Resort Town Reimagined

Borrego Springs Integrated Planning Work Group

Scoping Proposal for an Integrated
Watershed-Scale Master Planning Process
January 2020

Local Government Commission
Leaders for Livable Communities

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction

Borrego Springs, a small unincorporated desert community in northeastern San Diego County, faces a critical juncture for determining its future. The community is a hospitality hub for hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, as well as popular camping, hiking, golfing, recreational vehicle use, and wildlife viewing. It is also home to 2,328 year-round and roughly 1,000 more seasonal residents. The livelihood of Borrego Springs is 100% dependent on groundwater, and its basin is in a state of critical overdraft.[1]According to their Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan, the Borrego Valley must collectively reduce water use by 75%.[2]

Water use reductions will significantly impact Borrego's economy and socioeconomic structure, while also causing long-term environmental effects. The region's greatest water users – local agriculture and golf recreation – are also the primary drivers for the community's economy. Any change to agriculture or golf will disrupt local employment, and potentially degrade air quality due to land fallowing. This could lead to a ripple effect, with job loss and public health risks impacting the number of families living in the area, in turn affecting local commerce, housing demand, and school enrollment, among other factors.

These circumstances, while seemingly dire, present a significant opportunity for the Borrego Springs community to proactively pivot toward a sustainable future, based on an economy that will vitalize the region while living within its natural resource constraints. Borrego Springs can serve as a model for other communities for a just and resilient transition in the face significant socio-economic and environmental disruption. To succeed, efforts must be unified and collaborative across sectors, socioeconomic status, community values, and personal interests. No piece of the community fabric can be overlooked.

The integrated master planning process outlined in this scoping proposal begins by providing the current context – an overview of the sociocultural and physical conditions of Borrego Springs today. The following sections detail the important socioeconomic and environmental issues driving the need for an integrated master plan as well as the community priorities identified through several recent community engagement efforts. The work plan and budget sections provide the necessary detail about plan development phases, from establishing the leadership structure and engaging in community visioning to reviewing the economic, social, and environmental data needed to establish a baseline for Borrego's present-day community structure, as well as developing appropriate, implementable goals and actions that combine into a cohesive master planning strategy.

This scoping proposal is built upon extensive stakeholder engagement and long-term, cross-sector collaboration. This will ensure that the diverse interests of the community are represented and foster innovative, multi-benefit solutions to complex challenges.

An integrated, regional, watershed-scale master planning process will identify the complex relationships between water use, economic, social, and environmental factors that underlie Borrego's vitality, and strategize activities necessary to turn Borrego into a thriving community and world-class tourist destination.

[1] Critical overdraft occurs when 1) the average annual amount of extracted groundwater exceeds the long-term average annual supply and 2) continued extraction at these rates would likely incur significant impacts to water quality, availability, the local economy, and the environment. Retrieved from https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management

[2] Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Borrego Springs Groundwater Subbasin Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/SGMA/borrego-valley.html

2. Current Conditions

2.1. Community Characteristics (Socio-cultural)

2.1.1. Demographics

Borrego Springs' estimated full-time population is 2,328.[3] The median age of residents in Borrego Springs is 53.8 years, with almost 60% of the population aged 55-years or older.[4] Residents are primarily White (87%), with the remainder Black/African-American, Asian, or two or more races. Approximately 20% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latinx (Figure 1).[5]

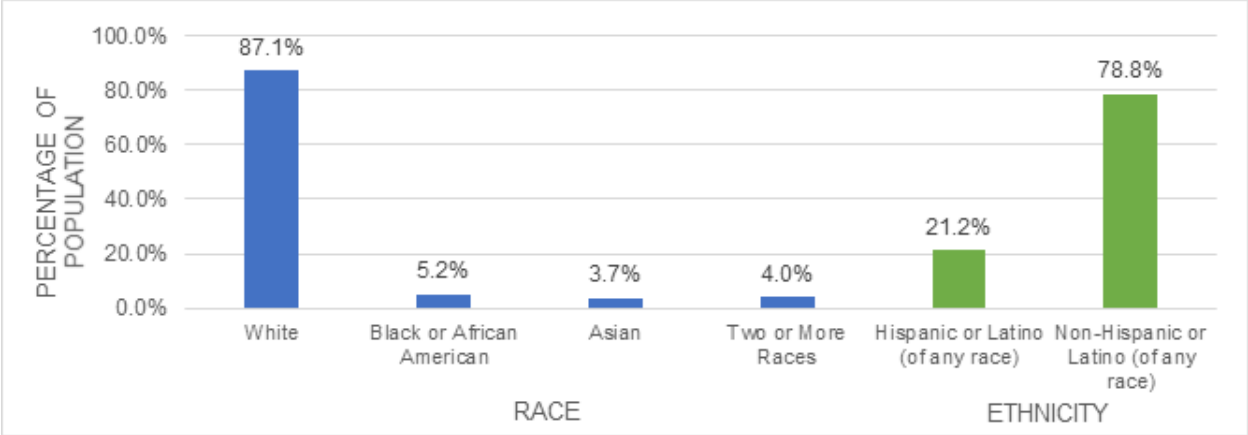

Figure 1. Race and Ethnicity, 2016 American Community Survey data

Based on the seasonality of the area, it is estimated that part-time residents – seasonal workers, "snowbirds," and weekenders – inflate the population by two-fold.[6]

2.1.2. Resident Typologies

Anecdotally, year-round residents are comprised of two types:

1. Households consisting of individuals and couples over the age of 55, primarily White/non-Hispanic, who are living on limited or fixed incomes.
2. Households comprised of multigenerational families, primarily Hispanic/Latinx and consisting of grandparents, working parents, and children who make up most of the students in the Borrego Unified School District.[7]

Part-time residents are comprised of the following three types:

[3] U.S. Census. (2016). *ACS Demographics and Housing Estimates, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_DP05; U.S. Census (2010). *Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics, 2010*. Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_DP_DPDP1

[4] U.S Census. (2016). *Age and Sex, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S0101

[5] U.S. Census. (2016). *Place of Birth by Nativity and Citizenship Status, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B05002

[6] San Diego County. (2011). *Borrego Springs Community Plan.*

[7] According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), 84% of students in the Borrego Springs Unified School District (BSUSD) are Hispanic/Latinx and 44% of students are English language learners. Retrieved from: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_detail.asp?Search=2&details=1&ID2=0605700&DistrictID=0605700

1. Seasonal workers: Individuals who work in the area during agricultural harvest seasons.
2. Snowbirds: Those with second homes in the area who avoid Borrego's hotter months, typically arriving in November and leaving in March or April.
3. Weekenders: Visitors often interested in outdoor activities ranging from golf to hiking to mountain biking.

2.1.3. Community Groups

Borrego Springs has an active network of community groups, comprised primarily of year-round residents and part-time "snowbirds." Interests range from outdoor activity and nature clubs to youth and religious groups, volunteer service organizations, and community leadership groups focused on business and governmental affairs.

- Al-Anon, Alcoholic & Narcotics Anonymous
- American Legion Auxiliary
- American Legion Post 853
- Anza Borrego Foundation (ABF)
- Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association
- Borrego Art Institute (BAI), Borrego Springs Civic Foundation
- Borrego Spring Art Guild
- Borrego Springs Chamber of Commerce
- Borrego Springs Children's Center
- Borrego Springs Community Sponsor Group
- Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition
- Borrego Springs Little League
- Borrego Springs Minister Association
- Borrego Springs Performing Arts Center (PAC)
- Borrego Springs Rotary Club/Rotary Foundation
- Borrego Springs Senior Center
- Borrego Springs Youth Basketball League
- Borrego Valley Endowment Fund
- Borrego Valley Stewardship Council
- Borrego Village Association
- Borrego Village Foundation (BVF)
- Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts, Boys & Girls Club of Borrego Springs
- Christmas Circle Community Park
- Feeding America at Borrego Springs Unified School District
- Feeding America at St Richard's Catholic Church
- Friends of the Borrego Springs Library
- Kiwanis Club
- Lions Club
- S'Interact Club (High School Interact/Rotary plus Soroptimist)
- San Diego County Supervisor Jim Desmond Revitalization Groups: Revitalization Working Group on Economic Development/Tourism, Revitalization Working Group on Infrastructure, Revitalization Working Group on Community Health, Revitalization Working Group on the Environment
- San Diego Food Bank at Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church
- Soroptimist International of Borrego Springs
- Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy

2.1.4. Income and Poverty

According to 2016 U.S. Census data, the median household income (MHI) in Borrego Springs is $34,046.[8] This is almost 50% less than the San Diego County MHI of $66,529 and the California MHI of $63,783. The MHI qualifies Borrego Springs as a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) as well as an Economically Distressed Area (EDA) according to California Department of Water Resources guidelines.[9]

[8] U.S. Census. (2016). *ACS Demographics and Housing Estimates, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*.
[9] CA Department of Water Resources. (2016). *DAC Mapping Tool.*

With such a large population in retirement, income for many Borrego households comes from retirement, Social Security, or other sources of fixed income. In 2016, there were 1,050 individual Social Security beneficiaries in the 92004 ZIP code – 850 of the total were retired, and 895 were aged 65 or older.[10] The Census estimates 45.2% of households receive Social Security income at an average of $18,201 per year, and 30.3% of households have retirement income at an average of $19,371 per year.[11]

It is estimated that 11.5% of Borrego Springs full-time residents live below the federal poverty line, the threshold for 2016 being an income of $24,3000 for a four-member household.[12] Though children under 18 make up only 16% of the total population of Borrego, 60% of youth live in a household that receives food stamps/SNAP, cash assistance, or Social Security Income.[13] Additionally, 71% of children in the Borrego Springs Unified School District (BSUSD) qualify for free lunch, while another 17% qualify for reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program.[14]

The census tract is also designated as "Low Income, Low Access at 10 miles" to groceries by the USDA.[15] A census tract is designated Low Income if the poverty rate is 20% or higher, or if the MHI in the census tract is 80% less than the state or metropolitan area. A census tract is designated Low Access if at least 33% of the population lives farther than 1 mile from the nearest grocery store in an urban area, or farther than 10 miles in a rural area.

2.1.5. Housing

There are approximately 2,667 total housing units in Borrego Springs, with a seasonal housing vacancy rate of around 40%.[16] Over 1,000 units are estimated to be for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Borrego is largely made up of single-family homes (62.5%), the majority detached, while 24.6% of homes in the area are mobile homes. Duplexes and multifamily units make up the final 12.9% of the housing stock.[17] According to the Borrego Springs Community Plan, over 1,500 homes and condominiums were in the development pipeline in Borrego in 2011.[18] Most of the projects were put on hold due to groundwater supply discussions, while some have had development resume, such as the Rams Hill Golf Course redevelopment.

