

Newberry Springs Civic Hub Strategic Plan (February 23, 2021)

Executive Summary

The Newberry Community Services District (CSD) is the only local government agency in Newberry Springs. Our mission is to deliver, sustain and improve the delivery of authorized services to the community. By LAFCO charter, the CSD is authorized to provide fire protection, parks and recreation, street lighting and water management for domestic use, irrigation, sanitation, industrial, fire protection and recreation. Region-wide agencies such as the Silver Valley Unified School District as well as community groups such as the Newberry Springs Family Center and the Newberry Springs Economic Development Association are active in providing additional services. The CSD endeavors to partner with these agencies as well as other regional business and community groups.

Committee Membership

Committee members included Paul Deel (NSEDA), Brian Fisher (Newberry Family Center), Karen Gray (Community Member), Mike Sullivan (Principal, Silver Valley High School/Silver Valley Unified School District), Daphne Lanier (Chief, Newberry Volunteer Fire Dept.), Cory Rogers (Assistant Chief, Newberry Volunteer Fire Dept.), Co-Chair Victoria Paulsen (Director, Newberry CSD) and Chair, Jack Unger (Director, Newberry CSD).

Mission Statement

The Civic Hub Strategic Planning Committee was formed to study the feasibility of creating a new centralized Civic Hub for Newberry Springs to improve and centralize the delivery of authorized CSD services. Also, as much as allowed by our LAFCO authorizations, to enable the availability of leased land for small commercial businesses desired by the community. Examples of such small business services include (but are not limited to) auto mechanic, grocery store, coffee shop/restaurant/ice cream parlor, medical clinic, sheriff substation, general store, antique store, small business office center, etc.

Historic Community Goals, Values and Aspirations

The CSD recognizes and respects that there are many needed and desirable community improvement projects however, the CSD's legal spending authority is currently limited to the following four areas - fire protection, parks and recreation,

street lighting and water services (to the extent described in the above Executive Summary). Notwithstanding these limitations, the CSD can support the broader list of community aspirations as much as is practical and legally allowable.

During the past few years, several community studies have been performed regarding community goals and aspirations. The following table includes both goals that are within the scope (“**IN Scope**”) of the CSD’s legally-permitted San Bernardino County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) authorizations as well as goals that are out of the scope of the CSD’s authorizations (“**OUT of Scope**”). There may be some creative ways to incorporate some of the “out of scope” goals in whole or in part within the “in scope” goals. Going forward, it may be appropriate to consider revising (broadening) the CSD’s LAFCO authorizations, thereby enabling some currently out-of-scope activities to be brought within the CSD’s scope of action.

The findings from one previous community survey, one previous community study as well as the current San Bernardino County Newberry Community Action Guide are summarized in the following table. The “FROM” column indicates which survey, study or guide addresses each item.

- **(A)** San Bernardino County’s 2018 Newberry **Community Planning workshop** conducted as part of the county’s “Countywide Plan” preparation.
- **(B)** Cal Poly graduate student March 2017 **Planning Study**.
- **(C)** San Bernardino County **Newberry Springs Community Action Guide**. (NOTE: This material was largely the same as that contained in **(A)** above.

Similar items from the **different surveys** are listed **following each other**. The letter **(A, B or C)** in the “From” column shows which survey the specific **Goal, Value or Aspiration** is drawn from.

	Goal, Value, Aspiration	From (A, B or C)	Comments
IN Scope			
	Improve public safety (EMS, Fire, Sheriff).	A	Improving emergency medical services and fire services would be enabled by the construction of a new civic hub fire station to replace the current station located on the elementary school (leased) property. Improving law enforcement (i.e. Sheriff) is less obvious however a satellite law enforcement office at the civic hub is also a realistic, IN-Scope goal.
	Improve public infrastructure .	A	The civic hub itself is a major public infrastructure improvement . Some elements of public infrastructure such as road improvements fall into the out-of-scope category below.
	Develop a civic hub that provides essential services and that also provides for the leasing of land to private businesses that choose to provide essential retail services to the community.	B	Help support the establishment of a stable economy by encouraging the establishment of private businesses on leased land in the civic hub so residents can shop and obtain services locally instead of regionally. Examples include a grocery store, auto shop, ATM, medical clinic, restaurant, youth center, shared office center, laundromat, beauty salon and barbershop.
	Set a positive example by promoting a clean civic hub and	A	Emphasize a clean and litter-free civic hub. Provide civic hub recycling facilities.

