



WHERE SUCCESS TAKES ROOT

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting

April 2025



Agenda

1. Call to order and roll call
2. Remote Participation
3. Modifications to the Agenda
4. Announcements
5. Approval of Minutes
6. Public Comments
7. Partner Reports
8. New Business Items
9. Matters held in Committee
10. Department Reports
11. Adjournment

7. Partner Reports

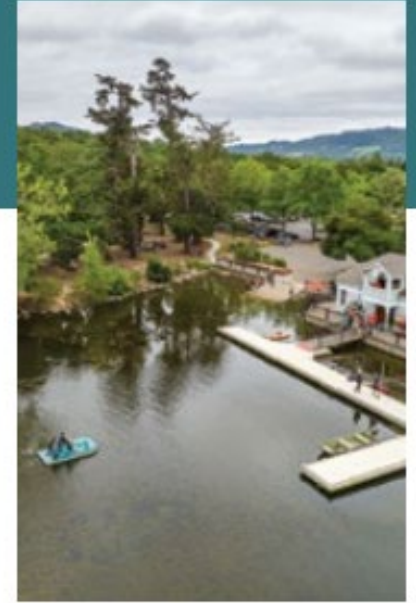
8. New Business Items

8.1 Economic Development Division Update

- A) Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan Update
- B) Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion Update
- C) Entrepreneurship and Small Business Update
- D) Economic Vibrancy and Resiliency Update
- E) Community Investment Update
- F) Metrics and Indicators
- G) Special Projects Update

