



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE AND UNITED SOCCER LEAGUE INTEREST IN SANTA ROSA

City Council Meeting
April 15, 2025

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Planning & Economic Development

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



2. UNITED SOCCER LEAGUE INTEREST IN SANTA ROSA

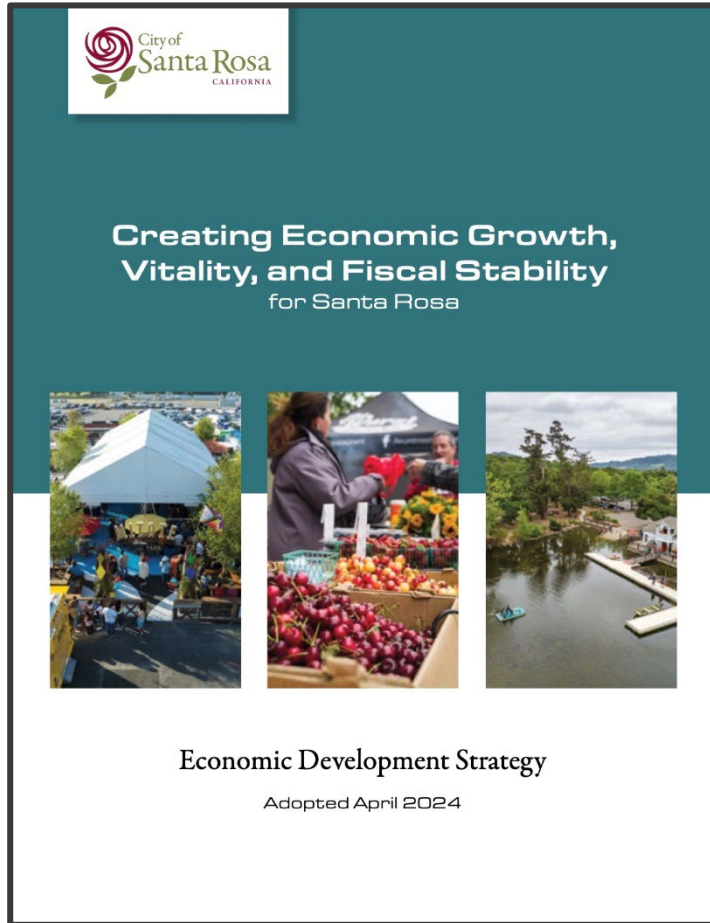


Background

- **Strategic Vision:** Santa Rosa's Economic Development Strategic Plan focuses on fostering a vibrant, economically sustainable city.
- **Business & Community Growth:** Supports initiatives that drive business expansion, community engagement, and regional connectivity.
- **Economic & Social Impact of Sports:** Professional sports can attract visitors, boost local businesses, and strengthen community identity.
- **Proven Success Model:** Other cities have leveraged professional sports as economic and social catalysts.



GOALS



This opportunity aligns with the Economic Development Strategic Plan, which emphasizes "identifying and optimizing land opportunities," "welcoming new ventures," and "supporting and investing in a diverse community." Also leveraging opportunities to achieve a more vibrant community.



Opportunity

USL Market Interest: The USL has identified Santa Rosa as a potential market for expansion of the league and to site both a men's and a women's professional soccer team and for a stadium located in Santa Rosa.

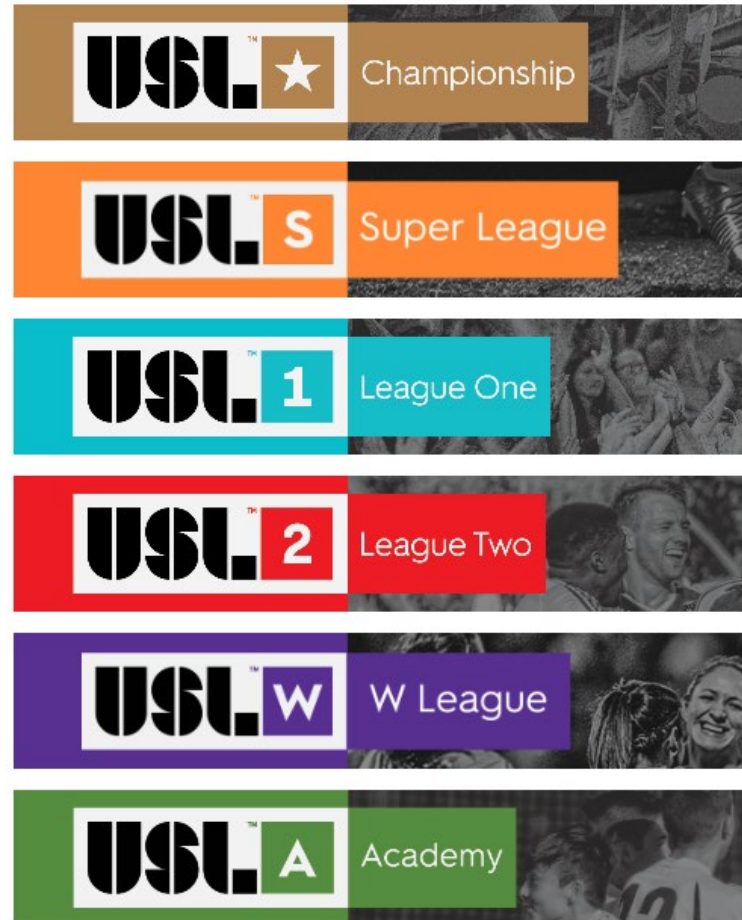


United Soccer League (USL)

