

Building a Better Banning

with

A Community Vision and Plan

**Created by
The Building A Better Banning
Community Task Force
for
Bob Botts for City Council**

The Plan

Building A Better Banning

Economic Development

To provide for the long term economic viability of the municipality of Banning as well as raising the standard of living for many of its residents, the City needs to begin an aggressive program of industrial, commercial and retail recruitment to be located throughout the City and at the Airport.

This Plan establishes the following goals:

- Encourage retail and commercial business growth
- Attract new industrial and manufacturing businesses
- Develop an overall strategy for Restaurant Recruitment
- Continue to build a skilled and knowledgeable workforce
- Identify and create new career opportunities.
- Enhance the standard of living and quality of life for those who call Banning “home”
- Incubate Entrepreneurships – Provide support and training.
- Modernize Banning Airport and extend the runway.

The City should immediately enlarge and strengthen the Economic Development Agency of the City of Banning, including a Community Outreach Technician.

The City’s Economic Development Committee (EDC) and Staff should be charged with developing an aggressive marketing outreach recruitment program, identifying potential target market segments, and how to market to them. A target industry analysis is similar to any business market research where the goal is to identify “who is the most likely candidate(s) to buy or use my goods or services”...the **target audience**. Often a target industry study will also analyze competitor markets to determine competitive and non-competitive advantages. **Banning can attract new business and industry with its increasing population, access to transportation including freeways and rail, and in utilizing various incentive programs including reduced energy fees for selected periods of time.**

As outlined in the transportation section of this document, discussions need to be opened regarding the Ramsey Street extension. This could be beneficial for all entities involved, however, also included in this project must be the commitment of the City to clean up and beautify East Ramsey.

The EDC and staff should immediately set about to establish communication links with business and economic development groups including meeting monthly with these groups to facilitate coordinated economic expansion activity, information, and growth data.

The EDC and staff should also be tasked with maintaining a building and property availability data base in conjunction and coordination with the local Real Estate Community. This should include the updating of the City Website.

As discussed under the Marketing and PR Section of this document, all marketing and Public Relations for the City, including the responsibility and management of Channel 10, should be transferred to the Economic Development Department. Responsibility for a bi-monthly newsletter should be assigned to the Economic Development Department (EDD).

Management and oversight of the Banning Airport should be immediately transferred to the EDA with the Executive Director responsible for any current or future airport staff. This includes the review and analysis of the necessity for hiring an Airport General Manager and analysis and a decision to retain a Fix Base Operator for the Airport.

An Airport Advisory Committee should be reinstated with appointees interested in moving the airport refurbishment and expansion forward, in a positive way.

A “Red Team” should be immediately created; made up of decision makers, city staff, and private sector individuals, to be available to work with and assist potential businesses desiring to relocate to Banning. This group should also be tasked with working on business retention issues with existing businesses and industry. To improve communications, monthly meetings should be initiated with Decision Makers, City Staff, and selected Banning Businesses.

The City Redevelopment Plan should be revisited, simplified, and integrated into a total City Plan. Elements that have changed should be modified or dropped from the plan.

Continuation the RDA Façade Program; however, it should be monitored closely to insure its effectiveness and adherence to plan goals and objectives and ultimate façade build-out results.

EDC and staff must work closely with the City Community Development Department assisting where possible, in the continuing streamlining of the Development Process, as well as good customer relations. It is essential that the City of Banning maintain and improve the attitude that Banning is a friendly place where it is easy to do business.

Continue and review potential incentives to attract commercial, retail, and industrial development to the City of Banning.

Review East Ramsey for special focus for consumer driven retail stores. A grocery store is needed on the Eastside. As population grows on the north and south side of the freeway, on the eastern side of Banning, the “numbers” needed to support a grocery chain’s decision to locate a market there will improve.