Creating Economic Growth,
Vitality, and Fiscal Stability
for Santa Rosa

Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan Update



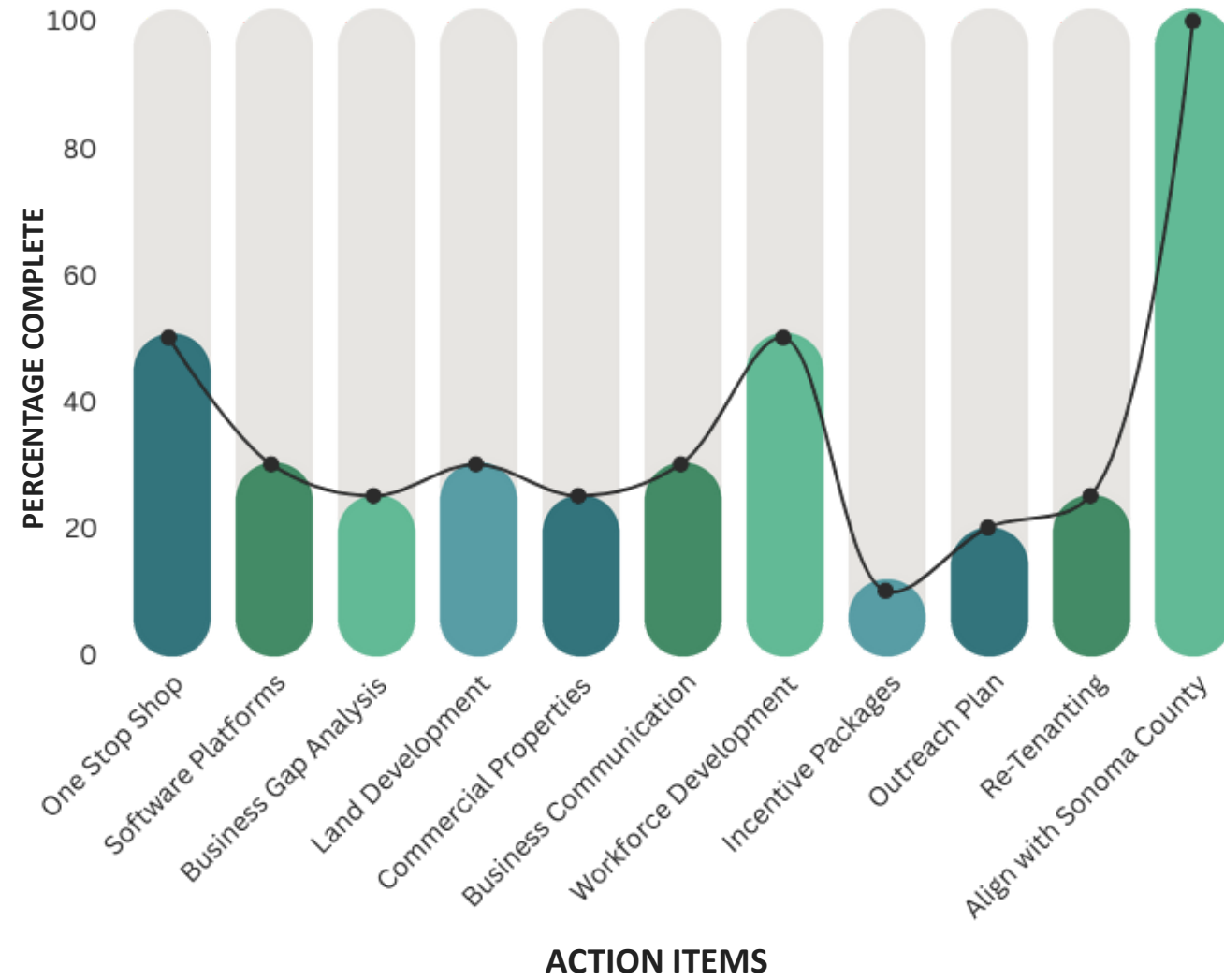
Economic Development Strategy

Adopted April 2024

Objectives:

- Create Fiscal Stability
- Support Workforce
- Business-Friendly City
- Communication Strategy
- Increase Businesses
- Business Retention & Expansion
- Support & Grow Businesses
- Support Entrepreneurship
- Remove Barriers

BUSINESS GROWTH & RETENTION



City of Santa Rosa

Economic Development Division



biz@srcity.org



srcity.org/doingbusiness

Implementation Plan Progress as of April 1, 2025

BUSINESS GROWTH & RETENTION

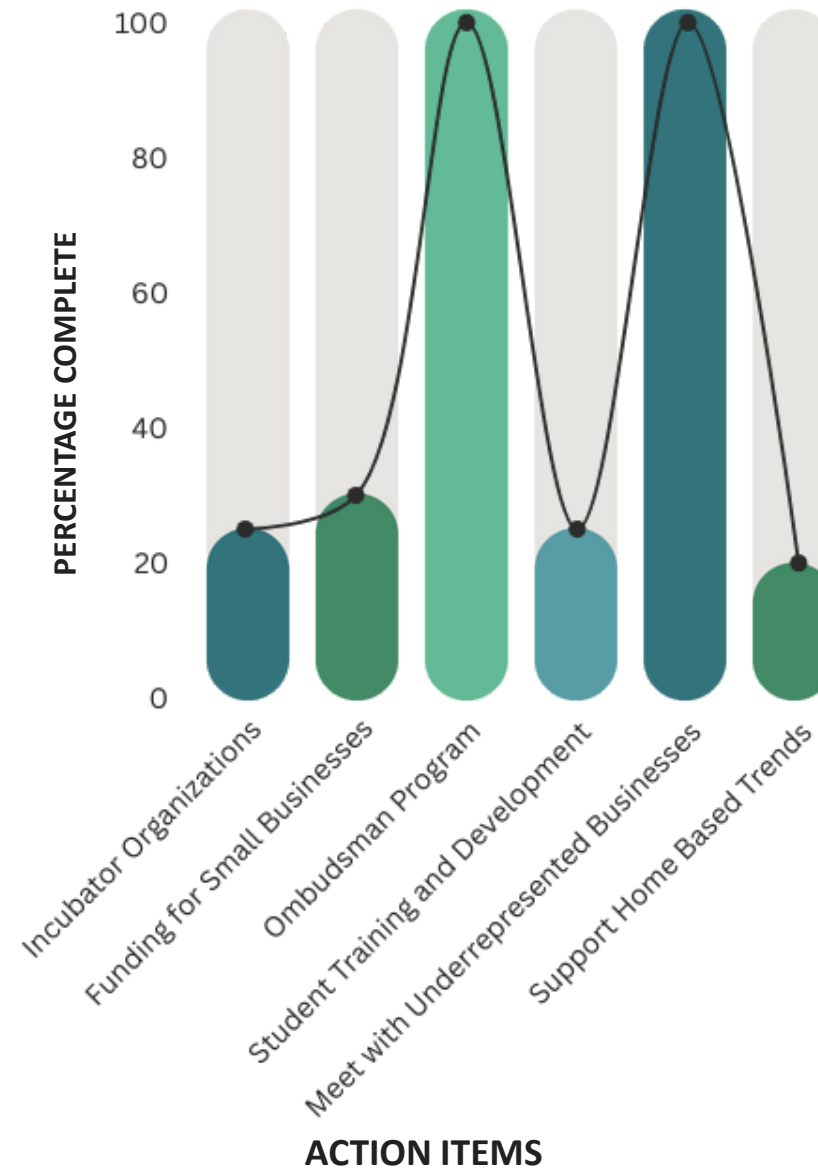
ACTIONS:

1. Create a Virtual (online) and Physical One-Stop-Shop to support businesses
2. Obtain Software Platforms for Tracking and Reliable Demographics
3. Conduct a Business Gap Analysis, Existing Cluster Industry Analysis, and Key Emerging Industry Sectors Analysis
4. Identify Key Opportunities and Land Development Sites and Work with Outside Partners to Prepare and Market
5. Align Policies, Procedures, and Standards with Plans to Encourage Mixed-Use and Innovative Uses of Commercial Properties
6. Establish Site Visits and Open Communication with Businesses
7. Strengthen and Support Partnerships with Educational Organizations and Business Associations to Support Workforce Development Needs
8. Develop Incentive Packages to Attract Identified Key Industries
9. Create a Comprehensive Outreach and Marketing Plan (aka “Business Recruitment Plan”.) to Attract Identified Key Industries
10. Create a Streamlined Re-Tenancing Program with Clear Pathways for Re-Tenancing Retail, Restaurant, or Office Spaces
11. Align Efforts with Sonoma County to Create a Tandem Approach to Attraction Efforts

Objectives:

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESS



Implementation Plan Progress as of April 1, 2025

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESS

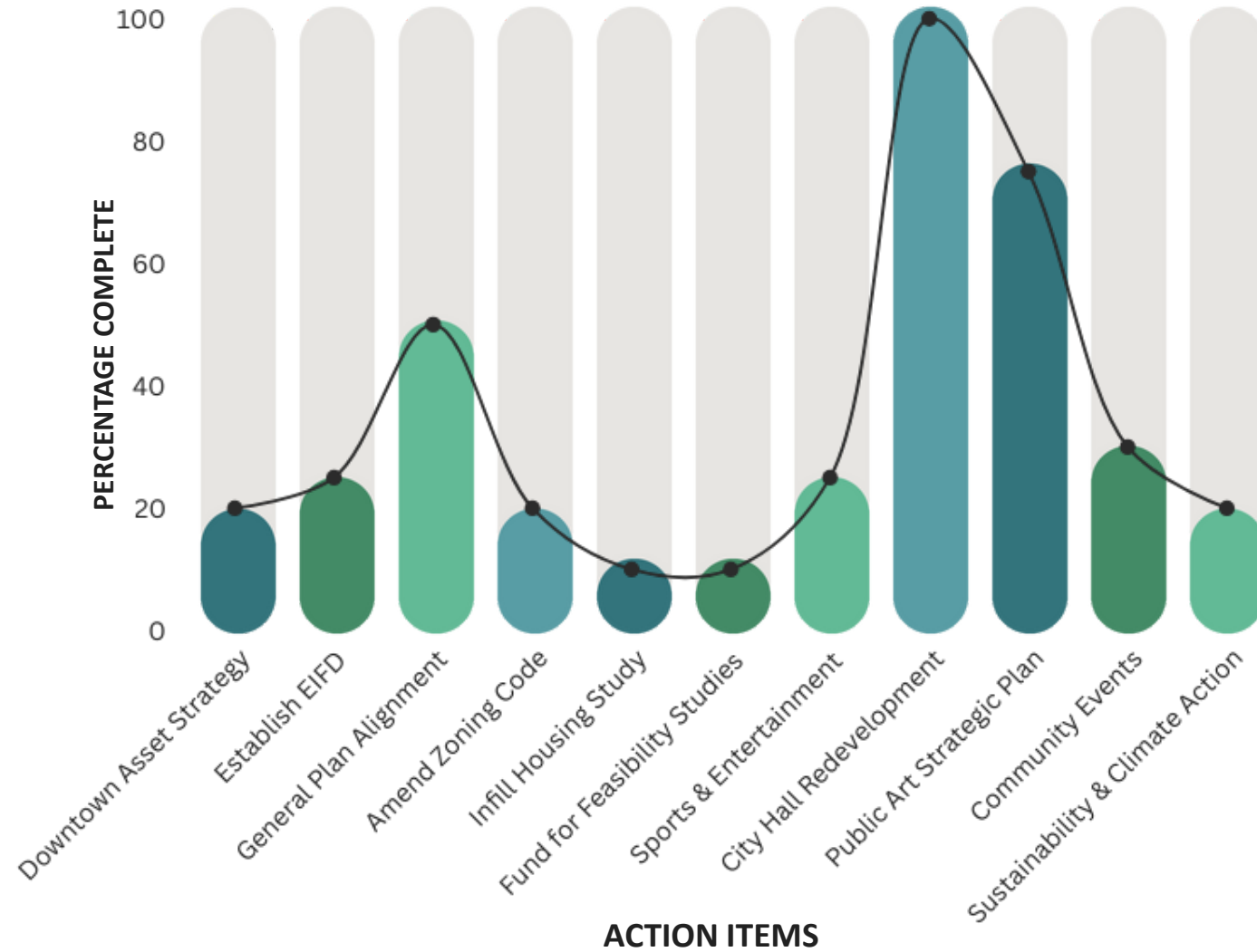
ACTIONS:

1. Strengthen Support for Entrepreneurship through Incubator Organizations
2. Identify and Promote Available Funding Sources for Small Business Owners
3. Create Ombudsman Program for Technical Assistance and Process Support
4. Partner and Connect Students for Training Opportunities, Mentoring, and Workforce Development Upskilling
5. Meet with underrepresented (LGTBQ, Immigrant, BIPOC, and Women-Owned) Businesses to Identify Barriers and Build Pathways for Assistance and Support
6. Analyze Opportunities to Support Home-Based and Work from Home Entrepreneur Trends

Objectives:

- Downtown Housing
- Increase Revenue
- Support Economy
- Walkable Neighborhoods
- Climate Action Goals

ECONOMIC VIBRANCY & RESILIENCY



Implementation Plan Progress as of April 1, 2025

ECONOMIC VIBRANCY & RESILIENCY

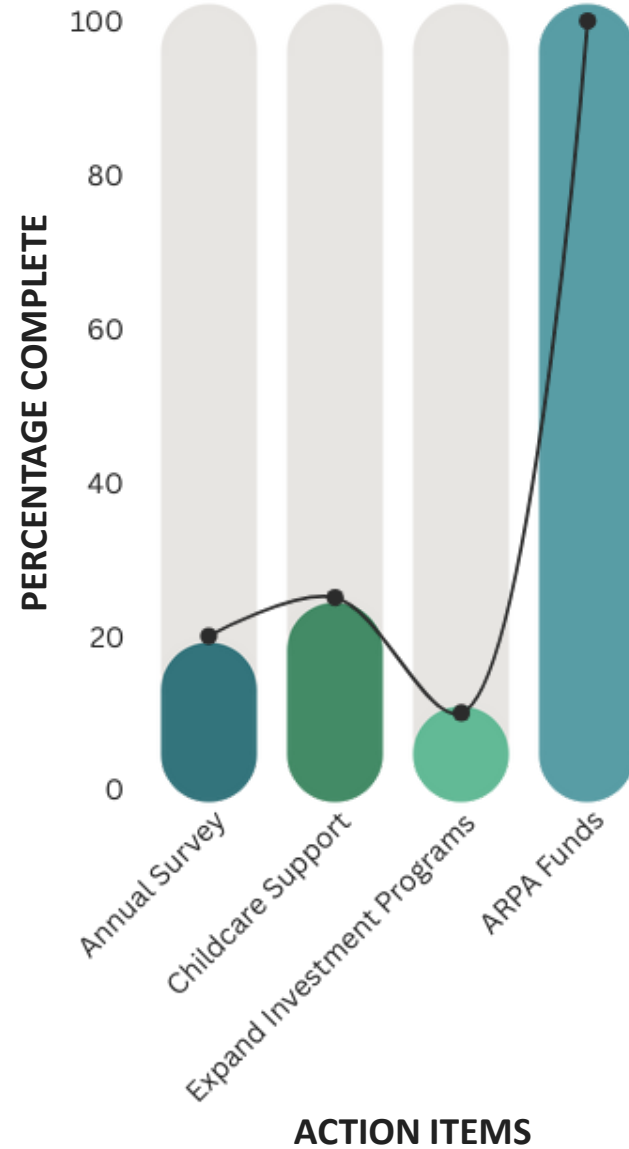
ACTIONS:

1. Expand Downtown Asset Strategy activating city-owned property for economic development purposes, to include housing and housing supportive amenities with an emphasis on sustainability and walkable neighborhoods
2. Establish an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District in Downtown
3. Ensure General Plan and Economic Development Strategic Plan alignment
4. Review and amend zoning code where needed to align with economic strategies in support of development initiatives and opportunities
5. Conduct a downtown infill housing economic and fiscal impact study
6. Create an Economic development fund to conduct feasibility studies
7. Explore, develop, and implement sports and entertainment as an economic driver for both residents and tourists
8. Continue to assess City Hall Complex redevelopment opportunities
9. Implement the public art program strategic plan
10. Support community events and activities through direct programming and grants
11. Champion sustainability and the City's Climate Action

Objectives:

- Upstream Investment
- Support Diverse Needs
- Address Childhood Poverty
- Early Childhood Sector

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

OBJECTIVES:

1. Coordinate annual district-based surveys to solicit community input at a neighborhood level from all seven districts
2. Advance childcare support programs
3. Identify and capitalize on funding opportunities to expand upstream investment pilot programs
4. Use ARPA funds to continue pilot programs addressing childhood poverty and increase advanced education opportunities – continue implementation through expenditure of funds by end of 2024

Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion:

Large Business Attraction

Create a business-friendly, sustainable, and strong economy by attracting new businesses and expanding, retaining, and supporting existing businesses



Goals:

- Create fiscal stability for the City, businesses and property owners
- Support a thriving workforce
- Establish Santa Rosa as a business-friendly city
- Develop a communication strategy for the promotion of services and interactions with business owners
- Increase the number of medium and large businesses in key industries
- Create a business retention and expansion strategy for existing industry

Actions:

- Create a virtual one-stop-shop online portal of virtual tools to start or expand a business, customized to meet diverse cultural and language needs, building from partnerships with the County, State, and Sonoma Small Business Development Center.
- Obtain software platforms for tracking and reliable demographics

- Conduct a business gap analysis, existing cluster industry analysis, and key emerging industry sector analysis
- Identify key opportunities and land development sites and work with outside partners to prepare a market
- Align policies, procedures, and standards with plan to encourage mixed-use and innovative uses of commercial properties
- Establish site visits and open communication with businesses
- Strengthen and support partnerships with educational organizations and business associations to support workforce development needs
- Develop incentive packages to attract identified industries
- Create a comprehensive outreach and marketing plan to attract identified key industries
- Create a streamlined re-tenanting program with clear pathways for re-tenanting retail, service, and office spaces
- Align efforts with Sonoma County's regional tandem approach to attraction efforts

Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion Update

Entrepreneurship and Small Business

Actively support and empower the existing small business ecosystem while establishing clear pathways to enable successful and fulfilling small business ownership

Goals:

- Support and grow existing small business
- Support and promote opportunities for entrepreneurship
- Understand and remove barriers for immigrant, BIPOC and women-owned business

Actions:

- Strengthen support for entrepreneurship through incubator organizations
- Identify and promote available funding sources for small business owners
- Create Ombudsman program for technical assistance and process support
- Partner and connect students for training opportunities, mentoring and work force development upskilling
- Meet with Immigrant, BIPOC and women-owned businesses to identify barriers and build pathways for assistance and support
- Analyze opportunities to support home-based and work from home entrepreneur trends



Business Attraction Retention and Expansion Measurements:

- % change in the number of business licenses compared to base year
- % change in startups
- % change in the number of business licenses by industries
- % commercial property vacancy rate
- Website analytics for virtual portal
- Monetary tracking for incentive programs
- # of site-visits
- % business demographics
- Track BIPOC and women-owned business support through an annual survey

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Update



1. Small Business Support, Retention, and Expansion

Under the direction of the Chief Economic Development Officer, the Ombudsman will administer programs designed to support small businesses (fewer than 500 employees), including:

- **One-Stop-Shop Initiative** (*Implementation Plan, pg. 11*)
- **Site Visits and Open Communication with Businesses** (*Implementation Plan, pg. 15*)
- **Strengthening Support for Entrepreneurship through Incubator Organizations** (*Implementation Plan, pg. 19*)
- **BIPOC and Underrepresented Business Support** (*Implementation Plan, pg. 22*)
- **Home-Based Business and Work-from-Home Entrepreneur Support** (*Implementation Plan, pg. 22*)
- Additional small business and entrepreneurship support initiatives as assigned.

