

MEMORANDUM			
TO:	Paul Stamper Ventura County	DATE:	December 1, 2016
FROM:	Roger Dale, Managing Principal The Natelson Dale Group, Inc. (TNDG)	FILE:	#4059
SUBJECT:	Summary of Summit #1 – Group Discussion Topics		

On November 18, 2016, The Natelson Dale Group, Inc. (TNDG) led the first of three summit meetings as part of the Ventura County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan process. Summit Meeting #1 accomplished two primary tasks: 1) provide stakeholders with an introduction the Summit Process, and 2) identify the key issues, challenges, challenges, and opportunities to be addressed by the research process and the remaining Summit sessions. Related to the second task, Summit Session #1 focused on three discussion topics:

1. Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality
2. Potential Threats to Economic Progress
3. County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

Approximately 60 stakeholders attended the summit and organized into eight discussion groups to brainstorm and discuss the three discussion topics listed above. The summary matrix on pages 2 and 3 lists the top three discussion points for each discussion topic listed above. Following the summary matrix, this memo provides a transcription on the entire discussion, related to the three topics listed above, for all eight discussion groups.

Summary of Top 3 Issues by Discussion Topic			
Group	Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality	Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress	Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality
Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social infrastructure (develop more) [e.g., early childhood care] • Tourism potential • Quality of life (e.g., low crime rate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Inadequate infrastructure • Brain drain (higher-value, higher-paying jobs drawing residents outside county to work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination (among local governments) • Streamline regulatory framework • Attract tourism-related industries
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land • Mobility • Workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture (yesterday's policies/philosophies) • Focus on competition instead of collaboration in health care sector to keep services here • Infrastructure delays and uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration (w/in county and outside) • Define "vitality" – find common ground • Acknowledge unique moment in time & take action/embrace change
Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher education • Agricultural innovation • Emerging eco-system entrepreneurial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Housing variety • Lack of shared vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline permitting • Certainty in investment • Creating an entrepreneurial eco-system
Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal resources • Universities (research) • Naval base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOAR (restricts development) • Infrastructure – water/highways • Balancing environmental concerns w/ development interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster cooperation to obtain a county-wide vision (like today) • Pursue IT industries • Eliminate the ease of protests against development
Group 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life (positive lifestyle) • Education • Diversified economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender gap (wages) • Infrastructure (traffic, housing, water) • Generation gap (not always friendly for younger people's lifestyle) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardization of business/development requirements • Outreach to businesses • Workforce development
Group 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life is very high, and should be marketed • Quality of education services is high and could benefit further from being better coordinated • The Port, military facilities, and airports combined are strong assets for attracting economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of housing • Water supply, which has direct effects on agriculture as well as other activity • The county is now exporting too many young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance customer service • Take on economic development role • Improve secondary arterials to address commuter congestion
Group 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port/Tourism/Free Trade Zone (FTZ) • Universities/Community Colleges – connect and leverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent export • Lack of development potential • Image/brand (lack of identity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relax planning/zoning requirements • Increase regional economic development collaboration w/

Summary of Top 3 Issues by Discussion Topic			
Group	Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality	Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress	Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm-to-table agri-tourism – C.S.A. 		<p>cities, naval base, port, university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation agenda
Group 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal/Military employment and technologies • Weather/Climate • Cultural Assets/Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Complexity of regulations • Limited land for industrial/mfg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sector and cross-dep't collaboration • Red teams/ombudsman w/in county gov't – change culture to get to “yes” • Strong county role in information dissemination, education, outreach, and consensus-building

Group 1

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- “Social Infrastructure” (e.g., early childhood care) is underdeveloped
- Beach-related tourism - opportunity for growth
- “Goldilocks”-type county – one of county’s strongest assets. County is not too big; not too small; is able to react quickly to stressors; it’s “agile”; cooperation among local governments is relatively strong
- Geographic strengths are under-recognized (e.g., mountains)
- Quality of life is a strong asset (very low crime rate)

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Traffic congestion and traffic infrastructure in general
- Lack of affordable housing
- “Brain drain” – high-value, high-paying jobs attracting residents outside county
- Lack of infrastructure investment related to water quality/quantity
- Obstacles to increasing residential density
 - Local zoning ordinances
 - Lack of mass transit infrastructure
- Education system that doesn’t train people for “21st century” jobs.

