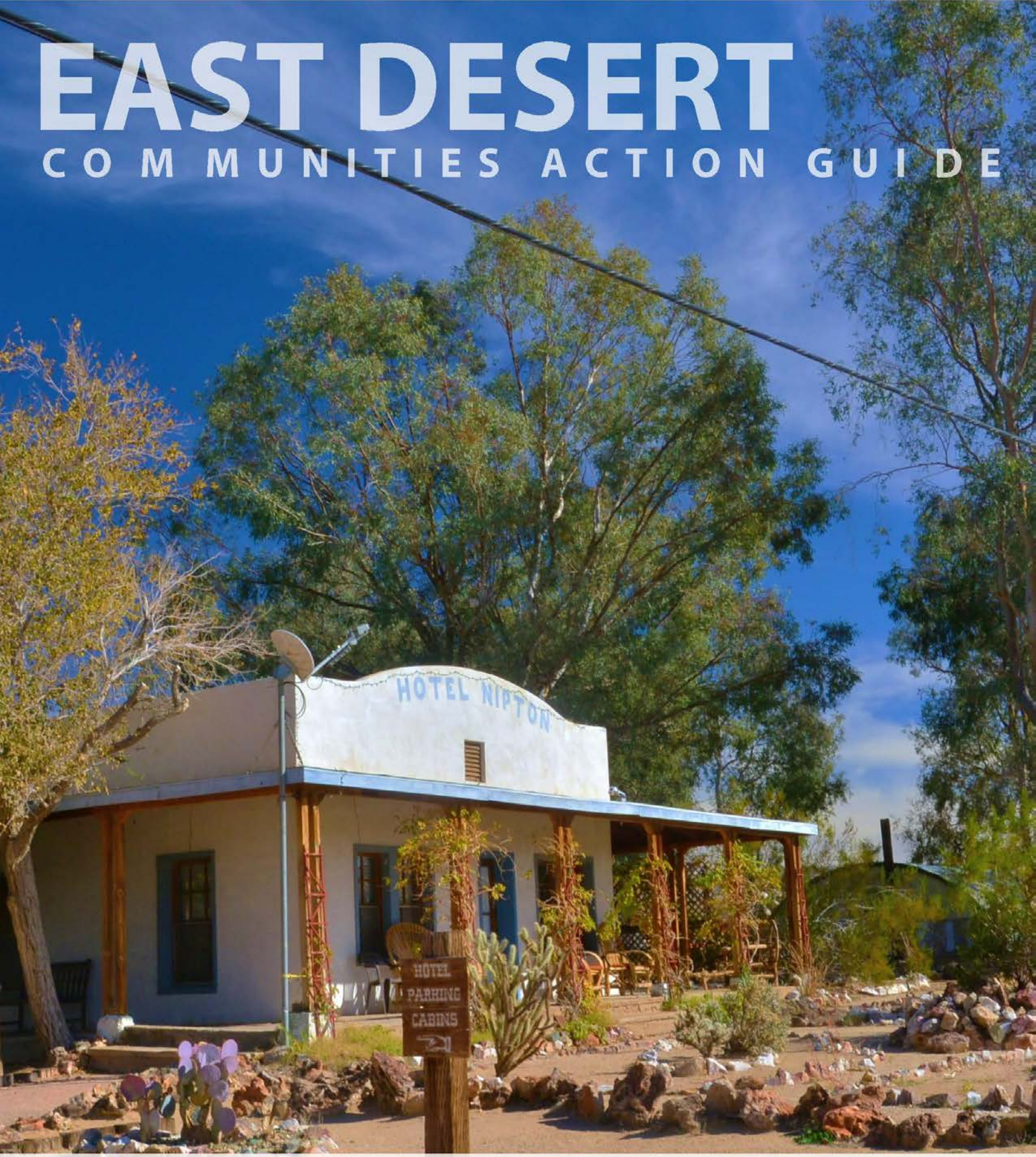
# EAST DESERT
## COMMUNITIES ACTION GUIDE




SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

COUNTYWIDE PLAN

East Desert Communities Action Guide

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# Introduction

The East Desert Communities are located on the east side of the County. They include Nipton, Vidal, Vidal Junction and Rice.