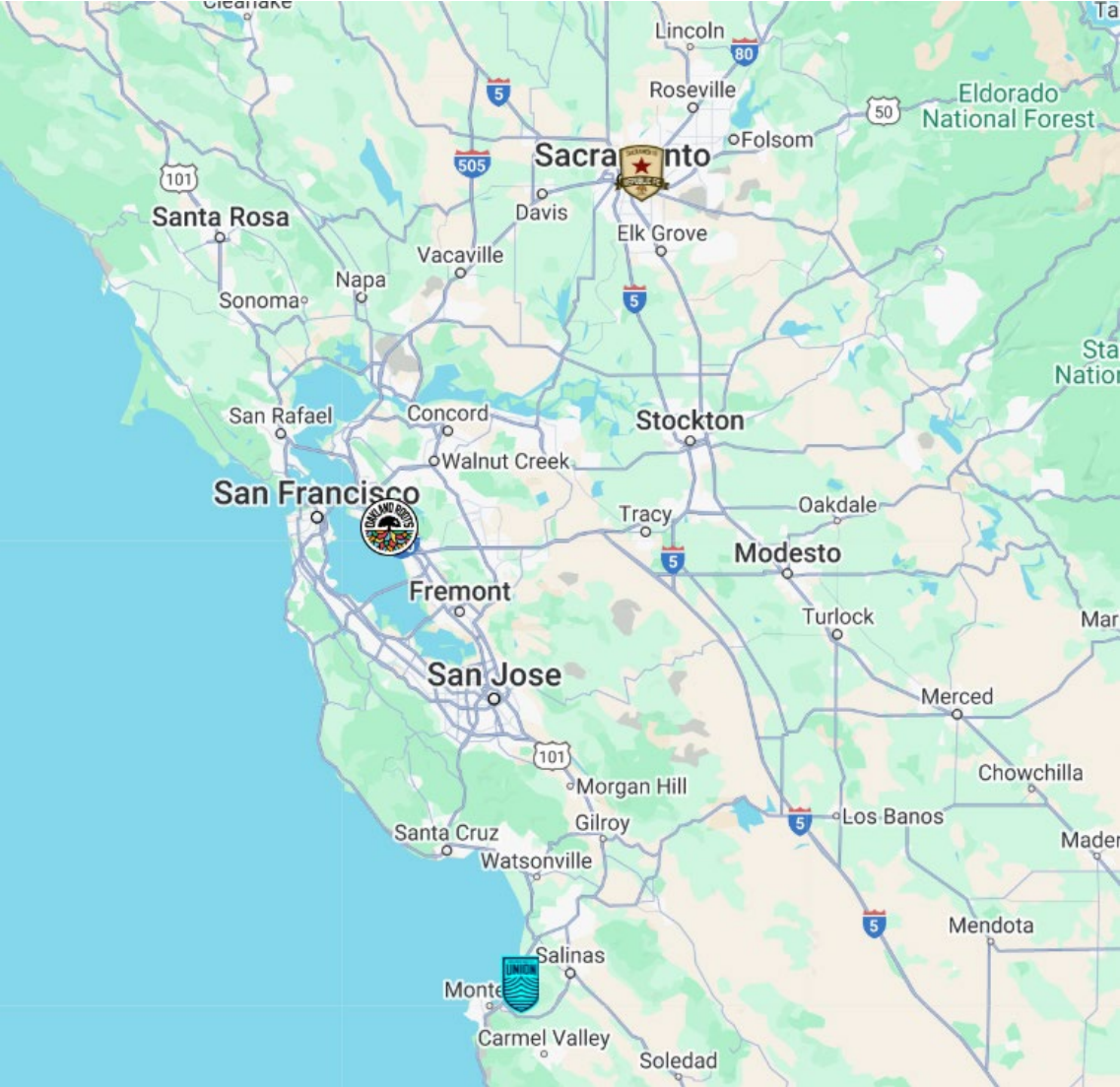
ABOUT THE UNITED SOCCER LEAGUE

The United Soccer League (USL) is the largest professional soccer organization in North America, possessing nearly a decade of experience in bringing the world's game to communities across the United States and Canada. It counts more than 200 clubs in its membership.

THE LEAGUES



United Soccer League (USL)



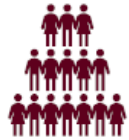
 Monterey Bay FC

 Oakland Roots SC

 Sacramento Republic FC

Santa Rosa's Soccer Market

SANTA ROSA HAS THE INGREDIENTS TO BE A TOP SOCCER MARKET



SPORTS FAN POPULATION

87% of the DMA are sports fans



AGE

Median age of Soccer fans trends much younger compared to the DMA



DIVERSITY

Diverse population, that trends towards sports like soccer



SPORTS SUCCESS

The state's professional league franchises & collegiate programs have historically been successful on & off the field



SOCCER AUDIENCE

Soccer Fan demographics skews towards average soccer market: younger, more diverse, higher income, more educated, compared to the DMA



CORPORATE ECOSYSTEM

Significant sponsorship opportunity revenue for the team, stadium, and stadium development.



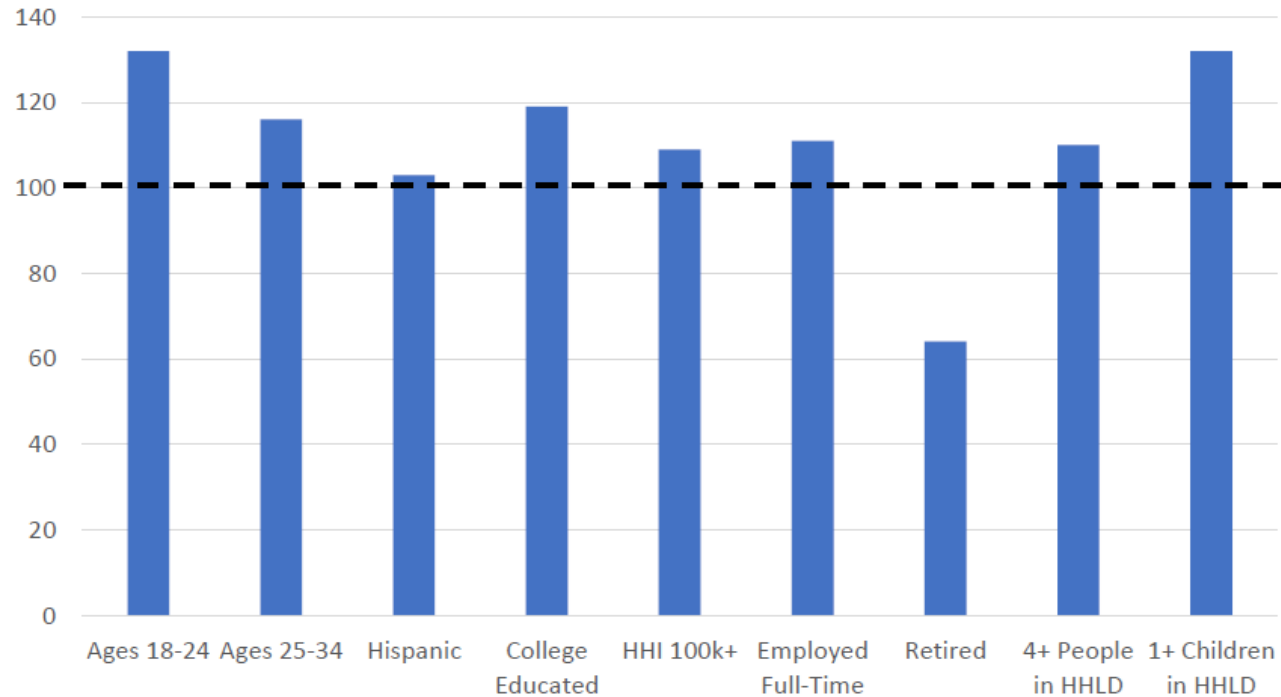
Santa Rosa's Soccer Market

SANTA ROSA SOCCER FANS BRING A DIFFERENTIATED AND VALUABLE CONSUMER

The Santa Rosa soccer fan represents a young, diverse, educated, and financially influential market.

Santa Rosa DMA soccer fan index compared to the Santa Rosa DMA (18+)

Santa Rosa Soccer Fans vs. Santa Rosa DMA



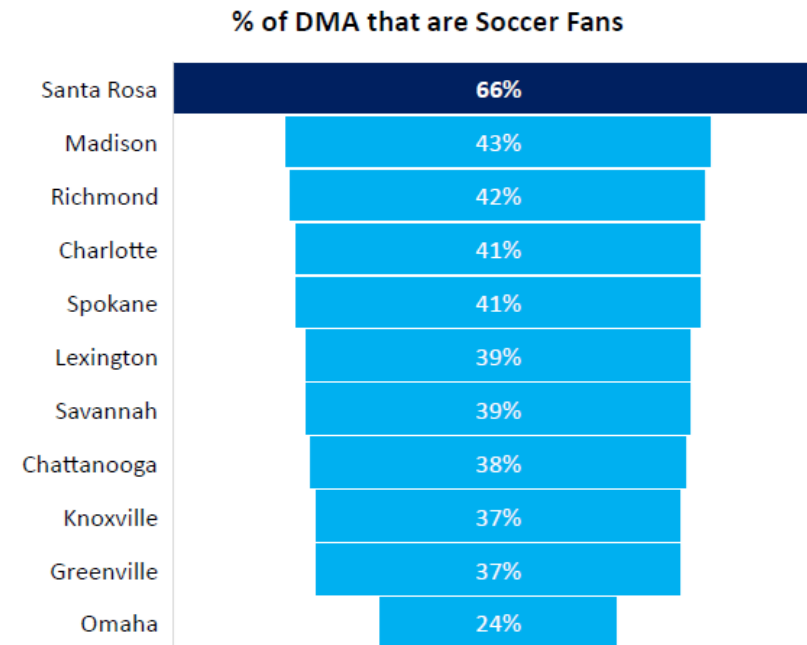
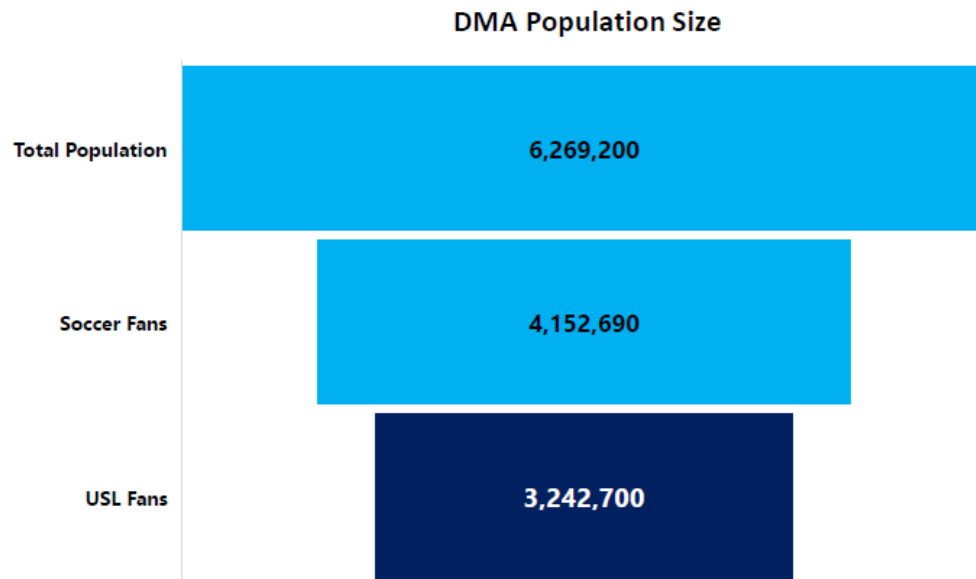
- **Read as: Santa Rosa soccer fans are 48% more likely to fall between the ages of 18-34 when compared to the DMA.**
- The soccer fanbase in Santa Rosa is younger than the general DMA. This suggests a strong opportunity for a USL club to engage with a young audience and build a foundation for the long-term customer value.
- Santa Rosa soccer fans have higher spending power which is notable given the younger age profile and cultural makeup of the fan base
- The younger Santa Rosa soccer fan segment is also highlighted by those with a full-time employment status and under-indexing for retirees.



Santa Rosa's Soccer Market

SANTA ROSA HAS A ROBUST BUILT-IN SOCCER FAN BASE PRIME FOR NEW, HOMETOWN TEAM

When compared to current USL League One markets, Santa Rosa has upside, in terms of soccer fan concentration, in addition to having a large casual sports fan consumer base.



Decoder, Dec 2023 - Nov 2024; A soccer fan is a resident of the market whose level of interest ranks 2-7 on interest scale of 1-7, 1 being not interested and 7 being extremely interested, in the following leagues: USL, MLS, NWSL, USWNT, USMNT, Liga MX, Liga MX Femenil, EPL, La Liga, Bundesliga, Ligue 1 & Serie A.



Exclusivity Agreement (LOI)

Letter of Intent (LOI): The City Manager has executed an LOI agreement with USL, establishing an exclusive negotiating period to explore league expansion.

- **Exclusive Negotiation Terms & Ancillary Development**
- **Stadium Planning & Development**
- **Financial & Legal Considerations**

Exploratory only. No immediate Fiscal Impact



Next Steps

- **Begin Community Outreach**
- **Identify Key Partners**
- **Site Selection Process**
- **Market Studies**
- **Sports Master Plan**
- **Source Operator/Franchisee**
- **Development Agreement**



Action steps

Phase 1: Site Identification & Feasibility
Site Selection & Feasibility
Exclusivity or LOI Signed
Site Selection & Due Diligence
Site Options Analysis
Determine Zoning + Environmental Conditions
Preliminary Title + Land Use Review
Determine Land Acquisition Process + Timeline
Site Selection
Initial Community + Political Landscape Review
Feasibility & Market Studies
Market Feasibility Study
Stadium Economic Impact Study
Mixed-Use Economic Impact Study
Public Funding Analysis
Demand studies for residential, hotel, retail, office
Stadium & Real Estate Pro Formas

Concept Development
Preliminary master plan and test fits
High-level cost estimates (stadium + mixed-use)
Create Initial Phasing Plan
Community Engagement
Discussions with city/county/state leadership
Outline Community Benefits
Create Steering Committee
Complete MOU w/ USL



More information and ways for the public to
engage online at [SRCity.org/USL](https://srcity.org/USL)

Future Community Forum: June 4th, 2025, 4-6pm

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