Responsibilities Include:

- Providing one-on-one consultations to help businesses identify and access specific resources.
- Coordinating with City departments on behalf of small businesses.
- Connecting businesses with partners offering financial, workforce, and technical resources.
- Engaging partner agencies that provide business support and services.
- Analyzing and identifying trends related to business retention, expansion, and relocation.

2. Business Concierge Program

Under the direction of the Planning and Economic Development Director, the Ombudsman will oversee the City of Santa Rosa Business Concierge Program, which provides specialized planning and permitting assistance for businesses as assigned.

Services Include:

- Early review of concepts or plans to identify potential challenges.
- Providing education and guidance on entitlement and permitting requirements.
- Advising business owners and developers on required fees, permits, and property use or development opportunities.
- Assisting with building permits, submission requirements, and inspection processes to ensure compliance with applicable building codes.
- Acting as a liaison within City Hall to guide businesses through ministerial and discretionary permitting processes for tenant improvements or new construction.
- Monitoring the permitting process to help advance construction projects.
- Offering additional support to help businesses navigate the permitting and licensing process while ensuring alignment with the Planning Department's customer service strategies.
- Support businesses impacted by graffiti through the PED graffiti abatement and removal program.

Goals:

- Bolster Downtown housing, commercial and retail business
- Increase revenue to businesses and the City
- Support a thriving economy
- Support walkable neighborhoods
- Promote and enhance climate action goals and sustainability principles

Actions:

- Expand Downtown Asset Strategy activating city-owned property for economic development purposes, to include housing and housing supportive amenities with an emphasis on sustainability and walkable neighborhoods
- Establish an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District in Downtown
- Ensure General Plan and Economic Development Strategic Plan alignment
- Review and amend zoning code where needed to align with economic strategies in support of development initiatives and opportunities
- Conduct a downtown infill housing economic and fiscal impact study

- Create an Economic development and feasibility studies
- Explore, develop, and implement sports entertainment as an economic driver for residents and tourists
- Continue to assess City Hall Complex redevelopment opportunities
- Implement the public art program strategy
- Support community events and activities through direct programming and grants
- Champion sustainability and the City's Climate Action Plan

Measurements:

- Identification of potential business opportunities
- Implementation of/or monetary amount for financial fund for feasibility areas
- % of empty store front/office space in downtown compared to Year 1
- Housing construction in progress on surplus sites number of available sites
- Feasibility and fiscal impact studies complete, and business opportunities defined

Economic Vibrancy and Resiliency Update



Community Investment

Invest in and support our diverse community to fortify current and future economic challenges

Goals:

- Increase economic opportunity through upstream investment
- Support diverse needs of all districts
- Address childhood poverty
- Strengthen early childhood education sector

Actions:

- Coordinate annual district-based surveys to solicit community input at a neighborhood level from all seven districts
- Advance childcare support programs
- Identify and capitalize on funding opportunities to expand upstream investment pilot programs
- Use ARPA funds to continue pilot programs addressing childhood poverty and increase advanced education opportunities – continue implementation through expenditure of funds by end of 2024

Measurements:

- Report progress on all funded program implementation through online dash.
- # of programs funded, dollars provided, individuals impacted
- Report progress from annual surveys, yes, through dashboards



Community Investment Update

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee
Meeting April 2025

Metrics and Indicators

Special Projects Update

HARRY'S HOUSE

Pop Up Program

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting
April 2025



Street Activation

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting
April 2025



Farmers Market

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting
April 2025



One Stop Shop

City of Santa Rosa Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting
April 2025

End New Business

Public Comment on New Business

9. Matters Held In Committee

10. Department Reports

11. Adjourn