



Economic Development Draft Strategic Action Plan

December 12, 2023
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRAFT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

COUNCIL GOAL STATEMENT

Economic & Community Vibrancy:

Sustain and develop a diverse and thriving economy that benefits Santa Rosa residents and businesses and contributes to the community's economic health while preserving historical and cultural integrity.

CITY OF SANTA ROSA MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide high-quality public services and cultivate a vibrant, resilient and livable city.

General Plan Update:

Emerging themes – live, work, recreation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRAFT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Timeline

JULY - AUGUST

- Process and element clarification
- Vision (goal/value) statement(s)
- ED Subcommittee Discussion 2

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER

- Internal engagement
- External engagement

SEPTEMBER

- Draft review by staff
- Draft review by ED Subcommittee
- Incorporation of changes and recommendations

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

- Review of final draft by staff
- Review of final draft by ED Subcommittee

DECEMBER

- Council Study Session
- Incorporation of changes & work with designer to prep public document

Final Adoption Prior to July 1, 2024



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Economic and Employment Drivers

Santa Rosa has a diverse economy with strengths in:

- **Healthcare:** largest industry in Sonoma County; 2 of the major hospitals are in Santa Rosa and serve the greater region.
- **Retail Trade:** 2nd largest industry; Santa Rosa is one of the few urban centers in the North Bay region
- **Manufacturing:** driven mostly by the agribusiness industry. Relative to the county, Santa Rosa includes a relatively small share of manufacturing and agricultural jobs.
- **Advance Technology Research and Development and Manufacturing:** a significant industry niche, includes medical tech related to the presence of health care, computer and electronics components, and clean tech.
- **Accommodation and Food Services:** tied to the area's well-established tourism and recreation destination brand.
- **Sonoma County's primary business and financial hub:** Santa Rosa has approximately 41% of the county jobs in office-based industries (professional and tech services, finance/insurance, information, real estate, etc.).

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Input & Engagement

Surveys

- Past survey
- Other department/division surveys
- Upcoming survey

In Person Community Engagement

- 3 tabling/engagement sessions
- 1:1 discussions
- Targeted meetings

Departmental Engagement

Data, Studies, Research

Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan Examples



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2021 Economic Development Survey

600+ Respondents | Available in English and Spanish

- 59% identified as business owners
- Majority were long-term Santa Rosa residents (12 years or more)
- Respondents identifying as Asian, Multi-racial, and White were over-represented compared to the population
- Respondents identifying as American Indian or Alaskan Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander were under-represented compared to the population.
- The majority were 35 or older and slightly more female than male
- Top 5 zip codes across respondents were:
 - 95404: parts of Downtown and South Park
 - 95405: Montgomery Village, Bennet Valley
 - 95409: Oakmont, Skyhawk
 - 95403: Coffey Park, Piner Rd./N. Mendocino areas
 - 95401: Stony Point Road/W. College Ave. areas

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2021 Economic Development Survey

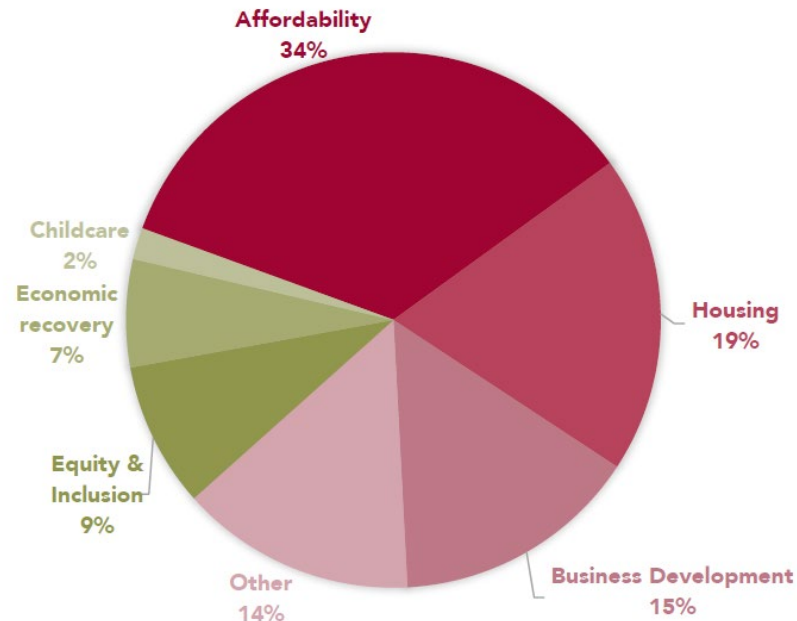
Survey Questions *(based on input from interviews)*

