



WESTMARC 2018



RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

**The West Valley is filled with sugar,
spice and everything to entice economic
growth and opportunity**



By ERIN THORBURN

Karrin Taylor Robson may have summed it up best at the annual WESTMARC Economic Development Summit.

The founder and president of Arizona Strategies says there are a few essential ingredients needed to create the perfect recipe for great communities: transportation and infrastructure, education, healthcare, quality of life and a robust, competitive workforce.

Guess what community has all these ingredients — and all the proverbial perfect seasoning? It's the West Valley, where the average household income ranges between \$64,634 to \$100,000, outdoor recreational hot spots span 3,000 square miles, more than 20 schools (and growing) offer programming to local students and businesses, a skilled labor pool of roughly 1 million residents reside along the I-10 and Loop 303 and a bustling, expanding entertainment mecca boosts an already burgeoning economy.

NOT TOO MANY COOKS IN THIS KITCHEN

Many other prominent voices of the West Valley echo and elaborate upon Robson's community recipe analogy. And it's more than fitting for the fastest-growing region in Maricopa County.

"Over the next 25 years, 49.5 percent of the growth in Maricopa County will occur in the West Valley," says Sintra Hoffman, WESTMARC president and CEO.

That's proof alone, that whatever is baking in the West Valley not only has the right ingredients, but also the opportune alignment in leadership in the kitchen, which the West Valley most certainly possesses. The collaborative efforts of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Glendale, Peoria, Surprise and sister West Valley cities have made the entire region a competitive force in attracting skilled labor, new business and unique entertainment opportunities.

"Places like Mesa and Phoenix aren't competition for the West Valley," Robson says, "Austin, Seattle, and Denver are who we compete with now."



Bobbi Magdaleno



Katherine Pappas



Karrin Taylor Robson



John Halikowski



Sintra Hoffman



Dale Larsen

BY THE NUMBERS

1.6 MILLION

Number of people who live in the West Valley.

40%

Percentage of Phoenix residents who live west of Interstate 17. Phoenix, the state's largest city, has a population of 1.5 million.

\$62,775

Average annual income for households in the West Valley.

62%

Percentage of the West Valley population that is workforce age.

69%

Percentage of the West Valley workforce that commutes outside of the region to work in other parts of Maricopa County.

28%

Percentage of the manufacturing workers in Maricopa County who live in the West Valley, yet only 16% of the jobs are located in the West Valley.

37%

Percentage of the healthcare workers in Maricopa County live in the West Valley, yet only 21% of the jobs are located in the West Valley.

34%

Percentage of the professional finance and insurance workers in Maricopa County live in the West Valley, yet only 12% of the jobs are located in the West Valley.

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And once again, the eyes of the world will be on the West Valley when it hosts its third Super Bowl in 2023. To show the value of bringing back the big game, Super Bowl XLIX in 2015 generated \$719 million in total economic impact for Greater Phoenix, and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport experienced record days. That's a lot of potential new residents and new business owners getting to see the value of the West Valley up close and personal.

ADDING SPICE TO AN ALREADY FLAVORFUL WORKFORCE

Did you know that 28 percent of manufacturing laborers, 34 percent of professional finance and insurance workers and 37 percent of healthcare employees reside in the West Valley? While the 69 percent of the West Valley's workforce currently commutes to other parts of Maricopa County, this is about to change. The addition of Chewey.com adds 700 new positions in Goodyear and BALL Corporation another 130. Avondale is adding King Koil and 50 new jobs and IAC another 30. And Buckeye attracted a 500-acre, one-million-square-foot facility that will represent \$1 billion in capital investment from the Nikola Motor Company. This facility is slated to bring 2,000 jobs to Buckeye and will manufacture Nikola Motor Company's hydrogen-electric semi-trucks.

While nationally recognized organizations are already calling the West Valley home, WESTMARC and partners have recently implemented the West Valley Pipeline initiative. This five-year plan represents 15 West Valley communities and their 1.6 million residents in an effort to reinforce a prospering talent pool of high-demand and higher-wage occupations.

"The West Valley Pipeline is a unique strategy for the West Valley," says WESTMARC Chair Bobbi Magdaleno, Arizona State University's executive director of government and community engagement. "It mirrors WESTMARC's membership of business, education and government all working together toward a common goal."

And how exactly will this pipeline flow? Largely through the continuation of connections and collaboration of local businesses and educators.

"The West Valley Pipeline highlights the region as a strong competitor for a powerful skilled workforce by articulating its strengths, filling our gaps and sending consistent messaging," Magdaleno says. "ASU and all post-secondary education are vital to the pipeline."

EQUAL PARTS EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Similar to the success of a culinary endeavor, the prosperity of any community-driven goal depends upon the appropriate measure of influence and collaborative mix.