The larger San Diego County Desert Community Planning Area (Desert CPA), which includes the Ocotillo Wells area and expands south encompassing the Anza Borrego State Park, adds an additional

[10] OASDI Social Security Administration. (2016). *Number of beneficiaries with benefits in current-payment status and total monthly benefits, by field office and ZIP Code.* Retrieved from: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_zip/2015/ca.html

[11] U.S. Census. (2016). *Selected Economic Characteristics, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_DP03

[12] U.S. Census. (2016). *Percent of families and people whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_DP03

[13] U.S. Census. (2016). *Receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Cash Public Assistance Income, of Food Stamps/SNAP, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B09010

[14] National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Enrollment Characteristics (2015-2016 school year).* https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/school_detail.asp?Search=1&SchoolID=060570000517&ID=060570000517

[15] United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2015). *Low Income & Low Access Layers 2015.* Retrieved from: https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas

[16] U.S. Census. (2016). *Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.*; U.S. Census. (2016). *Vacant housing units, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B25004

[17] U.S. Census. (2016). *Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.*

[18] San Diego County. (2011). *Borrego Springs Community Plan.* Retrieved from: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf

1,000 housing units to the sub-region's total, totaling approximately 3,500-3,700. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) estimates that more than 10,000 additional acres will be developed as Low-Density Single Family or Single Family by 2050, which would increase the total housing units in the Desert CPA by more than 1,500.[19]

Though sparsely populated, Borrego Springs still has unmet housing and infrastructure needs. The Census estimates that about 76% of renters in Borrego Springs are cost-burdened, and 30.6% of renters are severely cost-burdened.[20] This means almost a third of rental households face monthly housing costs that are 50% or more of their total household income. This generally affects lower-income households, as approximately 95% of renter households making below $50,000 are cost burdened.[21]

The Borrego Springs Community Plan highlights a shortage of senior and low-to-moderate-income housing in the community, including assisted living and nursing homes. It also details the lack of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to housing within the Village Core. Assuming the community remains a destination for older retirees, strategic planning around affordable housing for those on fixed or low incomes, as well as local accessibility and active transportation, will be important.

2.1.6. Public Health

Borrego Springs is located within a Medically Underserved Area (MUA) in San Diego County, as defined by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration. An MUA is an area with too few primary care providers, high poverty rates, a higher older adult population, and/or a high infant mortality rate.[22] There is one medical clinic that provides comprehensive healthcare for residents in the Borrego Valley -- the Borrego Valley Medical Center, which does not provide emergency services. Desert Home Care provides in-home care and Mountain view Assisted Living is an assisted-living facility in the area.

Borrego's location within the desert of San Diego County poses increased risk for heat-related illnesses. There is also a significant number of sub-populations with greater heat-related risk factors: those 65 years or older, those who are medically underserved and/or low-income, as well as those who are occupationally or recreationally active outdoors.[23] However, since 2014, thanks to the development of one of the largest utility microgrids in the United States, Borrego Springs and the surrounding northeast area of the county are less likely to have extended power outages that risk residents being without air conditioning.[24] In addition to heat risks, the census tract is also ranked higher than 75% of other state tracts for the number and type of groundwater threats that exist in the area due to contamination.[25]

About 12% of residents in the 92004 ZIP code in 2014 had ever been diagnosed with asthma. This is slightly lower than the statewide rate of 14% and the countywide rate of 16% (1-17 years) and 14% (18-

[19] SANDAG. (2013). *Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast: Desert Community Plan Area, County of San Diego*.
[20] U.S. Census. (2017). *Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.*
[21] U.S. Census. (2016). *Estimated percent of all renters with incomes less than $50,000 who are burdened by housing costs between 2012-2016.* Retrieved from https://policymap.com
[22] County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency. (2013). *San Diego County Atlas of Medically Underserved Areas/Populations, Health Professional Shortage Areas, & Registered Nurse Shortage Areas.* Retrieved from: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/documents/CHS-HealthcareShortageAtlas_2013.pdf
[23] County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency. (2012). Health Vulnerability Atlas, San Diego County, 2012. Retrieved from: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/documents/CHS-HeatAtlas2012.pdf
[24] San Diego Gas and Electric. (2018). *The Borrego Springs Microgrid is a Glimpse into the Future.* Retrieved from: https://www.sdge.com/more-information/environment/smart-grid/borrego-springs-microgrid
[25] California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. (2017). *CalEnviroScreen 3.0, Groundwater Threats.* Retrieved from: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/indicator/groundwater-threats

plus years).[26] However, changes in climate or land use could affect these rates, as the neighboring Salton Sea area has seen a spike in asthma issues due to drought and receding water.[27]

2.1.7. Local Governance

Borrego Springs is an unincorporated community far removed from the majority of San Diego County and has little local governance. It is overseen by County District 5 Supervisor Jim Desmond, 38th State Senate District Senator Brian Jones, and 71st District Assemblymember Randy Voepel. All land use planning is subject to County approval, governed by the County General Plan and the Borrego Springs Community Plan. The Anza Borrego Desert State Park has jurisdiction over much of the land surrounding Borrego Springs, but no authority outside the park boundaries.

2.1.8. Amenities and Services

2.1.8.1. Facilities and Infrastructure

The Borrego Springs community is supported by the following facilities and infrastructure, which are also used by neighboring Ranchita and Shelter Valley.[28]

- County Road Station
- School District
- Water District
- Fire Department
- Sheriff's Substation
- County Library
- Children's Center
- Boys and Girls Club
- Senior Center
- Medical Center
- Airport
- County Rural Bus System
- AT&T Central Office
- Chamber of Commerce

2.1.8.2. Parks and Recreation

Borrego Springs has several community facilities and is also located near multiple public recreation areas. The Borrego Springs Performing Arts Center presents multiple plays and musicals in season and the Community Concert Association also provides regular programming. The Borrego Springs Community Park offers pickleball courts, a dog park, a picnic area, and an astronomy bowl. Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, Palomar Mountain State Park, and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park are nearby, as is Ocotillo Wells Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation, San Bernardino National Forest, Mt. San Jacinto, Joshua Tree National Park, and the Salton Sea.

[26] UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, California Health Interview Survey (2014). *Ever diagnosed with Asthma (1-17); Ever diagnosed with Asthma (18+)*. Retrieved from: askchisne.ucla.edu

[27] Desert Sun (2017). Salton Sea communities "no longer a good place to live" for those with respiratory issues. Retrieved from: https://www.desertsun.com/story/salton-sea/2017/10/25/salton-sea-communities-no-longer-good-place-live-those-respiratory-issues/769970001/

[28] County of San Diego General Plan (2014), Borrego Springs Community Plan. Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf

The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park headquarters provides visitor facilities that are also used by residents, including a Visitor Center, developed campgrounds, trails, and an outdoor amphitheater.

2.1.8.3. Transportation

State Highway 78 and County Highways S3 and S22 serve the residents of Borrego Springs. The closest airport is Borrego Valley Airport. The closest international airport is Palm Springs International Airport, approximately 80 miles north of Borrego Springs. Public transit is available by Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), which provides transportation service via routes 891 and 892 but only on Thursdays and Fridays.

2.1.8.4. Education

The Borrego Unified School District (BSUSD) serves grades K-12 (approximately 450 students) who attend five schools. The school district includes Ocotillo Wells and serves discretionary students from Ranchita and Salton City. As of the last Community Plan update in 2014, a new charter school was recently approved by the BSUSD Board of Trustees.[29]

2.1.8.5. Utilities

Electrical service in Borrego Springs is provided by San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E). Service reliability from SDG&E is poor, especially during summer "monsoon" season. Above-ground utility poles are eyesores that interrupt our panoramic views. They are also susceptible to damage in our frequent high winds, often disrupting service during storms. With high summer temperatures (averaging 107 degrees), costly electric bills for residents and businesses affect our ability to conduct year-round commerce, resulting in fewer services and lessened ability to market the community for year-round tourism. Propane service providers to Borrego Springs are Amerigas and Pro-Flame Gas Co. Increasingly, residents are installing private solar generation systems.[30]

2.1.8.5.1. Distribution Communications Reliability Improvement (DCRI) Project

The Distribution Communications Reliability Improvement (DCRI) project will provide more reliable, high speed communications to help protect communities from wildfires by expanding the use of the Falling Conductor Protection (FCP) technology. FCP uses relays that communicate wirelessly to de-energize downed power lines (typically due to high winds) before contacting the ground, potentially sparking fire.

SDG&E plans to use its new advanced wireless communications network to monitor, communicate with, and control transmission and distribution equipment. They will be able to support additional smart grid functionality such as microgrids, advanced battery storage, dynamic voltage controllers, falling conductor applications, high-risk fire mitigation and photovoltaic penetration volatility.

SDG&E uses wireless networks to communicate between FCP and other devices. DCRI will replace these systems with a single wireless network serving various purposes, like FCP enabling push-to-talk radio for crews and the ability to monitor and control the power grid DCRI is part of a comprehensive 3-pronged program to minimize the risk of wildfire. First, SDGE engineers and operates the electric system to be fire safe. Second, they have weather models and over 150 weather sensors to predict and monitor fire conditions. Lastly, its educating residents in High Fire Threat Districts to be safe and prepared for wildfires

[29]County of San Diego General Plan (2014), Borrego Springs Community Plan. Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf
[30] Ibid.

County, Borrego Springs has historically experienced many outages because the community is served by a single transmission line and weather conditions are extreme. To strengthen this community's energy reliability and resiliency, SDG&E explored the adoption of new technologies for local energy generation and battery storage.

2.1.8.5.2. Borrego Springs Microgrid

The Borrego Springs Microgrid is the first utility-owned, community scale microgrid in America to demonstrate the capabilities of renewable generation and new technologies to enhance energy reliability. Microgrids that use renewable energy and battery storage can increase energy resilience. The Borrego Springs Microgrid is designed to be a robust, renewable-based system that provides critical power during emergencies and planned outages, which are necessary when system upgrades and maintenance work are needed. The Borrego Springs Microgrid is also a true community microgrid providing benefits to the entire area, and not just to a single-metered customers. A utility-grade microgrid controller known as the Distributed Energy Resources Management System (DERMS) monitors all assets deployed across Borrego Springs including the distributed battery storage and the solar plant located at the northern edge of town.

