

# Economic Development Roadmap



STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION - JANUARY 2025

## ABOUT ECON DEV

Cathedral City's **business-friendly** environment helps companies of various sizes and industries to start-up, grow, thrive, and succeed. The City fosters **real partnerships and collaborations** with local businesses in order to contribute to their continued success, as integral members of the Cathedral City community.

Many visitors and residents are drawn to Cathedral City for its **climate, desert beauty, and family-oriented atmosphere**. The City of Cathedral City created the Economic Development Team to provide specialized services to the business community.

With a proven track record of **fostering innovation** and supporting **business growth**, Cathedral City stands out as the premier destination for companies looking to succeed in a **vibrant and collaborative community**.

## THE FIVE STRATEGIC PILARS



Cathedral City Economic Development has created a *draft* Roadmap as the entire department has been **revamped and restructured to be part of Community and Economic Development**. As part of the restructuring, staff has developed the following roadmap that leads the city towards the development and adoption of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

- Economic Development will work over the next year to refine its 5 Strategic pillars to foster **growth, resilience, and inclusivity**.
  - Together they address key priorities such as supporting businesses, empowering the workforce, enhancing viability, promoting sustainable practices, and positioning Cathedral City to be a premier destination.
- This document serves as a foundation for our efforts to develop an adoptable **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**.

**1** Business Attraction, Retention, & Expansion

**2** Workforce Development

**3** Entrepreneurship Support

**4** Housing & Quality of Life

**5** Tourism & Regional Collaboration



# BUSINESS GROWTH & RETENTION



Cathedral City is committed to creating a vibrant and dynamic business environment by attracting new investments and supporting existing businesses. Through streamlined processes, targeted incentives, and dedicated resources for businesses, we aim to foster sustainable economic growth. By prioritizing business retention, we ensure long-term stability and prosperity for the local economy.

**917**  
Million in Retail Sales (2023)

*Cathedral City has dropped from 3rd most taxable retail sales in the Coachella Valley to 5th most per Capita.*

## Streamlined Processes



- Simplify The Processes by creating online digital videos to explain online processes.
- Create tailored roadmaps for each permit/review process (i.e. Business License Process, Cannabis, Development, Housing, Commercial, Industrial, etc.)

## Targeted Incentives



- Identify ways to support business sectors (i.e. Automotive, Hospitality, Retail, Industrial, etc.)
- Evaluate the ROI for current investments such as existing contracts with GCVCC and CVEP to better serve the business community.

## Business Support



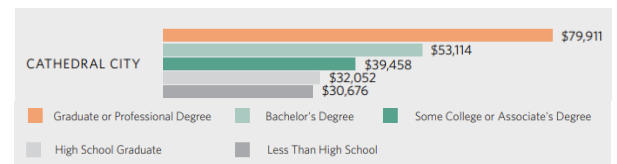
- Ensuring we have adequate investments that compete with neighboring communities such as Indio's investment in their Auto Mall.
- Stakeholder engagement is needed to hear from industry leaders.

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



A skilled and adaptable workforce is essential for economic success. Economic Development will analyze existing and potential partners to provide training programs, career pathways, and highlight employment opportunities. These efforts empower residents with the tools they need to thrive in an evolving job market while meeting the demands of existing and future local employers.

## Median Earnings by Educational Attainment



*Data from CVEP shows that the higher education equates to higher income. Current driving patterns show that almost 80% of our workforce is commuting to neighboring cities.*

## Skills Training Programs



- Collaborate with COD on ensuring continued collaborative efforts with their Roadrunner Campus.
- Entertain collaborative efforts with NPO's such as OneFuture and Center for Employment Training (CET) to help with youth entering the workforce.

## Local Employment



- Commuting trends show that the majority of the workforce in Cathedral City comes from other areas in region with less than 10% living and working in Cathedral City.
- Work with regional partners to ensure there are efforts dedicated for Cathedral City.

## Career Pathways

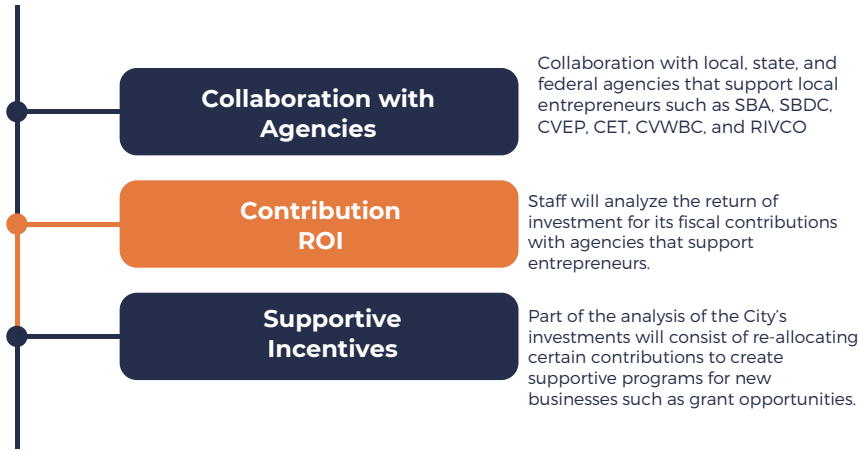


- Identify ways to support various populations and their respective careers.
- As new industries emerge in the Logistics and Manufacturing realm, we must equip our residents and students with skills necessary to grow within those industries.