In 2016, the County embarked on a planning process to update the fourteen existing Community Plans and create over 30 new plans for approximately 80 unincorporated communities. The strategic system of community planning is called the Community Planning Continuum with a continuum of plan-types to provide planning tools and resources to match local conditions and needs. The plan-types are Detailed, Framework, Foundation and Fundamental.

East Desert Communities are a Fundamental community. An online survey was available for five months in early 2018. The survey requested information about communities including Values, Aspirations, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, local organizations and local history (see Appendix A). Four surveys (2 Nipton, 1 Vidal and 1 Vidal Junction) were completed by residents of the East Desert Communities. The survey information was reviewed to create this Community Action Plan, but with the small number of responses, we are not including the specific responses. The Community Action Guides are a framework of actions identified by the community and supports implementation of the actions by the community. The information in this Community Action Guide is from general research and the survey responses.

# Values Statement

The Values are those shared assets, principles, standards, mores, and in the judgement of the communities, what is important in the lives of its residents and businesses. A community's values are an important consideration in shaping its aspirations, focus and actions.

As a community we value:

***Deep historical roots***: East Desert Communities value their unique Wild West history, from gold mining to the famous outlaws that has shaped them into the communities that they are today.

# Aspirations Statement

The Aspirations Statement is a written narrative illustrating how the community desired look and function once the Community Focus Statements and Action Statements are accomplished. This is a long term view of 10 to 20 years. The Aspirations Statement serves as a foundation for developing Community Focus Statements and Action Statements.

The East Desert Communities aspire to:

***Improve Public Safety***

As a community, residents improved the overall safety of the communities by working together. A neighborhood watch program has decreased the vandalism and helps residents feel safe. Regular community clean-up events are held to clean up litter from illegal dumping. The numerous abandoned structures are cleaned up or rehabilitated, and roads are maintained.

***Improve Quality of Life and Growth of the Community***

To improve the lives of our residents in the East Desert Communities, more job opportunities have been created to allow for more residents to enter the work force.

***Protect Historical Roots***

As a community, residents restored and preserved the important historical structures as places for future generations to learn about the unique history that led them to where they are today.

# Plan Framework

**Community Focus Statement A:** Improve the built environment to increase quality of life for residents and businesses.

A

***Action Statement A.1:*** *Advocate to the County Public Works to maintain county maintained roadways.*

***Action Statement A.2:*** *Collaborate with County Code Enforcement to rehabilitate substandard structures.*

***Action Statement A.3:*** *Coordinate with Economic Development Agency to encourage economic opportunities*

**Community Focus Statement B:** Improve Public Safety

B

***Action Statement B.1****: Meet with Sheriff Department to discuss major community safety issues.*

***Action Statement B.2:*** *Create a Neighborhood Watch Program.*

***Action Statement B.3****: Hold an annual Clean-Up Day to remove litter and illegal dumping sites.*

**Community Focus Statement C:** Identify, enhance, and document the history and historic places in the Community

C

***Action Statement C.1****: Create a Historic Society of interested residents.*

***Action Statement C.2****: Contact County Library to collect local historical information.*

***Action Statement C.3****: Research and identify historical stories and locations around the communities.*

***Action Statement C.4****: Create a History Brochure to share with residents and visitors.*

# Community Profile

## Purpose

The community profile is a summary of the social, cultural, economic, and historic dimensions of the East Desert Communities. It presents data collected through secondary sources to inform future actions. The profile, together with future studies and information gathered from general sources, highlights essential facets and "tells the story" of the East Desert Communities.