When an outage occurs, the Microgrid can be activated to provide power. During the day, the Microgrid can harness energy from a local solar plant as well as the Microgrid's batteries and generators to power the entire community. During the night, the Microgrid's batteries and generators power designated critical-load areas. As needed, non-critical loads are shed to maintain Microgrid stability. Seamless transitions to and from the grid are possible and can be initiated and controlled onsite or remotely.[31]

2.1.8.6. Sewer and Water

Borrego Springs receives sewer and water service from the Borrego Water District (BWD), established in 1962. The Water District has 2100 water customers and 800 sewer customers. Since most of the houses are not occupied all year round only 1/3rd of the sewage is created from year-round residents. Many individual house owners have elected for septic tanks, which indicates low flow of sewage due to less customers. In December 1979, the latent powers of the District were activated by the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission to provide water and sewer services to Montesoro (formerly Rams Hill). Since 1979, the BWD has consolidated water and sewer services within the community. Sewer service uses existing treatment facilities located in the southeastern area of the Valley adjacent to the Borrego Sink. Service is provided via a collection system extending from the treatment plant approximately 7.2 miles north along Borrego Valley Road, and west along Palm Canyon Drive to Montezuma Valley Road. The Borrego Water District also maintains pest control and flood control powers.[32]

2.1.8.7. Telecommunications

The local telephone company is AT&T. Only Borrego Valley businesses and residents living near Palm Canyon Drive are able to obtain high-speed data (T-1 and DSL) service. Residents living more than 10,000 feet from the central office must use dial-up or cable Internet service. The local franchised cable provider is CableUSA, providing television and high-speed Internet service. There are several Internet service providers that provide toll-free local access to their dial-up networks.[33]

---

[31] *Distribution Communications Reliability Improvement (DCRI) Project*. SDGE. Page 1
[32] County of San Diego General Plan (2014), Borrego Springs Community Plan. Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf
[33] County of San Diego General Plan (2014), Borrego Springs Community Plan. Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf

2.2 Physical Characteristics (Geologic, Hydrologic, Geographic & Environmental Features)

Borrego Springs occupies 42.5 square miles and is surrounded by the 640,000-acre Anza-Borrego Desert State Park (ABDSP).[34] Geography in the valley is generally sloping alluvium posing a significant flood consideration. [ii][1] The low-desert climate is characterized by mild winters and extremely hot summers, with rainfall historically averaging less than 7 inches per year. Flora and fauna are native to the Colorado Desert region of the Sonoran Desert.

2.1.1. Subbasin

Borrego Springs is situated within the Borrego Valley Subbasin. Land uses consist primarily of private land under County jurisdiction, and both the private land and the Borrego Valley Subbasin are surrounded by the perimeter of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Land uses in the subbasin include residential, agricultural, recreational, and commercial, with 4,000 acres devoted to agriculture and most commercial and residential property undeveloped.

The Borrego Valley Aquifer is a finite source of natural water, much of which has been present as groundwater for thousands of years. The amount of groundwater pumping in the Valley since the inception of agriculture has overwhelmed the amount that is naturally restored to the aquifer each year. [x] DWR has designated the 98-square-mile Borrego Valley subbasin as high priority and critically overdrafted. [4] [xi]

2.1.2. Watershed

The watersheds providing water runoff to Borrego Springs are important resources, protected mostly by the surrounding Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Coyote Canyon watershed provides the highest volume of natural water runoff into the Valley, followed by Borrego Palm Canyon, Henderson Canyon and Tubb Canyon.[5] [xii] The aquifer is replenished primarily from the Coyote Creek flow coming from the Collins Valley to the north. Coyote Creek runs year-round in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and supplies water to the Borrego Valley sub-flow migration. [xiii] Surface flow of streams entering the Valley, such as Coyote Creek, Palm Canyon Creek and Tubb Canyon can be impacted by the overdraft of the Borrego Valley Aquifer. Streams cannot meander far out into the valley if the aquifer has been depleted beneath them. The streams will quickly seep into the subsurface if the ground beneath them is not saturated at the canyon mouths. This impacts the amount of riparian vegetation near the canyon mouths and can negatively impact the growth of native fan palms, willows, mesquites and cottonwoods that normally inhabit desert canyons. [xiv]

Defining the subbasin setting also requires an examination of groundwater quality issues. Groundwater quality provided by the Borrego Water District (BWD) water supply wells meets California drinking water maximum contaminant levels without treatment. Arsenic concentrations were increasing in multiple BWD water supply wells until 2014, but have since decreased. Historically, there have been nitrate-related water quality problems encountered in BWD wells that led to well reconstruction, abandonment, and replacement. [xv]

[34] Ibid.

Given the limited number of water quality testing sites for agricultural wells that have been available, total dissolved solids and sulfate are presently the only known water quality constituents that show increasing concentrations with simultaneous declines in groundwater levels.

2.1.3. Socio-Political Boundaries

For the purposes of integrated planning, it will be important to document regional jurisdictional boundaries, including but not limited to: County boundaries, public agency boundaries, private and public lands, neighborhood designations, etc.

2.1.3.2. Land-Use Designations

Most land in Borrego Springs' 42.5 square mile radius is zoned as Rural Lands, some Semi-Rural Residential, and a sprinkling of General Commercial and Rural Commercial (Appendix A). There are also a few industrially zoned land uses related to jobs-based businesses. The larger Borrego Valley comprises 110 square miles and is defined by its open desert lands and mountains that surround Borrego Springs.

A United States Geological Survey report (Scientific Investigations Report 2015-5150) estimated the percent of overall land use in 2009 in the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin as the following. Approximately 72.5% of land is native vegetation, generally desert-type vegetation, while 5.6% of land is phreatophytic vegetation, e.g., plant communities with deep roots that depend on groundwater, like mesquite. An additional 11.1% of land is dedicated to residential or developed land while 3.6% of land is dedicated to citrus farming, 3% dedicated to golf courses, 2.1% to fallowed agricultural land or dedicated to livestock, 1.2% was dedicated to potato farming, and 0.9% was dedicated to dates, palms, or other nursery types.

2.1.3.3. Flooding Designations

There are several properties in Borrego that are subject to flooding, mapped as "repetitive loss properties" in the County Floodplain Management Plan (FMP)[35], and many of these properties have filed flood loss claims in the past. Any future develop should consider flood risk and the appropriate land uses for flood prone areas, including allowing areas in a flood zone to be utilized for agriculture, open space, or habitat restoration.

2.1.4. Air Quality

As noted previously the Borrego Springs area has seen increases in the number of asthma cases, which have been linked to decreasing air quality resulting from drought conditions and environmental changes in the Salton Sea area. Powerful winds blow across the Salton Sea, causing dust storms that increase highly hazardous particulate matter into the air.

Since 2015, in a joint venture between the University of California, Irvine (UCI), the Borrego Water District, and the Borrego Valley Endowment Fund, the Borrego Valley has developed one of the most sophisticated air quality monitoring systems of any small community in California. The monitoring system is composed of five stationary nephelometers located strategically throughout the region – Clark Dry Lake, Wilcox Well, the UCI Research Center, the Borrego Springs Elementary School, and Viking Ranch – and one mobile nephelometer used to intercalibrate the stationary monitoring devices with an official EPA-approved monitoring device in the Imperial Valley. The Borrego Air Quality monitoring system provides for constant monitoring of dust, or "particulate matter" sizes PM 2.5 and PM 10, which are the sizes of particulate matter regulated by EPA clean air standards. The process of intercalibration of

[35] County of San Diego Section 14.0, Floodplain Management Plan August 2007, Page 14-15

the maturing Borrego Air Quality monitoring system with EPA-approved monitoring devices will allow for closer coordination with the San Diego Air Pollution Control District for monitoring of air quality in Borrego and enforcement of federal clean air standards.

In addition to monitoring activities, air quality issues are being addressed through environmental interventions. One notable effort is the Red Hill Bay Restoration Project, which aims to restore and improve the quality of wetland habitat to conditions similar to the Salton Sea shoreline from many decades ago. The primary objectives are to reestablish the Red Hill Bay area as an important saline shallow-water habitat for migratory waterbirds and to cover the newly exposed playa with saline water in order to decrease fugitive dust released during wind events.

Congressmember Raul Ruiz, M.D., who represents the 36th Congressional District, has prioritized preventing toxic particulate matter from blowing into surrounding communities and harming public health, having brokered a $30 million federal funding commitment for the Salton Sea, pushed for the groundbreaking of the Red Hill Bay project, and protected the long-term water supply for the Salton Sea through recent legislation.[36]

3. Needs and Impetus for Integrated Planning

The Borrego Valley is surrounded on three sides by mountains: the Santa Rosas to the north, the San Ysidros to the west, and the Grapevine Hills to the south. To the east, the mud hills of the Borrego Badlands stretch off toward the Salton Sea. The area has been a major transportation corridor due to its geography and water sources. Native American migrations, Juan Bautista de Anza's inland route to San Francisco and other missions, stagecoach routes, the gold rush, Mexican War troop movement, ranchers and cattlemen, farmers and settlers. All followed the same routes in use today and used the same water sources.

In addition to agriculture production, Borrego Springs serves as a hospitality hub, providing lodging, dining, arts, and activities for visitors coming to explore the area. The Anza Borrego Desert State Park (ABDSP) is one of the largest draws for tourism in the area. Encompassing approximately 600,000 acres of California's Western Colorado Desert, the park is the largest state park in California and second largest in the U.S. ABDSP is also recognized by the UNESCO World Heritage Center's Man and Biosphere Programme, which tracks changes in the biosphere resulting from human and natural activities. Recreational opportunities attract hikers, campers, wildlife watchers, equestrians, mountain bikers, road bikers, nature seekers, star gazers, and artists to the area. Researchers, academics, teachers, and students of natural sciences, primarily geologists and paleontologists, study the area and have access to the University of California Irvine Desert Research Center facilities.

However, the local economy – consisting primarily of high-use water businesses such as agriculture and golf, as well as state park-related tourism – is struggling due to natural drought and a critically overdrafted groundwater basin. Borrego Springs must grow its sustainable economic activities, diversifying the local economy by introducing new sectors such as green tech, research hubs, education and training facilities, and expanded geotourism options. Sustainable directions for community and economic development must be established for residents of Borrego Springs and the surrounding area to continue to thrive.

[36] Press release. "Dr. Ruiz Calls for a Congressional Hearing on the Imminent Health Crisis at the Salton Sea." Retrieved from: https://ruiz.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/dr-ruiz-calls-congressional-hearing-imminent-health-crisis-salton-sea.

As discussed in subsequent sections, critical components of this economic transition are retraining the existing workforce to connect with year-round employment opportunities that align with a pivoting economy (e.g., loss of agriculture and introduction of new sectors) and creating educational and business incubator opportunities for the local workforce to take the lead on a variety of economic development activities.

3.1. Economy, Industry, and Workforce

The main economic driver in Borrego Springs is tourism, largely from state park visitation. It is estimated that the 900 square-mile ABDSP attracts between 650,000 and 1,000,000 visitors to the region annually.[37] Recent California State Park Statistical Reports from 2013-2016 put the official numbers between 350,000 to 550,000. In FY2015-2016, there were approximately 403,000 visitors to ABDSP, accounting for $620,169 in total park revenue; meanwhile, Anza-Borrego's 2015-2016 total budgetary expenses added up to over $3.7 million.[38]

While Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is the largest draw to the Borrego Springs area, visitors are often interested in other activities such as biking, hiking, golfing, stargazing, or visiting the Borrego Art Institute and local galleries. The surrounding businesses in Borrego, such as restaurants, retail stores, and lodging properties, also support this tourism economy. There are 10 lodging options for visitors to Borrego Springs, with additional communities and resorts offering traditional house rentals or RV parking, as well as multiple private vacation home listings for the greater Borrego Springs area.

