEING IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

What is Well-Being? 30

The State of Well-Being in Riverside County32

Well-Being Driver Analysis..... 48

POLICY

Built Environment56

Food Environment..... 96

Alcohol.....124

Tobacco143

PLACES

Schools.....148

Worksites162

Restaurants168

Grocery Stores172

PEOPLE

Civic & Faith-Based Organizations178

APPENDIX

Riverside County Assessment188

- Built Environment188
- Food Environment.....202
- Tobacco Policy.....214
- Worksites240
- Health Equity.....254
- Media266

Value Brief270

Meet Our Team.....280



Executive Summary

Coachella is a beautiful desert city with a rich agricultural history and vibrant community.

Agriculture, outdoor recreation, art and culture, and a strong community spirit make Coachella unique.

Coachella is a diverse and vibrant city located in Riverside County, known for its natural beauty and agricultural history. The city is surrounded by a stunning landscape, including the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, the Salton Sea, and several national parks and wilderness areas. This makes the city a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts, with opportunities for hiking, camping, golfing, and more.

Home to some of the world's most productive agricultural areas, Coachella is a major producer of citrus, grapes, bell peppers, and 95% of the nation's dates. Coachella has a diverse population, with 97% of the population being of Latino decent. This is reflected in the city's vibrant arts and culture scene, and events like the Mariachi Festival and the Día de los Muertos celebration. The city has invested in public infrastructure and parks, providing residents with a strong sense of place and a variety of community gathering places. Coachella's unique blend of culture, history, natural beauty, and economic vitality make it a special place to live.

However, like many cities, Coachella also faces challenges such as high rates of food insecurity, financial stress, lack of affordable housing, and limited access to healthy food and healthcare. These challenges mean Coachella is plagued by the same U.S. well-being trends that threaten the health and prosperity of many Americans. According to Gallup, 1 in 2 are struggling with their health, 3 in 4 are obese or overweight, and 3 in 5 experience regular financial stress.

These well-being shortcomings are not only causing needless suffering for the people in Coachella, they are also costing countless billions in lost productivity, absenteeism, and healthcare costs. We estimate that over the next ten years, Riverside County could save about \$139 million with a coordinated comprehensive effort.

*See Appendix for full Value Brief

The city is plagued by the same U.S. trends that threaten the health and prosperity of many Americans.

According to Gallup:



1 in 2 Coachella residents are struggling with their health



2 in 5 report they are not proud of their community



3 in 5 are experiencing regular financial stress

For the people of Coachella, everyone needs better access to the things that measurably improve well-being, including healthy food, transportation options, jobs, education, and safe places to gather with others. Everyone gains from creating a resilient, prosperous city where all residents have equitable access to opportunities and can contribute to the larger community and economy.

The people of Coachella and organizations like the Riverside University Health System are ready to jumpstart community transformation. A long-term, regional collective vision is foundational for success, and will allow the people and organizations working together to leverage and amplify each other's efforts over time.

Blue Zones help communities optimize their human-made surroundings so the healthy choice is not only the easy choice, but at times the unavoidable choice in the places and spaces people spend the most time. We achieve this by improving:

Policy

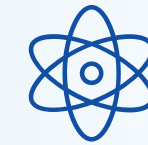
We've aggregated evidence-based policy "menus" that favor healthy food over junk food, walkability over increased traffic, the non-smoker over smokers, and a "sweetspot" for alcohol consumption that allows for a vibrant community with a minimum of misuse. Then, we help the city drive consensus around most feasible and effective policies. Finally, we ensure that the chosen policies are implemented.

Places

We administer a Blue Zones Approval Program that recognizes places that make it easy to help people eat less junk food, move naturally all day, smoke less, build strong social networks, and live out their lives with purpose. In five years, we aim to get 30% of all of the region's schools, grocery stores, restaurants, and workplaces Blue Zones Approved.

People

Our teams will help 15% of the adult population to optimize their homes for less mindless eating and more natural movement, upgrade their social circle so that they have at least five healthy friends they see regularly, and identify their life purpose and put it to work through volunteering. This perfect storm of healthy nudges and defaults sets people up for success as they move through their day.



Blue Zones brought a team of experts together during the assessment period, where we investigated conditions, talked to local stakeholders, ran focus groups across sectors, and dove deeply into data. To truly understand the community and its strengths and challenges, we try to understand it from as many angles as we can - from a bird's eye view to a data-centric view to close conversations with residents and neighbors. This process was the foundation for our community transformation plan centered around the Blue Zones philosophy of making healthy choices easier for everyone living in Coachella.

READINESS MEASUREMENT

Readiness is measured on a scale from 1-5 (low to high, respectively) and is a reflection of attendance of key leadership at events or one-on-one meetings, and overall community input during the assessment process.



SCORE:
4.5

CRITERIA: Alignment of community's current initiatives and strategic plans with Blue Zones

Both Coachella's past and current initiatives/strategic plans are in alignment with Blue Zones. From the past Clinton Health Matters Initiative and Building Healthy Communities Eastern Coachella Valley to the present meaningful work done by Alianza, there is evidence of a strong foundation and effort to improve the health, vitality and opportunities for everyone in the community. Furthermore, the City of Coachella's General Plan contains many health goals that are also in alignment with Blue Zones. Community leaders identified multiple opportunities for collaboration between Blue Zones and initiatives currently underway across Coachella.



SCORE:
4.0

CRITERIA: Leadership Support Across Sectors

Coachella leaders from schools, health care, worksites, civic and non-profit organizations, and human service organizations, demonstrated strong commitment and support for a Blue Zones transformation in Coachella. A number of these leaders attended community presentations and focus groups and were eager to share information and suggestions for alignment with Blue Zones.



SCORE:
4.0

CRITERIA: Governing Body Support and Continuity

Elected officials and supervisorial representatives who participated demonstrated support for a Blue Zones transformation in Coachella. In a next stage transformation, it will be important to build on this support and engage additional municipal leaders broadly.



SCORE:
5.0

CRITERIA: Well-Being Improvement

Key well-being indicators show that there is a high need across Coachella for a well-being transformation effort, such as a Blue Zones Project. This includes higher than average rates of obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and depression among other risks when compared to top performing MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) communities. By leveraging Blue Zones model for transformation, we believe there is an opportunity to positively impact these, and other, risks and improve well-being for all residents of Coachella.

The Blue Zones Approach

What is Blue Zones

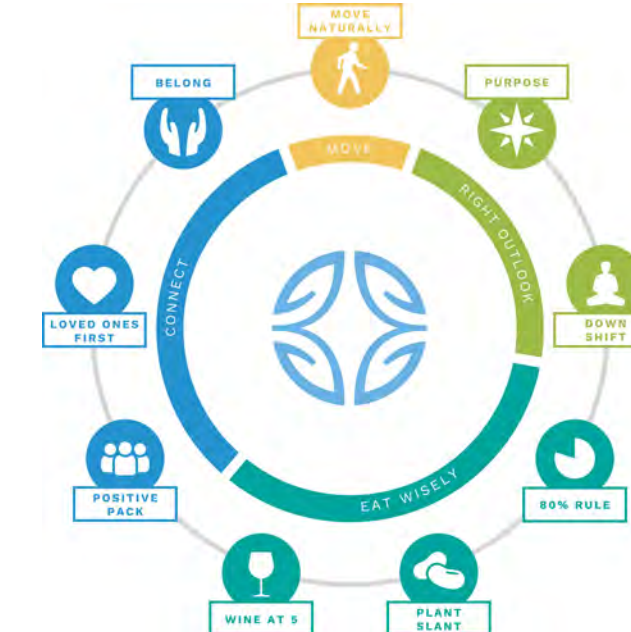
The Original Blue Zones

Places where people live measurably longer, healthier lives



Power 9®

Though the original blue zones are located across vastly different parts of the world, their residents share nine specific traits that lead to longer, healthier, and happier lives. We call these the Power 9®.



- 1. Move Naturally**
The world's longest-lived people are in environments that nudge them into moving without thinking about it.
- 2. Purpose**
Waking up in the morning knowing your purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy.
- 3. Down Shift**
Stress leads to chronic inflammation and is associated with every major age-related disease. The world's longest-lived people have routines that shed stress.
- 4. 80% Rule**
"Hara hachi bu"—the Okinawans say this mantra before meals as a reminder to stop eating when 80 percent full.
- 5. Plant Slant**
The cornerstone of most centenarian diets? Beans. They typically eat meat—mostly pork—only five times per month.
- 6. Wine at 5**
Moderate drinkers outlive non-drinkers, especially if they share those drinks with friends.
- 7. Positive Pack**
The world's longest-lived people chose or were born into social circles that support healthy behaviors.
- 8. Loved Ones First**
Centenarians put their families first. They keep aging parents and grandparents nearby, commit to a life partner and invest in their children.
- 9. Belong**
Attending faith-based services four times per month—no matter the denomination—adds up to 14 years of life expectancy.



Blue Zones Mission: We help people live better, longer by improving their environment.

Blue Zones focuses first on changing the human-made surroundings and systems that have such a big impact on our health instead of focusing on changing individual behaviors. We take an environmental approach to improving the health and well-being of entire communities by impacting the places and spaces people live, work, and play.

We focus on the Life Radius®, the 20-mile radius close to home where we spend 90% of our lives.



What We Do



The Blue Zones Approach

How can we improve all the places and spaces we spend the most time so that the healthy choice is the easiest choice?

In our work in communities, we improve the food environment and built environment to increase the availability and accessibility of healthy food and opportunities to walk, bike, and move. To reduce the culture of excessive drinking and the culture of smoking on the population level, we focus on policies to reduce the access and availability of alcohol and tobacco products. To improve the social environment and reduce loneliness, we help people find ways to connect, give back, and find their purpose.

We weave together a set of complementary strategies that are multi-faceted and multi-level and target the entire community — we use policy as the biggest lever to create positive change, but we also reach into all the places people live, work, learn, worship and play.

We use Gallup’s Well-Being Data to inform our work. Well-being includes not just physical health, but also social, financial, community, and career health. You can predict someone’s life expectancy and health status based on their zip code, and this “Zip Code Effect” shows wide health disparities exist.

These disparities affect well-being and quality of life but also cost billions of dollars in terms of unnecessary healthcare costs and lost productivity. The interconnectedness of our health to that of our neighbors has never been more clear, and we believe that communities can bridge glaring gaps with a community-wide initiative that combines macroscale policies and micro-level grassroots action.

Community Collaboration

An essential component to Blue Zones is meeting the community where they are. **A Blue Zones Project is not something that is “done” to a community, but rather in full collaboration with the community.** From hiring the local team directly from the community to hosting design charrettes to dedicated staff specifically for community engagement, the Blue Zones process is grounded on collaborating, listening, and learning from residents, stakeholders, and leaders within the neighborhoods.



In our work in over 70 communities in America, we’ve demonstrated a measurable ability to increase levels of physical activity and the consumption of healthy food over junk food. We’ve seen smoking, obesity, and loneliness decline. We are good at helping people find their purpose and put that purpose to work. All of these factors have a measurable impact on people’s well-being. We work with the world’s top experts, use the science of well-being, and find deep engagement at the community level. We build a collective vision with people and leaders to drive consensus around policies that will be most effective and feasible in creating a healthier and happier population.

We test rigorously, innovate relentlessly, and use evidence-strategies to improve health at a population level. The result is that people improve their lives and strengthen their community at the same time.

Since we began work in 2014, the largest gains in well-being came among those who needed it the most. Neighborhoods and sectors of Fort Worth whose residents showed the highest well-being disparities in 2014 now show the greatest gains in well-being. Higher risk populations have lower health outcomes and higher-than-average rates of healthcare costs; this significant achievement comes at a time when most cities in the U.S. see widening gaps in health disparities.



Fort Worth moved from **185th to 31st healthiest in the nation** since launch of Blue Zones Project.



Physical activity is **up 16.8 percent since 2014.**



\$9.9M funding secured for built environment policies and infrastructure projects and **\$656k secured for community and school gardens.**



Transformation is Possible

In 2009, Blue Zones worked in partnership with the AARP and the United Health Foundation to apply the Power 9 principles to Albert Lea, Minnesota.

It worked: After just one year, participants added an estimated 2.9 years to their average lifespan, while health care claims for city workers dropped 49 percent.

Blue Zones has since expanded to 71 communities across the United States and Canada, impacting millions of people.

At Blue Zones, we transform communities. Applying the principles of the world's longest lived people, we are pioneers in creating big picture change through altering environments — the places where people live, work, learn, and play. Rather than a siloed approach that concentrates on specific challenges, we represent a paradigm shift to a focus on root causes, not just the symptoms. We help re-engineer environments and cultures to make the healthy choice the easy choice and measurably improve the well-being of entire populations.



BLUE ZONES™

“...the biggest healthy living experiment in America.”
— DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Value Delivered and Measured

Transforming communities takes time, but every step of the way adds value. Blue Zones rigorously measures this value throughout the entire process so that change is not just felt, but proven. Our work is quantifiable through three levels of meaningful impact:

Reduction in lifestyle risks

Well-being isn't just an idea. It's calculable. We measure risk reduction with the Gallup Well-Being Index® and survey elements tied to overall well-being improvement and Blue Zones interventions.

Movement in community prioritized metrics

This isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. Your community has its own unique challenges and concerns, and a Blue Zones activation is tailored to make them a priority. We work with community leadership to identify and track community-specific metrics utilizing available data sources.

Media interest

Working with Blue Zones is a partnership with a global brand, respected for our pioneering longevity research and groundbreaking work transforming communities in America. Media interest in our work becomes media interest in your work, helping you generate support and secure grant funding for your project.

The New York Times



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



Well-Being Imperative

The Economy of Well-Being is defined as the ‘capacity to create a virtuous circle in which citizens’ well-being drives economic prosperity, stability and resilience, and vice-versa.’

**ANGEL GURRIA,
OECD SECRETARY GENERAL**

In February of 2021, consulting firm Deloitte released a new report that predicted healthcare spending as a percentage of GDP would decelerate over the next 20 years. **They expect healthcare spending to grow to \$8.3 trillion by 2040, which is \$3.5 less than the current federal government estimate.** The discrepancy is what they call a “well-being dividend,” or the return on investment for tools, systems, or protocols that help consumers to take an active role in their health and well-being.”



In January of 2021, the Office of the Surgeon General and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a Community Health and Economic Prosperity report. The first of its kind, it raises awareness to business leaders of the advantage of investing in community health for the health of their businesses and the health of their economy. It shows that the return on investment in community well-being is economic development which means more prosperity and happiness for individuals, organizations, and the community at large.

By 2040, 60% of healthcare spending will go to improving health and well-being.

DELOITTE CONSULTING

The State of Well-Being in Riverside County

“Our well-being and that of our families and community is what matters. Creating the best possible conditions for well-being is not just the right thing to do philosophically, but it is also the smart thing to do since happier individuals are more pro-social, more productive, and live longer and healthier lives.”

— Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, Economist and Professor, Oxford University

What is Well-Being?



Well-being is about how we are doing as individuals and communities and, in turn, how that makes us feel about the way our lives are going.



Why Does Well-Being Matter?

Our well-being and that of our families and community is what ultimately matters



A recent large-scale survey shows that **over three quarters (78%) of people globally now feel strongly that happiness and well-being should be prioritized** over money.*



This demand for change is being championed by the younger members of our society, with the 25-34-year-old age group representing the highest percentage of responses in favor of change.

*Unilever Wall's 2020 Happiness Research
https://www.unilever.com/Images/walls-manifesto_tcm244-558473_en.pdf

Most policy-makers underestimate that creating the best possible conditions for well-being is not just the right thing to do philosophically, but that it is also the smart thing to do since happier individuals live longer and healthier lives, are more pro-social, more productive, and also show greater support for incumbent government leaders.

The State of Well-Being in Riverside County



The goal of this work is to help us identify policies that are most likely to improve the happiness of the people of Riverside.

Understanding & Mapping Life Satisfaction in Riverside County

For this assessment, we teamed up with Oxford University and Gallup to understand both what seems to make people in Riverside most happy and what specific policies are most likely to increase happiness and life satisfaction. The goal of this work is to help us identify policies that are most likely to improve the happiness of the people of Riverside.

Over the past decade, Gallup has surveyed Americans to determine their life satisfaction and what characteristics most drive that satisfaction. We know from this work that the happiest Americans are socializing more than six to seven hours per day, that people who sleep less than six hours a day are 30% less happy than people who sleep at least eight hours, and that obese people are 11% less happy than similar people of normal weight.

Our experts have analyzed the Gallup Well-Being Data for Riverside County to determine what seems to be most driving life satisfaction and day-to-day happiness in this community. While health, city, community, safety, and work are all important for happiness everywhere, we are able to discern their relative importance. Knowing this will help policymakers decide what policies should provide the most happiness for Riverside.

The primary measure for wellbeing asks survey respondents to evaluate the quality of their life. This is normally done by asking respondents to rate their life satisfaction on a scale from 0 to 10.

Survey respondents evaluate their life as follows:

“Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?”

Secondary measures for well-being also survey optimism as well as positive and negative emotions.

“On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now? ”

“Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about _____?” (well-rested, smile or laugh, enjoyment, etc)

“Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about _____?” (physical pain, worry, stress, sadness, etc

Best possible life for you



Worst possible life for you



Data Source

01

Between 2009-18

All data analyses in this report draw on the Gallup daily poll which ran between 2009-18

02

N=16,829 surveys

We look at Riverside County as the main geographic unit of interest in our principal analyses

03

N=29,082 surveys

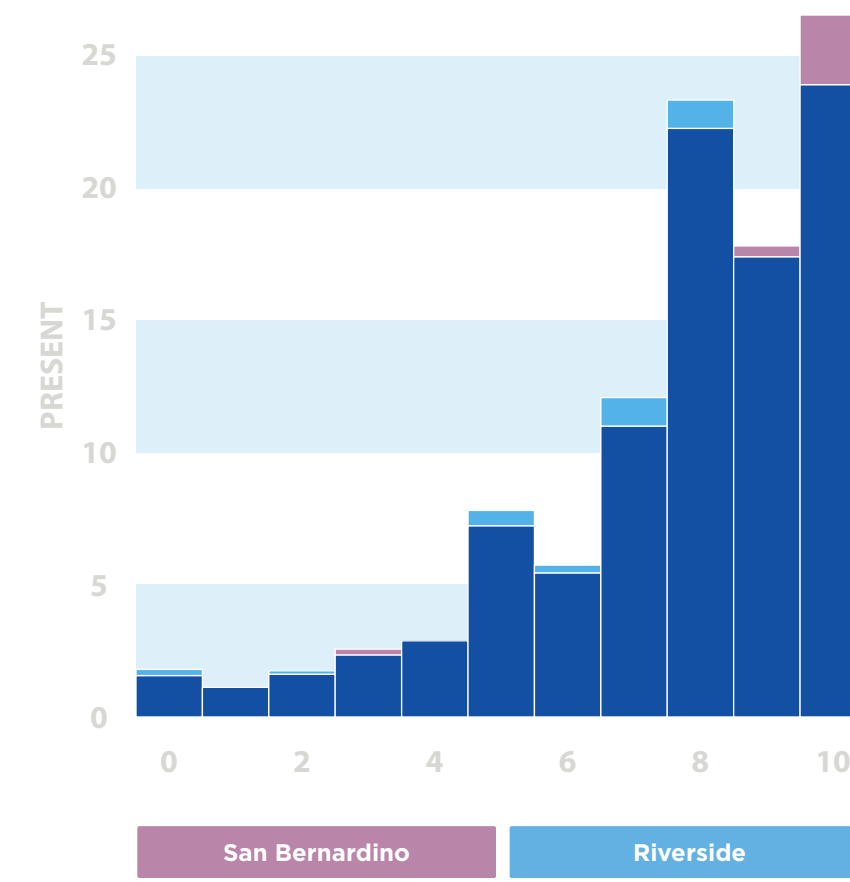
We also compare San Bernardino MSA to Riverside County in some analyses

Well-Being in Riverside County

Life Satisfaction

Average well-being in Riverside County is **7.02 out of 10**.

This is above **San Bernardino (6.95)**, but below average for **California (7.09)** and the **USA (7.07)**.

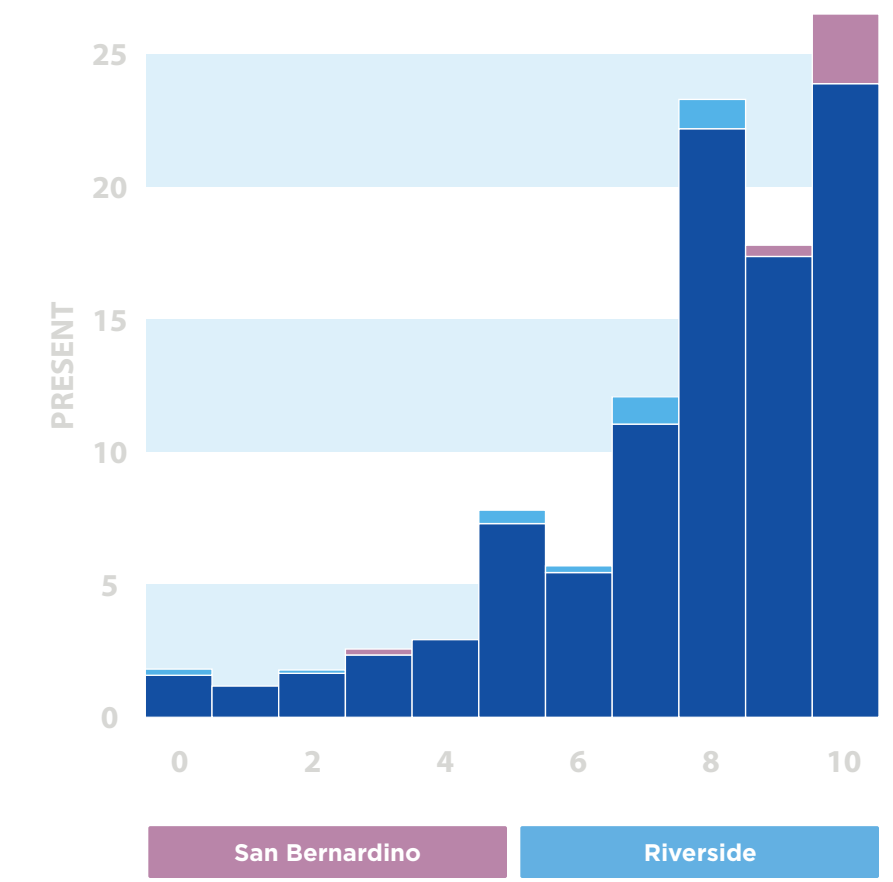


Optimism in Riverside County

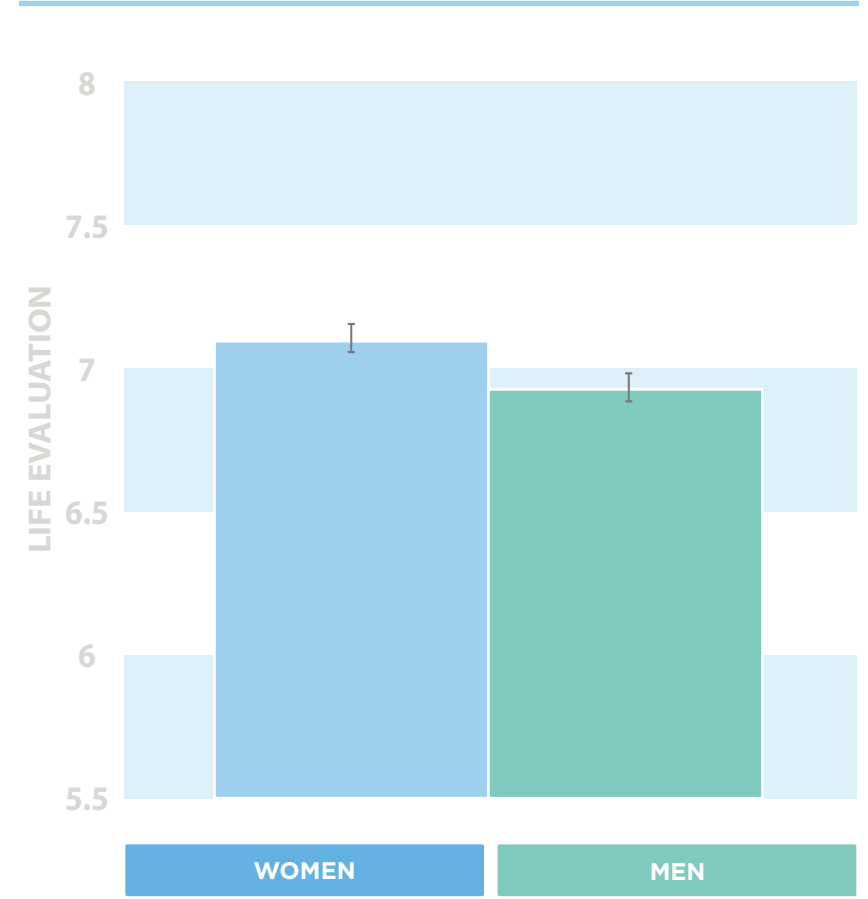
Life Satisfaction in 5 Years

Average expected well-being in Riverside County is **7.62 out of 10**.

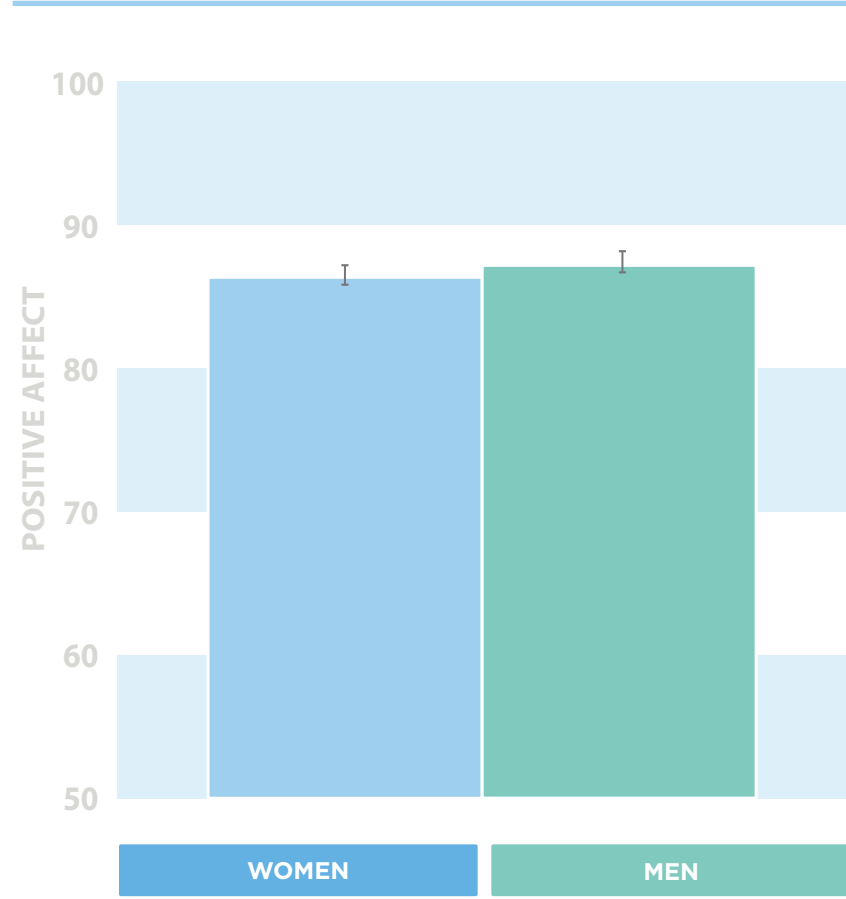
This is slightly below **San Bernardino (7.73)**, **California (7.70)**, but above the **USA average (7.56)**.