- What are the most important issues for the future of Santa Rosa
 - Business Development
 - Affordability
 - Housing
 - Childcare
 - Economic Recovery
 - Equity and Inclusion
 - Other (public safety, homelessness, infrastructure, environmental, wildfire, beautification, vibrancy)
- What econ dev issues are important to you?
 - Business Assistance
 - Development Proj.
 - Workforce Dev.
 - Civic Pride
 - Permitting
 - Permits (planning/building)
 - Public Art
 - Neighborhood programs
 - Tourism
- Level of interaction with ED Division
- Challenges and barriers
 - Difficult processes
 - Unsure of resources
 - Time consuming processes
 - Unsure who to reach out to
 - Unsure what is required
 - No money
 - None
 - Other
- What changes do you want to see in the city?
- What excites you about the future of Santa Rosa?

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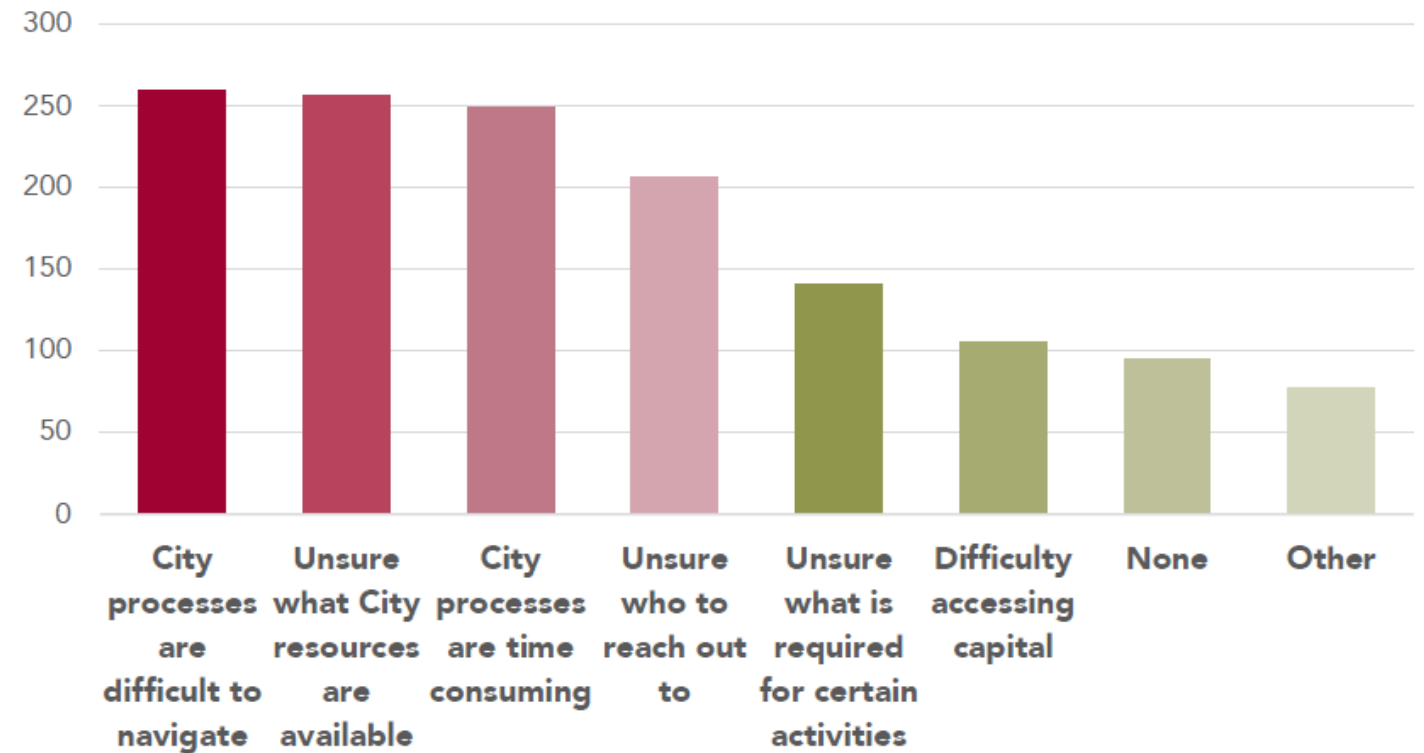
2021 Economic Development Survey

