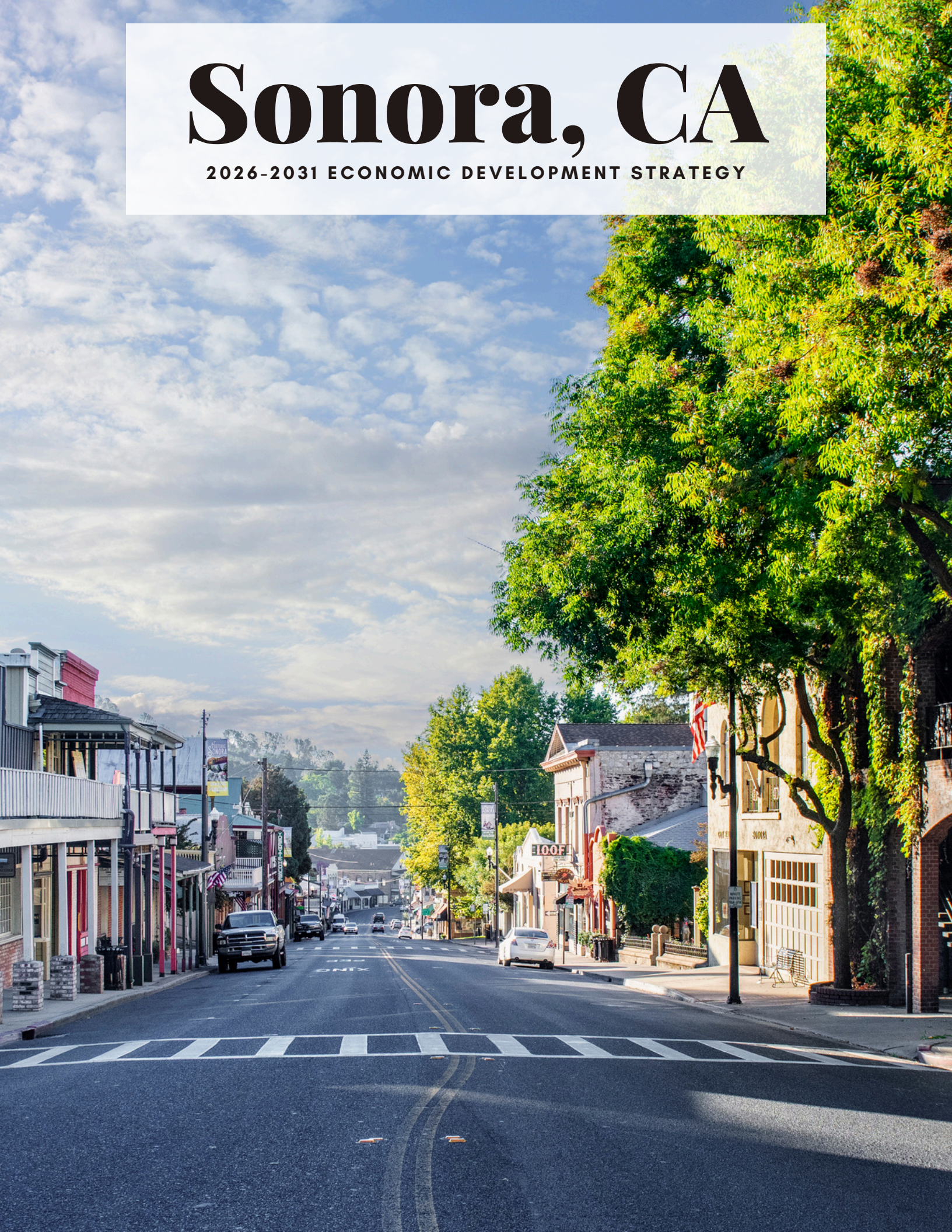


Sonora, CA

2026-2031 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



A 5-Year Strategic Toolkit

This playbook is a five-year working document designed to strengthen Sonora's economy by balancing growth with preserving the city's unique qualities.



The plan serves as a staff accessible toolkit to leverage Sonora's position as the county seat and gateway to Yosemite, turning community input and regional guidance into tangible economic outcomes.

The strategy is built around five objectives with practical action items designed to be carried out by city staff, focusing on low-cost, high-impact implementation tools.

We would like to thank the community of Sonora for their input and the stakeholders who made themselves available for interviews, Sonora Area Foundation (SAF), Mother Lode Job Training (MLJT), Visit Tuolumne and the Sonora City Council.

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5 Objectives

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Message from the Mayor

The Strategy's Foundation: Community, Context, and Commitment

On behalf of the City of Sonora, I am honored to present the Economic Strategy for 2026–2031. This plan builds upon years of community input and regional collaboration. It is not another study to sit on a shelf. It is a working document, a toolkit of clear objectives, action items, and clear tools that City staff, along with our partners, can implement with the resources we have.

Sonora stands at an important crossroads. We are a small city with just over 5,000 residents, but we serve as the county seat, a retail hub of the Central Sierra, and the gateway to many destinations, including Yosemite National Park. Every day, thousands more people move through Sonora than live here, bringing business, sales, and vibrancy, but also putting strain on our housing, streets, and services.

We heard from the community about what matters most. The 2025 Community Survey, completed as part of this study, drew over 500 responses and gave us a strong direction. Residents want economic growth, a stronger downtown, new housing options, and better support for small businesses. Councilmember interviews reinforced the same message. Sonora should strengthen its economic development basics while protecting what makes the city special: its historic charm, community events, and connection to the landscape.

This plan was not created in isolation. It draws from previous city economic reports, regional and statewide frameworks like Sierra Jobs First, the Central Sierra Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), the Housing Element Update, and CA FWD's wildfire resilience work. By aligning Sonora's efforts with these larger strategies, we can stretch our limited resources and position ourselves for state and federal funding to advance local initiatives like Vision Sonora and infill programs.