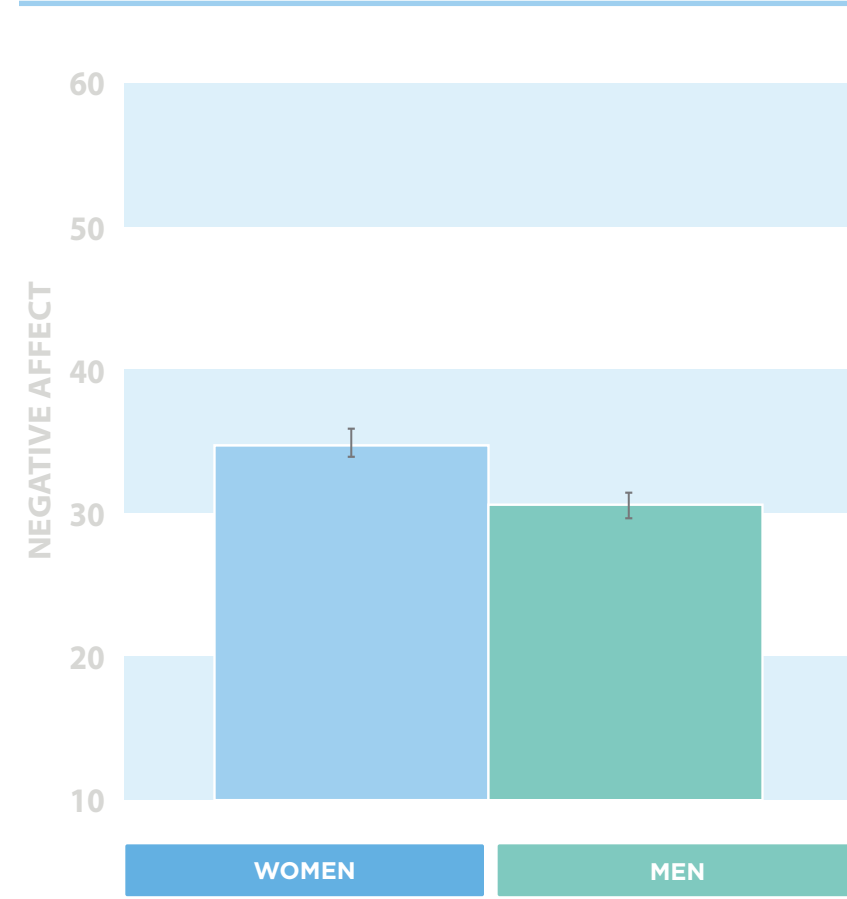
Well-Being by Gender



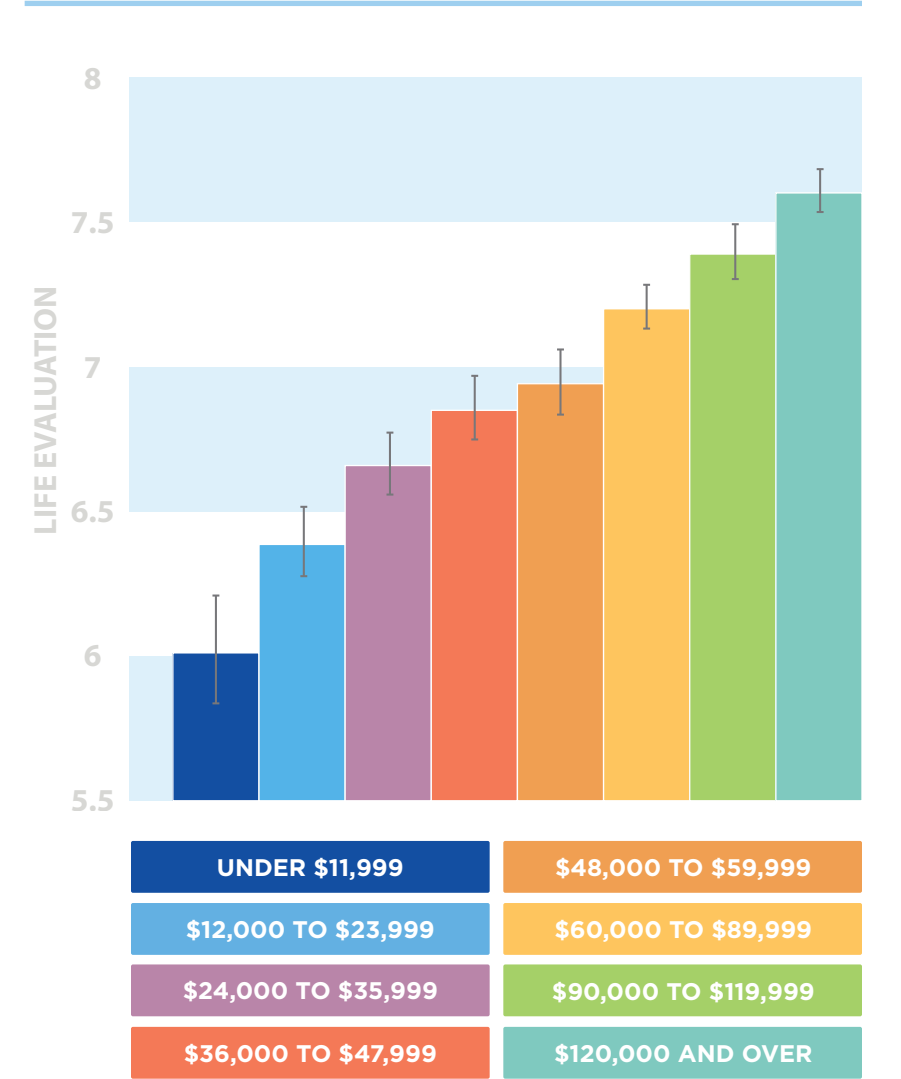
Positive Emotions by Gender



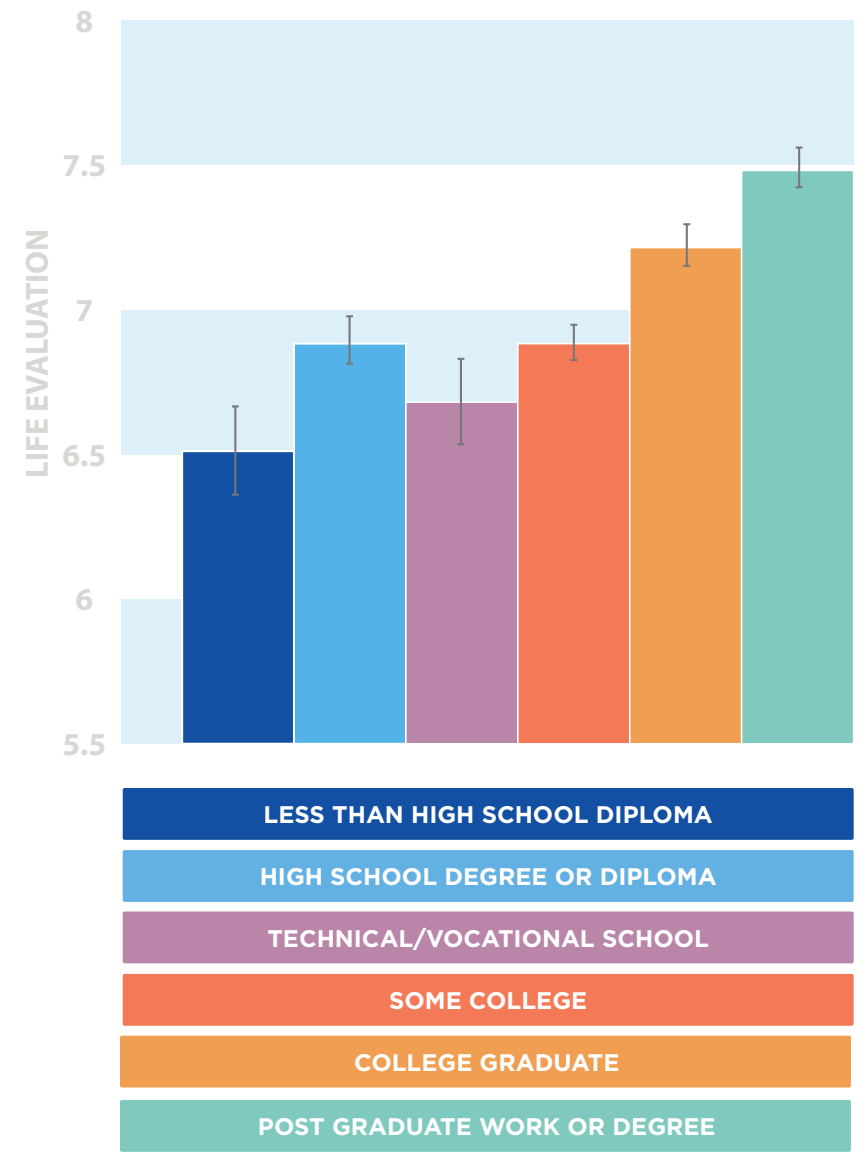
Negative Emotions by Gender



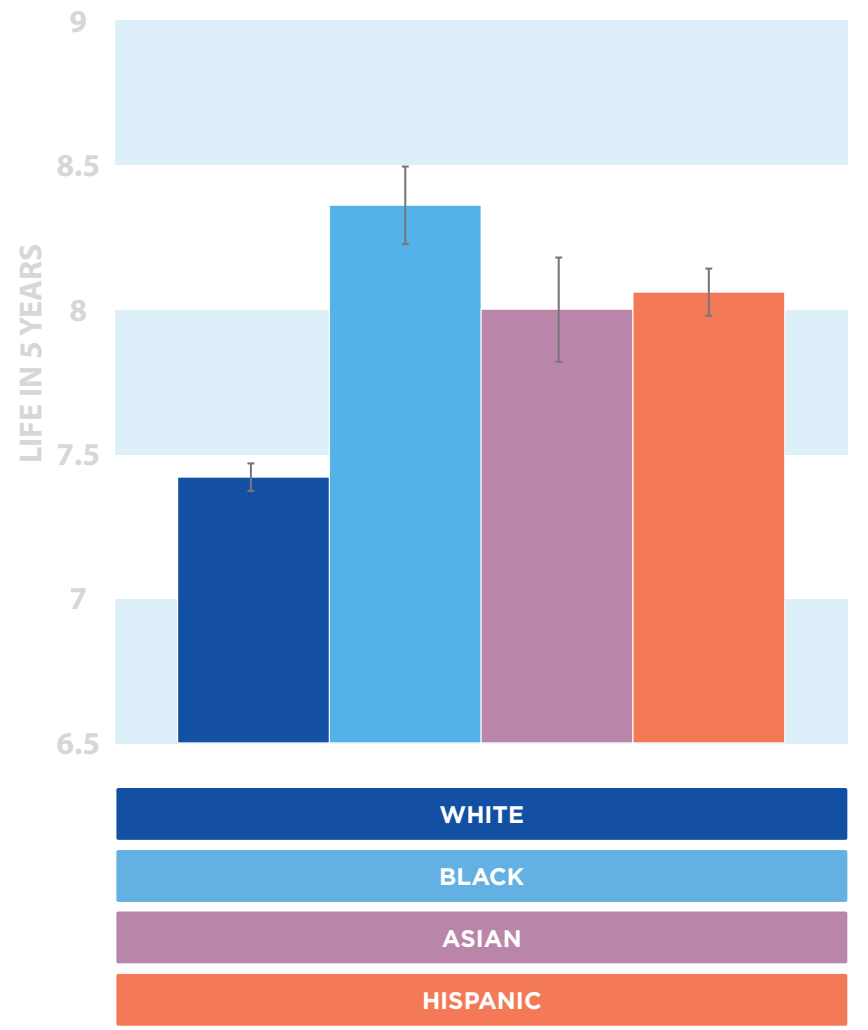
Well-Being by Income



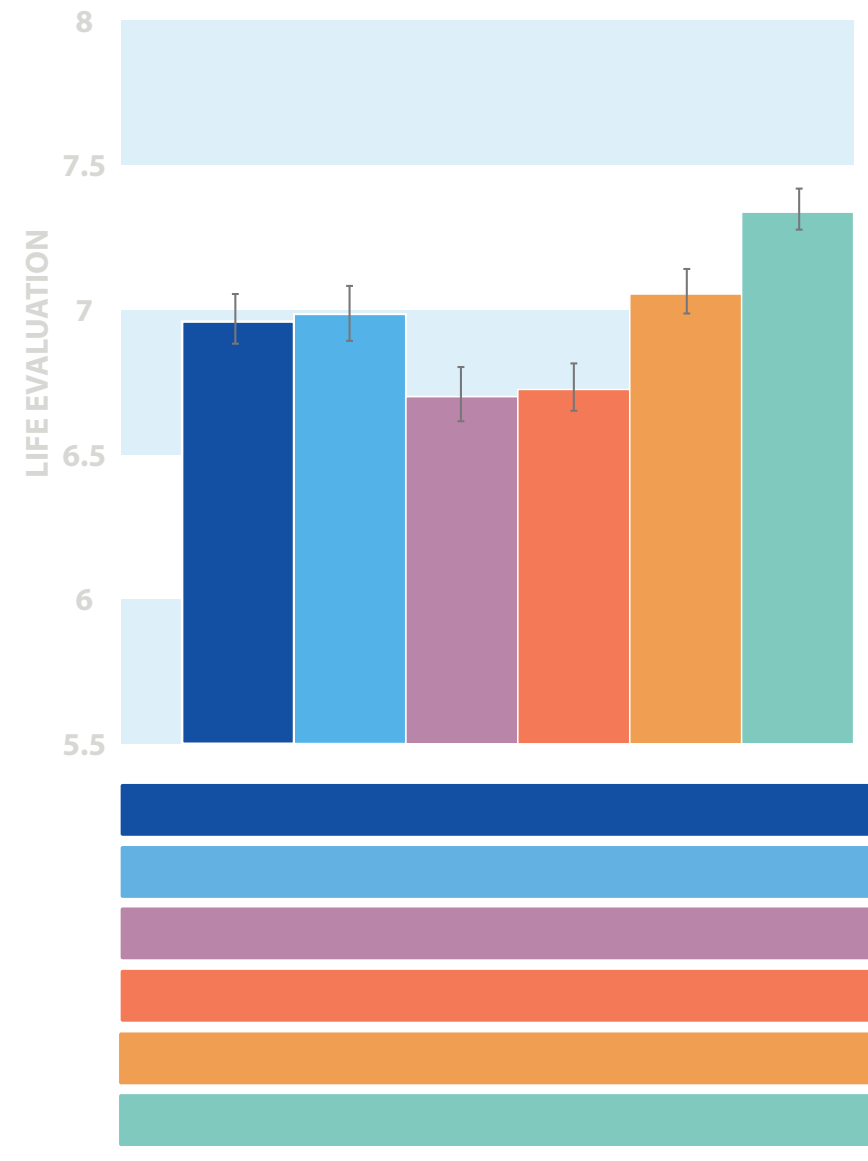
Well-Being by Education



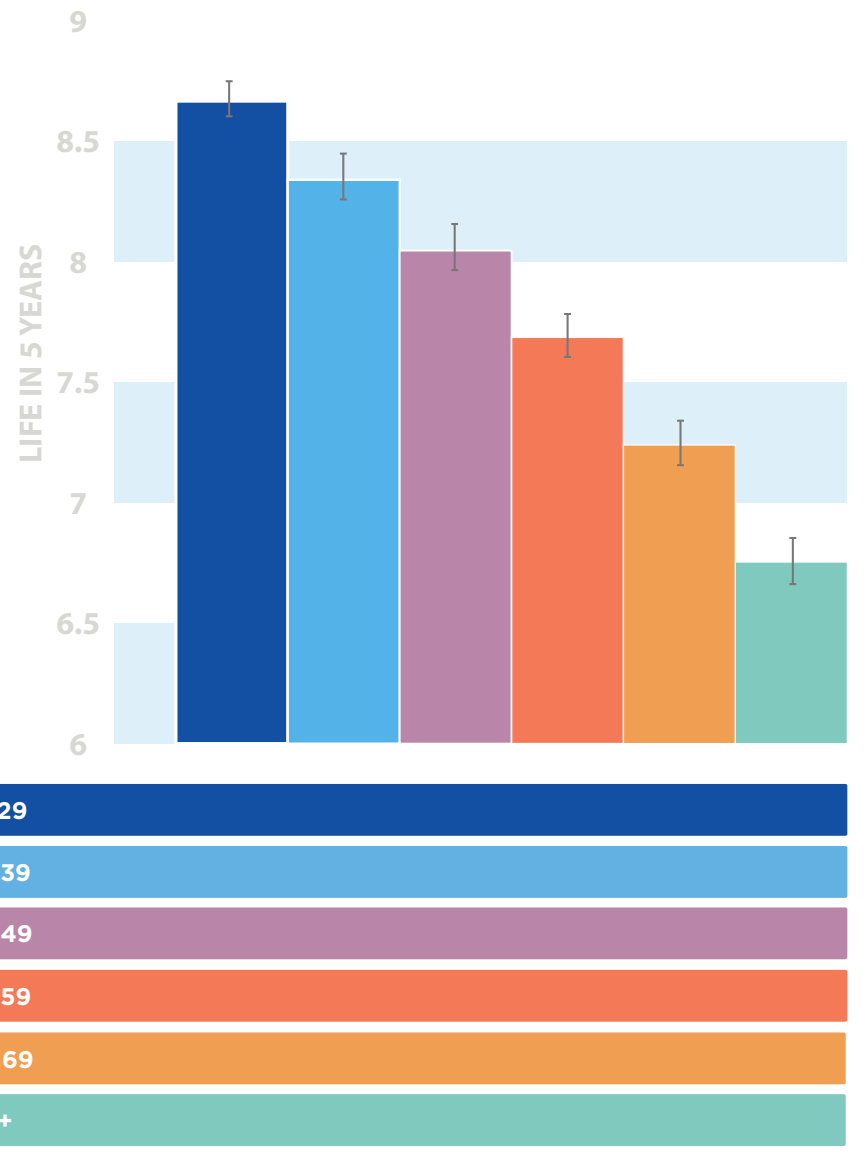
Optimism by Racial Differences



Well-Being by Age



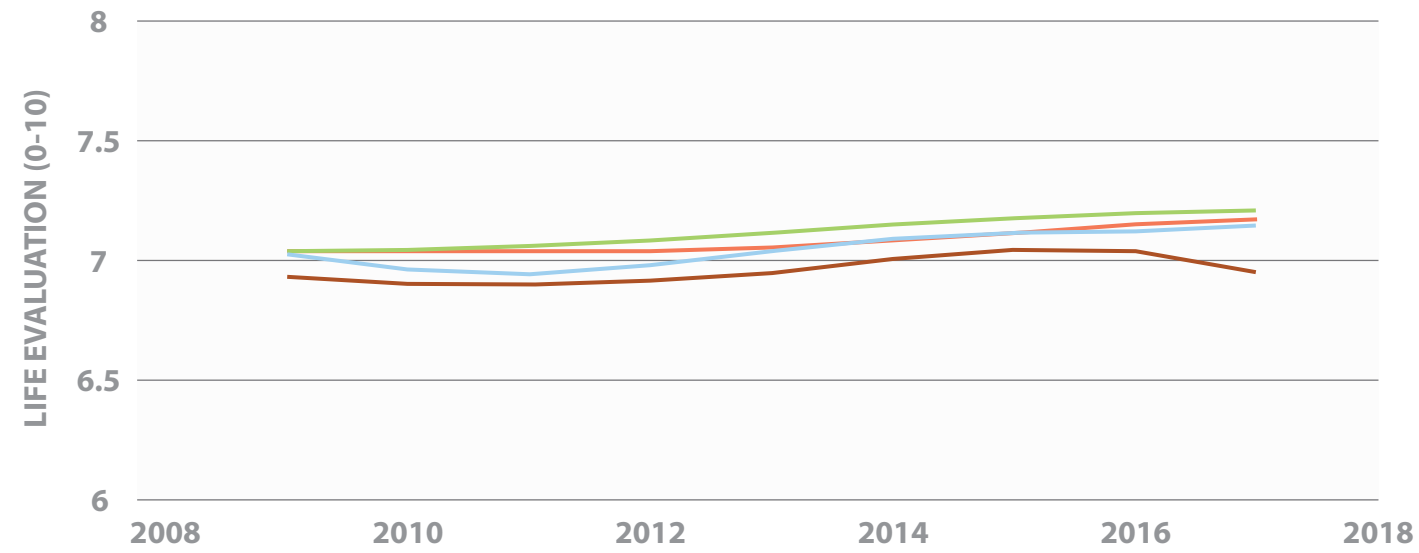
Optimism by Age



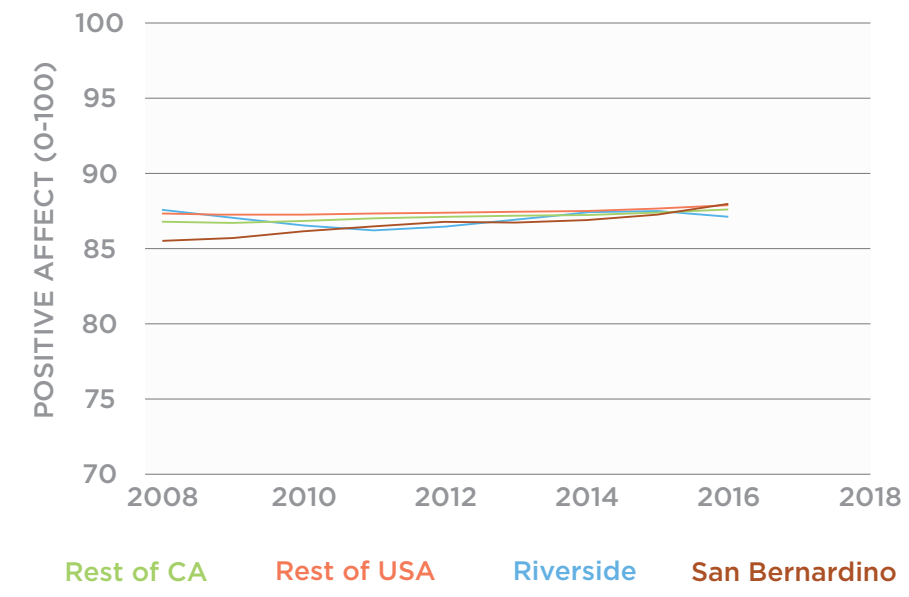
Well-Being Over Time

- Rest of CA
- Rest of USA
- Riverside
- San Bernardino

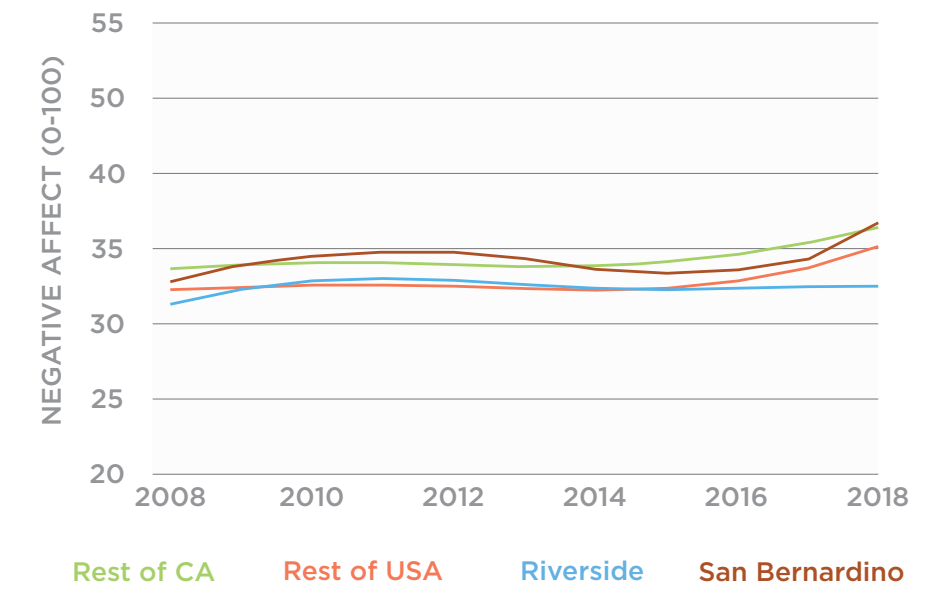
Life Evaluation Over Time



Positive Emotions Over Time

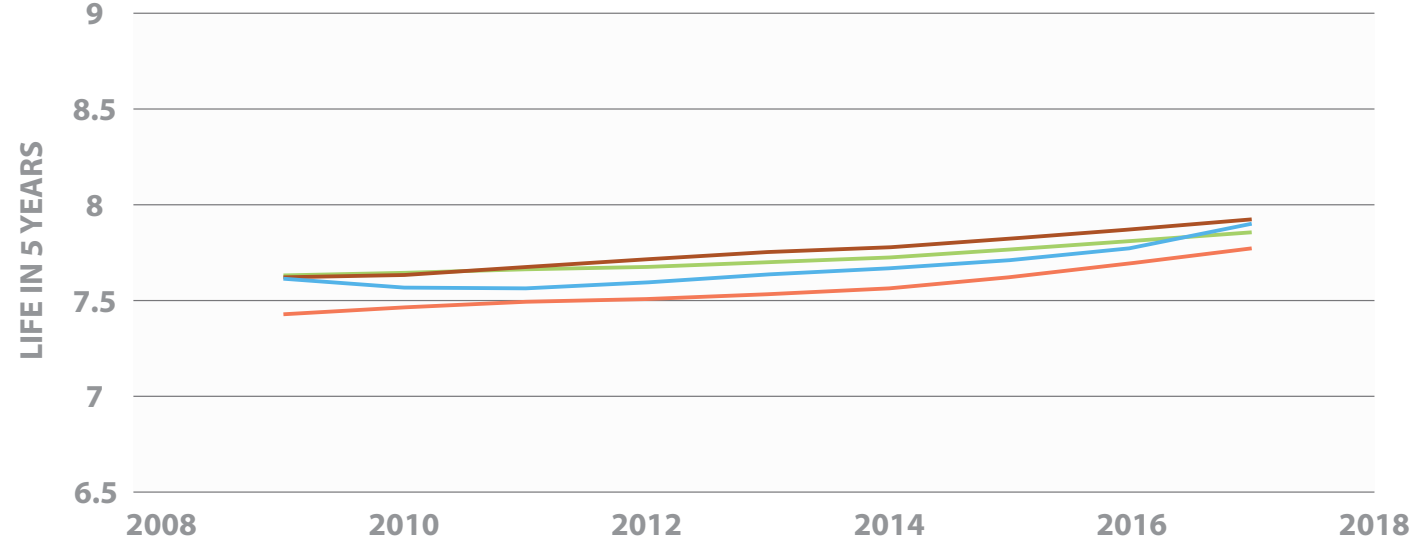


Negative Emotions Over Time



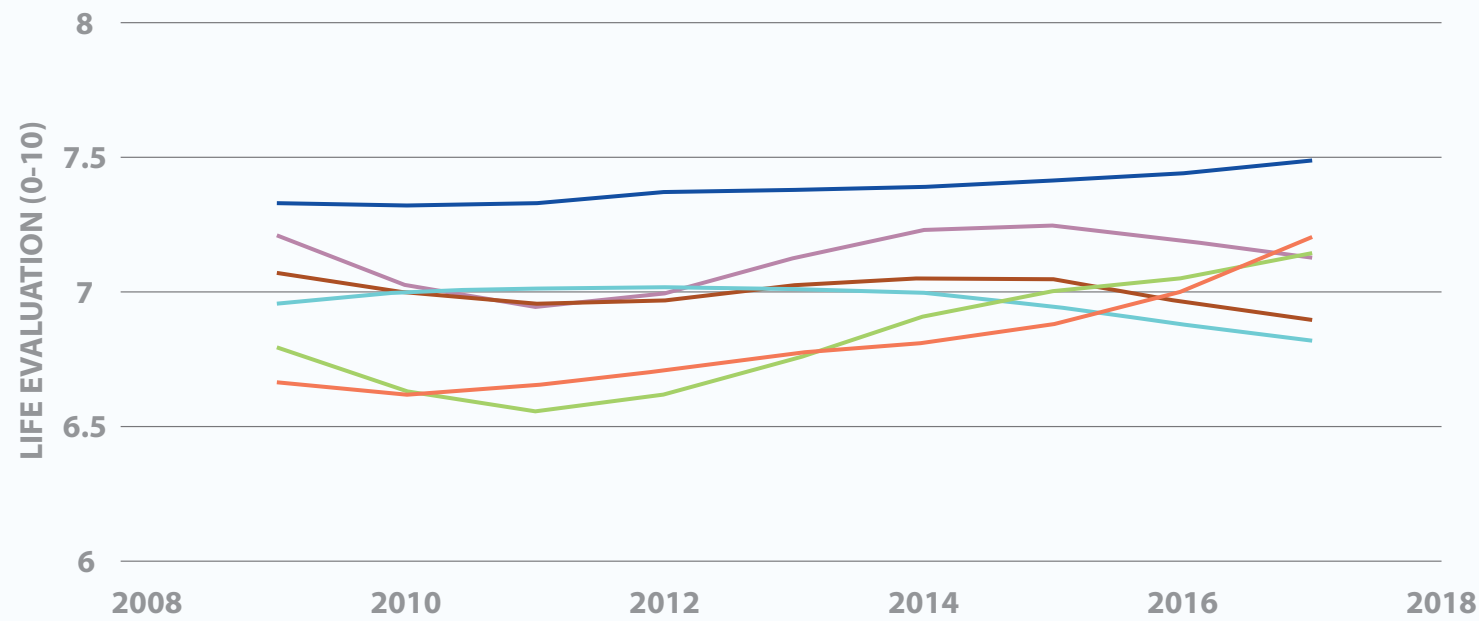
Optimism Over Time

- Rest of CA
- San Bernardino
- Riverside
- Rest of USA



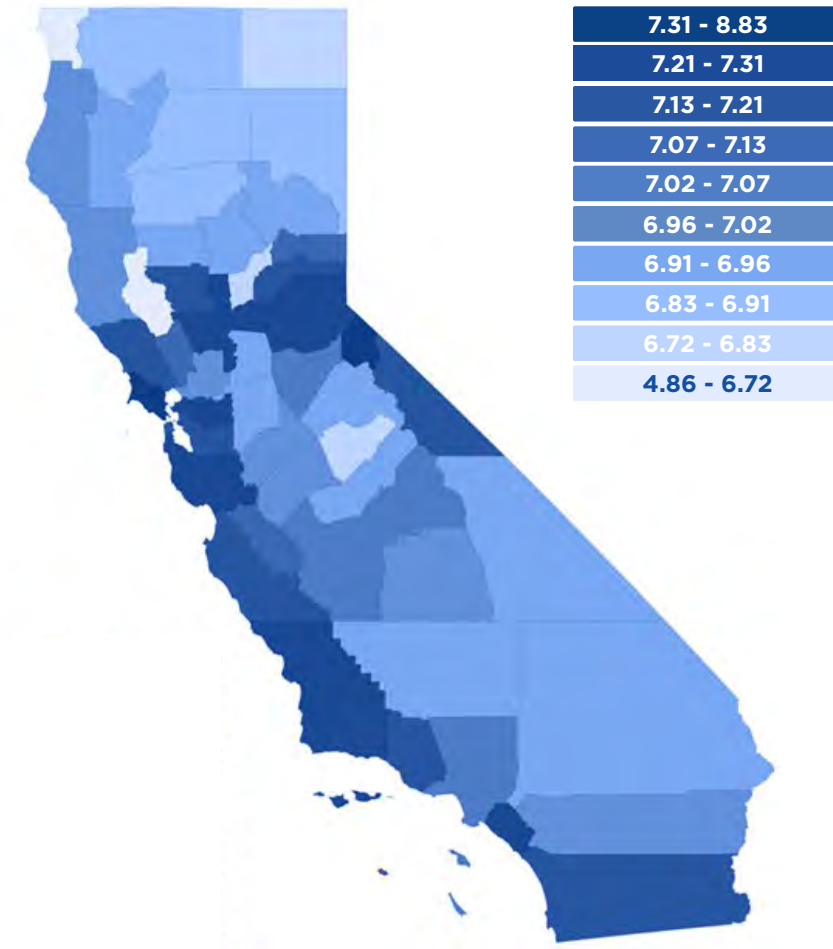
Well-Being Over Time by Age

- 70+
- 60 - 69
- 30 - 39
- 18 - 29
- 40 - 49
- 50 - 59



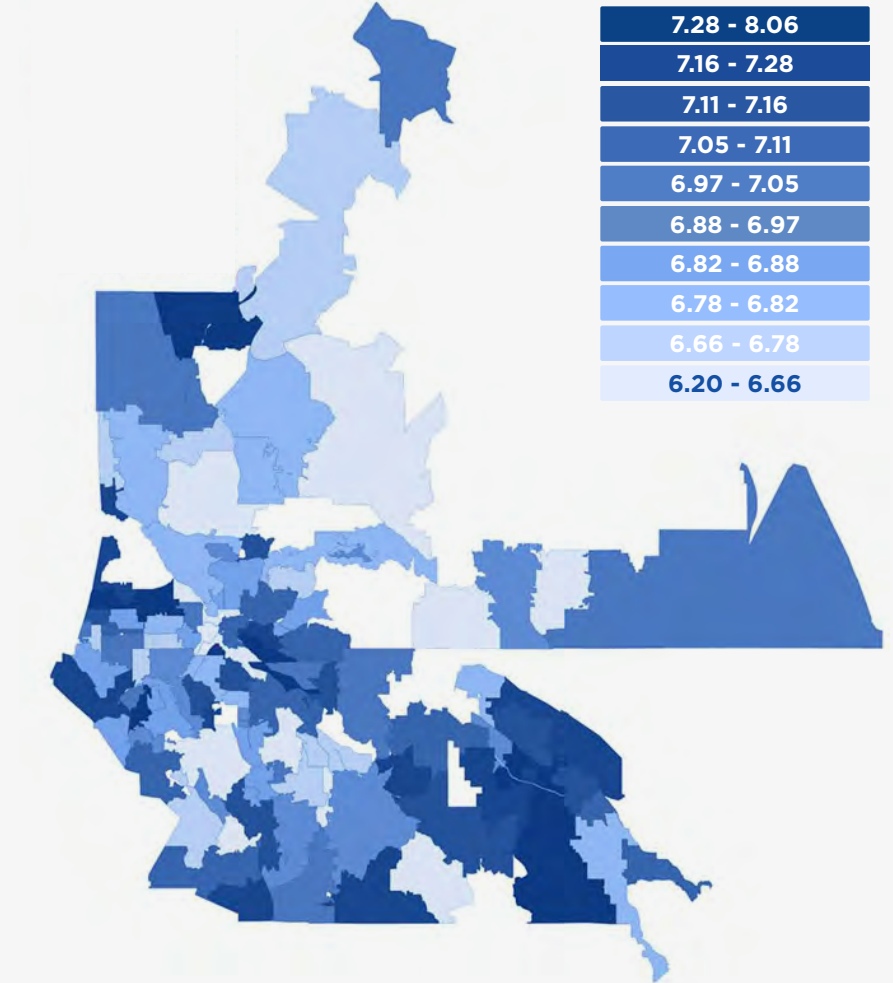
Mapping Well-Being

Mapping Well-Being in California



Mapping Well-Being in Riverside County - San Bernardino MSA

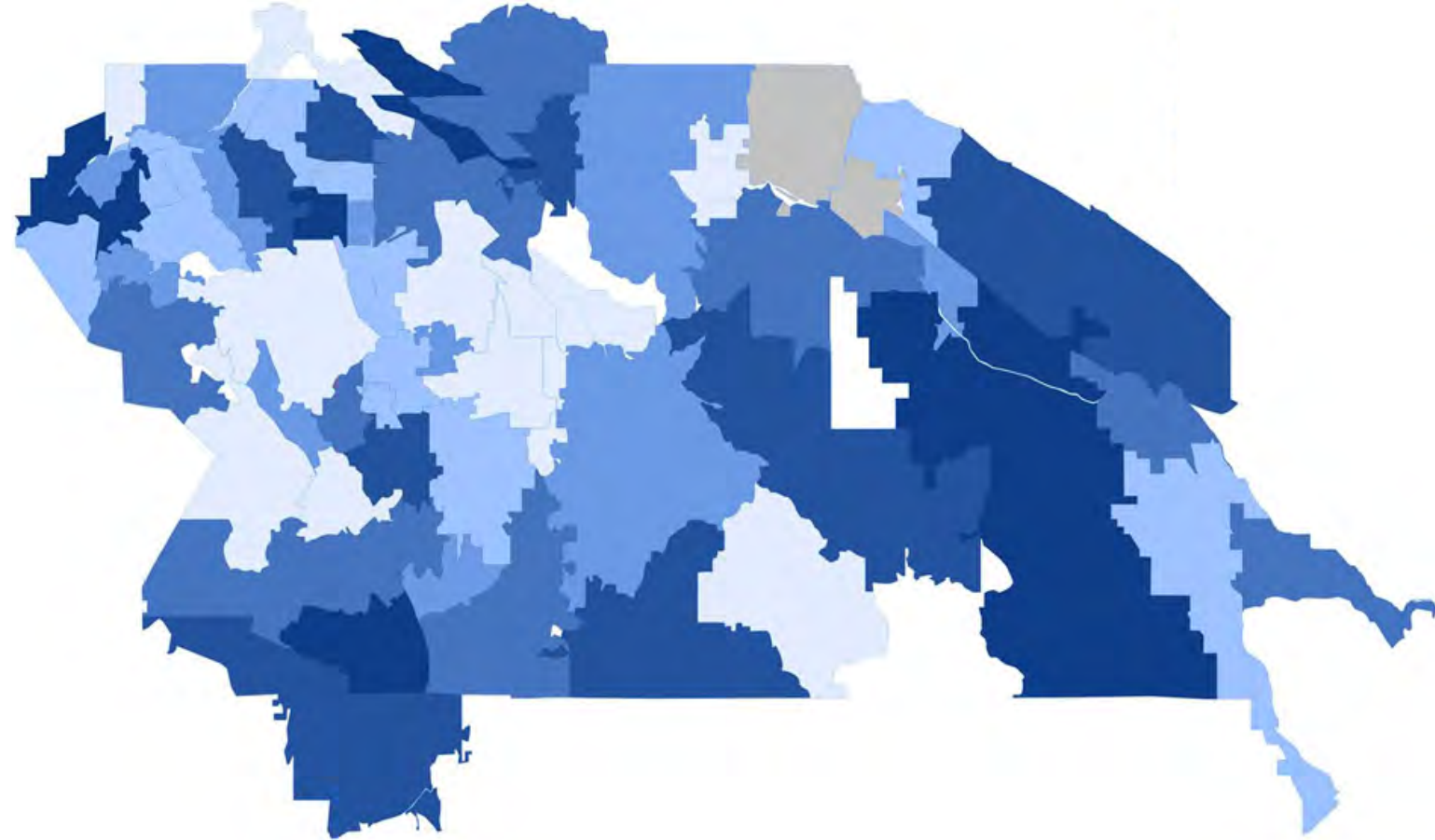
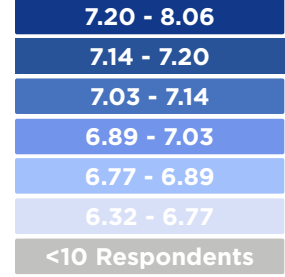
LIFE SATISFACTION



Mapping Well-Being

Mapping Well-Being in Riverside County

LIFE SATISFACTION

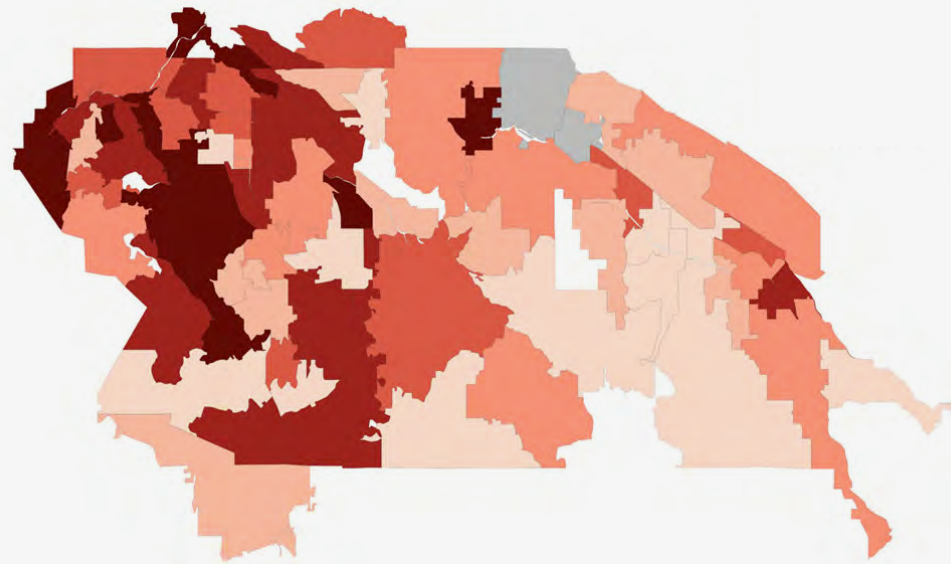
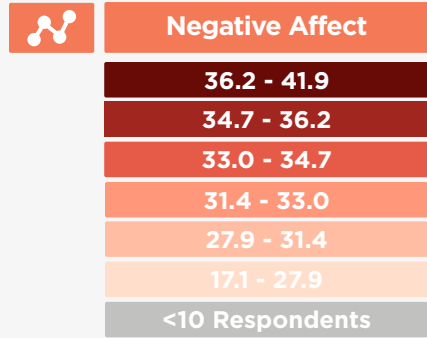
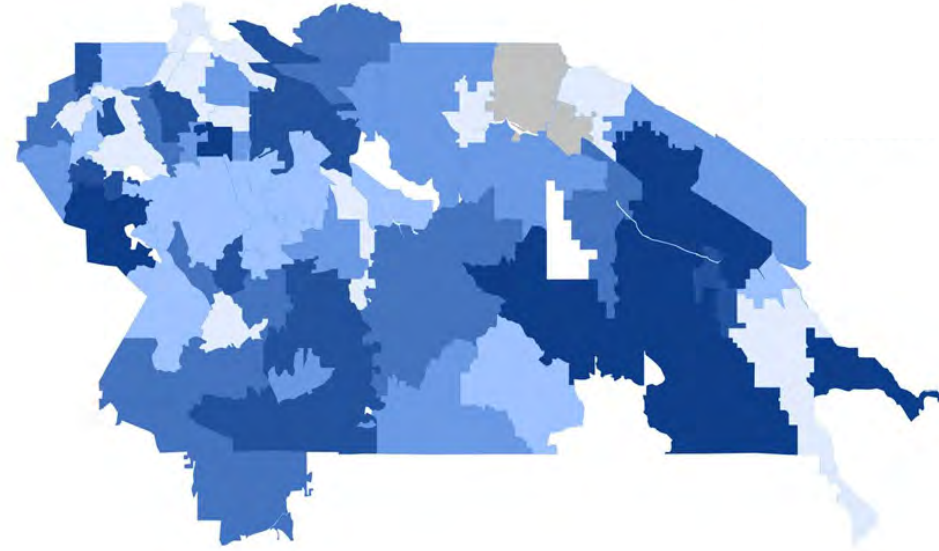
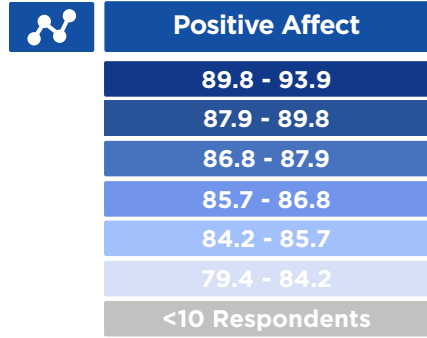


Mapping Well-Being in Riverside County

ZIP	BZ Community	Life Sat	Life in 5Y	Neg Aff	Pos Aff	Sample
92210	Rest of County	8.06	7.58	0.17	0.93	73
92518	Rest of County	8.00	8.00	0.27	0.92	15
92270	Rest of County	7.82	7.43	0.22	0.90	247
92211	Rest of County	7.53	7.35	0.24	0.91	368
92253	Rest of County	7.36	7.46	0.28	0.88	375
92373	Rest of County	7.34	7.75	0.35	0.90	355
92879	Corona	7.28	8.15	0.30	0.86	208
92260	Rest of County	7.26	7.28	0.25	0.91	358
92880	Corona	7.24	8.16	0.39	0.87	257
92264	Palm Springs	7.23	7.32	0.31	0.87	264
92590	Rest of County	7.21	7.67	0.36	0.88	47
92536	Rest of County	7.20	7.67	0.25	0.87	44
92549	Rest of County	7.18	7.60	0.30	0.88	61
92508	City of Riverside	7.17	7.83	0.38	0.87	212
92241	Palm Springs	7.17	7.75	0.33	0.86	76
92506	City of Riverside	7.16	7.78	0.34	0.89	439
92561	Palm Springs	7.16	7.71	0.26	0.91	36
92276	Rest of County	7.16	7.71	0.28	0.94	71
92584	Rest of County	7.15	7.81	0.30	0.87	242
92203	Rest of County	7.15	7.61	0.33	0.91	208
92223	Banning	7.15	7.72	0.26	0.87	349
92557	City of Riverside	7.15	7.90	0.33	0.86	298
92028	Rest of County	7.15	7.44	0.31	0.87	438
92201	Rest of County	7.14	7.66	0.32	0.90	318
92563	French Valley	7.13	7.81	0.34	0.89	379
92587	Rest of County	7.11	7.52	0.30	0.89	143
92236	Coachella	7.10	8.07	0.35	0.85	114
92399	Rest of County	7.10	7.57	0.35	0.87	460
92562	Rest of County	7.09	7.66	0.28	0.88	476
92883	Corona	7.09	7.74	0.32	0.91	176
92262	Palm Springs	7.08	7.84	0.32	0.86	332
92555	Rest of County	7.08	8.30	0.35	0.88	173
92254	Rest of County	7.07	6.69	0.26	0.92	51
92592	Rest of County	7.04	7.77	0.35	0.88	484
92320	Rest of County	7.03	7.32	0.30	0.87	84
92220	Banning	7.03	7.47	0.32	0.86	292

ZIP	BZ Community	Life Sat	Life in 5Y	Neg Aff	Pos Aff	Sample
92860	Rest of County	7.02	7.69	0.35	0.80	159
92548	Rest of County	7.02	7.46	0.31	0.85	62
92504	City of Riverside	6.97	7.72	0.36	0.87	369
92881	Corona	6.97	7.86	0.35	0.89	162
92551	Rest of County	6.96	8.35	0.33	0.86	114
92532	Rest of County	6.96	8.07	0.38	0.87	114
92509	City of Riverside	6.96	7.89	0.33	0.85	399
92234	Palm Springs	6.94	7.29	0.34	0.87	344
92591	Rest of County	6.92	7.41	0.28	0.87	276
92544	Rest of County	6.91	7.28	0.34	0.88	391
92596	French Valley	6.89	7.76	0.36	0.89	116
92503	City of Riverside	6.88	7.68	0.36	0.84	467
92571	Rest of County	6.87	8.00	0.36	0.85	164
92505	City of Riverside	6.87	7.77	0.37	0.90	232
92882	Corona	6.86	7.71	0.38	0.86	400
92586	Rest of County	6.84	6.61	0.29	0.85	294
92585	Rest of County	6.83	7.17	0.33	0.85	111
92507	City of Riverside	6.82	7.86	0.36	0.84	346
92274	Coachella	6.81	7.75	0.33	0.83	88
92240	Palm Springs	6.81	7.81	0.30	0.83	237
92553	Rest of County	6.81	8.02	0.34	0.81	265
92501	City of Riverside	6.79	7.75	0.34	0.82	163
92545	Rest of County	6.77	6.72	0.28	0.86	397
92225	Rest of County	6.76	7.62	0.43	0.87	97
91752	Rest of County	6.75	7.84	0.34	0.89	151
92583	Rest of County	6.71	7.42	0.30	0.86	206
92582	Rest of County	6.71	7.62	0.42	0.81	93
92530	Rest of County	6.71	7.72	0.36	0.84	289
92324	Rest of County	6.63	7.89	0.38	0.83	213
92570	Mead Valley	6.62	7.76	0.37	0.85	290
92595	Rest of County	6.52	7.35	0.40	0.84	212
92230	Banning	6.41	7.50	0.39	0.79	18
92567	Rest of County	6.40	7.26	0.32	0.85	60
92539	Rest of County	6.32	7.09	0.33	0.85	41
92543	Rest of County	6.32	7.02	0.36	0.82	291

Mapping Positive & Negative Emotions in Riverside County



Well-Being-Adjusted Life Years (WELLBYs) Across Coachella



Calculating WELLBYs

Gives us a single metric that combines average life satisfaction with average life expectancy.



WELLBYs Approach

Thus allows us to evaluate whether we are 'adding years to life and life to years'.

	Life Satisfaction	Life Expectancy	WELLBY's
Coachella	7.16	84.0	602
Riverside County Total	7.03	80.0	562

- ✓ Considering well-being and life expectancy together reveals **larger inequalities** than considering these variables separately because happier places also tend to be **healthier**.
- ✓ Average **WELLBYs** in Coachella of **602** as compared to Riverside County average of **562** and **USA** average of **547**.
- ✓ For reference, Finland tops the chart of all countries in the world at **638 WELLBYs per person**.

Well-Being Driver Analysis:

What factors best explain differences in well-being across people in Riverside County?

Variable Groupings & Question Wordings

Work

- ✓ At work, do you get to use your strengths to do what you do best every day, or not?
- ✓ Are you currently employed?
- ✓ Does your supervisor always create an environment that is trusting and open, or not?
- ✓ Does your supervisor at work treat you more like he or she is your boss or your partner?
- ✓ In the last seven days, I have felt active and productive every day.

Health Status

- ✓ Do you have any health problems that prevent you from doing any of the things people your age normally can do?
- ✓ During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor health keep you from doing your usual activities?
- ✓ BMI greater than or equal to 30 (derived from height and weight)
- ✓ Have you ever been told by a physician or nurse that you have depression?
- ✓ Would you say your own health, in general, is ...? (1-5, excellent to poor)

Safety

- ✓ I always feel safe and secure.
- ✓ In the city or area where you live, is it easy or not easy to get a safe place to exercise?

City and People

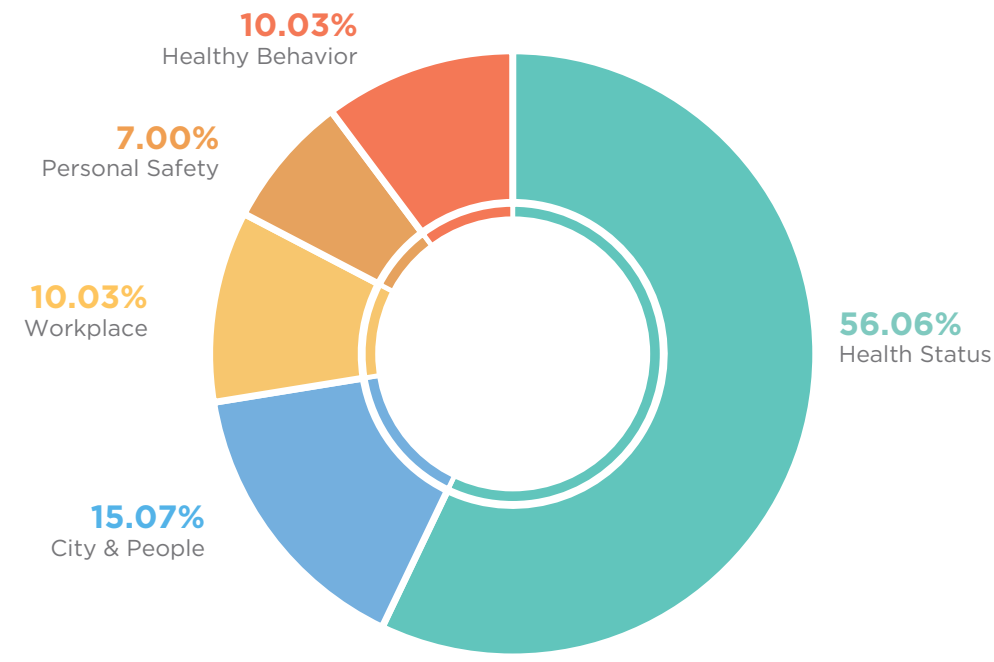
- ✓ You can't imagine living in a better community than the one you live in today.
- ✓ You are proud of your community or the area where you live.
- ✓ Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?
- ✓ The city or area where you live is a perfect place for you.
- ✓ Approximately, how many minutes does it take you to get from your home to your workplace?
- ✓ The house or apartment that I live in is ideal for me and my family.
- ✓ If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?
- ✓ Someone in your life always encourages you to be healthy.
- ✓ Your friends and family give you positive energy every day.

Health Behaviors

- ✓ Do you smoke?
- ✓ In the last seven days, on how many days did you exercise for 30 or more minutes?
- ✓ In the last seven days, on how many days did you have five or more servings of fruits and vegetables
- ✓ Did you eat healthy all day yesterday?

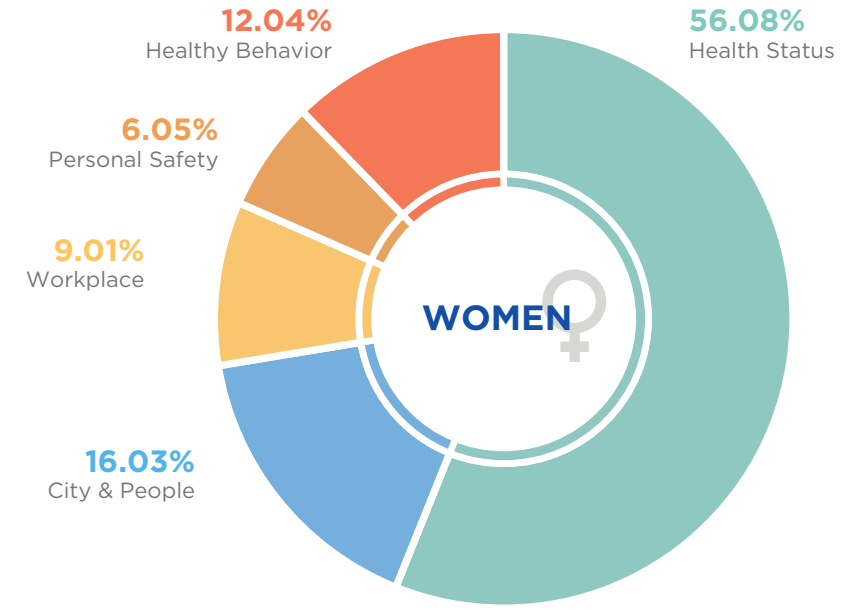
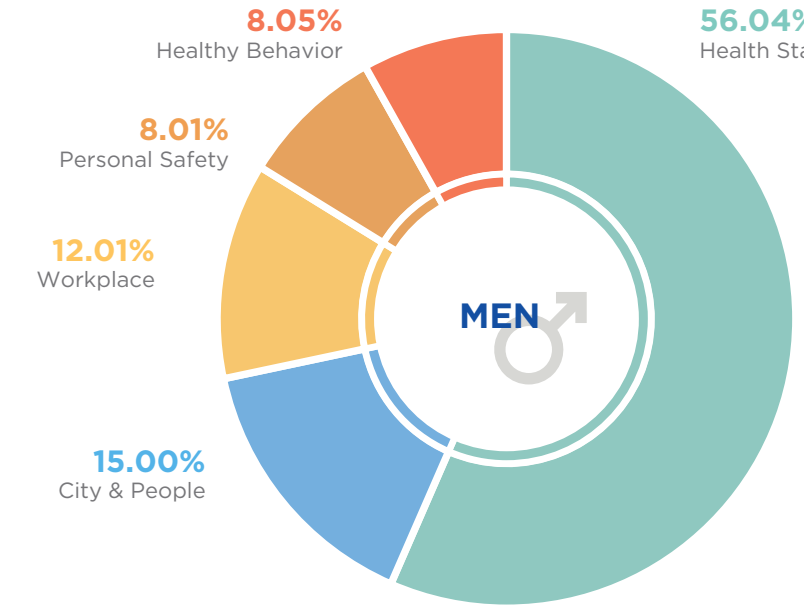
Driver Analysis of Well-Being in Riverside County

RIVERSIDE: POOLED



While health, community, and work are all important for happiness everywhere, we are able to discern their relative importance. For instance, our analysis finds: Individual health status stands out as the most important driver for life satisfaction with general satisfaction with city and people a contributor to it. Healthy behaviors, personal safety, and work satisfaction are other strong drivers for life satisfaction.

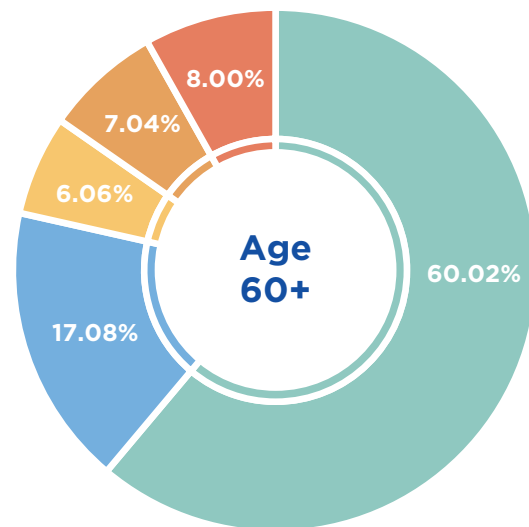
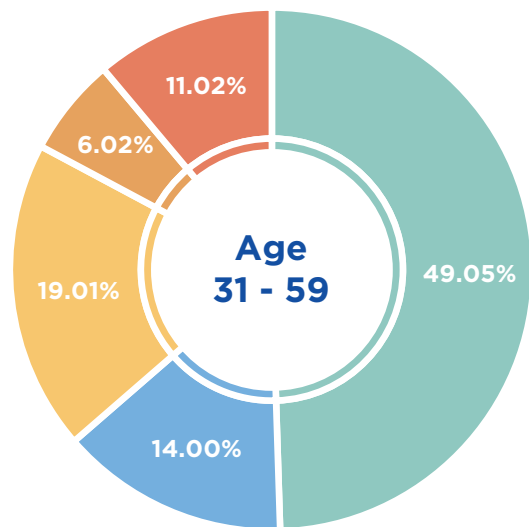
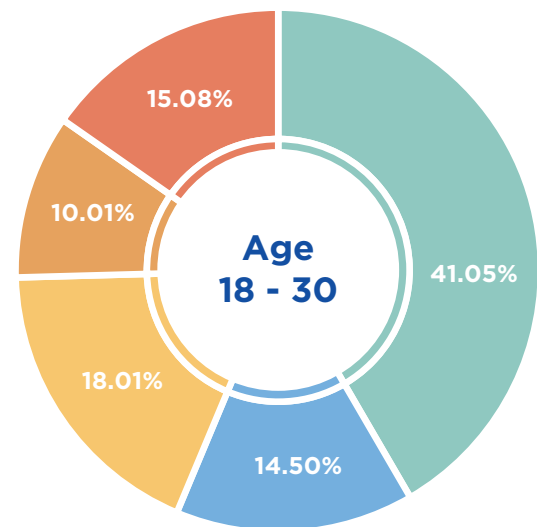
Driver Analysis of Well-Being in Riverside County by Gender



Most notable are the changing drivers of well-being over the life course. The importance of health status rises dramatically with age. The opposite is true for the workplace and city & people variables which are much more important to the well-being of the young.