It is important to note that most of the business in Borrego Springs is seasonal, with the high season from October to May, although the village is still active during the summer months. Since 2009, the Borrego Springs Village Association has been working on a variety of community initiatives to make Borrego's Central Business District more accessible and pedestrian-friendly through design enhancements and traffic-calming. This central area of the village provides much of the support for the tourism economy and hosts many of the local businesses serving the community.

There are an estimated 1,000 residents (around 50% of residents aged 16 years or older) in the labor force in Borrego Springs.[39] Workers are primarily employed in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, as well as educational services, healthcare, and social assistance.[40] Borrego Springs' 2015 Work Area Profile[41] indicates that just over one-third of workers earned $1,250 per month or less, one-third earned $1,251 to $3,333 per month, and a third earned more than that. The workforce is majority female (60%) and 37.5% are Hispanic/Latinx.

Unemployment data – excluding retired workers, students, active duty military, stay-at-home parents, those completing unpaid volunteer work, etc. – indicates that almost 20% of the civilian labor force in Borrego Springs is unemployed, compared to 7.8% of the population in San Diego County and 7.4% of the population nationally.[42] According to the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 unemployment indicator, this unemployment rate within the census tract is higher than 99% of the rest of the state.[43] However, this higher rate could be inflated due to a factor other than a lack of job opportunities in the area, such as the

[37] San Diego County. (2011). *Borrego Springs Community Plan.*
[38] California State Parks. (2016). *State Park Statistical Report 2015-2016 Fiscal Year.* Retrieved from: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23308
[39] U.S. Census. (2016). *Employment Status, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved From: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S2301
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] U.S. Census. (2016). *Employment Status, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.*
[43] California Environmental Protection Agency. (2016). *CalEnviroScreen 3.0: Unemployment.* Retrieved from: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/indicator/unemployment

informal or "underground" sector of the local economy. The informal sector is defined as a part of the economy that is unregulated, unrecorded, and/or untaxed by the government. Common examples of informal employment includes paid domestic workers, day laborers, or other types of employees.[44] The Census estimates that there were 147 self-employed workers (in non-incorporated businesses) and unpaid family workers in Borrego Springs in 2016.[45]

According to the San Diego North Economic Development Council (SDNEDC), two sub-regions, the Northern Coast and Inland North County (where Borrego is located), have lower than average educational attainment and lower than average wages.[46] A result of this disparate growth, SDNEDC suggests targeted workforce development to connect residents in less dynamic regions to high-skill, high-growth career pathways to distribute opportunity more evenly across the North County.

3.2. State and Local Policy Impacts

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (2014) requires formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to develop a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) to ensure the long-term sustainability of groundwater resources. The California Department of Water Resources designated the Borrego Springs Subbasin as "critically overdrafted" basin, which required that the GSA develop a GSP by 2020 and ensure the subbasin reaches sustainable yield by 2040.

The Borrego GSP projects that a 75% reduction in groundwater use by 2040 will be needed to reach sustainability, i.e., to bring groundwater use and natural replenishment into balance. This substantial water-use reduction will have socioeconomic impacts affecting local industries (particularly agriculture and golf), job types and availability, water quality and affordability, and area demographics (both seasonal and year-round). Public health impacts related to land fallowing and any other physical changes related to SGMA need to be closely monitored. The integrated master planning process must account for the range of resiliency factors, from climate change uncertainties to economic shifts due to SGMA implementation.

The need for watershed scale planning in Borrego Springs is further highlighted by the following present-day example. San Diego County has declined to update ordinances in the "interim period" in which it is known that the General Plan does not sufficiently protect the critically overdrafted subbasin and before such time as the County updates the General Plan to takes the subbasin's status into account. This interim period leaves the subbasin vulnerable to overdraft, and a recently submitted proposal for a local golf course's specific plan would re-commit the County to allowing a second golf course to be built despite this land use conflicting with GSP sustainability goals. The Borrego Springs Community Plan needs to be updated to fully accommodate Borrego Spring's critically overdrafted subbasin status.

3.3. Additional Socioeconomic Considerations

3.3.1. Local Resources Across Generations

Given Borrego Springs' isolated location, there is a need to have all necessary services to sustain the residents without requiring them to commute long distances for health services, grocery shopping,

[44] Martha A. Chen. (2012). *WIEGO Working Paper No. 1: The Informal Economy: Definitions, Theories and Policies.* http://www.wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Chen_WIEGO_WP1.pdf

[45] U.S. Census. (2016). *Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Retrieved from: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_C24050

[46] San Diego North Economic Development Council (SDNEDC). (2018). *2018 San Diego North County Indicators.* Retrieved from: https://www.sdnedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-NC-Prospects-Report-final.pdf

employment, and education. This includes high-quality broadband internet access to service both personal and professional needs.

Additionally, for Borrego to be viable in the long term for all residents (year-round, seasonal), there needs to be a mix of opportunities and access to resources across generations. For example, there is a need for a clinical care facility and transportation in and out of the valley for elderly residents and those with limited mobility, and there is also a need for entry-level jobs, college-level educational opportunities, and training centers for students graduating from the local high-school so that these young adults do not have to leave the area to move into the next phase of their lives.

3.3.2. Marketing the Area

Due to SGMA legislation and resulting groundwater sustainability planning activities, the local media narrative regarding Borrego Springs has focused on its limited water supply. According to Borrego Springs Chamber of Commerce representatives, this narrative is inhibiting the Borrego community from attracting residents, tourism, and business investment. There is a need to market the Borrego Springs area to economic investment and change the narrative from "Borrego is running out of water/Borrego is a dying area" to "Borrego is the first locality with a critically overdrafted basin to successfully reposition its economy and unify its community around a shared set of values that preserve the prized natural features of the area while continuing to attract residents, tourism, and economic investment and preserving its water supply."

Additionally, changing tourism-related demographics indicate a need for Borrego's tourism-related marketing activities to focus on the following.

- Greater engagement with the sharing economy: devoting more attention to and/or working more closely with service providers like Airbnb, HomeAway, TripAdvisor, etc.
- Shifting from product development to experience development: focusing on nature, culture, culinary experiences, and more active pursuits.
- Increasing focus on sustainability: both cultural and environmental, as a component of strategies for creating more authentic visitor experiences, reducing negative impacts on local communities, increasing local value added, and as a source of competitive advantage, for increasingly environmentally and socially aware travelers.
- A shift from analog to digital: in terms of providing online trip planning tools, customized itineraries, digital destination promotion campaigns, micro-targeting, generating consumer feedback, and word-of-mouth advertising (through social media).

3.4. Public Health and Environmental Considerations

3.4.1. Public Health

Air and water quality monitoring, as well as wetland restoration activities will be critical to the integrated master planning process, ensuring that negative impacts related to land use changes and other actions taken as part of water use reductions and climate change will be mitigated. This includes land use changes such as fallowing agricultural land and increased tourism related to recreational vehicle use (a non-water-intensive desert recreation activity), both of which can increase harmful particulate matter in the air. Additionally, water quality changes will need close monitoring as they relate to shifts in well locations, new infrastructure, and water treatment.

3.4.2. Impacts of Climate Change

The impacts of climate change on Borrego Springs community may directly affect public health through increased temperatures and drought conditions, reduced wetlands, and air quality deterioration. Additionally, climate uncertainty and associated variability are likely to affect surface water availability, instream flows, and groundwater recharge, presenting yet another set of complicating factors for the community. While the impacts of climate change are uncertain, community resiliency will be an important consideration throughout many components of the integrated master planning process.

4. Goal / Desired Outcome

4.1. Community Priorities

4.1.1. Implement an equitable community engagement strategy across the master plan development process

Continued community engagement throughout the integrated master planning process is a key component to developing a pragmatic and actionable plan. Opportunities to update, educate, and engage the community in the earliest stages of plan development are important to ensure that all community members are aware of plan elements and able to provide feedback on short- and long-term impacts, as well as alternate strategies or timelines to consider. For example, water use reduction activities will likely result in significant job loss in agricultural sectors and may also impact jobs in recreational and hospitality sectors. It will be important for community members potentially affected by these changes to have reciprocal communication channels with plan development leadership through which their concerns and anticipated needs can be factored in (e.g., job retraining programs, local hire ordinances, etc.).

4.1.2. Develop a community vision with widespread buy-in from diverse groups and across sectors

Much community visioning has already been conducted through outreach activities related to the Borrego Springs Community Plan, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, and the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council. However, the community visioning as part of the integrated master planning process intends to move from the visionary and idealistic to the concrete – identifying specific outcomes and mapping the pathways to achieve them. Additionally, despite significant community engagement in previous efforts, there remain hard-to-reach subsets of the community that have not yet been meaningfully engaged in these processes. The integrated master planning effort must take special care to actively engage these groups to ensure that their vision and needs are adequately incorporated into the final deliverable.

4.1.3. Develop a healthy, economically viable community that meets the needs of residents across the lifespan

Prior community outreach efforts have identified the desire to have Borrego Springs develop into a community in which people can live and work, shop, and have access to a full range of resources and amenities without having to leave the area (e.g., drive to Coachella, Palm Springs, or San Diego). Community members have identified several focus areas:

1. Employment opportunities for a variety of skillsets across sectors. It is difficult to retain employees and their families in the area and businesses have difficulty recruiting potential employees that must move their families to the area and work in existing sectors. Additionally, local businesses will

sometimes lose employees to higher paying seasonal work in the area (e.g., in agriculture or recreation), creating retention and business stability issues.

2. Youth workforce development, training, and job placement: There is limited workforce development and training and job placement opportunities for young people finishing high school in Borrego Springs and wanting to stay in the area.
3. Education opportunities. Limited secondary and higher education opportunities require locals to leave the area to pursue an education that will lead to professional job opportunities.
4. Community-serving amenities across generations. There are limited community resources for locals, e.g., urgent care, retail, and other small businesses to serve the needs.

4.1.4. Preserve existing features and local natural characteristics

Local characteristics such as clean air, dark night skies, scenic mountain vistas, and natural flora and fauna are primary draws to Borrego Springs.[47] Community priorities identified in previous outreach efforts highlight community members' concerns that economic and residential growth in the area, as well as impacts from water use reductions, could affect the natural features that make the Borrego Valley unique. Therefore, it is important that the integrated master planning process consider impacts to valued local characteristics when developing strategies and projects. For example, integrated master plan activities related to increasing local business and nightlife would have to be reconciled with community goals to preserve Borrego's "dark sky community" designation from the International Dark Sky Association.