"Our No. 1 job at ASU is to produce individuals capable of learning anything," Magdaleno says. "With a large percentage of future jobs yet to be invented, we teach students at ASU how to learn in order for them to be able to adapt and grow with changing work dynamics and technologies."

"ASU, West-MEC and the West Valley community colleges are united in bridging the education gap," says Dale Larsen, ASU director of community relations and professor of practice at the College Of Public Service & Community Solutions. "Not all students jump into a four-year college, and 50 percent of our students are first-generation graduates."

TOP WEST VALLEY EMPLOYERS

Banner Health	6,683
Luke Air Force Base	5,072
Amazon.com	4,538
American Express	3,240
APS/Palo Verde	2,624
PetSmart Inc.	2,061
Abrazo Healthcare	1,726
Swift Transportation Co.	1,324
FedEx	1,308
Shamrock Foods Company	1,204
JBS Packerland Tolleson	1,200
Arizona State University	1,187
HonorHealth	1,145
JPMorgan Chase Bank	945
Humana Inc.	940
Grand Canyon University	903

Source: MAG Employer Database 2015



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Part of effectively closing the gap for which Larsen refers is the “two-plus-two” initiative in which West-MEC and West Valley community colleges work to put students through their schools for the first two years of college and then help them successfully transition to ASU for the remainder of their four-year education.

On the businesses side of cultivating education-to-workforce pathways, the West Valley Pipeline works with students, members of the military and other individuals seeking new employment or a change or transition in career.

“We’ve created a local solution to help job-seekers make better and informed decisions to promote sustainability and growth in the West Valley’s skilled workforce,” explains Katherine Pappas. “This includes military personnel with an average of 22 days of transition from military to civilian jobs.”

“Skilled, educated professionals who are separating from Luke Air Force Base total 400-450 people annually,” Magdaleno says. “This offers the West Valley a unique opportunity to capture these people and make them permanent residents.”

QUALITY OF LIFE IS ICING ON THE CAKE

Entertainment, dining, recreation and infrastructure offer an enticing and diverse quality of life for West Valley residents, making it no surprise that it’s one of the fastest-growing communities in the entire region.

An example is Buckeye, which saw the fifth-fastest growth rate in the U.S. last year among cities with more than 50,000 residents, according to the Census Bureau. Buckeye added more than 3,800 people, a 5.9 percent growth rate that brought its estimated total population to 68,453.

“Like all of what we do in the West Valley, creating an attractive, sustainable quality of life is a collaborative effort,” Hoffman says. “From the Cardinals being a huge draw to the changes taking place along the Loop 101, the opening of Top Golf in the fall, Desert Diamond Casino coming in off Northern Parkway and the Loop 101, the West Valley is in a truly transformative state.”

“With I-10 and I-17 designated as Key Commerce Corridors for Arizona, Loop 303 and other freeway improvements in the West Valley allow for this uniquely positioned community to prosper economically,” adds John Halikowski, director of the Arizona Department of Transportation. “The proposed I-11 and State Route 30 corridors will continue to foster mobility and economic development for a growing region.”

And as transportation and infrastructure solidify, the West Valley’s recipe for success is expected to include more and more retailers, restaurants and entertainment experiences. If you’re looking for a seat at the table, come and get it — WESTMARC and the West Valley are ready to serve. **AB**

About WESTMARC

MISSION: WESTMARC, a public/private partnership of 15 communities, the business and education sectors, provides opportunities for members to interact and communicate on issues vital to moving the West Valley forward. WESTMARC is committed to its members’ success and its mission of enhancing economic development and quality of life in the West Valley.

INFORMATION: westmarc.org

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GCC North Campus

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A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Main Campus

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Buckeye Campus

902 East Eason Avenue in Buckeye

West-MEC Southwest Campus

500 North Verrado Way in Buckeye

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MONEY TALKS

There is no mystery when it comes to the power of consumer spending in the West Valley

By ERIN THORBURN

The average sale price of a single-family home in the West Valley is \$265,000 and the average household income is about \$65,000 per year. What does this have to do with targeting unique dining and shopping experiences? Two words: consumer power.

Last year's comprehensive and prolific workforce development study by WESTMARC illuminated clear and concise clues as to the consumer power and behaviors of West Valley residents.

COLONEL MUSTARD IN SCOTTSDALE SPENDING HIGH DOLLARS

To the tune of the classic game of Clue, attempting to prove quality of life metrics in the West Valley was somewhat of a mystery. Of course, it had long been suspected that West Valley residents historically commuted to Scottsdale and other historically affluent areas of the Valley for fine dining due to a lack of

local, unique, independent and grassroots establishments in the West Valley.

Thanks to the extensive workforce development research of the West Valley, a theory has now become fact. With vetted data solidifying that West Valley residents indeed have a steadily increasing household income, valuable information has been unearthed. The time and desire for high-end, unique dining experiences in the West Valley is now.

"The perception in the past has been that there is a lack of large buying power in the West Valley," says WESTMARC member Cheryl Covert, who is an employment and business development specialist for the City of Avondale. "The analytics we have been able to prove thus far through our workforce process has helped us to demonstrate that the West Valley has a day- and night-time population to support high-end restaurants."

With evidence of West Valley consumer

power in hand, Covert has been instrumental in pitching a restaurant strategy to WESTMARC's Quality of Life Committee.

"Part of the site selection process is thinking about where employees will go to be entertained and where they will go for dining options," Covert says. "We are at a place where the quality of life demands more high-level needs, including unique dining experiences."

MISS SCARLETT DINING AT LOLA IN THE WEST VALLEY

The intention of WESTMARC's Quality of Life Committee will begin by targeting existing independent and unique restaurant operators like those who championed popular Valley hot spots like Postino and Joyride Tacos. Eventually, the committee intends to cast an even wider net by approaching out-of-market entities.

"The strategy is being created as we



COMING SOON: The Trailhead, a mixed-use project planned for the northeast corner of 83rd Avenue and Happy Valley Road in Peoria, will feature 15-plus specialty retail and restaurant tenants. PROVIDED RENDERING



Cheryl Covert



Sintra Hoffman



Jeff Teetsel

speak,” Covert explains, “but the initial approach is to offer a demo day in the Central Phoenix area and do an invitation-only event to pitch ideas of what we have available to restaurateurs and entrepreneurs city-by-city. There needs to be a full understanding of what’s available. One restaurant will ultimately find success by partnering with another.”

As the plot unfolds to attract new, dynamic dining opportunities to the West Valley, there is already evidence of growth in this facet of consumerism.

“We are seeing unique and higher-end options emerge, like Lola opening at Westgate,” says Jeff Teetsel, principal at Teetsel Properties. “West Valley residents don’t want to have to continuously drive to the East Valley for a unique meal and atmosphere. The business owners that recognize and capitalize on that built-in, pent-up demand will be rewarded.”

PROFESSOR PLUMB LIKES INDIVIDUALITY AND A SIDE OF RUM

While high-end is definitely a consideration in the widening of dining options in the West Valley, so are community-oriented, dynamic dining experiences.

“People are looking for more than delicious, high-quality food,” says Sintra Hoffman, WESTMARC’s president and CEO. “They’re seeking a gathering place and they don’t necessarily want chains. They want individualized dining experiences.”

And, individualized dining experiences they will find — some are already available now and others in the not too distant future, such as Tempo Urban Bistro in Buckeye, Cold Beers & Cheeseburgers in Peoria and Amuse Bouche in Surprise.

The mystery of fine and independent dining options in the West Valley: Solved. **AB**

DIG IN

Looking for a reason, location, or insight into where to dine in the West Valley? Cities like Avondale, Goodyear, Glendale and Buckeye are open (or soon to be open) to new restaurant experiences.

AVONDALE

Carolina’s
8-Bit Brewery
Main Event

GOODYEAR

Cheddar’s Scratch Kitchen
Lakeside Bar and Grill

GLENDALE

The LoLa (Scratch kitchen concept at Westgate)
Salt (Westgate)
Fat Tuesday
Manna Korean
Mi Vegana Madre
Nomadic Ice Cream Rolls

PEORIA

Cold Beers & Cheeseburgers
North 40 (Happy Valley and Lake Pleasant Parkway)
Nektar

BUCKEYE

The Vic Bar + Kitchen
Tempo Urban Bistro

EL MIRAGE

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SURPRISE

State 48 Brewery
Saigon Kitchen
Amuse Bouche

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THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

West Valley has become a hot spot for fun and recreational activities

By ERIN THORBURN

The dictionary by Merriam-Webster's definition of entertainment: Amusement or diversion provided especially by performers to provide entertainment. The West Valley's definition of entertainment: Gila River Arena, P83, ISM Raceway, Westgate Entertainment District, Desert Diamond Casino, University of Phoenix Stadium, Cactus League Spring Training and a new 320-mile Maricopa Trail system.

West Valley residents who are looking to be entertained need to look no further than their own back yard. Visitors now have more options than ever before to keep their interest longer and spending even more generous. If you're a new or expanding business looking for the perfect landing spot to entice and satisfy the entertainment and recreation whims of employees, look at the West Valley. It's a done deal.

WHICH CAME FIRST, RESIDENTS OR ENTERTAINMENT?

There's no denying it — the West Valley is rapidly becoming a beacon of entertainment prosperity and possibility. While residents and visitors are pleased with the addition of new entertainment options, entertainment entities are likewise attracted to a region where household income is high, consumer power is strong and the population is swiftly rising.

"Now that we have the people, we have the retail, the workforce, and now we're starting to see more entertainment come in," says Sintra Hoffman, WESTMARC's president and CEO.

In addition to entertainment-focussed businesses, the West Valley has been host to the NCAA Final 4, the College Football

Playoff National Championship game, the 2015 Super Bowl, the CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer tournament, UFC, Katy Perry, Sugarland, Brad Paisley, and countless other sports and concert venues. And in 2023, the West Valley will host its third Super Bowl.

"Businesses crave both the brand exposure and revenue spikes from these events," says Jeff Teetsel, principal at Teetsel Properties, LLC. "Only a select few markets in the country get to experience and benefit from these mega events."

THE DOMINO EFFECT

The added value of big sporting events and concerts, combined with increasing dining and entertainment options in the West Valley is akin to a supercharged magnet. One big pull attracts dollars and literally spreads the wealth to surrounding entertainment sources — and visitors are sticking around longer and returning to the West Valley more and more.

"We consistently draw in revenue with big-name events at Gila River Arena, benefitting the surrounding hotels and businesses," says Dale Adams, general manager of Gila River Arena and vice president of event development of AEG Facilities. "But our major advantage is the ability to create invaluable exposure for the West Valley, while creating unique memories."

Unique experiences are something for which West Valley purveyors of entertainment excel, as they constantly seek ways to capitalize on already abundant offerings and prime locations.

"From regular live music to car shows, bike nights, summer series geared toward younger children and families, charity

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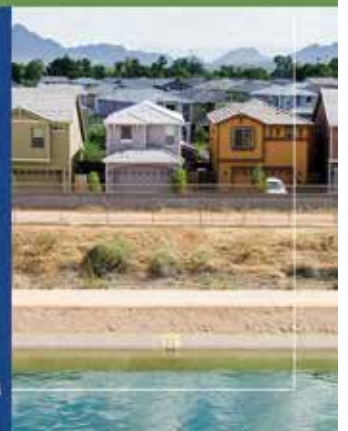


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runs, a seasonal ice rink and more,” says Teetsel of the Westgate Entertainment District, “we activate the property with over 400 different events on about 250 days a year to drive repeat traffic and consumer enjoyment to supplement the great events in the arena and stadium.”

While staples like Westgate, P83, Desert Diamond Casino, Gila River Arena and ISM Raceway capture attention from within and outside of the West Valley, nonprofits and recreational outlets are doing more than their share as well.

“West Valley nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences contributed \$23 million in direct economic activity and more than \$2.5 million in local and state government revenues,” says Bernadette Carroll, executive director, West Valley Arts Council.

The recent renovations at Estrella Mountain Regional Park and White Tank Mountain Regional Park renovation enhanced and improved trails and campsites and are primed to attract more visitors and residents.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

ISM Raceway, which has entertained auto racing fans in the West Valley since 1964, has reinvented and reinvigorated itself thanks to a \$178 million renovation project that will create a one-of-a-kind experience for race fans. When the project is complete in November, there will be WiFi in every seat, allowing fans access to social media, live news reports and their favorite apps during races. And the infield will be transformed into an interactive experience where fans can access garages and see teams, cars and drivers prepare for the race from up close.

But it's not only race fans that will benefit from the new state-of-the-art ISM Raceway.

“We hope to bring in more non-racing events in the future,” says Jennifer Staton, senior director of partnership sales and

marketing for ISM Raceway. “By adding concerts and other events, we are trying to transform ourselves from a strictly motorsports venue into an entertainment venue.”

ISM Raceway has successfully hosted 5K runs, a Tough Mudder and hopes to bring concerts or a music festival to the new facility.

“We are always going to be a motorsports facility first,” says Keane Horner, manager of partnership sales at ISM Raceway, “but we are trying to change that so we are a true entertainment destination.”

Also coming this fall to the West Valley is the third Arizona location for Topgolf, which will be located at the northwest corner of Bethany Home Road and the 101 near Westgate in Glendale.

“Topgolf and this vibrant, dynamic area are a perfect match and would offer residents and visitors alike fun entertainment options,” says Glendale City Manager Kevin Phelps. “This signature opportunity would go a long way in furthering the type of quality growth Glendale is attracting to this thriving district.”

The three-level Glendale location – which will be open year-round – includes up to 3,000 square feet of private event space and climate-controlled hitting bays that can host up to six players at one time. Officials estimate that Topgolf Glendale will serve approximately 450,000 visitors in its first year of operation. Approximately half of all Topgolf guests describe themselves as “non-golfers.”

Those who seek outdoor entertainment can look forward to the officially dedicated Maricopa Trail, a 320-mile trail system connecting dozens of West Valley communities. It is also set to debut this fall.

As for the future of West Valley entertainment? Expect even more to come.

“The majority of future Valley housing growth will occur in the West Valley, bringing increased population density and income to the region and amplifying the demand for entertainment options proximate to where people live,” Teetsel says. **AB**



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