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- Streamline regulatory framework
- More local government coordination on infrastructure planning/development
- Target industries
 - Maintain and foster biotech and health-related industries
 - Renewable energy
 - Hotel/conference centers to support tourism cluster

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Social infrastructure (develop more)
 - Tourism potential
 - Quality of life
- Threats
 - Affordable housing
 - Inadequate infrastructure
 - Brain drain
- County role
 - Coordination
 - Streamline regulatory framework
 - Attract tourism-related industries

Group 2

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Assets
 - Great network of hospitals and healthcare facilities
 - Agriculture opportunity: pull from outside, process - water savings, create healthy soil
 - FAA – Camarillo airport doing well
 - Naval base
 - UAV opportunity
 - CLO, CSUCI Education partners
 - VCCCD – 3 collaborators: college/work w/ K-12
 - Port of Hueneme
 - Large # of educated millennials (living at home)
- Opportunities
 - Leverage Film for potential expansion
 - Temp use
 - Image base
 - Permit infrastructure

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Coordination between health care lacking – try to keep services here; competition stifling
- Lack of airline service
 - Location between LA and Orange
 - Pilot shortage
 - Shift change in aircraft fleet mix
 - Political issues – restrictions
- Educated millennials
 - Need housing
 - Need local recreation
 - Need master planning for strategic expansion
- Culture/attitude or community
 - Current systems created by yesterday's policies/philosophies
 - We're in big trouble in readiness for next recession
- Losing "small town" feel – city centers are malls
 - Limited opportunities to relax and hang out (Downtown Ventura = good environment)
- Need community gathering opportunity for spectrum of ages/interests
- Need better connections between economic needs and meeting sustainability needs
- Sense of separateness when we need to find how to be strong together (collaboration)
- Barriers to cross-county transportation
- Local community doesn't want change
- Over-reliance on technology – we forget how to be human

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- Go from competition to collaboration
- Figure out how to communicate better
- Plan and foster political will to accomplish community-beneficial outcomes
- Acknowledge political issues/sacred cows
 - Agree on something to get started
 - Stop talking and do something
- Help uncertainties
 - If not, businesses will relocate
 - Make “vitality” happen (growth)

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Land
 - Mobility
 - Workforce
- Threats
 - Culture
 - Focus on competition instead of collaboration
 - Infrastructure delays and uncertainty
- County role
 - Collaboration (w/in county and outside)
 - Define “vitality” – find common ground
 - Acknowledge unique moment in time & take action/embrace change

Group 3

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Higher education
- Human capital
- Collaboration between government and organizations
- Recreational assets
- Emerging tourism sector
- Agricultural innovation
- Agricultural processing
- Port
- Emerging eco-system entrepreneurial
- Naval base

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Funding of UC system
- Transportation
- Housing variety
- Exodus of young people
- Lack of child care slots
- Lack of shared vision
- Water
- Counter by changing zoning rules
- Marketing industry and jobs
- Shrinking middle class
- Cost of relocation

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- Streamline permitting
- Certainty in investment
- Outreach to key employers
- Transparency in permitting process
- Creating an entrepreneurial eco-system
- Financial incentives as an opportunity
- County as liaison (transportation)
- Tourism and high-tech as priority for business growth

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Higher education
 - Agricultural innovation
 - Emerging eco-system entrepreneurial

- Threats
 - Transportation
 - Housing variety
 - Lack of shared vision
- County role
 - Streamline permitting
 - Certainty in investment
 - Creating an entrepreneurial eco-system

Group 4

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Assets
 - Port
 - Harbors
 - Beaches
 - Tourism
 - Career pathways
 - County parks system
 - Coastal resources
 - Natural environment (tourism potential)
 - Collaboration (agencies)
 - Agricultural (underdeveloped)
 - University
 - Naval base
 - Airport (none)
- Opportunities
 - Influx of technology
 - Rail system
 - Convention services (need, opportunity for growth)
 - Restaurants (need growth)
 - Medical professionals
 - Professional services
 - Sports center (meetings, sports opportunities)
 - Agricultural support
 - Business Expansion

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Threats
 - SOAR – production / development for growth
 - Housing/processing facilities
 - Affordable housing (quality projects don't pencil)
 - Environmental concerns
 - Aging population (need jobs/kids housing)
 - Education funding – workforce development
- Barriers
 - County-wide vision (identity)
 - Infrastructure: water, transportation (roads), technology – providers, limited access
 - Avail of land (stronger opposition)
 - Short term rentals – monitoring
 - Workers (educated)
 - Expand career pathways

- Vocational training
- Lack of variety of housing
- Amenities – after 9:00 pm (youth opportunities)
- Local Cities
 - Threats – many countywide
 - Affordable housing (infill/variety)
 - Willing city support – delays
 - Harbor – permits/support
 - Resident/environmental costs

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- Examine CEQA process for in-county development
- 1-step permitting process
- Continue efforts to pull all cities together – MOU of limits/distribute benefits
- Continue to grow collaboration, ancillary business, & more between cities (EDC-VC, VCEDA, VC council of governments)
- Chambers of Commerce & Gov't/cities
 - Communication
 - Collaboration
- IT industries
- Re-use/change the use office space (open)
- Statement of mission & vision
- Say yes instead of auto-no
- Examine land use rules and fees
- Staffing costs? \$160/hr
- Protests fees/reduced? (don't make it so easy to block projects)
- Eliminate private ballot initiatives