## History

**Early 1900s**: Nipton founded after gold was discovered and added as a stop on the Los Angeles to Salt Lake Railway

**Early 1900s**:Wayatt Earp settles in Vidal

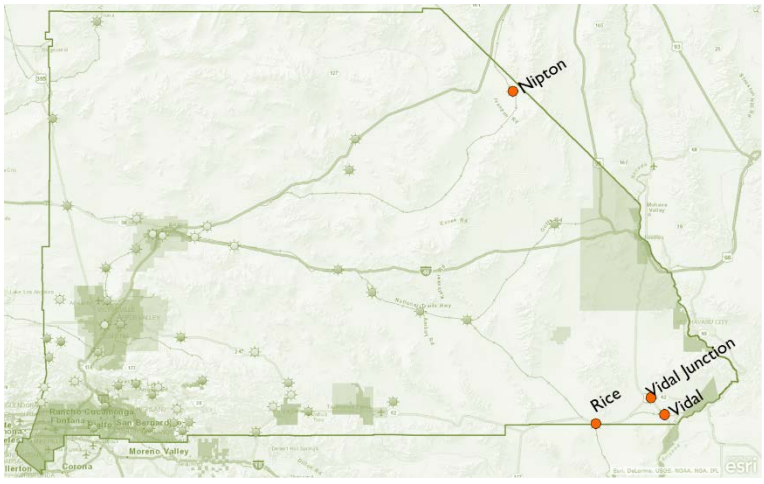
Many of the East Desert Communities have historical roots as mining towns, ranching areas or railroad stops. Nipton was established in the early 1900s after Samuel Dunc Karns discovered gold. Soon after, a railway from Salt Lake to Los Angeles was constructed and Nipton was added as a stop along the route. This allowed for more economic opportunities. It continued to grow and proposer. Today, it is home to the official Visitors Center for the Mojave National Preserve. Rice was founded around the Santa Fe Railroad. It later was home to the Rice Arm Airfield, but is now a ghost town. Vidal got its start by homesteaders. One of those homesteaders, Wyatt Earp, moved to the area to mine for gold. The community saw a boom in the 1930s when construction of the Colorado River Aqueduct drew more residents to the town. Sadly, the great depression put an end to the booming town of Vidal and during recent years the population has declined.

*Source(s): Wikipedia*

## Location & Geography

The East Desert Communities are located along the east border of the County. Nipton, located in the northeastern portion of the county is on the border of California and Nevada. Vidal, Vidal Junction and Rice are located in the southeastern portion of the County near the Riverside and San Bernardino County border north of Interstate 10.

*Source(s): Google Maps*



## Existing Land Use

The Land Use Zoning Designation in these areas is primarily Resource Conservation (RC) and Special Development-Residential (SD-RES), due to the remote locations that these communities fall in. Some of this area is federally owned land with no County jurisdiction.

# APPENDIX A

## How to Use this Guide

## Where are the Goals, Policies, and Land Use Map for My Community?

Goals, Policies and Land Use Map will be adopted as part of the County Policy Plan. The content of the Community Action Guide focuses on those actions identified by the community that the community is willing to take to make desired changes to their community. The County Policy Plan and the Community Action Guide will be web-based, with adoption of the Countywide Plan in 2019.

## Relationship of the Community Action Guide to the Countywide Plan

In 2010, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors set out to establish a vision for the future of the county as a whole, and subsequently adopted a Countywide Vision in 2011 after two years of input from the community and the county's 24 cities and towns. Following the adoption of the Countywide Vision, which calls for the creation of a "complete county", the Board adopted the County paradigm and job statements in 2012.

In 2015, the County of San Bernardino launched an effort to go further than any county or city has ever gone with a general plan by creating a web-based comprehensive "complete county" plan. General plans are almost always strictly rule books for guiding development and growth. The County's General Plan update, last updated in 2007, goes well beyond a traditional general plan to become a comprehensive Countywide Plan that complements and informs the Countywide Vision by taking into account all services—not just land-use planning—provided by County Government, and the unique values and priorities of each unincorporated community.

The Countywide Plan serves as a guide for County decision-making, financial planning, and communications. Its web-based format provides a wealth of easily accessible data on how the County operates, and allow independent research using County data and information.

The Countywide Plan includes:

- A County Policy Plan, which serves in part as the County's General Plan for the unincorporated areas and also provides guidance for regional county services. The Policy Plan establishes goals and policies for the entire county as well as specific sub regions and communities.
- A County Business Plan, which contains governance policies and operational metrics that outline the County's approach to providing municipal and regional services.
- A Regional Issues Forum, which is an online resource for sharing information and resources related to issues confronting the entire county.
- A Community Plans Continuum of 35 Community Action Guides, which articulates what is important to each Community; sets out an Action Plan based on community input, and for the most part, would be implemented by the community; and provides a Community Profile. Links will also be provided for maps, goals, and policies in the Countywide Plan.