Most importantly, this plan is designed to be implemented. We recognize our reality: the City of Sonora has a small staff, a modest budget, and many competing needs. The strategies here are developed with that in mind—practical steps with real impact. Some will take longer and require partnerships; others can be advanced right away by City staff.

To our residents, businesses, and visitors: thank you for your input and your ongoing commitment to Sonora. Together, we will build a City known for doing things, not just seeing things.

*Ann
Segerstrom*



Current Conditions & Challenges

The City of Sonora functions as a regional retail and medical hub and serves as a gateway for various recreational, employment, and retail services. This results in a daily influx of commuters, shoppers, and tourists. While this high level of activity boosts retail sales and economic opportunities, it also presents significant challenges, particularly regarding housing availability, strain on public services, and pressure on the downtown area. These dynamics are the primary focus of this Strategic Plan.

The 2025 Community Survey, workshop discussions, and regional reports from our Statewide partners collectively identified five core objectives essential to securing the city's future prosperity.

Downtown Sonora has experienced business turnover in recent years resulting in vacant commercial buildings on Main Street. These vacancies create opportunities for new ventures and creative re-use of historic structures.

The city's reliance on retail, healthcare and tourism plays a central role in shaping economic development decisions.

A nationwide housing crisis across every income level is making it difficult to retain families and a qualified workforce.

Persistent business and workforce hurdles include high utility costs, trouble accessing capital, and workforce shortages,



all of which can benefit from tangible, visible support from the city.

Limited vacant land within city limits makes redevelopment and infill a priority. To facilitate future growth and ensure coordinated municipal planning and service delivery for nearby projects, the City endorses strategic annexation within its Sphere of Influence.

Together, these conditions set the stage for this plan. They reveal a community rich in natural beauty, history and a strong sense of identity, but also real vulnerabilities in housing, revenue stability, business costs, and developable land.

The objectives that follow are designed to address these challenges through practical, achievable steps that City staff can realistically implement.

What types of services or businesses do you want added to Sonora?

Delicatessen ^{Italian Restaurant} ^{Free walking tours}

Apothecary ^{Tea} ^{Tincture} ^{Salves} ^{Spice equipment rental} ^{Engraving machine use} ^{E-Books} ^{Special order to your} ^{More business!}

Crafting ^{Trade/tools} ^{Fishing} ^{store} ^{We take care} ^{Re/Vamp} ^{Recipe} ^{Branch place}

Golf Store ^{More Transit along 105} ^{Author} ^{Music} ^{Hummingbird} ^{Crosswalks}

Craft Store ^{Books} ^{Organic/healthy food} ^{grocery store} ^{Dim Sum!} ^{More organic for young children}

Artists Studios ^(Affordable) ^{Indian food} ^{Yes!!} ^{Indian food} ^{Yes!!} ^{Indian food} ^{Yes!!}

Makers Stack ^{Object library} ^{Electric Bike ^{Locker} ^{So I can ride to work!} ^{SALAD/Soup REST.}}

Volunteer Opp. ^{Pho}

Author ^{Music} ^{Hummingbird} ^{Crosswalks}

Books ^{Organic/healthy food} ^{grocery store} ^{Dim Sum!} ^{More organic for young children}

Electric Bike ^{Locker} ^{So I can ride to work!} ^{SALAD/Soup REST.}

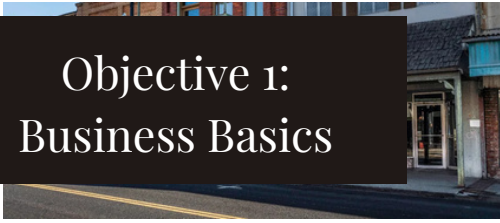
Pho



5 Key Objectives

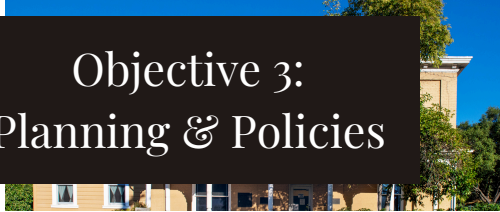
5 Objectives form the core of the City of Sonora's Economic Development Strategy guiding from 2026 to 2031. The objectives simplify economic development by providing a community-focused roadmap with clear action items enhanced by measurable implementation tools. These objectives ensure city staff and community partners can align their efforts, turning the plan's vision into practical, day-to-day implementation.

The framework is built specifically to address the city's critical challenges: strengthening the economic base, revitalizing the downtown and supporting local businesses. Each objective is broken down into practical, manageable steps that reflect the reality of a small city with limited staff and budget. By focusing on clear priorities, the City can effectively implement this plan, track progress, and build the resilience necessary to shape an appealing future for all residents and businesses.



Objective 1: Business Basics

Promote Sonora as a place to visit, invest and do business through coordinated economic development efforts



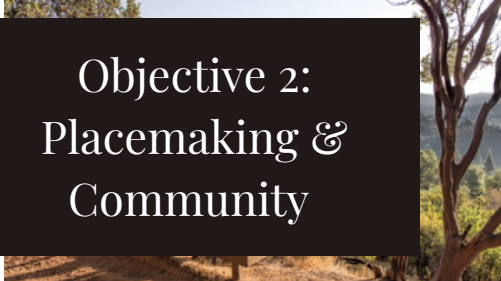
Objective 3: Planning & Policies

Encourage private investment and business growth by providing predictable approval processes and adopting Policies that support business investment and expansion.



Objective 5: Workforce Development

Actively work with the Business community, Brick and Mortar owners and Career Technical Education providers to fill current vacancies, develop new growth sectors and train tomorrow's talent locally.



Objective 2: Placemaking & Community

Position Sonora as a modern recreational gateway, while preserving its historical character through creation of active social spaces (Farmers Market + Linoberg St) and beautification, Art, events that strengthen Sonora's role as a vibrant regional destination.



Objective 4: Funding

Apply for grant funding to enhance economic development and improve city infrastructure, focusing on the protection of historical assets, non-motorized improvements, fire resiliency, and long-term sustainability.

OBJECTIVE 1 - BUSINESS BASICS

ACTION ITEMS



1.1) Select Sonora Marketing Campaign

The campaign is a low-cost, digital-first business attraction effort that will use the updated Sonora Economic Development website, targeted social media activity, direct outreach, and consistent follow-up to raise awareness of Sonora's opportunities among current (and prospective) businesses. It replaces traditional brochures with a modern, ongoing online presence that highlights local success stories, available spaces, and Sonora's competitive advantages. The campaign is a 12-month continual rolling effort, not a 30-day promotion.

1.2) Business Attraction Strategy

Identify vacancies in brick-and-mortar storefronts across the City and prepare tailored recruitment packets for hotel groups, hospitality investors, and retail companies appropriate for the size, location and need within the City.

Conduct exit interviews with businesses closing their doors, re-locating or otherwise modifying their activities to understand the "why". Communication with property owners is also critical to identifying the investments needed to make spaces attractive to potential tenants.

1.3) Business Retention Strategy

City businesses should be encouraged to join the Sonora Chamber of Commerce and become more familiar with Mother Lode Job Training and Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in the region. The local business community can benefit from coordination, co-promotion, and collaboration with each other and the City.



BUSINESS BASICS

IMPLEMENTATION

1.1.1) Economic Development working group

Remain active in the multi-agency economic development working group. Use the working group to keep shared goals achievable by creating resources that represent the region and support outcomes that highlight opportunities in Sonora.



1.1.2) Landing Page Development

The economic development working group will lead an effort to create a Regional landing page with an economic development focus. This shared recruitment resource serves as the practical front door for recruitment and a place to keep core recruitment information current through an established working group.

1.1.3) Business Start-up Guide

Prepare and publish a comprehensive Business Start Up in the City of Sonora guide that outlines all the steps and resources to establish a new business. The guide will cover getting a Business License, Tenant Improvements, establishing a fictitious business name, Permits, Design Review, Chamber membership and other key elements entailed in opening a business to the public.

1.2.1) Vacancy and Ownership Pipeline

Create an inventory of vacant spaces Citywide including, property owner contact, property needs, vacancy date and zoning. Use the vacancy pipeline to keep status updates, ownership, and next steps current, so these sites can be the focus of efforts to recruit new business, expansion opportunities, assistance programs, etc.

1.2.2) Business Outreach

Conduct targeted outreach calls or meetings with prospective businesses and site selectors to keep communication lines open and Sonora top of mind.



1.2.3) Business Attraction List

Prepare a “Business Attraction Target List” identifying top industry prospects, updated when necessary to reflect market shifts and Sonora’s evolving strengths. This list should be reviewed with economic development partners to align recruitment efforts.

1.2.4) Hospitality & Retail

Maintain a list of potential mid-scale hospitality and destination dining operators to initiate outreach contacts.

1.3.1) Sonora on Social Media

Utilize Sonora Social Media accounts to promote new businesses opening in the City, highlight business expansions/changes/activities, city improvements, Sonora Chamber activities, exciting developments within the community (such as Farmers Market vendors establishing a storefront on Main Street!).

1.3.2) Business Town Hall

Host one annual “Policy & Business Roundtable” with local business leaders, utility providers, and regional partners to gather feedback on business conditions, discuss regulatory challenges, and recommend adjustments to maintain Sonora’s competitive position.

1.3.3) Annual Business Survey

Partner with Sonora Chamber of Commerce to conduct an annual Business Survey to gather input on expansion opportunities, succession risks, workforce needs, infrastructure concerns, and regulatory or cost barriers that may affect business stability or growth, as well as potential responses to implementation of strategy action items.

1.3.4) Digital Tools for Downtown

Coordinate with Sierra SBDC or local social media firms to deliver an annual “Digital Tools for Downtown” workshop focused on e-commerce adoption, online marketing, and digital payment systems.

1.3.5) Tenant Improvements

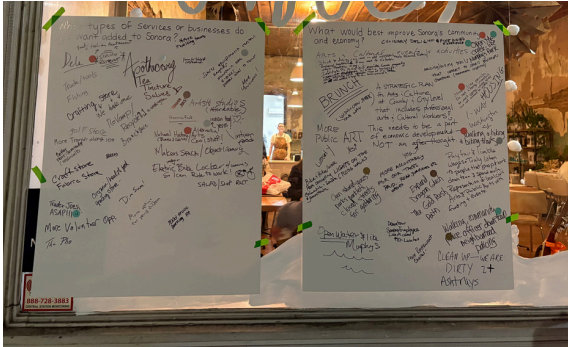
Establish and implement tenant improvement programs using a mix of grants and low-interest loans. Key examples include: Forgivable loans for Life Safety and ADA compliance, Downtown Revitalization microgrants (up to \$5,000), and Historic Building Improvement grants (up to \$20,000).

1.3.6) Small Business Microgrants and Loans

Establish a small business microgrant and loan program with awards of up to \$10,000 to support start-up costs, equipment purchases, storefront improvements, and business expansion. Partner with the Small Business Development Center and Mother Lode Job Training to provide applicant outreach, technical assistance, and business coaching.

OBJECTIVE 2 - PLACEMAKING & COMMUNITY

ACTION ITEMS



2.1) Strengthen Sonora's Identity and Sense of Place

Improve how Sonora looks, feels, and functions for residents, businesses, and visitors. Strengthen gateways, public spaces, trails, streetscapes, storefronts, visitor amenities, and community gathering places in ways that celebrate Sonora's character, support local businesses, and build community pride. Use coordinated improvements and programming to create a more consistent and recognizable experience throughout the city.

2.2) Anchor Event

Formally designate the Mother Lode Fairgrounds as the site for one annual anchor event by 2028, such as a multi-day fishing expo, mountain bike expo, multi-day music festival, Soap Box Derby or motorcycle tour. This event will serve as a regional

draw, fill hotel rooms during shoulder seasons, and reinforce Sonora's emerging identity as a hub for recreation and outdoor culture.