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Coastal resources
 - Universities (research)
 - Naval base
- Threats
 - SOAR
 - Infrastructure – water/highways
 - Balancing environmental concerns w/ development interests
- County role
 - Foster cooperation to obtain a county-wide vision (like today)
 - Pursue IT industries
 - Eliminate the ease of protests against development

Group 5

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Assets
 - Diversity – ports
 - Lifestyle
 - Education
 - Cost of doing business – compared to other coastal regions
- Opportunities
 - Branding
 - Exposure
 - Non-employee businesses
 - Demographics

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Barriers
 - Lack of skilled workforce
 - Regulations
 - Educating small businesses about regulations
 - Permit processing
- Threats
 - Water
 - Gender gap – wages
 - Attrition
 - Housing
 - Not friendly for young people lifestyle
 - Transportation/traffic
 - Health concerns/obesity
- Actions
 - Land use policies
 - More affordable housing
 - Affordable child care

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- Business Friendly
 - Standardized checklist
 - Industry feedback
 - Not one-size fits all
 - Business outreach
- Industries
 - R&D

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Quality of life
 - Education
 - Diversified economy
- Threats
 - Gender gap
 - Infrastructure (traffic, housing, water)
 - Generation gap
- County role
 - Standardization
 - Outreach
 - Workforce development

Group 6

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Assets
 - Port Hueneme – sea link to rest of world
 - Naval Base (although contracting dollars appear to be decreasing)
 - Agriculture (although this is currently a “tentative” asset, the conditions of which are evolving)
 - Airports are an asset in two ways: 1) on-site jobs, and 2) as an important asset for corporate headquarters. There is also the potential for at least one of them to become a future regional airport.
 - County’s location: good for high-tech.
 - Natural beauty: parks, beach, marinas – all can be leveraged to encourage economic activity.
 - Site Selection Magazine (January) rated the Oxnard-Thousand Oaks region #1 [*cannot confirm anything here*]
 - commercial space is available at lower rents than other nearby counties.
 - There is innovation occurring in the area, which could be expanded and retained, but for this to happen more housing is needed at competitive prices.
 - More cruise ships are docking at the Port, and this represents an opportunity to capitalize upon.

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Threats
 - Overregulation
 - The region is “becoming Palm Springs” (aging population and housing stock, but prices going up).
 - Housing costs; older people take up housing stock; for houses at these prices quality jobs are needed so that workers can afford them. Families are doubling up in existing housing.
 - Conditions are not favorable in the county for younger people.
 - Existing residents, especially the elderly, are closeminded on issues such as expansion of transportation infrastructure. There is an overall lack of support for infrastructure in general.
 - Land-use issues are limiting growth opportunities.
 - Too much out-commuting. Supporting the conditions that make it easier for people to work from home would be one way of helping to address this.
 - The County does not have top-tier retail outlets, so people leave to shop.
 - There is a glut of low-wage jobs.

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- In Ventura County, there is not a governmental entity or institution with full capability to do proactive recruiting of desired target industries. The County could fill this role, and would need

to identify industry targets. One approach to this would be to have economic development people working with the cities (as in a technical support role).

- County ombudsman services focus primarily on land development, and this function could be expanded to business development in general.
- The County's role in film production could be expanded.
- Development approval processes are too slow, in all jurisdictions.
- Even with steps taken, better customer service by the County is still needed.
- The County could take more responsibility for enhancing the transportation routes it could directly influence, especially given the lack of action on the 101 expansion.
- Encourage the use of rail for commuting.
- Mitigate the impact of CEQA on open space development, which is the County's overriding development issue [in its jurisdiction].

Top 3 summary:

- Assets
 - Quality of life is very high, and should be marketed
 - Quality of education services is high and could benefit further from being better coordinated
 - The Port, military facilities, and airports combined are strong assets for attracting economic activity
- Threats
 - Cost of housing
 - Water supply, which has direct effects on agriculture as well as other activity
 - The county is now exporting too many young people
- County role
 - Enhance customer service
 - Take on economic development role
 - Improve secondary arterials to address commuter congestion

Group 7

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Quality of Life (QOL)
- Coastal Location
- Studio 30-mile zone
- Proximity to So Cal Market
- Port/Tourism/Free Trade Zone (FTZ)
- Universities/Community Colleges – connect and leverage
- Channel Islands National Park
- Safe Communities
- VC Lodging Association
- Business friendly cities
- Auto malls/Design, processing fulfillment
- Freeway connectivity to entire state
- Agriculture
- Destinations (opportunity)
- Farm-to-table agri-tourism – C.S.A.
- Food processing
- Lower business taxation/costs