4.1.5. Reposition the economy to accommodate water use reductions

The integrated master planning process is intended to develop a comprehensive strategy that will effectively reposition the Borrego Springs economy within the bounds of mandated water use reductions. Community members from a variety of sectors have identified the following economic repositioning considerations related to water use reductions.

1. Identify methods that can retain all or portions of agricultural and golf industries within the bounds of water use reductions.
2. Consider a variety of sectors and businesses to invite to Borrego and explore incentives to locate in the area. This includes education/research institutions, art/film spaces and events, expanded tourism opportunities, skilled nursing/in-home medical care, medical billing, accounting, digital and web services, and new technology development.
3. Create workforce development and job retraining programs to address the employment needs of the local workforce that may be displaced due to water use reduction activities.
4. Prioritize local-hire opportunities in all economic development activities. This includes a needs assessment of existing and needed skills within the local workforce. Explore local-hire and retraining opportunities before outsourcing jobs.

4.1.6. Ensure water rates are affordable for low-income residents

Community feedback obtained during Groundwater Sustainability Plan development indicated that residents and business owners are concerned about rising water rates. Several residents said there should be efforts to create state or local funding to convert to drought-resistant landscaping. Others suggested that water rates could be tiered based on consumption. Over time, increasing water rates would increase financial hardship for lower-income households, according to a report commissioned by the Borrego Water District in 2016. Ideally, households would not spend more than 2% of their annual income on

[47] County of San Diego General Plan (2014), Borrego Springs Community Plan. Retrieved from https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Borrego_Springs_CP.pdf

essential water use, but households at the poverty level or below, and at the 20th percentile of income, already spend between 3.2 and 3.8% of their income on essential water needs, according to the report.

4.1.7. Build relationships with the County to improve water and land-use integration

Ensure that County of San Diego staff and the Borrego Springs Sponsor Group actively participate in the integrated planning process, particularly to review proposed strategies and other plan elements as related to jurisdictional policies and guidelines, potential opportunities and challenges, and implementation feasibility. The County can also support the planning process by providing additional data for economic development, land use, real estate, tourism, environmental, and public health to ensure the plan elements and implementation forecasting are grounded in real data to the extent possible.

4.2. Deliverables of the Process (Outputs)

The integrated regional watershed-scale master plan will serve as a roadmap for Borrego Springs to govern all major community decisions and investments to ensure alignment with the established vision and maximum benefit to the community. This Plan will include goals and targets for every aspect included in the master plan (e.g., ecosystem management, water use, economic development, public health, education, jobs, infrastructure, cultural resource preservation, etc.), as well as implementation and influence mechanisms to achieve those targets. Mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, zoning changes, passing new ordinances, tax or permitting incentives for projects aligned with Plan goals, updating existing administrative policies, and launching community-driven projects. Appropriate agencies with jurisdiction over each of these mechanisms will also have to be on board with the plan.

The community may choose to establish a networked governance system for implementing the plan, comprising existing agencies with jurisdiction in the region (e.g., San Diego County, Borrego Water District, Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Borrego Springs School District, etc.) as well as representatives from the community and community-based organizations. This could take the shape of a formal Joint Powers Authority or Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District, or a looser structure, similar to a watershed group or community development corporation, operating under Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate agencies and organizations.

The planning process will conduct extensive stakeholder engagement, visioning, and consensus-building to ensure all community voices are equally represented, and to build a plan that has broad cross-sector buy-in. The planning process will also include primary and secondary data collection and analysis to fill gaps related to air quality, demographic, and employment data that will be important to developing a realistic, pragmatic plan for shifting Borrego Springs to a thriving, low water-use community that meets the needs of the local residents, business, and the workforce.

4.3. Ancillary Outcomes

Borrego Springs residents are concerned about the impact of water use reductions on their way of life and their community. By having a visible, community-driven planning process, anxiety about the unknown can be ameliorated. Additionally, the iterative nature of the master planning process will significantly increase local capacity for collaboration by building new skills and relationships among participants and strengthening existing partnerships.

4.3.1. Building Community Capacity

By participating in the integrated planning process, community members will learn more about their own community and the community planning process, as well as be better equipped to recognize and act on opportunities and overcome future challenges, including how to foster and improve collaboration across sectors, better engage the County and build relationships, and apply for future funding to implement the plan.

Capacity-building outcomes from long-term community participation in the master planning process include:

1. New and strengthened connections among community members, particularly across sectors, which increases collaboration opportunities as a natural offshoot of planning discussions and cross-sector education.
2. Increased understanding of state and local government structures, policies, economic development processes, and the socioeconomic and environmental factors involved, which can foster creative thinking and innovative solutions.
3. An informed network of integrated master plan community leaders who can advocate for plan elements and assist with educating the community and building partnerships during implementation.
4. A robust communication network that includes a database of local leadership, master planning participants, and other partners, as well as a well-developed protocol for ongoing community engagement during implementation.

4.3.2. Building Local Cohesion

The planning process will bring together diverse community members, and a well-designed and facilitated process can foster understanding and empathy among disparate sectors of the community. Participating community members might reach consensus on key elements of the integrated master plan, which will promote a unified message whenever the community engages in County planning meetings, speaks with other stakeholders or the media, and actively supports local, state, and federal initiatives that could positively impact Borrego's economic repositioning activities.

4.3.3. Preparing for Localized Governance

While the integrated master plan is not a governing document, it will contain much of the baseline information, economic forecasting, and community engagement required in County planning documents. This will better position the Borrego community to participate in decision-making about its future – community members will have a comprehensive document to continuously draw upon throughout the County's Borrego Springs Community Plan update process, during implementation of local groundwater sustainability goals, and when serving on state or local boards and commissions. Additionally, the educated and active local network of planning participants can work with the County to develop collaborative governance processes for integrated master plan implementation.

5. Anticipated Process

Any major planning process or initiative is inherently complex and uncertain. Developing an Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan that incorporates water management, land use planning, community and economic development, public health, and cultural resources is exponentially moreso. To be successful, the scope of work (or, guiding process for the planning initiative) must strike a balance between being

sufficiently detailed to provide adequate structure and guidance for the team leading the effort, while remaining flexible enough for the team to adapt the process as necessary to changing conditions, needs, resources, and/ or priorities within their community as well as lessons learned and best practices gained through the process itself.

The Work Plan outlined for this Scoping Proposal is not intended to meet the criteria described above and should not be solely relied upon in its current condition to lead an Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process. To be clear, this is not a planning document. Rather, it is intended to be a rough concept or framework to guide the Borrego Springs community in their pursuit of an integrated planning process, which can be further developed, modified, and adapted as the community sees fit. This work plan (and the scoping proposal in general) can also be used as a framework to inform other local planning efforts (such as the Community Plan update, economic revitalization, organizational strategic planning, etc.). The work plan, and this Scoping Proposal, are in no way intended to be a "one size fits all" solution or "cookie-cutter" approach to planning. Rather, it is intended to serve as a guidance document - a starting point - for the community to build on for their specific purposes.

The draft Work Plan below is divided into three major stages of the process, each with multiple tasks and subtasks or specific activities. These are:

- Stage I: Plan to Plan
- Stage II: Develop the Plan
- Stage III: Implement, Evaluate, and Adapt

Stage I, or "Plan to Plan," must be the first step. This is when the entity leading or initiating the planning process determines all necessary structures, partners, agreements, and processes necessary to launch the planning process. This includes determining leadership for the initiative and building partnerships with other agencies/organizations critical to the success of the endeavor. This stage should also include initiating a community outreach and engagement effort, and establishing a rough, high-level vision for the future of the watershed which the planning process & implementation will strive toward achieving. The vision will be further developed by the community at large during the planning process. Stage I should be the shortest stage of the entire planning process, but it is critically important. This stage can take anywhere from three to eighteen months, depending on the circumstances.

Stage II, or "Develop the Plan," is the most intensive part of the process; this is where the actual planning work takes place. Tasks may include characterizing the region across multiple perspectives and/or contexts; establishing goals and objectives the Plan will strive to meet; and identifying specifically how the community will progress toward those goals and objectives. Ideally, this stage will be conducted in conjunction with other planning efforts within the region (e.g., Community Plan, Groundwater Management Plan / Groundwater Sustainability Plan; economic revitalization; etc.). Indeed, the community may determine they do not want to develop an integrated plan, but would rather use this Scoping Proposal as a framework for guiding how to update and/or integrate their existing plans. Depending on its application (i.e., to update existing plans or to create a new integrated plan), this stage will likely take between 12 and 36 months. While the tasks in this stage are likely to follow a chronological step-by-step process, the actual plan is more likely to be organized into different components. Stage II may be initiated or contributed to during Stage I; thus Stage I and II will likely overlap at least to a small degree.

Stage III, or "Implement, Evaluate, and Adapt," is where the proverbial rubber meets the road; when the plan transforms from a document into action. The tasks within this stage are intended to be especially iterative. When implementing the Plan, it is critical to conduct ongoing evaluation of its success or room for improvement, and the plan can be adapted as needed. This stage is also iterative, in that the team should regularly be evaluating the process' successes and areas for improvement, and adapting both the

plan and the plan implementation as needed. Stage III will last for the entire duration of the plan horizon, to be determined by the scope and scale identified in Stage I; this could be anywhere from 1 to 10 to 50 years.

The specific activities to be conducted, and the order in which they are to occur, must be well thought out and prepared for by the entity that will be managing the planning process. Tasks and subtasks are not necessarily linear. Not all tasks will require the same amount of time or level of detail; and may tasks may overlap. Furthermore, this is intended to be an iterative process, adapting the work plan as needed along the way. This is also a long-term process; it is highly likely that individual stages, and even tasks, will be funded separately through different funding mechanisms, and not all at once. The intent of this document is to outline the long term strategy and what the process may look like in order to demonstrate to funders that this is a worthy initiative to invest in, and that the Borrego Springs community is well poised to take the next step in their integrated planning endeavors. The goal is to leverage as much outside funding as possible to support each stage (or even task) of the process, if not all at one time.

Work Plan

5.1. Stage I: "Plan to Plan" (establish the planning process and structure)

Stage I, "Plan to Plan," is designed to help the entity that will be managing the planning process to get organized, preparing itself and the community for the planning process. Activities during this stage are likely to include: establishing a leadership team, building partnerships, conducting community outreach and stakeholder engagement, and starting to outline a high-level shared vision for the future of the community and the watershed. Specific tasks, order, and timing will of course be determined by the community and leadership team. The tasks outlined below are for guidance purposes only.

5.1.1. Task A: Establish Leadership & Build Partnerships

At the time this document was produced, the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council was going through a major transition and structural development. The original intent of the Workgroup that developed this concept proposal was that the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council would lead coordination of any future integrated planning efforts, working with community input to establish a leadership structure. It is currently unclear whether the Stewardship Council will emerge as the convener of future planning efforts.

