Game Change: What Have We Learned?

How Brookings Mountain West and The Lincy Institute are Reframing Policy in Southern Nevada

May 3, 2013
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Who We Are, What We Do, Where Are We Going

Brookings Mountain West is a partnership between UNLV and the Washington, D.C.-based Brookings Institution.
Goals and Objectives

Create high-quality, independent, impactful programs, publications, and activities that address issues of critical importance to greater Las Vegas and the Intermountain West region.

Serve as a platform to bring ideas and expertise together and facilitate local, metropolitan, and state discussions about the West’s future.

Enhance local, regional, and state research and public policy discussions.
Mountain Megas: 
America's Newest 
Metropolitan Places and a 
Federal Partnership to 
Help Them Prosper

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/0720_mountainmegas_sarzynski.aspx
Mountain Megas: America's Newest Metropolitan Places and a Federal Partnership to Help Them Prosper
Credit: Grace Bjarnson, Metropolitan Research Center, University of Utah and Brookings Mountain West, UNLV

Some county boundaries adjusted.
Brookings Scholars

Brookings Research Programs:

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http://brookingsmtnwest.unlv.edu/publications/radio-interviews.html

Recent topics include immigration reform, the federal deficit, housing policy, state budgets, foreign policy, alternative energy, and the economic development of Las Vegas.
Brookings Mountain West in the Headlines

“Forum brings together lawmakers, local government officials to prioritize legislative issues,”
*Las Vegas Sun*, September 10, 2013

“Brookings Mountain West Names UNLV as a Model for Energy Work.”
*Rebel Yell*, September 20, 2010

“Why Nevada falls short on federal funding,”
*Las Vegas Sun*, March 17, 2013

“High-speed rail just not for tourists. At summit, experts makes the case for Las Vegas as an international business hub,”
*VegasInc*, December 17, 2012

“Look at Economic Development Produces Road Map for Diversification,”

The Debate on the State’s Economy Has Skirted the Issues for Too Long,”
*Las Vegas Sun*, November 20, 2011
Publications

Brookings Mountain West issues print and electronic publications on public policy issues in the Intermountain West.

http://brookingsmtnwest.unlv.edu/publications
Mountain Monitor: Tracking Economic Recession and Recovery in the Intermountain West’s Metropolitan Areas
Structurally Unbalanced: Cyclical and Structural Deficits in California and the Intermountain West

By Matthew Murray with Sue Clark-Johnson, Mark Muro, and Jennifer Vey

Though the Great Recession may be officially over, economic recovery is slow and tentative, particularly in California and much of the Intermountain West. Among other challenges, the protracted downturn in these states has exposed and aggravated a huge public-sector fiscal crisis—with disconcerting implications for citizens and states’ long-term economic health.

This brief takes a careful look at the fiscal situation in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Nevada, examining both their serious cyclical budget shortfalls—those resulting from the recession and its aftermath—as well as the critically long-term structural imbalances between revenues and expenditures that have developed in Arizona, California, and, to a lesser extent, Nevada. Along these lines, the study uses a unique methodology to estimate the size of the states’ structural deficits (or, in Colorado, the surplus) and explores the mix of forces, particularly the policy choices, that created them. After that, the authors highlight the dramatic impacts these states’ fiscal challenges and government responses to them, are having on service delivery as well as local governments. The brief suggests some of the state state policymakers must take to close their budget gaps over the short and longer term.

First, it urges better policymaking and more leaders to broaden, balance, and diversify their revenue bases while looking to ensure a long-term balance of taxing and spending. Second, the report recommends that the states improve the information sharing and budgeting processes through which fiscal problems are understood—so they may be averted.

I. Introduction

Nationwide, the Great Recession is technically over. Real gross domestic product (GDP) is expanding, modest job growth has begun, and housing prices are stabilizing. A halting and tentative economic recovery is underway.

And yet, all is not well, and especially not in California and the Mountain states. Three years after the collapse of a massive housing “bubble,” the deepest economic downturn in memory has exposed and exacerbated a massive public-sector fiscal crisis that is affecting all of the region’s states, albeit in varied ways.

To be sure, the crisis in public budgets is not the only problem Western states face. In Arizona, California, Colorado, and Nevada, employment levels remain fully 2 million jobs off their pre-recession peak. But it is the state budget crisis that promises to bring the most painful next round of dislocations to the fore.

Export West

How Mountain West Metros Can Lead National Export Growth and Boost Competitiveness

Mark Muro, Emilia Istrova and Jonathan Rothwell

“Expanding the region’s exports holds out the promise of at once lifting the region’s sights, widening its horizons, and creating thousands of new jobs in metros that desperately need them.”