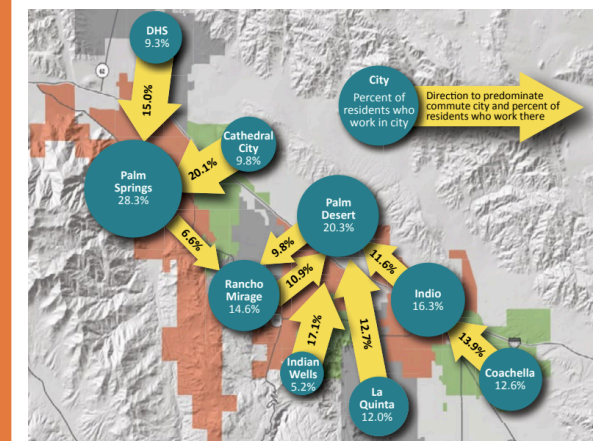
# ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT



Economic Development will use agency relationships to help support entrepreneurs. Through the CEDS process, Economic Development will work with residents, business owners, and stakeholders to bring forward actionable items that City Council can potentially adopt or support.



## WORKFORCE COMMUTING PATTERNS



- Data from CVEP shows that only **9.8%** of the residents live and work in Cathedral City with **20.1%** commuting to Palm Springs for their employment.
- Cathedral City has the 3rd to lowest percentage of people who live and work in the City where they reside.

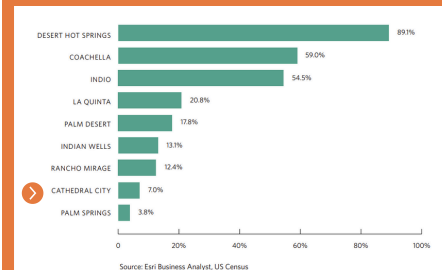
# HOUSING & QUALITY OF LIFE



Creating a vibrant and inclusive community is at the heart of Cathedral City's economic development strategy. Through affordable housing, cultural enrichment, and active community engagement, we enhance the city's livability and appeal. These initiatives ensure that all residents share in the benefits of a thriving local economy.



## POPULATION GROWTH



- Cathedral City has the **2nd lowest** population growth percentage (7%) in comparison to other Coachella Valley cities.
- The Median Age for Cathedral City is **42.9 years** of age.
- Over the last 20 years (2004-2024) Cathedral City saw an increase of **3,380 residents**.
- Cathedral City is now the 3rd most populated city in the Coachella Valley with an estimated **51,968 residents**.

# TOURISM & REGIONAL COLLABORATION



Cathedral City's rich culture, events, and attractions make it a premier destination for visitors and a vital player in the regional economy. By promoting tourism, developing events, and collaborating with neighboring communities, we maximize economic opportunities. These efforts position Cathedral City as a hub for growth and innovation in the Coachella Valley.

## Destination Marketing

- We will work in collaboration with Ryan Hunt and the Communications/Events team to utilize data collected from the Visit Greater Palm Springs Downtown Destination survey being conducted by Downs & St. Germain Research.

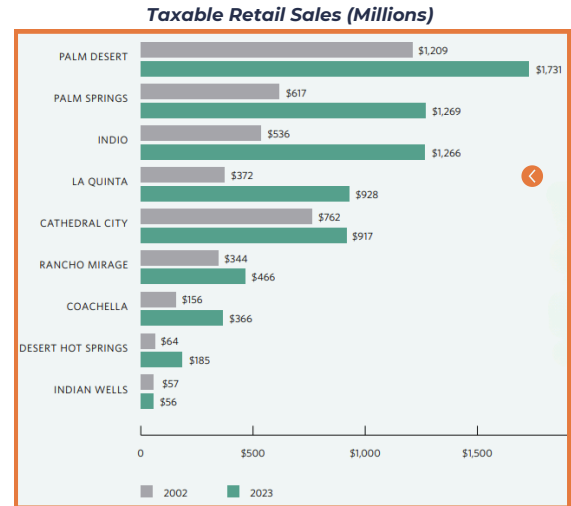
## Event Participation

- Large scale events such as the Mary Nutter Collegiate Classic bring in over 30,000 visitors. The inclusion of local restaurants, and hospitality businesses can help boost tax revenues for the city.

## Regional Partnerships

- Leveraging our relationship with Visit Greater Palm Springs and other regional agencies /NPO's is critical. These agencies have more resources and were designed to assist the region as a whole with efforts such as tourism.

## TAXABLE RETAIL SALES



- Total Taxable Retail Sales in the Coachella Valley rose **86.4%** in just 8 years from 1994 to 2002. The next 21 years (2002-2023) witnessed a **74.3%** rise.
- In 2023, Cathedral City fell behind Palm Springs, Indio, and La Quinta in city rank for taxable retail sales.
- The Economic Development team will analyze ways to create exposure for local businesses during large events such as the Hot Air Balloon Festival and the Mary Nutter Collegiate Classic.

# ROADMAP & IMPLEMENTATION

This roadmap outlines some of the key components needed to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Cathedral City. It provides framework for assessing the city's economic landscape, setting actionable goals, and implementing initiatives that drive sustainable growth.



**Step 2:** Draft an RFI or RFP for consultant to create a CEDS.



**Step 3:** Identify funding and Apply for Grants for CEDS.



**Step 4:** Bring forward adoptable action items for City Council input.



**Step 5:** Adopt and Implement CEDS goals and objectives.



**Step 1:** Obtain feedback from residents, stakeholders, and business owners to help create a preliminary Economic Development Assessment.