	(by extension) a clean community .		
	Increase community involvement and volunteerism.	A	The civic hub operation will increase opportunities for volunteerism in operation and maintenance of the civic hub itself. In addition, the civic hub will expand and improve the meeting spaces available for use by a wide range of community organizations.
	Newberry residents value serenity and the desert landscape including wide open spaces, clear night skies, quietness, independence, large lots, agricultural neighbors and a rural, small town atmosphere.	A	These goals and values can be supported by the use of 1) educational and informational kiosks , 2) native plants , 3) low intensity solar-powered lighting and 4) climate-appropriate building architecture.
	Increase investment in community services .	A	A new community center will provide vastly improved meeting spaces for community meetings and events. A new fire station as part of the civic hub will attract and house more volunteer firefighters , provide better training facilities , shorten response times , improve fire department water availability and lower home insurance rates .
	Improve the fire department water supply.	A	A new water well as part of the civic hub will 1) allow the fire department to improve the supply of water for fire protection.
	Support fire services through the expansion of necessary water infrastructure .	B	One example: A series of backup fire protection water tanks placed throughout the community fed, in part, by the well at the civic hub.
	Engage external agencies to support local interests.	A	Successfully building the civic hub will require more engagement

			and partnerships with external agencies and districts (to everyone’s mutual benefit).
	Establish primary and backup emergency communications systems .	A	The civic hub (both fire department and CSD offices) would provide sufficient space to install primary and backup emergency communications systems including commercial two-way radio equipment, commercial fixed wireless broadband equipment, amateur radio equipment and Citizens Band radio equipment. Space would also be available to install meteorological (weather) and air quality monitoring equipment.
	Establish a community learning center .	B	Provide the opportunity for continuing education for all residents regardless of their age by establishing a community learning center with computers and highspeed broadband Internet access.
	Promote tourism .	B	The new community hub will draw tourists in both for their convenience and to satisfy their curiosity about the Newberry community. Establish a Newberry Springs Desert/History Museum as part of the civic hub.
	Provide public spaces to promote the sense of community.	B + C	An open-space plaza (or plazas) will provide outdoor public meeting space for farmer’s markets, car shows, art shows and other open-space public activities. A community garden will provide the community shared, hands-on education and practical knowledge.

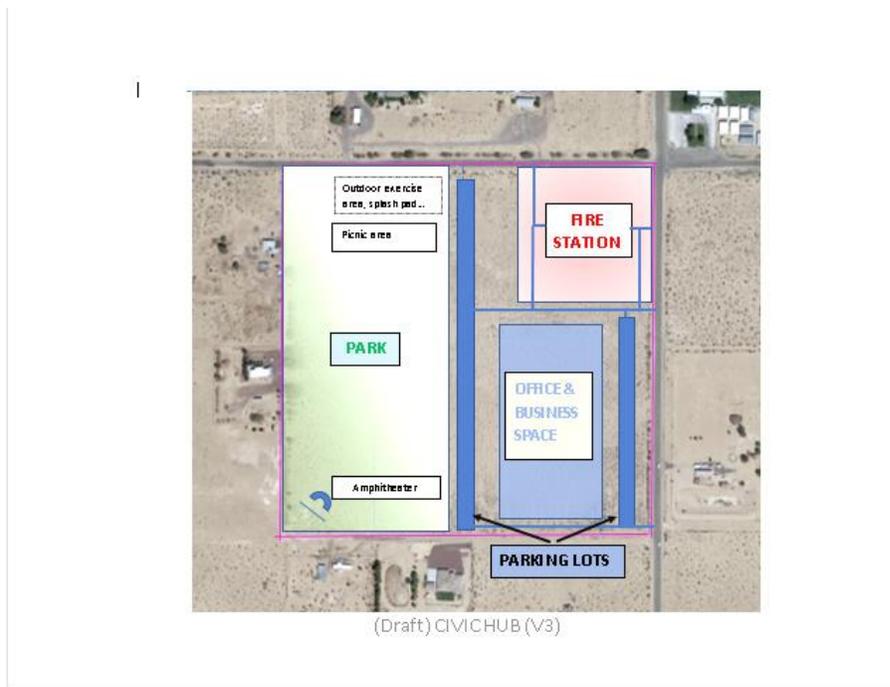
	Research and prepare a list of funding and grant opportunities.	B	See CalPoly Study Appendix for list.
OUT of Scope			
	Establish a water plan .	A	Although this is a desired community goal, it is currently outside the scope of this strategic plan.
	Create a sustainable economic environment that enables entrepreneurial opportunities for residents and businesses.	B	Increase home-based businesses . Create a technical assistance program so that permit process and concerns are communicated to prospective business owners. Adopt zoning overlay districts that maintain community characteristics and needs while also encouraging new development, streamlining the permit process, and reducing impact, development, and permit fees
	Capitalize on our presence along the Route 66 corridor . Give travelers a reason to stop and enjoy our community.	A	A marketing campaign focused on Newberry’s new civic hub can also highlight the attractions of Newberry’s Route 66 corridor .
	Encourage tourism opportunities along Route 66 . Work with regional groups to promote Newberry Springs as a tourist destination as part of a larger (tourism) network.	B	Transform Newberry Springs into a key tourist destination along the Las Vegas and Los Angeles corridor.
	Promote the adoption of zoning overlay districts that maintain community characteristics and needs while also encouraging new development, streamlining the permit process, and reducing impact, development, and permit fees.	B	Overlay district(s) have already been mentioned in the context of a centrally located civic hub however a zoning-overlay district for the Route 66 corridor , while out-of-scope, should also be kept in mind.