2.3) Tourism

Continue partnering with Visit Tuolumne County to co-market Sonora, its anchor event, and other local highlights in larger state and regional tourism markets.



PLACEMAKING & COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION

2.1.1) Destination, Sonora!

Market Sonora's family-friendly amenities, including parks, schools, Farmers Market and community events, through city newsletters, social media, Visit Tuolumne County and the City website. This campaign reinforces the city's appeal to young families and regional transplants.

2.1.2) Arts, Exhibits and Shows

Temporarily activate vacant or underused downtown properties as venues for art exhibitions, performances, trade shows, expos, and other community events.

2.1.3) Welcome to Sonora Gateway

Place a welcome to Sonora, Queen of the Southern Mines, Gateway Monument on city-owned property or other appropriate location at major intersections.

2.1.4) Sonora Farmers Market Promotion

Actively promote the farmers market to strengthen community social fabric and downtown activity. Support vendors in transitioning from Market to Main Street.



2.1.5) Community Beautification Project

Continue So-Beautiful Community Beautification project as an ongoing, low-cost community activation program, including targeted tree planting and other streetscape improvements where appropriate.

2.1.6) Dragoon Gulch and Tuolumne Heritage Trail

Advance extensions to the Dragoon Gulch and Tuolumne Heritage trails, including landscaping, signage, interpretive elements, and stronger connections to surrounding destinations. Use both trail systems to support placemaking, community recreation, and Sonora's outdoor identity.

2.1.7) City Landscape Planter Program

Re-plant and refresh downtown planters as part of an ongoing beautification effort. Partner with a local nursery or landscape professional to select attractive, water-wise options that add visual interest to Sonora.

2.1.8) Professional support for storefront and exterior improvements

Engage a local business or professional to support consistent window displays, beautification, and exterior enhancements.

2.1.9) Banners and Seasonal Displays

Utilize existing Banner hardware on light standards as an opportunity to promote and advance messaging, create a fresh look in town and enhance seasonal outreach efforts (Christmas Town, Round Up, Sonora Chamber, City Anniversaries, etc)

2.1.10) Parking lot upgrades

Recognize the importance of safe, convenient, well-maintained City infrastructure to business activity. Consider projects that add parking or improve existing lots.

2.1.11) Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Expand publicly accessible electric vehicle charging at downtown parking areas, visitor destinations, lodging properties, and commercial centers, as grant funding becomes available.

2.1.12) Courthouse Park Demonstration Coordination

Collaborate with Tuolumne County to review policies governing protests and public demonstrations at Courthouse Park, with the goal of protecting lawful public expression while minimizing disruption to downtown businesses, customers, traffic and public access.

2.1.13) Build the Stewart & Linoberg Street Plaza project

Advancing both plaza projects as signature public spaces strengthens downtown identity, creates a recognizable community gathering place, and supports nearby businesses and events.

2.2.1) Anchor Event Feasibility and Partner Recruitment

Convene the Fairgrounds, Visit Tuolumne County, local businesses, and event producers to evaluate concepts, identify funding and operating partners, and select an event for launch.

2.3.1) Public Restroom Basics

Maintain public restrooms that are consistently open, clean, safe, and well stocked during peak visitor periods and community events.

2.3.2) Grow Christmas Town

Continue supporting the Sonora Chamber of Commerce in expanding Christmas Town Sonora as a signature seasonal destination. Build on the event's growing attendance by adding activities, strengthening promotion, encouraging local shopping, and creating additional reasons for residents and visitors to spend time downtown.

OBJECTIVE 3 - PLANNING & POLICIES

ACTION ITEMS

3.1) Outreach Tools

Prepare practical development and housing outreach tools, including commercial prospectuses, housing prospectuses, and a homeowner-facing ADU guide, to make priority commercial sites and small-scale housing opportunities easier to pursue.

3.2) Active Transportation Integration

Incorporate active transportation improvements—such as pedestrian connections, bike lanes, and wayfinding signage—into corridor and downtown planning documents and funded projects. A walkable community is advantageous to consumer spending, community health, social connectedness and overall happiness.

3.3) Sonora Growth Plan

Establish a framework for future city expansion. The plan should address pre-zoning within the existing sphere of influence, infrastructure corridors, service needs, sustainability, and fiscal impacts.



PLANNING & POLICIES

IMPLEMENTATION

3.1.1) Commercial Activation Prospectuses

Prepare detailed prospectuses for Mono Way, the Sanguinetti Triangle, and Childs Drive sites. Each document should include zoning allowances, infrastructure capacity, potential uses, and available incentives. Prospectuses should be distributed to developers, brokers, and regional partners to attract investment.

3.1.2) Housing Activation and Coordination Prospectuses

Prepare and publish housing activation prospectuses for underutilized parcels throughout the City. Each prospectus should detail zoning allowances, infrastructure capacity, and potential development models. Focus directly on property owners and developers who have entitled, yet inactive, infill projects to identify barriers and provide tailored incentives that encourage project initiation. For properties outside city limits, emphasize the benefits of becoming part of the city.

3.1.3) Homeowner ADU Guide

Publish a homeowner accessory dwelling unit (ADU) guide. This guide should explain zoning, permitting steps, parking requirements and cost considerations in plain language. By lowering barriers for homeowners, Sonora can add small-scale housing units that expand supply without requiring large land acquisitions.

3.1.4) Development coordination

To keep projects within city limits and to limit delays in project approval, meet with developers to review projects prior to formal submittal. This proactive approach ensures that planned projects move toward groundbreaking and completion.



3.1.5) Rehabilitation of 290 Stewart St

Deliver on rehabilitation of the property located at 290 Stewart Street, utilizing financial assistance from the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program or Program Income funds. The CDBG funding ensures the project aligns with the program's objectives: providing rent controlled housing, establishing and maintaining a suitable living environment for a range of income levels.

3.1.6) Vision Sonora Implementation

Reaffirm the City's commitment to the Vision Sonora Plan to identify priority projects from the plan each fiscal year and moving it forward with design, financing plan, and ultimately construction.

3.1.7) Fire Insurance Advocacy

Join the California Forward Resilience Coalition and submit one annual Council resolution to the California Insurance Commissioner advocating for fire insurance solutions that stabilize local residents and businesses. This action both raises Sonora's profile at the state level and provides tangible advocacy for community members struggling with rising premiums or coverage loss.

3.1.8) Advance Census Tract 12 for Opportunity Zone Designation

Advance the current nomination of Census Tract 12 for the next Opportunity Zone program. Coordinate with state and regional partners, document the tract's investment potential, and identify priority properties and projects that could benefit from designation.

3.2.1) Active transportation network tie-in to key place-making assets

Advance Dragoon Gulch and the Tuolumne Heritage Trail as part of an interconnected active transportation network that supports infill sites, housing access, and community mobility.

3.2.2) Priority Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

Identify and prioritize missing pedestrian and bicycle connections between downtown, neighborhoods, schools, parks, public spaces, and commercial corridors to incorporate into capital improvement plans, development review and grant applications.

3.3.1) Annexation study + Municipal Service Review update

The study should include fiscal impact analysis, infrastructure requirements, service delivery costs, and potential revenue gains. Findings will guide Council on whether annexation aligns with Sonora's long-term growth strategy.

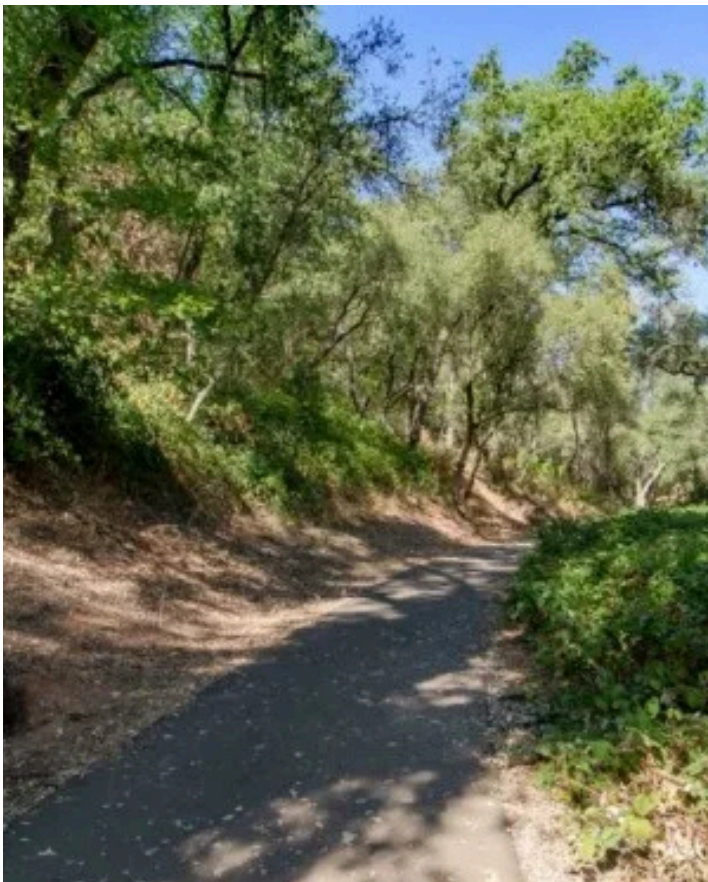


3.3.2) City-owned property evaluation

Evaluate city-owned properties for development potential, for sale or surplus, including City rights of way and property swaps.

3.3.3) Community engagement on growth

Host at least two community workshops to gather resident input on potential annexation and growth policies. Workshops should include maps, data on projected impacts, and facilitated discussion to build transparency and trust in the decision-making process.



3.3.4) Priority Opportunity Sites Matrix

Maintain a simple priority sites matrix identifying key commercial, housing, downtown, and growth-area sites, including current status, major constraints, and recommended next steps to help guide City outreach, planning, and partnership efforts.

3.3.5) Growth and Project Communications Program

Use a standard communications approach for major growth, housing, annexation, and economic development efforts, including clear project summaries, early public information, and consistent messaging on community benefits, tradeoffs, and timelines.

OBJECTIVE 4 - FUNDING

ACTION ITEMS

4.1) Annual Funding and Reinvestment Strategy

Establish an annual process to identify grants, matching funds, and local reinvestment opportunities that advance the City's economic development priorities. Track applications, awards, and project results to support consistent implementation of the strategy.

4.2) Local Funding Stream

Establish a durable local economic development funding approach that supports match capacity, grant execution, and ongoing implementation.



FUNDING

IMPLEMENTATION

4.1.1) TOT Reporting and Analysis

Continue providing Council with TOT revenue reports that break down contributions from hotels, short-term rentals, and events. Each report should include year-over-year comparisons and identify seasonal gaps where marketing campaigns or event programming could strengthen low-performing months. Use the report to guide investment decisions and address weak tourism months.

4.1.2) Annual Funding Matrix Report

Prepare and publish an annual “Funding Matrix Report” for Economic Development beginning in FY 2026–27 that identifies \$50,000–\$100,000 in state and federal grant opportunities. The report should outline eligibility criteria, required matching funds, and alignment with Sonora’s strategic objectives. Present the report to Council each spring to guide budget decisions and set priorities for applications.

4.2.1) Implementation of Grants

Submit grant applications each year in categories such as Jobs First, USDA Rural Development, EDA Economic Adjustment, or wildfire resilience. Staff should track application outcomes and report results to Council annually, building institutional knowledge and improving competitiveness over time.

4.2.2) Matching Fund

Continue to propose matching fund allocations for economic development projects in the City’s annual budget, subject to available resources and fiscal conditions. This formalizes the City’s commitment to leveraging small local contributions into larger external awards. It also reduces last-minute match scrambles and improves application readiness.

4.2.3) Facade improvements and Investment in Old Structures

Create a clear, repeatable decision process that defines which visible improvements are eligible for reinvestment support and why. This includes banner deployment, beautification investments, and other public-facing upgrades tied to visitor experience and community pride.

OBJECTIVE 5 - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION ITEMS

5.1) Broad Workforce Support (Annual Workforce Update)

In partnership with regional workforce organizations, monitor workforce needs in healthcare, hospitality, professional services, and other key local industries.

Provide the City Council with annual updates on employer needs, workforce gaps, available training resources, and grant opportunities that may support regional workforce development efforts.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION

5.1.1) Workforce referral and “warm handoff” loop

Refer local businesses to the Mother Lode Job Training hub in downtown Sonora for technical assistance and workforce support. Use a consistent referral process so businesses that contact the City for workforce help are connected quickly to MLJT and partner resources, with follow-up tracked to confirm outcomes where possible.

5.1.2) MLJT-led economic development working group infrastructure

Participate in workforce and economic development efforts led by Mother Lode Job Training, the Chamber, Tuolumne County, and other regional partners. The City’s role should focus on supporting partner-led initiatives, sharing information, connecting local businesses with available resources, and participating in joint projects when they align with City priorities and available staff capacity.

5.1.3) Youth-to-Workforce Initiative

Support ongoing, partner-led collaboration to establish a youth-to-workforce retention initiative in partnership with schools, workforce organizations, and local employers. The initiative should strengthen local career awareness, internships, apprenticeships, work-based learning, and practical pathways into jobs that allow younger residents and families to remain in the Sonora area.

5.1.4) Childcare and after-school program working group

Identify a community partner to convene a working group with schools, nonprofits, and youth service providers to identify a site and funding strategy for a new childcare or after-school program. The findings and recommendations should be delivered to City Council to guide program development and help meet a documented community need.

5.1.5) School district/Columbia College partnerships

Support practical partnerships with the school district to support childcare delivery and workforce pathway development. Use school partnerships to strengthen siting options, program coordination, and participation pipelines that improve retention for working families.

APPENDIX



APPENDIX 1 - PREVIOUS PLAN CROSSWALK

The table below shows the strongest connections between previous economic development plans and the City's five objectives. It is not intended as a complete summary of each source.

Earlier finding or direction	Connected strategy objective(s)	Connection to this strategy
2020 Economic Development Restart Findings Report, pp. 18–20. Downtown faced vacancies, reduced activity, aging storefronts, missing visitor amenities, and a need to reposition Sonora as a destination.	1, Business Basics 2, Placemaking & Community	Objective 1 organizes vacancy tracking, property-owner outreach, business recruitment, and retention. Objective 2 addresses storefronts, public spaces, visitor amenities, events, and Sonora's destination identity.
2020 Economic Development Restart Findings Report, pp. 9 and 20. Development activity was limited, few sites were available for businesses supporting living-wage jobs, and stakeholders raised concerns about permitting, costs, infrastructure, and the City's business climate.	1, Business Basics 3, Planning & Policies	Objective 1 creates a consistent business-facing recruitment and support function. Objective 3 makes priority sites, permitting steps, and development expectations easier to understand while advancing long-term growth planning.
2020 Economic Development Restart Findings Report, pp. 5–7. The report documented a declining labor pool, limited growth in the working-age population, and substantial worker commuting into and out of the area.	3, Planning & Policies 5, Workforce Development	Objective 3 connects housing and growth planning to workforce availability. Objective 5 establishes recurring employer and partner coordination and an annual workforce update.

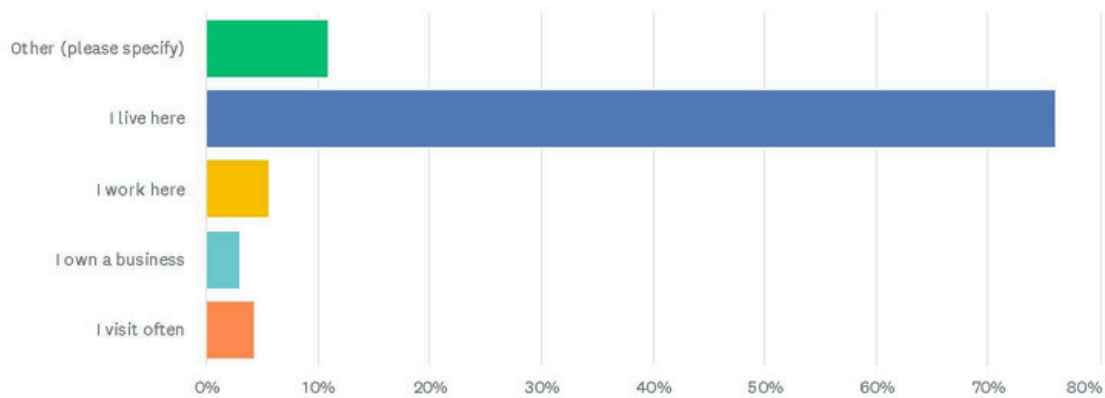
2023 Organization Review and Budget Stabilization Study, Executive Summary, Theme Four. Citygate called for effective growth and annexation planning, attainable housing, tourism and small-business development, filling vacant commercial spaces, and protecting downtown’s historic character.	1, Business Basics 2, Placemaking & Community 3, Planning & Policies	The strategy separates this broad direction into three areas of responsibility: business development, place-based revitalization, and housing, infill, and growth planning.
2023 Organization Review and Budget Stabilization Study, Executive Summary, pp. 3–4. Citygate found that Sonora’s small staff and limited fiscal resources constrained the City’s ability to advance projects and meet long-term needs.	4, Funding	Objective 4 establishes annual funding review, grant pursuit, match planning, and revenue reporting. The five-year implementation structure phases the work and uses regional partnerships and outside expertise where additional capacity is needed.
Central Sierra 2024–2029 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, pp. 11 and 24. The regional economy relies heavily on businesses serving residents and visitors. The CEDS calls for stronger small-business support, entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, and growth in sectors that bring outside revenue into the region.	1, Business Basics 5, Workforce Development	Objective 1 supports business retention, small-business assistance, and targeted recruitment. Objective 5 connects employers with education, training, and workforce partners.