Categorization of Gallup data variables relevant to Blue Zones interventions.
Methods: variance decomposition and hot-deck imputation

Driver Analysis of Well-Being over the Life Course in Riverside County



HEALTH STATUS

HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

PERSONAL SAFETY

WORKSPACE

CITY & PEOPLE



COACHELLA

Policy Overview

Optimizing the built environment, the food environment, and tobacco and alcohol policies is a high-impact, cost-effective strategy to reduce chronic disease and increase well-being.

With this approach, individuals can see tangible transformation taking place in their lives: from the buildings they work in, to the streets and paths they use to get around, to the foods they buy and eat.




COACHELLA

COACHELLA

Built Environment

Our built and natural environments have a direct impact on our health. The built environment encompasses the human-made spaces where we live, work, learn, and play, which includes our streets, intersections, buildings, homes, and sidewalks. How well our built and natural environments are integrated is an essential predictor of natural movement, socializing, and downshifting in any community.

 Optimizing built environments can increase physical activity of an entire community by over 30%. It can also enhance the social life of a community by increasing a sense of belonging, ownership, watchfulness, and involvement in one's community.

This report is meant to be a snapshot in time for local community policy and well-being. The policy team endeavors to explore all policy work that is underway in the community. This report may not reflect all efforts in which the community is engaged.



Introduction

In Coachella, there is a depth of community assets to increase well-being throughout the city. The City of Coachella is the most eastern community in the Coachella Valley, and is home to some of the world's most productive agricultural areas, and is a major producer of citrus, grapes, bell peppers, and 95% of the nation's dates.

Geographically located at the center of Riverside County, Coachella is equidistant between the Orange / San Diego county border to the west and the Arizona state border to the east. Despite sharing a name with the world famous Coachella Music Festival, this event occurs in neighboring Indio and the City gains little benefit from the event.

Starting as a rail stop along the Southern Pacific Railroad, Coachella's initial growth was fueled by harvesting dense mesquite trees for lumber to ship to Los Angeles. Identification of a sizable water source in the early 1900s and development of irrigation systems led to an explosion in agricultural activity, drawing large numbers of immigrant laborers, including from Mexico. Coachella today has a population of around 45,000, with almost 97% of residents of Latino descent, and close to 90% of residents speaking Spanish at home.



Much of Coachella scores poorly in various socioeconomic indexes when contrasted with the county average, with Coachella ranking in the bottom 15th percentile of the Healthy Places Index. Between 1990 and 2020 Coachella's population increased by 250%, although over the past decade this growth has slowed. Coachella is home to some of the lowest housing prices in the Coachella Valley, and is set to accommodate spillover demand from high demand areas such as Indio, which is driving a series of new masterplanned communities designed to cater to snowbirds and retirees. To manage the impacts of this growth and improve the quality of life for existing residents, City goals include sustainable and safe transportation, being a walkable and parks-rich city, with public infrastructure, transit-ready places, healthy housing, and a range of housing stock. Implementing this vision will assist Coachella in accurately directing investment to keep existing residents and retain its soul and sense of place.

Coachella's built environment assessment was completed through research, observation, and conversations with local leaders. This process was facilitated by the Blue Zones Built Environment Team, who engaged with key stakeholders and conducted windshield and walking tours to assess readiness to improve well-being through more opportunities to move naturally, socialize, and downshift. The Built Environment Team gleaned insights into planning and leadership, existing on-the-ground efforts, and other considerations. Based on our evaluation and supplemented with on-site interviews, and additional research into the policies and practices of Coachella, we believe there are a number of ways to strengthen the region's built and natural environment. This report summarizes findings, observations, and next step recommendations. It is intended to inform stakeholders and leadership, with the goal of advancing informed and strategic decisions about built environment opportunities and priorities.



Blue Zones Built Environment Goals

Routine, daily movement and social connection are central tenets of the Blue Zones principles of a healthy, engaged lifestyle. This does not necessarily mean structured exercise or scheduled interactions, rather, through an environment that is supportive of walking, bicycling, and social connectedness. Essential Blue Zones goals for the built environment include moving naturally, encouraging social gathering places, completing neighborhoods, and increasing housing options. Extensive research has demonstrated that neighborhoods or communities that have these components have higher rates of walkability, economic development, vitality, and greater overall health and safety for residents. Each of the core Blue Zones built environment goals are described below.



60 BLUE ZONES

PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT: A comprehensive and connected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, such as sidewalks and crossings, bicycle lanes, and trails are available to all residents and visitors. Major roads are designed or retrofitted to fully accommodate those walking and bicycling to access their destinations safely and comfortably. Streets are compact, green, comfortable, and inviting, serving low-speed movement of all. Traditional, well-connected paths favor walking and biking. Essential to this goal is ensuring the safety, security, and access for people of all ages and abilities. Daily needs are met easiest by walking among mixed use buildings, parks and plazas.

ENCOURAGE SOCIAL GATHERING SPACES: Accessible areas are integrated into the neighborhood fabric to facilitate and encourage connections between people and places. Examples include parks, open spaces and community nodes like a plaza or neighborhood square. Sometimes uninviting and nonessential pavement can be transformed into community amenities.

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

INCREASE COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS: Offer residents options on where and how to live, work, shop, play, learn, worship, and get around. Destinations and well-connected low speed routes are designed to encourage social connections and reward those who arrive on foot or bike. Benches, shade structures, planters, awnings, water fountains, human scaled lighting, way-finding elements and well-placed quality bicycle parking offer safe, welcoming, comfortable, and appealing surroundings. Buildings provide security by their placement near walkways and transparent window coverage.

INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS: Providing a range of housing can increase affordability of neighborhoods and communities. Missing middle housing, such as accessory dwelling units, townhomes, duplexes, four squares, courtyard homes, pocket neighborhoods, apartments and other housing options traditionally found in communities are encouraged. Missing middle housing can also help gently increase density in a neighborhood, increasing its vitality, sense of community, and opportunities for social connectedness.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

BLUE ZONES 61

Strengths

The City of Coachella enjoys an engaged and active leadership that have played a critical role in the development of key assets that are working towards creating environments that better prioritize pedestrians, support natural movement by foot and bicycle, and offer social gathering areas. City staff have had repeat success in accessing grants to fund major investments in supporting and protecting the local community. Key essential assets include:



ACTIVE FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY: Coachella has been able to create a sense of place and preserve cultural heritage reflective of the community. Keeping residents at top of mind, the City has included health and wellness in the General Plan, as well as instituted meaningful resiliency and climate change initiatives to ensure the well-being of families that live in Coachella. Measures taken include development of an Active Transportation Plan (2020), planting trees, promoting hydrogen-fueled buses, electric scooters, ride-sharing initiatives, installing solar panels in residences, and water efficiency projects. All efforts undertaken are informed by the community and undertaken in partnership with the community.

TRAIL NETWORK: Extending from Palm Springs to Coachella, the 40-plus-mile CV Link for bicycle, pedestrian, and low-speed (up to 25 mph) electric vehicle pathway is funded and under construction. This exceptional asset mostly follows the Whitewater River incorporating existing portions of trail. The CV Link will provide a transportation and recreation route throughout the Coachella Valley with future expansion planned. Identifying feeder routes for bicycle and pedestrian connections to create protected facilities within Coachella to connect to the trail can increase access and bring this asset closer to residents of all ages.



DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT: In recent years the City has made a series of major investments in the downtown and surrounding areas, representing some best practices in downtown revitalization. These investments include the Veterans' Park (2016) the Coachella Branch Library (2018), and extensive remodeling of the Coachella Senior Center (2020) and the Palm View Elementary School (2021). Connectivity between Downtown amenities has been enhanced through wide sidewalks, mid-block crossings, extensive street lighting, mature trees, landscaping and public art, resulting in strong, inviting, and accessible downtown core. Coachella's built environment investment in the downtown and immediate surrounding area is an example of how to get the design details right.

PLACEMAKING: The savvy municipal investments made in the downtown and citywide have established a placemaking framework that encourages small business opportunity, new jobs, mobility, and sustainability. The various design elements implemented and policies instituted are creating a walkable, vibrant and safe place. A city with a soul and sense of self can add value for retail sales and encourage private investment. Coachella will need to weigh new development proposals from a full cost accounting perspective including impact to city services, the increase to well-being, economic opportunities generated, and real community benefit for residents.

Challenges

There are several challenges that could prevent or hinder Coachella from maximizing or fully capitalizing on opportunities. During the focus group meeting, participants shared a number of challenges that are preventing residents from fully maximizing the built and natural amenities Coachella has to offer. This includes:

- ✔ High unemployment and poverty rates
- ✔ Strong demand for affordable housing - a recent affordable housing development saw 4,000 applicants for 108-units, indicating a need for more affordable housing
- ✔ Coachella is home to a large student population, with around 25% of people under 18, with many leaving to pursue secondary education and leaving the area. How can Coachella better retain young talent?
- ✔ Limited transit options
- ✔ Housing affordability
- ✔ Coachella’s desert climate leads to frequent days above 100 degrees with intense sunlight, making alternative forms of transport less appealing
- ✔ Funding is challenging
- ✔ Unable to sustain more services
- ✔ Maintenance of new infrastructure is a concern
- ✔ More open space and amenities but fear won’t be able to maintain any of those improvements
- ✔ Despite a number of well-loved parks, the City is park poor and many areas lack convenient access to recreational facilities



The Blue Zones Built Environment team identified additional challenges, as well:

HOUSING: With more housing, there is greater demand on City services. Private developers are driving the market and building new homes, with more planned. Some of these efforts include affordable housing. The City coordinates closely with the County Housing Authority on all affordable housing efforts; and while needed, the multifamily low-income housing in the downtown is rental only. This is a broader challenge to provide housing that can build wealth creation.

SAFER STREETS: As identified throughout Riverside County, the default typical street section is 5 lanes for vehicle travel, with overly wide lane widths. Street design standards should be changed in order to better support desired surrounding land uses, the safety of all road users and to retain a neighborhood feel. While there has been significant investment to improve safety and walkability in Coachella, a broader application to the entire street network is needed to effect change for a safer and more people focused built environment.

Neighborhood collectors and residential street width standards, in particular, need to be reduced and the pavement reallocated. Avenue 51, as an example, could be improved with protected pedestrian refuge in median islands for safer crossings at uncontrolled intersections and mid-block, reducing the number of travel lanes and lane widths, and tighter radii corners at intersections. These changes improve safety for walking or biking by encouraging reduced travel speeds through built environment improvements that are people focused.

Opportunities

Building from these assets, Coachella is teeming with opportunities to increase well-being. During our focus group meetings, we heard from participants on several opportunities. This includes:



- ✓ Safe routes to school efforts
- ✓ Want more open space and amenities but fear that they won't be able to maintain any of those improvements
- ✓ Introduce a Ciclovía, a car-free festival (see Muevete en Bici - Mexico City)
- ✓ Coachella can improve their bike infrastructure - there's good potential, including connections to nearby communities
- ✓ Can solar panels be a thing?
- ✓ There could be a focus on food - to become a gastronomical destination - there are opportunities for new revenue streams
- ✓ Need to build anti-displacement measures
- ✓ Coachella's transit infrastructure is lacking compared to communities in East Coachella Valley (e.g. Palm Springs)
- ✓ Different in the next five years with the rise of electric bikes?
- ✓ Excitement at the prospect of the Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass which would link Coachella to Downtown Los Angeles.
- ✓ Installing a transportation center/hub
- ✓ County Housing Authority - City coordinates with them on all affordable housing efforts
- ✓ Health and Wellness elements in the City's General Plan

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE: The community is propelling the desire for more protected bicycle facilities and paired with the CV Link and successful downtown investment, there are additional quick methods for implementing bicycle facilities. Updated lane striping on existing pavement on key corridors to reallocate pavement for connectivity from residential to destinations is one of the easiest methods. A minimum width of bicycle lane standard and the practice of using average daily trip data to inform the number of travel lanes can be established. The threshold for a lane reduction from 5 to 3 lanes is typically less than 20,000 to 22,000 vehicle trips per day. Residential streets should also be designed for less than 25 mph with less pavement width. This approach has multiple benefits: less maintenance costs, more land for housing, slower traffic speeds for safer streets, and less need for enforcement.

HOUSING: With over half the land area undeveloped, Coachella has a unique moment-in-time-opportunity to address housing based on local values. To help residents build wealth and incorporate supportive anti-displacement measures, entry level price points for greater homeownership can be more readily achieved with a variety of housing types. Allowing for a variety of housing options also contributes to improved walkability. "Missing middle" housing types such as: accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplex, triplex, four squares, garden apartments and townhomes should be allowed, in emerging and existing neighborhoods. The City can encourage and incentivize this type of development with streamlined permitting and "off the shelf" design plans to better guide development and

manage growth for a more economically stable, sustainable and resilient community. Broader policy could "masterplan" the city to set expectations for developers with an urban design and transportation network. An innovative approach example is Baldwin Park in Orlando, Florida, that redeveloped an 1,100 acre former Naval Base.



WELLNESS HUB: The City of Coachella is using ARPA funding and other sources to address accessibility and availability of park space and recreation activities, including development of a wellness hub concept. Known as Central Park, this community driven project will include an “inclusive playground with shade, a splash pad, a multi-purpose pavillion with restrooms, a walking path, botanical/community garden” built with CPTED principals to provide direct lines of sight. While the City is pursuing creative sources of funding whose missions align with this concept, such as an \$8.45 million grant from the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program (SPP), the City should work to ensure accessibility to surrounding developments and beyond through enhancing alternative transportation options and expansion of bike lanes. This is the type of catalyst project that could improve the well-being of entire families and provide a social gathering space.

CAPITALIZE ON CITY INVESTMENTS: In recent years Coachella has invested tens of millions of dollars into its Downtown, which is starting to attract private development in and around the Downtown core. Numerous apartment buildings are in the pipeline in and around the Downtown core which will help animate streets, support independent retail and services, and catalyze more development. Coachella should continue efforts to incentivize development downtown and make it an in demand destination to live, work, and play.



CLIMATE ADAPTATIONS: Coachella should incorporate green infrastructure such as green roofs, walls, rain gardens, and tree planting initiatives to increase sustainability, reduce car dependence, and mitigate the urban heat island effect. In addition, Coachella can also consider installing shade structures and mature, native trees along bike lanes to provide protection from the intense desert sun, encouraging more people to cycle instead of drive. These shade structures can also incorporate solar panels to generate renewable energy and further increase the city’s sustainability.

Readiness

A first step after Blue Zones is invited into a community is to assess readiness. This is an essential step as a number of communities are interested in transformation to enable “making the healthy choice the easy choice.” Specific to our four policy areas, we seek to answer the following questions:

- ?** Does the **political leadership** of the jurisdiction have a strong willingness to support Blue Zones efforts?
- ?** Are the city’s/region’s **decision-makers** on board to change (some) jurisdictional policies and processes to support a Blue Zones project?
- ?** Are **community groups** excited about the possibility of a Blue Zones project and on board to partner and collaborate to move a Blue Zone project forward?
- ?** Are other **community influencers** excited about the potential and willing to support our work?



Acknowledgements

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Adrian Moreno	City Associate Planner, City of Coachella
Andrew Simmons	City Engineer, City of Coachella
Castulo Estrada	Water and Sewer, City of Coachella
Daisy Ramirez	Health Education Assistant II, RUHS Public Health
David Dewegeli	Pulte Homes
Fernando Heredia	Deacon, Our Lady of Soledad Parish
Gabriel Martin	City Manager, City of Coachella

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Gabriel Perez	City Development Services, City of Coachella
Gayle Hoxter	PH Program Chief III, Nutrition And Health Promotion, RUHS Public Health
Maritza Martinez	City Public Works Director, City of Coachella
Miguel Vazquez	Health Equity Urban and Regional Planner, RUHS Public Health
Phoebe Seaton	Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
Stan McNaughton	KPC Development

Blue Zones Built Environment Policy Menu

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

- Category:
- ★ **REGULATORY** — Creating or changing legally binding standards, rules, or laws, such as zoning codes, ordinances, permitting, or licensing standards.
 - ★ **NON-REGULATORY** — Creating or changing programs, guidance, or education efforts.

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
PRIORITIZE WALKING FOR EVERYONE	★	M	Adopt or amend complete streets policies to direct specific changes to the design of streets (such as those identified below). For communities without a complete streets policy, adopt one that identifies relevant changes (such as those listed below) and establishes prioritized schedules for implementing those changes.
	★	M	Identify critical walking/biking routes in local communities (especially those that connect key community assets such as schools, parks, libraries, and other civic institutions) and schedule capital improvements to complete missing or insufficient sidewalks or paths.
	★	M	Create a program to place, establish, and maintain street trees in neighborhoods with inadequate tree canopy.

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	"The first goal for the circulation element of Coachella's master plan is Complete Streets. Moreover, the Plan Includes Cross-Sections of Streets That Incorporate Complete Streets Elements. The implementation steps for the General Plan include developing a complete streets manual. (See ""05 - Circulation Element (coachella.org)," on pages 05-5 and 05-7; ""02 - Vision + Guiding Principles (coachella.org)," on pages 02-9 and 02-11, and ""12 - Implementation Actions (coachella.org)," on page 12-4.) "	X						X				X	
2	The city has a report that includes maps of dangerous intersections, existing and proposed bicycle routes, and other improvements. The same document also includes a section on Safe Routes to School. (See "City of Coachella, California Active Transportation Plan - Transpo Group (usgovcloudapi.net)."	X					X	X	X				X
2	There is a street tree ordinance, but it has no such requirement. (See "Chapter 12.24 - Street Trees.") Street trees are required in the planned development District and in the R-S Residential Single-Family Zone. (See "17.38.030 - Design guidelines" and "17.16.030 - Property development standards.")The city did in urban greening project in the Pueblo Viejo downtown district. (See "Coachella to Celebrate New Urban Greening and Conductivity Project - NBC 36 News Palm Springs" and "Urban Greening Grant Program - California Natural Resources Agency.")	X			X		X	X	X			X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
PRIORITIZE WALKING FOR EVERYONE	REGULATORY	L	Evaluate the need for traffic calming, reduced travel lane width or number, and reduced pedestrian crossings along critical walking/ biking routes, and provide timely capital improvements to implement findings.
	REGULATORY	M	Adopt tactical urbanism strategies to demonstrate easily implementable streetscape changes.
	REGULATORY	S	Require wide sidewalks in commercial areas and places where multi-unit housing and townhouses are prevalent.
	REGULATORY	M	Limit the number and width of curb cuts to preserve continuous and safe sidewalks.
	REGULATORY	L	Remove bans on on-street (parallel) parking on local and collector streets, and on arterials where possible, to help slow traffic and to protect sidewalk users from moving vehicles.
	REGULATORY	S	Train key staff, administrators, partners, and consultants on the importance of implementation measures for complete streets.

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
1	Traffic calming is the number two goal in the circulation element of its master plan, and it is also mentioned in the noise element. (See "Slideshow for the Pueblo Viejo Implementation Strategy Plan," Page 05-9;" and "10 - Noise (coachella.org)," page 10-1.) Many of the elements mentioned in the slideshow were completed around the Coachella Veterans Memorial Park and along 6th Street. Looking at cool images, prompted by a Google Street view search, the area around the new Department of Public Social Services building has bulbs and other elements common in traffic calming.	X					X	X					X
3	Not found.	X							X	X			
2	The standard specifications for the city require that commercial sidewalks be as wide as the parkway, which however, vary in width. (See "Standard Specifications - Public Works" on page 18.)	X							X	X			
3	Not found.	X							X	X			
2	The city's Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan places parking between pedestrians and traffic. It is diagonal parking, however. (See ""Pueblo Viejo District Plans Coachella, CA" and "City of Coachella Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan: Section II Vision Plan (coachella.org).")	X	X						X	X			
2	As noted at top, one of the implementation steps for the General Plan is to make a complete streets manual. However, nothing indicating actual training sessions was found.	X			X				X			X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
MAKE IT EASIER TO WALK TO SCHOOL	★	M	Create a Safe Routes to School Plan that sets priorities for the most important improvements.
	★	M	Implement the Safe Routes to School Plan through capital improvements.
	★	L	Maintain, renovate, and create new neighborhood schools; avoid relocating existing schools to non-walkable locations.
MAKE THE WALK WELCOMING AND COMFORTABLE	★	M	Amend zoning regulations to better support the "pedestrian realm" by requiring buildings to be located close to the sidewalk, with sidewalk-facing entries and windows.
	★	M	Create or update street design standards that prioritizes pedestrians and increases pedestrian safety.
	★	S	Require street trees be planted when properties are developed or redeveloped.
	★	L	Allow awnings and canopies over public sidewalks to provide shade and rain protection for pedestrians.
	★	S	Require pedestrian-scaled lighting be provided along sidewalks when commercial or multi-unit properties are developed or redeveloped.
	★	S	Require street furniture such as trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks, and benches in commercial areas when properties are developed or redeveloped.
	★	L	Create physical buffers between pedestrians and moving cars, using features such as curb extensions, street trees, street furniture, street-level stormwater management, and on-street parking.

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
1	The Coachella Valley Unified School District has a Safe Routes to School Program.	X						X		X			
1	1. The website for the city's capital improvement projects mentions that the safe Routes to school program spent \$1 million in 2018. (See "Capital Improvement Program (coachella.org).") It seems to have been a one time project	X						X				X	
3	Not found.	X			X			X				X	X
3	Not found except in the Pueblo Viejo district planning considers it. (See "Pueblo Viejo District Plans Coachella, CA" and "City of Coachella Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan: Section II Vision Plan (coachella.org).")	X						X		X			
2	The city seems to have considered this, but has not yet fully embodied it in policy. The general plan, considers complete streets important. The plan for the Pueblo Viejo area, incorporates such standards. However, these are not found in the general standards for streets.	X	X				X	X	X	X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	The planning director can require street trees, but this is not explicit in the subdivision regulations. (See "§ 16.28.150 Minimum requirements," at G.)	X						X		X			
3	According to the standard specifications, ornamental lighting can be allowed, but is not required.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
2	The city seems to incorporate when it redevelops in the Pueblo Viejo district, but not much elsewhere. See "Traffic calming is the number two goal..." above.	X						X				X	

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
SUPPORT MOVEMENT BY BICYCLE		M	Create a bicycle master plan to prioritize new bicycle connections between key community assets.
		L	Invest in bicycle infrastructure such as separated/protected bike lanes and bike/pedestrian trails.
		M	Provide bicycle racks in commercial districts, major workplaces, and near civic institutions.
		S	Amend zoning to require a minimum amount of bicycle parking in new developments.
		M	Create or enhance community education programs that teach bicycle laws and roadway safety.
EXTEND THE RANGE OF PEOPLE WALKING AND BIKING		M	Create or enhance transit based on community size, e.g., commuter or other van service, express bus, or on-demand bus or van service.
		L	Establish a publicly-accessible circulator, especially in places without transit service.

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
1	The Active Transportation Plan seems to be this document. (See "City of Coachella, California Active Transportation Plan - Transpo Group (usgovcloudapi.net).") See also "The city has a report that includes maps of dangerous intersections..." above.	X						X		X			
3	The 2021-22 budget included two bicycle facilities improvements, but they were for bicycle lanes on two widening projects. (See "City of Coachella California Budget - Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (coachella.org).") However, the city seems to be due some funds under a state grant. (See "Clean California: \$8M for Coachella Valley bike paths, sidewalks (desertsun.com).")	X						X				X	
2	These can be found in the Pueblo Viejo district.	X						X				X	
2	There is a transportation demand management program that is sometimes required. It can require bicycle parking. (See "Chapter 12.40 - Transportation Demand Management Program" and "§ 12.40.050 - Minimum standards.")	X						X		X			
2	As noted above at "The Coachella Valley Unified School District has a Safe Routes To School Program..." The Safe Routes to School Program include some safety training.	X			X			X				X	X
3	Although the system is fairly minimal in the city of Coachella, a number of lines converge in Pueblo Viejo. There does not seem to be a peak of density anywhere in the area, although, this is certainly the center of the community. Otherwise, the main line is along Cesar Chavez Street. (See "Sunline System Map.")	X	X					X	X			X	X
3	There is no circulator.	X	X		X	X		X	X			X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
EXTEND THE RANGE OF PEOPLE WALKING AND BIKING		L	Provide more frequent transit service, especially in underserved areas.
		M	Provide all-weather shelters at bus stops.
		S	Provide bicycle racks on all buses.
		M	Amend regulations that block micro-mobility options on public streets.
		S	Establish a mobility education program focused on safety for users and nonusers.
CREATE PARK-ONCE ENVIRONMENTS		M	Amend zoning to locate parking for enhanced walkability, such as prohibiting parking between the front of buildings and the sidewalk.
		M	Add on-street parking spaces that can be shared throughout the day; this can sometimes be accomplished through lane reduction and restriping.
		S	Amend zoning to allow off-site and shared parking, instead of requiring all parking to be on-site.
		XL	Establish a parking management district to coordinate shared parking (instead of requiring a set number of parking spaces for each use at all times).

GOAL: PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
3	Buses are infrequent. (See "Route 8 Schedule.")	X	X		X	X			X			X	X
3	Some new shelters have been implemented recently.	X	X					X				X	
1	All buses have bike racks.	X	X					X				X	
1	2022 the city Council approved Bird scooters. (See "Coachella unveiled Bird scooters on Thursday - The Desert Sun.")	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X	X		X			X				X	X
3	Not found, except that the Pueblo Viejo district planning considers it. (See "Pueblo Viejo District Plans Coachella, CA" and "City of Coachella Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan: Section II Vision Plan (coachella.org).")	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X				X	
2	Shared parking is permitted with a conditional use permit. (See "17.54.010 - Parking requirements," at G.)	X						X		X			
2	There is a de-facto parking management district. (See "17.54.010 C.1.a. - Parking requirements, exemption near public parking or business within the Sixth Street Downtown Plan.")	X				X	X			X		X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: ★ REGULATORY ★ NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: ENCOURAGE SOCIABLE GATHERING PLACES			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
INCREASE ACCESS TO PARKS AND OTHER RECREATION AREAS	★	L	Provide more playgrounds in neighborhoods parks, especially in underserved areas, using municipal funds or private fundraising efforts.
	★	L	Provide paved walkways and benches in neighborhood parks using municipal funds or private fundraising.
	★	M	Amend school district policy to enable community use of school recreational facilities after hours.
	★	L	Prioritize trail network extensions and crossings in capital improvement programs, especially in underserved areas.
	★	M	Amend existing standards to provide more frequent and smaller parks, e.g., pocket parks, linear parks, neighborhood parks, within neighborhoods (to supplement larger community and regional parks).
	★	M	Create a parks and recreation master plan that evaluates park access and facilities for all neighborhoods.
	★	M	Amend comprehensive plans to identify the need for neighborhood and community parks that support active and passive recreation for all residents.

GOAL: ENCOURAGE SOCIABLE GATHERING PLACES													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	Mapping the city's parks with playgrounds, a lot of areas are far from playgrounds. On the other hand, the Tot Lot at Avenue 53 and Calle Empalme is an excellent example of a micro-park.	X			X	X			X			X	X
2	The city incorporates these features.	X			X	X			X			X	X
3	There is supposedly a form on the CVUSD website. (See "Public Forms - 2020 Coachella Valley Unified School District (cvusd.us).")					X			X			X	
2	The city has done planning work, but the city's page about capital improvements only mentions one bike facilities project. The city's 2021-22 budget mentions two bicycle projects and seven sidewalk replacements or constructions; 2020-21 has a bridge and sidewalk extensions around Avenue 50, sidewalks, etc. Most years seem to add something, gradually, but no mention of a network among the projects. Each year, however, does mention that there are funds for pedestrian and bike improvements.	X							X			X	
2	The city is planning "Central Park" on Avenue 52, but no master plan for parks after 2006. (See "City of Coachella, California Parks & Recreation Master Plan - Draft as of 5-3-06.doc.") That plan was only a draft. (Note that Parks and Recreation are mentioned in the general plan, but they do not get their own section/document. See "More than \$25 mil approved to fund parks throughout the Coachella Valley - KESQ.")	X							X		X		
3	Not found.	X							X		X		
	The general plan identifies needs for parks. Calls for a community space fund to gather funds for acquiring and improving parks. It also calls for revising and adopting a Master Parks Plan. (See "12 - Implementation Actions (coachella.org)" on pages 12-8 and 12-9, respectively.)	X							X		X		

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: ENCOURAGE SOCIABLE GATHERING PLACES			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES FOR GATHERING	REGULATORY	S	Amend zoning to allow excess, underutilized parking lots or other spaces to be used for alternative activities such as outdoor dining, farmers' markets, pop-up retail, and similar events.
ENCOURAGE GATHERING WITHIN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY	REGULATORY	S	Amend regulations as needed to allow sidewalk dining.
	REGULATORY	S	Amend regulations to enable parklets and dining decks in on-street parking spaces.
	REGULATORY	M	Establish outdoor entertainment districts within defined geographic areas and with specific performance standards (such as limited hours of service and number of drinks allowed).

GOAL: ENCOURAGE SOCIABLE GATHERING PLACES													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	The city has an outdoor dining program and an application for it. The file metadata says that it was created in September 2020. No guidelines for outdoor dining requirements. (See "Slideshow for the Pueblo Viejo Implementation Strategy Plan" and "Outdoor dining program forms (usgovcloudapi.net).")	X						X		X			
2	See immediately above.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X				X				X			

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: COMPLETE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
REMOVE ZONING BARRIERS TO COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS	★	M	Ensure that dimensional standards in zoning districts are aligned with existing or desired pattern of buildings.
	★	M	Amend zoning to allow more mixing of uses within zoning districts, both within buildings and by proximity to other buildings.
	★	L	Amend zoning to allow small-scale commercial uses within or along the edge of residential neighborhoods; ensure that on-site parking is not required or is very minimal.
ENABLE NEIGHBORHOOD MAIN STREETS	★	L	Allow on-street parking, especially in and around neighborhood main streets areas.
	★	M	Establish a program to recruit a mix of supportive businesses in neighborhood main streets.
	★	M	Encourage the establishment of new local Main Street programs, e.g., a National Main Street Center program.
	★	L	Designate existing and potential neighborhood main streets in general plans or zoning regulations.
REFORM MUNICIPAL PARKING REGULATIONS	★	L	Reduce or eliminate minimum on-site parking requirements.

GOAL: COMPLETE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	On-street parking is part of the Pueblo Viejo plan and it's allowed on a lot of streets, but it is not well supported in the code.	X					X	X		X			
2	A general program to entice businesses to the city exists. (See "Economic Landscape Coachella, CA (vivacoachella.org).")	X			X	X	X	X				X	X
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X				X	X
2	The general plan does this at a high level. It maps numerous "Neighborhood center" areas that would be something like main streets. (See "04 - Land-Use + Community Character (coachella.org)" at page 04-59.)	X						X		X			
3	Found in connection with traffic demand management and density bonus and development incentives. The density bonus and development program incentives can be used to reduce parking permits for affordable and senior housing. (See "Chapter 17.88 - Density Bonus and Development Incentives.")	X						X		X			

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: COMPLETE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
REFORM MUNICIPAL PARKING REGULATIONS	★	M	Require that any on-site parking spaces in walkable areas be placed behind buildings.
	★	M	Allow off-site and shared parking.
	★	M	Provide easily accessible bike parking in high-demand locations.
RETAIN AND RECRUIT CIVIC INSTITUTIONS AND NON-PROFITS	★	M	Establish non-profit hubs in neighborhood main street or other neighborhood-adjacent areas.
	★	L	Establish a community foundation to support local community-focused non-profits.
IMPROVE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT	★	M	Amend zoning to allow small-scale manufacturing within neighborhood centers or main streets
	★	L	Incentivize and recruit new businesses within walkable, bikeable, and transit accessible areas.
IMPROVE ACCESS TO RECREATION	★	M	Build parks where they are easily reachable by foot, bike, or transit.
DEVELOP NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS	★	M	Develop master plans for downtown and other neighborhood centers to guide mixed-use infill development and redevelopment.
	★	M	Amend zoning as needed to implement new downtown and neighborhood center plans.
ALIGN PLANNING DOCUMENTS	★	S	Ensure that comprehensive plans include goals and policies on health and equity.

GOAL: COMPLETE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	Not found in code, but the general plan supports it. (See "04 - Land-Use + Community Character (coachella.org).")	X						X		X			
2	Off-site parking is only encouraged in one area. See above at "Although no general policy found, there is a de-facto...."	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X				X						X	
3	Not found.	X			X	X	X					X	X
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X					X
3	Not found.	X				X				X			
3	Not found.	X						X				X	
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X				X	X
1	The city does this. The Pueblo Viejo plan mentioned several times above is one example. (See "Pueblo Viejo District Plans Coachella, CA" and "Zona Central; Downtown Expansion (coachella.org)" at Figure 9. The other specific plans may do this as well. There is also the general plan's call for planning the neighborhood centers identified in "04 - Land Use + Community Character (coachella.org).")	X					X	X		X			
3	The general plan calls for, or in any case would require, updating zoning throughout.	X					X	X		X			
1	The general plan includes community health and wellness. Moreover, the state requires that both be considered. (See "06 - Community Health + Wellness (coachella.org).")	X						X		X			

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
REDUCE THE COST OF PROVIDING ADDITIONAL HOUSING	★	M	Amend parking requirements to reduce the number of on-site parking spaces required for new housing.
	★	S	Amend parking requirements to allow on-street parking spaces to count towards any on-site parking requirements.
	★	M	Where impact fees exist, reduce or eliminate fees for affordable housing.
	★	M	Where impact fees exist, tier fees by the size and location of new housing units.
	★	S	Amend zoning to remove requirements that each new housing unit be larger than an arbitrary size.
	★	M	Amend ordinances that arbitrarily limit the acceptable composition of a family
	★	L	Amend allowable densities to align with infill housing models (such as missing middle types).

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	The density bonus and development program incentives can be used to reduce parking permits for affordable and senior housing. (See "Chapter 17.88 - Density Bonus and Development Incentives.")	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	The impact fee schedule makes no distinction, except between single family and multi-family. (See "Development Impact Fee Schedule.")	X						X		X			
3	Each zone has its own development regulations, so the examples given here are not the only ones. Each of them sets them unit sizes and/or capacity in rooms that may be arbitrarily large by some standards. (§ 17.18.020 - Permitted uses (R-O 6000 zone)" and "§ 17.20.030 - Property development standards (R-M Zone).")	X						X		X			
1	A family is a "...person or persons living together as a single housekeeping unit in a residential building." (See "§ 17.06.070 - Definitions beginning with "F".")	X						X		X			
3	The existing zones are not geared to missing middle densities, although they can be built to some extent. For example, in the R-M Multiple Family Zone, the minimum site area is 10,000 square feet for a building of five units, or one unit per 3,200 square feet per unit on smaller lots. Thus, a 9,999 square foot lot could only have three units, but a 10,000 square foot lot could have five units. This tends to favor building on lots a minimum of about 1/4th acre in size. However, it also means that relatively small tweaks could make missing middle possible. (See "§ 17.20.030 - Property development standards (RM Zone).")	X						X		X			

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
REDUCE THE COST OF PROVIDING ADDITIONAL HOUSING	REGULATORY	S	Establish a program to reimburse application and review fees for affordable housing.
	REGULATORY	L	Establish a local affordable housing development non-profit.
	REGULATORY	M	Establish a community land trust or similar entity, if one does not exist, to provide and manage affordable housing.
	REGULATORY	L	Encourage area institutions (e.g. hospitals and universities) to provide nearby affordable housing for their staff.
ENABLE AND ENCOURAGE INFILL HOUSING	REGULATORY	L	Amend zoning to allow missing middle housing in single-family zones.
	REGULATORY	M	Amend zoning to permit more intensive housing along transit lines (where they exist)
	REGULATORY	M	Amend zoning to reduce maximum lot coverage caps to block infill housing.
	REGULATORY	S	Amend zoning to allow residential uses in commercial zones.

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	This can be done with the density bonus.	X						X				X	
2	The Riverside Housing Development Corporation is active in the county, as is the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition. (See "Affordable Housing in the Inland Empire - RHDC (rhdc.org)" and "Affordable Housing Development Organization - Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (cvhc.org).")	X			X			X				X	X
1	There is a new one: the Inland Equity Community Land Trust. (See "Inland Equity Community Land Trust" and "Home Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (harivco.org).")	X			X			X				X	X
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X				X	X
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X						X		X			

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
ENABLE AND ENCOURAGE INFILL HOUSING		L	Provide streamlined review processes for small-scale infill housing, such as making site-plan review an administrative rather than a discretionary process.
		S	Schedule an Incremental Development training session for potential local developers to facilitate small scale infill housing.
ENABLE AND ENCOURAGE ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS		S	Amend zoning to allow accessory dwellings on residential lots, within existing buildings or as accessory buildings, including the following regulatory elements.
		S	Amend zoning for accessory apartments to eliminate size caps that are smaller than 600 sq.ft. or 50% of the primary dwelling unit size, whichever is greater.
		S	Amend zoning that requires owner-occupancy for the principal or accessory unit.
		S	Amend zoning to remove parking requirements for accessory dwelling units.
		S	Provide training and assistance for homeowners in creating accessory dwelling units.
ALIGN COMMUNITY'S PLANNING DOCUMENTS		M	Ensure that the housing element in a comprehensive plan includes essential goals and strategies to encourage additional housing, such as those listed above.
		M	Complete a housing study to analyze and document existing conditions and needs, and describing next steps in creating additional housing.

GOAL: INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS													
STATUS	Status of strategies: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on it. 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy. 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, by e.g. preemption from state.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
3	Not found.	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X				X	X
1	The state requires cities to permit accessory dwellings. (See "§ 17.60.010 - Property development standards (General)" at H.)	X						X		X			
1	See immediately above.	X						X		X			
1	There is no owner-occupancy requirement for ADUs built after January 1, 2020. (See "§ 17.60.010 - Property development standards (General)" at H.5.f.)	X						X		X			
	No parking is required for accessory dwelling units in some circumstances. (See "§ 17.60.010 - Property development standards (General)" at H.6.g.)	X						X		X			
3	Not found.	X			X	X		X				X	X
1	The housing element does. (See "11 - Housing (coachella.org).")	X						X		X			
1	The housing element did so. (See "11 - Housing (coachella.org).")	X	X					X	X			X	



COACHELLA

Food Environment

The food system includes all the components and activities associated with growing, handling, packaging, distributing, getting, making, and eating food. These elements are supported and shaped by policies and systems that ultimately result in the design of a community's food environment, which encompasses the availability of healthy and unhealthy food and beverages in the places we work, live, learn, and play.



The extent to which a community's food system enables people to have easy, reliable access to affordable healthy food is a key predictor of dietary choices and risk for diet-related chronic diseases.

This report is meant to be a snapshot in time for local community policy and well-being. The policy team endeavors to explore all policy work that is underway in the community. This report may not reflect all efforts in which the community is engaged.



Introduction

The well-planned City of Coachella features a charming, historic downtown replete with locally owned Mexican grocery stores and a busier, lengthy commercial corridor with small and large food retailers and numerous types of restaurants. The downtown is surrounded by residential neighborhoods of various economic strata that eventually shift into newer, more affluent housing developments and extensive agricultural production on the outskirts of town.

With a strong historical and contemporary connection to agriculture, Coachella was a key locus for farmworker labor organizing led by Cesar Chavez and remains a population center for a large Latino agricultural workforce. The cultural and economic reality of agricultural labor is essential to Coachella's past and current community identity. The jurisdictional footprints of the city and Riverside County share a geography with multiple sovereign tribal nations. The confluence of these factors forge unique and intriguing opportunities for Coachella's food future.



These assets are offset by numerous challenges, which include higher than average rates of food insecurity and diet-related diseases. California's current cost-of-living squeezes household budgets that must be stretched to meet basic needs. High need, combined with an overall lack of adequate resources to address them and to invest in innovative new strategies, strains existing systems. It is important to state that many of the diet-related health issues faced by Coachella residents are a result of the structural inequities and economic conditions they face as an immigrant labor force working physically demanding jobs with low pay and long hours.

Coachella's food environment assessment was completed through background research, a site visit, and interviews with local leaders. Led by the Blue Zones Food environment Team, this process engaged key food and agriculture stakeholders and included windshield and walking tours; visual inventories of food-related assets; and a scan of relevant food-related policies. The food environment assessment is a means to evaluate community readiness to enhance well-being by increasing access to healthy food and beverages and decreasing access to unhealthy food and beverages in the places people spend their time. This report synthesizes core findings, related next steps, and perspectives on the state of Coachella's food system and is designed to provide useful information to community leaders and interested stakeholders.

Blue Zones Food environment Goals

Enjoying a nutritious diet daily, combined with social connection, and a sense of purpose are fundamental components of the healthy, active Blue Zones lifestyle. In the context of food, this means the community where we live and the environments where we spend most of our time offer affordable, culturally relevant, nourishing dietary choices and the opportunity to relax and enjoy our meals in the fellowship of others. It also means our local food system fosters a vibrant, healthy local food culture; access to nutritious options in the places we spend time; community food assets and infrastructure that promote local agriculture and healthy options; and the development of healthy food skills across the lifespan. Policy and systems changes, combined with shifts to community infrastructure, are proven ways to move the dial on health outcomes. Each of the core Blue Zones food environment aims are described below.

MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE:

Increase participation in healthy food programs; ensure children have enough healthy food to eat; and foster healthy hunger relief programs to ensure that all residents have easy access to healthy food.

BUILD FOOD SKILLS:

Prioritize education on how to grow and cook healthy food and foster opportunities for families to eat together. Strengthening people’s food skills can equip them with the knowledge they need to select and prepare healthy food, improving the nutritional quality of their daily food choices.

INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS:

Ensure healthy options and habits for young children, children in K-12 environments, and on college campuses; increase healthy eating behaviors in hospitals and public institutions; and promote healthy options and habits for everyone. Making the healthy choice the easy choice in the places people spend time will increase consumption of nutritious items and decrease consumption of unhealthy items.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

GROW LONG-TERM COMMUNITY HEALTH:

Establish lasting leadership on food issues for the community; build a base of resources to keep children healthy; and make healthy grocery access easy for everyone. Ongoing, thoughtful planning around food, health, and agriculture with consistent relevant resource support creates healthy choice options in a community.

