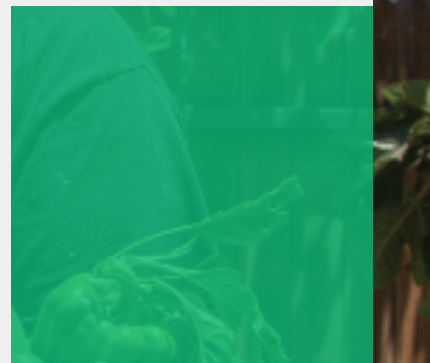
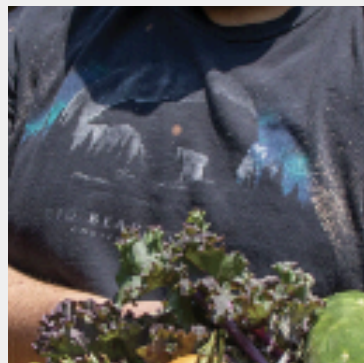




Revitalization of the Santa Fe Ave Business Corridor

The ripple effect of these efforts has been profound, leading to numerous positive outcomes and setting the stage for sustained momentum in the corridor's rejuvenation.



Explore More



Executive Summary

In the wake of the challenges brought about by the **pandemic**, the Long Beach Economic Partnership (LBEP) recognized an urgent need to breathe new life into the Santa Fe Avenue business corridor in West Long Beach. Fortified with a generous grant of \$200,000 from Prologis, LBEP embarked on a pioneering campaign of economic revitalization that has already catalyzed at least an additional \$1.2 million of direct investment in the corridor's beautification, job training programs, tenant improvements as well as reductions in the cost of doing business, and public space creation and programming (a 6x multiplier from our initial investment).

Rather than adhering to traditional models of development that could lead to gentrification via solely focusing on large capital transformations, LBEP innovated a grassroots approach. We deployed Project Business Lift, dedicated local field experts, to engage directly with small businesses, understanding their unique needs and aspirations. This hands-on approach aimed to identify immediate steps businesses could take to enhance their operations, from cost reduction strategies to tapping into beautification programs.

Furthermore, LBEP facilitated connections among businesses, fostering a sense of community and collaboration. This was complemented by promotional efforts, including the establishment of a dedicated website—westsidelbvibe.com—and leveraging social media to spotlight these businesses.

LBEP's strategy was not merely about physical or economic transformation. It was about filling a unique gap in the economic landscape: serving as a robust platform for targeted investments in minority businesses, catalyzing community spaces, and igniting a renewed sense of vibrancy and hope. The ripple effect of these efforts has been profound, leading to numerous positive outcomes and setting the stage for sustained momentum in the corridor's rejuvenation.



Understanding the Landscape: Challenges Faced by the Santa Fe Avenue Corridor

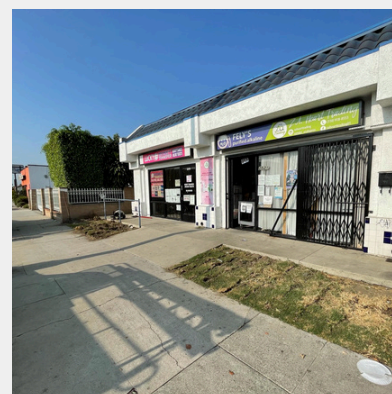
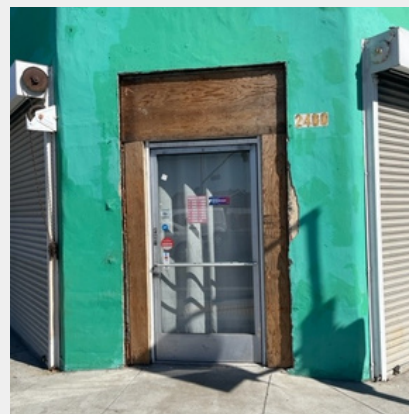
Spanning 1.1 miles from Pacific Coast Highway to Willow Street, our focus area of the Santa Fe Avenue corridor confronted a myriad of challenges:

Poor District Conditions:

Maintenance and Care Deficit: The corridor, marked by withered trees and unkempt streets, revealed a pressing need for regular maintenance. The lack of a dedicated business improvement district and limited community engagement have exacerbated the decline in neighborhood aesthetics and pride.

Safety Concerns: Crime rates in the Santa Fe Avenue corridor surpass those in other Long Beach areas. This elevated crime environment not only deters potential patrons but also complicates the hiring and retention processes for local businesses.

Blighted Landscape: Over 15 vacant buildings and storefronts cast a shadow of blight over the corridor, undermining its attractiveness to potential investors and patrons.



Residential Profile:

Economic Disadvantage: With a poverty rate of 18.9%, the corridor's economic challenges are evident, especially when contrasted with Long Beach's citywide rate of 13.2%.

Employment Woes: The corridor's unemployment rate, peaking at 9%, significantly overshadows Long Beach's citywide rate of 6.3%.

Cultural Tapestry: The corridor stands out for its diversity. Approximately 40% of its residents are foreign-born, a proportion surpassing the LA/LB/OC region's average by 20%. The Hispanic or Latino community forms the majority at 59%, complemented by a notable Southeast Asian population at 23%.

Economic Strain: The 90810 area's per capita income, at \$23,000, is a mere three-fifths of the regional average, underscoring the economic challenges faced by its residents.

Health Disparities: The health implications of residing in the 90810 are stark, with residents having a life expectancy up to 7 years shorter than those in more affluent Long Beach areas. This disparity is accentuated by the corridor's location within the Port of Long Beach's "Priority Zone," bearing the brunt of pollution from the Western Hemisphere's largest port.

Business Challenges:

Sparse Business Landscape: The corridor is home to 4,583 businesses, trailing the citywide average of 5,678 businesses per ZIP code in Long Beach by 20%.

Limited Employment Opportunities: Businesses in the corridor, on average, employ 5.8 individuals, falling 20% short of Long Beach's citywide average of 7.2 employees per establishment.

Capital Constraints: Access to traditional lending sources remains elusive for many small businesses in the corridor, posing significant barriers to their growth and sustainability.

Safety and Accessibility: The elevated crime rates not only deter potential customers but also compel businesses to adopt measures that might inadvertently make their establishments less accessible, in efforts to curb theft and vandalism.



Long Beach Economic Partnership's Santa Fe Revitalization Strategy

The **Long Beach Economic Partnership (LBEP)** champions a grassroots economic development strategy, pivoting on the belief that local businesses are the lifeblood of a community. LBEP's strategy is rooted in the belief that when local businesses thrive, the community thrives. By investing in these businesses, enhancing their connectivity with the community, and fostering a vibrant public realm, LBEP aims to create a resilient, interconnected, and flourishing community. Grassroots strategies, with their emphasis on inclusivity and community bonds, ensure that development is not only sustainable but also resonates with the community's aspirations.

1. Local Business Investment

Capital Connectivity: LBEP facilitates connections between businesses and a network of alternative funding and grant programs, ensuring they have the financial backing they need.

Beautification Grants: Hands-on support and resource allocations are provided for businesses to enhance their exteriors, contributing to the community's visual appeal.

Technical Assistance and Training: Beyond financial support, LBEP connects businesses with technical assistance and training sessions, ensuring businesses have the skills and knowledge to thrive.

2. Building Communication Tools

Digital Platforms: LBEP assists businesses in establishing their digital footprints, from creating responsive websites to setting up e-commerce platforms.

Promotional Campaigns: Campaigns like the Westside Vibe campaign spotlight businesses, driving sales and deepening community connections.

Data-Driven Approaches: LBEP employs data and analytics to measure the effectiveness of its communication efforts, ensuring maximum impact and continuous improvement.

3. Engaging the Community

Events and Gatherings: LBEP supports events like the "Everybody Eats" food festival and the organizing of local business alliances, celebrating the community's diversity and vibrancy.

Collaborative Outreach: LBEP collaborates with community organizations like Long Beach Fresh, Arts Council for Long Beach and the UC Master Gardeners, ensuring a wider reach and more impactful community engagement.

4. Enhancing the Public Realm

Public Spaces: Investments in spaces like Santa Fe Community Learning Garden and Grow2Zero Urban Farm provide venues for events and foster community spirit.

Safety and Accessibility: Initiatives like improved lighting, murals and "selfie walls" in business areas and pedestrian-friendly pathways ensure that spaces are welcoming to all.



Local Business
Investment



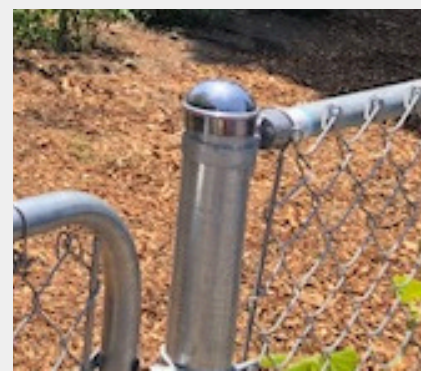
Engaging the
Community



Building
Communication
Tools



Enhancing the
Public Realm



Tangible Achievements by Project Business Lift

The economic development strategy adopted by LBEP, executed in collaboration with our community partners and service providers, has yielded significant tangible results. These achievements not only underscore the effectiveness of the approach but also highlight the transformative impact on the Santa Fe Avenue corridor.

1. Infrastructure and Safety Enhancements

Signage Upgrades: Five new business signs were commissioned, each representing an investment of approximately \$4,000, enhancing the visual appeal and brand identity of local businesses.

Physical Improvements: Seven businesses received a fresh coat of paint and new fixtures, revitalizing their exteriors and interiors. Notably, La Mexicana Market and Casa Chaski's Peruvian Cuisine were equipped with a new door and frontage, enhancing its accessibility and curb appeal.

2. Beautification and Environmental Initiatives

Greening the Corridor: The corridor witnessed an environmental transformation with the planting of new trees and thorough sidewalk cleanups, fostering a greener and cleaner environment.

Santa Fe Community Garden: This initiative not only added a green touch to the corridor but also had a direct economic impact. Casa Chaski's Peruvian Cuisine, a local restaurant, leveraged the new fruits and vegetable plots as a Kitchen Garden. This led to cost savings, eliminating the need to purchase tomatoes during the summer. Additionally, it spurred menu innovation with the introduction of the popular "Kale Saltado" dish.



3. Business Support and Transformation

Targeted Investments: A&F Market was a beneficiary of a significant \$40,000 investment, facilitating the installation of new refrigeration systems. This enabled them to diversify their offerings, emphasizing healthy and culturally-relevant fruits and vegetables.

Business Outreach: Over 30 business owners were directly engaged, connected to vital resources, and enrolled in the city's Healthy Market Initiative, fostering a healthier and more vibrant business ecosystem.

4. Community Engagement and Empowerment

Grow2Zero Farm: This community garden, initially supported by LBEP with a \$30,000 grant, later attracted over \$1M in funding. The funds have been channeled towards creating green industry job training programs, mitigating environmental impacts, and distributing a staggering 52,000 pounds of food to nearly 3,300 local households.

Long Beach Fresh Initiative: Inspired by LBEP's groundwork, Long Beach Fresh organized the Everybody Eats open house, spotlighting restaurants and gardens along the street. Their subsequent proposal to the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services secured a \$250,000 grant. A significant portion of this grant is earmarked to provide three corner stores along the corridor with \$20,000 each in fruits and vegetables in the upcoming year.

Community Garden

\$30,000

LBEP Initial Grant



Distributed

52,000

lbs of food



Sustaining the Work: LBEP's Potential Role in the "West Side Promise"

The Westside of Long Beach, despite its rich cultural tapestry and potential, has faced years of inequitable investment leading to disparities in health, employment, and business growth. Mayor Rex Richardson's visionary 10-year plan seeks to rewrite this narrative, aiming for a revitalized and equitable Westside. The Long Beach Economic Partnership (LBEP), with its proven track record on the Santa Fe Avenue corridor, is poised to be a cornerstone of this transformation.

Here's how LBEP can continue to build upon its successes and align with the Mayor's ambitious vision:

1. Amplifying District Revitalization

Deepening Beautification Efforts: LBEP can expand its beautification grants, targeting more businesses and public spaces, ensuring the Westside not only thrives economically but is also a visual testament to its resurgence.

Safety Enhancements: Continue to enhance the environmental design of the area to deter crime, collaborate with local law enforcement and community watch groups to develop community policing initiatives, ensuring businesses and residents feel secure.

Combatting Blight: Identify and repurpose vacant buildings, transforming them into community hubs, co-working spaces, or incubators for start-ups, turning symbols of neglect into beacons of opportunity.

2. Elevating the Residential and Economic Profile

Job Creation and Training: Partner with local educational institutions and businesses to create job training programs tailored to the needs of the Westside, ensuring residents are equipped for the jobs of tomorrow.

Supporting Diverse Communities: Launch initiatives celebrating the Westside's cultural diversity, from cultural festivals to business grants for minority-owned enterprises, ensuring the revitalization is inclusive.

Financial Empowerment: Expand financial literacy programs and workshops, ensuring residents and businesses are equipped to make informed financial decisions, fostering economic resilience.

3. Catalyzing Business Growth and Innovation

Business Incubation: Establish business incubators and accelerators focused on sectors relevant to the Westside, nurturing the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Access to Capital: Deepen partnerships with financial institutions, creating tailored loan and grant programs for Westside businesses, ensuring they have the capital to innovate and grow.

Digital Transformation: In an increasingly digital world, assist businesses in embracing e-commerce, digital marketing, and other online tools, ensuring they remain competitive.

4. Fostering Health and Well-being

Green Initiatives: Expand community gardens and green spaces, offering residents recreational spaces while combating environmental challenges.