Most important issue for the future of SR



Business owners & residents prioritized housing and affordability. **Business owners** selected business development next whereas **non-business owners** were concerned about equity and inclusion.

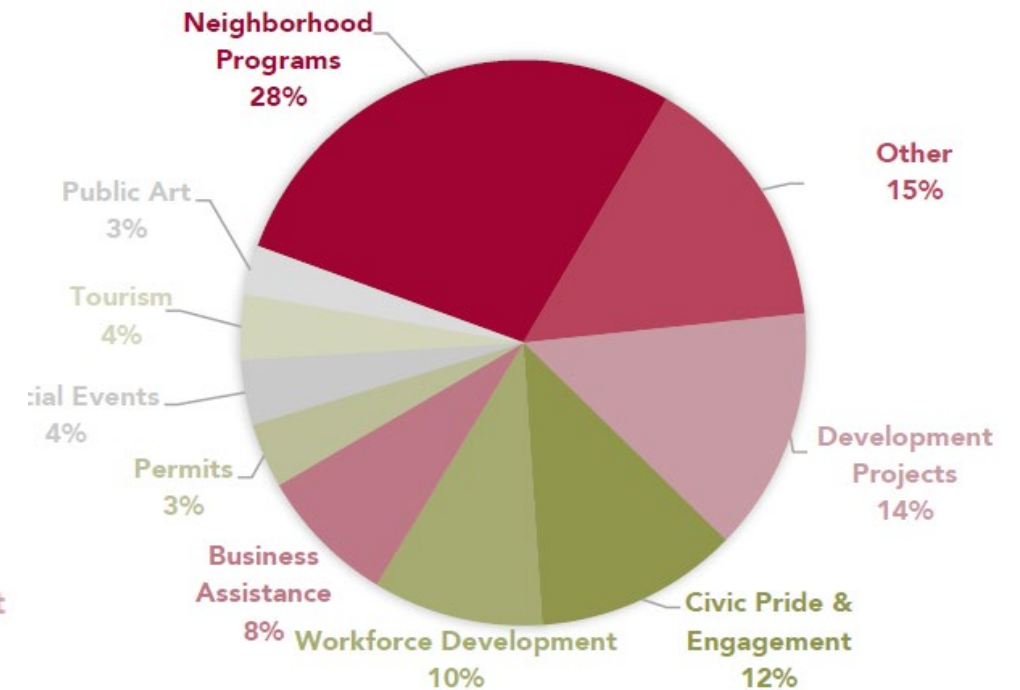
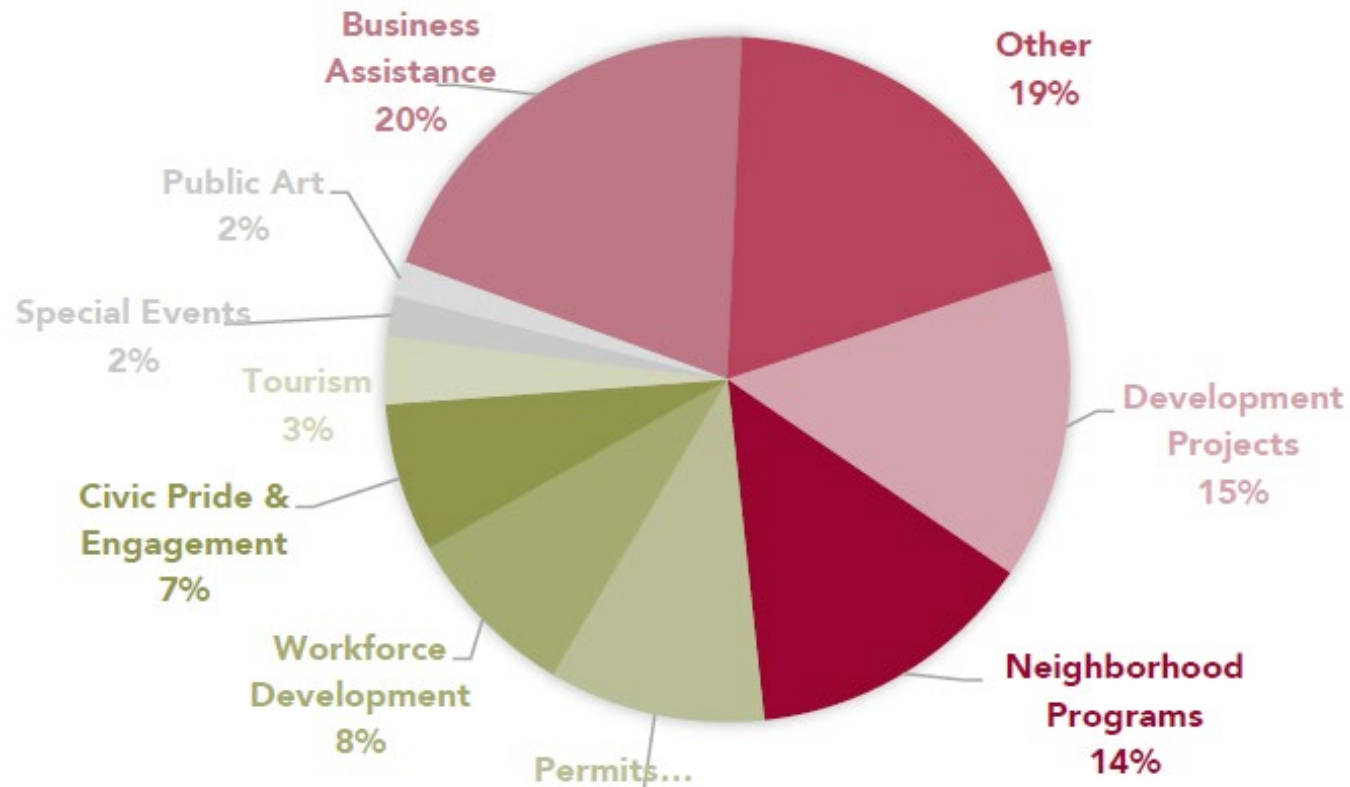
Challenges and Barriers to Engagement