GROW THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY:

Use public land and planning to enable food production by local residents; care for natural resources needed to grow food; and support area farmers and food enterprises to raise and sell food for local markets. Creating and sustaining a community’s infrastructure around food production and food and farm enterprises fosters a dynamic food culture; galvanizes the local economy; and fosters community food self-sufficiency.

The Blue Zones Food Policy Menu identifies specific strategies that can help achieve the above goals. Coachella’s food environment assessment focused on determining the extent to which the City has pursued strategies contained in the policy menu, within the geographic focus area.

Strengths

Across the community anchor institutions and systems in Coachella, there is a high degree of engagement and support to respond to and innovate around food-related issues. The City Council is highly involved and open to innovation, as is the School District. Game-changing statewide legislation around micro-enterprise home kitchens originated here. New agricultural assets that focus on the local community, combined with other plans afoot for food skills development show real promise. There are numerous resources to foster a vibrant local food culture, healthy food skills and food environments, and a robust community food infrastructure. Key assets include:

NEW AND EMERGING FOOD ASSETS: On the edge of town, across from Coachella’s High School, the Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians recently opened the 50-acre Temalpakh Farm. This multi-faceted agricultural enterprise raises an array of organically grown fruits and vegetables, which they sell through individual subscriptions for weekly boxes (CSA share); wholesale accounts; and an on-farm indoor market that includes a smoothie bar. An adjacent classroom space, combined with an array of outdoor seating areas, offers an opportunity for groups to learn more about agriculture, tribal presence in the region, and healthy eating. While the surrounding community may not fully realize it, the Tribe has built an incredible asset that not only is a new source of affordable, healthy, locally grown food, but is also a food hub. At present, they are aggregating, processing, and distributing food grown onsite.

Immediately across the road from Temalpakh Farm’s front gate, a small number of livestock are sheltered in covered pens – part of the high school’s agricultural education program. Behind the animals lies a large, open tract of land. In coming years, this acreage will become the District’s state of the art Agricultural and Natural Resources Academy. The facilities will feature a section for farm animals, a greenhouse, and two plots for seasonal and long-term crops production. These plots will include a vineyard, orchards, date palm groves, vertical production, spaces for large scale composting and vermiculture, and more.

Both of these significant investments provide long-term growth opportunities for Coachella’s local food system. The thought leadership and associated investment of the Tribe, combined with the School District’s commitment to train a next generation of agricultural professionals show true vision and innovation.



Activate Riverside County – City of Coachella Assessment Report

Activate Riverside County – City of Coachella Assessment Report



BLUE ZONES 103

A ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE OF CULTURALLY FOCUSED FOOD RETAIL:

Coachella offers an array of culturally familiar food retail options across the community that offer an abundance of healthy options. City staff note that large grocery retailers may not best serve their community; smaller, locally owned stores seem to work better in Coachella. Many “food desert” studies miss these important markets.

Numerous, locally owned carnicerías and other small Mexican markets offer abundant dried, fresh, and frozen produce, beans, whole grains, and grain based products for home cooks, as well as prepared items. While there are unhealthy foods and beverages sold in these outlets, they are well stocked with healthy items. Larger Mexican grocery outlets also line the main commercial corridor downtown, including Rancho Grande and Cardenas markets.

Throughout the community, one can also find small vendors selling fresh fruits and prepared foods at intersections and larger farm stands. Just across the city limits in Indio, the beloved L&G Desert Store offers just-picked, locally grown, high quality produce, a variety of other groceries, and numerous prepared food items, many of which are healthy.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

GARDENS GALORE: Many Coachella residents are extremely skilled at growing food and have an active interest in home gardening. There are multiple community gardens in Coachella, including two community gardens with multiple raised beds located in affordable family housing sites that are managed by the City. By local ordinance, food gardens and orchards are permitted as incidental uses, but chickens and beekeeping are only permitted in agricultural and agricultural transition zones.

The City’s current General Plan also features important content relevant to food production, expressing support for creating further opportunities to grow more food. The Agriculture Element of the plan defines how to preserve important agricultural land. The Plan’s chapter, “Community Health and Wellness” stipulates: “Neighborhoods will provide opportunities for residents to improve their physical and mental health while meeting daily needs – walking to the store, meeting friends, bicycling to school, taking transit to work and having access to nutritious and affordable food that can be purchased or grown in the neighborhood.”



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report



COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO FOOD INSECURITY:

Many Coachella residents struggle to meet basic needs, including the ability to pay for food. Food insecurity rates are higher than average. The hunger relief system is well integrated and offers an array of ways that people in need can get culturally familiar, healthy food. CalFresh and WIC programs provide important resources to purchase food. Locally administered hunger relief programs reach farmworkers at their employer farms, as well as through a network of food pantries in town located in churches, schools, and social service providers. Hidden Harvest is a local non-profit organization that rescues produce via gleaning from local large agricultural producers and redistributes this healthy food through the hunger relief system.

Challenges



There are several challenges that could prevent or hinder Coachella from maximizing or fully capitalizing on opportunities. These include:

FOOD IS EXPENSIVE: Poverty is a core challenge for Coachella residents and plays an instrumental role in peoples’ access to healthy food and their risk for diet-related chronic diseases. Many Coachella residents are low income, which limits their ability to purchase healthy options. Fresh produce is viewed as particularly costly, which means people are putting their food dollars toward items that go the farthest in terms of filling stomachs for the lowest price. Often, the cheapest items are highly processed and least nutritious. Put another way, there is a high rate of food insecurity in Coachella. While many programs and people work mightily to close the missing meals gap and provide as much healthy, culturally relevant food as possible, there is still more to do.

BIG IDEAS, FEW RESOURCES: There is no shortage of well thought out and carefully planned ideas to undertake food-focused community well-being and local food environment initiatives. Resources are the issue. Coachella needs an infusion of investment and support to undertake these ambitious concepts, respond to opportunities, and implement needed healthy eating efforts.

Opportunities

ALIGNING AND COORDINATING COACHELLA’S FOOD SYSTEM LEADERS: Coachella would benefit from more strategic alignment and formalization of networks among key food environment players and resources. Establishing a local food policy council and involving representation from key systems and food environment sectors (including tribal participation, if interested), can help the community implement innovative food environment development initiatives to create healthier food environments, expand food skills education, and generate supportive infrastructure for the local food system.

HATCHING A COMPREHENSIVE FOOD ENVIRONMENT PLAN: While Coachella has several assets, there is a lot of interest in and opportunities to strengthen the local food system and improve community well-being. A food system’s plan that offers goals, related objectives, and proven strategies across sectors and priorities can help Coachella improve the health of the community and serve as a valuable resource for obtaining resources to execute the plan.



CREATING HEALTHY FOOD POLICIES AT KEY SITES: There is also more that can be done around nutrition and healthy food procurement policies at anchor institutions across the community, including K-12 schools, post-secondary education, the healthcare system, and local units of government. These types of policies will increase farm to institution purchasing; improve the quality of meals; expand support for school gardens and community agricultural activity; reduce access to unhealthy food and beverages; increase access to healthy items; and elicit a comprehensive improvement to many food environments across the community where people spend time every day. There is already groundwork laid in many of these settings, but much more could be accomplished with time, attention, and resources.

GROWING WELL BEING AT AREA SCHOOLS: The School District has a demonstrated track record of food environment work, including farm to school, nutrition education, school gardens, agricultural education programs, and hunger relief work. Yet there is more to be done, in terms of need, interest, opportunity, and innovation. Coachella’s schools would like to take on new initiatives but require more resources and infrastructure to do so, including offering a culinary skills program, growing school garden programs, and increasing farm to school. Limitations of staff and budget are the constraining factors.

There seems to be an opportunity to :

- ✔ Introduce a farmers market
- ✔ Provide outlets / licenses for small scale producers to have farm stands on property.

Readiness

By all reports, key agencies and core players are eager to further develop Coachella’s local food system, with an eye to community well-being and vitality. Individually and collectively, leaders have done a lot of thinking and planning, engaging many stakeholders along the way. There is extensive support from the grassroots and grasstops for community food environment work.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

Acknowledgements

Blue Zones acknowledges the following individuals who contributed to Assessment Phase activities.

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Brad Hardison	Master Gardener
Esmerelda Nunez	CalFresh Healthy Living
Gabriel Perez	Development Services Director, City of Coachella
Gurumantra Khalsa	World Be Well
Jasmine Martinez	City of Coachella
Marcus Alonzo	Coachella Valley Unified School District Nutrition Services

Blue Zones Food Environment Policy Menu

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

- Category:
- ★ **REGULATORY** — Creating or changing legally binding standards, rules, or laws, such as zoning codes, ordinances, permitting, or licensing standards.
 - ★ **NON-REGULATORY** — Creating or changing programs, guidance, or education efforts.

GOAL: BUILD FOOD SKILLS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
PRIORITIZE EDUCATION ON HOW TO GROW AND COOK HEALTHY FOOD	★	XL	Require all middle school students to take a course on healthy eating and healthy food preparation
	★	M	Leverage existing youth programs, such as school classes, parks and recreation programs, and other local or regional efforts, to provide culturally responsive, healthy food skills education.
	★	S	Conduct an inventory of existing food skill resources and programs to guide a community-wide strategy.
	★	M	Develop and adopt a comprehensive, community-wide food skill & education strategy.
	★	M	Leverage community and regional organizations, such as non-profit programs, federal and extension nutrition programs, faith based initiatives, to provide culturally responsive, healthy food skills education.
	★	S	Establish a seed give-away program, which may be run through libraries, schools, or local non-profits.
	★	S	Establish a home garden education program.
EATING TOGETHER	★	S	Establish programs that incentivize a shared mealtime day of the week, including a recommendation to eat a plant-slant meal.

GOAL: BUILD FOOD SKILLS														
STATUS	Status of strategies from Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on affecting the policy but could do more. 3. Locale recognizes the need for work on the policy but has not started to work on it. 4. Locale does not recognize this policy as a priority and has no plans to work on it. 5. The scope of this assessment did not ascertain information about the status of this item.	Coachella Policy Scan												
		WHO					WHERE				HOW			
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
2	There is not evidence of a requirement for middle school students. Nutrition education is delivered through Health Education classes. Coachella Valley HS has a culinary curriculum through CTE.					X				X			X	
2	Some youth program do have nutrition and food skills education. SNAP-ED is active throughout the county, healthcare offers nutrition classes to patients.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X					X
4	Inventory not identified.	X			X	X			X	X				X
4	This is not happening.	X				X								
2	SNAP ED is active in food skills education throughout the county, including Coachella.				X	X		X	X					X
4	There is not currently a large organized event or location for seed swapping, though the Master Gardeners or some community gardens may do so on a small scale.	X			X	X			X					X
2	There is a robust UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardener program that includes activity in Coachella. The Desert Horticultural Society is also engaged in putting on "Coachella Garden Day."	X	X		X	X		X	X					X
5	This is not happening but it is unclear yet if it would be a priority or good community fit.	X			X				X		X			X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN HEALTHY FOOD PROGRAMS	★	M	Include food insecurity screenings at healthcare providers as part of well-baby and regular doctor's appointments to increase enrollment in free and low-cost hunger relief programs and services.
	★	M	Establish requirements or offer financial incentives for farmers markets, grocery stores, and all other food retailers to accept SNAP and WIC payments.
	★	M	Increase enrollment of eligible childcare providers in USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
	★	M	Establish locally administered food incentive programs, such as market match, Power of Produce, produce prescriptions, and healthy food boxes for seniors from local farms and farmers markets.
	★	L	Amend zoning regulations to prohibit new fast-food restaurants near schools and public playgrounds, and in neighborhoods that are saturated with fast-food restaurants.
	★	M	Establish or expand locally administered food incentive programs for SNAP and/or WIC recipients, such as market match and prescription produce to retailers, such as large and small grocery stores and corner and convenience stores.
GIVE CHILDREN ENOUGH FOOD	★	S	Increase enrollment for eligible K-12 school students in free/reduced school meals programs.
	★	M	Establish universal second chance breakfast at all schools.

GOAL: MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE													
STATUS	Status of strategies from Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on affecting the policy but could do more. 3. Locale recognizes the need for work on the policy but has not started to work on it. 4. Locale does not recognize this policy as a priority and has no plans to work on it. 5. The scope of this assessment did not ascertain information about the status of this item.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
5	No clear indication food insecurity screenings are offered within the various healthcare systems, though many note that reducing food insecurity is part of their community improvement plans.					X			X			X	
4	No clear indication of incentives for retailers or program to do so	X	X						X		X		X
4	There is not evidence this is happening.	X	X		X								X
4	There are no certified farmers markets in the City of Coachella, but there are several in neighboring cities that accept SNAP and WIC and Market Match. There was once a FM that was not successful. City staff are interested in learning more about what could be successful in Coachella.				X	X	X		X				X
4	No evidence of this policy	X	X				X						
5	There are no retail locations that accept Market Match in Coachella, but this may be due to state limitations with the program.					X			X				X
1	California recently passed legislation that will provide free school breakfast and lunch to all CA children.					X			X				X
5	Many schools offer second chance breakfast, and it is specifically mentioned as a priority in the student wellness policy.				X				X				X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
GIVE CHILDREN ENOUGH FOOD	REGULATORY	M	Expand participation in USDA summer meals programs for eligible children.
	REGULATORY	S	Support a food backpack program for children that align with BZ nutrition guidelines.
PRIORITIZE HEALTHY HUNGER RELIEF PROGRAMS	REGULATORY	M	Adopt food pantry and food bank policies geared to healthy items, such as fresh produce, beans, and whole grains, and limit donations of unhealthy processed food and beverages.
	REGULATORY	M	Develop food rescue initiatives with area food retailers to accept donations of healthy, surplus food for hunger relief system.
	REGULATORY	L	Develop mobile food delivery infrastructure for communities with limited access to healthy food.
	REGULATORY	S	Create a food pantry on college campuses that features healthy options.

GOAL: MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE														
STATUS	Description	Coachella Policy Scan												
		WHO					WHERE				HOW			
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
2	Coachella Valley Unified School District works with a number of partners to provide summer meals					X						X		X
2	United Way Inland SoCal runs a backpack program that served 2,000 homeless or very low income youth in the past year. There is no indication that the program has nutritional guidelines. The Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino and Riverside Food Bank Distributions does drive-through food distributions for parents of school children at school sites, consistently in the same locations with routine distribution schedules. NOTE: Desert Sands District elementary schools have 31 of 33 elementary schools providing suppers M-F.				X	X	X							X
4	There is not evidence this is happening.				X		X				X		X	X
2	The Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino and Riverside Food Bank has a robust grocery rescue program that includes sites in Coachella				X						X		X	X
2	The Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino and Riverside Food Bank has a mobile pantry program serving more rural areas that does come to Coachella, serving about 250 families per month. They are looking to expand this program in the future. In the urban areas, mobile grocery services do accept SNAP and WIC.				X						X		X	X
2	The Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino Food Bank has a program that works with campus partners to provide food for campus food pantries. It is unclear if there are nutritional guidelines.					X	X						X	

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
ENSURE HEALTHY OPTIONS AND HABITS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN		L	Expand childcare licensing regulations to include wellness requirements around healthy snacks and meals, plant slant options, and beverages that align with Blue Zones nutrition standards.
		M	If changing licensing requirements isn't an option, create voluntary well-being policies around healthy snacks, meals, and beverages that align with Blue Zone nutrition standards.
ENSURE HEALTHY OPTIONS AND HABITS FOR CHILDREN IN K-12 ENVIRONMENTS		M	Adopt nutrition standards that align with Blue Zone nutrition guidelines for food and beverages everywhere students consume food, such as after school program, in the lunchroom, classroom, vending machines, concession and other areas where students may consume food or beverages.
		M	Establish policies around merchandising, display, and verbal and behavioral prompts that encourage healthy eating.
		S	Establish a school garden education program.
INCREASE HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS AND HABITS ON CAMPUS OF HIGHER LEARNING		M	Set guidelines for nutrition and local procurement practices for all foodservice and vending contracts in all places where students learn.
		M	Establish local food procurement standards for learning campuses, using Blue Zones nutrition guidelines to guide food procurement and preparation.
INCREASE HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS IN HOSPITALS		M	Adopt CDC recommendations for healthy hospital foods served to patients and within the cafeteria and vending machines that align with BZ nutrition standards.
		S	Establish programs to promote breastfeeding for new mothers.

GOAL: INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS													
STATUS	Status of strategies from Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on affecting the policy but could do more. 3. Locale recognizes the need for work on the policy but has not started to work on it. 4. Locale does not recognize this policy as a priority and has no plans to work on it. 5. The scope of this assessment did not ascertain information about the status of this item.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
4	There is not evidence this is happening	X						X		X			
4	There is not evidence this is happening				X	X	X					X	
2	The school wellness policy has some nutrition standards but could be more robust.					X			X			X	
4	There is not evidence of this at a policy level.				X	X						X	
2	There are school gardens in several schools but they need more support.	X	X			X							
5	Procurement and vending contract review was outside of the scope of this assessment.					X	X					X	
5	Procurement and vending contract review was outside of the scope of this assessment.					X			X			X	
2	The Desert Healthcare District is recognized for its efforts to have a Healthy Cafeteria and patient meals					X	X					X	
2	There are some breastfeeding programs, though there is advocacy for hospitals and employers to do more.	X	X		X	X			X			X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
INCREASE HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS IN HOSPITALS	★	M	Implement 'baby friendly hospital' policies and procedures.
	★	M	Establish local food procurement standards, using Blue Zones nutrition guidelines to guide food procurement and preparation.
INCREASE HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS IN PUBLIC FACILITIES	★	L	Enact nutrition policy that aligns with BZ nutrition guidelines and applies to all food and beverages purchased by a local government.
	★	M	Establish local food procurement standards, using Good Food Purchasing Practices and BZ nutrition guidelines to guide food procurement and preparation in publicly managed facilities.
PROMOTE HEALTHY OPTIONS AND HABITS FOR EVERYONE	★	M	Adopt a "Healthy Corner Store" policy to require/encourage corner stores to offer healthy food and beverage options, decrease unhealthy food advertising, adjust floor plans to encourage healthier eating choices.
	★		
PROMOTE HEALTHY OPTIONS AND HABITS FOR EVERYONE	★	M	Establish farm to institution program, everywhere children and young adults learn and eat, using Good Food Purchasing Practices and Blue Zones nutrition guidelines to guide food procurement and preparation.
	★	S	Encourage businesses and institutions to provide private, convenient, and clean spaces for breastfeeding.
	★	S	Create nudges to increase consumption of healthy options by students, including marketing, merchandising and display, and verbal and behavioral prompts.
	★	L	Prohibit the sales of energy drinks to minors.
	★	S	Establish pricing incentives for food and beverages sold in vending machines, where healthier options are priced more affordably than unhealthy options, accompanied by marketing that prompts healthy choices.

GOAL: INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS														
STATUS	Status of strategies from Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on affecting the policy but could do more. 3. Locale recognizes the need for work on the policy but has not started to work on it. 4. Locale does not recognize this policy as a priority and has no plans to work on it. 5. The scope of this assessment did not ascertain information about the status of this item.	Coachella Policy Scan												
		WHO					WHERE				HOW			
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
2	No hospitals in Coachella are listed as "baby-friendly" but they do demonstrate efforts to support breastfeeding.					X	X						X	
4	No evidence of this policy					X	X						X	
4	No evidence of this policy	X	X					X	X	X				
4	There is not evidence this is happening.	X	X					X	X	X				
4	Though there may be healthier options at some smaller stores, there is not evidence of an initiative on a policy level.	X						X		X				
4	There is not evidence this is happening anywhere but schools.	X				X		X	X				X	X
2	This is happening in some places but not everywhere.	X				X		X	X				X	X
2	This is happening in some places but not everywhere.	X			X	X		X	X				X	X
4	No evidence of this policy	X						X		X			X	
4	No evidence of this policy	X						X		X				

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE Category: ★ REGULATORY ★ NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: GROW LONG-TERM COMMUNITY HEALTH			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
ESTABLISH LASTING LEADERSHIP ON FOOD ISSUES FOR THE COMMUNITY	★	S	Establish a city or county food policy council to provide ongoing advice and input to policymakers and staff on food-related issues.
BUILD A BASE OF RESOURCES TO KEEP CHILDREN HEALTHY	★	XL	Enact healthy kids impact fee at the register to provide a permanent resource for community health strategies designed to ensure child and adolescent health.
MAKE HEALTHY GROCERY ACCESS EASY FOR EVERYONE	★	S	Adopt or amend transit policies to allow grocery bags on public transportation, reducing barriers for individuals reliant on transit to buy groceries.
	★	M	Amend zoning regulations to allow vacant, unimproved, or otherwise blighted lands to be used for small-scale production of agricultural crops and animal husbandry.
	★	L	Amend zoning laws to create a Healthy Food Overlay district that establishes limits on prevalence of small box food retailers; requires minimum square footage of store space to offer healthy, perishable options and increases access to land and resources for community gardens and farmers markets.
	★	XL	Provide incentives for grocers to locate in food desert neighborhoods with limited access to healthy food.

GOAL: GROW LONG-TERM COMMUNITY HEALTH														
STATUS	Coachella Policy Scan	WHO					WHERE				HOW			
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
		4	There is no multi-sector food policy body.	X	X		X							
4	No evidence of this policy	X	X	X				X			L/S			
1	There is no policy prohibiting bags on transit.	X	X					X	X	X				
4	No evidence of this policy, but there is city support in the General Plan to create opportunities to grow more food (see next item)													
2	No evidence of this specific policy, but a chapter on "Community Health and Wellness" are part of the General Plan: "Neighborhoods will provide opportunities for residents to improve their physical and mental health while meeting daily needs - walking to the store, meeting friends, bicycling to school, taking transit to work and having access to nutritious and affordable food F59that can be purchased or grown in the neighborhood." https://cityofcoachellageneralplanupdate.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/1/2/12129446/community_health_and_wellness.pdf	X						X		X				
4	No evidence of this policy. City staff note that large grocery retailers may not serve their community best. Small, locally-owned stores seem to work better. Many "food desert" studies miss these important markets.	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	X	

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: GROW THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY			
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)
USE PUBLIC LAND AND PLANNING TO ENABLE FOOD PRODUCTION BY LOCAL RESIDENTS	REGULATORY	M	Amend zoning regulations to permit backyard chickens, beehives, front yard fruit trees, food gardens, non-commercial greenhouses, and rooftop gardens.
	REGULATORY	S	Amend zoning regulations to establish, protect, and expand community gardens and orchards on public land and land provided by community organizations and members.
	NON-REGULATORY	L	Establish plant edible landscaping and pollinator friendly perennial landscapes program on publicly managed landscapes and new local-government funded housing developments
	REGULATORY	L	Amend the zoning to preserve prime farm lands for primary agriculture use and to preserve of high quality fish and wildlife habitat primarily for fishing and hunting.
	REGULATORY	M	Amend zoning regulations to create an urban agricultural incentive zones in which there are dedicated sites are eligible for reduced property taxes if the site is used for an agricultural public benefit, e.g., education, community garden, or food donations.
CARE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES NEEDED TO GROW FOOD	REGULATORY	M	Amend jurisdictional ordinances or policies to prohibits the use of pesticides on publicly managed lands to support pollinators.
	NON-REGULATORY	S	Educate retailers to discourage the sale of nursery plants treated with pesticides that are particularly harmful to bees and other pollinators.
SUPPORT AREA FARMERS TO RAISE FOOD FOR LOCAL MARKETS	NON-REGULATORY	L	Establish a food hub where local farmers can sell their produce to restaurants, schools, hospitals, and institutions.

GOAL: GROW THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY													
STATUS	Status of strategies from Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy. 2. Locale is working on affecting the policy but could do more. 3. Locale recognizes the need for work on the policy but has not started to work on it. 4. Locale does not recognize this policy as a priority and has no plans to work on it. 5. The scope of this assessment did not ascertain information about the status of this item.	Coachella Policy Scan											
		WHO					WHERE				HOW		
		Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations
2	Greenhouses, Food gardens, and orchards are permitted as incidental uses; chickens and bees are only allowed in agricultural and ag transition zones.	X	X					X		X			X
2	There is not yet policy that specifically protects or supports community gardens, but city staff is interested in learning more about what is effective and necessary that they can work on.	X						X		X			X
2	There are two city-supported community gardens at multi-family housing sites in Coachella.	X	X					X	X			X	
2	The Agriculture Element of the City General Plan seeks to define how to preserve important ag land.												
4	No evidence of this policy	X					X			X			
4	No evidence of this policy	X						X		X			
4	No evidence of this policy	X				X		X					X
	There has been a lot of work done to figure out what it would take to create a food hub in Coachella, but the new tribally owned Temalpakh Farm essentially functions as a brand new food hub, as well as retail and wholesaler of organically grown produce raised on their farm: https://ulidigitalmarketing.blob.core.windows.net/ulidcnc/sites/58/2020/08/ShareKitchen.pdf Note: ShareKitchen does not appear to be in business at this time.				X	X			X			X	X



COACHELLA

Alcohol

Alcohol misuse is the third leading cause of death in the U.S., and it frequently figures in motor vehicle crashes, homicides, suicides, drownings, falls, and many diseases. It remains a greater threat to public health than opioids or street drugs. According to the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics (NCDAS), alcohol abuse, alcoholism and alcohol use kills 95,000 Americans each year. NCDAS also reports a 60% increase in alcohol consumption since the COVID-19 lockdowns.



Excessive use of alcohol through binge drinking or heavy drinking (drinking 15 or more drinks per week for men or 8 or more drinks per week for women) also increases the risk of many health-related problems including liver disease.

This report is meant to be a snapshot in time for local community policy and well-being. The policy team endeavors to explore all policy work that is underway in the community. This report may not reflect all efforts in which the community is engaged.





A readiness assessment of Coachella, California, was conducted during January - February 2023, beginning with a scan of the Coachella Municipal Code to identify local alcohol policies, followed up by focus groups with local stakeholders on January 25. This readiness assessment focused on existing alcohol-related policies and initiatives that affect the overall community environment to either enable or restrict alcohol access, availability, and consumption. This report also reviewed the environmental context of alcohol as a community-wide variable of intervention for prevention and control efforts to improve overall community health and vitality. The methods used to inform this report included convening and interviewing key stakeholders, reviewing key documents and data, and understanding the alcohol policy infrastructure and the types of programs and services available to the Coachella community.

In the United States, each state has the authority to regulate the manufacture, distribution, and sale of alcohol within its state borders. This means state and local jurisdictions may have their own requirements in addition to federal requirements and can enhance and strengthen what Federal law provides. California's alcohol policies directly related to the manufacture, distribution, and sale of alcoholic beverages are established at the state level by the California Alcoholic Beverage Control Act (ABC Act), enforced by the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (CA-ABC) and preempt the authority of local jurisdictions.

For example, only CA-ABC can issue a license to a business allowing it to sell alcohol in the State of California. Taxes on the sale of alcohol in California can only be established by the State and Federal Governments, and not at the local level. The minimum drinking age, maximum blood alcohol limits for driving, and dram shop liability are other policies strictly under State authority.

However, local jurisdictions in California can use land use (zoning) and nuisance authority to manage access, availability, and consumption of alcohol. For example, a local jurisdiction can require that alcohol establishments obtain a conditional use permit (CUP) to sell/serve alcohol in the municipality to ensure that the use is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and does not contribute to an overconcentration of alcohol businesses or problems in the area. Local government agencies such as code enforcement and police departments can monitor the compliance of such businesses with permit conditions and State laws.



According to the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (CA-ABC), there are 75 establishments licensed to sell alcohol in Coachella. This amounts to 17.7 alcohol outlets per 10,000 people and consists of 29 off-sale (e.g., convenience stores, liquor stores, grocery stores, supermarkets) and 46 on-sale outlets (e.g., restaurants, bars).²⁰

Coachella's Municipal Code includes an ordinance that specifies factors like alcohol consumption by minors as a criterion for designating a loud and unruly gathering as a public nuisance. The code also includes policies that place limits on the location, density, and operating standards of licensed establishments by requiring conditional use permits for on-sale, off-sale, and entertainment businesses that sell and serve alcohol. Other policies restrict public consumption and provision of alcohol, intoxication, and open containers of alcohol in public. Based on evaluation and supplemented with interviews and additional research into the policies and practices of Coachella, there are ways to strengthen the City's alcohol policy environment. These opportunities are presented in this Assessment Report.






²⁰ California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, 2023. <https://www.abc.ca.gov/licensing/licensing-reports/licenses-by-city/>

Blue Zones Alcohol Policy Goals

The Blue Zones Project Alcohol Policy Menu identifies three primary goals and best-practice strategies for reducing the availability and accessibility of alcohol to reduce excessive alcohol consumption and associated harms.

The Blue Zones Project Alcohol Policy Goals include:

- GOAL: Reform legal liability to reduce excessive drinking
- GOAL: Enhance public safety programs
- GOAL: Discourage excessive and under-age drinking

	 <p>BINGE drinking</p> <p>drinks on occasion</p>	 <p>HEAVY drinking</p> <p>drinks per week</p>
	<p>MEN</p> <p>5</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>WOMEN</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>8</p>

These policy goals are applicable to most communities and are supported by the existing evidence base and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) best practices. It is also noteworthy to add that Blue Zones recognizes that each community is unique, and strategies will vary from community to community.

Why focus on alcohol? The evidence base clearly establishes that excessive alcohol consumption is associated with many health and societal problems including chronic diseases, unintentional injuries, violence, and community decay. According to the CDC, excessive alcohol use includes binge-drinking, defined as consuming 4 or more drinks on an occasion for a woman or 5 or more drinks on an occasion for a man; and heavy drinking, defined as 8 or more drinks per week for a woman or 15 or more drinks per week for a man; or any alcohol use by pregnant women or anyone younger than 21. Most people who drink excessively are not alcohol-dependent and do not have alcohol use disorder (AUD). Additionally, underage drinking is considered a form of excessive drinking because it is both illegal and often involves consumption in quantities and settings that can lead to serious immediate and long-term consequences.²¹ Principally, these goals seek to implement policies that affect access, availability, and consumption of alcohol. Furthermore, these goals seek to change the environmental context of the community by cultivating a culture that values the importance of responsible alcohol sales and consumption.

²¹ U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/alcohol.htm>

Strengths

Coachella has assets and strengths to leverage for reducing the availability and accessibility of alcohol to reduce excessive alcohol consumption, youth consumption and access to alcohol, and associated harms. This includes:

ALCOHOL POLICIES: The City of Coachella has established policies to limit the consumption and sales of alcohol in public places. In addition, the City of Coachella uses its zoning authority to regulate where new alcohol establishments can be located and limit the density of alcohol outlets to protect the health and safety of specific neighborhoods. It does this by designating retail alcohol sales as a “special use,” requiring an application for a conditional use permit (CUP) to sell or serve alcohol at on-sale, off-sale, or entertainment establishments in the city. After the application is reviewed by the City Planning Department and Police Department, conditions of operation may be placed on the business to ensure that it operates in a manner compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, Coachella works to prevent underage drinking and the provision of alcohol to minors in private settings by using its authority to declare what constitutes a nuisance, including underage alcohol consumption, at large and unruly gatherings.

PROBLEM PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES: The Coachella Planning Department and Police Department are actively engaged in reviewing alcohol (CUPs). This process includes conducting public hearings to understand the resident’s opinions and concerns about new alcohol outlets. The Coachella Police Department participates in regional and state DUI prevention and enforcement activities, including the Office of Traffic Safety Sobriety/Driver License Checkpoints. The City of Coachella requires permits for special events that sell alcohol and asks applicants to report the “types of alcohol” and “location of alcoholic beverage sales (i.e. beer garden, booth)” at the special event. Community stakeholders reported talking to youth in recovery to determine where youth accessed alcohol. However, this practice was not currently connected to alcohol policy implementation or compliance efforts.

GENERAL PLAN 2035 – COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

In its General Plan Update (2035), Coachella has included goals that align with alcohol policies:

- ✔ **Goal 3: Smoke-Free Environments. Reduced negative public health impacts of tobacco smoke.**

3.4 Liquor and Tobacco marketing. Prohibit stores from placing alcohol and tobacco products near candy and from placing alcohol and tobacco advertisements on exterior signage and below four feet in height, which is child’s eye level.

- ✔ **Goal 6: Healthy Food Access. Safe and convenient access to healthy, affordable, and culturally diverse foods with low concentrations of unhealthy food providers.**

6.6 Non-alcoholic beverages. Require new liquor licensees to offer a variety of non-alcoholic beverages to their customers during all business hours.

6.7 Liquor stores. Prohibit off-site alcohol sales within 600 feet of religious institutions, hospitals, schools, parks, playgrounds, and preschools to reduce youth exposure to alcohol and the potential externalities of liquor store establishments. Consider prohibiting new liquor licenses in areas of the City where numerous alcohol retail establishments already exist.



INTERVENTION PROGRAM: Riverside County has a program to integrate screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) for individuals experiencing problems with alcohol use countywide (not specific to Coachella).



OTHER STRENGTHS: The following strengths are not related to alcohol policies but were mentioned by focus group members:

- ✔ **School and Community-Based Prevention Programs**

Riverside County Latino Commission provides education and prevention services for Coachella youth and parents. The Latino Commission has representatives working in seven schools in Coachella Valley Unified School District. They provide substance use counseling and conduct “Behavioral Research to Improve Medication-Based Treatment” (BRIM) and American Society of Addiction Medicine ASAM screenings.

The Coachella Valley Unified School District conducts drug and alcohol prevention activities, such as Red Ribbon Week.

Friday Night Live is a Riverside County Substance Abuse Program that encourages school and community-based peer prevention clubs.

- ✔ **Treatment Programs**

Riverside County provides extensive mental health treatment options for Coachella residents: <https://www.rcdmh.org/>

Other organizations, such as The Awareness Group, also provide mental health and substance use treatment.



Challenges

Due to limited community participation in focus groups and interviews, the key challenges that could prevent or hinder Coachella from maximizing or fully capitalizing on any opportunities:

MISSING INFORMATION: This assessment includes little to no understanding of the house policies or practices of alcohol-licensed establishments in Coachella. Although there are several areas in the Blue Zones policy scan that are under the direct authority of alcohol business owners or managers, there was no participation in focus groups or interviews by representatives of individual alcohol businesses, local merchant associations, or the Chamber of Commerce. Furthermore, those who participated in interviews and focus groups were unable to provide information about the policies and practices of local alcohol establishments or merchant associations. This information is necessary to include in assessing the complete picture of the alcohol policy environment and community readiness.

PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR NEEDS CONTINUED CAREFUL PLANNING AROUND ALCOHOL SALES:

In a community presentation, a city official stated the city’s desire to be a business-friendly, job-creation community, and to revitalize the downtown corridor into an entertainment center (there are currently 3 casinos). Ensuring the use and enforcement of existing policy tools, can help proactively prevent any alcohol-related problems that may result from increased access to retail alcohol sales.



Opportunities

Building from the assets, there are several opportunities to increase well-being in Coachella:

DEVELOP DATA COLLECTION METHODS: City officials and community stakeholders reported the need to collect and analyze data to make policy and prevention decisions. Collecting alcohol-related data will require resources and partner participation, including the schools, police, and business community.

UNDERAGE ACCESS TO ALCOHOL: Community stakeholders reported that youth access to alcohol is often in social settings, family homes, and similar places. Coachella’s stakeholders and City leaders have the opportunity to conduct an assessment of youth access to alcohol to determine how and where youth obtain alcohol. In part, this assessment could include determining analyzing existing “California Healthy Kids” survey data to assess the level of underage drinking and where youth are accessing and using alcohol. Coachella Valley Unified School District appears not to have participated in the California Healthy Kids Survey in the past three years. Coachella has an opportunity to resume the practice of participating in this survey to study valuable prevention data. The results, including identifying areas to improve and celebrating positive results, can be shared among stakeholders to deepen the understanding of youth access to alcohol and policy strategies to address it locally.

An assessment can help determine challenges, what is working, and help with allocating limited resources. Conducting these assessments regularly can inform prevention and policy implementation activities. In addition, community stakeholders reported talking to youth in recovery about where and how they accessed alcohol. This data could also be used anonymously to inform policy and prevention activities.

UNDERSTAND THE LOCAL IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE DRINKING: Sources and types of data can include:

- ✔ Police agencies (RCSO/CPD, CHP, CA-ABC) data - Annual alcohol-related police calls for service/crimes in areas with a high density of alcohol outlets and driving under the influence (DUI) crashes in Coachella; “place of last drink” information from those arrested for DUI; and
- ✔ Local hospitals data - Alcohol-related emergency room admissions, for example, injuries (from crashes, assaults, etc.) and alcohol poisoning/overdose.

Readiness

In general, there appears to be an appreciation for alcohol policy and prevention and an interest in engaging in new efforts among Coachella City officials and community stakeholders. For example, City officials expressed interest in Coachella as an entertainment “destination” to revitalize the downtown, but also expressed concern about balancing the problems associated with alcohol sales. City officials also expressed interest in methods to collect and analyze data to use alcohol policy proactively to prevent underage and excessive alcohol use. In addition, the updated General Plan includes goals related specifically to alcohol policies.

Some community stakeholders did not demonstrate knowledge of policy-based prevention strategies. They reported that they attributed problems with underage alcohol use to a lack of education about alcohol use. This could indicate stronger support for informational strategies, and softer support for evidence-based policies and practices that limit access. Although this may be due in large part to the specific direct-service occupations of some stakeholders (e.g., treatment, school-based prevention education), additional data about local alcohol-related issues and the evidence base of policy strategies may increase readiness to consider policy changes.



Acknowledgements

Blue Zones acknowledges the following individuals who contributed to Assessment Phase activities:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Daisy Ramirez	Health Equity Community Outreach Coordinator, RUHS Public Health
Gabriel Perez	Development Services Director, City of Coachella
Jeff Davied	Operations Director, The Awareness Group
Lucero Fabela	Human Resources Specialist, Riverside County Latino Commission
Misty Mejia	Program Administrator, Riverside County Latino Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
Reha Hussain	RUHS Public Health

Blue Zones Alcohol Policy Menu

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

- Category:
- REGULATORY** — Creating or changing legally binding standards, rules, or laws, such as zoning codes, ordinances, permitting, or licensing standards.
 - NON-REGULATORY** — Creating or changing programs, guidance, or education efforts.

GOAL: REFORM LEGAL LIABILITY TO REDUCE EXCESSIVE DRINKING				
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	
ESTABLISH DRAM-SHOP OR COMMERCIAL-HOST LIABILITY		L	Establish dram-shop liability that holds the owner or server of a retail alcohol establishment legally responsible for harms inflicted by a customer who recently was served alcoholic beverages.	State preemption
ESTABLISH SOCIAL-HOST LIABILITY		L	Establish social-host policies that establish legal liability for adult responsible for serving alcohol and any harm caused by a person who becomes intoxicated as a result of excessive consumption.	"7.05.020 Loud or unruly gatherings—Public nuisance. It shall be unlawful and a public nuisance to conduct a gathering of ten (10) or more persons on any private property in a manner which constitutes a substantial disturbance of the quiet enjoyment of private or public property in a significant segment of a neighborhood, as a result of conduct constituting a violation of law. Illustrative of such unlawful conduct is excessive noise or traffic, obstruction of public streets by crowds or vehicles, public drunkenness, the service of alcohol to minors, fights, disturbances of the peace, litter. A gathering constituting a public nuisance may be abated by the city by all reasonable means including, but not limited to, an order requiring the gathering to be disbanded and citation and/or arrest of any law violators under any applicable local laws and state statutes. (Ord. No. 1023, § 1, 11-17-10; Ord. No. 1025, 11-17-10)"

GOAL: ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAMS				
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	
REGULATE OPERATION OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES		S	If not already in place, establish standards above which it is illegal to operate recreational watercraft while legally intoxicated.	State preemption
		S	If not already in place, establish standards above which it is illegal to operate electric scooters and other micro-mobility devices on roads or sidewalks while legally intoxicated.	State preemption
ADJUST PUBLIC CONSUMPTION LAWS FOR ALCOHOL		M	If not already in place, adopt public-consumption laws to appropriately control the use and availability of alcohol in public places, which may include community events, public venues (e.g., concerts, street fairs, and sporting events), public parks, beaches, and other public spaces. These laws may specify the conditions of availability and use of alcohol in other public settings.	*SEE ON NEXT PAGE
INVEST IN ALCOHOL ENFORCEMENT		S	Establish an alcohol-control program to reduce the social and health harms of excessive alcohol use. Enforcement efforts must complement policies and create a deterrent effect.	Unknown. Need to hear from key informants.
ESTABLISH FREE-RIDE-HOME PROGRAMS		S	Establish and promote programs to provide free rides home to people who may be intoxicated.	Unknown. Need to speak with key informants.
ESTABLISH PLACE-OF-LAST-DRINK REPORTING		S	Establish a system to collect information on the location where a person last consumed alcohol if they are involved in an alcohol-related incident (e.g., driving under the influence of alcohol, assault).	Unknown. Need to speak with key informants.

STATUS OF STRATEGIES FOR: ADJUST PUBLIC CONSUMPTION LAWS FOR ALCOHOL

*Chapter 9.04 ALCOHOL RELATED OFFENSES (See page 137)

Sections:

9.04.010 Alcoholic beverages.

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the city’s residents and visitors and to protect property values from declining due to nuisance related activities associated with alcoholic beverages.

B. Alcoholic Beverage. Alcoholic beverage means to include alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, and every liquid or solid containing alcohol, spirits, wine, or beer, and which contains one-half of one percent or more of alcohol by volume and which is fit for beverage purposes either alone or when diluted, mixed, or combined with other substances.

C. Consumption.

1. It is unlawful for any person to drink, use or consume any alcoholic beverage upon any public street, sidewalk, highway, road, lane or alley, or in or upon any park or recreation area, or upon any other publicly owned property which is not licensed for the consumption of such alcoholic beverage on the premises by the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control of the state of California.

2. It is unlawful for any person to drink, use or consume any alcoholic beverage upon privately-owned property, which is open to the use or patronage of the general public at the time, unless the person doing or committing the act has the express or implied permission or invitation to do so from the owner or lessee or other person in charge of the private property or business premises involved.

3. The provisions set forth in this subsection are intended to protect all persons, including, but not limited to, adults, teenagers, adolescents, supervised minors and unsupervised minors from causing or suffering from injuries that are proximately caused by acts committed while drinking, using or consuming alcoholic beverages.

D. Retail Package Off-Sale Premises and Adjacent Parking Lots and Public Sidewalks.

1. All retail package off-sale alcoholic beverage licensees licensed pursuant to Division 9 (commencing with Section 23000) of the California Business and Professions Code shall post on their respective licensed premises, any parking lot (other than a privately owned residential parking lot) located immediately adjacent to such licensed premises, and any public sidewalk situated immediately adjacent to such licensed premises and any posted parking lot signs that contain the following message:

“It is unlawful for any person who has in his or her possession any bottle, can or other receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage which has been opened, or has its seal

broken, or has its contents partially removed, to enter, be, or remain on these premises. All violations will be reported to the Riverside County Sheriffs Department.”

