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# **Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting**

**March 2025**

# Economic Development Subcommittee 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. New Meeting Time
8. Partner Reports
9. New Business
10. Matters held in Committee
11. Department Reports
12. Adjournment

## 9. Partner Reports



# Rose-E Electric Trolley

Pilot Project

May 15-September 29, 2024





# Overview

- Pilot Overview
- Marketing
- Ridership Data
- Survey Response
- Lessons Learned
- Future Opportunities







# Rose-E Pilot

Rose-E was conceived by the Downtown Action Organization as a way to address connectivity issues between Courthouse Square and Historic Railroad Square, with the goal of testing a fun method of transport that would link tourists and visitors to both sides of Downtown, provide entertainment for locals and help SMART riders reach their final destination.





# Community Partnership

Multiple community organizations came together to support the DAO in testing the Rose-E pilot program:





## Program Marketing

Visit Santa Rosa oversaw the marketing efforts which included a dedicated webpage, social media posts, distributed printed materials, stationary signage throughout Downtown and promotions during local radio interviews.

61,604

### Social Media

Total reach from Facebook and Instagram was 61,604

5,388

### Webpage

9,305 Page views from 5,388 unique viewers who stayed for an average of 1 minute 7 seconds

2,760

### Printed Materials

2,500 Rack Cards and 260 Posters were distributed in the Downtown area





# Ridership Data

## Total Riders

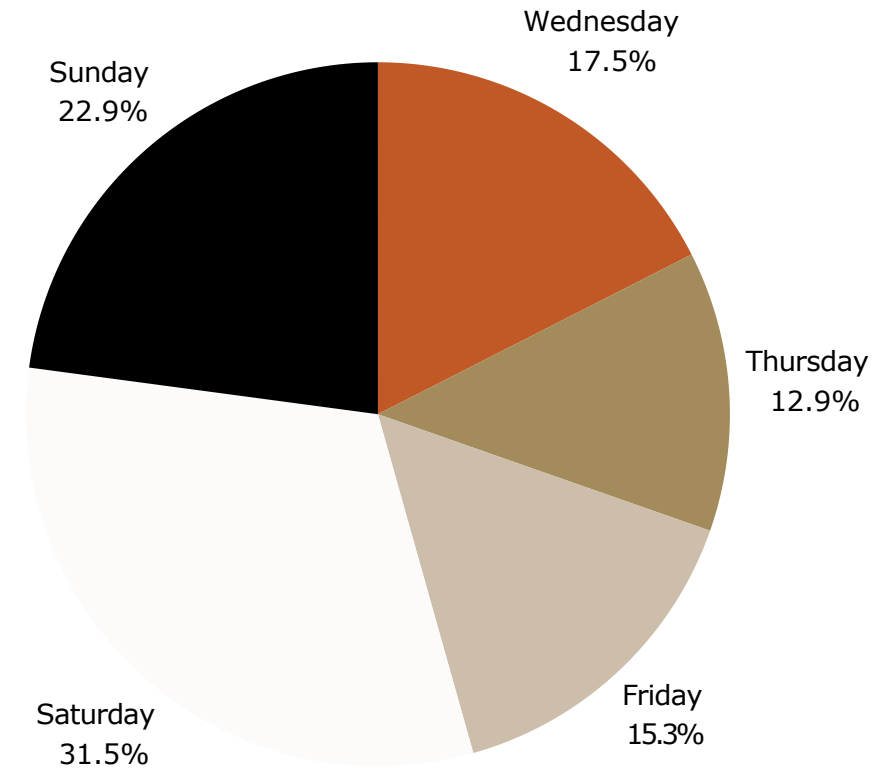
3,754 Riders rode Rose-E during the pilot - the majority rode on Saturday, the longest day of service and were spread out evenly from May through September.

## Peak Days & Hours

The most popular days, based on an average of riders per hour, were Sundays, and the most popular hours were between 2 and 3pm on the weekends followed by 7-8pm.