## The Draft Community Action Guide for Public Review

The final format of the Community Action Guide will be web-based and provided online. This printed version of the Draft Community Action Guide is provided as a courtesy for simplifying community review, but may not be

available once the online version of the guide is finalized. A draft version of the web-based Community Action Guide can be found at www.countywideplan.com/cp. This printed version includes the information provided on the website under each tab except for the information included under the "Maps and Links" tab. A separate Community Profile can be printed from the website.

This Draft Community Action Guide was created by the community members who responded to the online survey in 2018. If no survey was submitted for a community, County staff researched the community to complete the guide. It is written in the words of those participating in the public engagement process. Therefore, the Community Action Guide retains the voice and future image of the community presented by the community members participating in the public engagement process. However, the implementation of each Action Statement is an opportunity for additional discussion by community members and modification of the statement and action steps may be made by the community and Action Teams.

## How to Use This Community Action Guide

Overall, the Community Action Guides are a framework for communities to create the future character and independent identity, as identified in the online survey as community values and aspirations through completion of community actions. These Community Action Guides are focused on community self-reliance, grass-roots action, and local implementation. Goals, policies, land use, and infrastructure decisions are addressed in the Policy Plan of the Countywide Plan. The County Development Code will still regulate zoning and land development.

The Community Action Guide includes the community's Values, Aspirations, and Plan Framework, if provided by community members in the online survey. An appendix has a Community Profile with a summary of the social, cultural, economic and historic dimensions of the community as well as the communities online survey responses on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Values – Those shared assets, principles, and in the judgment of the community, what is important to the lives of its residents and businesses.

Aspirations – A written narrative illustrating the community's desired look and function once the Community Action Guide is fully implemented. This is a long-term view of 10 to 20 years. They are written as if the community's desired changes have already occurred.

Plan Framework – Outlines clear Focus Statements and Action Statements identified by the community.

- The Focus Statement provides general direction toward realizing the community's aspirations and helps organize the plan.
- The Action Statement is a measurable statement providing critical information on the program, initiative, or project to complete.

Through the identification of Focus Statements and Action Statements, the community can work toward creating Action Plans and eventually implementing the Community Action Guide.

# How to Implement the Community Action Guide

## Community's Next Steps

Appendix B contains the Action Plan template that can be used to create the Action Plan. You may request a Word version of the document from CommunityPlans@lus.sbcounty.gov. The Community Action Guide identifies the Focus Statements and Action Statements. The Community may want to meet to identify the top three priority Action Statements to work on first. Some of these may be those actions that the community believes could be completed quickly and easily. Completion of one Action Statement will provide the community and local groups with the motivation to move forward with another Action Statement.

Once an Action Statement is selected for implementation, the community identifies a Champion for that Action Statement to initiate activities, identify those responsible for carrying out action steps, identify and secure resources that will be required, and develop a timeline. The champion is not responsible for completing the action, but serves to facilitate and guide the Action Team.

To initiate Action Statements in the community, the Champion should gather community volunteers, groups and organizations to develop Action Plans and identify the specific steps required to accomplish the Action Statement. Volunteers (e.g., individuals, businesses, property owners, etc.), community groups (e.g., chamber of commerce, non-profits, etc.) and organizations (e.g., scouts, community service districts, churches, schools, etc.) can change for each Action Plan or some groups could work on more than one related Action Plans.

Creating an Action Plan helps better prepare the community by identifying the steps to be accomplished, the resources needed, and who will be responsible for each action step. Some action steps may require guidance by a County department, but the community must take the lead in moving the action forward, scheduling meetings, or requesting information from specific County departments.

The Action Plans should be used to guide community actions and should not be "set in stone". Each Action Plan is a general set of tasks that can be modified if necessary. If needed, the community can find alternatives and make changes as they progress.

## How to Create an Action Plan

The community should first identify a champion for the Action Statement. The action champion can be an individual or organization that will help oversee the execution of the Action Plan and ensure steps are completed. It is important to note that the champion is not responsible for carrying out each action step, but is responsible for coordinating communications and ensuring the steps are completed.

After the champion is identified, the community or group can develop action steps. The focus should be on what action steps will occur, who will carry out each action step, when it will take place, and an approximate duration. Again, these are guidelines, and may change, but this planning helps identify resources needed, people or

organizations that must be engaged or will lead each action step, and manage expectations on how long it will take to implement each Action Statement.