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Water availability
- Exported labor
- Affordable housing
- Image/brand (lack of identity)
- Support for low income/homelessness
- Reliance on a few large employers (Amgen, Naval base, etc)
- Highway
- High land costs
- Lack of business development incentive funding
- Lack of fast-growing high tech industries
- Broadband infrastructure
- Relationship w/ universities
- High cost of living (CA in general)
- Lack of regional government economic development collaboration on policy level
- Talent export
- Public Transportation (intro city)/Public Rail – weekend rail
- Air carriers
- Lack of development potential

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- R&D: UAVs; BioMed
- Innovation agenda
- Tech shop for small businesses
- Advocate on countywide-impacting legislation at state level
- Facilitate more collaboration between base and private industry
- Managing Water – launch water market
- Sharing of former RDA Funds
- Biomed Research w/ HCA
- Creative use of underutilized county facilities
- More involvement in broadband infrastructure
- Relax planning/zoning requirements
- Facilitate small business permitting
- Increase regional economic development collaboration w/ cities, naval base, port, university
- Focus on Big Med
- Business incubator areas
- Permitting food processing

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Port/Tourism/Free Trade Zone (FTZ)
 - Universities/Community Colleges – connect and leverage
 - Farm-to-table agri-tourism – C.S.A.
- Threats
 - Talent export
 - Lack of development potential
 - Image/brand (lack of identity)
- County role
 - Relax planning/zoning requirements
 - Increase regional economic development collaboration w/ cities, naval base, port, university
 - Innovation agenda

Group 8

Discussion Topic 1: Assets and Opportunities for Economic Vitality

- Federal/Military employment and technologies
- Weather/Climate
- Cultural Assets/Diversity
- Available workforce
- Diverse industry types
- Unique climate and agriculture
- Port of Hueneme
- Airports
- Businesses to target immigrant population
- Agriculture and Sustainability
- Biotech/Ag. Innovation Center (STEM)
- AG summit – March 31
- Abundance of land w/ limited development potential (TNDG: belong somewhere else?)
- Tourism/Channel Islands Nat'l Park
- Hospitals/Health Care growth
- Education/Colleges
- Social Capital

Discussion Topic 2: Potential Threats to Economic Progress

- Affordable housing to serve agricultural workers
- Need to recognize the value of the workforce
- Competition w/ other agriculture regions (e.g., San Joaquin, etc.)
- Affordable housing
- Land use constraints
- Balance econ growth w/ development
- Need to encourage areas w/ higher density housing
- Diversify industries w/ higher wage jobs
- #7 in U.S. cost of housing
- Water availability
- Meeting basic needs and including broader population in decision-making (going beyond elites), economic diversity
- Keep up w/ state laws/regulatory changes
- Complexity of legal/regulatory framework for businesses
- Limited land for industrial/mfg. development
- Specialized interests driving land use
- Lack of effective/efficient infrastructure
- Lack of voter support for transportation investment
- Health access for workers, including those w/ lack of legal status
- Lack of executive housing

- Economic viability of agriculture (profitability)
- Lack of high-skilled workforce (meeting demand for existing industries)
- Workforce training
- Lack of education in trades
- Lack of agility of gov't to keep up w/ private sector

Discussion Topic 3: County Roles in Improving Economic Vitality

- County role in protecting workers/safe environment
- Agriculture: diversify into businesses that support agriculture
- Keep agricultural local resources
- Biotech
- Professional services
- Break down silos in county departments: one set of rules for all departments
- County support teams to expedite permitting for target industries (Red team, SWAT teams across departments)
- Hire people who have prior experience in private sector
- Business-friendly attitude/ombudsman for projects
- Support for non-profit sector
- Independent/ombudsman role w/in county
- Break through/bridge across cities (cross the motes) for regional planning
- Strong role in information dissemination and outreach – find areas of commonality and consensus
- Cross sector businesses
- Healthcare = future needs and trends – senior care
- Connection to the sea
- Building cooperative relationships across sectors (e.g., BizFed in L.A.)
- Streamline regulatory and permitting processes
- Acknowledge role of county gov't in econ vitality
- Improve permitting attitude
- Slow/no growth perspective of county planning
- Find a way to say “yes” – partnership w/ business

Top 3 Summary:

- Assets
 - Federal/Military employment and technologies
 - Weather/Climate
 - Cultural Assets/Diversity
 -
- Threats
 - Affordable housing
 - Complexity of regulations
 - Limited land for industrial/mfg

- County role
 - Cross-sector and cross-dep't collaboration
 - Red teams/ombudsman w/in county gov't – change culture to get to “yes”
 - Strong county role in information dissemination, education, outreach, and consensus-building