All such signs shall be clearly visible to patrons and members of the public using the subject public sidewalk.

2. It is unlawful for any person who has in his or her possession any bottle, can or other receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage which has been opened, or has its seal broken, or has its contents partially removed, to enter, be, or remain on any premises posted pursuant to this subsection.

E. Illegal Provision of Alcohol. As set forth in Penal Code Section 11200, every building or place used for the purpose of unlawfully selling, serving or giving away any spirituous, vinous, malt or other alcoholic liquor, and every building or place in or upon which such liquors are unlawfully sold, served or given away, shall be declared a nuisance which permits the city attorney to maintain an action to abate and prevent the nuisance pursuant to Penal Code Section 11200 et seq.

F. Infraction Violation. A violation of subsection (C)(1) or (2), and subsection (D) (1) or (2) of this section by the person responsible for committing such violation shall constitute an infraction violation.

G. Civil Fines. Any person convicted of an infraction under this section shall, for each violation of this section, be subject to: (a) a civil fine in an amount not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) for a first conviction of an offense; (b) a civil fine in an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for a second conviction of the same offense within a twelve (12) month period of the date of the first offense; and (c) a civil fine in an amount not to exceed seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00) for the third conviction of the same offense within a twelve (12) month period of the date of the first offense. The civil fine for a fourth and subsequent conviction of the same offense within a twelve (12) month period of the date of the first offense shall be one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00).

H. Criminal Fines. Any person convicted of an infraction under this section shall, for each separate violation of this section, be subject to: (a) a criminal fine in an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for a first conviction of an offense; (b) a criminal fine in an amount not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) for a second conviction of the same offense within a twelve (12) month period of the date of the first offense; and (c) a criminal fine in an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the third and any subsequent conviction of the same offense within a twelve (12) month period of the date of the first offense.

I. Misdemeanor Violation. A fourth violation and subsequent violations of subsection (C)(1) or (2) of this section within a twelve (12) month period shall be deemed a misdemeanor violation subject to the fines and imprisonment provisions set forth in section 1.08.010 of this code.

(Ord. 892 § 13, 2003; prior code § 14-11)”

GOAL: ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAMS				
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	
INTEGRATE SCREENING, BRIEF INTERVENTION, AND REFERRAL TO TREATMENT		S	Establish a program to integrate screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) for individuals experiencing problems with alcohol use.	“Riverside University Health System - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for Substance Misuse and Substance Use Disorders Funder: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Program Goal: The SoCal Optimization of SBIRT (SOS) Project uniformly optimizes and standardizes SBIRT services at FQHCs in San Diego, Riverside and Imperial Counties to prevent and reduce alcohol and other substance misuse among adolescents (ages 12-17) and adults (ages 18+) in primary care and community health settings. Participating Health Centers: Neighborhood Healthcare, Clinicas de Salud Del Pueblo, Inc., Imperial Beach Community Clinic, North County Health Services and San Ysidro Health About: Health Quality Partners will partner with five member health centers to expand Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) services in primary care.”

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: DISCOURAGE EXCESSIVE & UNDER-AGE DRINKING				
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	
REGULATE ALCOHOL OUTLET DENSITY*	REGULATORY	M	If not already in place, establish standards for approval of use permits for businesses that sell alcohol, which may include minimum distance from sensitive uses, hours of operation, and other conditions to ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhood(s) and prevent high density of alcohol outlets.	"Chapter 5.24 ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS WHERE ALCOHOL IS SERVED 5.24.030 Permit—Required—Exceptions. Chapter 17.74 Conditional Uses 17.74.015 Conditional use permits for liquor, on-sale and off-sale. D. Additionally, if the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) notifies the City that the proposed establishment is either (1) subject to the State law moratorium/limit on the number of liquor licenses that may be issued within the city under California Business and Professions Code Section 23817.7 or, (2) is in an area of "undue concentration" of liquor licenses, as defined in California Business and Professions Code Section 23958.4; the planning commission must additionally find that the public convenience or necessity nonetheless justifies the issuance of the liquor license to the establishment. (Ord. No. 1088, § 5, 12-14-16)"
		M	Adopt state or community standards that control the placement and content of alcohol marketing materials, which may include prohibiting alcohol-related promotions or giveaways, restricting sponsorship of civic events, and restricting the content of print, Internet, radio, and television marketing in locations or during times where children are likely to be present.	Not specific to alcohol.
RESTRICT MARKETING AND ADVERTISING OF ALCOHOL	REGULATORY	M	Adopt state or community standards that control the placement and content of alcohol marketing materials, which may include prohibiting alcohol-related promotions or giveaways, restricting sponsorship of civic events, and restricting the content of print, Internet, radio, and television marketing in locations or during times where children are likely to be present.	Not specific to alcohol.
		XL	Restrict billboard advertising of alcohol where it can be demonstrated that such restrictions would advance a significant governmental interest in improving the health of residents.	Not specific to alcohol

GOAL: DISCOURAGE EXCESSIVE & UNDER-AGE DRINKING				
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	
SUPPORT THE RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL	REGULATORY	S	Establish parameters for alcohol consumption in responsible social settings, such as outdoor dining and entertainment, by limiting hours of service and the number of drinks served.	Unknown. Need to hear from key informants.
		S	Work with tourism industry in marketing local craft beer, distilleries, and wineries to appropriate audiences.	Unknown. Need to hear from key informants.
		M	Allow establishments serving alcohol to be located in walkable areas by removing barriers such as minimum parking requirements (which encourage driving after drinking) and overly restrictive locational standards (which can push alcohol service to locations that require customers to drive home).	Unknown. Need to hear from key informants.
		S	Establish a program to encourage bars and restaurants to disallow events that encourage excessive drinking, such as 21st birthday parties and bachelor/bachelorette parties.	Unknown. Need to hear from key informants.
END DISCOUNTS AND DRINK SPECIALS	REGULATORY	M	Eliminate price discounts, drink specials, and times when drinks are sold at substantially discounted rates by bars and restaurants (which increase alcohol consumption and the risks associated with excessive drinking).	Unknown. These would be created at individual licensed establishments. Need to hear from key informants
IMPLEMENT RESPONSIBLE-BEVERAGE-SERVICE AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING	REGULATORY	S	"Implement responsible-beverage-service (RBS) training programs that provide service staff in licensed establishments with knowledge and skills to serve alcohol in a responsible manner and to comply with all legal requirements governing alcohol service."	No local policy for off-sale establishments
		S	"Implement responsible-beverage-service (RBS) training programs for owners and managers of licensed establishments that focuses on establishment policy development, policy enforcement, and dealing with challenging situations."	No local policy.
INCREASE ALCOHOL TAXES	REGULATORY	L	"Increase taxes on the unit cost of alcohol (beer, wine, and distilled spirits) to discourage excessive consumption."	State has preemptive authority over alcohol taxes



COACHELLA

Tobacco

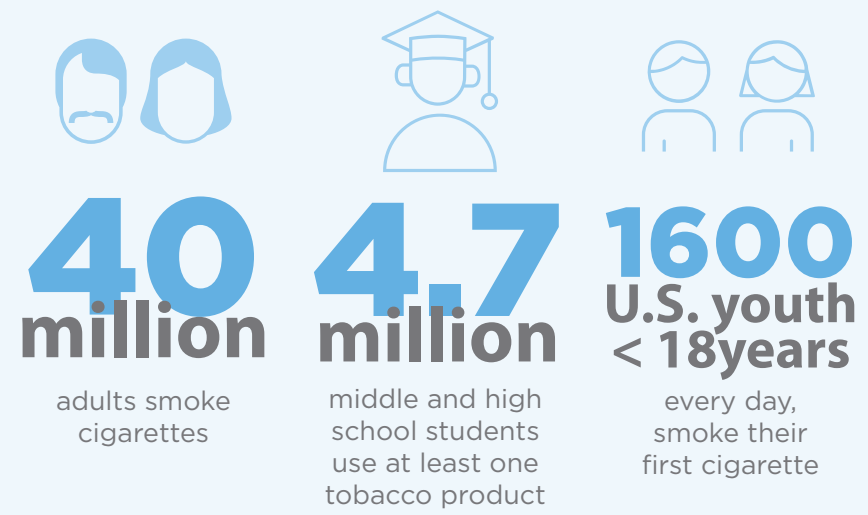
Curbing tobacco use is one of the most easily available ways to improve health in Riverside County.



Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability and death in the United States. Half a million Americans die prematurely of smoking or exposure to second-hand smoke annually. Another 16 million live with a serious illness caused by smoking that erodes their quality of life.

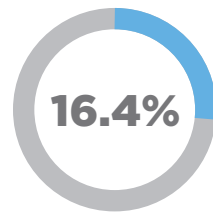
This report is meant to be a snapshot in time for local community policy and well-being. The policy team endeavors to explore all policy work that is underway in the community. This report may not reflect all efforts in which the community is engaged.

Despite widespread knowledge of the risks of smoking and tobacco use, nearly 40 million U.S. adults still smoke cigarettes, and about 4.7 million middle and high school students use at least one tobacco product. Every day, about 1600 U.S. youth younger than 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette. (Source: CDC)



Research has shown that preventing youth from developing a smoking habit reduces the likelihood that they will become adult smokers.

Smoking is still the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Lung Association (ALA).



City of Coachella adult smoking rate



ALA's State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card



Tobacco Retail License



Smokefree Housing and Smokefree Outdoor Air

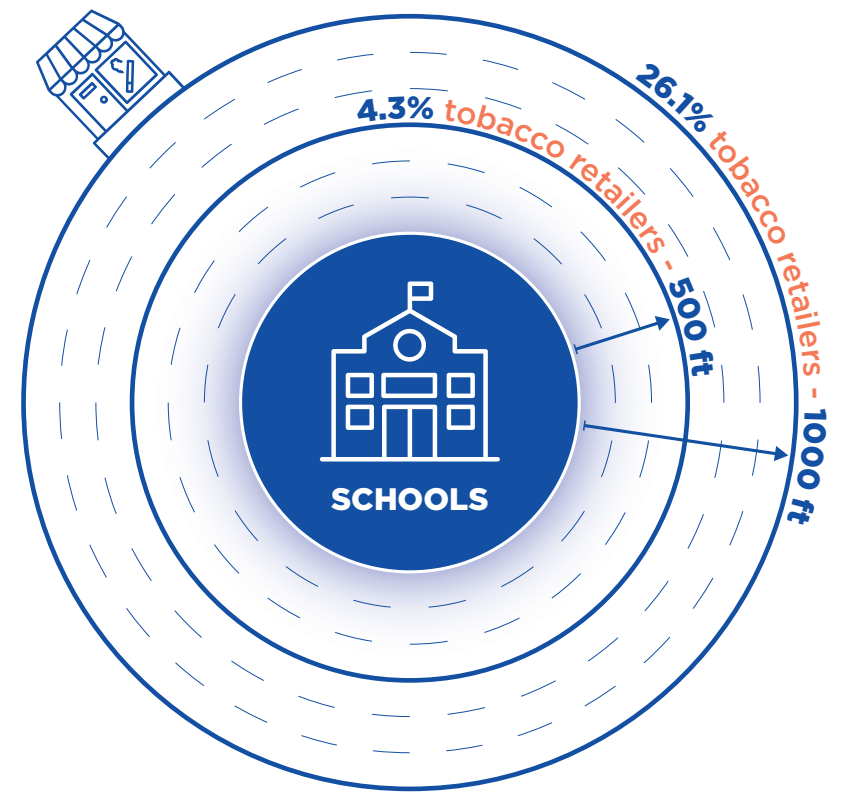
The City of Coachella has a 16.4% adult smoking rate. It scores an overall "D" grade on the ALA's State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card, while having an "A" for a Tobacco Retail License, "F" for Smokefree Housing and "F" for Smokefree Outdoor Air.

There are 0.5 tobacco retailers per 1,000 Population and 4.3 % within 500' of a school and 26.1% within 1,000'. The City of was recently awarded a tobacco education and enforcement grant and hired a Community Service Officer in March 2022.

The program has developed a campaign with the city titled "GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE CLOUD... your health is WORTH IT!" The City of Coachella has an opportunity, like Riverside City, for a future TRL ordinance strengthening and to adopt smokefree policies.

SEE Appendix Page 212 for the full Tobacco Report for Riverside County.

Cities must follow tobacco laws passed at the federal, state, and local levels, including the county level. Cities can pass more restrictive policies than the county's policies and counties can pass more restrictive policies than the state's policies.



COACHELLA

Places Overview

SCHOOLS | WORKSITES | RESTAURANTS | GROCERY STORES

The Blue Zones approach to community transformation is to optimize the places and spaces people spend the most time so that healthy choices are easier or even unavoidable. Large worksites and public schools are a focus because they are where most adults and children spend the majority of their waking lives. Administered and run by our team, we deploy a Blue Zones Approval program for schools, worksites, restaurants, and grocery stores.




Over time, our objective is to get a minimum threshold of these places Blue Zones Approved™. **In Blue Zones communities, we typically have 70% or higher name awareness and recognition**, so a Blue Zones designation is highly coveted. By working collaboratively to make permanent and visible changes, healthy choices become easy choices in all the places where people live, work, learn, pray, and play.



COACHELLA

Schools

Schools make a wise investment for health resources because outcomes can last 70 years or longer. Good habits adopted at an early age lead to healthier, happier, more productive lives, and enormous cost savings in medical and social expenditures.

 The Blue Zones team will focus on **helping 50% of the schools in the community implement a critical mass of best practice items** from the Blue Zones Schools Pledge to become Blue Zones Project Approved schools.



Introduction

The Blue Zones region of focus encompasses six communities across Riverside County, including Coachella, representing an opportunity to make a tangible impact on this vibrant community’s public health.²² In this regard, a focused effort to improve the health of educational environments is a critically important issue. Of the host of public health issues many communities across the country face, providing healthy environments in public schools is a challenge with an undeniably strong influence on most other outstanding problems.



The following readiness assessment examines public schools in the City of Coachella, CA (Coachella). In addition to compiling data through analysis of textual resources, focus groups with stakeholders, including school leaders, building and district-level personnel, community engagement professionals, community organizations, and other representatives proved instrumental in capturing valuable information for this report.²³ The purposes of these gatherings were to gain a deeper understanding of the City’s public schools, and determine their readiness for working with Blue Zones to revitalize school environments and better promote physical, social, and emotional health throughout the region of focus.

Our review of current practices and local realities illuminates that many public schools within the study area are uniquely positioned to work with Blue Zones toward improving school environments. While numerous perennial public health challenges, objectives, and priorities exist, leveraging Blue Zones-established best practices, and practically applying them at both a macro and micro level with the knowledge gained from this review, will begin to empower these school districts to better serve the groups and individuals who are in need of such collaboration.

Background

The education system consists of the Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). Despite its name, it does not serve the entire Coachella Valley, only the areas of Coachella, Mecca and Thermal.²⁴ There are 14 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 4 high schools and 1 adult school.²⁵

Also in this region is Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD)—it primarily serves five communities in the central Coachella Valley of California: Bermuda Dunes, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, and Palm Desert. There are 20 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, 7 high schools and 1 adult school.²⁶

	 20 elementary schools	 8 middle schools
	 7 high schools	 1 adult school

	 14 elementary schools	 4 middle schools
	 4 high schools	 1 adult school

Strengths

State of California Programs and Funding

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSAL MEALS PROGRAM

California is the nation's first state to implement a universal meals program for school-aged children.²⁷ Beginning in the 2022–2023 school year, the California Universal Meals Program is a statewide initiative aimed at providing nutritious meals to all children in California “regardless of their family’s income or immigration status”.²⁸ This program was established to address food insecurity and ensure access to healthy meals, with all children under the age of 18 eligible to receive two free meals, breakfast and lunch, at participating schools, community centers, and various locations. The program is funded by the State of California and administered by the California Department of Education in partnership with local schools, community organizations, and food service providers. The meals provided through the program are based on USDA nutrition standards, and designed to meet the dietary needs of growing children while instilling healthy eating habits.

KITCHEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAINING FUNDS (KIT FUNDS)

In 2022 California passed legislation allocating necessary funds through 2025 to improve schools’ kitchen infrastructure and train food service staff with the goals of increasing schools’ capacity to prepare fresh meals on site that are minimally processed and incorporate locally grown and sustainable ingredients, and with the overarching aims of promoting nutritious foods while reducing waste.²⁹



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Riverside County’s Office of Education focuses on developing students from the perspective of the whole child model, which includes fostering children’s physical, mental, and spiritual health in addition to their academic growth. The county’s Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Edwin Gomez, established 4 initiatives addressing issues related to equity and inclusion, mental health, literacy by 5th grade, and financial literacy to support students.³⁰

Moreover, through partnerships with Riverside Latino Commission, Riverside University Health Systems Behavioral Health, Boys & Girls Club of the San Gorgonio Pass, and the Riverside County Department of Animal Services, various organizations are helping to provide mental health services, including a program called CAREspace that creates dedicated safe spaces in schools.³¹ Given the focus on the whole child, and existing programs and initiatives serving students and families, the county’s Office of Education is aligned with Blue Zones’s efforts.

Critically, Superintendent Gomez expressed his openness and willingness to collaborate with Blue Zones, noting the importance of Blue Zones’s efforts and the need for them to be integrated regionally.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Among the most significant strengths that Coachella Valley possesses are partnerships with community organizations that work to support students and families. Schools are no longer a place that only provide an education—they are neighborhood hubs that community organizations collaborate with to offer critical services and resources, including healthcare and dental services, social services and social and emotional learning, translation services, tutoring, child care, and additional meals for dinner and during the summer. While reconciling the demand placed on schools to offer these supports with available resources poses a significant challenge, community organizations in the region of study are stepping in to assist and offer programming to help meet some of these needs. A sample of these efforts shared by focus group members are as follows.

A particularly important point of collaboration is with the University of CA, Riverside Cooperative Extension and CalFresh Healthy Living (CA SNAP-Ed). This partnership provides several schools (Caesar Chavez, Las Palmitas Elementary Schools) with gardens along with programming that includes educational services to schools and children, such as online gardening lessons, and works with volunteers and teachers to promote gardens as academic experiences. Incorporating school gardens into students' daily activities provides meaningful opportunities to learn and experience growing and eating healthy foods.

Both CVUSD and DSUSD provide extended care through the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program. ASES provides free after-school enrichment for students at schools through art, music and sports activities, along with academic intervention.³² This program cannot service all students that need after-school care, but has expanded its enrollment over the years due to increased support from the state's Department of Education and local fundraising efforts. The program works through partnerships between a school and local community resources to provide literacy and study skills, academic enrichment, character development, physical activity and safe constructive alternatives for students in kindergarten through sixth grade.³³

Further, addressing how partnerships between schools and community organizations can work in more harmonious ways, and helping them create healthier environments through the Blue Zones Pledge, could further ease the burden schools face to offer the aforementioned services and resources. Community organizations can be a part of district and school wellness communities that offer valuable resources and learning opportunities to many, while Blue Zones can help to align resources to the school pledge actions through current and additional well-being initiatives.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

COACHELLA VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT AND DESERT SANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

District and school-level communications are bilingual, which has helped significantly in increasing family participation in events and activities. Moreover, parent and student engagement on social media is substantial and impactful—this can be a great tool for sharing well-being efforts, events, and healthy educational opportunities with district community members. The focus group illuminated the dramatic impact that this strength has had on increasing parental engagement with the school community.

At CVUSD, an initiative to revamp an athletic field and improve its surrounding area at Seaview Elementary School, which included replacing fencing, creating a walking path, building covered outdoor learning spaces, and installing new turf proved remarkably popular and successful—there are now three more fields in the district scheduled for similar renovations and improvements, and one has funding committed to it. These fields are places for students and families to learn and play in a safe, positive environment.

Wellness centers are implemented at the middle school and high school-level, with behavioral specialists and mentors, aroma therapy, meditation, yoga, and stress relief activities, free counseling to students and their families through the Latino Commission, and two counselors per school. Future plans exist to introduce wellness centers into elementary schools as well.



School meal menus include the daily availability of salads for students.

Charter schools offer family-oriented activities and community celebrations—this provides a sense of belonging and connectedness to the school and each other. Additionally, these events provide moments for the community to recognize and appreciate the cultural diversity surrounding them. Local food festivals, for example, have been a popular way to bring people in this community together and expose them to culturally relevant foods (American and Hispanic).

DSUSD promotes its wellness policy online and provides resources that align with wellness for students, such as healthy online nutrition education tools, including the Smart Snack Calculator that helps teachers and parents choose healthier snacks. In previous years, DSUSD had several schools achieve recognition from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s Healthy Schools Program, which indicates that these schools value making changes toward improving well-being and can implement additional well-being initiatives that already align with current efforts.³⁴

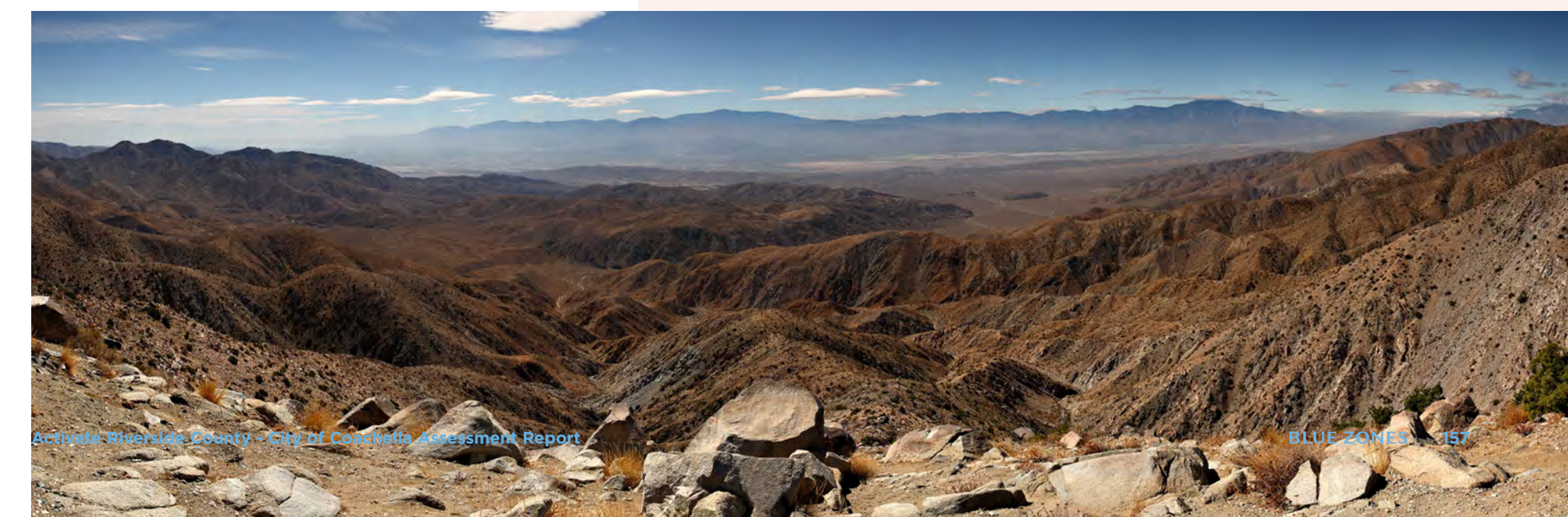
Challenges

Riverside University Health System started a farmers market that tried to enlist local farmers, but focus group discussion revealed that the initiative struggled, as it proved difficult to identify local vendors who would sell their products. Schools, therefore, could benefit by building relationships with local vendors.

Substance abuse, including marijuana and vaping, continue to pose a significant challenge for the community.³⁵ Indeed, 9.7% of high school-aged youth in California currently consume some form of tobacco.³⁶ One attempt to combat this issue involves a law enforcement officer visiting schools to educate students on the harmful effects of vaping and substance abuse.³⁷ This is in partnership with the City of Coachella, which facilitates the program through a three-year initiative, Get Your Head Out of The Clouds.³⁸

Discussions during the focus group highlighted CVUSD’s current social-emotional programs, and frequently referred to the Latino Commission’s efforts to help students living with mental health conditions. It was, however, also mentioned that there is still a need for greater programmatic support to address these exacerbating challenges.

Focus groups participants claimed that parks are run down (broken glass and poor lighting) and need improvement. The city is currently in the midst of a revitalization effort wherein parks’ facilities are improved for more effective use and to increase a sense of safety in these places. An ongoing challenge related to park usage includes meager transportation options to and from the existing parks, diminishing the benefits and purposes of offering these spaces to the community. Joint-use agreements are often used for student activities. The lack in the number of play areas combined with the physical state of existing spaces, however, has created a challenging supply constraint wherein the demand for sports fields and playtime facilities is not accommodated.



Opportunities

The District Wellness Council exists in CVUSD through the nutrition services department but focuses primarily on school meals; this can be **expanded to address a more comprehensive approach to well-being.**

At charter schools, frozen meals are heated and served since no partnerships with local vendors exist to provide fresh, nutritious meals. **Fostering partnerships with local farmers and vendors could enhance school meals that offer a greater variety of fruit and vegetables.** Most fruit and vegetables come from Los Angeles, and consist of those that have a longer shelf life, such as bananas, apples, and oranges, rather than culturally appropriate items like mangos.

Kitchens that allow for food preparation are available in CVUSD's schools, though they are small, and fresh food is not always available. A central kitchen would likely be a suboptimal solution due to transportation challenges related to the district's 1,200-square-mile geography. Some foods are from sources from local vendors, but most of it is outsourced.

Additional parks would offer more safe space for student and family activities.

CVUSD has several school gardens with relevant **programming—growing gardens in additional schools would expose more students to these experiential learning opportunities** that incorporate nutrition curriculum, provide opportunities for brain breaks and physical activity, and foster social-emotional skills. Blue Zones can help foster collaboration and build partnerships throughout the community to help schools receive these beneficial programs.



Blue Zones can help to create a streamlined approach to school health through the Blue Zones Project School Pledge Actions and offer assistance in updating the district wellness policies that districts in the region of focus will benefit from. For example, the following areas in the Blue Zone Pledge could be implemented with school principal support:

- ✓ creating additional social connectedness opportunities in and out of school
- ✓ creating physical activity opportunities and mindfulness into the school day
- ✓ specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness
- ✓ support policies for other foods and beverages available on the school campus during the school day (e.g., in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives)
- ✓ assist in building more collaborations with organizations and community members to enhance well-being initiatives.

People and Organizations Engaged during Assessment

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Brad Hardison	Master Gardener, UCCE Riverside County
David Baucom	Director of Facilities, Operation & Planning, CVUSD
Dr. Edwin Gomez	Superintendent, Riverside County Office of Education
Grace Jimenez	Imagine School Riverside
Juanita Goodwin	Unit Director, Frank Foster & Palmer Powell Family Clubhouse Boys and Girls Clubs of Coachella Valley
Kat Satterly	CA Program Manager, Alliance for a Healthier Generation
Lisa Hernandez	NOVA Academy
Manuel Arriaga	Teacher, CVUSD
Marta Shand	Nutrition Services (former), DSUSD

FOOTNOTES

22 Image courtesy of the United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/profile?g=0500000US06065>

23 Building- and district-level personnel include superintendents, those from child nutrition services, and those from health and physical education.

24 Ibid

25 Coachella Valley Unified School District. <https://www.cvusd.us/>

26 Desert Sands Unified School District <https://www.dsusd.us/schools>

27 California Department of Education. (n.d.). Universal meals - school nutrition. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/cauniversalmeals.asp>

28 Ibid

29 California Department of Education (n.d.). 2022 Kitchen Infrastructure and Training Funds. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/kitfunds2022.asp>

30 Riverside County Office of Education. (n.d.). Superintendent's Initiatives. <https://www.rcoe.us/about-us/superintendent/superintendent-s-initiatives>

31 Riverside County Office of Education. (n.d.). CAREspace. <https://www.rcoe.us/departments/student-programs-and-services/alternative-education/carespace>

32 Hwang, K. (2016, July 5). CVUSD after-school program gives students opportunity. The Desert Sun. <https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/education/2016/07/05/cvusd-after-school-program-gives-students-opportunity/86515772/>

33 Ibid

34 Alliance for a Healthier Generation. <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/>

35 Focus Group (2022, December 7)

36 Zhu S-H, Braden K, Zhuang Y-L, Gamst A, Cole AG, Wolfson T, Li S. (2021). Results of the Statewide 2019-20 California Student Tobacco Survey. San Diego, California: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control (CRITC), University of California, San

Diego. https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ResearchandEvaluation/FactsandFigures/2019-20CSTSBiennialReport_7-27-2021.pdfv

37 The officer's visit plays a dual role of conducting a security check throughout the school building.

38 City of Coachella. (n.d.). Tobacco awareness campaign. <https://www.coachella.org/departments/police-department/tobacco-awareness-campaign>





COACHELLA

Worksites

Most Americans spend about half their waking life on the job, making workplaces a prime opportunity to encourage healthy lifestyles.



The Blue Zones approach to transforming worksites is to offer a Blue Zone Approval program that implements a critical mass of initiatives that nudge employees into moving more, eating less junk food, making meaningful connections with coworkers, and helping people find and live out their purpose.

The Blue Zones Worksite Pledge is designed along five areas of best practice:



Leadership



Purpose



Physical Environment



Social Networks / Engagement



Policies and Benefits

To achieve Blue Zones Certification, we require 50% of the largest workplaces to become Blue Zones Approved.

Employers who take the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge are offered consulting support at no cost, but they are required to take the process seriously. To that end, our assessment involved identifying the top employers in the county and then meeting with a representative sample of those employers to assess their interest and readiness to move forward with a Blue Zones initiative.

The program provides free purpose workshops and moais — a process by which we build employee social networks around walking and healthy eating.



Strengths

As indicated by the “Coachella Cares” statement at the Community led presentation, the community fosters a sense of health and well-being, and this is pervasive through the presence of nonprofit organizations and well-established partnerships in the community such as Grow Coachella Valley, and Desert Healthcare District Foundation.

- ✔ Several nonprofit organizations are doing great work supporting the health of farmworkers. These organizations include Grow Coachella Valley, The Health Equity Collaborative and Desert Healthcare District Foundation (Mobile Medical Unit, mobile Covid and Flu Vaccines, as well as HIV testing).
- ✔ Experience with prior community health initiative, “Building Healthy Communities”(BHC), focused on impacting health inequities.
- ✔ The city leadership is committed to health improvement. Being a “Healthy City” is part of Coachella’s vision and guiding principles, and Community Health+Wellness Goals - building out on the foundational commitment.
- ✔ Prior experience provides a strong foundation to improve health and build out Blue Zones in the community. Coachella was the first community to develop a five-year “Blueprint for Action” with the Clinton Health Matters Initiative (2011-2012) so there is a long-standing interest and experience focusing on a strategy to improve health and wellness in the community.



The Desert Healthcare District Foundation Mobile Medical Unit was able to provide vaccines, enabling workers to maintain health and productivity so work could continue during the pandemic. This mobile unit has now expanded its offerings to include Flu Vaccines, as well as HIV Testing for farmworkers to help keep them healthy and productive.

ALEJANDRO ESPINOZA, MPH, CHES, CHIEF of COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Desert Healthcare District Foundation

Challenges

- ✔ Coachella’s zip code has some of the lowest socioeconomic index scores across Riverside County.
- ✔ BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) residents face barriers to finding culturally competent health providers. Worksite experts indicated that residents have difficulty finding health care providers with whom they are comfortable; given the limited number of culturally similar providers in the area and community residents’ language barriers.
- ✔ The recent job growth in warehouses and Logistics/Transportation industry brings jobs, but not always work that supports worker growth, development, and health. Frequently these jobs offer minimal pay, and skill development, rigid schedules, and limited options for breaks and time away policies. As one local subject-matter expert indicated, “The warehouses are coming into poor communities of color not wealthy communities because they are not wanted in the more affluent areas of the county”.



Opportunities

- Based on the community led presentation, the top lifestyle related conditions with the greatest opportunity for health improvement are obesity, sedentary lifestyle, smoking, and sleep. An approach of working with local employers to make the healthier choice the easy choice by improving access and making popular local dishes with fresh and healthy vegetables, and creating opportunities for natural movement and social connection can improve these health risks.
- Limited high wage jobs in the county so many of the younger generation leave Coachella to move for better education and career opportunities. This was referred to as community “brain drain”.
- Explore leveraging the foundation from the prior policy framework “Building Health Communities” (BHC) impacting health inequities to build out Blue Zones community initiative.
- Develop partnerships and align efforts with other nonprofits in the community to encourage employers and empower workers to improve health.
- Coachella as a city and community has a desire to focus healthy living and recreational resources.
- Coachella city goals around increasing bike lanes, and public transportation access (zero emission buses) align with Blue Zones approach to encourage active commuting options for workers in the community. Employers can encourage an active community by adding incentives for employees in their benefits designs. (Employers are not typically incentivizing active commuting today).

- Explore opportunities (proposed in community led presentation and beyond) to activate the near site green space and potentially community volunteers to enhance existing parks (such as Wellness Hub @Bagdouma Park) in the community.
- Work with employers to implement worksite social gatherings and or before/after work moais to support natural movement.
- Explore partnership with local growers to set up a Farmer’s Market in Coachella and neighboring communities.



- Partner with nonprofits and health systems to offer education of the value of fresh fruits and vegetables in diet and healthy recipes of cultural favorite dishes using healthier fresh ingredients (encourage integration into Hispanic rice and beans-based diets).
- There are opportunities to support employer and worksite health by supporting behavioral and mental health, continuing to improve access to healthcare services, health education, and communication of available services.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, DEPT. OF SOCIAL
MEDICINE POPULATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Ann M. Cheney, Ph.D

In Riverside County it is not about people at the top coming in and saying we’re going to do this because Blue Zones has found in their research that this is what’s going to make our communities healthy it’s about **providing people with the information and educating them and helping them make choices about what may or may not work in their community and then supporting them in building the capacity to make that happen ... it’s the leaders who are there to bring the resources to the community.**



COACHELLA

Restaurants

Blue Zones Approved restaurants tend to save money on food costs and attract more business through customers who want to eat healthier.



Our goal is to assure a critical mass of restaurants offer residents healthy options when they go out to eat. To that end, we administer a Blue Zones Approval Program that helps restaurants make the healthy choice the easy choice by offering plant-based meals, smaller portions, and less processed foods with sugar and sodium. Blue Zones Approved restaurants tend to save money on food costs and attract more business through customers who want to eat healthier.



In our work in cities and counties across the nation, our goal is for 10% of all restaurants within the community to take the Restaurant Pledge to become Blue Zones Approved.

The Blue Zones Project Restaurant Pledge is designed around five areas of best practices:



Healthier Entrée Offerings: Provide more entrée options that align with the plant-based focus of Blue Zones regions around the world.



Side Dishes and Ingredients: Provide more options for healthier side dishes and portion sizes.



Education and Awareness: Train restaurant staff on Blue Zones restaurant guidelines.



Physical Environment: Model the Blue Zones principles in the restaurant work environment.



Preparation and Presentation: Design menus and present food to highlight healthier options, enabling diners to make better choices

Benefits to Restaurants

- ✔ Attract new diners by offering healthier options
- ✔ Increase overall revenue with sales of healthy food and beverage options
- ✔ Community recognition for Blue Zones Approved status
- ✔ Promotion through Blue Zones Project social media and website

Relying on online sources, there are 80 restaurants located in the City of Coachella. More discovery is needed to determine a full list of eateries and a breakdown of local/chain restaurants. The majority of restaurants in Coachella appear to be locally owned and serve Mexican cuisine or specialize in tacos, with many of these being quick-serve restaurants with counter-style ordering. Most of these are mom and pop restaurants, which is a positive in our experience. These owners are most likely to have the autonomy to make marketing decisions, menu changes and modifications to the dining environment, such as removing saltshakers or eliminating free refills.

In Blue Zones Project cities, working with locally owned restaurants has been a successful strategy. Unlike regional or national chains, locally owned businesses can implement changes because marketing decisions are made by a manager or owner who is typically on-site.

There are a few chain eateries, but these all serve fast food. These include:

Del Taco

Taco Bell

Carl's Jr.

Jack in the Box

Little Caesar's Pizza

Domino's

Subway

Although more research is needed, there seem to be no restaurants in Coachella that specialize in vegan, vegetarian, locally sourced, or healthier food options.





COACHELLA




Grocery Stores

Grocery stores influence what people choose to eat, for better or for worse. Food companies have known and used this to increase their sales with in-store marketing for decades, but health-promoting businesses have only recently started targeting food retailers as untapped resources for healthy eating.

 Grocery stores play a key role in Blue Zones Project as more and more customers are demanding healthy options. By following best practices from around the country, grocery stores can meet this growing customer demand and dramatically increase revenue, all while improving customers' health. Local grocery stores may already be pointing customers toward healthier choices; but there are many opportunities to expand upon what they are currently doing.

Benefits to Grocers

The Blue Zones approach to creating healthy food options benefits both residents and grocery stores. For a community to obtain Blue Zone Certification, 25% of grocers must implement the Blue Zones Pledge, which includes 35 proven best practices associated with these domains:

-  **Healthier beverages:** Promoting healthier drinks and decreasing the focus and promotion of sugar-sweetened beverages
-  **Physical environment:** Re-imagining the store layout to make healthy choices more prominent
-  **Education and promotion:** Adjusting marketing strategy and timing of promotions to highlight healthier options

Retail grocers realize clear benefits by affiliating with Blue Zones:

Healthy Sales: The employee-owned and operated chain of Hy-Vee grocery stores in one regional center in southern Minnesota and seven Iowa communities, grew sales of healthy product categories like whole grains, produce, frozen vegetables, and healthy snacks.

Customer Growth: Blue Zones social media, web, and community promotions connect the store to potential new customers and other involved organizations. Participating Iowa communities averaged 70% public awareness with several communities reaching nearly 90%. More than 50% of residents reported being highly engaged in the work.

Customer and Staff Satisfaction: The Blue Zones Grocery Store Pledge fits with evolving consumer preferences for healthier foods. Participation helps optimize and showcase these offerings.

Involvement also sends a positive message to customers and employees that the business is doing its part to help the community thrive.

Retail grocers realize clear benefits by affiliating with Blue Zones

-  Healthy Sales
-  Customer Growth
-  Customer and Staff Satisfaction

Grocery store chains in Coachella include:

Smart & Final



(a warehouse-style supermarket chain)

Food4Less



(a no-frills grocery chain owned by Kroger)

Walmart Neighborhood Market



(2 locations)

ALDI



Cardenas



In addition, there are approximately 10-15 small food stores in Coachella with more than half of these advertising themselves as Mexican supermarkets, grocery stores or markets.

There is also at least one discount store and several convenience stores in Coachella that sell a limited selection of groceries.

There do not appear to be any grocery stores in Coachella that specialize in health foods.

However, there is at least one certified organic farm that offers fresh, locally grown produce. Temalpakh Farm grows a large variety of organic produce from November through May. It offers residents weekly farm boxes filled with their organic produce for \$35, and it also offers wholesale pricing to restaurants. Located at the intersection of Van Buren and Ave. 55, the farm's market is open daily except Sundays, at least seasonally, and also has a smoothie bar.

COACHELLA

People Overview

Blue Zones engages people in activities that change mindsets and habits in lasting ways. We provide individuals tools, tips, and resources that empower them to transform their lives so that healthy choices become the easy choice. During a community transformation, our staff administers a Blue Zones Ambassador Program aimed at 15% of the adult population (a tipping point needed for widespread change).



COACHELLA

Civic & Faith-Based Organizations

In addition to business and government, a third lesser-known sector exerts a major influence upon every aspect of life in a community: religious congregations and civic organizations, ranging from service clubs like the Rotary to advocacy groups. Very little progress is made in any direction without their valuable involvement.



Civic organization and faith-based communities have a unique ability to connect and engage a large number of residents from a wide range of ethnic, cultural, racial backgrounds, abilities, and language groups.

During the life of a Blue Zones Project, faith and civic organizations are involved as leaders, designing the overall well-being plan for the community, as engagement partners that mobilize an informed community to support and amplify the work, and by utilizing the Blue Zones Organization Checklist that support the well-being of their employees and stakeholders.

Civic Organizations

The City of Coachella has a strong amount of civic engagement. Some notable agencies involved within the community are:

Alianza Coachella – this non-profit formed out of the work of the California Endowment.

Pueblo Unido PDX – legal services for immigrants.

Raices Cultura – youth empowerment through the arts

Hidden Harvest – gleaned program providing local fruits and vegetables to the food bank and senior centers (Valley-wide but located in Coachella)

One Future Coachella Valley – preparing and connecting students to post-secondary education

Lift to Rise – Housing stability and economic mobility

TODEC Legal Center – Serving Immigrants and their Families

Alianza Coachella is engaged in civic projects related to civic engagement, environmental justice, community justice, and youth organizing. It brings together community members, non-profits, and government leaders to shape policy and public funding priorities. Some notable recent accomplishments include changing the Coachella Valley Water District from an all at-large board to a district board, which ensured minority representation on the board, and also formed the Disadvantaged Community Infrastructure Task Force in the Water District. Alianza’s other recent accomplishments include lobbying for the first public bus route in North Shore, securing funding for paved roads in 40 eastern Coachella mobile home parks, and organizing two youth-led festivals.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report



Hidden Harvest is a Coachella based organization that serves the greater Riverside County area. Hidden Harvest is a produce recovery organization that employs low-income farm workers to “rescue” produce that is left behind in fields and orchards and provides this rescued produce to low-income members of the community. Hidden Harvest has gathered hundreds of thousands of pounds of produce left behind for a variety of reasons, including superficial blemishes, overproduction, and falling market prices. The fresh produce rescued has been delivered to over 50,000 in-need residents of Riverside County.

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

OneFuture Coachella Valley works to prepare local students for college and the workforce by supplying scholarships and financial aid. They also provide students with meaningful career explorations in concert with local schools and business partners.

Life to Rise brings together community advocates and policy leaders in both public and private sectors to increase housing stability and upward financial mobility among families in Coachella. Their 2022-2024 Action Plan was created as the result of several years of cross-sector collaboration, community listening, focus groups, and extensive data analysis.

Faith-Based Organizations

There are a small number of Faith communities within Coachella, the majority of which are Christian, and several of which cater to the Spanish-speaking population. There is a high amount of collaboration among the Coachella Valley faith leaders.

There are over 8 tax-exempt religious organizations in Coachella, CA.

Faith-Based Organizations in Coachella, CA

- ✓ Iglesia Bautista del Valle
- ✓ Our Lady of Soledad Parish
- ✓ Pentecostal Church
- ✓ Templo La Hermosa of the Assemblies of God of Coachella
- ✓ Iglesia Evangelica Libre de Coachella
- ✓ Apostolic Church
- ✓ The Promise Church
- ✓ Tam Nguyen Temple

Community-Generated Input: Faith, Civic and Community Engagement

Our focus group meeting was attended by 4 representatives from public health and nutrition organizations. During the focus group, we learned about the strengths, opportunities, and challenges in community involvement in Coachella.