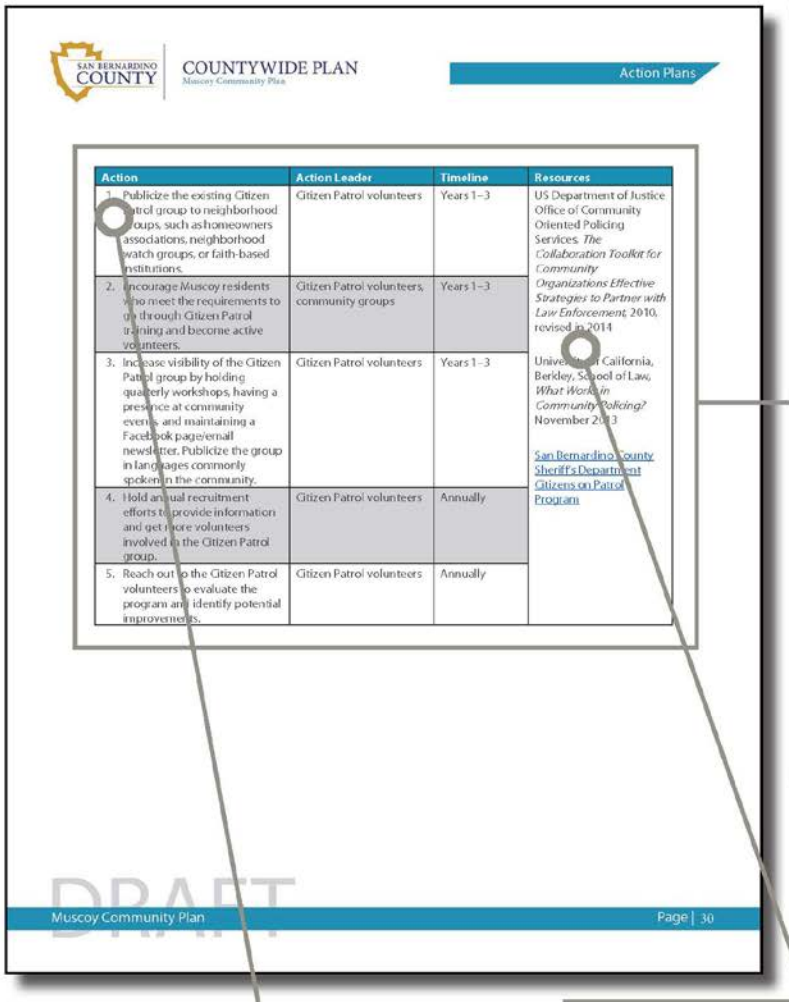
After completing the action steps, resources should be identified. Resources may include governmental agencies needed to help carry out the action, community and external funding sources, and potential assistance from other communities who implemented similar programs.

Reviewing a Detailed or Framework Plan can assist in providing examples of Action Plans and may have similar actions that can be used or modified to meet identified Foundation Plan actions. In addition, the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Planning Division is preparing a Community Development Toolkit with tools on several topics to help local groups make positive changes in their community. When complete, the Community Development Toolkit will be available at www.countywideplan.com. Other resources and contacts will be provided on the same website.

## Placing your Action Plan in the Community Action Guide

Any modifications of the Community Action Guide or Action Plans can be sent to San Bernardino County Land Use Services Planning Division for future updates to your Community Action Guide. The County will provide information on specific contacts for Community Planning assistance. It will be the responsibility of the community to provide requested updates and modifications to the County.

***The following page is an example of an Action Plan from the Helendale Community Action Guide.***




*The action plan should be reviewed and modified by the Action Team and/or the community prior to implementation, including the addition of people and organizations involved. The Action Team can search the Internet to look for similar actions by other communities or groups.*

*Suggested steps to implement the Action Statement, along with potential leaders for each step and a timeline of when it should occur in the process. This can be modified to meet the current needs of the community.*

*Resources including stakeholders, human resources, and capital that may be required or provide assistance to implement the Action Statement. Action Team can also search the Internet to see if there are other resources available at the time of action implementation.*

# APPENDIX B
## Action Plan Template

**Community Focus Statement:** _____

_____

**Action Statement:**

_____

_____

_

_____

**Champion:**

_____

**Estimated Cost:**

_____

| Action | Action Leader | Timeline | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |