

June 7, 2024

Johnice Williams

Here are some events that are going on: Jazz on the Green and 4 Juneteenth events in Orange County from June 15 to June 22. I will post the flyers in the chat.

Linda DiMario

The OC Arts and Learning Conservatory, are producing gospel voices on Saturday at Chapman.

Luis Sarmiento

This was the third in a series of community forums. We have been developing over the years, our expertise, our methodology, on how to do community led planning processes. When we hosted our first forum, participants shared their strategies to make ends meet with their families, leveraging resources at a community level, with different types of networks, and also engaging in policy advocacy. We know that persistent obstacles are low wages, the cost of housing, and the lack of access to existing resources. In our second forum in October, we asked folks to get together according to their work, the type of work that we do, so we had a big participation of folks that do domestic work, which is a pretty big sector here in our county, but which is largely underrepresented, in terms of different types of protections. For our third forum, we brought information about this collaborative.

Ana Urzua

We discussed the industries that the collaborative has been reviewing. We were able to work in 10 small groups across those five industries, but also with the specific sectors that were identified. The questions that we asked were specifically open-ended. All of them brought up immigration status as a factor in the burdens and experiences that they face, both in the past and in the present. The other was language barriers in accessing already existing systems of support. We recommend being able to incorporate the feedback and the way that community members can respond to the work that the HRTC is advancing. We can review top voted strategies, engage residents from disinvested communities, which can be done by hosting community stakeholder meetings that residents participate in.

Luis Sarmiento

In small group discussions on strategy review, there was a call for training opportunities for low-income seniors and low-wage food service workers, including paid training and education. Participants also highlighted the need for enhanced workplace safety protections and improved access to information. We want to eliminate the barriers that keep folks from participating directly and from accessing resources.

Jesse Ben-Ron

We need to develop strategies as required by the grant and the original plan. This step is crucial before creating project criteria for regional implementation. The state will provide guidelines for implementation-ready projects, and we can adjust these as needed. We also need to develop our own criteria for Catalyst projects. In August, we'll discuss whether our documents should be similar or different from the state's, weighing the pros and cons. Ultimately, project criteria will be more valuable when applying for funds, but the strategy document will be important for aspects not covered by the criteria. We'll also discuss selecting investment sector coordinators, aiming to finalize them in July. To support regional projects, whether funded through Catalyst or implementation, sector investment

coordinators can address any issue in the regional plan. For instance, even if housing isn't in the project criteria, coordinators can still identify resources and organize efforts to support them. The importance of the strategy framework lies in this flexibility. Recently, Tony presented nine umbrella strategies summarizing key themes, and the subgroup aims to finalize and review these themes, ensuring all March contributions are integrated. They plan to refine the top 21 strategies and consider additional ones, noting the state imposes no limit on the number of strategies. Initially, six strategies were divided into seven categories, with three strategies each, chosen from over 100 options. The collaborative can adjust this number as needed. The goal is to align our strategies with the state's new guidance, maintaining authenticity to reflect our region's values.

Toni Symonds

The nine overarching strategies shared last week were a proposed approach, not a final list. The idea is to have nine to eleven broad strategies encompassing various activities, instead of narrowing the list too much, which often sidelines disinvested communities. The regional plan, a 10-year document, should support funding and activities beyond Catalyst and phase two. Broad strategies will allow groups to leverage the plan for other funding opportunities. Narrowing strategies too much could limit us if new opportunities arise, such as building a hospital, which wasn't specifically mentioned.

Cesar Covarrubias

I support having these broad strategies but recognize that some activities and interventions might not fit into them and still need to be prioritized. The recent forum highlighted such examples. Even if they don't align with the agreed-upon strategies, these activities and interventions must be identified and followed.

Garry Brown

Hi, everyone. At our meeting last Friday, I expressed my concern about the language in item nine, "sustainable environment." The phrase "or at least do no harm" suggests accepting the status quo, which I find problematic. We should aim to do better. Tony restructured the strategies, but terms like "environment," "resilience," and "climate" were omitted, despite their importance in the state guidelines. We must include these terms. I support the strategies but believe they need some revisions.

Annette Kelly-Whittle

As we work on the theory of change document, space has been a challenge. We've discussed using guiding principles to summarize our focus, such as prioritizing disinvested communities or incorporating a climate component. These principles would underpin everything we do, providing clarity regardless of specific language. This approach aims to streamline without diluting our intentions.

