**Helendale, San Bernardino County**
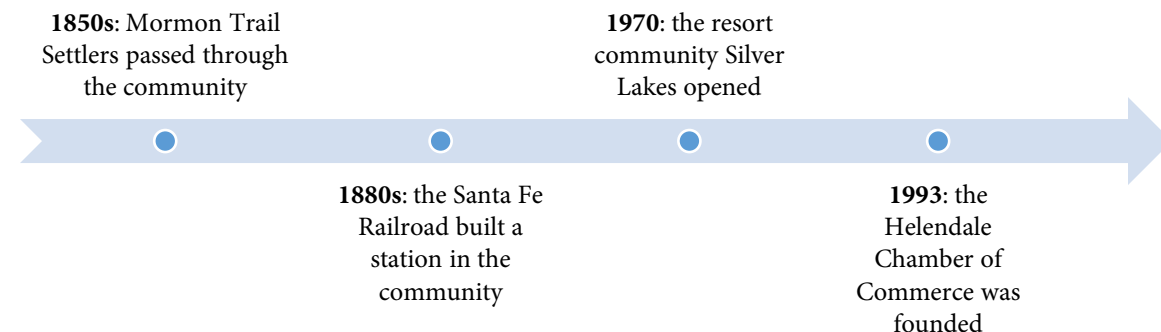
# Community Profile

## Purpose

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

The initial objective research prepared for the community profile was provided to participants as a handout at each community workshop to provide a basis for discussion during the SWOT, values, and aspirations exercises. Workshop participants were asked to review the information and provide comments as a way to infuse local knowledge into the community plans process. Their feedback was used to finalize the community profile, which includes objective research and issue identification by community workshop participants.

The objective information, community stories, and public's participation in the community profile, SWOT, values, and aspirations exercises were all used when developing the framework for the focus and action statements that make up the community plan.

## History

**1850s**: Mormon Trail Settlers passed through the community

**1970**: the resort community Silver Lakes opened

**1880s**: the Santa Fe Railroad built a station in the community

**1993**: the Helendale Chamber of Commerce was founded

On September 22, 1918, the community was officially named Helendale in honor of Arthur G. Wells's daughter. Route 66 was paved and officially opened in Helendale in 1926. Into the 1940s and 1950s, the popularity of Las Vegas drew many visitors through Helendale. In 1969, construction began on two man-made lakes, North Lake and South Lake, covering approximately 277 acres. The resort called Silver Lakes was opened in the early 1970s. The community includes a golf course, a clubhouse, an equestrian center, an inn, and three schools. Numerous activities are enjoyed on the lakes, including boating, sailing, swimming, and fishing. The Helendale Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1993.

*Source(s): Wikipedia; http://helendalechamber.com ; www.silverlakesassociation.com*

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## Location & Geography

Helendale is located in the western portion of San Bernardino County, just north of Victorville and southwest of Barstow. Helendale primarily comprises the Silver Lakes community.

*Source(s): Google Maps*



*Figure 1: Helendale Area Map*
*Source(s): ESRI, San Bernardino County LUS*

## Key Census Data

| Category | Helendale | | San Bernardino County | | California | | United States | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *% of Total* | *Number* | *% of Total* | *Number* | *% of Total* | *Number* | *% of Total* |
| **Population** | | | | | | | | |
| Total Population | 5,794 | | 2,078,586 | | 38,066,920 | | 116,211,092 | |
| 2020 Population Forecast | N/A | | 2,227,066 (+7.1%) | | 40,619,346 (+6.7%) | | 334,503,000 (+6.5%) | |
| Total Households | 2,082 | | 607,604 | | 12,617,280 | | 116,211,092 | |
| Average Household Size | 2.74 | | 3.34 | | 2.95 | | 2.63 | |
| Median Age | 46.4 | | 32.2 | | 35.6 | | 37.4 | |
| **Education** | | | | | | | | |
| High School Diploma | 1,008 | 92.6% | 330,613 | 26.3% | 5,153,257 | 20.7% | 58,440,600 | 27.95% |
| Education Past High School | 2,762 | 67.9% | 417,953 | 33.3% | 7,400,714 | 29.8% | 60,821,634 | 29.1% |
| Bachelor Degree of Higher | 1,089 | 26.7% | 336,315 | 26.8% | 7,708,909 | 31.0% | 61,206,147 | 29.3% |
| **Housing** | | | | | | | | |
| Total Households | 2,841 | n/a | 703,737 | n/a | 13,781,929 | n/a | 132,741,033 | n/a |
| Vacancy | 528 | 18.6% | 96,133 | 13.7% | 1,164,649 | 8.5% | 16,529,941 | 12.5% |
| Average Household Size | 2.5 | n/a | 3.34 | n/a | 2.95 | n/a | 2.63 | n/a |
| Homeowners | 1,673 | 59% | 370,032 | 52.58% | 6,908,925 | 50.1% | 74,787,460 | 56.3% |
| Renters | 640 | 22.5% | 237,572 | 33.76% | 5,708,355 | 41.4% | 41,423,632 | 32.2% |
| Median Year Structure Built | 1993 | N/A | 1976 | n/a | 1974 | n/a | 1976 | n/a |
| **Income** | | | | | | | | |
| Median Household Income | $56,729 | n/a | $54,100 | n/a | $61,489 | n/a | $53,482 | n/a |
| Persons Below Poverty Level | N/A | N/A | 199,451 | 12.7% | 3,354,518 | 11.2% | 26,235,361 | 10.6% |
| Employed | N/A | N/A | 812,707 | 86.1% | 16,890,442 | 89.0% | 143,435,233 | 90.2% |
| Unemployed | N/A | N/A | 131,293 | 13.9% | 2,084,564 | 12.3% | 14,504,781 | 9.2% |
| Note: N/A indicates that the data is not available; n/a indicates that the category is not applicable | | | | | | | | |
| *This figure may include seasonal households | | | | | | | | |

*Table 1: Key Census Data*
*Note: N/A indicates that the data is not available; n/a indicates that the category is not applicable.*
*Source(s): 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

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## Community Structure (Physical Characteristics)

The community is built around two bodies of water and one large golf course. Lots range from 20,000 square feet to 20 acres and are occupied by single- and multiple-family dwellings. Commercial uses are extremely limited with a few neighborhood commercial districts serving the area. Buildings in the area are single-story, strip-mall types. The major roadways are National Trails Highway, Vista Road, and Shadow Mountain Road. The community has one water purveyor, the Helendale Community Services District, which also provides wastewater service.

*Source(s): Google Earth, County of San Bernardino Zoning Map, www.vvta.org, Fehr & Peers, San Bernardino Countywide Plan Transportation Existing Conditions Report, Dudek, County of San Bernardino General Plan Existing Conditions Report*

## Community Amenities

Parks and Trails
- 264 acres of parkland
  - 74-acre community park
  - Two lakes (190 total acres)

Schools (Helendale School District)
- Helendale Elementary School
- ACE Charter School/Riverview Middle School

Fire Protection
- San Bernardino County Fire Department- Station 4

Police
- San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department – Victor Valley Station

Community Gardens
- Harvest to Home Community Garden
- The Green Maven's Community Garden

*Source(s): Google Maps; San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department; Municipal and Regional Services and Amenities Inventory, County of San Bernardino 2012; American Community Garden Association*

## Community Organizations

**Silver Lakes Association** (760) 245-1606 www.silverlakesassociation.com

**Helendale Community Services District** (760) 951-0006 https://www.helendalecsd.org/

## Quality of Life Concerns

The following list was compiled from observations and calls received by the San Bernardino County Sheriff and Code Enforcement officers. Common issues noted within the community include:

- Community Services District
- Solar – issues from residents with solar facilities
- Route 66

*Source(s): County of San Bernardino General Plan, 2007*

## Community Economics

The 2016 ESRI Community Analyst Report showed that Helendale is home to 657 jobs and 87 businesses. These include a variety of business types. The most common are eating and drinking places, real estate, construction, and banks. Approximately 27% of the Helendale labor force is employed within Helendale.
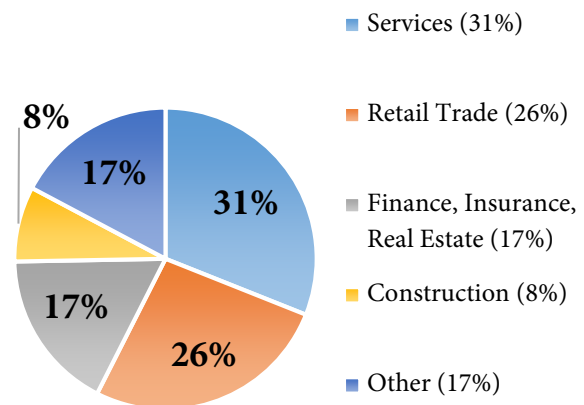


Services (31%)
Retail Trade (26%)
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (17%)
Construction (8%)
Other (17%)

*Figure 3: Business Types in Helendale*
*Source: ESRI Community Analyst*

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## Community Events

- **Community Services District (CSD) Board Meeting:** first and third Thursday of the month, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (Helendale CSD Office)

- **Silver Lakes Association (SLA) Board Meeting:** last Wednesday of the month, 7 to 9 p.m. (SLA Recreation Room/Library)
- **Open Gym Night:** every Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m. (ACE Charter School Gymnasium)