Annexation

To insure future economic viability, and the availability of land for residential, industrial and commercial expansion, the City should embark upon an aggressive annexation policy and plan focused on the north and south sides of Banning which are currently in County Areas, but are within the City's Sphere of Influence. The City should take the initiative in moving these annexations forward. For the long term, discussions should be opened regarding annexation on the eastern boundary of the City. Additionally the City should work with the Banning Unified School District to bring the City Property, just north of Wilson and east of Highland Springs, into the Banning School District.

City Beautification

Continue and expand Code Enforcement in Commercial, Industrial and Residential neighborhoods in an aggressive fashion. Create a tracking and notification system that is visible to the owners of the property as well the general public. Create a marketing program, including the use of Channel 10, to highlight properties that have been neglected, with the goal to ultimately highlight them when they are corrected. This same program can and should showcase properties and neighborhoods that have had significant self improvement also.

Develop incentive programs to encourage residential and business property owners to paint and fix up their properties. Communicate these programs through the Neighborhood Associations. (See Neighborhood Associations)

Continue beautification of Ramsey from East to West. Communicate the availability of the East Ramsey Street Beautification Grant funded by the Morongo Band of Mission Indians for qualifying property owners.

Ramsey Street Corridor

Develop a strategy and plan for the retail and commercial development of mid and west Ramsey.

Neighborhood Associations

Develop and implement a program to assist in the establishment of **Neighborhood Associations** throughout the City, maintaining boundaries with communities of interest.

The intent is for these Associations to meet at least monthly, with support from City Decision Makers and Staff. These meetings are to discuss how residents can improve, cleanup, beautify and make safer, their own neighborhood, with help from the City. Safety concerns can be addressed through a Neighborhood Watch Program with assistance from the Banning Police Department. A marketing and communication program should be developed highlighting the positive changes and improvement, utilizing Channel 10 and the City Newsletter, as well as other media outlets.

It is the intent of the proposal that the City Policy Makers and staff help facilitate a monthly meeting of the Presidents of the Neighborhood Associations, at City Hall, to improve communications, coordination, and assistance to these groups. This can be an effective way to give a voice to people who may feel they have none. However, with this program, like many others, the City MUST follow through and make it happen.

This program and staff should work closely and cooperatively with the Banning Police Department's Community Policing and Neighborhood Watch Programs.

As a part of this program, and located in the Economic Development Department, create a new position reporting to the Economic Development Director. This position would serve to assist the Director with economic development as well as support these neighborhood community outreach programs outlined in this section. Other economic development duties are outlined in another section of this document.

Banning Cleanup and Beautification

Code compliance and/or enforcement has been very lax for many many years. The City looks dirty, unkempt, overgrown, with broken windows, fences in disrepair, etc.

City Code Enforcement programs should be expanded and extended throughout the City to clean up all residential, commercial, and industrial areas of the City.

Develop and implement incentive programs for individual residents and Neighborhood Associations to paint and clean up their neighborhoods.

All Neighborhood Association activities should be coordinated by the Economic Development Department (EDD) through its new Community Outreach Technician.

Beautification including streetscape, trees, fountains, tree trimming, and more, should follow basic cleanup.

Housing

Monitor new residential development infrastructure working to minimize/mitigate negative impacts from new development on existing residents.

Continue the City support of the TUMP Fee which causes Developers to put up fees to build the infrastructure for the new housing they are going to build.

Review City Housing Element in relationship to infill housing.

Actively seek out nonprofit organizations to partner with to build low and moderate income Senior Housing.

Review justification for “Self Certification” for the City’s Housing Element with consideration of moving to outside review and certification.

Youth, Parks and Receptions

The City lacks parks and programs for young people. There are limited soccer fields and teams and leagues.

Expand the park system within Banning including development of Soccer Fields. Create and/or expand youth sports programs including Little League, basketball and soccer, to accommodate any Banning youngster who wants to participate and not be forced to play in another community. Partner with the School District for joint use of fields and facilities.

