The Coachella Valley is a study in contrasts. On the surface we see a region of extra-ordinary beauty and extensive natural resources, a favorite gathering spot for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Often unseen, the reality that most people in the valley never experience the opulence and luxury for which the area is known. Hard work and vital contributions by local residents do not ensure an invitation to shared prosperity.

Building toward an inclusive and equitable future for all requires re-envisioning the institutions and systems that drive our current landscape of opportunity. It also requires cooperation across the Valley because the problems holding people back are too widespread to be addressed by any single jurisdiction or organization.

Lift to Rise is a bold vision and an unfettered commitment to the belief that the Coachella Valley is a place where the sun rises for everyone.

WHY WE LIFT

The Coachella Valley is a study in contrasts. On the surface we see a region of extra-ordinary beauty and extensive natural resources, a favorite gathering spot for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Often unseen, the reality that most people in the valley never experience the opulence and luxury for which the area is known. Hard work and vital contributions by local residents do not ensure an invitation to shared prosperity.

Building toward an inclusive and equitable future for all requires re-envisioning the institutions and systems that drive our current landscape of opportunity. It also requires cooperation across the Valley because the problems holding people back are too widespread to be addressed by any single jurisdiction or organization.

Lift to Rise is a bold vision and an unfettered commitment to the belief that the Coachella Valley is a place where the sun rises for everyone.

OUR CANS

Collaboration with community partners and extensive data analysis led us to two areas of focus: housing stability and economic opportunity. We structure our work on these two areas into Collaborative Action Networks (CANs) which are local stakeholder working groups that utilize a results framework.

Housing Stability CAN

Story: The lack of affordable housing across the region is a primary cause of personal struggle in the Coachella Valley, with more than 50% of households currently rent burdened.

Strength: Rent burden is a significant issue across the Coachella Valley, which disproportionately impacts the economic stability and welfare of low-income families. Across the Valley, residents expressed concern over rising rents, which have increased their total housing costs.

Change: Reducing the number of rent burdened Coachella Valley households by 30% over the next ten years will improve the quality of life for nearly 40,000 households. In the next two years we are committed to advancing 2,000 units by:
- Building and sustaining a regional pipeline of community-valued projects
- Building and leveraging regional investment, including establishing a regional housing fund.
- Changing local policies to advance our shared priorities and development of the pipeline.

Economic Opportunity CAN

Story: Economic hardship in the Coachella Valley has reached alarming levels with nearly one in two valley residents earning below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Strength: Across the Valley, residents consistently described the precarity created by the high costs of utilities and inability to establish credit with traditional financial institutions.

Change: The Economic Opportunity CAN is piloting two innovative “stabilizing” strategies, while simultaneously working with partners to build a comprehensive continuum of “stabilizing” supports.

We are launching two strategies to:
- Significantly increase the uptake of underutilized state and local utility discount programs
- Pilot innovative Mission Asset Fund “Lending Circles” for families who face financial exclusion with key institutional partners

OUR NORTH STAR

A future where all Coachella Valley families are healthy, stable, and thriving.

OUR OBJECTIVE

A two year action plan of scope and scale, outlining strategies that will work to increase housing stability and economic opportunity for all Coachella Valley families.

THE WAY WE LIFT

To address the underlying causes and consequences of poverty in the Coachella Valley, Lift to Rise employs a collective impact frame, informed by deep community engagement that fosters strategies to immediately stabilize conditions and advance systems change. We focus on story, strength and change.

Story: creating a common, shared understanding from which to work.
We uplift our region’s story, using data and research, to reframe the local narrative about what it means to live and work in the Coachella Valley.

Strength: building our collective capacity to work together toward outcomes.
We build local strength, prioritizing resident voice and leveraging local, regional, and national resources to effect change.

Change: Generating results for Coachella Valley families and children.
We work to instigate change to stabilize and support Coachella Valley families through the implementation, evaluation, and scaling of our economic opportunity and housing stability interventions.

LIFTING TOGETHER

“I came here. I work so hard in the fields every day because I believed that the Coachella Valley is a place where, when the sun rises, it rises for everyone.”

Our work is anchored in this spirit of belief. We believe that we share a collective responsibility to lift together so that everyone can rise. Realizing our Action Plan for Housing Stability and Economic Opportunity will take contributions from all in the Coachella Valley region. Partners can sign on to implement our multi-year action plan to help us achieve ambitious results in the areas of housing stability and economic opportunity.
2019-2020 Highlights

- Became a pilot site for the Center for Community Investment’s Connect Capital Initiative
- Inventory 2,000 units by assembling a regional pipeline of projects
- Convened local, state, and national partners with Beneficial State Bank & NextGen around two “Bridging the Gaps” Investment Summits
- Built a multi-year investment, pipeline, and policy agenda with 50+ cross sector partners
- Launched a multi-strategy Action Plan in January 2020
- Received the support from more than 100 local leaders
- Initiated piloting of the Mission Asset Fund’s Lending Circles
- Piloted the Annie Casey Foundation’s “Resultados Cuentan”
- Announced the Coachella Valley Housing Catalyst Initiative and the development of a capital fund
- Launched a multi-jurisdiction utility subsidy intervention and initiated targeted outreach
- Launched the Coachella Valley Economic Protection Plan and Support Fund

IN THE NEWS

Desert Sun.
“Nonprofit: 2,000 affordable housing units coming to Coachella Valley”

“Poor credit is a barrier to affordable housing. Lending circles are a tool for those in poverty”

“Valley Voice: Together we can create a Coachella Valley where all families thrive”

“Coronavirus: Coachella Valley aid programs crop up to help businesses, workers amid shutdowns”

LOOKING AHEAD

The lack of affordable housing across the region is a primary cause of personal struggle in the Coachella Valley, with more than 50% of households currently rent burdened.

Housing Plan: What’s next?
- Operationalize Regional Planner by March 2020
- Public launch of the Coachella Valley Housing Catalyst Initiative and Capital Fund
- Launch of an online regional housing pipeline portal
- Development of a policy platform for regional and state legislation
- Implementation of a multi-jurisdictional pro-housing policy agenda

Economic Plan: What’s next?
- Launch of additional lending circles with community organizations and institutional partners
- Outreach and enrollment of utility discount program across 3 jurisdictions
- Conduct evaluation of piloted stabilizing support programs
- Systematize pilot programs through partnership and coordination
- Build a bold systems change agenda around income, wages, and employment

Resident Engagement
- Establishment of a Resident Leadership Table
- Development of a Resident Leadership curriculum
- Schedule of Resident & Community Meetings

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

lifttorise.org
fb.com/lifttorise
@lift_rise
@liftorise