Therefore, the first and most important immediate next step is to determine which entity will take the lead on future integrated planning efforts. From that point, the organization identified can begin building partnerships with other important community constituents, determine some basic parameters for the planning process (e.g., scope and scale), and begin planning what community outreach and stakeholder engagement will look like throughout the planning process. The subtasks outlined below are meant as a recommendation to guide the process, but should be adapted by the lead organization as they see fit.

5.1.1.1. Subtask 1: Identify the entity or group that will lead & manage the integrated planning effort

As stated above, there must be an entity that has ownership over the planning process, coordinates all of the parties, and ensures the process is moving forward. Activities within this subtask could include selecting an interim leadership team to identify the planning project lead entity and conducting a SWAT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and solutions) Analysis to determine what type of entity is best suited to manage the planning effort. Options include: an outside consultant; an existing public agency, an existing community organization; or a new hybrid team including multiple types of organizations and

partners. This subtask could also include establishing goals, expectations, a decision-making process, and the necessary contracting for the entity selected to lead and manage the planning effort.

5.1.1.2. Subtask 2: Determine scope & scale of the plan

Once a lead organization is identified and project management processes are determined, the management team can begin establishing some parameters on the planning process. While the integrated watershed-scale planning process is intended to be comprehensive, no one plan can include everything. The project management team should establish guidelines on what will be included in the plan, and what will not be included. These guidelines should then be vetted with the community at large, to ensure there is agreement among the majority of stakeholders.

One important factor to consider in determining the scope and scale of a plan is its geographic boundaries: will it include the entire watershed, subwatershed, just a portion of the watershed, or the watershed as it is situated in the larger geographic region; what are those boundaries? Equally important is the range of topics the plan will address, which are innumerable. Topics we recommend considering include: physical infrastructure, social and cultural values, natural ecosystems, natural resources (e.g., water, air, soil, energy), industry and economic development. Specific topics, and the level of detail to which the plan addresses each topic, should be proposed by the project leadership team, and then finalized based on broad community input.

5.1.1.3. Subtask 3: Develop a Stakeholder & Community Engagement Plan

Robust, equitable outreach and engagement of the community at large was identified as one of the highest priorities by the Workgroup, and is critically important to any planning process. Especially given the wide range of topics and interests likely to be included in an integrated watershed-scale master planning process, it is even more important to ensure all community members have an opportunity to participate, and that key stakeholders are actively and continuously engaged. The planning project management team should take special care to develop a comprehensive engagement plan that is well thought out and vetted by community members.

Activities under this subtask will likely include (but should not be limited to): identifying key stakeholders; creating an advisory committee; determining the best mechanisms for engaging the community (and various subsets of the community); and establishing an engagement timeline.

5.1.2. Task B: Initiate Outreach & Engagement

Specific subtasks and steps for conducting the community outreach and stakeholder engagement will be determined by the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan, developed in Task A3, above. Subtasks will likely include (but should not be limited to): a public communications and media campaign; a series of public meetings; and a schedule and structure for stakeholder advisory committee meetings.

The planning project management team may decide to hire a communications and/or community engagement consultant to actually conduct either a portion or all of the activities included in the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan. The team should consider carefully which approach would be in the best interest of the community and yield a more positive outcome. Budget, human resources, and capacity must also be taken into consideration.

5.1.2.1. Subtask 1: Communications & Media

Activities under this subtask will likely include (but should not be limited to): determining the frequency and type of communications (social media, print, mail, postings, email list, local radio, public television, etc.); arranging those communications; and then ensuring they are executed according to the schedule developed.

5.1.2.2. Subtask 2: Public Meetings

Based on the stakeholder and community engagement plan developed in Task A3, activities under this subtask will likely include (but should not be limited to): determining the frequency and duration of public meetings; planning agendas for each public meeting; promoting each public meeting; preparing all meeting materials; conducting public meetings; debriefing and compiling data from public meetings; incorporating that information back into the planning process; and sharing the results back out to the public.

Important considerations for equitable public meetings include (but should not be limited to) the following:

- Location: should be easily accessible and welcoming to all members of the community.
- Time of day: meetings should be held at times when the greatest number of community members will be able to attend (this may include evenings and weekends).
- Scheduling Conflicts: to the extent possible, meetings should not conflict with other important community events or meetings.
- Accessibility: babysitting and translation services should be made available for all public meetings.
- Structure: meeting agendas should include both a time for the project team to report out to the community, and the community to address and/or provide feedback to the project team.
- Promotion: to the extent possible, meetings should be promoted through outreach channels that meet the needs of all community members. This may include (but should not be limited to): email, mailers, distributing flyers to parents via schools, and posting on web platforms such as NextDoor.com and Facebook. Promotional materials should be translated as needed to ensure equitable engagement of all community members.

5.1.2.3. Subtask 3: Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

It is strongly encouraged that the planning project management and leadership team convene a stakeholder advisory group, representative of the community, to more actively engaged in the planning process. The stakeholder advisory group does not preclude the importance of robust community engagement, nor does community engagement preclude the value of an advisory group. If the planning project management team does institute a stakeholder advisory group, it is important that the process for selecting group members be one that is transparent, fair, and equitable; and that the group itself reflects the makeup of the community.

Activities under this subtask will likely include (but should not be limited to): determining the process by which the stakeholder advisory group will be populated; identifying and inviting Stakeholder Advisory Group members; determining the frequency and duration of Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings; planning agendas for each meeting; preparing all meeting materials; conducting each meeting; and sharing out notes and follow-up items from each meeting with the leadership team and broader community (e.g. via a public website).

5.1.3. Task C: Establish a High-Level Shared Vision for the Future of the Community and Watershed

Before any master planning initiative can really begin, it is critical that the community at large has a shared vision of what they want for the future of their community and watershed. This vision need not be very specific or detailed, but it must be broadly supported. If the community is relatively cohesive and already has at least a high-level shared vision for their future, then this task will be less intensive. The existing vision can be further crystallized, in the context of the scope and scale of the Integrated Master Plan (as determined in Task A2). If, on the other hand, the community is fractured and/or lacks any real collective vision, then this task will require much greater time and resources. This vision must be established, as it will shape the goals, objectives, and activities that the plan will address.

Subtasks that may occur within this task include (but should not be limited to): identifying the values and priorities of all stakeholder groups within the community; determining areas in which identified stakeholder values and priorities conflict, as well as areas in which they are aligned; and then coalescing around a set of core values and top priorities broadly supported by the entire community. These activities are outlined in more detail below, for guidance purposes only.

The planning project management team should strongly consider hiring a professional facilitator to complete Task C, with expertise in community visioning and consensus building.

5.1.3.1. Subtask 1: Identify Values and Priorities of all Stakeholder Groups

Before a shared vision can be established, a community must understand all its disparate parts. This requires identifying all of the subsets, interest groups, and stakeholders within the community, and then understanding what each holds as its values and priorities. Depending on the diversity or homogeneity of the community - and thus the number of unique stakeholder groups - this could be a relatively simple process; or it could be very arduous. This is a task that a Stakeholder Advisory Group would be very helpful in executing.

Activities under this subtask may include (but are not limited to): analyzing community demographics to identify subsets of the community; cataloging all interest groups active within the planning area; evaluating each subset and interest group for relevance to the plan scope and scale (as established in Task A2); compiling a list of those relevant as “stakeholders;” conducting a desktop review of all available information on each stakeholder group to gain a general sense of their values and priorities (e.g., reading organizations’ websites and publications); ground-truthing identified values and priorities with each stakeholder group; and finally crystalizing a concise description of values and priorities for each stakeholder group.

5.1.3.2. Subtask 2: Determine Areas of Conflict and Areas of Alignment

Once stakeholders’ relevant values and priorities are determined, they can be further analyzed to identify areas in which stakeholder views are divergent - or even in direct opposition to one another - (“conflict”), as well as areas in which the community as a whole generally shares values and interests (“alignment”). Areas of conflict will need to be directly confronted in the Planning process, and a mutually-agreeable solution should be determined. Areas of alignment will provide the foundation on which the shared vision can be developed.

This analysis could be conducted in a number of ways, including (but not limited to): the advisory group self-analyzing the information; community focus groups to discuss the interests; and social science research analytics.

5.1.3.3. Subtask 3: Coalesce Around a Set of Values and Priorities Broadly Supported by the Community

The process for determining a set of shared values and priorities will greatly depend on the agency or organization leading this initiative. Regardless, it should be closely aligned with the decision-making process established under Task A1. It is critically important that the community vision be vetted by the actual community itself, and not just by the management team or stakeholder advisory group. The community must be fully "bought in" to the vision, or they will quickly lose interest in the plan to be developed, and the planning process itself.

Activities under this subtask may include (but are not limited to): identifying the values and priorities most relevant to the plan; mapping how each aligns with the components of the plan; ground-truthing selected values and priorities with the community at large; and implementing a broad public information campaign.

5.2. Stage II: Develop the Plan

All of the preparations conducted during Stage I will ensure the community – and the project management team – is well equipped to actually begin compiling and developing the integrated watershed-scale master plan. The scope and scale of the plan (as determined in Task A2), as well as the number of goals and objectives included (as identified in Task C3), will greatly influence how long the plan takes to develop, and how intensive the process will be.

A community striving to integrate natural resources management with economic development and community visioning can expect to spend between 3-5 years to develop the plan. As Borrego Springs is a relatively small community with limited jurisdiction, and because much of the supporting work that will feed into the plan already exists (as exemplified by this Scoping Proposal) and simply needs to be compiled and referenced or slightly modified, the process will likely take less time. With a strong project management team and sufficient budget, Borrego Springs may be able to complete their Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan in as little as two to three years.

Activities during this stage are likely to include: establishing a widely-accepted characterization of the region; determining goals and objectives the plan will address; and designing a process for actually implementing the plan once fully developed. Specific tasks, order, and timing will of course be determined by the community and leadership team, and will be greatly influenced by the outcomes of Stage I. The tasks outlined below are for guidance purposes only.

As the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council has no governance authority, the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan will be dependent upon existing governance and regulatory authority over the region. Therefore, close coordination with the County of San Diego, the Anza Borrego Desert State Park, the Borrego Water District, San Diego Association of Governments, and relevant state and federal agencies will be critical to the plan's success. In addition to regulatory and jurisdictional alignment, the plan should include activities that can be conducted by the private sector.

5.2.1. Task D: Characterize the Region

Drawing heavily on previous community visioning, and data collected and compiled for other planning or policy initiatives, the integrated plan will need to include a comprehensive description of the planning region. The characterization should include all components to be addressed in the plan (e.g., watershed geographic boundaries, physical characteristics, demographics, and culture). The plan should summarize

this information into a concise description or “profile” of the planning region and community. This description should be representative of all stakeholders, and widely accepted by the community at large. This "profile" will be similar to what is developed for the Community Plan; these could even be one in the same document - or at least drawing on the same content.