Findings

An analysis of export activity in the 10 largest metros of the Intermountain West for the years 2003 to 2008 reveals that:

- Exporters are an important source of good jobs in the Mountain West, and export growth has the potential to generate significant and much-needed job creation in the region.
- In 2008 only 437,000 workers in the 10 largest Intermountain region metros were employed by firms that exported goods or services; these workers earned $94 billion in metropolitan GDP that year, a figure that excludes the spending elsewhere that those earnings generate. What is more, export jobs are good jobs. The typical Mountain West exporter employs 1.5 times as many workers as the average American worker.
- The major Mountain region metropolitan areas are not exceptionally large exporters in dollar terms but a number of them export a significant portion of their overall output. Each of the region’s 10 largest metros are among the top two-thirds of their goods-manufacturing-exporting (GME) states. Their regions are larger than the nation’s larger 100 metros mixed together.
- Mountain metros, moreover, not only expanded their export bases but also grew more export intensive from 2003 to 2008. Only in Phoenix did export intensity decline.
- Services account for a greater share of export activity in the Intermountain West metros than they do in the average large metro nationally. Service exports—ranging from architecture and engineering to consulting—account for a substantial share of the Mountain region. Service exports comprise a much larger share of all metro exports, at 45 percent, than they do for the country’s largest 100 metros as a group. In ten Mountain metros—Las Vegas, Provo-Orem, Denver-Aurora, Salt Lake City, Ogden-Central Valley, Minot-Bismarck, Billings, Jackson Hole, Great Falls, and Helena—the shares range from 60 to 70 percent.
- The Mountain region’s large metros are quite varied in their export specializations. Computer and electronic product manufacturing stands out as one of the region’s clear specializations, as well as transportation equipment (perhaps reflected in the dominant service production of aerospace). Among the other exports are medical equipment and instruments, a group of industries that only this group appears far more diversified. However, export earnings in the prominent computer and electronics industry actually fell in seven metros over the five-year period studied, pointing to the need to maintain constant vigilance in the face of changing global markets.
- Strengths in manufacturing and innovation tend to drive metropolitan export power. Manufacturing industries nationally are the most export oriented and tend to be more innovative, defined by patent production. Exporting ties in the West are strong, the region’s parent leader and number two metro in manufacturing and export intensity indicators.
- Canada and Mexico remain the region’s leading export markets but major growth opportunities exist in large emerging markets like Brazil, India, and China. The “RICs,” with their rapidly expanding economies and growing middle classes, are among the region’s important export markets.
- The West has a number of innovative cities that are export leaders, and it is these cities that will lead growth in the years to come. In addition, a number of cities lack a critical mass of demand. Existing from the large Mountain metros are no more likely to be destroyed for Mexico than the average large metropolitan area.
- And while five of the Mountain metros capitalized on opportunities farther afield—the BICs, for example—their success in the region will allow average growth in exports to these markets.

Conclusion

Contrasted by a malfunction of the region’s real estate-driven long boom, the Mountain West metros need to leverage new sources of demand to power sustainable growth. Export of goods and services to international markets can provide one such source. For that reason, metropolitan leaders and their federal, state, and private sector partners need to engage in exports to create good-paying jobs at home.
Envisioning Nevada’s Future
Goals & Strategies for Advancing Our Quality of Life

PREPARED FOR THE NEVADA VISION STAKEHOLDER GROUP BY MOODY’S ANALYTICS

September 2010

Nevada Vision
Stakeholders
Group
The Intermountain West region, including Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah, is the new swing region in American politics.
America's New Swing Region: Changing Politics and Demographics in the Mountain West

Brookings Institution Press

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Nevada 2.0:
New Economies for a Sustainable Future
Left to right: Lt. Governor Brian Krolicki, and Speaker, Nevada Senate, Steven Horsford, serve as panelists at Nevada 2.0.
Unify, Regionalize, Diversify:
An Economic Development Agenda for Nevada 2011

The four most exciting words you used to hear in Las Vegas: I won the jackpot!

The four most exciting words you'll hear in Las Vegas today: I found a job!
Grant Award: $3,488,000
GOAL

To provide UNLV undergraduate students with a unique educational experience, the opportunity to explore the world around them through a series of courses taught by UNLV faculty and Brookings Institution colleagues.

Program:

A series of six courses, including a capstone course, taught by UNLV faculty and Brookings scholars.
Bi-Partisan Legislative Support

AB 499: Economic Development
SB 322: Transportation
SB 391: Community Colleges Governance
SB 173: Knowledge Fund
Southern Nevada Caucus: Provide data and information for assembly and senate members
Future Projects

- The Southwest Triangle: The Las Vegas-Los Angeles-Phoenix Connection
- Las Vegas: America’s Next Global City (monograph)
- Global Cities Initiative (Brookings): in Las Vegas (2014)
- Tri-State (Nevada-Arizona-Utah) Collaborations
- UNLV Faculty Fellowships and Student Internships at Brookings
1987 AND BEYOND:
A FUTURE LOOK TO DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS

A MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS
Freemont East District Downtown Las Vegas
Questions and Answers