Central Sierra 2024–2029 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, pp. 5, 15, and 22–24. Housing shortages, infrastructure and utility costs, limited small-business capital, childcare shortages, and loss of local talent were identified as interconnected barriers to economic growth.	3, Planning & Policies 4, Funding 5, Workforce Development	Objective 3 advances housing and development readiness. Objective 4 improves access to outside funding. Objective 5 places the City in regional partnerships that can identify and address workforce barriers extending beyond City responsibilities.
Central Sierra 2024–2029 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, p. 23. The CEDS prioritizes downtown redevelopment, placemaking, vibrant public spaces, visitor amenities, and trail connections to commercial districts.	2, Placemaking & Community 3, Planning & Policies	Objective 2 advances public spaces, visitor amenities, trails, and downtown identity. Objective 3 connects those investments to active transportation, infill sites, housing, and commercial areas.
Sierra Jobs First Strategic Plan. The regional plan identifies sustainable recreation and tourism as a priority sector, alongside natural and working lands, clean energy, healthcare, and sustainable agriculture.	2, Placemaking & Community	Objective 2 provides the strongest local connection through outdoor recreation, tourism, events, and destination development.
Sierra Jobs First Strategic Plan. Small-business development, education, workforce, childcare, housing, and infrastructure are treated as foundations for regional job growth.	3, Planning & Policies 4, Funding 5, Workforce Development	Objective 3 addresses housing and infrastructure readiness, Objective 4 strengthens project-funding readiness, and Objective 5 anchors workforce coordination in existing regional partnerships.

APPENDIX 2 - COMMUNITY SURVEY

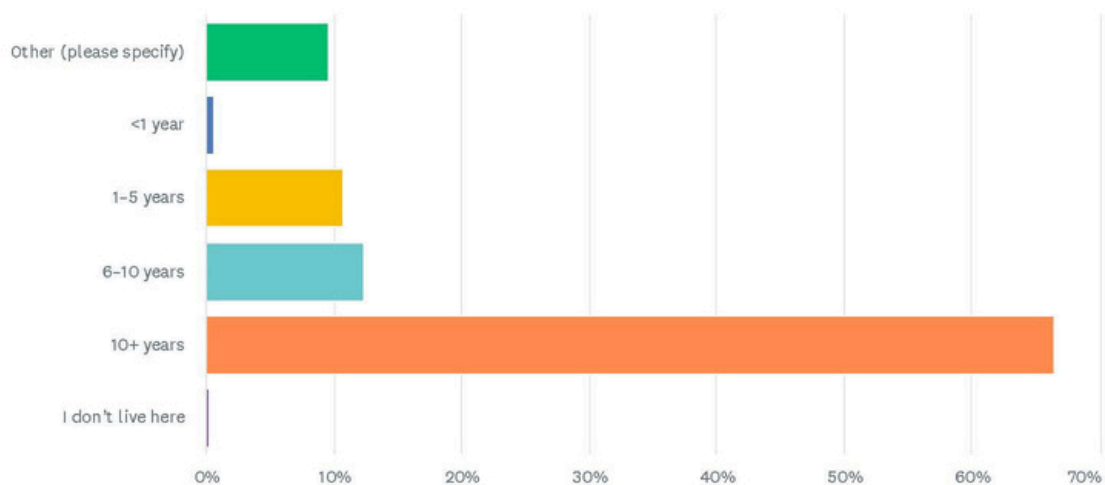
Q1 503 responses

Your connection to Sonora:



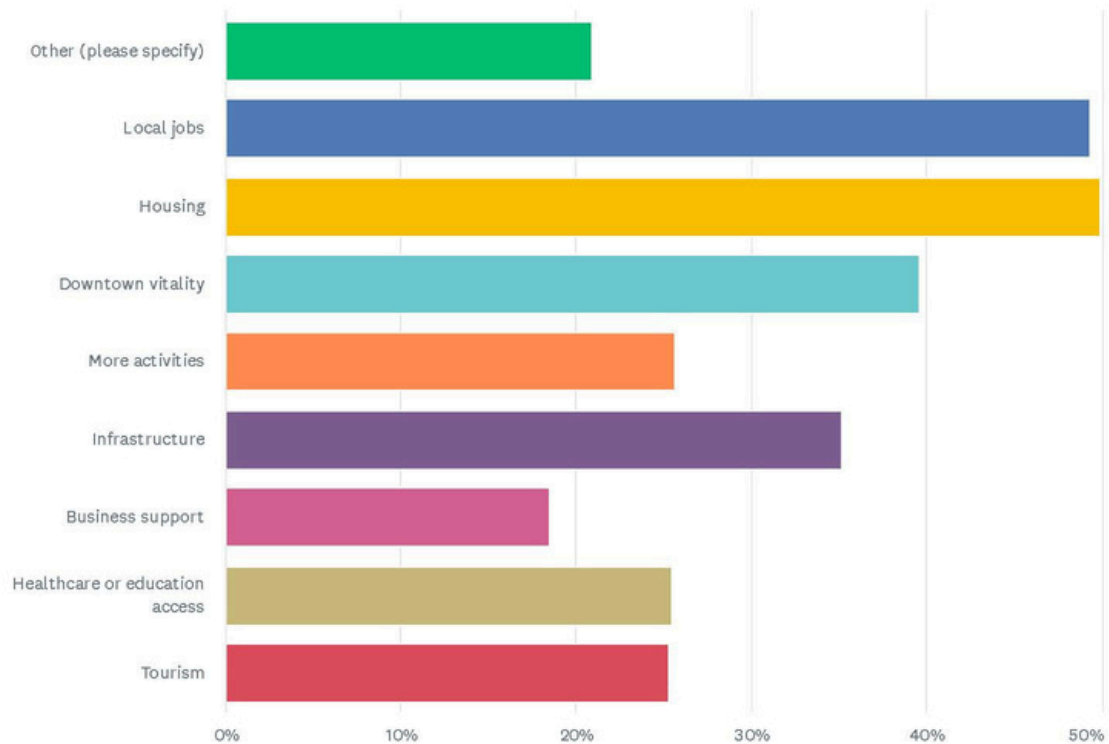
Q2 501 responses

How long have you lived/been connected to Sonora?