Subtasks for creating the regional characterization will likely include (but are not limited to): conducting a thorough review of all existing information and noting information gaps; identifying the primary issues of concern to community members and stakeholders; and determining the desired outcomes of the integrated watershed-scale master plan. These proposed activities are outlined in more detail below, for guidance purposes only.

5.2.1.1. Subtask 1: Conduct Desktop Review

The region characterization process should begin with a thorough review of all existing plans, research, data, community interests and priorities, etc. Thanks to the work already conducted through development of the Borrego Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan and development of this Scoping Proposal, much of this information has already been compiled and reviewed. Some data gaps have already been identified. The planning team will need to determine if additional gaps exist, and what additional research is still needed.

Once data or research gaps are identified, the planning team must determine and pursue how best to fill those data or research gaps. This may involve hiring an outside consultant or leveraging existing resources within the community to do so.

Once all research is completed, the planning team can summarize a shared characterization of the region, addressing all plan components identified in Task A2. The planning team may decide to begin developing the characterization summary concurrent with additional research being conducted, and adapt the summary as new information becomes available.

As with most activities in the planning process, it will be important for the planning team to ground truth the characterization summary with stakeholders and provide an opportunity for feedback. This should result in a final characterization of the region that is widely supported by the community at large.

The planning team may choose to follow the above process, or identify other activities in support of this task.

5.2.1.2. Subtask 2: Identify Primary Issues of Concern

The community at large, with support and guidance from the planning team, should identify and summarize the issues facing the community with which they are most concerned. Once issues are identified, then the planning team can identify areas in which community concerns are aligned and prioritize those issues which the community as a whole deems most important. The planning team may choose to follow the above process or identify other activities in support of this task.

5.2.1.3. Subtask 3: Determine Desired Outcomes of the Plan

Once primary issues of concern are identified and prioritized, the community can determine what they hope to be the outcome of the integrated watershed-scale master plan. Rather than a “wish list” of results to please each stakeholder group, these should be overarching aspirations that the community as a whole ascribes to. The desired outcomes should directly support the shared vision developed in Task C. While the planning team will establish the specific procedure for determining these desired outcomes, it should be a heavily facilitated, iterative process with ample community participation.

5.2.2. Task E: Established Goals and Objectives for the Plan

Determining the desired outcomes of the integrated watershed-scale master plan prepares the community for establishing more specific goals and objectives for the plan which, when implemented, will drive the region toward those desired outcomes. For the purposes of master planning, a "goal" is the broad primary outcomes towards which effort and actions are directed. An "objective" is the measurable step taken to achieve a goal.

Goals and objectives can be developed consecutively or concurrently, depending on the preference of the planning team. Regardless, this task should also be an iterative, facilitated process with robust community input.

5.2.2.1. Subtask 1: Determine Goals

One potential approach to determining goals is to first brainstorm potential solutions to each of the issue areas or primary concerns; (Task 3B). Identifying how the solution would contribute toward the plan's desired outcomes (from Task 3C) will ensure the plan is cohesive. The planning team should consider establishing "SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound). Goals should be ground-truthed by the community to ensure accuracy and alignment with community values. More specificity to the goal-setting process will be determined by the planning team.

5.2.2.2. Subtask 2: Define Objectives

Whether completed concurrently or consecutively defining objectives for each of the plan goals will lay the foundation for plan implementation. The objectives map out what specific activities, projects, and/or policies will be necessary to achieve the goals set forth.

Activities within this subtask may include but are not limited to: identifying which agencies, entities, and/or policies are directly relevant to the plan goals; working with each responsible entity to determine what activities or processes are necessary for achieving each goal; establishing objectives for each goal by prioritizing the necessary actions identified; and determining appropriate metrics for measuring progress toward the goal. It is important in defining objectives that the planning team consider which activities or processes will be most important, most necessary, and most impactful for implementing new policies.

5.2.3. Task F: Design an Implementation Process to Achieve Goals & Objectives

Specific subtasks and steps for designing an implementation process for the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan will be determined by the specific goals and objectives identified in Task 5, above. Subtasks will likely include (but are not limited to): coordination agreements; policy interventions; project development and prioritization; financing; etc. It is also critical to include continuous community outreach and engagement in every aspect of the implementation process.

The implementation process must be integrated into the other local planning processes, such as (but not limited to): the Groundwater Management Plan, County General Plan Community Plan, State Park Master Plan, and Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan. This plan must not be developed nor implemented without considering all other local planning processes and aligning timelines, objectives, and goals. Alternatively, this process may be applied to the existing planning efforts mentioned above as a framework for engagement, setting goals and objectives, determining implementation processes, and monitoring progress toward achieving goals.

5.2.4. Subtask 1: Agency & Organizational Coordination

Activities in support of this subtask are likely to include (but are not limited to): identifying the best point of contact for each agency or organization identified in Task E to be coordinated with; reaching out to those identified; determining which policies, processes, and activities are to be coordinated; and developing and executing coordination agreements with each agency or organization. Coordination agreements should specify activities to be conducted, responsible parties, and timeline for activities.

5.2.5. Subtask 2: Policy Interventions

Policy interventions will be highly dependent on the outcomes of Task E; "Establishing Goals and Objectives." The plan should include all potential policy interventions that will advance the goals and objectives identified, even though there is no guarantee that the proposed policy changes will be achieved. Policymakers (e.g. County staff) should be consulted early on in this process to determine which policy interventions are most necessary and feasible. This plan should also outline the specific actions to be undertaken, and a timeline for doing so, for each policy intervention identified.

Specific activities in support of this subtask should be identified in concert with the relevant agencies and organizations identified in Task F1.

5.2.6. Subtask 3: Project Development & Prioritization

Specific projects to advance the goals of the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan will be highly dependent on the outcomes of Task E; "Establishing Goals and Objectives." The plan should include all potential projects that may be undertaken, despite the uncertainty of whether projects will indeed be implemented. Project implementation will be influenced by multiple factors, including but not limited to: the agency or organization responsible for implementing the project; other agency or organizational priorities; funding availability for project implementation; and other unforeseen circumstances. As such, identified projects should be prioritized based on their need, urgency, and feasibility, as well as any other factors the community determines to be most important.

Activities in support of this subtask may include (but are not limited to): brainstorming possible projects that would advance each goal and/or objective; identify the most appropriate entity to undertake the project (whether public agency, organization, or private sector company); collaborate with the appropriate entity to determine the feasibility and potential timeline for project implementation; prioritize projects based on need, urgency, and feasibility; establish a mechanism to track project implementation in concurrence with the plan goals and objectives.

5.2.7. Subtask 4: Financing

It is inevitable that there will be costs involved in implementing the Integrated Watershed Scale Master Plan. At minimum, the planning and leadership teams must be supported, and community engagement will need to be funded. Additionally, the majority of implementation activities - whether policy interventions or projects - will have associated costs. The implementation process is only as useful as it determines how these activities will be financed. Even if all financing cannot be determined at the outset, the implementation process should outline how funds could be secured for implementing additional components of the Plan.

Activities in support of this subtask may include (but are not limited to): working with each relevant agency, organization, and project proponent to estimate a budget for each implementation activity; determining what funds and financing mechanisms already exist in support of the plan implementation activities; brainstorming additional financing mechanisms and funding options to support

implementation; evaluate options for feasibility; and outline a strategy for pursuing prioritized financing mechanisms.

5.2.8. Subtask 5: Outreach & Engagement Plan

As previously stated in Stage I, robust and meaningful community outreach and stakeholder engagement is critically important to the success of any planning effort; even more so to the successful implementation of that plan. Drawing on experience and lessons learned from outreach and engagement efforts during plan development, the planning team should develop a specific outreach and engagement process for plan implementation activities. The specific activities in support of this subtask are likely to be very similar to those outlined in Task B.

5.3. Stage III: Implement, Evaluate, and Adapt

Once the community has developed their integrated watershed-Scale Master Plan, and outlined a process for implementing that plan, they can begin actually following their implementation process. It is critical to the effective implementation of that plan that progress toward plan goals and objectives be carefully monitored, and in response to monitoring, the plan and/or implementation process be adapted as needed throughout it's time horizon. Furthermore, the community should be provided regular updates on plan progress, and have an opportunity to provide input along the way.

The specific tasks for this stage of the plan will be directly shaped by the outcomes of the previous two stages ("Plan to Plan" and Develop the Plan"). As such, the recommended tasks outlined herein are less detailed than the previous two stages. And, again, are meant only for guidance purposes.

5.3.1. Task G: Implement the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan

As previously stated under Task F, the goals, objectives, and activities outlined within the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan must be implemented through policies and actions of the public agencies which have jurisdictional and/or regulatory authority over the activity, or through independent projects carried out by private entities, so long as those entities seek all necessary approvals and/or permits. This Scoping Proposal does not recommend the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council, or any other entity, take on activities outside their scope, authority, or jurisdiction.

Specific subtasks and steps for implementing the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan will be identified in the Implementation Process during Task F, above. Subtasks will likely include (but are not limited to): administrative actions; policy changes and implementation; community initiatives; physical projects (e.g., construction or restoration work); etc. It is also critical that active community outreach and engagement continues throughout the duration of the plan implementation process.

5.3.1.1. Subtask 1: Outreach & Engagement

The Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan project management team should continue community outreach and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the Outreach and Engagement Plan developed during Subtask F5. Specific outreach and engagement activities should be planned in support of every policy intervention and project developed during Task F.

5.3.1.2. Subtask 2: Administrative Actions

Many of the goals and objectives determined through the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process will likely be able to be addressed simply through internal agency or organizational decisions, rather than requiring a formal policy or regulatory change, project construction, or budget allocation.

These "administrative actions" would be at the discretion of existing agency or organizational staff. The project management team should brainstorm all potential administrative decisions that will advance the goals and objectives of the plan; identify the decision-maker(s), determine the best method for approaching the decision-maker(s); request the administrative action; and then collaborate with decision-maker(s) to execute the requested administrative actions.

5.3.1.3. Subtask 3: Policy Changes

Some of the goals and objectives determined through the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process will need to be addressed through changes to public policy. The desired policy changes should be identified during Task F2, and a strategy developed for achieving the desired policy change. Examples include (but are not limited to) community ordinances, zoning codes, development incentives, etc.

Accomplishing these changes may require political strategies, lobbying, and/or a public awareness campaign. Specific activities in support of this subtask will be informed by the implementation process, and determined by the project management and leadership teams.

5.3.1.4. Subtask 4: Community Initiatives

Some of the goals and objectives determined through the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process may not necessitate administrative action or formal public policy change, but rather can be achieved through community-based initiatives. Local non-governmental organizations may be willing to take on various activities aligned with their organizational mission and scope of work. For example, the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council identified a lack of skilled labor available to transition the community toward a geotourism-centric economy, and the Borrego Village Association sought grant funding to launch a youth job training program in order to help address the issue.