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2021 Economic Development Survey

**ED Issue Areas of Most Importance
Business Owners**

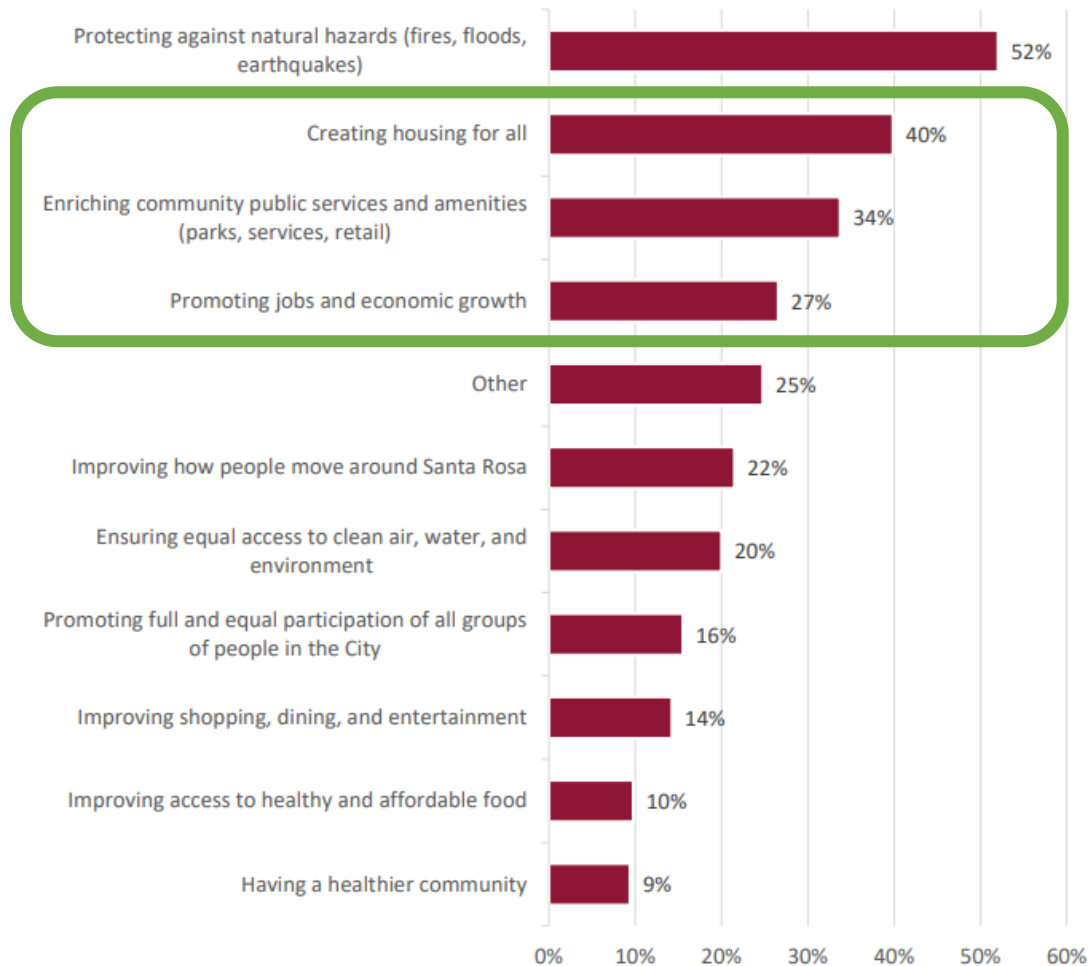


**ED Issue Areas of Most Importance
Non-Business Owners**

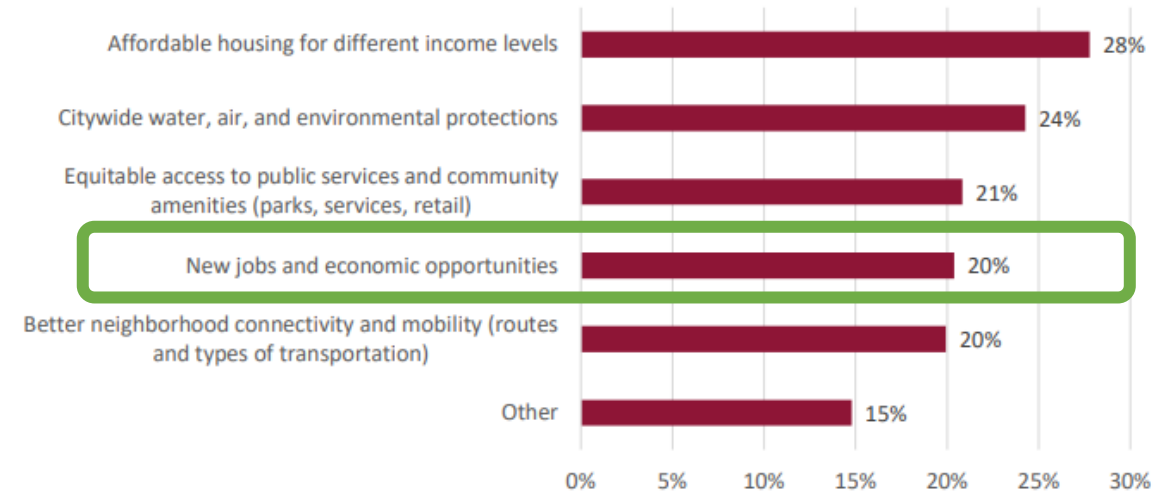
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2021 General Plan Update Survey

What are the most important changes you would like to see in the City of Santa Rosa? Select up to three. (N: 3,583)



What excites you the most about the future of Santa Rosa? Select up to three. (N:1,714)



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Community Perspectives Summary

Lack of Affordable Housing / High Cost of Living & Limited Workforce Attraction and Development

- Costs are high for businesses and employees alike
 - Poses challenges to business retention and attraction
 - Is a critical limiting factor for workforce development
- Employers cited need for downtown entertainment and living options for young professionals.
- “Workforce development begins with equitable access to early education.”