Q3 503 responses

What would most improve Sonora's economy/community? Pick 3



City of Sonora Community Survey

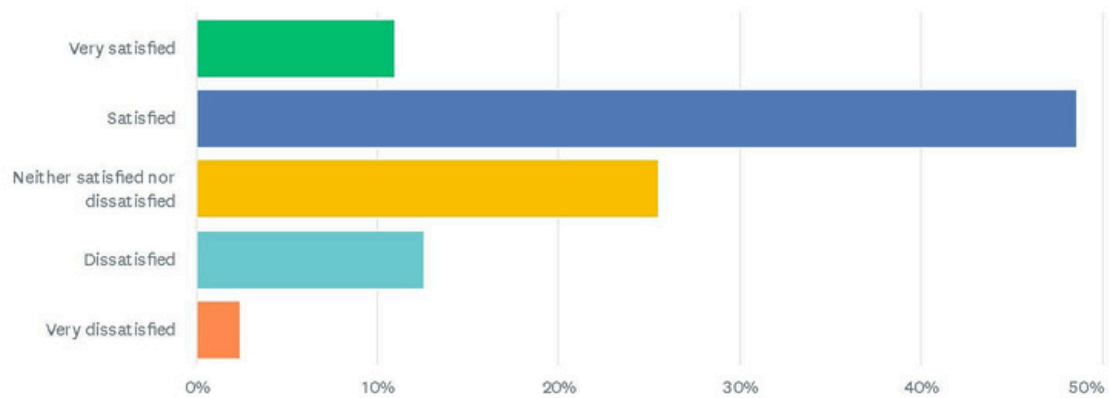
SurveyMonkey

Q4 What types of businesses/services do you wish we had?

Answered: 397 Skipped: 106

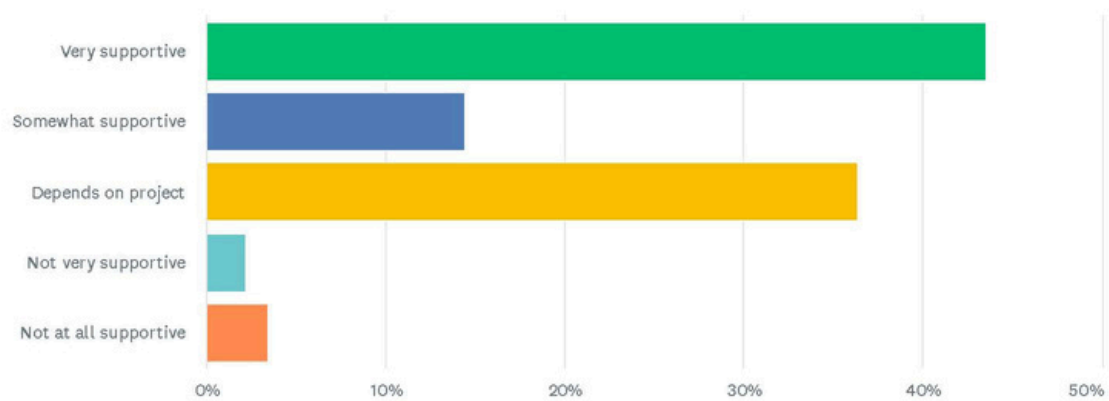
Q5 502 responses

Overall satisfaction with Sonora livability:



Q6 500 responses

Rank your support for new growth and development:

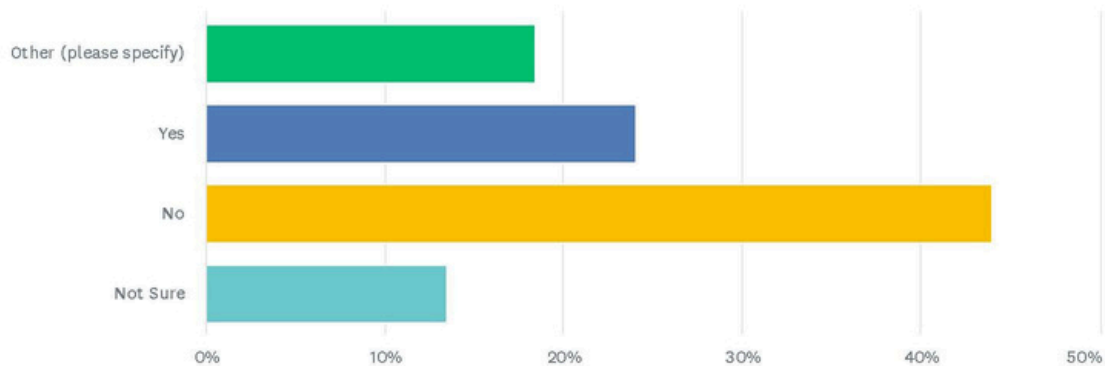


Q7 Where do you see opportunities for growth or improvement?

Answered: 395 Skipped: 108

Q8 498 responses

Are you concerned growth could harm the community?



Q9 Would you join a workshop or participate further in developing the City of Sonora's Economic future?

Answered: 195 Skipped: 308

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Email address	100.00% 195