Develop and/or expand youth activities that include Junior Golf and Tennis. Partner with the School District and the PGA and other golf courses for youth training programs and tournaments.

Develop and/or expand Youth Mentoring programs through the Parks and Recreation Department. Through mentoring programs, children begin to build better academic and life skills, friendships with a mentor they can look up to, and broaden their view of life and gain self-esteem. Successful programs in other communities have taught the youngsters that, “It’s cool to be educated.” If a young person knows that more education means more money, he/she will be more inclined to hit the books rather than the streets.

Explore the concept of Smith Creek Park Development and how the City can assist the Developers with the proposed development.

Continue and enhance programs for Senior Citizens through outreach at the Community Center.

General Plan

The General Plan, including the new zoning, has recently been updated and approved by the City Council. This is an important “forward look” for land use planning and zoning designation for the City for many years to come. The General Plan is an important document to the future of Banning.

With the exception of modifications to the General Plan, as may be necessitated by the adoption of this Plan, the new General Plan should be implemented and followed. A careful strategy should be discussed and adopted relating to amendments to the general plan resulting from major annexations or more minor causes. The City is allowed only four amendments a year to the General Plan, so the development of this ongoing strategy is critical.

Community Events

Stagecoach Days – Evaluate the expanded Stagecoach Days after its 2006 run to ascertain its viability as the Signature Event for the City of Banning or proposed changes to make it more viable and of interest to more communities.

Support the expansion of the Farmers’ Market with the organizational manpower and underpinnings to sustain itself over multiple years. Insure support and buy-in by all organizing participants as well as downtown merchants.

Continue to support and expand the Banning Cultural Alliance/Art and Business District Annual Art Hop.

Revitalization of Downtown Banning

Downtown Banning is idle and decaying with the exception of a few businesses, City Hall and County Facility activities. Buildings are run down; broken windows are in abundance, and weeds have sprouted up on public and private properties.

Continue to support the implementation of the Downtown Economic and Revitalization Plan, through the Business District, with its defined boundaries, City Incentives, and contract with the Banning Cultural Alliance to manage and market the Plan and City This includes support of the Downtown Property Owners Program (PBID) to assist in the downtown revitalization effort and support new streetscape, lighting and plantings.

The goal of the Downtown Economic and Revitalization Plan is to bring new retail stores, artists, art studios, art galleries, art walks, boutique stores, restaurants and sidewalk cafes, to the downtown area, and when promoted and marketed properly, this can and will bring thousands of visitors to the City from Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa and Yucaipa, as well as visitors from Los Angeles, Orange County, and the Coachella Valley.

Insure that existing building owners and business owners are aware of the Downtown Revitalization Programs.

Continue the RDA façade program working in conjunction and coordination with the Downtown Business District. Track and monitor its progress and success.

Add more plants and flowers to existing planters and along sidewalks in pots and hanging baskets, as part of the new streetscape being developed by the City.

Transportation

With continued residential growth comes additional traffic both on the Freeway and surface streets. Everything possible should be done to minimize traffic congestion

and freeway tie-ups.

An important priority for the City is to assist in the relocation of the CHP Weigh Station on Interstate 10, near Cabazon and enter into discussions with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians concerning the extension of Ramsey Street. This is very important to help facilitate traffic during emergency times to avoid a recent situation where the freeway was closed for twelve (12) hours. The Mayor and a City Council Working Group (CWG) should bring all affected governmental entities together to facilitate this project. This subject must also include Banning's commitment to cleaning up and beautifying East Ramsey Street.

Continued support for the TUMP Fee which insures that Residential Developers pay for and put in the roads and infrastructure in their projects within the City, before the Developer builds the new houses.

The City needs to work cooperatively with the City of Beaumont, again, through a Council Working Group (CWG), to maximize both cities efforts for effective traffic control and movement along Highland Springs Road including on and off ramps from Interstate 10 to Highland Springs Road as well as other common intersection and traffic issues between the two cities.