COMMUNITY-GENERATED INPUT

Strengths

- ✓ The Interfaith Alliance led by Jacob Alvarez has no formal website but does have an active email distribution list.
- ✓ Riverside County is not particularly siloed.
- ✓ The Galilee Center in Mecca has a thrift shop that helps fund Martha's Village which is a homeless shelter. They also bring portable showers to farmers, among other projects.
- ✓ True collaboration exists in the city, such as addressing housing and rental issues during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The police bring social services when working with homeless encampments.
- ✓ In nearby Indio, the Backpack Medicine and the Volunteers in Medicine groups have been helpful.
- ✓ The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program through the Office of Aging.
- ✓ Women in Agriculture is a strong organization.
- ✓ In Coachella, youth helped to spread the word about hydration stations, which was a great opportunity for them.
- ✓ There is also the Boys and Girls Club of Coachella Valley that does outreach programming.
- ✓ There is an online portal for school parents called "PeachJar" which also reaches Head Start parents.



Challenges

- ✓ Coachella is very far east and so it's difficult to recruit volunteers from across the county to come; Palm Springs residents don't want to leave Palm Springs.
- ✓ Residents of Coachella are lower-income and the city doesn't have a big budget and is stretched for time.
- ✓ A lot of civic groups overlap city boundaries.
- ✓ It was noted 95 percent of the county are Spanish speakers, and 80 percent of Spanish speakers are Catholic, so the Archdiocese is a good method of communication out to the community.



Opportunities

- ✓ Opportunities for the Optimist Club and Rotary to connect with schools.
- ✓ Volunteer clearing house is needed.

Many residents don't have cars, which is problematic because they often have to leave Coachella for services like medical appointments. However, the younger generation is helping around their households with things like giving their parents rides outside of the city limits. Also, farmworkers do a lot of carpooling, which caused an issue while COVID restrictions were in place, however, this helped to leave a car at home for stay-at-home spouses who needed to run errands or take children to school.

Focus group members emphasized the need for a local Coachella voice within the broader county. They expressed that just because a person may work at a farm doesn't mean they have access to the fresh food grown there.

People and Organizations Engaged

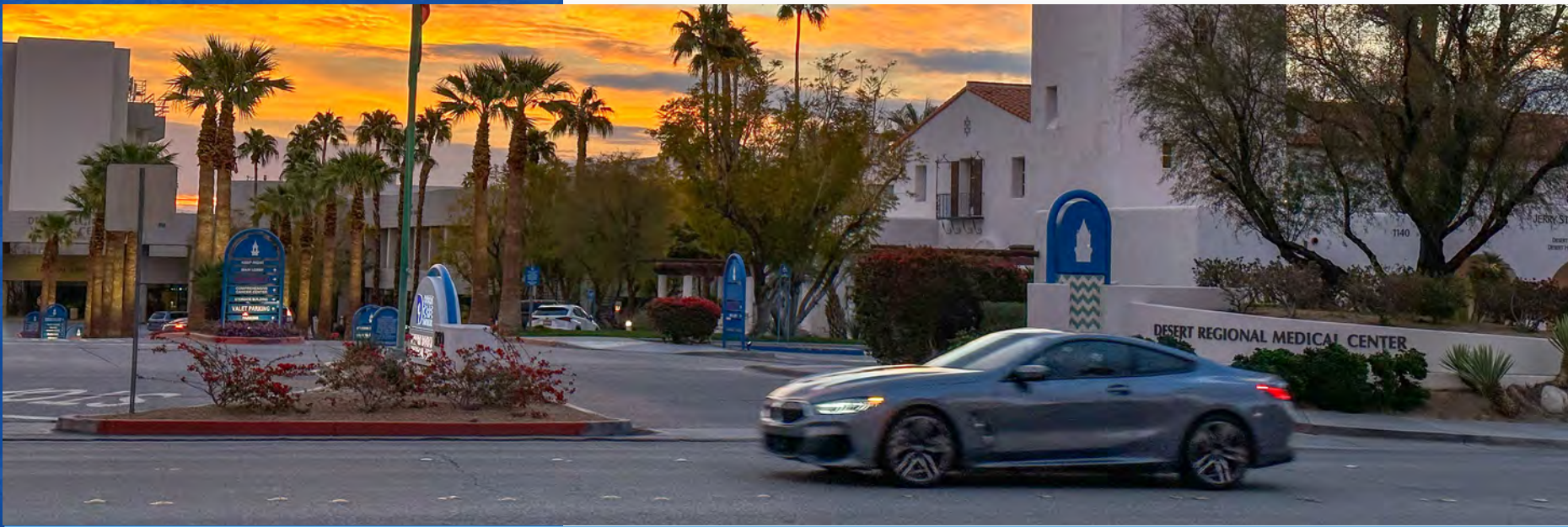
NAME	ORGANIZATION
Jenna Lecomte-Hinely	Health Assessment and Research for Communities (HARC)
Gayle Hoxter	PH Program Chief III, Nutrition And Health Promotion, RUHS Public Health
Kim Saruwatari	Director of Public Health, RUHS Public Health
Tanya Mayton	RUHS Nutrition Services

Appendix

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Built Environment

Riverside County, part of the “Inland Empire,” encompasses a massive territory with a rich array of assets to leverage to increase well-being throughout the region. With a history stretching back centuries, the County is home to diverse populations and cultures that contribute to the unique fabric of the community. Hosting a number of County, State and National Parks, Forests, Refuges, Monuments, Wilderness & Conservation Areas and Preserves, the range and bounty of natural open space in Riverside County is unmatched. Local geography spans mountain ranges, river valleys and desert that has been explored throughout history by Native Americans, Spanish Mission Fathers, gold prospectors, agricultural interests and people seeking a new life.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

The evolution of transportation in the region spans the history of travel itself: from walking the Spanish Trail to horses leading stagecoaches to steam engine trains and the railroads and major highways of today. The area is also known for a citrus industry that started with the introduction of the navel orange and lemon trees. Growth has been driven in recent decades by people looking for affordable housing outside of the Los Angeles and San Diego metro areas, with corporations following the growth in some parts of the county.

Leveraging this growth to build walkable communities throughout the county to create a sense of place can also double as an economic development strategy for cities within the county. The County displays a past ability to change with emerging trends. The County now has an opportunity to manage growth to ensure the health and economic well-being of residents for a more resilient and economically stable region. Implementing people focused transportation networks with supportive land use policies should include connected bicycle, pedestrian, trails and transit networks that provide access within, to and among the various cities clustered in the west side of the county to the east side and major

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report



metropolitan areas nearby.

There is significant research that links walkable places with resilience, economic growth and community well-being. For example, research has shown positive correlations between improved walkability, enhanced value of local services and goods and the creation of more job opportunities. In Lancaster, California, making the downtown more walkable generated \$130 in private investment and \$273 million in economic output after the City invested in taming its Main Street to create not only a walkable downtown but a central gathering area for the city.¹

According to Cities Alive: Towards a More Walkable World, walkability creates public spaces that are a pleasure to pass by and ensures small and well-planned distances between destinations to enhance the pleasure of strolling through the city and enjoying local services, shops and landmarks. A city’s identity is driven by how cultural and social interactions occur, which can be enhanced by improvements in the public realm to create that greater “sense of place.”²

Riverside County’s built environment assessment was completed through research, observation and conversations with local leaders. This process was facilitated by the Blue Zones Built Environment Team, who engaged with key stakeholders and conducted



Optimizing built environments can increase physical activity of an entire community by over 30%.

Our built and natural environment has a direct impact on our health, and — for most people — the amount of daily physical activity they get.

windshield and walking tours. This engagement was to assess the County and individual city readiness to improve well-being through more opportunities to move naturally, socialize, and downshift. The Built Environment Team gleaned insights into planning and leadership, existing on-the-ground efforts, and other considerations.

This report summarizes key findings, observations and next-step recommendations for the County. It is intended to inform stakeholders and leadership, with the goal of advancing informed and strategic decisions

about built environment opportunities and priorities. Based on our evaluation, supplemented with on-site interviews, and additional research into the policies and practices of Riverside County, we believe there are a number of ways to strengthen the region’s built and natural environment across the County.

Blue Zones Built Environment Goals



Routine, daily movement and social connection are central tenets of the Blue Zones principles of a healthy, engaged lifestyle. This does not necessarily mean structured exercise or scheduled interactions, rather, through an environment that is supportive of walking, bicycling, and social connectedness. Essential Blue Zones goals for the built environment include moving naturally, encouraging social gathering places, completing neighborhoods, and increasing housing options. Extensive research has demonstrated that neighborhoods or communities that have these components have higher rates of walkability, economic development, vitality, and greater overall health and safety for residents. Each of the core Blue Zones built environment goals are described below.

PROMOTE NATURAL MOVEMENT: A comprehensive and connected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, such as sidewalks and crossings, bicycle lanes, and trails are available to all residents and visitors. Major roads are designed or retrofitted to fully accommodate those walking and bicycling to access their destinations safely and comfortably. Streets are compact, green, comfortable, and inviting, serving low-speed movement of all. Traditional, well-connected paths favor walking and biking. Essential to this goal is ensuring the safety, security, and access for people of all ages and abilities. Daily needs are met the easiest by walking among mixed use buildings, parks and plazas.



ENCOURAGE SOCIAL GATHERING SPACES: Accessible areas are integrated into the neighborhood fabric to facilitate and encourage connections between people and places. Examples include parks, open spaces and community nodes like a plaza or neighborhood square. Sometimes uninviting and nonessential pavement can be transformed into community amenities.

INCREASE COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS: Offer residents options on where and how to live, work, shop, play, learn, worship, and get around. Destinations and well-connected low speed routes are designed to encourage social connections and reward those who arrive on foot or bike. Benches, shade structures, planters, awnings, water fountains, human scaled lighting, way-finding elements and well-placed quality bicycle parking offer safe, welcoming, comfortable, and appealing surroundings. Buildings provide security by their placement near walkways and transparent window coverage.

INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS: Providing a range of housing can increase affordability of neighborhoods and communities. Missing middle housing, such as accessory dwelling units, townhomes, duplexes, four squares, courtyard homes, pocket neighborhoods, apartments and other housing options traditionally found in communities are encouraged. Missing middle housing can also help gently increase density in a neighborhood, increasing its vitality, sense of community, and opportunities for social connectedness.

Assets & Strengths

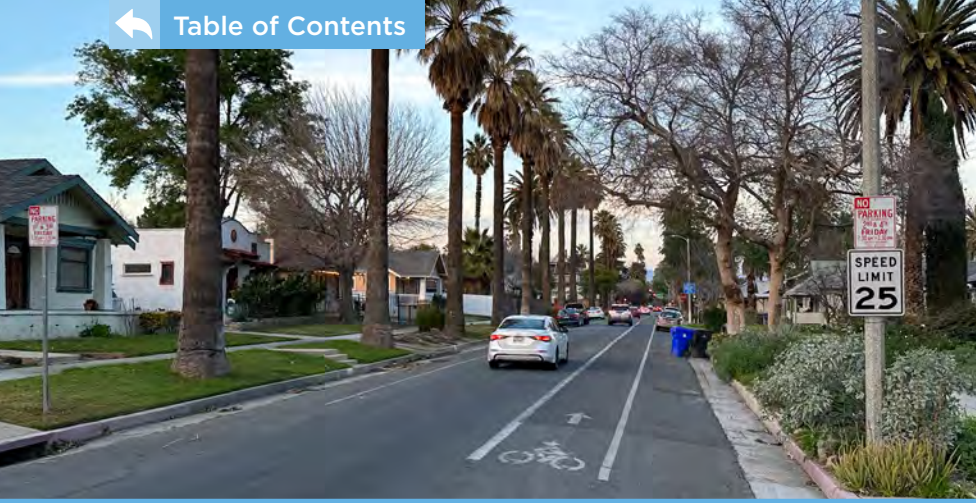
The communities of Riverside County have a number of assets to leverage to help create environments that better prioritize pedestrians, support natural movement by foot and bicycle, and create social gathering areas. Essential assets across the County include:

ENGAGED COMMUNITIES: Riverside County has small-scale rural communities, suburban development and mostly built-out urban cities. Cities within the County are engaged and committed to honoring the diverse populations, welcoming healthy development, and creating vibrant and inviting communities. Several of the cities assessed are eager to tackle barriers they are facing to become model communities that prioritize well-being with a sense of identity that reflects the growing population. While the various entities are at

different stages on this spectrum, the region has a history of evolving to meet the demands of change.

ACCESS TO NATURE: Growing up in Riverside County affords close contact with an abundance of nature, even when living in urban areas. The impact of





land-consuming sprawl settlement and over-paving varies across the county, with competing interests in maintaining rural feel and demand for affordable housing. Existing regional trail networks provide unique connections and opportunities for natural movement, and the bounty of open and green spaces provides endless cultural, historic and natural experiences. The County and the State have prioritized resources to sustain natural spaces for residents to continue to enjoy and to have healthy, livable, affordable, and vibrant places to call home. Access to nature on a daily basis provides significant health and learning benefits, so ensuring connections to assets is important for residents and visitors alike.

MURAL ARTWORK: Public art murals add interest and value to communities, while also providing an economic opportunity for encouraging local investment in the community. Local murals are on display in a number

of the communities visited in Riverside County and can provide a means to connect within the community across cultures and language barriers.

TRANSIT MOBILITY HUBS: The benefits of public transportation are amplified when systems provide reliable, interconnected, high-quality user experiences. Governed by a regional transportation entity, Riverside County transit systems are connected and supported in some locations by local circulators. These connections help riders move throughout the area, are safer than car travel, and can improve a city’s economy by giving more people the ability to get to jobs and meet daily needs. Transit Oriented Development land use designations paired with frequent or on-demand transit service to key local destinations provide access, choice and freedom.

DOWNTOWNS WITH ARCHITECTURE THAT HAS RETAINED ITS SOUL: A walkable city consists of a series of walkable neighborhoods, and it’s these neighborhoods that give many cities their character. Some of the cities visited have retained the character of their original downtowns and surrounding core neighborhoods, with an abundance of beautiful buildings throughout the county. This traditional architecture is a wonderful asset from which to build and leverage. The adaptive re-use of these structures



should include mixed uses such as affordable housing, ground floor retail, office space and food access options that can serve the community in the surrounding area to highlight the unique flavor or attributes of the area. Newer cities in the county can implement policies to create town centers that mimic the successful local examples to create a sense of place for residents.

A STRONG TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION: A unique asset, Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), functions as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization to distribute State and Federal funding. The RCTC also distributes Measure A funds – a half cent sales tax approved through 2039 - to every locality in Riverside County. Each community receives a fair share of local road funds for all transportation needs identified and approved in local Capital Improvement Plan budgets for capital, maintenance, and operating cost.

RCTC provides all transportation planning, design, operations and funding in the county; manages transit, toll express lanes, mobility hubs, bus stops and rail stations; makes major improvements to highway

corridors; helps local communities build railroad overpasses and underpasses; administers state and federal funds to improve sidewalks, bike lanes, and accessibility for persons with disabilities (ADA); as well as funds for specialized transportation in partnership with Metrolink, SunLine Transit Agency, and Riverside Transit Agency.

Additionally, in January 2021, the RCTC became the managing agency for the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA). Created in 2004 to implement one of the largest Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plans (MSHCP) in the nation, the MSHCP mission is to protect multispecies habitat in permanent conservation to provide access to open space and reduce nature deserts. Currently, there are 410,000 acres acquired with a goal of 500,000 acres to form a habitat reserve for 146 native species. The RCA also monitors habitat loss and the welfare of protected species, while managing the conserved lands to help animals and plants thrive.



Challenges & Threats To Overcome

There are several significant challenges that could prevent or hinder Riverside County from maximizing or fully capitalizing on the assets described. During our focus group meeting, we heard from participants on challenges that are preventing residents from fully maximizing the built and natural amenities Riverside County has to offer. This includes:

MANAGING LOGISTICS AND WAREHOUSING

SPRAWL: While a local economic driver, the logistics and warehousing locations across Riverside County maintain an immense footprint with significant impacts to transportation networks, air quality and livability of the area. A comprehensive vision for containing future growth to ensure community and economic benefits, infilling what is built, and managing the sprawl of this type of development is key for communities to maintain their identity and quality of life. Street networks within and to these immense complexes also require review to reduce the overly wide pavement and consider roundabouts (mountable for large trucks) to better manage traffic flow.

DEFAULT STREET DESIGN: Design guideline standards county-wide should be updated to create safe streets. The default typical section county-wide is to build a

5-lane street that move cars as quickly as possible with overly wide lanes, regardless of the purpose of the street or the surrounding land use. Commercial corridors, neighborhood collectors, and residential streets should all be designed with people as the priority and within their land use context. The main purpose of these types of streets is to provide access and move people. A default typical section for average daily vehicle trips of less than 20,000 should start at 2-3 lanes, no more than 11-foot wide. Design elements that should be considered include 6-foot wide sidewalks, 10-12-foot wide side-paths or trails, buffered or protected bicycle lanes, on-street parking and mid-block pedestrian refuge islands between intersections.

MORE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REQUIRED:

While we were able to engage with a number of city leaders, it would be beneficial to further engage RCTC to better understand potential concerns, areas of focus overlap and how efforts could be leveraged and messaged to better serve communities. Transit, in particular, is an essential means of travel to help address commuter traffic. Convenient connections from housing to existing and planned mobility hubs should be done in partnership with the communities they serve. RCTC is a willing partner to participate, and bringing their voice to the table provides an opportunity for all parties to better understand how their existing services can amplify and complement serving the growing community.



Opportunities

Based on our time in the community, research, and follow-up interviews, the Blue Zones Built Environment team found emerging themes county-wide for improving well-being and walkability. The Team has developed initial recommendations for what the County could do to increase well-being. Key overarching opportunities noted to promote more natural movement include:

UPDATE STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES AND

STANDARDS: Riverside County can work with RCTC to conduct an internal policy and process review for all governing agencies for how new streets are designed, developer requirements are written, and the annual

street repair and maintenance cycle is prioritized. Changes for a more people-focused built environment could be incorporated into County policy for local jurisdictions to apply. Minimal changes to design guidelines when repaving and re-striping streets could incorporate reduced vehicle lane widths to include buffered or protected bicycle facilities; fill sidewalk gaps; and retrofit curbs to meet ADA standards. Additionally, default design standards when new streets are planned or developed should complement and



support the surrounding land use i.e. if the street is a residential or neighborhood collector street surrounded by housing with a desired speed of 25 mph, the road needs to be designed for that speed to significantly transition the pedestrian experience to be comfortable and safe.

ADOPT VISION ZERO RESOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

The county could impact the transportation network comprehensively by working with the RCTC to formally adopt a Vision Zero Resolution and Implementation Strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility. A Vision Zero Resolution and Action Strategy are an opportunity to look holistically at how the County, cities within the county and RCTC plans, designs for, and accommodates people using all modes of travel to move safely throughout the county. Using crash data to identify key projects to implement and prioritize funding, a Vision Zero Strategy can be an effective tool for meaningful impact. Having a strategy in place can also leverage RCTC funding to apply for significant Safe Streets 4 All Federal grants.

SAVE OR CREATE THE CORE: Restore, revitalize, and infill main streets, downtowns and adjacent neighborhoods to take advantage of existing gridded streets, services and buildings, and thus avoid the

need for new and expensive repairs to maintain infrastructure. By focusing first on historic downtowns and the surrounding core areas, the County can preserve and enhance each community’s individuality, identity, character, history, and culture. With its colorful historic past, Riverside County communities that are emerging in unincorporated areas can tap into these same desired characteristics for creating a unique local identity. Walkable downtown cores or town centers, close-in neighborhoods, access to parks and trails can all be created through policy frameworks that guide development for land use and supporting transportation networks.

INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS: Increase housing stock for community members, maintain affordability and address local displacement due to the influx of commuters by creating a county-wide policy that allows and encourages a variety of housing options to contribute to improved walkability. “Missing middle” housing types such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplex, triplex, four squares, garden apartments and townhomes should be allowed, encouraged and incentivized in emerging areas and existing neighborhoods. An audit of existing housing, and a review of county-wide and local regulations could identify any unintentional Zoning language preventing missing middle housing from being built. Working with engaged developers to identify any opportunity

to modify plans and offer a greater variety of housing types will greatly improve the livability and walkability of the residential development underway and in the future to meet the local housing demand.

Readiness

A first step after Blue Zones is invited into a community is to assess readiness. This is an essential step as a number of communities are interested in transformation to enable “making the healthy choice the easy choice.” Specific to our four policy areas, we seek to answer the following questions:

- ✔ Does the **political leadership** of the jurisdiction have a strong willingness to support Blue Zones efforts?
- ✔ Are the city’s/region’s **decision-makers** on board to change (some) jurisdictional policies and processes to support a Blue Zones project?
- ✔ Are **community groups** excited about the possibility of a Blue Zones project and on board to partner and collaborate to move a Blue Zone project forward?
- ✔ Are other **community influencers** excited about the potential and willing to support our work?

Across Riverside County, the Built Environment assessment of each community found a range of opportunities from a county-wide perspective to the micro-level in each city. Some cities are further along with understanding the change that needs to occur for well-being and others have a greater ability to put policies into place now to ensure future development creates a connected, walkable and livable community. Through conversations with local stakeholders, officials and local leadership, the Blue Zones Built Environment Team is confident that there is support, enthusiasm, and desire to do the hard work needed to transform the communities assessed in Riverside County and to increase well-being region wide.

Acknowledgements

Ann Mayer, Executive Director, Riverside County Transportation Commission

Stakeholders in the assessed communities informed the Riverside County report

¹ Steuteville, Rob. “Ten economic benefits of walkable places.” Published in CNU’s Public Square, August 21, 2021. <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2021/08/18/ten-economic-benefits-walkable-places>.

² ARUP. Cities Alive: Towards a More Walkable World. 2016.



RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Food Environment



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

Riverside County has a rich agricultural history and remains an agricultural powerhouse today in many areas. It is also a geography in transition, with the development of massive tracts of warehouses, new housing developments for a growing population, and a diverse populace that brings an array of food-related preferences and practices. For some communities within the County, easy access to affordable, healthy food near where people live, learn, and play is a challenge. Long commutes and the cost-of-living are squeezing household budgets and families are stretching to meet basic needs. Yet, in many places, there is an abundance of just-picked, healthy food and a broad availability of food options. The mild climate fosters a culture which supports healthy food – often grounded in the cultural traditions of residents. With an intriguing range of assets and opportunities, Riverside County, California, is well-positioned to ensure the people who live and work there can maximize their well-being.

Riverside County’s food environment assessment was completed through background research, a multi-day site visit with stops in numerous communities, and interviews with local leaders. Led by the Blue Zones Food Environment Team, this process engaged key food and agriculture stakeholders and included windshield and walking tours; visual inventories of food-related assets; and a scan of relevant food-related policies. The food environment assessment is a means to evaluate community readiness to enhance well-being. This can occur by increasing access to healthy food and beverages and decreasing access to unhealthy food and beverages in the places people spend their time.

The food environment assessment generated insights into planning and leadership, current food environment development activities underway, and other key factors at the intersection of food, health, and agriculture.

This assessment report synthesizes core findings, related next steps, and perspectives on the state of Riverside County’s food system. The report is designed to provide useful information to community leaders and interested stakeholders, with the aim of generating strategic, informed decisions about opportunities and priorities. The Riverside County food environment assessment has generated a clear set of opportunities to further enhance the area’s food environment.



Blue Zones Food Environment Goals

Enjoying a nutritious diet daily, combined with social connection, and a sense of purpose are fundamental components of the healthy, active Blue Zones lifestyle. In the context of food, this means the community where we live and the environments where we spend most of our time offer affordable, culturally relevant, nourishing dietary choices and the opportunity to relax and enjoy our meals in the fellowship of others. It also means our local food system fosters a vibrant, healthy local food culture; access to nutritious options in the places we spend time; community food assets and infrastructure that promote local agriculture and healthy options; and the development of healthy food skills across the lifespan. Policy and systems changes, combined with shifts to community infrastructure, are proven ways to move the dial on health outcomes. Each of the core Blue Zones food environment aims are described below.



MAKE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE: Increase participation in healthy food programs; ensure children have enough healthy food to eat; and foster healthy hunger relief programs to ensure that all residents have easy access to healthy food.



BUILD FOOD SKILLS: Prioritize education on how to grow and cook healthy food and foster opportunities for families to eat together. Strengthening people's food skills can equip them with the knowledge they need to select and prepare healthy food, improving the nutritional quality of their daily food choices.



INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS: Ensure healthy options and habits for young children, children in K-12 environments, and on college campuses; increase healthy eating behaviors in hospitals and public institutions; and promote healthy options and habits for everyone. Making the healthy choice the easy choice in the places people spend time will increase consumption of nutritious items and decrease consumption of unhealthy items.



GROW LONG-TERM COMMUNITY HEALTH: Establish lasting leadership on food issues for the community; build a base of resources to keep children healthy; and make healthy grocery access easy for everyone. Ongoing, thoughtful planning around food, health, and agriculture with consistent relevant resource support creates healthy choice options in a community.



GROW THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY: Use public land and planning to enable food production by local residents; care for natural resources needed to grow food; and support area farmers and food enterprises to raise and sell food for local markets. Creating and sustaining a community's infrastructure around food production and food and farm enterprises fosters a dynamic food culture; galvanizes the local economy; and fosters community food self-sufficiency.

The Blue Zones Food Policy Menu identifies specific strategies that can help achieve the above goals for Riverside County.



Assets & Strengths

Riverside County features numerous resources to support food environments that foster a vibrant local food culture, healthy food skills and food environments, and a robust community food infrastructure. Key assets include:

LONGSTANDING AGRICULTURAL EPICENTER:

Agriculture is a central activity around the county, including nut and fruit orchards, date groves, fruit and vegetable production, and some animal production. Agriculture defines a sizable portion of the county’s economy, cultural identity, workforce, and land management. Unlike most places in California, some parts of the county are not struggling with water access issues. The University of California Riverside campus features large plots of land in agricultural production that serve as research plots. Many of the incorporated and unincorporated communities across the county have established zoning codes to preserve and protect farmland; agricultural activity often occurs adjacent to housing developments and town centers. The presence of agriculture in Riverside County means that decision-makers are accustomed to making long-term decisions about food production; understand the importance of policymaking and cross-sector collaboration related to food, health, and agriculture; and are open and willing

to undertake innovative food environment initiatives.

RECORD OF HEALTHY EATING INITIATIVES: Across the county, there are numerous systems and organizations that focus on food and nutrition. Riverside County is committed to providing programs and making systems changes that increase people’s access to affordable, healthy food where they live, learn, and work and equip them with the know-how to plan, grow, make, and enjoy a healthy diet. County administration of CalFresh and WIC, in cooperation with UC Cooperative Extension, provide food-focused public health programs; broad-based food insecurity and nutrition resources; and

nutrition education and support through health systems. Notably, many of the County’s School Districts offer farm to school programs, including purchasing and preparation of locally grown foods; school gardens with cross-subject curricular content; and academic and non-academic opportunities for students of all ages to learn about food, health, and food production. In fact, the Riverside Unified School District has established a successful food hub, procuring food from local growers for school meals. This exciting asset offers promise as an infrastructural resource to other school districts and organizations with institutional food services interested in farm to institution efforts. Furthermore, California’s statewide investment in universal free school meals and USDA sponsored snack and supper programs, combined with county-wide food resource programs (such as backpack programs, school-based food pantries, and regularly scheduled food distribution days at area schools) help close the meal gap for many Riverside County students. Finally, county-wide nutrition education learning opportunities are available to specific populations on an ongoing basis, such as SNAP-Ed classes offered to those enrolled in CalFresh. WIC, CalFresh, and area health systems also offer nutrition and lifestyle education to patients..

BUILDING A NEXT GENERATION OF GROWERS AND FOOD ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONALS: In various parts of the county, there are institutions with active

and planned high quality educational programs designed to create a future workforce for the county’s food system. UC Riverside offers multiple majors and a wide array of coursework in food and agriculture-related subjects, as well as access to numerous career development opportunities in the county. Formal and informal agriculture education programs at the secondary level are available in districts across the county, including agriculture education classes, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Riverside Food System Alliance, and student clubs. Mead Valley’s high school features a brand new array of resources to support their programs, including an aquaponics facility; multiple raised beds; and large production areas that raise food for the school’s cafeteria. Coachella has a massive, ambitious agricultural studies complex planned, with construction beginning later this year and significant support from local agricultural interests.

PASSION FOR GARDENING: Throughout the county, many people participate in food gardening, and County and local policy encourage it. Community gardens feature raised beds, learning opportunities, and social gathering spaces, many of which are supported by local municipalities, faith based organizations, non-profit organizations, and affordable housing complexes. Gardening clubs, programs, and resources (such as the countywide UC Cooperative Extension’s Master Gardener program) support individual and

community gardens, equipping people with the seeds, knowledge, and tools needed to raise food for themselves, their loved ones, and the community. For example, Banning is investing municipal resources in the construction of a new community garden and educational space, providing much needed infrastructure and a hub for its gardening culture.

HELPFUL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE-FOCUSED POLICY AND PROGRAMS:

County regulation and policy encourages and permits farmland preservation; beekeeping; backyard small animal husbandry; micro home kitchen operations; and cottage food operations. Other countywide efforts further community well-being with specific emphasis on healthy eating. The Healthy Riverside County Initiative combines four components—healthy eating, active living, tobacco control, and the built environment—to



address issues of chronic disease. The Riverside County Health Coalition, a collaboration that undertakes policy development, advocacy, and community engagement to promote healthy lifestyles. The County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP) main focus is on countywide nutrition action plans and is a public-private partnership addressing the food system as well as USDA-funded programs. Finally, the Ag Trail is a project to promote agriculture and connect Riverside County farms to homes and businesses.

MOMENTUM ON FOOD ENVIRONMENT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT:

There is both strategic coordination and independent emergent efforts to create what will become an ecosystem of local food environment infrastructure across the county. All of these efforts provide important mutual learning opportunities across geographies and systems, as well as a powerful, aggregate investment in Riverside County's future local food system. This includes Coachella's new agricultural high school complex, combined with new, innovative tribally operated organic farm and food hub across the street; Banning's new community garden complex; the City of Riverside's long term, comprehensive food system development plan and associated plans for a large incubator farmer program on the edge of town and the school district's new food hub; and Mead Valley's new agricultural infrastructure which includes a school farm. These reflect this momentum.



Furthermore, the collaborative leadership required to advance the City of Riverside’s ambitious food system plan illustrates the potential and need for cross-sector strategic partnerships aligned around a shared, comprehensive vision. This leadership model, further nurtured in communities across the county, and collectively across these communities, demonstrates exciting potential for how Riverside County can develop and advance ambitious, much needed innovations at the intersection of food, health, and agriculture to support community and economic well-being for years to come.

Challenges & Threats to Overcome

There are several challenges that could prevent or hinder Riverside County from maximizing or fully capitalizing on opportunities. These include:

COST OF LIVING, FOOD INSECURITY, AND HEALTH: Like most of California, residents in Riverside County struggle to make ends meet. The rising cost of food, high gas prices in communities primarily designed for vehicle use, expensive housing, and other expenses (such as childcare) are combined with lengthy commutes. Time burdens are a reality for most residents. Cessation of COVID-related Federal food benefits occurring this month will further exacerbate food insecurity for Riverside County residents.

Concerning rates of food insecurity and many working low wage jobs present very real obstacles for people just trying to get by. The psychological stress of this reality, combined with the health impacts of a poor diet, mean a higher incidence of diet-related diseases.

RAPID COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT: As an historically agricultural region, the Inland Empire is facing dramatic change, particularly in unincorporated areas. Developers are purchasing farmland, transforming it into miles of large warehouses and housing developments. The County government is racing to keep up with these rapid shifts, addressing basic infrastructure needs (such as roads, utilities, and commercial needs) and has little time for longer term planning around land use and considerations like agricultural production and food access. This momentum is permanently and quickly shifting the landscape, culture, and character of the region.

STRENGTHEN FOOD ENVIRONMENT PLANNING AT THE COUNTY LEVEL: There currently is not a structured, comprehensive plan for food environment development at the county level. Across scales, geographies, jurisdictions, sectors, and issues, there is a need for a thoughtful plan that describes opportunities, needs, goals, associated objectives and evidence-based actions, with an associated workplan. Riverside County must thoughtfully and holistically address

healthy food access in the places people spend time, food skills development, healthy food infrastructure, local food culture, and agricultural vitality in the region. To do this, a collective understanding on investment and engagement of leadership across many agencies, institutions, and places are needed. Adopting a similar approach with a cross-jurisdictional, cross-function, cross-sector framework can provide a fundable, strategic roadmap for the county's food future. Furthermore, an operational backbone to support the execution and necessary collaboration of this effort is needed.

Opportunities

Participants identified several opportunities to improve food environment in Riverside County. These include:

COUNTYWIDE FOOD ENVIRONMENT PLANNING:

Riverside County would benefit from the development of a countywide food environment plan that responds to and aligns with existing, planned, and hoped for healthy eating and food environment development plans in communities across the county. This plan can guide county-level efforts to cultivate and coordinate food skills development; healthy food environments; local food infrastructure development; farmland preservation; and community and economic development efforts that foster a vibrant culinary and agricultural identity for the region.

HEALTHY INSTITUTIONS: There are a series of strategies that can be implemented in anchor institutions across the county that play a role in healthy eating. Expanding participation in state-funded Market Match programs, combined with prescription produce and other local incentive programs for eaters with limited resources, can increase peoples' access to healthy food and reduce their risk of diet-related diseases. A comprehensive initiative to support corner and convenience store 'makeovers' to reduce unhealthy food and beverage availability and increase nutritious offerings would be a welcome addition. Additionally, updates and enhancements to school district wellness policies across the county would be a beneficial step, including universal use of second chance breakfast at all Riverside County public schools. Institutional food services in community anchor institutions (such as hospitals) and worksites could create nutrition guidelines that align with Blue Zones nutrition standards for food service, vending, and catering. Expanding farm to institution programs at anchor institutions, including implementation of 'Good Food Purchasing Practices' and expansion of the Riverside Unified School District's food hub to serve these food services could continue to improve community health and economic vitality of the region.



FOOD INSECURITY SCREENINGS: Finally, establishing food insecurity screenings as standard practice for patient, student, and client intake at a variety of institutions across the county would be a valuable step, increasing peoples' access to and participation in federal and state food benefit programs and local hunger relief programs (RUHS uses a "whole person health score" screening which includes nutrition.). Healthcare systems could conduct these simple assessments and provide referrals at regular patient and annual school/sports physical appointments; senior centers and schools could conduct this assessment through usual intake practices.

Readiness

Riverside County is well poised to take on a new body of food environment work that builds from previous initiatives and successes and is inspired by truly innovative work, collaboration, and models occurring across the county. A coordinated, strategic approach that involves partners from across the sectors of the food system, local agencies and institutions, and geographies could meaningfully move the dial on community health outcomes, while leaning into the Inland Empire's agricultural character and connection to community and economic development. Blue Zones could offer strategic guidance, expertise, and support to ensure a robust, dynamic portfolio of efforts that galvanize the health and vitality of the entire county.

Tobacco



Tobacco policy addresses four major intervention arenas: 1) commercial tobacco retail environments, 2) secondhand / thirdhand smoke exposure, 3) youth prevention education, and 4) cessation support. Commercial tobacco-use / smoke exposure is the number one cause of preventable disease and death in the US.³ Riverside County is a model leader in the state for coalition and health agency collaborations as well as for advancing commercial tobacco prevention, health

equity and non-smoker rights. Still, there is much work to be done in the policy arena to move the dial forward in one of California's highest populated counties.

The annual American Lung Association's (ALA) State of Tobacco Control Report is a valuable tool for measuring the existence and strength of local tobacco prevention policies across jurisdictions. The report grades policy progress for "Smokefree Outdoor Air, Smokefree Housing, Flavored Tobacco and Reducing Sales of Tobacco Products" for each of these categories from "A" to "F." It also provides an overall grade for counties and cities. For instance, a jurisdiction could have an "A" grade for retail interventions but an "F" grade for Smokefree Housing. Overall grades provide a high-level vantage point as to how strong community will has been jurisdiction by jurisdiction for commercial tobacco prevention.

According to the ALA's 2023 report, none of the 29 jurisdictions, including unincorporated areas, in Riverside County have overall "A" grades and just five have "B" grades. Eleven jurisdictions are ranked with "C" grades, nine with "D" grades, and there are four "F" grades. Riverside County has around one-third of its jurisdictions only achieving average policy results, and over one third of jurisdictions have policies failing or close to failing levels. An anecdotal overview suggests that unlike many jurisdictions in California that have overall and category-specific grades at the "D" or "F" level, Riverside jurisdictions collectively shows both promise and challenges for commercial tobacco prevention.

Riverside County's tobacco assessment was completed through research, observation, and conversations with medical professionals, community

health workers, policy influencers and coalition members. This process was facilitated by the Blue Zones Tobacco Team who engaged with key stakeholders and conducted windshield tours, neighborhood walks and store visits. The purpose was to assess readiness to improve well-being through more opportunities to reduce commercial tobacco sales and the impacts from secondhand and thirdhand smoke. Key components are also youth education and community cessation support.

The Blue Zones Tobacco Team interviewed staff at Riverside County Tobacco Control Project, members of Riverside County Coalition for Tobacco Free Communities and California Tobacco Control Program grantee partners, as well as other community members.

These stakeholders are working to reduce teen initiation to nicotine products, curtail the tobacco industry’s targeting of vulnerable communities and population groups, and support cessation from nicotine.

Advancing health equity for all is centered on lowering tobacco sales and use to alleviate much of the engineered public health crisis caused by the tobacco industry. Based on this evaluation, interviews, and research into the policies and practices of Riverside County, there are a number of ways to strengthen the region’s health indicators. These opportunities are presented in this Assessment Report. Please note that adult smoking rates cited in this report are drawn from SHAPE Strategic Health Alliance Pursuing Equity Riverside County’s published datasets.⁴

Assets & Strengths

The communities of Riverside County have a number of assets to leverage to help create environments that reduce tobacco retailing, protect residents from secondhand and thirdhand smoke, educate youth against nicotine initiation, and support cessation for community members who are commercial tobacco/nicotine users. Essential assets include:

A MODEL COALITION: Riverside County Coalition for Tobacco Free Communities, in many ways, sets the standard for effective coalitions. The Coalition has a Western chapter and a Desert chapter. Both meet independently on a quarterly basis. The Coalition is further organized into groups that support members to engage in direct action to promote key messaging, grow community will and galvanize support from decision-makers. The Coalition has the following Action Teams: Flavored Tobacco, Urban Planning & Healthy Communities, Social Media, Outreach & Logistics, and Cessation. The Coalition also has two Policy Campaigns Task Forces: Secondhand Smoke and Retail.

A STRONG COUNTY TOBACCO PREVENTION PROGRAM: Riverside University Health System’s (RUHS) Tobacco Control Project (TCP) is a world-class organization funded by the California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP) and designated by them

as the County’s Local Lead Agency (LLA). Having a county tobacco program within this structure uniquely positions prevention efforts for effective and energized collaboration with research and education stakeholders. Part of RUHS TCP’s role is to support the Coalition with a staff coordinator who, while not permitted under Prop 56/99 restrictions to advocate, can provide educational, logistical and administrative support to allow non-funded grassroots membership to maximize their advocacy work.

STRONG COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH EXPERT ORGANIZATIONS: RUHS TCP and the Riverside County Coalition for Tobacco Free Communities partner with a number of other State grantees known as Partner Organizations not limited to the American Lung Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc., American Heart Association, TUPE-Tobacco Use Prevention Education, and Riverside County Black Chamber of Commerce.

STRONG COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-CTCP FUNDED PREVENTION ALLIES: RUHS TCP and the Riverside County Coalition for Tobacco Free Communities also help move policies forward by partnering with other stakeholders such as local medical providers, health plans, higher education institutions, youth and adult allies, the business community, local media, law enforcement, schools, youth-serving



organizations, civic and volunteer groups, and religious and fraternal organizations.

ASSESSED JURISDICTIONS HAVE SOME TOBACCO PREVENTION POLICIES IN PLACE: All the jurisdictions in this policy assessment have commercial retail policies in place and received “A” grades specifically for tobacco retail licensing in the ALA’s State of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card. While great gains have been made towards reducing sales, much work is still needed to be done to reduce second/thirdhand smoke exposure. Because of this need, the jurisdictions covered in this assessment, except for one, have overall tobacco control grades at a “C” or higher.

THE RUHS TOBACCO CONTROL PROJECT’S CURRENT WORKPLAN IS BASED OFF RIGOROUS COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES: The RUHS Tobacco Control Project completed a Communities of Excellence (CX) Needs Assessment in 2021 that ranks policy priorities in their current CTCP workplan. This helps identify community tobacco policy priorities, which directs RUHS’s tobacco grant workplan and helps validate the Coalition’s focus areas. The CX process ranked Tobacco Retail Licensing at top priority, smokefree multi-unit housing as second and smokefree outdoor public spaces as third. The 2021 CX process and report provide a main foundation layer for gauging jurisdictional readiness for particular policies. This is complemented by CTCP grantee workplan



activities such as regular use of jurisdiction-specific Midwest Academy Strategy Charts and other tools gauging readiness for change related to political leadership and decision-maker openness, as well as community group and influencer support.

FLAVORED TOBACCO BAN: The recent statewide ban on flavored tobacco in California prohibits the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, and flavored smokeless tobacco. The ban also applies to electronic cigarettes and vaping products with flavors like fruit, candy, and mint. The goal of the ban is to protect youth from the harmful effects of tobacco by reducing their access to flavored tobacco products, which are often marketed to young people. The ban went into effect on January 1, 2021, and includes fines for retailers who violate the law.

Challenges & Threats To Overcome: Riverside County

There are several significant challenges that could delay or present other barriers to Riverside County Coalition for Tobacco Free Communities, RUHS Tobacco Control Project and partner organizations from maximizing on the opportunities described above. During our focus group meetings and interviews, participants shared a number of challenges that impact progress and momentum in saving lives and preventing teen initiation

to commercial tobacco in Riverside County.

THERE ARE ENTRENCHED MINDSETS AROUND ANTI-REGULATION AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: Focus group sessions pointed to profit-centrism and individualism as being widespread mindsets and value systems related to decision-maker hesitancy and pushback. These can be substantial hurdles that educators and advocates for tobacco retail control and non-smokers rights face with decision-making bodies. These mindsets have been known to block and delay the consideration of stricter retail provisions, multi-unit housing ordinances and other smoke-free policies.

ASSESSED JURISDICTIONS ARE JUST A FEW AMONG MANY RUHS AND THE COALITION ARE WORKING IN: Interviews and focus group sessions suggest an optimism for community readiness for tobacco prevention policies across all County jurisdictions. Potential Blue Zones Project community candidates will benefit from both the vision and the demonstrated success of Coalition stakeholders to get policies enacted. Logistically, any future Blue Zones Project tobacco objectives in target jurisdictions will need to be aligned as much as possible with CTCP funded agency workplans to avoid duplication or competition with established Coalition priorities. Ultimately, capacity can impact progress with so many jurisdictions.