Iosefa Alofaituli

I appreciate the focus on guiding principles as values that guide decision-making. They should underpin how we approach decisions. Regarding item eight, cultural competence is evolving towards cultural humility, which emphasizes ongoing growth and understanding rather than achieving a fixed competency level.

Jesse Ben-Ron

To recap, this initiative began with input from a broad stakeholder group of over 100 representatives, brainstorming and voting on strategies which were later refined into a list of 21 by the collaborative. These strategies were minimally edited to maintain authenticity. Subsequent meetings among

collaborative groups further refined the top strategies based on feedback, which has been shared and discussed over the past month. Recently, OCBC staff consolidated and refined these edits into a draft aligned with the state's new guidance on the regional plan. Additional updates have been added for review. Moving forward, the working group will meet before July 12 to finalize this document for group approval in August, ensuring alignment with major deliverables like the regional plan. I'm available for any questions or to discuss the Strategy Group's recommendation versus our current position. Tony presented umbrella strategies, which were previously more detailed but are now condensed. The next steps include refining these strategies to ensure each category is adequately covered and incorporating feedback from the March 25 subgroups. This will result in a more cohesive document for eventual group approval.

Linda DiMario

Okay, so today we're not voting on the definitive concrete work or language, but rather a continued process to arrive at the concrete language.

Jesse Ben-Ron

If you wish to proceed with the updated process, the proposed language has been shared via an Excel spreadsheet. You can choose to approve this language or suggest further refinements. The final document will be developed and presented for approval before the July 12 meeting. On the subgroup are those present which include representatives from the Irvine Chamber/Boys and Girls Club of Central Coast, Orange County Conservation Corps, Coastkeeper, American Indian Chamber of Commerce, Cooperacion, Thrive, and First 5.

Linda DiMario

My concern is that despite the good intentions and intelligence of the committee members, who are more knowledgeable about the bureaucratic process than I am, I fear our collective work may be interpreted differently going forward. While we will review it again, it won't be the same as our original process, which worries me.

Jesse Ben-Ron

I believe that while there will be adjustments and refinements, the final document will still be grounded in the feedback from our subgroup strategies. It won't be a complete rewrite; rather, it will build upon the work we've done together. Ultimately, decisions need to be made to ensure coherence, despite differing opinions on specific details.

Luis Sarmiento

I motion to approve the recommended process by the working group. I believe the work we've done reviewing the 21 strategies and the accompanying spreadsheet has been valuable. The focus now is on developing a guiding framework to unify these strategies. I invite anyone interested to join the working group. Thank you.

Ish Herrera

Thank you. So your motion is duly noted. We're going to turn to Andrew and then I'll invite a second to the motion. But Andrew, let's go to you first.

Andrew Gonzalez

I echo Linda's concerns about the working group's process. It's concerning to see only one mention of jobs in a document focused on resilient communities. I propose tabling this item until the next meeting to have a broader discussion on these new strategies and address the group's concerns.

Ana Charco

I would like to the second the motion.

Ish Herrera

There's been a motion and a second for the action in front of you. The motion is to approve the recommended process by the sub-working group. Given the importance of this decision and potential impact on our work, we will conduct an electronic vote via Google platform. Maria will share the link shortly. A yes vote directs the staff to continue refining and finalizing the strategy language for approval during our July 12 meeting. A no vote supports proceeding with the original process using the refined language already presented.

Jesse Ben-Ron

The idea that the collaborative will proceed as it sees fit is unwise because the research team needs time to develop a substantial document for the state, as outlined in your agenda packet. This document, likely around 100 pages, requires analysis based on the decisions made today. If we approve the recommended process from the working group, the group will need to meet next week to ensure the document is ready by our July 12 meeting. Delaying this decision until July is impractical given the other significant decisions already scheduled for that meeting.

Ish Herrera

The poll will stay open until the end of today's session. If the vote is close, we'll extend the poll to allow those who couldn't attend today to cast their vote by next week.

Matt Horton

I'm a senior advisor with the Milken Institute. Today, we're diving into the mechanics of economic development beyond surface-level discussions. At the Milken Institute, we conduct indices like the Best Performing Cities Index, which measures economic activity driven by the knowledge-based economy. This reflects local investments in sector growth, high-wage job creation, and attracting talent. Looking nationally, we examine trends in technology, infrastructure, and workforce readiness. Successful metros focus on minimizing economic inequality through investments in housing, mobility, and services. Our economic toolbox includes tax incentives, workforce programs like San Antonio's 'Ready to Work,' business incubators, infrastructure investments, and industry-specific initiatives. Public-private partnerships and cohesive regional economic strategies are crucial. For example, New York's Strategic Investment Group leverages tax incentives for biotech, while New Orleans uses finance tools to bolster affordable housing and infrastructure post-Katrina. These models offer insights and lessons that can inform our regional planning and development efforts moving forward.

