

The Big Picture

I was at the AIA chapter meeting last night and had the opportunity to listen to Tom R. Skancke speak about the economic future of Las Vegas. Tom is the President and CEO of the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA), formerly the Regional Development Authority for Southern Nevada (RDA). He spoke about his vision of moving Las Vegas forward to a global economic leader. One reason why Las Vegas fell so hard during the recent recession is because of our narrow economic base ... mainly gaming and tourism. The LVGEA is a non-profit organization with the goal of globalizing Las Vegas so that our economic base is broad to better withstand economic fluctuations.

Their 85 page economic strategy starts with a series of goals for Nevada. "Goal One: Offer the best and most innovative business climate in the Western United States and provide high quality services that will result in the startup, recruitment, retention, and expansion of businesses in Southern Nevada. This is an attainable goal. In most ways, Nevada and the Las Vegas region are already well ahead of their western neighbors... In creating this as goal, there are important caveats. The businesses that will help ensure a vibrant and sustainable economy care about "quality of place." As a region, we must take a holistic approach to economic development, building a community that excels in education, opportunity, and entrepreneurialism."



Sunset Park Overlook

As I thought about this, I was reminded how important each one of us is in the advancement of our community. We definitely cannot do it by ourselves, but our cumulative efforts can raise our community up. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We are each an important cog in the economic wheel of success in Southern Nevada. If one cog is missing, the wheel doesn't turn as efficiently.

To study the LVGEA's economic strategy, visit www.lvgea.org and click on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

"God made the world round so we would never be able to see too far down the road."
— Isak Dinesen

FAVORITE FLORA: DALBERGIA SISSOO - SISSOO TREE



You will have to travel all the way to the Indian subcontinent to view this month's favorite flora in its natural habitat. Luckily for us, you could also just grow the Sissoo Tree (*Dalbergia sissoo*) in your backyard. This evergreen/ semi-evergreen tree grows to heights of up to 60 feet in its native range but is limited to 30-40 foot height and spread in the Las Vegas climate. The Sissoo Tree, sometimes known as Indian Rosewood, has 2 inch oval leaflets that are green to light green in color and shake in the wind similar to Quaking Aspens found in the Rockies. Blooms consist of small clusters of inconspicuous clusters of yellow flowers which can sometimes be fragrant. This

Photo of the Month

tree is very drought tolerant but can also handle heavy irrigation as well. It prefers regular deep watering in the summer to promote healthy growth through the hottest months. *Dalbergia sissoo* is tolerant of heat and can be grown in full sun locations. It is, however, somewhat frost tender with damage occurring just below the freezing mark.

The Sissoo Tree has a variety of uses outside of the landscape. It is one of the most popular cultivated timber for products such as cabinetry, furniture, floorings and even boats. Its rich reddish brown heartwood is usually only outshined by teak for products of this nature. In the landscape, Indian Rosewood's unique appearance allows it to fit into a variety of themes from alpine to tropical. Pair with pines and evergreen shrubs or palms and succulents. It will produce a medium amount of litter throughout the year. Prune as needed to shape the tree and remove any suckers sprouting from its base. This tree can be prone to limb breakage in high wind areas.



Venice Canal
Venice, Italy
Cassi Dawes