*Source(s): helendalechamber.com; helendalecsd.org*

## Public Health

**Chronic Disease:** The chronic illnesses of concern are heart failure, diabetes, and hypertension, as residents of Helendale have higher rates of those illnesses than the state median. Figure 4 shows the emergency room and hospitalization rates for individuals age 18 and older.

|  | **Diabetes** *Hosp./E.R.* | **COPD** *Hosp./E.R.* | **Asthma** *Hosp./E.R.* | **Heart Failure** *Hosp./E.R.* | **Hypertension** *Hosp./E.R.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Helendale** | * /23.6 | * / * | * / * | 26.7/ * | * /36.6 |
| **San Bernardino County** | 23.3/42.4 | 16.0/19.9 | 9.6/52.6 | 32.3/10.6 | 5.6/46.9 |

*Table 5: Rate of Hospitalization/Emergency Room Visits per 10,000 People*
*Source(s): Healthy San Bernardino*
*\* Indicates insufficient data*

**Air Quality:** Table 3 below shows the air quality near Helendale, measured at the Victorville – 14306 Park Avenue monitoring site, in terms of the number of days that area exceeded the federal standards for pollutants (exceedance days). The table shows that the monitoring site near Helendale had fewer exceedance days for each pollutant than that of the overall South Coast Air Basin, in which Helendale is located.

Air pollution is one of the contributing factors linked to the development of chronic diseases such as stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases. By reducing levels of ambient pollution (outdoor air pollution), communities can lessen the impact that it has on resident's health.

|  | **Victorville – 14306 Park Avenue** | | | **Mojave Air Basin** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** |
| Ozone Federal 8-hour standard | 28 | 31 | 18 | 81 | 66 | 86 |
| Course Particulate Matter ($PM_{10}$) Federal 24-hour standard | 0 | * | 1.0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) Federal 24-hour standard | * | * | * | 2 | 6 | 2 |

*Table 3: Air Quality Exceedance Days*
*Source: California Air Resources Board*
*\* Indicates insufficient data*

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**Modified Food Index:** The Modified Food Index maps the availability of healthy food in a census tract. The lower the score, the less available healthy options are in the area.

The entire community area of Helendale ranks little to moderate for food access, meaning that there is access to between 15 and 30 healthy food outlets within that area. Lower scores indicate that these areas contain many convenience stores and fast food restaurants compared to the number of healthy food markets.

*Source(s): Modified Retail Food Environment Index Score Map*

**Public/Active Transportation:** The community is served by the Victor Valley Transit Authority. However, there are no dedicated bike lanes or bike trails. Parts of the National Trails Highway are identified as a bike-friendly road with a connection to Victorville.

*Source(s): Healthysanbernardinocounty.org; Arb.ca.gov; Google Maps; Victor Valley Transit Authority*

## Community Engagement Summary

As a part of the Community Plans Continuum process, community members from Helendale were invited to participate in three community workshops. The first workshop, titled "What We Value", took place on February 23rd, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Helendale Community Services District. This workshop was attended by 21 community members. Workshop participants performed a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the community. Following that exercise, participants used that information to share what they valued about the community (Values) and what they want to see the community become in the future (Aspirations).

The second workshop, titled "Our Roadmap", took place on March 29th, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Helendale Community Services District. This workshop was attended by 31 community members. The purpose of this workshop was to develop preliminary focus and action statements. The project team provided word for word summaries of the SWOT and Values and Aspirations exercises to use during the goal setting process. Additionally, an existing land use map was provided for each of the Detailed Plan Communities for participants to comment on and recommend changes. Participants made comments on where they would and would not like to see certain uses in the future, as well as what they saw as the true boundary of their community.

The third workshop, titled "Making it Happen", took place on July 19th, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Helendale Community Services District. This workshop was attended by 89 community members. The workshop was used to help prioritize the focus statements developed in the previous workshop while also identifying possible champions for each effort.

Information was also made available on project websites made specifically for each community. This information included:

- Background materials on the project
- Materials developed for each workshop
- Summaries of the information collected from past workshops
- Surveys developed to follow the process of each meeting and allow for further input

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## Community Identified Issues

### SWOT Analysis

This section contains the results of the SWOT analysis conducted during the first workshop. A SWOT exercise stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is used to help gain insight into the community through local knowledge. In the first part, participants identify their communities' biggest strengths, such as community assets like a library or community center, along with their biggest weaknesses, which could be a lack of open space or high rates of internal crime. Next, workshop participants looked at opportunities that the community could take advantage of as part of the community plans process. This builds off of what was identified in the strengths and weaknesses portion. Lastly, participants identify external threats to the community. These are generally concerns that are outside of the control of community members, such as natural disasters or changes in economic conditions. This information was then compiled and used throughout the rest of the community plans process to inform the values and aspirations exercises conducted at workshop #1, as well as the focus and actions statements.

*Strengths*

- Home-owners association (HOA)
- Community services district (CSD)
- Rural-suburban lifestyle
- Sense of community and neighbors lending a helping hand
- Variety of backgrounds and cohesiveness
- Variety of recreational and outdoor/social activities within Silver Lakes
- Well-maintained amenities, such as lakes and parks within Silver Lakes
- Involvement with youth through schools and community programs
- Well-governed by the HOA and CSD
- Remote location and small community
- Equal distance to Los Angeles, Orange County, and Las Vegas
- Great neighbors
- Great views of the night sky
- Low-density development with plenty of open space
- Remote location, quiet, safe
- Desirable weather for most of the year
- Self-contained community
- Close proximity to shopping in Victorville and Barstow

- Community character with no cookie-cutter appearance
- Academics at the high school and ACE high school athletics
- Varied demographic make-up of the residents
- The community contains a total of 264 acres of park land. This total acreage includes the 74-acre community park planned by the Helendale Community Services District and two fishing and boating lakes (190 total acres) operated by the Silver Lakes Association
- Silver Lakes Golf Course is located within the community
- Silver Lakes Community Center is located within the community
- Over 50s' club is located within the community
- Sun Hill Ranch Airport is located within the community
- The community is served by Silver Lakes-Helendale Fire Station, which is located within the community

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*Strengths (continued)*

- There is an expansive local road network that runs throughout the community. The local roads are paved with some pedestrian facilities, including marked crosswalks and sidewalks.
- The Victorville Valley Transit Authority (http://vvta.org/bus) "22" bus line connects the Helendale community with Northgate Village, Oro Grande, Silver Lakes, and Spring Valley Lake. The NTC Commuter also provides service from Helendale to Fort Irwin's national training center, with stops in Hesperia, Victorville, and Barstow.
- The Helendale community has one water purveyor, the Helendale Community Services District
  - Supply is anticipated to continue to meet future demand based on population growth projections for this plan area
- Victor Valley Sheriff Station serves Helendale and has a 40-hour liaison deputy assigned to the community

*Weaknesses*

- Not enough police support or presence in the community
- Poor road conditions
- Railroad—blocked access to the community
- Lack of advanced -placement classes at the local high school
- Interaction with the county planning and decision-making process
- Limited funding from the county or outside sources
- Route 66 traffic, speeds, and dangerous conditions
- Outdated gym
- Lack of commercial structures
- Bugs, coyotes, snakes

- Wind and dust
- Bad cell phone service
- Nothing for youth to do
- At-grade blocks
- Lack of water in the community and water rationing
- Poor industrial base to bring jobs and money into the area
- Lack of services and commercial shopping (banks, restaurants)
- Low level of intellectual stimulation and cultural opportunities
- Lack of independent land-use authority and lack of commercially zoned land
- There are no dedicated bicycle lanes or bicycle and multiuse trails or paths.

*Opportunities*

- County-funded daycare
- Room for businesses (restaurants and shops)
- Appropriate development
- Wi-Fi and Internet access
- Additional parks and recreational services and spaces
- New resident orientation to explain amenities, activities, and community guidelines
- Access to medical services
- Land development; a lot of available land
- Expand freeway access
- Trade schools and higher education opportunities for adults and youth
- Community classes; recreational, safety, business, and educational
- Stimulate growth while maintaining tranquility
- Things for youth to do and more community activities
- Use knowledge of experienced residents
- Low density

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*Opportunities (continued)*

- Use of the lakes for boating, swimming, and fishing
- Expand recreational activities, such as Helendale Park
- Golf cart infrastructure
- Water reclamation plant as a potable water source
- Local-access television show
- For Helendale to go from an unincorporated community to a city
- Adding a connection to the Wild Road interchange

*Threats*

- Drugs and crime
- Access to the community due to potential for trains to block main access
- Low-income Section 8 housing
- Not enough for the youth to do
- Lack of police presence in the area

- Infrastructure and services
- Homeless population increasing with removal from Victorville area
- Lack of commercial uses
- High-density housing
- Tapestry-type project
- Distance from emergency services during natural disasters, such as earthquakes, El Nino, and other weather-related issues)
- Poor economic conditions and recession
- Inadequate infrastructure to support future growth, including services, utilities, water, cable, and roads
- Rents increasing and pushing out commercial stores and restaurants
- Mail thefts are a perpetual problem. They are mainly occurring at rural cluster boxes where multiple boxes are hit during the night

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