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Community Perspectives Summary

Need for a more inclusive approach to economic development

- Perceived shift on moving from a focus on economic gardening and business/community resiliency needs to traditional business attraction.
- Noted the importance of supporting small businesses and creating an environment where information and resources are easily accessible to all.
- Interest in publicly available training to support entrepreneurs (e.g. incubators).
- Inclusive ED would intentionally center equity and data to evaluate processes and procedures that are not effectively serving the whole community, and to identify new avenues to increase opportunity.



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Summary of Goals

Business Climate & Communication

- What it's like to work with the City; how easy do we make it?
- How effectively do we communicate?

Economic Vibrancy

- Business Retention
- Business Expansion
- Business Attraction
- Economic Accelerators & Infrastructure

Resiliency & Community Investment

- Infrastructure resiliency
- Skilled and resilient workforce
- Community investment, placemaking and place-keeping
- Address poverty and increase economic opportunity through upstream investments



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Business Climate and Communication

Enhance Biz-Friendly Policies & Processes

Development Services
Strat Plan

Identification/address
concerns, opportunities

Enhance access &
access points

Communication & Collaboration

Track/share ED opps &
business needs &
inquiries

Conduct biz
visits/facilitate direct
idea sharing

Collaborate with private
sector on biz forums

Support education &
workforce Investment

Biz Satisfaction & Marketing

Business/developer
attract/retain/expand
marketing program

Digital marketing, social
media, and in-person
engagement

Feedback loop to
monitor City service
satisfaction

Equitable Economic Opportunities

District-based surveys

BIPOC business audit

Support/collaborate to
strengthen BIPOC &
women-owned biz

Meet cultural &
language needs of biz



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Economic Vibrancy: Biz Retention, Expansion, Attraction

Support Business Retention

Establish a Business retention program

Changing market trainings/resources

Develop industry focused incentives

Implement ARPA funded Biz Support

Promote Business Expansion

Small Business Expansion Fund

Incubator programs

Biz development tech assistance & funding

Attract New Businesses

Conduct industry specific cluster analysis

Council Goals aligned incentives

Emerging tech – office, distro, research

Biz recruitment & support team

Area specific data & data tools

Streamlined re-tenanting program

Accelerators and Infrastructure

Asset & civic investment strategy + EIFD

Intensification of industrial land uses; state/fed zones

One-time incentives to jumpstart specific land uses

Supply chain analysis

Home-based entrepreneur support



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Resiliency and Community Investment

Enhanced Infrastructure Resilience

Assess business infrastructure needs

Economic & fiscal impact study of Downtown infill housing

Infrastructure reinforcement plan

Climate action & sustainability principles

Foster Community Investment

Community Investment Fund

Partnerships for community development projects

Community amenities location assistance

Build a Skilled & Resilient Workforce

Workforce needs & gaps by industry

Support curricula alignment w/ industry needs

Apprenticeships, internships & retraining

Leverage/support upskilling programs

Advance Placemaking & Place-Keeping

Public Art Program strategic plan

Support community events and activities

ARPA funded placemaking

Economic Opportunity & Upstream Investments

Advance the Childcare Support Program

Capitalize on funding opps to extend upstream investment programs

Continue ARPA funded pilot programs



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRAFT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation

Objectives

- Implementation
- Identify and respond to new opportunities
- Address historic challenges and reproduce successes
- Communicate progress to stakeholders - dashboards

➤ **Economic Development Subcommittee**

- Prioritization & programmatic development (*as needed*) in coordination with City Manager's Office
- Development of targets, metrics and/or enhancement of existing performance measures
- Review, assess and adjust to adapt to changing economic conditions
- Act as forum for stakeholder involvement and feedback



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Questions and Feedback

- Modifications or additions to the goals
- Modifications or additions to the strategies