SOME OF THOSE MOST IN NEED OF CESSATION SERVICES HAVE SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES

ACCESSING THEM: Focus group sessions highlighted that many of the most vulnerable community members in greatest need for cessation support live remotely and/or lack resources to travel to support centers. While free, online quit services are effective to some, but many are still not accessing it.

THERE IS A STRONG NEED FOR EDUCATION AND CESSATION INNOVATIONS:

A number of stakeholders voiced a need for additional innovative resources such as culturally appropriate and trauma-informed youth prevention approaches and new cessation recruitment solutions. One key stakeholder mentioned that current cessation approaches across California have reached a plateau of efficacy.

THERE ARE HIGH DENSITIES OF TOBACCO RETAILING OCCURRING IN MANY JURISDICTIONS:

Tobacco retail clustering and associated advertising in some neighborhoods, such as in Banning, might aptly be described as blight. High density of tobacco retailing can promote a normalizing effect in communities and neighborhoods for tobacco in the retail environment. During retail store visits, State-banned cheap, flavored tobacco products were found in a donut shop as well as a feed store, not just in convenience stores.

SMOKE/VAPE SHOP LOCATIONS PROLIFERATE



AROUND RETAIL CENTERS AND STORES SERVING VULNERABLE AND LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS (SES) RESIDENTS:

In the jurisdictions assessed, upscale retail centers serving more economically advantaged community members generally have a distinct absence of smoke shops in their neighborhoods. By contrast, in a number of retail centers serving low SES residents, it is typical to find these smoke shops more common and in proximity to discount markets, hydration outlets and laundromats. Because of this, tobacco-blight may be invisible to stakeholders and policy influencers from affluent communities that do not see commercial tobacco blight in their immediate retail

landscapes. Stakeholders from neighborhoods more heavily targeted by Big Tobacco pay greater health costs, such as more frequent illness and shortened lifespans. In this way, commercial tobacco victims are disadvantaged to challenge anti-regulation/pro-business arguments of decision-makers.

THERE ARE EXAMPLES OF SHARP CONTRASTS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE STATE FLAVOR BAN:

Smoke shops visited in the city of Riverside, Corona and some unincorporated areas have extensive flavored tobacco inventories in contravention of the State’s new flavor ban. Staff members in stores visited voiced intentions not to comply and intimated that supply would not be a problem. By contrast, some shops in the City of Coachella and French Valley are making visible efforts to discontinue these products and, in some cases, featured signage explaining flavor products were being discontinued. Compliance inconsistencies can bolster retailer opposition to policies and can fuel skepticism by bureaucrats as to the efficacy of policies.





Challenges & Threats To Overcome: Jurisdictions

A. FRENCH VALLEY

French Valley is a region within unincorporated Riverside County and, as such, falls under Riverside County’s Tobacco Retail License Ordinance and smoke-free outdoor air laws. According to the California Tobacco Health Assessment Tool, there are just three State-licensed brick and mortar retail tobacco establishments in French Valley, which include two fuel convenience stores and one Smoke Shop. There are only 0.1 retailers per 1,000 population and no retailers within 500’-1000’ of a school. With median household incomes higher than Mead Valley, it is noteworthy that fewer retail establishments exist there in comparison. French Valley has the lowest adult smoking rate of the communities assessed in this report at 11.9 %. Further assessment will be needed to determine if there is a substantial inventory of multi-unit housing and if this inventory is managed by companies that are already smoke-free. French Valley has the advantage of falling under the policy umbrella of County Unincorporated, and efforts at the County-level will automatically apply.

B. MEAD VALLEY

Mead Valley is a region within unincorporated Riverside County and, as such, like French Valley, falls under Riverside County’s Tobacco Retail License Ordinance and smoke-free outdoor air laws. According to the California Tobacco Health Assessment Tool, there are just eight State-licensed brick and mortar retail tobacco establishments: one smoke shop, two liquor stores, three convenience stores, one market and one feed store that sells a variety of tobacco products as well as drug paraphernalia. There are 0.4 retailers per 1,000 population and no retailers within 500’-1000’ of a school. The one smoke shop is within the same building as La Michoacan Ice Cream Factory. While the tobacco retail footprint in Mead Valley is not as substantial as metropolitan areas, the median household income is much lower than French Valley. The proximity of a smoke shop next to a child/family friendly ice cream store as well as a mini-smoke shop within Mead Valley Feed demonstrates that while tobacco retail density may not be a prominent, retail locations may reflect the norming of commercial tobacco use in a community with a 16.7 % smoking rate, which is the highest of the communities assessed in this report. There does not appear to be a noteworthy inventory of multi-unit housing. Mead Valley’s smoking rates provides poignant arguments in support of Unincorporated Riverside County to strengthen its Tobacco Retail License (TRL) to include a flavor ban and other provisions such as minimum price points and pack sizes.

C. CITY OF RIVERSIDE

The City of Riverside is the only district in Riverside County to have an “A” for a Tobacco Retail License and an “A” for Smokefree Housing within the ALA’s State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card. In this way, political will for commercial tobacco prevention and decision maker allies to support further policies are demonstrated by the city being a leader among jurisdictions in the county. The city’s 13.2% adult smoking rate is currently higher than the State average. As the 2022-enacted smoke-free multi-unit housing ordinance ages, smoking rates may drop in the City of Riverside. There is, nevertheless, further work to be done as the city is still at a “D” for Smokefree Outdoor Air policies. Focus group participants voiced concerns for high density of retailing in the city, which, like on sections of Magnolia Avenue, tobacco outlets appear to cluster. It is important to note that 11.5% of the city’s tobacco retailers are within 500’ and 32.3 % are within 1,000’ of a school. February 2023 visits to multiple stores revealed full inventories of flavored products on display. One store clerk in a prominent smoke shop asserted his store would not be complying with the State-wide flavor ban and that their distributor had a reliable supply of flavored products.

The contrast between A-level policies in place yet retail density and compliance issues reveal the opportunity for the City of Riverside to strengthen retail policies.

The City of Riverside’s Tobacco Retail License (TRL) is aligned with most others in Riverside County that have adopted the County’s ordinance. Focus group input noted that the City of Riverside should strengthen their TRL with more strict and contemporary provisions to ensure A grades. This action will effectively reduce smoking and teen initiation rates, especially in neighborhoods characterized by health disparities. It is to be determined if an ordinance upgrade is best to happen at the county-level, first, to maximize parity opportunities for all jurisdictions that adopted the County ordinance.

D. CORONA

Corona has a 12.8% adult smoking rate and scores an overall “C” grade on the ALA’s State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card. It has an “A” for a Tobacco Retail License, “F” for Smokefree Housing and “D” for Smokefree Outdoor Air. There are 0.6 tobacco retailers per 1,000 Population and 4% within 500’ of a school and 15.4% within 1,000’. Like Riverside, Corona has

retailer density issues, especially along the length of East-West 6th Street, where many stores are located within 500’ of schools. During a visit to one prominent smoke/vape store, vast quantities of flavored products were on display. When asked if the store was affected by the State flavor ban, the manager explained they intended to disregard the ban. While this may be the case, this store had substantial inventories of flavored hookah and loose-leaf products for sale which are not covered by the ban. Corona would benefit from Riverside County strengthening its ordinance and giving the City a chance to amend theirs accordingly.

E. COACHELLA

Coachella has a 16.4% adult smoking rate. It scores an overall “D” grade on the ALA’s State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card, while having an “A” for a Tobacco Retail License, “F” for Smokefree Housing and “F” for Smokefree Outdoor Air. There are 0.5 tobacco retailers per 1,000 Population and 4.3 % within 500’ of a school and 26.1% within 1,000’. The city was recently awarded a tobacco education and enforcement grant and hired a Community Service Officer in March 2022. The program has developed a campaign with the city titled “GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE CLOUD... your health is WORTH IT!” Coachella has an opportunity, like the City of Riverside, for a future TRL ordinance strengthening and to adopt smokefree policies.



F. BANNING

Banning has a 15% adult smoking rate and an overall “C” Grade on the ALA’s State Of Tobacco Control 2023 Report Card. It has an “A” for a Tobacco Retail License, “F” for Smokefree Housing and “D” for Smokefree Outdoor Air. There are 1.1 tobacco retailers per 1,000 population, the highest density of any communities assessed in this report. Three percent of tobacco retailers are within 500’ of a school and 15.2% are within 1,000’. Almost all of the city’s 33 licensed retailers are on or adjacent to Ramsey Street, the east-west commercial corridor. Locations of smoke shops tell a sad story of unfortunate positioning for maximum access to people of low SES status. For example, smoke shops are located next to a hydration store and near a laundromat. In another case, a smoke shop is next door to a Mother’s Nutritional Center. One donut store prominently advertises tobacco products in its store window, as if from a bygone era, 5-packs of fruit flavored cigarillos for under \$1.50 are displayed next to frosted pastries. Banning, while faced with many challenges in the tobacco prevention front, still scores high for retail protections. Advocates for stricter retail laws can leverage its retail landscape challenges for maximum impact on decision-makers to point out how more responsible tobacco retailing could transform the city’s tobacco retail blight, as well as support lowered smoking rates overall.



Opportunities

Building upon existing assets and cognizant of challenges faced, there are a number of opportunities to increase well-being in Riverside County. During focus group meetings, participants shared several opportunities. This includes:

PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIES VALUE RELATIONSHIPS: Blue Zones Project community engagement policy strategies are relationship-centric and can provide formats and modalities to both enhance and maximize existing strong collaborations.

TRUST BUILDING AND TRUST-MAINTAINING: During community interviews, one stakeholder voiced a strong maxim related to work towards greater health equity in Riverside County, “We need to move at the speed of trust.” There is a strong ethos of doing policy “with” communities that fit the Blue Zones Project community participatory model.

STAKEHOLDERS VOICED DEMAND FOR MORE INNOVATIVE “UPSTREAM,” CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE AND TRAUMA-INFORMED SOLUTIONS FOR SERVING COMMUNITIES:

Blue Zones Project, in contrast to many government-funded program workplans, can often adapt, respond more nimbly and innovate to fill niches that community partners need to make policy work more effective. Riverside County, already a national leader in tobacco prevention, may be able to leverage Blue Zones Project frameworks to demonstrate newer, innovative approaches to tobacco prevention.

VALUING OF MORE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PROMOTING PREVENTION EDUCATION AND CESSATION:

Focus group participants strongly voiced support for whole-child, whole family, trauma-informed and culturally informed approaches to prevention education and cessation. Addressing the role of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) in nicotine initiation was highlighted prominently as a crucial consideration for innovative community engagement for both youth and adults. The need to address the “root cause” of nicotine susceptibility was emphasized as key to supporting prevention and cessation. Participants highlighted the need for more resources to expand prevention work at the kindergarten-level and maintain a consistent preventative program through 12th Grade to prevent youth from falling prey to the tobacco industry.

UPSTREAM INNOVATIONS FOR PREVENTION:

Approaches to prevention that demonstrate both the assaults to entrepreneurship, profitability and productivity that the tobacco industry causes to communities, the cumulative impact of commercial tobacco use and secondhand/thirdhand smoke exposure could be useful to help “flip the script,” in regard to influences on decision makers that would slow or avoid progress in a misguided homage to individual rights and profit-centric values. Blue Zones Project’s upstream frameworks that speak to the economic advantages of health and well-being in communities could greatly complement the already effective policy efforts of Riverside County tobacco prevention supporters.

Readiness

In each interview and focus group session conducted, stakeholders expressed confidence and initiative for advancing tobacco prevention in all forms and policy areas. There was no hesitation or reticence expressed at what needed to be achieved. Stakeholders expressed prioritizing all solutions for broad, diverse and strong tobacco prevention policies. Prevention partners, together with Coalition stakeholders, uniformly expressed a strong “we can do it” resolve and initiative. Given stakeholder collaboration, community-based leadership and action-orientation, strengthening “A” graded policies and moving lower grades to “A’s” is very realistic and not just aspirational.

Acknowledgements

Blue Zones acknowledges the following individuals who contributed to Assessment Phase activities:

Dr. Eddy Jara, Director, Riverside University Health System (RUHS) Tobacco Control Project (TCP)

Michelle Anguiano, Health Education Assistant II, Riverside University Health System (RUHS) Tobacco Control Project (TCP)

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/diseases-and-death.html#:~:text=Smoking%20is%20the%20leading%20cause%20of%20preventable%20death.&text=Cigarette%20smoking%20is%20responsible%20for,or%201%2C300%20deaths%20every%20day

⁴ Strategic Health Alliance Pursuing Equity SHAPE Riverside County, <https://www.shaperivco.org/>



Blue Zones Tobacco Policy Menu

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

- Category:
- ★ **REGULATORY** — Creating or changing legally binding standards, rules, or laws, such as zoning codes, ordinances, permitting, or licensing standards.
 - ★ **NON-REGULATORY** — Creating or changing programs, guidance, or education efforts.

GOAL: REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES TO SMOKE																	
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan												
					WHO			WHERE		HOW							
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE NO-SMOKING ORDINANCE INTO COUNTY OR CITY CODES TO RESTRICT SMOKING IN PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SPACES	★	XL	This comprehensive tobacco ordinance should address both outdoor and indoor smoking in public and private buildings, such as those listed below. The ordinance should include all pipes, vaping, smokeless tobacco, and marijuana.	3	X	X		X	X		X						X

GOAL: REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES TO SMOKE																	
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan												
					WHO			WHERE		HOW							
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance	Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships
IF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE, ADOPT AN ORDINANCE CREATING SMOKE AND TOBACCO-FREE SPACES, INCLUDING AS MANY OF THE FOLLOWING AS POSSIBLE	★	S	Government Buildings	4	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
	★	M	Private workplaces	4	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
	★	L	Schools	4	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
	★	S	Childcare facilities	4	X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	
	★	L	Health care facilities	4	X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	
	★	M	Restaurants	4	X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	
	★	S	Bars	4	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
	★	S	Indoor events	2	X	X	X					X			X		
	★	M	Private vehicles	unknown													

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES TO SMOKE														
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan									
					WHO			WHERE			HOW			
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting
IF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE, ADOPT AN ORDINANCE CREATING SMOKE AND TOBACCO-FREE SPACES, INCLUDING AS MANY OF THE FOLLOWING AS POSSIBLE	REGULATORY	L	Outdoor public venues and destinations (spaces).	2	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	REGULATORY	L	Other indoor spaces open to the public.	2	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
	NON-REGULATORY	M	Encourage businesses, retail, and other Main Street or neighborhood center areas to create a smoke free outdoor zones to create a cultural change in the neighborhood.	2	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	REGULATORY	S	Other areas as community determines.	unknown										
IF LIMITED ORDINANCES DO NOT ADDRESS SMOKING IN INSTITUTIONS AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS, ADVOCATE FOR ADOPTION OF PRIVATE AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICY TO ELIMINATE SMOKING.	NON-REGULATORY	M	Advocate for policy change with other local boards, associations, non-profits, and institutions.	2				X	X	X	X		X	X
	REGULATORY	M	Adopt an ordinance requiring multi-unit housing providers to disclose the smoking policy for the property, the location of any designated smoking areas, and the previous smoking status of units.	3	X	X	X	X	X		X			

GOAL: REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES TO SMOKE														
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan									
					WHO			WHERE			HOW			
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting
EMPOWER THOROUGH ENFORCEMENT OF NO-SMOKING ORDINANCES	REGULATORY	M	Increase enforcement of ordinance requirements. In the absence of full governmental enforcement, establish an independent inspection process.	2	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	NON-REGULATORY	M												
IF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE, ADOPT AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING SMOKING AND THIRD-HAND SMOKE THAT WOULD AFFECT VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.	REGULATORY	XL	Childcare facilities	4	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	REGULATORY	XL	Within vehicles with children present	unknown	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	REGULATORY	XL	Healthcare facilities	4	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	REGULATORY	XL	Home healthcare businesses	unknown	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: REDUCE ACCESS TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS																							
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan																		
					WHO					WHERE			HOW										
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships							
MODIFY ZONING TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE TOBACCO LAND USES	REGULATORY	M	Modify zoning uses in central business district and other neighborhood centers to reduce or eliminate tobacco -related land uses. This is to help create a cultural change.	unknown																			
		L	Restrict the number, location, or density of smoke and tobacco-product retailers.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X			X									X
		M	Reduce the allowable square footage of window and door signage to reduce opportunities to advertise tobacco products.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X			X									X
ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE TO RESTRICT TOBACCO SALES AND REDUCE PRODUCT VISIBILITY	REGULATORY	L	This comprehensive ordinance should address the specific items listed below.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X			X								X	

GOAL: REDUCE ACCESS TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS																						
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan																	
					WHO					WHERE			HOW									
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships						
IF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE, ADOPT SEPARATE ORDINANCES REGULATING DIFFERENT AREAS OF TOBACCO SALES AND VISIBILITY ACTIVITIES	REGULATORY	S	Restrict the distribution of free or low-cost tobacco products.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	S	Restrict the redemption of coupons or similar discounts for tobacco products.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	S	Restrict the placement of tobacco and smoking products to make them less visible within stores.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	M	Eliminate the sale and distribution of smoke- and tobacco products where licensed pharmacy or other healthcare services are provided.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	L	Eliminate sale of flavored tobacco products, including mentholated, and delivery methods.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	L	Eliminate or restrict access to vending machines.	unknown	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	L	Eliminate sale of other nicotine products.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	L	Eliminate online sales and delivery	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X
	REGULATORY	L	Establish minimum tobacco product sales amounts, e.g., eliminate the sale of "loosies."	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X								X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: REDUCE ACCESS TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS														
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan									
					WHO					WHERE				HOW
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting
ESTABLISH A TOBACCO-RETAILER LICENSING PROGRAM	REGULATORY	M	Implement comprehensive licensing program.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	REGULATORY	M	Limit the number of total and type of retail providers within a jurisdiction.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	REGULATORY	S	Implement license fee structure for tobacco retailers; the fees support tobacco and control.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
PROHIBIT UNDERAGE POSSESSION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS	REGULATORY	S	Various levels of penalties can be implemented, including fines, written warnings, community service, requirements for educational classes. In some cases, parents may be held accountable.	2					X					X
	REGULATORY	S	Create a prevention and cessation program targeted to youths.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
EMPOWER THOROUGH ENFORCEMENT OF SALES AND VISIBILITY ORDINANCES	REGULATORY	M	Increase enforcement of ordinance requirements. In the absence of full governmental enforcement, establish an independent inspection process.	unknown	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X

GOAL: MINIMIZE DISPARITIES AMONG VULNERABLE POPULATIONS														
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan									
					WHO					WHERE				HOW
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting
ESTABLISH MINIMUM SALES AGE OF 21 FOR TOBACCO AND ALL COMBUSTIBLES PRODUCTS	REGULATORY	S	Require purchase restrictions for sale of all tobacco products by minors.	4	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	REGULATORY	S	Require photo identification to buy tobacco products	4	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	REGULATORY	S	Establish retailer penalties for sales to minors	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
DEVELOP YOUTH-FOCUSED PREVENTION AND CESSATION PROGRAMS	REGULATORY	M	Create compliance and enforcement approaches that focus on prevention	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	REGULATORY	S	Establish curriculum for education of students on smoking and tobacco product use, including vaping and marijuana, and including metrics of success. Adopt this curriculum into school district or school wellness policies.	2	X	X		X	X		X			X
	REGULATORY	S	Create a youth-led, school based prevention support group.	2	X	X		X	X		X			X
	REGULATORY	M	Create tobacco prevention and cessation program for most vulnerable populations, e.g., LGBTQ+, low income, homeless, race, and ethnic populations and those impacted by mental health struggles.	2		X		X	X		X		X	X
ESTABLISH POINT OF SALE REQUIREMENTS	REGULATORY	S	Require that tobacco be separate from other products, e.g., behind the counter.	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X

Level of Effort: SMALL MEDIUM LARGE EXTRA LARGE

Category: REGULATORY NON-REGULATORY

GOAL: REDUCE TOBACCO MARKETING & PROMOTION																							
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan																		
					WHO					WHERE			HOW										
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships							
ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE INTO COUNTY OR CITY CODES TO RESTRICT THE MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS	REGULATORY	M	This comprehensive ordinance should address the specific items listed below:	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X									

GOAL: REDUCE TOBACCO MARKETING & PROMOTION																		
ACTION (Objective)	CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FOCUS (Strategy)	GD's Policy Scan: 1. Locale has done all that it can and must do to effect the policy 2. Locale is working on it 3. Locale has not started or has not conceptualized the policy 4. Locale is prevented from taking action, or doesn't need to take action e.g., preemption from state, satisfactory state policy, self-enforcing provisions, etc.	Riverside Policy Scan													
					WHO					WHERE				HOW				
					Municipality	County	State	Non-profit Organization	Institution	Small Area	Neighborhood	Across the Municipality	Region	Ordinance Licensing & Permitting	Operations	Partnerships		
IF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE, ADOPT ORDINANCES REGULATING AS MANY OF THESE TOBACCO MARKETING AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AS POSSIBLE	REGULATORY	M	Restrict marketing and sponsorship of tobacco in public, entertainment, and sporting venues.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X
	REGULATORY	S	Restrict marketing and sponsorship of tobacco and other smoking products at higher education institutions.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X
	REGULATORY	S	Require retail outlets that sell smoking and tobacco products to post graphic warning and cessation messages, including Quitline numbers, near tobacco-product displays and/or at the point of sale.	unknown	X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X
	REGULATORY	S	Establish a minimum price for tobacco products.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X
	REGULATORY	S	Establish a minimum package or volume size for tobacco products and/or eliminate the sale of individual or small-unit packages of tobacco products.	2	X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X
INCREASE EXCISE TAXES ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS	REGULATORY	M	Increase tobacco-product excise taxes to promote cessation and to reduce the initiation of tobacco use among youth.	unknown			X											

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Worksites



Most Americans spend about half their waking life on the job, making workplaces a prime opportunity to encourage healthy lifestyles.

The Blue Zones Worksite Approach

The Blue Zones Worksite transformation approach takes the focus off the individual and targets the environment, buildings, and social networks to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Employers are encouraged to achieve minimum thresholds among five areas of best practice: Leadership, Purpose, Physical Environment, Social Networks/Engagement, Policy, and Benefits. These initiatives nudge employees to move more, eat



healthier (avoiding processed and junk food), make meaningful connections, and help people to find and live out their purpose.

Well-being has become one of the key elements of building a workplace culture of health, and COVID-19 has intensified and highlighted the need for companies to prioritize all aspects of well-being.

Employers who take the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge are offered consulting support at no cost, but they are required to take the process seriously. To that end, our assessment involved identifying a cross-section of workforce in the Riverside County area. We completed interviews of a representative sample of those employers and organizations that provide and support health for the workforce to assess their interest and readiness to move forward with a Blue Zones initiative. As part of the implementation, Blue Zones provides free tools and resources, such as purpose workshops, and moais (group networking focusing on building employee social connections around walking and healthy eating). The program also provides specific recommendations

To achieve Blue Zones Certification, we require 50% of the largest workplaces to become Blue Zones Approved (adopting >70% of Blue Zones recommended workforce practices).

on how to engage leadership, increase employee participation, encourages use of formal and informal social networks, and provides recommendations for policies and benefits that advocate for an employee's well-being.

Employer and Industries

RIVERSIDE COUNTY WORKSITE CONTEXT

In the U.S., employed adults spend most of their waking hours working. Unfortunately, most US worksites (offices or remote work arrangements), where Americans spend time working, have not been designed to support optimal employee health and well-being. Within many industries, in Riverside County, workers perform sedentary jobs where they spend a large part of the day working without stopping to take stretch or movement breaks; while other employees in industries such as farming, education, and healthcare include more movement throughout the day, but they may not have quiet areas to seek relief from stress and/or to rest and recharge on breaks. Healthy food options are not always readily available on-site or nearby worksites, and coworkers are not encouraged to make meaningful social connections at work.



Compared to other US counties, Riverside County has experienced rapid job growth over the past few years. This growth has been led by expansion of transportation, warehouse, and logistics industry due to the pandemic era’s increased demand for shipping and delivery services. Although employer wellness programs are common among medium to large employers across industries in Riverside County, the regional transportation, warehouse, and logistics industries typically have rigid schedules that can pose challenges for employee well-being. The typical approach employers take with worksite wellness in the region includes leveraging the wellness program resources offered by the health plan and regional providers to offer programs such as health fairs, biometrics screenings, fitness memberships, or individual challenges to encourage “steps” activity or healthy eating. With the pandemic, virtual care management, and counseling, mobile screening/vaccines and telemedicine offering options have expanded and utilization has increased. The increased availability and utilization of these technology-driven healthcare services has been critical for Riverside employers, given the challenge of gaining accessibility to providers across the region and state. With industry growth in the county there continue to be opportunities to address public health concerns, such as obesity, sedentary lifestyle, inadequate diet (low intake of fruits and vegetables), as well as rising air pollution, and the continuing increased demand for regional healthcare services.

LINGERING IMPACT OF COVID IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Employers in the Inland Empire, like so many other parts of the world, were significantly impacted by the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic, and its economic impact, resulted in many business closures and reductions in early 2020. Businesses, as well as workers and their families, struggled with the loss or reduction of income, childcare and in-person schooling while trying to keep themselves safe from the virus. Many businesses and jobs were impacted, and well-being programs were put on hold or scaled down to virtual or online offerings between 2020-2022. Over the past year, as a vaccine has become more available, and many businesses are working through economic recovery, and employers are renewing their focus on employee well-being programs to keep workers healthy, present, and productive.

Despite the recovery, there are some long-lasting impacts on the area businesses, the Riverside County economy, and its workers. Many workers who lost their jobs turned to the high-tech warehousing/logistics economy to replace their income. Many of these jobs provide a replacement income, but do not necessarily provide career paths, or opportunities for career growth. In addition, there was a tremendous increase in remote working across the region. For some, this seems to have reduced commutes and improved work-life balance, however, for others remote working proved to be challenging due to unreliable technology and internet access.



Based on our conversations with employers and stakeholders, now is the perfect time for the region to amplify the focus on workforce health to support the rapid growth of the regional economy.

The Blue Zones approach to community transformation is to optimize the places and spaces people spend the most time so that healthy choices are easier or even unavoidable. Large worksites and public schools are a focus because they are where adults and children spend most of their lives. The process to become a Blue Zones Approved worksite activates the Blue Zones model through evidence-based practices and environmental changes. Each interested employer will focus on people, places, and policies, implementing semi-permanent to permanent changes which make healthy choices easier for all.

**We engaged with
Riverside County worksites
representing**

**~56,000
employees**

Riverside County (22,000 employees)

HARC, Inc. (<50 employees)

University of CA, Riverside (9,800 employees)

Riverside Chamber (<20 employees)

Professionals in Human Resources Association (PIRHA) Riverside

Corona Chamber (<20 employees)

City of Riverside (2,500 employees)

Riverside University Health System (RUHS) (3,500 employees)

Kaiser Health Plan (representing many employers)

Blue Shield, California (representing many employers)



Riverside County Overview: Worksites

RIVERSIDE COUNTY AREA EMPLOYERS

To achieve Blue Zones Certification, we require the majority of the larger workplaces to become Blue Zones Approved. Employers who take the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge are offered consulting support at no cost, but they are required to take the process seriously. To that end, our assessment included a select but representative group of employers and health service providers across all Riverside County communities. We met with the employers and program/plan providers to assess their interest and readiness to move forward with a Blue Zones initiative.

We met with 14 employers and health organizations during the Riverside County worksite assessment. Collectively, these companies employ more than 60,000 county residents, including some of the county’s largest employers and public agencies, such as City of Riverside, Riverside County, University of California, Riverside, representatives from the Chambers of Commerce for several communities, Inland Empire Health Plan, Blue Shield of California, Kaiser Permanente Health Plan, Alvord School District, and nonprofits such as Desert Healthcare District Foundation, and Growing Coachella Valley.

All these company representatives expressed interest in the Blue Zones initiative in Riverside County.

Strengths

STRONG LOCAL RESOURCES AND ASSETS FOR WORKSITE HEALTH PROGRAMMING

There are many resources in the community to support and encourage community and worksite health. Health Assessment and Research for Communities (HARC) has been working with several communities in Riverside County doing health needs assessment and health planning. HARC also provides an annual worksite conference which supports networking and encourages worksite health programs across participating employers and healthiest employer recognition programs. The Riverside County Culture of Health Department was created to increase employee access to worksite well-being programming.

Riverside County is also home to many non-profits, health, educational and community resources such as Desert Healthcare District Foundation, Health, University of California, Riverside, and several health plans (Kaiser, Blue Shield California, Inland Empire Health Plan) who support worksite and worker health in the region. The health plans have assisted with funding of many of the large employer wellness programs including City of Riverside, and Riverside County (when it was in place 2014-2020). The collaborative way in which these various providers are working with each

other today, will be a strong foundation to build out a Blue Zones community.

SEVERAL EMPLOYERS HAVE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS IN PLACE

Of the employers we interviewed, just over half (57%) of the Riverside County employers we met with had some type of wellness programming in place that would align with the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge such as fitness reimbursement or onsite fitness programs, maps and walking trails, online health education resources, physical activity challenges, or free biometric screenings. Most employers offer basic wellness through their health plans in addition to full coverage of preventive care for full-time workers. Wellness committees or ambassadors who support wellness programming, as well as tobacco free workplace policies, are also in place for several of the larger employers who participated in the assessment. All employers expressed interest in the Blue Zones initiative, regardless of whether they currently offered wellness programs.

To achieve Blue Zones Certification, a significant percentage of the largest employers in a community are required to become “Blue Zones Approved” to reach a “tipping point” of participation.





VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY GIVING

The state/county agencies and employers encourage volunteerism, but it is not typically offered to employees during work hours. Several employers expressed interest in promoting volunteerism as part of their well-being initiatives, however, none of the participating organizations currently have policies or programs in place

Less than one third of the employers who participated in Blue Zones interviews indicated that their company had a commitment to encourage employees to volunteer in the community.

Challenges

LIMITED ACCESS TO ACTIVE TRANSIT AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

Most employers interviewed indicated that they do not incentivize use of public transportation. However, a few employers do encourage use of public transportation and active commuting options through offering discounted bus passes. Some employers located outside the downtown area offer reimbursement options or subsidized commuter benefits for those employees who drive in carpools, use public transportation, or ride their bikes. Public transportation outside the larger cities is very limited, and not all roads are safe for cyclists to commute to work. Most employers do have bike racks available, and those who offer them do not feel they are utilized by more than a few employees. It is common that larger employer campuses (such as Inland Empire Health Plan) have fitness centers and maps or marked trails for outdoor walking. Based on the employers' input, typically these resources are utilized by a small portion of employees (less than 25%). Most employers interviewed acknowledged that very little promotion of "active commuting solutions" is done at their worksites, given the limited access to public transportation for active commuting.

GAPS IN WORKSITE PROGRAMMING

Among the employers who participated in the assessment, only a few had worked with their on-site cafes and vending machines to ensure healthy options were available. Very few employers had on-site cafes and none of the employers with café services indicated that they subsidized healthier options. A slightly higher portion of employers indicated that they had implemented healthy vending options, and no employers highlighted healthy catering options.

Purpose was not addressed directly from any of the participating employers, although most organizations felt that their professional development training or Employee Assistance Programs supported emotional well-being and provided some tools to identify and make recommendations for pursuit of purpose. Several of the larger employers offered online platforms or Employee Assistance Programs through their health plans or third-party providers, which included content or counseling which helped organizations to identify their purpose and address mental and emotional needs.

No organizations indicated that they provided leadership training to support employee well-being and work-life balance, but overall, most organizations felt that leadership support for working wellness was present at some level, but typically not present at all levels of management.

Opportunities

IMPLEMENTATION, EDUCATION AND PROMOTION OF HEALTHY FOOD POLICY

Blue Zones can assist large employers in working with the cafeteria and food service companies to implement and promote healthy food policies for on-site café, vending, and catering services. In addition, Blue Zones community initiative can improve access to healthier options nearby worksite locations in the community through partnerships with local grocery stores, restaurants, and farmers markets. A key part of the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge is ensuring that on-site vending offerings have at least 50% healthy options and that employee cafeterias become Blue Zones Approved Restaurants. Most of the employers we engaged during



the assessment did not include a focus on healthy options in their cafes or vending machines as part of their wellness programs.

For employers without on-site café options, Blue Zones can provide assistance in working with nearby restaurants and food trucks so that healthy options are available. Contacting at least 50% of restaurants within walking distance of worksites and encouraging them to take the Restaurant Pledge is part of the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge.

In addition to ensuring healthy food options are prevalent in and near the worksite, it is critical to provide education to workers on the value of healthy options and simple methods to prepare them. Bilingual (English/Spanish), promotion and education are essential, particularly with the composition of Riverside County's diverse cultures, to help all workers learn how to remake traditional cultural favorites/comfort food options with healthier ingredients (utilizing more plant-based options).



PURPOSE WORKSHOPS AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMING

Our sense of purpose can have a strong influence on our work performance and overall satisfaction in life, in addition to helping to protect associates against burnout. According to Gallup, associates who find meaning at work are 93% more engaged and more than three times as likely to stay with their organization. Employees can also be encouraged to volunteer and give back to the community with events or with their families and friends to help connect them with their purpose, create meaningful connections in their community, and improve life satisfaction.

Although some employers interviewed offer training and development programs which may touch on personality type or communication styles, very few worksites offer resources to support employees in their search for purpose or work-life balance. A few of the larger Riverside County companies have programs and campaigns that encourage volunteerism, but these programs are not usually linked to broader employee well-being programming. Blue Zones Purpose Workshops and volunteer initiatives would address some of the gaps that exist in traditional corporate health and wellness programming.

POLICY AND PRACTICES AND AVAILABILITY OF MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Many employers expressed concerns about limited access to mental health providers, inadequate coverage of behavioral health conditions, and long wait times to see behavioral health counselors. Like many fast-growing areas in the US, Riverside County offers limited access to psychology or psychiatry professionals, as the demand is higher than the supply of providers. Blue Zones could partner with employers to review benefits policy and coverage, provide a list of best practice coverage areas for benefits, as well as review online provider options. Given that loneliness and social support are often associated with poor mental health outcomes, Blue Zones could also work with employers to identify opportunities to enhance employee support through mentoring, team building, and workplace moais to improve social networks and connectedness. In addition, creating workplace social networks and stress and depression management services are both part of the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge.

ACTIVE COMMUTING: CARPOOLING AND PARKING INCENTIVES

Many employers are geographically dispersed across the county, and several employers indicated that they still have a portion of their employee population working remotely following the pandemic. In general, most employers are not currently encouraging or using incentives to promote public transportation. Some worksites do offer bike racks, or storage but most say they are not used. A few employers used to offer carpool incentives, but they indicated they were not used. Southern Californians who can afford to own cars, love to drive them, typically as single commuter drivers. Blue Zones could work with employers to provide incentives to encourage active commuting, to utilize carpooling or vanpool solutions, or to use Blue Zones parking spaces. Creating incentives and policies to encourage employees to commute to work by public or active transportation is part of the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge. The County of Riverside Commuter Services currently offers incentives for people who carpool, bike, walk, take public transit, or telecommute to work. Opportunities may exist to increase awareness of this program when working with employers.

METRICS AND DATA IMPROVEMENT

Of the employers interviewed, few (3) had consistent leadership support and all lacked metrics to demonstrate the value of their wellness programming. Most employers would benefit from a deeper review into how they could measure, improve, and report on their programs. Aggregating company well-being metrics and communicating them to employees is part of the Blue Zones Worksite Pledge.



Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

People + Organizations Engaged During Assessment in Riverside County.

Riverside County, Jennifer D'Urso, MPH, Principal Deputy ACR and former Employee Wellness Director for Riverside County

Health Assessment and Research for Communities (HARC, Inc.), Jenna Le-Comte-Hinely, PhD, Chief Executive Officer

University of California, Riverside, Ann M. Cheney, Ph.D. Faculty Director and Former Co-Chair of Wellness, School of Medicine, Dept. of Social Medicine Population and Public Health

Riverside Chamber, Nick Adcock, President

Dominique Fruchtman, SPHR, DTM, LSBB, Owner, Escape Room Palm Springs and Former President, Professionals in Human Resources Association (PIRHA) Riverside

Corona Chamber, Bobby Spiegel, President

City of Riverside, Miriana Gonzalez, Deputy HR Leader and Jennifer Brown, SHRM-CP, Human Resources Division

Riverside University Health System (RUHS), Eddy Jara, DrPH, Program Director, Nutrition and Health Promotion Branch, RUHS-Public Health

Kaiser Health Plan, Marc A. Saenz, MS, CWS, Workforce Health Consultant, Strategic Customer Engagement, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan - Inland Empire

Blue Shield, California, Jessica Pond, Principal Account Executive, National Accounts & Public Sector/Premier, Blue Shield of California

Desert Healthcare District Foundation, Alejandro Espinoza, MPH, CHES, Chief of Community Engagement

Growing Coachella Valley, Janelle Percy, Executive Director, Growing Coachella Valley

Inland Empire Health Plan, Dianna Del Toro, Director Human Resources Total Rewards, Inland Empire Health Plan

Alvord Unified School District, Amanda Benitez, Benefits Manager/ Human Resources

Activate Riverside County - City of Coachella Assessment Report

Bibliography:

MacKay, Jory. (2019, January 24). The State of Work Life Balance in 2019: What we learned from studying 185 million hours of working time. (Blog post). Retrieved from <https://blog.rescuetime.com/work-life-balance-study-2019/> Jory MacKay.

McGregor, Jena. (2014, September 2). The average work week is now 47 hours. The Washington Post. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2014/09/02/theaverage-work-week-is-now-47-hours/>

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/riversidecountycalifornia.CA.US/PST045222>

<https://www.dailynews.com/2023/02/03/riverside-san-bernardino-counties-are-us-job-creation-leader/>

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/mead-valley-ca/>

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/french-valley-ca/>

The American Community Survey, US Census Bureau Hispanic, or Latino

Data for French Valley, Mead Valley, Banning, Corona CDP

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

<https://www.livework.coronaca.gov/>

<https://www.bestplaces.net/health/city/california/corona>

California Healthy Places Index

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Health Equity

Riverside County Overview: Health Equity Report

Understanding how equitable and inclusive a community is means looking at the opportunities all residents have compared to each other and to other communities. This summary of publicly available secondary data provides a glimpse of that, and allows for further conversations about efforts made to address these disparities and where future work should be focused.

In some areas, the six communities of focus for Activate Riverside County have advantages over others in Riverside County, in California as a whole, or across the United States. For example, the rate of residents with health insurance is generally very high. Income equality, internet access, and the low level of neighborhood diversity distribution are also positive indicators. Among Non-Hispanic Black residents, the rate of premature death is much lower than state and national averages, even though it is higher than for other population groups.

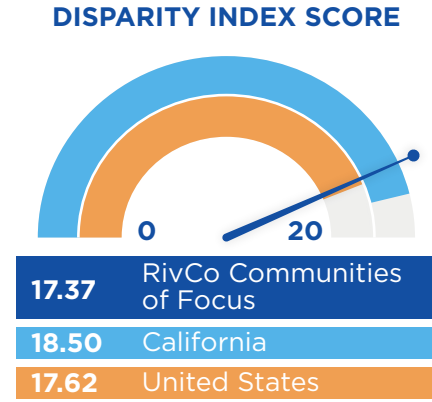
At the same time, many of these indicators are better for Non-Hispanic White residents than for other groups. Hispanic/Latino and Non-Hispanic Black residents are more likely to live in food deserts. The educational disparity rate is somewhat higher for these communities of focus than the state or national numbers, and this is most likely driven by the fact that Hispanic/Latino residents have Associates Degrees or higher at about half the rate of other community groups. Even though the rate of the uninsured is lower overall, that is less true for Hispanic/Latino and Non-Hispanic Black residents. The low rates of neighborhood diversity distribution do not extend to Hispanic/Latino residents, where rates are much higher than US and California rates.



This report is built around the data for the six communities of focus and includes comparison data for Riverside County, California, and the United States. When reviewing these indicators it is helpful to look at the comparisons across these locations and within the community groups represented in each. This can aid in understanding where needs are important to address for the entire population and where specific groups of residents might need particular attention.

Healthy Food Access

The disparity in food access, measured by the Disparity Index Score, is comparable for the RivCo Communities of Focus (17.37) and the entire United States (17.62), and lower than California as a whole (18.50). For this measure a lower number reflects greater food equality, with fewer people living without access to a large grocery store. While the percentages for Hispanic or Latinos (35.10%) and for non-Hispanic Black (22.07%) in Riverside are much higher than the overall number for the community, an important factor to note, the disparity is lower when comparing these same population groups across CA and the US.

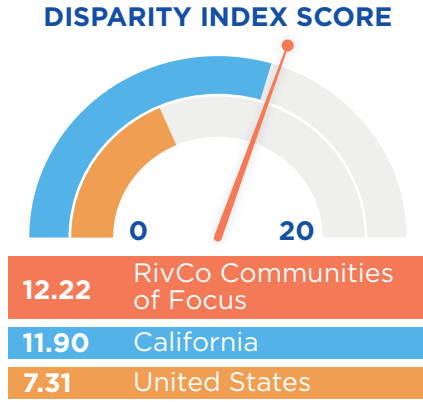


Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Disparity Index Score
RivCo Communities of Focus	16.54%	35.10%	22.07%	15.78%	17.37
Riverside County, CA	25.67%	42.10%	34.69%	21.42%	12.07
California	17.54%	38.70%	37.55%	19.40%	18.50
United States	18.73%	36.99%	45.91%	22.59%	17.62

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, USDA - Food Access Research Atlas. 2019. Source geography: Tract

Educational Attainment

There are two different ways to look at the level of educational disparity, as seen by the number of residents that have at least an Associates Degree, in the communities of focus. Looking at the rate by race and ethnic group, 49.40% of Non-Hispanic White and 50.16% of non-Hispanic Black have this level of educational attainment, compared to only 25.38% of Hispanic/Latino residents. This is a substantial difference. When looking at the overall disparity index score, a relative measure which expresses the magnitude of disparity across population groups, these communities average slightly better than Riverside County as a whole but worse than the state average and considerably worse than the national average.

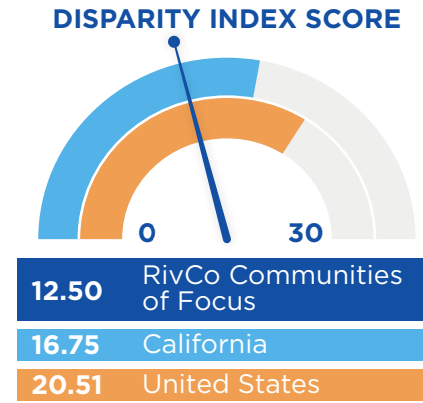


Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Disparity Index Score
RivCo Communities of Focus	49.40%	25.38%	50.16%	33.16%	12.22
Riverside County, CA	49.68%	24.82%	46.92%	31.40%	13.82
California	60.81%	27.33%	46.20%	44.11%	11.90
United States	51.43%	30.31%	37.62%	44.29%	7.31

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2017-21. Source geography: Tract

Health Insurance

The health insurance disparity index score evaluating who is uninsured in these areas is 12.50 and is quite a bit lower than that of CA (16.75) and the US (20.51), which means fewer people experience insurance-related disparities. 4.35% of Non-Hispanic White are uninsured in these communities compared to 11.24% of Hispanic/Latino, 7.04% of Non-Hispanic Black, and 10.47% of Non-Hispanic Other. These numbers are all lower than the national averages but are worse than state averages in all cases but Hispanic/Latino residents. The big difference in rates across groups in these communities is noteworthy.