The City needs to work cooperatively with Sunset Crossroad to extend Sun Lakes Boulevard to Sunset and insure that a grade separation is built at Sunset and the railroad tracks, along with other infrastructure improvements.

The City Street Department needs to insure that local streets are maintained and that potholes are filled in a timely fashion. Although a mundane issue, the appearance of good streets and roads is important in a City, as well as logical for preventing unnecessary wear and tear on automobile tires and suspension systems to citizens' cars.

A combined transit system between Banning and Beaumont is proceeding; however, much work needs to be done to improve the relationship of the two cities.

Banning, working with other Pass Cities, should take the lead in expediting the extension of light rail to and through the Pass Area with the rail station located in Banning. This will assist in the movement of people, as the population grows and traffic increases. Improve traffic flow and turning at the off ramp of Interstate 10 at Highland Springs Road, including the traffic problems created by the traffic island at Palmer Ave.

Governance

There is room for improved governance by the Policy Makers and Staff of the City of Banning. There needs to be significantly improved communications and coordination of

the City with other governmental entities including the Banning School Board/District, Mt. San Jacinto Community College Board/District, Beaumont Decision Makers, Hospital District, and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians.

The City Council should appoint two City Council persons each, to “Council Working Groups” (CWG’s) to deal with specific issues coming before the city, as well as assigning “Council Working Groups” to communicate regularly with other local governmental units and the Morongo Tribe, to insure optimum decision making and coordination of projects and efforts (and to avoid duplication of efforts). This kind of communications and coordination ultimately benefits the taxpaying public.

CWG’s should be created to focus on inter-governmental issues relating to non-duplication of programs among agencies as well as working cooperatively to promote partnering on programs that can be supported by each agency, again, for the ultimate benefit of the taxpaying public.

There are many transferable business practices that can be applied to a city municipality to insure optimum productivity of its staff in the accomplishment of day-to-day actions which supports the adopted Vision and Plan. Employees need to be reviewed and evaluated annually, with clear cut expectations laid out for each employee. These reviews and evaluations will need to be tracked to monitor the level of success of each employee. Positive evaluations and success of measurable goals should lead to increased hourly or salary increases. Employees not meeting their established goals need to be counseled.

All City projects should be tracked and a regular monthly report provided to the City Council. The report would indicate the beginning, progress, and completion dates, and if delayed, WHY? A sample tracking form is being developed.

In any private or public organization, positive results obtained are a direct result of established goals being set and then tracked and monitored. If there are no consequences to less than optimum employee performance, then a stagnant and non-responsive bureaucracy can follow.

The taxpaying public has a right to expect good, polite, efficient, customer service when dealing with ANYONE at City Hall -- in person, on the telephone or through email. Each and every City Employee needs to go through Customer Service Training.

Support staff career development (market rate salaries).

Develop training for City Staff to support the identified goals of The Vision and Plan.

The City should take the lead in establishing a Pass Area Group of Governments (PGOG). This organization would be made up of the Mayor, a Councilperson, and the City Manager, from each of the cities of Calimesa, Beaumont, Banning, and Cabazon, and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. The goal would be for these representatives to meet at least monthly, to discuss and find solutions to common problems among the

jurisdictions, as well as speaking with one voice, in regard to Pass Area Problems, to governmental jurisdictions including Riverside County, Western Riverside Council of Governments, and State and Federal Governments.

Art and Culture

Historically there has been a lack of visual and performing arts and cultural activities in the City of Banning. This has begun to change, however the City needs to continue to support and expand multi-cultural “Arts” in Banning.

This includes the effective implementation of Art in Public Places and the creation of the Banning Arts Commission.

Support should be continued to the Banning Cultural Alliance, Banning Playhouse Bowl Association, and other performing arts groups, as well as support of the Banning Mural and Banner Programs.

Assistance in the promotion of a Sinfonia Mexicana program to support Hispanic Music and concerts should be embarked upon.