Linda DiMario

New Orleans has one of the oldest improvement districts in the country. Have you explored very specifically, what those tools are available to us in the state of California that can be deployed?

Matt Horton

In the context of federal tax credits and state-level policies, the current discussion centers on California's proposed reduction of R&D tax credits in the governor's budget. Historically, these credits have played a significant role in fostering business growth and job creation, contributing notably to the state GDP.

Linda DiMario

I was talking about the overlay of improvement districts, which are usually city or county based.

Matt Horton

We're discussing enhanced infrastructure districts, which have appeared sporadically but aren't yet a structural part of our regional governance. There's a need to decide at either the Sacramento or regional level how to structure these districts effectively. Previously, redevelopment allocated around 20% of tax increment for affordable housing, which raises questions about replicating this structural element rather than treating it as optional.

Doug Magione

To be brief, in Orange County with its 34 cities, getting a unified direction can be challenging. The Board of Supervisors seems to hold oversight. Is this what you mean by needing more unified collaborative power in regional governance?

Matt Horton

So whether it's the New York, InVEST Atlanta, or Pei DC models, these governance entities have a clear mission to deploy and implement tools based on regional priorities. Our regional models currently focus more on strategic planning than on deployment and implementation. To replicate these successful models, we need to expand our regional governance to include a stronger focus on implementation and deployment that reflects our regional priorities.

Ish Herrera

We will now move to the RFQ Sector Investor Coordinator agenda item.

Jesse Ben-Ron

I want to clarify that we're not selecting people just yet. Instead, think of this process as forming a basketball team where we match skills to roles. Each application will be transparently reviewed by the collaborative, based on the RFQ scoring guidelines. Applications are due June 17, allowing nearly a month for review before July. Staff will recommend the top five candidates grouped by skill sets, but the collaborative can approve, modify, or vote on these recommendations. We'll prioritize complementary team dynamics within budget constraints. Until we review applications, we won't know the specific skill categories like outreach, grant writing, etc. Once we have applications, we'll proceed with voting rounds until we finalize the selection of five. Any feedback or suggestions on this process?

Toni Symonds

The overall process looks good, but we're concerned about ensuring a minimum standard. We propose setting a minimum score, perhaps 70 or even 65, to avoid selecting candidates out of desperation. It's crucial, especially for projects in disinvested areas, that applicants demonstrate relevant experience. We should clarify that applicants must meet this minimum threshold to be considered. This ensures we're not compromising on quality or overlooking more qualified candidates. Any thoughts on this addition?

Andrew Gonzalez

I'm just gonna make the motion to approve staff recommendation.

Ish Herrera

Great. Thank you, Andrew. There's a motion. Is there a second? Okay, Linda seconds.

Toni Symonds

I want to amend the motion to include the two items we put in the chat.

Jesse Ben-Ron

Just to clarify, what Linda mentioned aligns with the existing language in the RFQ stating that candidates must score 70 or above to be considered qualified. I believe it's important to emphasize this explicitly in our process to ensure we're not overlooking more qualified candidates and maintaining a standard that aligns with our goals, especially for projects in disinvested areas. This addition reinforces clarity and fairness in our selection process.

Andrew Gonzalez

That's fine. To make it more explicit.

Ish Herrera

We have a motion and second. Any opposition? Motion carries.

We will now share the results of the poll for item 5 on the agenda. Based on the outcome, where 56.7% voted yes and 43.3% voted no, and no abstentions. Should we leave the poll open for those who were not present today?

Jesse Ben-Ron

We will leave it open.

Linda DiMario

If the poll favors the subgroup working on the newly approved process rather than the original one, I'd like to volunteer for that subcommittee. It's important to ensure representation of labor and small businesses to reflect the main drivers of the categories. Otherwise, there's a risk of skewing the perspective.

Jesse Ben-Ron

I think we can work on ensuring that one representative of each of the

Ish Herrera

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 12th. You've already heard we've got a full agenda. That will be an in-person meeting, there'll be lunch provided which will start at 11:30 am. And the meeting will begin at 12:00 pm sharp. Please keep an eye out for an email from Maria regarding the logistics for that meeting and please plan to be there from 12 to 2pm.