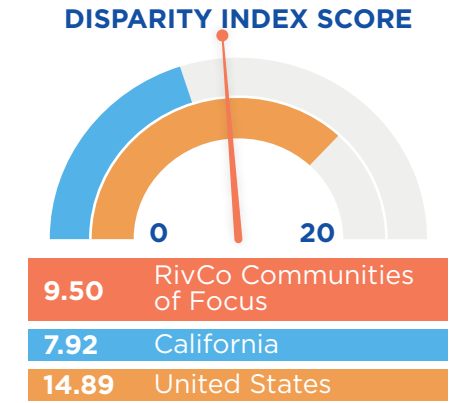


Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Disparity Index Score
RivCo Communities of Focus	4.35%	11.24%	7.04%	10.47%	12.50
Riverside County, CA	4.65%	11.47%	6.05%	10.66%	14.14
California	3.82%	11.73%	5.82%	8.86%	16.75
United States	5.97%	17.65%	9.95%	12.87%	20.51

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2017-21. Source geography: Tract

Premature Death

The relative measure of disparity in the rate of premature death (defined as deaths occurring before age 75) within the area by population race and ethnicity is 9.50, which is between that of CA (7.92) and the US (14.89). By group, this trend compared to state and national data is consistent for Non-Hispanic, White and Hispanic/Latino community members, but better for Non-Hispanic, Black residents.

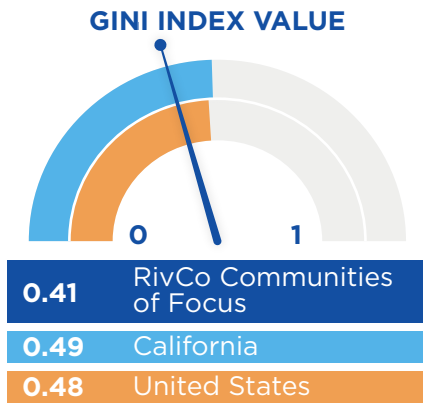


Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Black	Disparity Index Score
RivCo Communities of Focus	336.62	236.49	389.76	9.50
Riverside County, CA	336.62	236.49	389.76	9.50
California	296.77	233.08	474.57	7.92
United States	339.39	238.30	487.10	14.89

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.
Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC - National Vital Statistics System. Accessed via CDC WONDER. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2014-20. Source geography: County

Income Inequality

Using the Gini index value (0 is perfect equality, where all households have the same income; 1 is perfect inequality where only one household has any income), Riverside has a score of 0.41 compared to 0.49 for CA and 0.48 for the US. This means there is somewhat less income inequality for residents of Riverside, CA compared to California and the US. This data is not broken out by subgroups but is looked at annually in aggregate. The numbers are quite consistent going back 10 years.

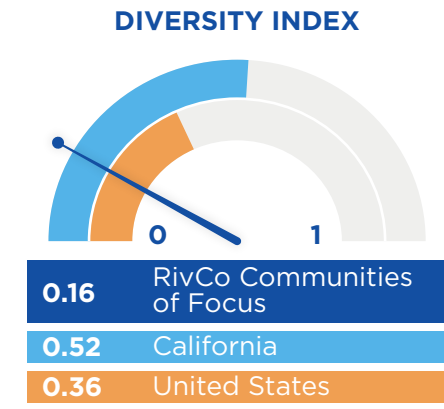


Report Area	Total Households	Gini Index Value
RivCo Communities of Focus	245,402	0.41
Riverside County, CA	740,506	0.45
California	13,217,586	0.49
United States	124,010,992	0.48

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2017-21. Source geography: Tract

Neighborhood Diversity Distribution

The measure of how evenly different population demographic groups are distributed in neighborhoods throughout the communities of focus is 0.16, where higher values between 0-1 indicate higher levels of neighborhood diversity distribution. This is compared to 0.52 in CA and 0.36 in the US. Overall, there is considerably less diversity distribution in neighborhoods for these areas and Riverside County. This is generally true at the subgroup level also, but the rates of neighborhood diversity distribution that Hispanic/Latino residents experience is substantially higher than other groups in the area and compared to state and national numbers. This is significant to note.



Report Area	Non-Hispanic White Population	Non-Hispanic Black Population	Non-Hispanic Asian Population	Non-Hispanic AI / AN Population	Non-Hispanic NH / PI Population	Hispanic or Latino Population	Diversity Index
RivCo Communities of Focus	29.82	5.72	9.7	0.45	0.27	54.04	0.16
Riverside County, CA	33.96	6.32	7.1	0.52	0.29	51.8	0.16
California	36.39	5.62	15.86	0.41	0.37	41.34	0.52
United States	60.01	12.5	6.14	0.7	0.19	20.42	0.36

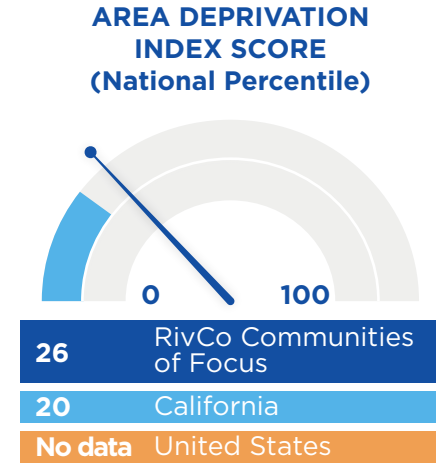
Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census. University of Missouri, Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems. 2020. Source geography: Block Group

Area Deprivation Index (ADI)

The Area Deprivation Index attempts to rate the level of advantage neighborhoods have in four domains; education, income and employment, house, and household characteristics. The higher the score, from 1 to 100, the greater the advantage. The area deprivation score for the communities of focus is 26 and is higher than that of California (20) but lower than that of Riverside County (31). There is no national data to compare to.

Another way to look at the ADI data is to see what percentage of the community falls into different categories of advantage. For Riverside County as a whole, there are more disadvantaged community members than California residents as a whole but considerably less of the most disadvantaged compared to the United States overall.

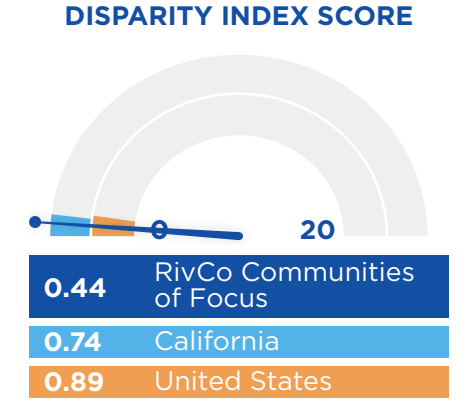
Report Area	Total Population (2020)	State Percentile	National Percentile
RivCo Communities of Focus	838,106	6	26
Riverside County, CA	2,418,185	73	31
California	39,538,223	No data	20
United States	334,735,155	No data	No data



Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, Neighborhood Atlas, 2020. Source geography: Block Group

Internet Access

Very little disparity is seen across population groups having a broadband internet available at home. The low disparity score (0.44) is lower than that of CA (0.74) and that of the US (0.89). A score of 0 represents perfect equality and a 100 perfect disparity.



Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Disparity Index Score
RivCo Communities of Focus	94.43%	92.00%	91.49%	93.14%	0.44
Riverside County, CA	93.43%	92.10%	92.06%	93.26%	0.33
California	93.76%	90.55%	89.55%	93.06%	0.74
United States	90.88%	88.42%	84.98%	91.45%	0.89

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average. Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-21. Source geography: Tract

Conclusion

The communities of focus have several equity and inclusion factors that put it at an advantage over the overall Riverside County area and California as a whole. While these advantages provide a strong foundation to build upon, they often don't extend to all community groups.



Credit: Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership, Rosa Gonzalez, Facilitating Power, and Movement Strategy Center <https://naacp.org/resources/guidelines-equitable-community-involvement-building-development-projects-and-policies>

Recommendations

- ✔ Conduct in-depth discovery within the communities of focus to gain deeper understanding of the root cause of the considerable social and environmental disparities experienced by Non-Hispanic, Black and Hispanic/Latino residents.
- ✔ Strengthen existing (or implement new) multi-sector collaboratives providing community-wide case conferencing for residents experiencing disparities.
- ✔ Conduct comprehensive asset mapping, evaluating systems of care for identified areas of disparities. Create and implement a follow-on strategy to prevent duplication of services, identify and prioritize gaps and achieve measurable improvement in health care and social service access for individuals impacted by equity and inclusion disadvantages.
- ✔ Prioritize equitable representation on steering committee and other leadership and implementation teams, and follow research-based principles of engagement to ensure individuals who may be experiencing social and environmental disparities are empowered to be a part of the decision-making processes.



RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Media



According to a Pew Research Center Study, about “one-in-five U.S. adults (19%) who feel highly attached to their communities demonstrate much stronger ties to local news than those who do not feel attached — revealing a link between personal connection to the area and a desire to stay more informed about current issues and events.”

When Blue Zones starts work in a community, the first thing we do is build a collective vision together with the people who live and work there. In moving communities towards higher well-being, Blue Zones takes an early approach to media involvement since community awareness and engagement is central to creating widespread change. By involving the media as part of the solution, we are able to mobilize and motivate people to get involved, whether it’s in their worksite, in their school, or as a supporter of key policy changes.

By engaging the media early, we form long-term relationships to help maintain press involvement and buy-in over time. We have used this as a key Blue Zones strategy in bringing diverse and disparate people together towards a common goal.

The Riverside Press-Enterprise is the main newspaper for the Inland Empire region of California, including Riverside County and covers local news as well as statewide and national news. It is published by Digital First Media. Its web presence includes separate pages for locality-specific news for each of the major cities. The Press-Enterprise is a daily paid newspaper and is headquartered in downtown Riverside.

Riverside County receives radio transmissions from radio stations across the San Bernardino Valley and the Inland Empire region. KCAL-AM is a commercial radio station owned by Lazar Broadcasting and primarily broadcasts in Spanish, although it provides coverage of the Cucamonga Quakes Minor League Baseball in English. KFOO is an AM station owned by iHeartMedia and is an all-news station affiliated with the Black Information Network. The Black Information Network is a network of news stations targeted at African American communities. KCAL-FM is owned by Anaheim Broadcasting and plays an Active Rock music rotation. KDEY-FM, also a music channel, is owned by Meruelo Radio Holdings Limited and plays a classic hip hop rotation. Other radio stations with service in Riverside include; KFRG which plays a country music rotation; KCGI which airs a contemporary music format; KLYY



which airs Spanish-language adult hit music and KSGN which is a non-commercial station that airs a Christian contemporary music format.

There are over 52 television channels providing broadcasting to the Riverside County area. There are two television stations based in Riverside. KRCA, owned by Estrella Media, broadcasts the Spanish-language station Estrella TV to the Los Angeles area. KZSW is a low-power television station based in Riverside and carries religious programming.

The Digital Divide

Over 100,000 Riverside County residents do not have high speed internet and a computing device, and are effectively shut out from the digital economy. These residents are lacking critical access to jobs, school resources including homework and assignments, and to getting health and public services online. Closing this digital divide is a priority for RIVCO Connect, which has launched a Digital Inclusion Program. The program centers on the refurbishment and donation of surplus computers and other technology and donates them to people in need throughout the county. They also provide digital/computer training and education. The program’s goals are to enable all county residents to participate in digital life. In addition to the RIVCO Connect, some broadband providers offer low-cost broadband for lower-income residents, including the Spectrum Internet Assist program, the AT&T Access program, and Frontier’s California Lifeline Discount Program.

Source: RIVCO Connect: <https://data.countyofriverside.us/stories/s/RIVCOconnect-Digi>



Why the Digital Divide Matters

For many lower-income residents, smartphones serve as their only means of connecting to news, job applications, and school assignments.

“Digital platforms have transformed most parts of daily life, from how we talk to one another, to how we consume media, to how we travel. But those platforms are only meaningful if you can access them via broadband.”

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Even though urban and suburban areas have the highest adoption rates, they also have the widest variation of broadband access among residents.

Broadband has become essential like education, electricity, and water. It has become a “fourth utility” that is necessary for people, businesses, and governments. that is relied on by residents, businesses, and governments alike. Local governments now consider broadband a critical enabler of success in communities:

- ✓ Rural areas with high broadband adoption had higher income growth.
- ✓ Broadband is associated with a 2% increase in employment rate and lower unemployment rates. There is a positive correlation between broadband expansion and local employment growth.
- ✓ Broadband increases civic engagement and enhances gathering of civic information. It is a significant benefit for disadvantaged residents in communicating with friends and family.

Value Brief



Coachella has the opportunity to unlock \$139.6 million in projected value generation and savings through a partnership with Blue Zones.

Blue Zones Value Brief for Coachella, CA

Over the next ten years, Coachella, CA has the opportunity to unlock up to \$139.6 million in projected value generation and savings, directly benefiting the community through a partnership with Blue Zones.

Unlocking this value is centered on the science and knowledge that people with sustainably higher well-being cost less and perform better. And for us, well-being isn't just an ideal. It's quantifiable.

As such, the goal of a Blue Zones community transformation is making measurable improvements in well-being across the area—specifically, improving elements of individual and collective well-being that are proven to positively drive key economic indicators.

Research has shown that lifts in personal purpose, as well as social, financial, community, and physical health factors have direct implications on future medical costs and human performance. Reductions in lifestyle risks, disease burden, and medical spend are all results that influence individual lives as well as the collective, driving results that are not only felt but are calculable in terms of economic impact.

Creating Value for Coachella, CA

The ten-year impact of a Blue Zones transformation:

- ✓ Projected Medical Cost Saving of **~\$48M**
- ✓ Reduction in projected workforce lost productivity of **~\$68.9M**
- ✓ These two sources of value result in a projected **~\$323 average annual per capita** medical saving and productivity improvement value for the adult population over the next decade
- ✓ Approximately **\$22.7M** of direct and indirect benefits to the regional economy
- ✓ Billions of expected positive media impressions
- ✓ Additional related follow-on community grants, gifts, and investments
- ✓ **A cumulative total value of over \$139 million for the Coachella, CA in including medical cost savings, productivity savings, and regional economic impact.**

The Origins of Blue Zones Project

To discover the cultural traits that lead to greater well-being, scientists researched the five areas of the world where people are living longer, happier lives. We call these blue zones, as coined and well-documented in Dan Buettner's New York Times best-selling book, "The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who Have Lived the Longest."

This research, coupled with a now 20-year worldwide longevity study, has been used to develop Blue Zones tools and programs that are designed to tackle the chronic disease crisis and health disparities plaguing our nation.



Our Approach to Community Well-Being Transformation

In collaboration with community leadership, Blue Zones ignites broad-scale well-being transformations that focus on creating systemic changes to the environments in which we live.

- At the focal point of our approach is affecting policy change in our human-made surroundings to make the healthy choice the easy choice.
- To unite our communities under a common cause, an extensive outreach and marketing campaign rallies everyone from employers, grocery stores, and restaurants, to government entities and non-profits, schools and universities, the faith-based community, the media, and of course, individual community members.
- In addition, a variety of individual engagement strategies strengthen social connection and foster personal integrity and accountability for each community member's part in the community's transformation.

Due to the permanent and semi-permanent nature of environmental and policy changes, the value of Blue Zones grows and compounds over time from the initial investment- in many aspects creating true generational impact.

Measuring the Impact of Well-Being

Research demonstrates the link between well-being, medical costs, and job performance

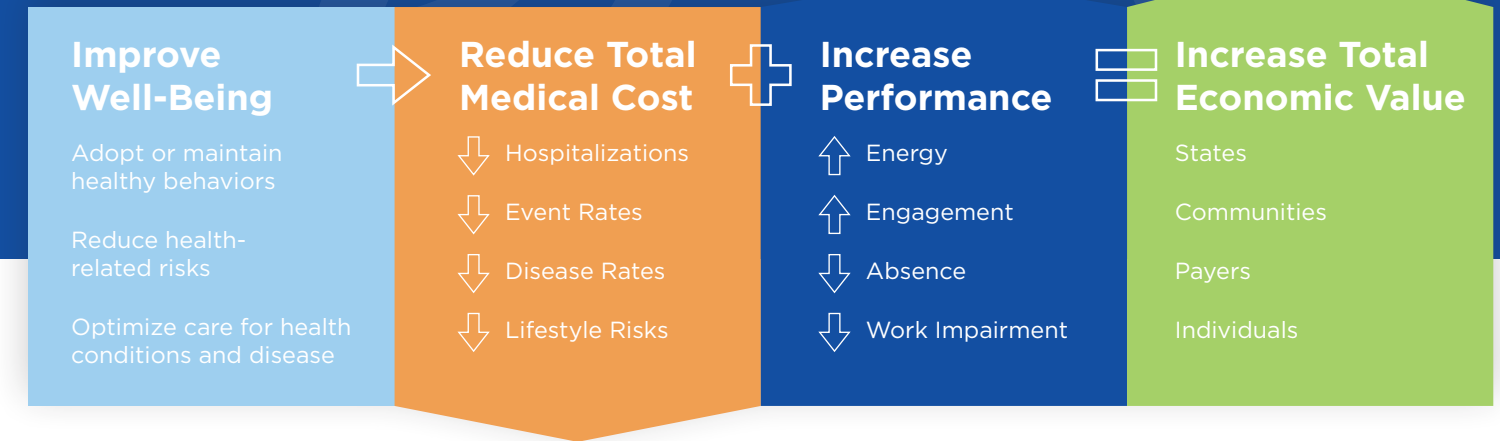


Figure 1

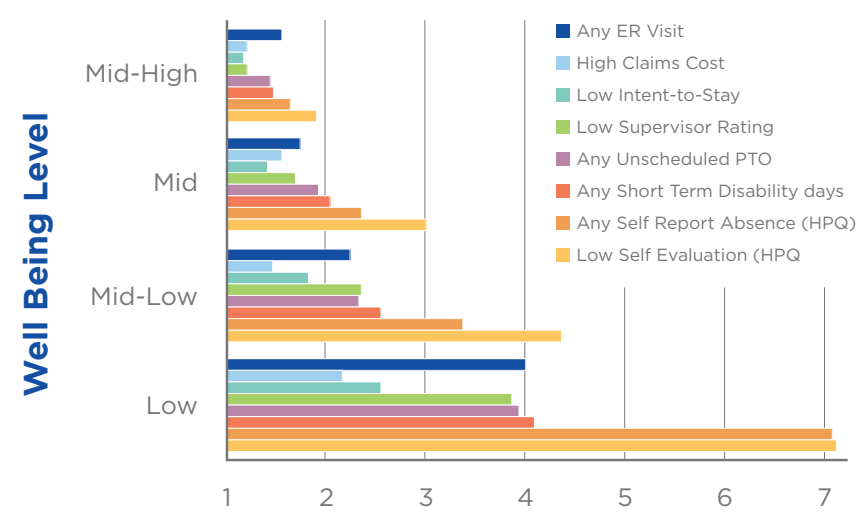


Figure adapted from: Overall Well-Being as a Predictor of Healthcare, Productivity and Retention Outcomes in a Large Employer. *Population Health Management*, 2013.

Figure 1 illustrates the probability of specific outcomes based on well-being level. Low well-being individuals are more likely to visit the emergency department, have high medical claim expenditures, leave an employer, have low performance ratings, have unplanned absences, experience disability, and attend work with an inability to perform at their best. Optimal well-being leads to higher-performing, healthier, and more productive individuals and businesses, thus creating economic value for the region.

Our advanced modeling approach includes a simulation model, multivariate econometric models, and coarsened exact matching. At the heart, is an industry leading predictive population health simulation model called the Healthways Simulation Model™, developed by the Healthways Center for Health Research in collaboration with the World Economic Forum, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, and Boston Consulting Group. Using conservative to more aggressive assumptions concerning population readiness to change, the simulation model was run with a range of scenarios— the average of which has been used to estimate the impact of a Blue Zones community transformation for the Coachella, CA, area over a ten-year period.

For our purposes, the simulation model is an epidemiology-based method used to forecast the complex and compounding relationships between existing chronic conditions and modifiable lifestyle behaviors. It is needed not only to calculate health care-related costs associated with conditions and behaviors based on a given set of data, but also to forecast the incidence and progression of these diseases over time.

Research has proven the value—via reductions in medical claims costs, decreases in absenteeism, and increases in productivity—of well-being improvement and population management interventions, and our simulation model is how we can quantifiably get to this goal.



Using the Gallup Well-being Index data and publicly available economic, health and demographic information, the simulation model creates a baseline of well-being risks, chronic disease burden and modifiable lifestyle risk for a population. From this baseline, the model then projects how these conditions and risk factors will interact over time to establish a future risks and disease burden profile. That future risk and disease burden profile is then converted to medical and lost productivity costs.

Changes in these costs are modeled and attributed to source and type in the form of medical expenditures and changes in workforce productivity and performance. With this information, the model can reasonably predict the cost of “status quo - or by not introducing transformational intervention” for populations over a given period. The accuracy of this model was scientifically and independently validated using data available from the Framingham Heart Study, the longest- running longitudinal epidemiologic public health study of its kind.

WELL-BEING VALUE for Coachella, CA

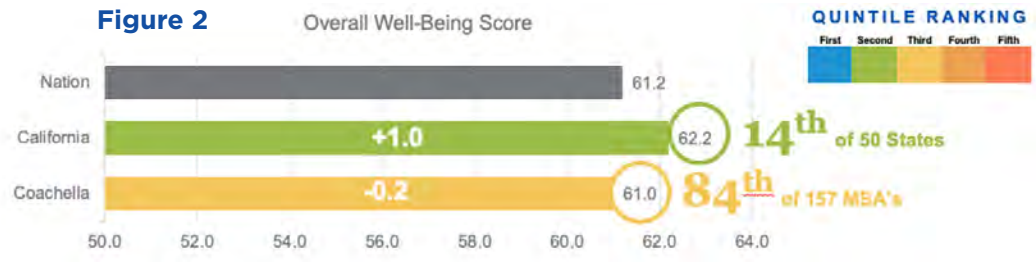
Current State of Well-Being

The Gallup Well-Being Index is the nation's largest well-being survey and database. With the ability to track nightly changes in well-being at a national, state, regional, and community level, it can report on a year-over-year basis for states and large communities. Gallup and the Blue Zones team leveraged 2017 and 2018 Well-Being Index data to identify the current state of well-being in the Coachella, CA.

The following represents a preliminary analysis, with the goal of providing an understanding of Blue Zones measurement methodology and projected impact. If Coachella moves forward with a Blue Zones community transformation, **a real-time baseline of well-being will be established in a statistically rigorous oversampling by Gallup.**

Overall Well-Being Index Score

California ranks 14th out of 50 states in overall well-being, placing it in the second quintile for well-being nationwide. Coachella, when compared to the 157 largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) across the nation for which the Well-Being Index provides standard annual reports, ranks 84th in overall well-being and is in the third quintile. Coachella is behind the nation and the state in overall well-being. (Figure 2)

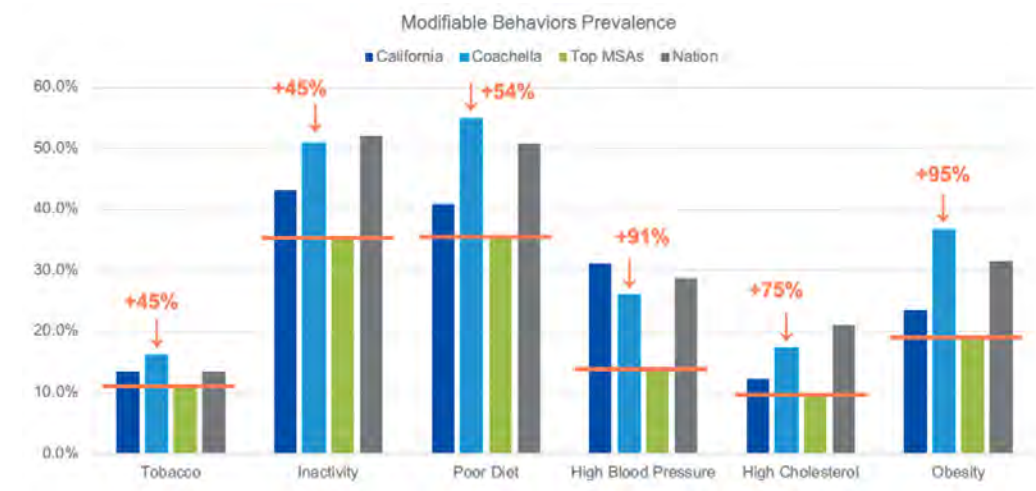


The graphic below (Figure 3) shows the Coachella, CA quintile ranking as compared to 157 MSAs across the nation on the five core elements of well-being measured within the Well-Being Index, contrasted with how the State of California ranks numerically among the 50 states (Note the color of the numeric ranking indicates it's quintile, see quintile ranking key). Notably, Coachella, CA ranks in the fourth quintile for financial well-being and in the third quintile for community, physical and social. Financial well-being is a measure of the ability to effectively managing one's own economic life, community measures the sense of engagement we have with the area where we live, physical is a measure of good health and enough energy to get things done on a daily basis, and social is the measure of having strong relationships and love in one's life. When compared to the state, Coachella ranks lower in financial, physical, community, and social but rankers higher in purpose.



Well-Being Index Risk and Disease Prevalence

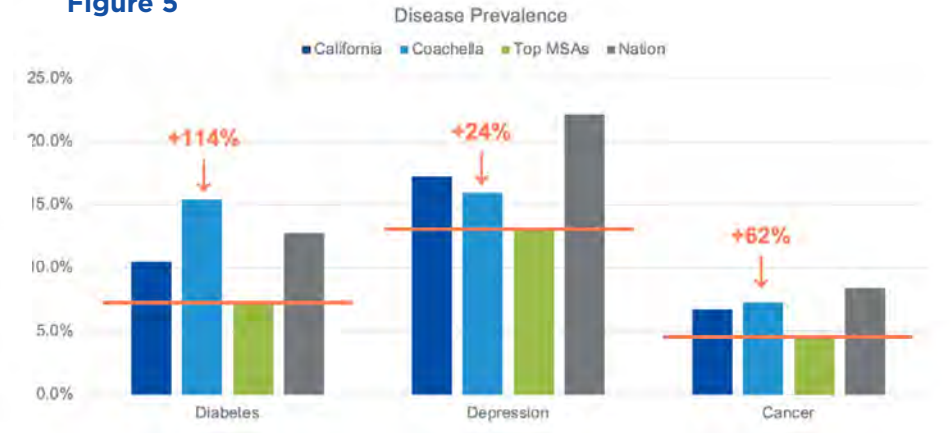
Figure 4



Coachella has a number of challenges in the risk profile of the population. Obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol are 95%, 91%, and 75% higher (respectively) as compared to the benchmark MSAs in the U.S. Benchmark MSAs represent the top ten performing communities within the category of comparison. Additionally, inactivity, poor diet, and tobacco use are all 45%, or more, higher than the benchmark MSAs. Risk prevalence data is reflected in figure 4.

Disease prevalence rates in diabetes, depression and cancer far exceed that of the benchmark MSAs. Notably, by more than 100% for diabetes, as shown in in figure 5.

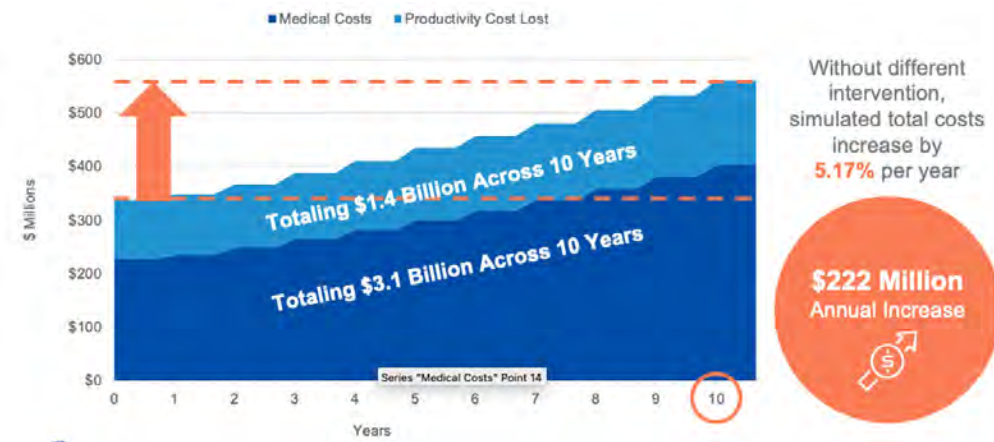
Figure 5



The Cost of Status Quo

Coachella, CA struggles with many of the same chronic conditions and lifestyle behaviors that plague the entire state and nation. The cost of status quo—for doing nothing differently in the future—is significant. Using the simulation model, we conservatively forecast that over the next ten years, medical and lost productivity costs will increase annually by \$222 million or 5.17%. (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Medical and Productivity Cost Projections Absent Intervention for Ages 18 and Up



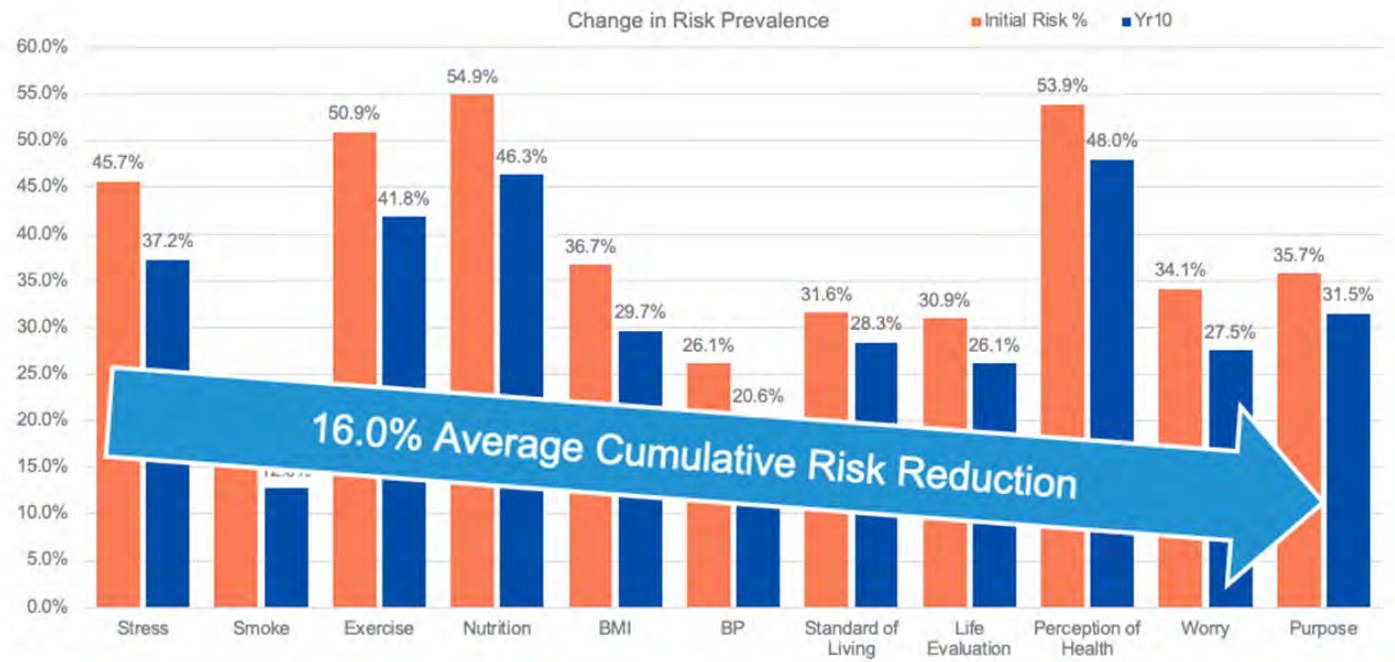
Key Well-being Measures for Coachella, CA

1 in 2		2 in 5		3 in 4		3 in 5		3 in 10	
Do not exercise at appropriate levels	Do not eat sufficient fruits and vegetables	Do not have a good perception of their health	Are not proud of their community	Are obese or overweight	Have worried about money in the last week	Do not feel safe and secure	Have a poor current life evaluation		

Blue Zones Community Transformation Risk Reduction and Savings Analysis Coachella, CA

Over the next 10 years we conservatively estimate and average cumulative risk reduction of 16% across the eleven risk factors identified in figure 7 below. These critical factors are indicators of an individuals experienced well-being and a reduction of prevalence produces improved well-being. Our approach does not seek to drive these to zero at a population level, but rather drives slow, steady, and sustainable progress in reduction.

Figure 7



The 10-year average annual per capita medical and productivity value for Coachella, CA is projected at \$323 for the adult population, and a total of \$386 when accounting for regional economic impact. Medical cost saving alone are projected to generate \$48 million for residents and employers within the region (Figure 8).

Within our framework lies a great opportunity to impact workforce productivity and provide significant economic benefit for Coachella, CA. Over the next ten years, the model projects the Blue Zones Community Transformation to generate approximately \$68.9 million in workforce productivity improvement in the form of reduced absenteeism and increased workforce engagement and performance. Medical cost savings and improved productivity savings account for a total aggregate savings of \$116.9 million (Figure 8).

Figure 8



Value increases further when the full regional economic impacts are considered. For every dollar of improved workforce productivity, the regional economy benefits in the form of increased direct and indirect household consumption. The regional economic impact from the proposed Blue Zones Community Transformation is expected to be approximately \$22.7 million over ten years (Figure 8).

In total, we project a conservative gross value estimate of up to \$139.6 million in medical savings, improved productivity, and regional economic benefit for Coachella, CA over the next decade as a result of implementing a Blue Zones Community Transformation (Figure 8).

Contributors

Activate Riverside County - RUHS Public Health Contributors

NAME	TITLE	BRANCH
Jose Arballo Jr.	Senior Public Information Specialist	
Katherine Au	Resident Physician	HIV-STD
Roopa Bajwa	Program Director	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Robin Bishop	Emergency Services Coordinator	Immunization and Staff Develop
Sarah Bode	Resident Physician	HIV-STD
Jennifer Chevinsky	Deputy Public Health Officer	
Christopher Dael	Deputy Public Health Officer	
Sandra Escobar	Epidemiologist	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Norma Escobedo	Supervising Nutritionist II	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Aaron Gardner	Senior Epidemiologist	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Wendy Hetherington	Branch Chief	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Mariana Hernandez	Program Coordinator II	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Gayle Hoxter	Branch Chief	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Danielle Huntsman	Deputy Public Health Director	Danielle Huntsman
Eddy Jara	Program Director	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Geoffrey Leung	Public Health Officer	
Kerri Mabee	Public Information Specialist	

NAME	TITLE	BRANCH
Donna Mayer	Program Director	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Tanya Mayton	Program Director	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Andrea Morey	Program Coordinator II	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Arienne Murphy	Marketing, Media & Communications Coordinator	
Shelley Nail	Supervising Nutritionist II	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Marshare Penny	Deputy Public Health Director	
Daisy Ramirez Bell	Program Coordinator II	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Rachelle Roman	Deputy Public Health Director	
Eduardo Santana	Supervising office Assistant II	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Kimberly Saruwatari	Director of Public Health	
Jennifer Stewart	Program Director	Nutrition and Health Promotion
Shunling Tsang	Deputy Public Health Officer	
Andrea Tovar	Research Analyst	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Valerie Rodrigues	Program Coordinator II	Injury Prevention Services
Salomeh Wagaw	Program Director	Epidemiology and Program Evaluation
Catherine Winters	Resident Physician	HIV-STD
Daisy Zavala	Office Assistant III	Nutrition and Health Promotion

Meet Our Team

Activate Riverside County - Blue Zones Team

Aislinn Kotifani, Communications Specialist

- For the last 7 years, has managed the Blue Zones brand, website, and social media presence
- Experienced with large diverse city, small community, and niche neighborhood program engagement and launches

Amelia Clabots, Vice President of Finance & Operations

- Experienced operations professional with deep experience managing cross-functional Blue Zones teams
- For the last 10 years, has helped Blue Zones transition from a small research company to a global brand with multiple products, channels, and initiatives

Ben Leedle, CEO

- Former CEO and President of Healthways, Inc.
- Transformed small business into world's top population health management company
- Co-founder, Blue Zones Project
- Co-founder, Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index

Dan Buettner, Jr., Vice President of Business Development

- Advancing Return on Well-Being models and archetypes for businesses and communities
- International Speaker
- Global commercial real estate expert

Fabian De La Espriella, AICP, Project Manager

- Experience working with multidisciplinary teams in both the public and private sector
- Featured in the New York Times, StreetsblogUSA, and the American Planning Association's Planning Magazine

- Former Urban Design & Transportation Planning Manager for Miami Downtown Development Authority

Greg Damron, Tobacco Policy Expert

- Specializes in Public Health initiative community engagement, policy strategies, planning, project management, and evaluation.

Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, World Happiness Expert

- Professor of Economics and Director of the Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford
- Co-editor of the World Happiness Report
- Recipient of the Ruut Veenhoven Award in 2015 for his contributions to the scientific study of happiness

Lisle Wescott, Director of Accounts

- Former Market President of the SSM Health Hospitals in St. Charles County
- Expert in hospital quality metrics, patient and employee safety, engagement, and community health needs assessments
- Immediate past President of Crossroads Clinic—Volunteers in Medicine

Lynn Richards, Senior Vice President, Policy and Implementation

- Former President and CEO of Congress for New Urbanism
- Former Acting Director and Policy Director, Office of Sustainable Communities at the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Deep experience implementing policy changes at the federal, state, and local levels

Malisa McCreedy, Built Environment Program Manager

- Former Director of Mobility for the City of Gainesville, FL
- Former Division Manager for the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation

Margaret Adamek, PhD, National Food Policy Expert

- Decades of experience working with native nations, new immigrant, and minority populations
- Designed and deployed Minnesota Food Charter
- Bush Foundation Leadership Fellow

Nadja Berneche, Food Policy Expert

- Lead Consultant and Director of Healthy Communities Projects with Terra Soma
- Co-chair of the Saint Paul-Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission
- Cross-cultural experience and demonstrated commitment to serving diverse communities

Naomi Imatome-Yun, Editor-in-Chief

- Wall Street Journal bestselling author
- Curator of the historic Flashlight exhibit at the Mayme Clayton African-American Museum in Los Angeles
- Experienced reaching and engaging hard-to-reach audiences (niche, underserved, millennial)

Nick Buettner, Vice President of Product

- Led or produced 17 world expeditions, including explorations to identify blue zones regions
- Former COO of Foolproof, a financial literacy foundation
- Ed-tech innovator and co-founder of Maya Quest, a web-based education program

Oliver Hayden, Project Manager

- Urban planning & development strategist
- Over eight years of experience delivering innovative, data-driven project solutions
- Passionate advocate for well-designed cities and neighborhoods

Robyn Fulwider, Account Executive

- Over 38 years of experience in the healthcare field
- Diverse operational management experience including strategic planning and visioning, business planning and management, budget development, and contract negotiations

Sara Hetrick-Couppas, Schools Expert

- Experienced Program Director with a demonstrated history of working in the developmental disabilities and mental health care industry

Sharon O'Hara, DrPH, MPH, MS, Alcohol Policy Expert

- Professor at UC Berkeley, Core Faculty, Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) Program
- Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation
- Group Leader, Berkeley Ethics and Regulation Group for Innovative Technologies (BERGIT)

Shelly Trumbo, Chief Transformations Officer

- Founder, Starling Community Solutions
- Former Director of Community Wellness at Adventist Health Clear Lake
- Advisory Board Member at North Coast Opportunities, Inc.

Steve Samples, Gallup Well-Being, Senior Financial Analyst

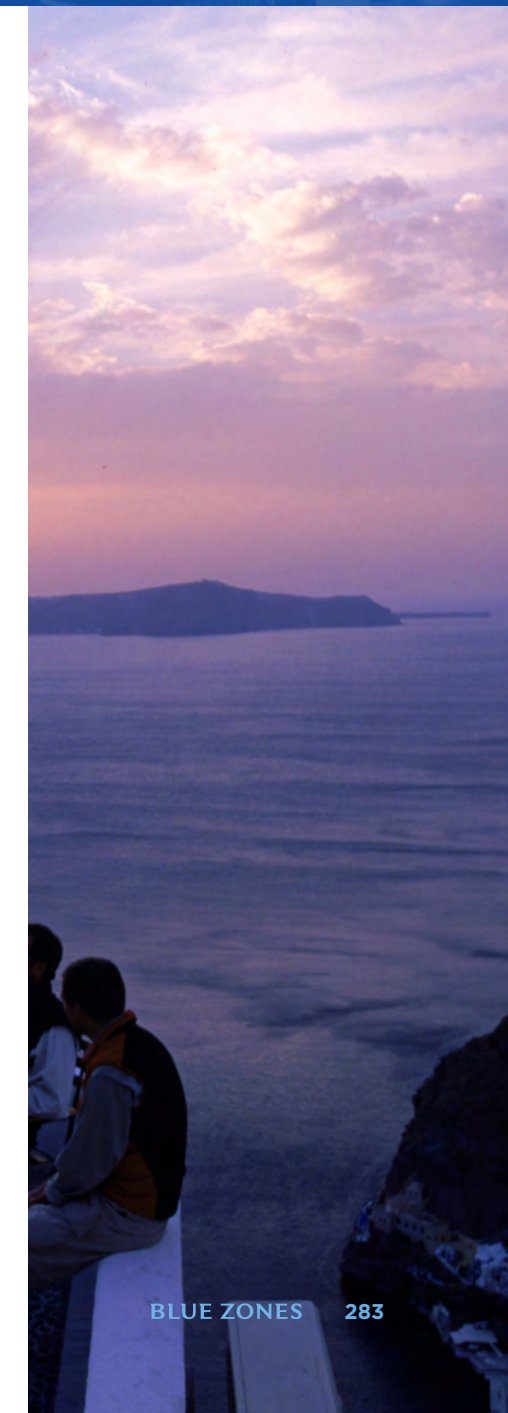
- CPA by training
- 40 years of health care experience
- Analyzed well-being, health, and claims data for hundreds of organizations
- Created numerous models to analyze and present value projections, costs, and outcomes
- Former SVP at Healthways, Inc. leading its Financial Operations Group

Tre' McCalister, Worksite Expert

- Former Total Health Management Consulting Practice Leader for Mercer, Central Market
- Former Global Health Strategist at Dell
- Board of Directors for Austin Mayor's Health and Fitness Council

Tricia Gehrein, Community Improvement Expert

- Former Director of Population Health, Morongo Basin Healthcare District
- Former Director, Community Health Transformation, Clinton Foundation
- Former Regional Director, Coachella Valley, Clinton Foundation's Health Matters Initiative
- Former Grants Manager, Desert Healthcare District





Contact Us

info@bluezones.com

612-596-3600

200 Southdale Center, Edina MN 55346