Emergency/Disaster Preparedness

The City needs to continue to improve its disaster planning capability and preparedness. It should continue its support and participation in PassCom, the Area-wide First Responders Emergency Planning Group.

Disaster preparedness groups should know what cargo trains are carrying when they pass through the City and thus be able to plan for a train derailment and possible disaster.

Water and waste water treatment

Water is essential to continued growth and development of the City of Banning both for residential use and industrial development. The City needs to work with Pass Agencies and support the continued importation of the State Water, to supplement the existing natural underground water supply. Timely completion of the City Tertiary wastewater treatment facilities and the ability to recycle water for non-drinking uses on lawns, freeways and golf courses must be expedited. Hundreds of millions of gallons of good, drinkable water can be saved, and used for citizens and future development, by completion of Tertiary treatment and pipelines, and using recycled water instead of the drinkable water in landscaping.

Electricity

The City needs to insure a reliable and cost effective electrical supply for residents and industrial use and to maintain the infrastructure. Through the municipal electrical supply,

the City can use this as an effective incentive tool for the recruitment of high energy-using manufacturers and businesses in its economic development program.

Animal Control

The animal control proposal recently presented to the Council needs to be thoroughly evaluated and analyzed as to what parts, or all, of the proposal are needed and can be implemented and how the costs should be paid.

Bridge Building

There is a need to improve communications and collaboration throughout the entire community of Banning. An Ecumenical Organization should be encouraged to function and communicate within the City of Banning.

The City is made up of Churches of many denominations, representing the religions and cultures of the world, and supported by thousands of Banning Residents. This Plan encourages the creation of a multi-cultural, multi-church based Ecumenical Organization, or Inter-Faith Council, that would meet regularly to enhance and improve the communications of the various groups, as well as improve communications between the City and the Organization.

This could include, for example, the Ecumenical Group co-sponsoring with the City and other local groups, a City-wide Mayor's Prayer Breakfast during the celebration of the annual National Day of Prayer throughout the United States.

This organization could be instrumental in encouraging positive communications among all racial and ethnic groups as well as multi-cultural, multi-religious organizations.

Crime and Safety of Banning Residents

The safety of all Banning residents in their home, at school, and at work must be right at the top of the priority list of this Plan. With increasing population and additional commercial and industrial establishments, which can bring new criminal elements, we must support the Police Department and the provisions of their new strategic plan. We can revitalize and rebuild downtown Banning but if crime is a problem, OR if crime is perceived as a problem, then perception can become reality and residents and visitors will not want to visit downtown or other parts of the City.

The City and Community need to support the Police Department and make sure that "Parolee Dumping" does not occur in our City. Parolee Dumping is where a Parole Office allows a Parolee, when released from prison, to relocate to another community other than where he lived when he/she committed the crime. Unfortunately there is a very high recidivism rate among parolees, which means they are probably going to

commit crimes and be returned to prison. We need to work to insure that those crimes do not happen in our community.

The recently adopted Police Department Strategic Plan is supported by the Task Force and copies are available from the Banning Police Department.

It should be a goal of the City to move its policing ratio from 1.39 police officers per 1000 in population, to 1.50 and ultimately to 2.0.

Education

If we as a community fail to educate the least educatable in our City, then we are failing as a community and cannot achieve our highest potential.

The City needs to work closely and cooperatively with the Banning Unified School District and Mt. San Jancito Community College (MJCC) to maximize our education efforts for the benefits of our students.

A Council Working Group (CWG) should be appointed to regularly communicate and work with the Policy Makers of both school districts, to maximize program efforts of all entities for the benefit of the students.

The CWG should communicate and work cooperatively with MJCC as they plan, develop, and build their Pass Area Campus in Banning.