Potential community initiatives in support of the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan goals and objectives should be identified during Subtask F3. The project team should coordinate with relevant organizations to ensure alignment with plan goals and objectives. Specific activities will depend on the particular initiatives pursued, and will be determined by the project management and leadership teams.

5.3.1.5. Subtask 5: Physical Projects

Some of the goals and objectives determined through the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process may require actual construction of physical projects, such as (but not limited to): urban greening; improved infrastructure and facilities; habitat restoration; land conversion; water or energy efficiency projects, etc.

Specific physical projects to be pursued should be identified during Subtask F3. The project team should coordinate with the project proponents (whether public sector agencies or private organizations) to ensure alignment with plan goals and objectives. Specific activities will depend on the particular projects pursued, and will be determined by the project management and leadership teams.

5.3.2. Task H: Evaluate Implementation Progress

As soon as the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan is completed, and implementation begins, the project management and leadership team should begin tracking progress of the implementation process toward the goals and objectives identified in the plan. Establishing metrics by which each goal and objective will be evaluated, and a timeline and process for that evaluation, enables the project management and leadership teams to effectively adapt implementation of the plan as needed. This process of evaluation and adaptation will greatly increase the likelihood that the plan achieves its greatest potential.

The specific process and schedule for evaluating implementation of the plan will be determined by the project management and leadership teams, in alignment with the plan's goals, objectives, and planning horizon. Recommended activities are outlined below for guidance purposes only.

5.3.2.1. Subtask 1: Quarterly Progress Reports

A format for the project management team to compose quarterly reports on implementation progress will ensure all involved parties are regularly kept up to date on all plan activities.

5.3.2.2. Subtask 2: Annual Analysis

Conducting an annual SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) of all plan activities will provide the appropriate level of insight for the project management and leadership teams to determine where changes may need to be made in the implementation process, as well as highlighting success-stories and best practices that can be applied to other scenarios.

5.3.2.3. Subtask 3: Stakeholder and Community Input

As with all activities associated with the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process, the community at large and key stakeholders should have opportunities to provide input on their perception of the implementation process, its progress, and effectiveness.

5.3.3. Task I: Adapt Plan Implementation

Evaluation is only as useful as it informs adaptation. Through the evaluation process, the project management and leadership teams should glean enough information to determine the effectiveness of plan implementation, and thus how the implementation process should be adapted. Changes can be made to improve an activity that has proven ineffective, as well as to address new needs or respond to shifting priorities.

Specific activities in support of this task will be informed by the evaluation results, and determined by the project management and leadership teams. These teams should determine a schedule for reviewing and adapting the implementation process. The following subtasks are suggested for guidance purposes only.

5.3.3.1. Subtask 1: Identify Areas in need of change

By analyzing the results of the evaluation process, it should be evident to the project management and leadership teams what changes need to be made to the implementation process. The project management and leadership teams should compile a list of all desired changes, and then prioritize that list based on need, urgency, and feasibility.

5.3.3.2. Subtask 2: Propose Draft Changes & Solicit Feedback

Once potential changes have been identified, the project management and leadership teams should determine what agency and/or organizational personnel are relevant to those changes. The teams should collaborate with the relevant personnel to draft potential changes to the implementation process. Then, the teams should share the draft changes with both key stakeholders and the community at large, providing them opportunities for feedback.

5.3.3.3. Subtask 3: Adapt Implementation Process Accordingly

The project management and leadership teams should incorporate stakeholder and community feedback into their revised changes to the implementation process. It should be noted that all agencies and organizations involved in the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Planning process may be impacted by any changes to that process. As such, all associated agencies and organizations must be notified and provided an opportunity to participate in the process. Some agencies or organizations may need to make changes to coordination agreements, bylaws or decision-making processes as a result of any changes to the implementation process.

6. Estimated Budget & Timeline

(Spreadsheet Link)

The following budget is a rough order-of-magnitude cost range for the tasks and subtasks outlined in this Draft Scoping Proposal. Costs for each task were determined based on standard consulting costs and expense estimates for similar work in similar-sized communities. For more specific detail on the assumptions made for each cost, please see the excel file in Appendix [X].

The Borrego Valley Stewardship Council, and the community of Borrego Springs, should expect costs to fluctuate, based on a wide range of factors. As such, the actual project cost for the proposed work plan may be higher or lower than what is outlined herein. For example: a non-profit consultant will cost less than a for-profit consultant; some cost-savings may be achieved through in-kind services or expenses provided free-of-charge; any delay in timeline is likely to have a correlative increase in cost; some cost-savings can be achieved by coordinating project tasks with other local or regional planning efforts funded by other sources (e.g., Community Plan update, Groundwater Sustainability Plan update, etc.). These processes are likely to have overlapping goals, objectives, and tasks; and should therefore be aligned to the greatest extent possible.

6.1. Budget

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	LOW RANGE	HIGH RANGE
I. Plan to Plan	A	Establish Leadership & Build Partnerships		$42,00	$63,000
		1	Identify the entity or group that will lead & manage the integrated planning effort	$6,000	$9,000
		2	Determine scope & scale of the plan (What's included / what's not)	$16,000	$25,000

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	LOW RANGE	HIGH RANGE
		3	Develop a Stakeholder & Community Engagement Plan	$20,000	$30,000
	B	Initiate Outreach & Engagement		$455,798	$683,698
		1	Communications & Media	$210,000	$315,000
		2	Public Meetings	$207,000	$311,000
		3	Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings	$38,000	$57,000
	C	Establish a High-Level Shared Vision for the Future for the Community and Watershed		$149,133	$223,699
		1	Identify Values and Priorities of all Stakeholder Groups	$44,000	$65,000
		2	Determine Areas of Conflict and Areas of Alignment	$7,000	$11,000
		3	Coalesce Around a Set of Values and Priorities Broadly Supported by the Community	$98,000	$148,000
II. Develop the Plan	D	Characterize the Region (watershed, basin, community, area of influence)		$86,211	$129,316
		1	Conduct Desktop Review	$42,000	$63,000
		2	Identify Primary Issues of Concern	$13000	$20,000
		3	Determine Desired Outcomes of the Plan	$31,000	$47,000
	E	Establish Goals and Objectives for the Plan		$32,000	$48,000
		1	Determine Goals	$21,000	$32,000
		2	Define Objectives	$11,00	$16000
	F	Design an Implementation Process to Achieve Goals & Objectives		$79,878	$119,816
		1	Agency & Organizational Coordination	$19,000	$29,000
		2	Policy Interventions	$26,000	$39,000

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	LOW RANGE	HIGH RANGE
		3	Project Development & Prioritization	$13,000	$20,000
		4	Financing	$11000	$17,000
		5	Outreach & Engagement Plan	$10,000	$15,008
III. Implement, Evaluate, and Adapt	G	Implement the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan		$444,804	$667,206
		1	Outreach & Engagement	$315000	$472,000
		2	Administrative Actions	$31,000	$47,000
		3	Policy Changes	$31,000	$46,000
		4	Community Initiatives	$37,000	$55,000
		5	Physical Projects	$32,000	$48,000
	H	Evaluate Implementation Progress		$52,456	$78,684
		1	Quarterly Progress Reports	$4,000	$6,000
		2	Annual SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis	$16,000	$23,000
		3	Stakeholder and Community Input	$33,000	$49,000
	I	Adapt Plan Implementation		$64,381	$96,572
		1	Identify Areas in need of change	$13,000	$20,000
		2	Propose Draft Changes & Solicit Feedback	$38,000	$57,000
		3	Adapt Implementation Process Accordingly	$13,000	$20,000
GRAND TOTALS				$1,406,736	$2,110,105

6.2. Timeline

Similar to the work plan and budget, the project timeline will be greatly dependent on the specific actions and decisions of the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council, and the ability of the community to secure funding for these efforts. The schedule outlined below is based on standard expectations for time to complete the tasks outlined in the Work Plan of this Draft Scoping Proposal. Some factors that will impact the schedule include (but are not limited to): project team size (which is dependent on project budget); timeline of other planning efforts with which this effort should be aligned; availability of

community-members to engage (e.g., seasonality of some residents); availability of funding, and restrictions on grant funding. Any delay in the work plan process will delay future task and subtask progress.

The table below is a summary overview of the entire project timeline. For a more detailed month-by-month timeline, please see the Gant chart in [Appendix X].

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
I. Plan to Plan	A	Establish Leadership & Build Partnerships		12-20 months
		1	Identify the entity or group that will lead & manage the integrated planning effort	3-6 months
		2	Determine scope & scale of the plan (What's included / what's not)	6-8 months
		3	Develop a Stakeholder & Community Engagement Plan	3-6 months
	B	Initiate Outreach & Engagement		36 months (or duration of project)
		1	Communications & Media	36 months (duration of project)
		2	Public Meetings	36 months (duration of project)
		3	Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings	36 months (duration of project)
	C	Establish a High-Level Shared Vision for the Future for the Community and Watershed		14-24 months
		1	Identify Values and Priorities of all Stakeholder Groups	6-12 months
		2	Determine Areas of Conflict and Areas of Alignment	2-4 months
		3	Coalesce Around a Set of Values and Priorities Broadly Supported by the Community	6-8 months
		1	Conduct Desktop Review	8-12 months
II. Develop the Plan	D	Characterize the Region (watershed, basin, community, area of influence)		14-24 months
		1	Conduct Desktop Review	8-12 months
		2	Identify Primary Issues of Concern	3-6 months

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
		3	Determine Desired Outcomes of the Plan	3-6 months
	E	Establish Goals and Objectives for the Plan		6-10 months
		1	Determine Goals	2-4 months
		2	Define Objectives	4-6 months
	F	Design an Implementation Process to Achieve Goals & Objectives		20-30 months
		1	Agency & Organizational Coordination	4-6 months
		2	Policy Interventions	6-8 months
		3	Project Development & Prioritization	4-6 months
		4	Financing	2-4 months
		5	Outreach & Engagement Plan	4-6 months
		3	Policy Changes	12-48 months
III. Implement, Evaluate, and Adapt	G	Implement the Integrated Watershed-Scale Master Plan		36-52 months (or duration of plan horizon)
		1	Outreach & Engagement	duration of plan horizon
		2	Administrative Actions	12-36 months
		3	Policy Changes	12-48 months
		4	Community Initiatives	12-52 months
		5	Physical Projects	36-52 months
	H	Evaluate Implementation Progress		quarterly; duration of plan horizon
		1	Quarterly Progress Reports	quarterly; duration of plan horizon
		2	Annual SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis	annually; duration of plan horizon
		3	Stakeholder and Community Input	ongoing; duration of plan horizon

STAGE	TASK	SUBTASK	SUBTASK DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
	I	Adapt Plan Implementation		annually; duration of plan horizon
		1	Identify Areas in need of change	annually; duration of plan horizon
		2	Propose Draft Changes & Solicit Feedback	annually; duration of plan horizon
		3	Adapt Implementation Process Accordingly	annually; duration of plan horizon