Health Partnerships: Collaborate with health institutions to offer regular health check-ups, workshops, and awareness campaigns, directly addressing health disparities.

Sustainable Infrastructure: Advocate for and support the development of sustainable infrastructure, from improved public transport to pedestrian-friendly pathways, ensuring the Westside's growth is sustainable.

Project Business Lift Team



Jeff Rowe

Jeff Rowe was a staff reporter for Wall Street Journal and Associated Press. He's also an urban farmer and entrepreneur and has coached dozens of businesses.



Somone Washington

Owner of Kiasi Technology Solutions, a local small business that specializes in virtual, customized, one-on-one technology training, technology support, data management, & social media content for small businesses.



Mike Cano

Servicio en Espanol

Mike Cano is the Founder and CEO of LatinX Digital Solutions, a consulting firm that provides growth strategies and digital marketing services to small businesses.



Project Business Lift

Special Thanks to Santa Fe Corridor Partners & Participants

Placemaking US

www.placemakingus.org

Vegan Castle

@vegancastlelb

TDI Signs

www.tdisigns.com

Star Stream Enterprises

streamlinebusinessservices.com

Binos Flooring

@binosflooring

Cuizina Filipino Cuisine

@cuizinalb

Vortex

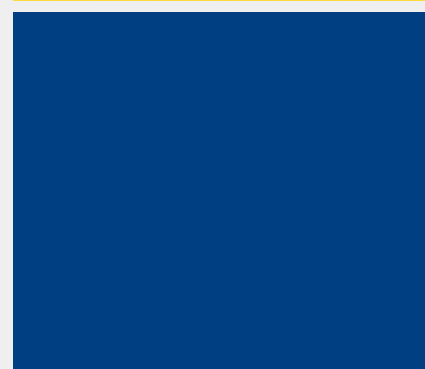
www.vortexdoors.com

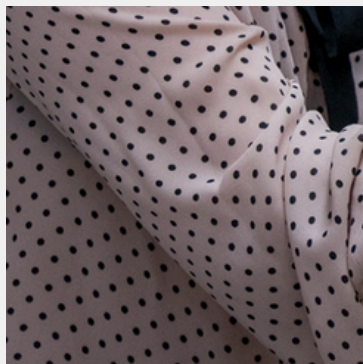
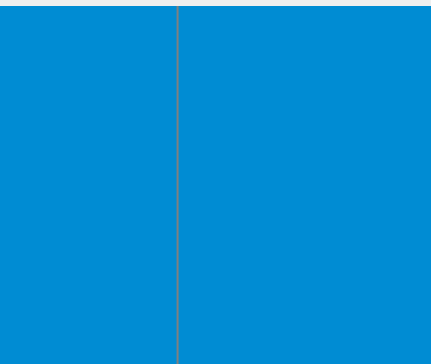
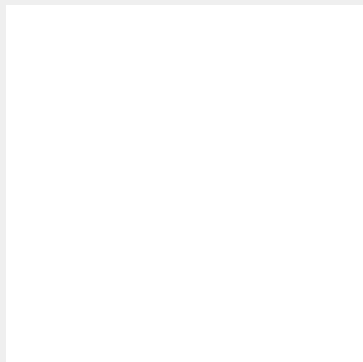
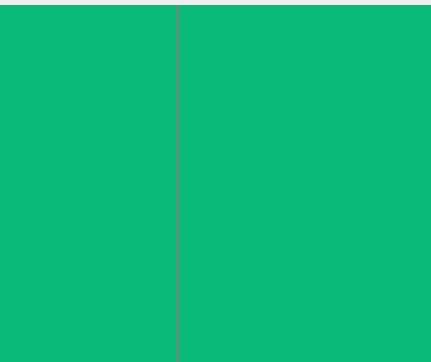
Conservation Corps of Long Beach

www.cclb-corps.org



*A special thanks to **LBEP board members**, Debra Fixen and Blair Cohen, for their leadership, direct engagement and tireless efforts in coordinating with a network of service providers and business consultants on behalf of the Santa Fe small businesses.*





Thank You

The **Long Beach Economic Partnership's** successes on the Santa Fe Avenue corridor serve as a testament to what's possible for the broader Westside. Through the tireless efforts of Councilmember Urunga and a collaboration that included a generous contribution from Prologis, alongside other funders and supporters, the Santa Fe Corridor project was brought to fruition. Through Councilmember, now Vice Mayor Urunga's vision and in alignment with Mayor Rex Richardson's 10-year plan of building upon proven strategies, LBEP can play a pivotal role in ensuring the Westside's revitalization is not just about infrastructure and economics, but about people, culture, and a shared vision of a brighter, more equitable future.



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www.LBEP.org | <https://westsidelbvibe.com/>