High School Career Academies. The City and Economic Development should partner with the School District and the business community, including the Chamber of Commerce, on programs that assist high school students in preparing for careers and post-secondary job training. Other School Districts are creating Career Academies, selecting 3-4 specific career paths that are needed, according to their research. These include for example, public works/services, industrial/pre-engineering; information technology, and medical science. The academies are designed to expose students to a wide range of skills, including those where a post-secondary degree is unnecessary and where perhaps a degree is needed. A key element for these kinds of programs to succeed is business partners who advise the school on career-related curriculums to ensure that students receive the education and training employers need.

Through internship programs with business and government, students have on-the-job-training, as well as assistance in determining they like that particular field of work. **A principal was quoted as saying “Many of the students lack vision because they do not know what is available. The academies will show them. There is a very broad disconnect of our kids and what they say they want to do and what they do day to day. Being able to see their goals through the academies gives kids motivation and reason to study.”**

This kind of program can assist many students who do not necessarily intend to pursue a college education, to find gainful employment and good paying hourly rates and salaries.

Marketing, Communication and Public Relations

Good communications flow and an informed citizenry are essential to the implementation, support, and accomplishment of the Vision and Plan

A major effort should be to develop a marketing and public relations program for the City within the newly expanded Economic Development Department. This should include the transfer of all public relations activities, management, and effective utilization of Channel 10, to EDD.

Programs should include:

- An effective communication program to City Residents regarding City activities, the City Vision, and Neighborhood Associations.
- A communication and direct marketing program for commercial and industrial business and job attraction in coordination with the staff of the EDD
- More effective utilization and professionalization of the activities covered by Channel 10.
- A bi-monthly newsletter to all City residents highlighting city and business activities, art and cultural activities, performing arts.
- The City Website should be enhanced, maintained, and updated at all times. A master calendar for the entire community should be added to the City Web Site. This would provide a planning tool whereby anyone can review the future calendar as well as submitting events for inclusion on the calendar, in order to avoid duplication of meetings/events on the same day at the same time.

“To improve the quality of life for citizens of Banning, including improving its socioeconomic challenges, blight, and livability, we must build a better Banning through creating New Horizons, that set our sights, goals, and expectations on a much higher level than we ever have before. We need to invite wide participation and “buy-in” by all stakeholders in our community, to insure that our success is spread equally throughout Banning. We will need everyone’s help in order to rapidly move the City forward and not miss out of the current economic momentum that is coming our way. The Task Force looks forward to

the time when everyone in Banning can and will say: “I am proud to live and work in Banning.”

It has been said that success and accomplishments are not made by extraordinary people, but extraordinary things are accomplished by ordinary people. It is the goal of this Task Force and this candidate to do some extraordinary things for Banning!”

***Bob Botts and
Building A Better Banning
Task Force Members***

Banning – Demographics

	<u>Banning</u>	<u>US</u>		
Population	27,200 (2004)			
Projected for 2010	34,661			
Projected for 2015	38,141			
Projected for 2025	47,318			
White	63.2%	75%		
African American	8.5%	12%		
Indian	2.5%	.9%		
Hispanic	30.0%	12%		
Disability Status	26.8%	19%		
			<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>
Median Household Income	\$36,076	\$41,994	47,394	\$42,887
Median Family Income	\$44,761	\$50,046		
Individuals Below Poverty Level	20%	12%		
Average Family size	3.1	3.14		
Total housing units	9,761			
Owner-occupied housing units	6,426	72%		
Renter-occupied housing units	3,508	28%		
Population - 25 years and over				
High school graduate or higher	11,695	76.0%	80.4%	
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,932	12.6%	24.0%	

SAMPLE/DRAFT

**City of Banning
Project Tracking
June 15, 2006**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1			ESTIMATED		MID TERM **	COMPLETED/	
2	PROJECT	APPROVAL	COMPLETION	FIRST	COMPLETION	NOT COMPLETED	VARIANCE
3	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DATE	UPDATE	DATE	DATE **	EXPLANATION
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32	Legend Entries **						
33	On Target						
34	Behind Schedule						
35	New Direction						
36	New Issues						