	<p>Newberry Springs has a higher rate of emergency room visits due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) than San Bernardino County.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Newberry has funding to implement an air quality monitoring program to alert residents to instances of higher than normal PM2.5 and PM10 air quality so corrective actions can be taken by the public.</p>
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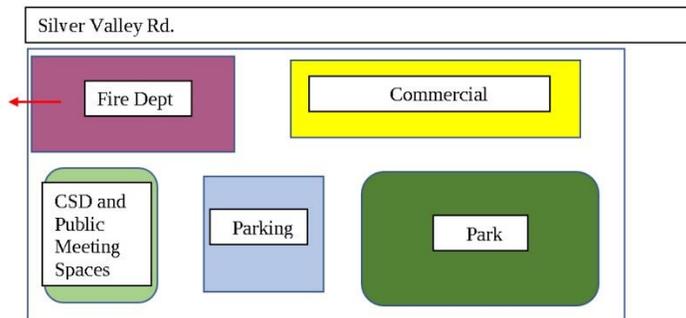
Possible Civic Hub Configurations

This Civic Hub Strategic Plan contains the following components. a) a new fire station, b) new CSD offices and public meeting spaces, c) a new park, and d) commercial small-business office space (as legally allowed by CSD LAFCO authorization). Two potential all-inclusive single-site configurations have been drawn up.

40-Acre Square Property Parcel Configuration



20-Acre Rectangular East- to-West Parcel Configuration



Other configurations are also possible; for example, a split-parcel configuration for nearby but non-contiguous parcels. To maximize services and to enable the provision of small business commercial services, the civic hub **may** (the legal issues of CSD-provided commercial small-office space needs further research) need to be located on one parcel or on several contiguous parcels rather than on discontinuous parcels.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

A SWOT analysis follows.

Strengths

- Expansive natural beauty including dark night skies
- Cal Poly Pomona study
- Rural, independent lifestyle
- On and Off freeway access
- Off-road recreational opportunities
- San Bernardino County Newberry Springs Community Action Guide

Weaknesses

- Minimum number of public services
- High speed Internet access not available everywhere
- Challenging weather (heat, wind, etc.)

- County fees and regulations stifle growth
- Loneliness
- Vacant homes subject to vandalism
- Lack of opportunity
- Lack of services
- Lack of recreational facilities
- Marijuana farms bring criminal cartels
- Water sustainability for long-term community viability and growth

Opportunities

- Cottage industries
- Tourism along Route 66
- Business growth, shopping, restaurants
- Airbnb sites
- Youth/afterschool programs; summer programs
- Business growth

Threats

- Excessive upstream water usage
- Invasion of large solar and wind projects
- Restrictions and unreasonable taxes for small scale businesses
- Aging population (losing young families)
- No healthcare facilities
- Crime, pot farms
- Limited fire and emergency medical access due to no railroad crossing at Fort Cady Road
- Need to be governed as a rural community – not held to big-city standards. One set of rules does not fit all.

Goals and Timeframes – To be determined by later CSD Board actions

This section can contain outlines of 6-month, 1-year, 5-year and 10-year goals

Target Groups and Needs

Group description and needs (**example:** Families)

- a) Group description and needs (**example:** Elementary school students)
- b) Group description and needs (**example:** High school and junior high school students)
- c) Group description and needs (**example:** Working adults between the ages of 20 and 65)
- d) Group description and needs (**example:** Seniors)
- e) Group description and needs (**Group** “x”)
- f) Other groups - TBD

Project Implementation Plans

We recommend following the San Bernardino County Planning Department “Newberry Community Action Guide” template. Survey Monkey can also be used however, first the CSD needs to narrow and define goals and actions, then reach out for partners and volunteers.

- a) Goal 1
- b) Goal 2
- c) Goal 3
- d) Goal 4
- e) Goal 5

Communication Plans and Messaging

Karen has a prior Communications Plan describing who to notify and how to notify them - from elected officials down to members of the Public.

- a) Ways to reach and inform target group “a”
- b) Ways to reach and inform target group “b”
- c) Ways to reach and inform target group “c”
- d) Ways to reach and inform target group “d”
- e) Ways to reach and inform target group “e”
- f) Ways to reach and inform target group “x”

Teaming and Partnerships

No single organization can achieve community development alone. A team effort is required. Possible partnerships may include:

- The U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- Newberry Springs Economic Development Association (NSEDA)
- Silver Valley Unified School District (SVUSD)
- Desert Discovery Center
- Mainstreet Murals
- Mojave River Valley Museum
- Newberry Family Center
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- California Rt. 66 Association
- Silver Valley Fire Alliance
- Daggett CSD
- Yermo CSD
- Daggett Historical Society
- BNSF Railroad
- Union Pacific Railroad
- The Bradco (Real Estate Development) Companies
- Barstow Chamber of Commerce
- Newberry Springs Chamber of Commerce
- Other regional and state agencies

Key Performance Indicators

The CSD Board will want to specify goals and resources first, then a description of key performance indicators can be entered.

Financial Projections

Financial projections should include estimated capital costs, yearly operating costs, yearly revenue estimates and any other financial considerations.

Revision History

1. This is the first attempt at Civic Hub strategic planning, as approved by the CSD Board on February 23, 2021. It will need revision as the planning process moves forward.