## Consistent Weekly

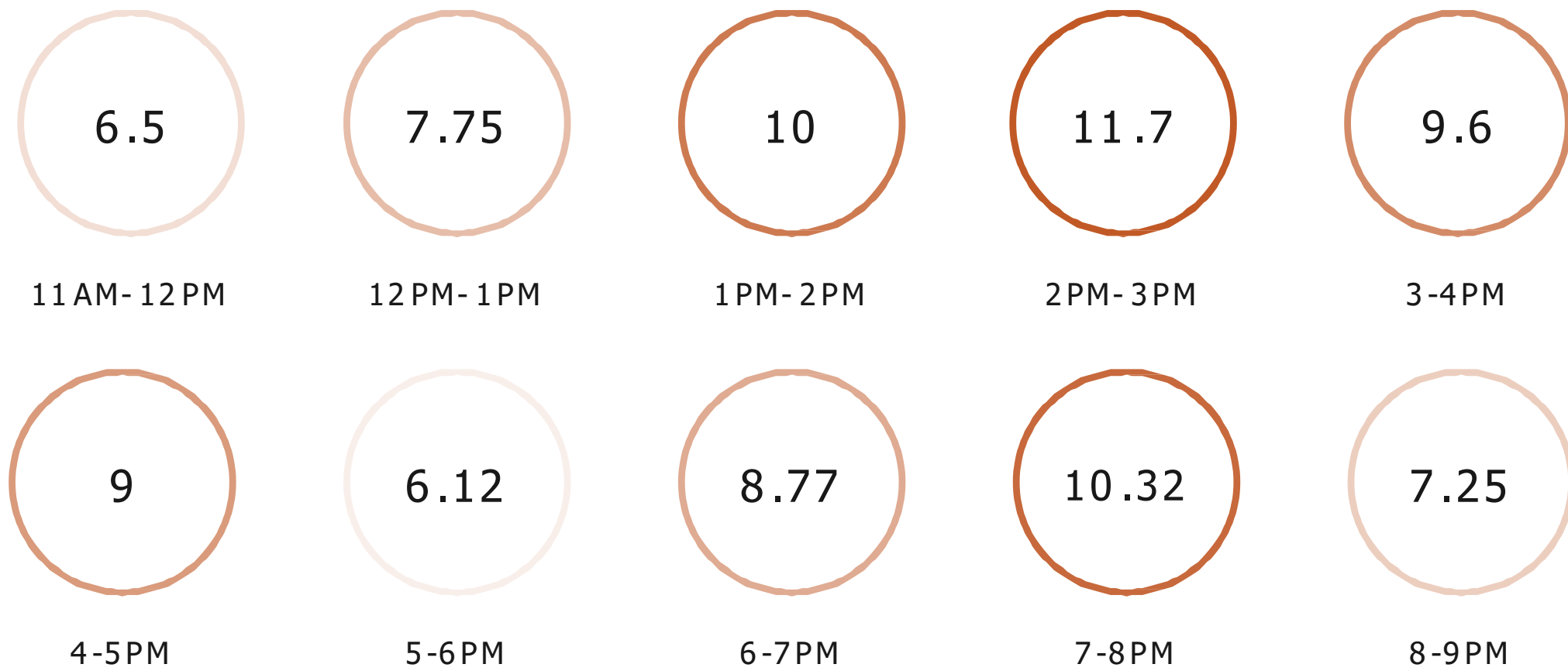
There was no specific pattern to the weekly ridership with weekly totals ranging from 118 passengers to 301 passengers.





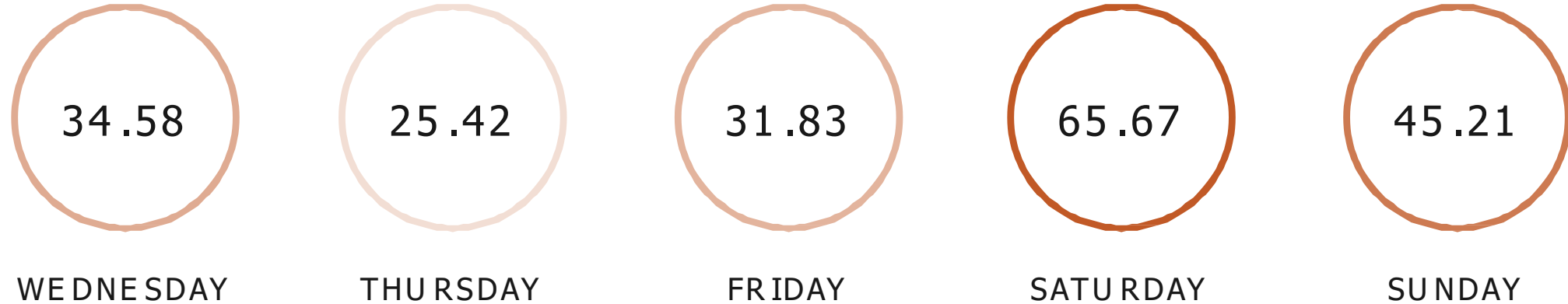


# AVERAGE NUMBER OF RIDERS DURING SPECIFIC HOUR BLOCKS OF TIME

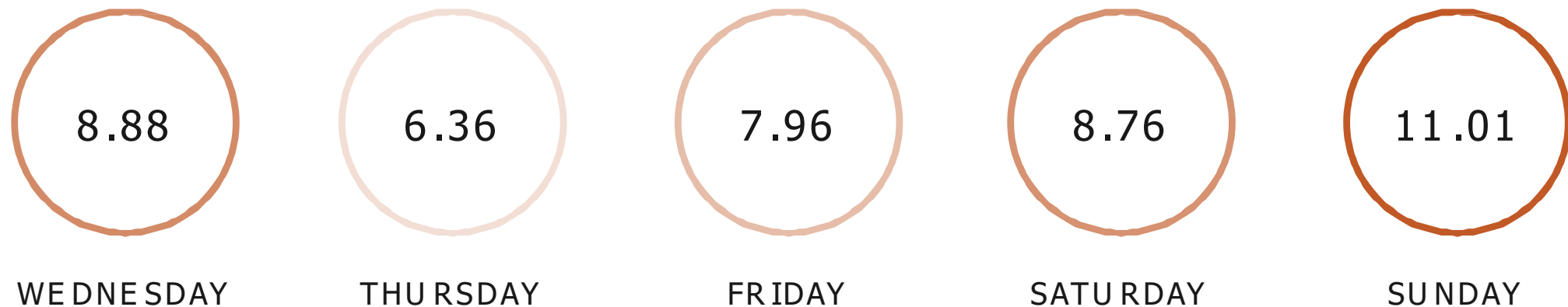




## AVERAGE NUMBER OF RIDERS PER DAY OVER 19 WEEK PROGRAM



## AVERAGE NUMBER OF RIDERS PER HOUR OVER 435 HOUR PROGRAM



## Average 2.9 riders

The average number of riders per party was 2.9

# Survey Response

145 riders took an optional survey while on board - this is what we learned from them:



## California Welcome Center

The California Welcome Center was the most popular location to start the ride, followed by Courthouse Square and 4th Street near Russian River Brewing.



## Locals Love It

Nearly 80% of survey respondents were from Santa Rosa. 8.2% were from Sonoma County, 3.5% from the Bay Area, 4.1% from California and 4.1% were out of state.



## Positive Feedback

98.6% of respondents said they wanted to see Rose-E return regularly or become a permanent program





# Rider Feedback

*My husband and I loved riding Rose-E and greatly appreciated having a public transportation option to connect near our neighborhood (roseland) to downtown*

*The experience is unique and a highly recommended family activity*

*It was a fun and quaint ride with my family! A new way to appreciate downtown SR!*

*It was a wonderful experience and my toddler still talks about going to visit Rose-E regularly!*

*The driver was extremely nice and it was a fun way to get around downtown Santa Rosa.*

*I loved it! I felt nostalgia and joy!*

*It's not comfortable walking between downtown and Railroad Square, more so after [the] mall closes. I'd like to go to RR Square more, and Rose-E was a great opportunity to do so.*



## • Rider Habits

- Those who took the initial survey were asked to complete some additional questions. 58 respondents indicated the following:

90%



### Shopped & Dined

Said they shopped, dined or enjoyed entertainment Downtown on the same trip that they rode Rose-E, and 43% attended public events.

67%



### Full Loop

Rode Rose-E on a full loop, getting on and off at the same stop in one ride. 22% rode point-to-point and 12% rode out and back.

64%



### Bonus Benefit

Indicated they were already Downtown when they decided to ride Rose-E. 36% said they came Downtown specifically to ride Rose-E.

85%



### Family Fun

Rode the trolley just for fun, while 15% utilized it to get around Downtown

# Lessons Learned

After speaking with hotels, high traffic businesses and Rose-E stops, as well as reviewing open ended survey feedback, several key elements emerged:

Attractions for  
Local Families



Tours for Tourists

Connecting SMART  
Riders



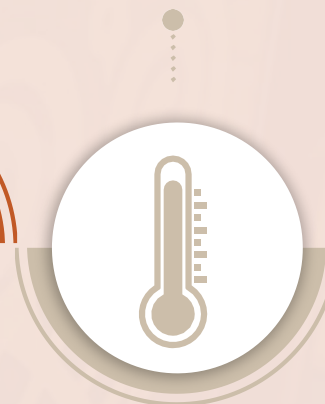
Eco-friendly  
approach

Consistent Schedule  
/ Tracking



Weekend Hours

Weather Saver





# Future Cross-Town Transit Opportunities



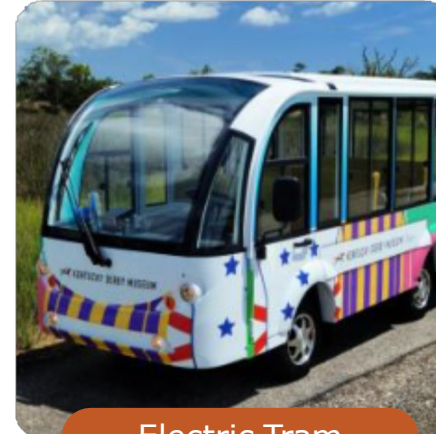
## Lease Trolley

The cost per rider for the pilot was approximately \$17 per person. If there was interest in continuing the concept, leasing from a trolley company that provides drivers or leasing a trolley and contracting out driving to a local logistics company, would be an option to continue delivering connectivity. A timetable or route tracker would be a necessary addition.



## Utilize Rosie

Utilizing the City's trolley for a schedule focused on peak use days, would maintain the appeal of the historic transportation, allow for an integration of income-generating tours geared toward tourists and provide continued connectivity when most needed. Maintenance and hiring drivers is a challenge, so consistency of scheduling might be a challenge.



## Electric Tram

A relatively inexpensive option to purchase, and easier to maintain than Rosie, a tram could be utilized in a similar style to the trolley and maintain minimal environmental impact. Income-generating tours would be possible, along with continued connectivity for SMART riders and tourists.



## Shared Ride Contract

Similar to the LumaGo pilot that launched in Petaluma, a decision could be made to contract with a company that has the infrastructure to provide on demand ride-share service that could meet the need of cross town transport.

# Santa Rosa Economic Development Division



WHERE SUCCESS TAKES ROOT

City of Santa Rosa Planning and Economic Development Department,  
Economic Development Division

## VISION

In pursuit of economic prosperity, the City of Santa Rosa envisions a future guided by principles of innovation, sustainability and inclusivity. Our strategic focus centers on leveraging these pillars to foster growth, attract investment, and cultivate a vibrant business environment that enriches our community.

## GOALS

To Achieve

1. Business Growth,
2. Economic Vibrancy and Resiliency,
3. Community Investment.

## PURPOSE

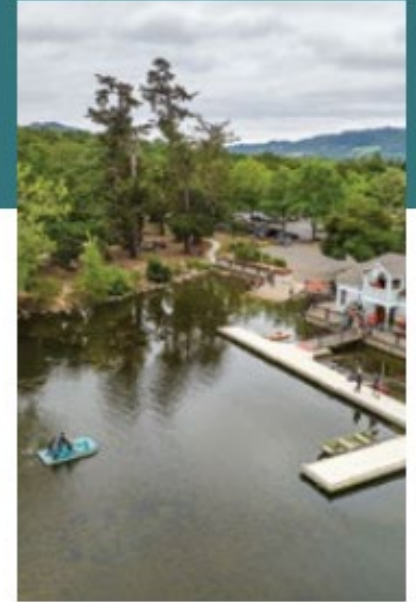
To help the city and community to achieve and realize the above vision and goals, through...

## MISSION

Implementation of the Economic Development and Public Art Strategic Plans.

## 9.1 Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan Update

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Economic Development Strategy

Adopted April 2024



# Implementation Plan One Sheet



## 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 coordinated tandem approach to attraction efforts

# 9.2 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

# 9.3 Entrepreneurship and Small Business Update



(Ombudsman 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 and 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

# 9.4 Economic Vibrancy and Resiliency Update



(Events Update)

Total Event permits issued  
Nov-Feb: 13

Fees Collected: \$3581.10

10 returning annual events, 3  
new

SOFA district Winterblast had  
highest reported attendance  
to date in its 18 years.

First event in years from the  
downtown Library where  
they shut down part of E  
Street

From City events outside of  
Chamber Blanket Permit, an  
estimated 6,500 attendees

Garage 12 on 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
selected as ideal candidate  
for rooftop concert series.

Recology contract  
reexamined to support new  
events and maintain annuals,  
with 40  
•events and a \$100k cost total to  
support



## 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



# 9.5 Community Investment Update

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# Arts and Culture Program Update

Economic Development Subcommittee

March 11, 2025

Meredith Knudsen: Arts and Culture Coordinator





# Creating Opportunities for Artists

- **National Arts Program**  
Eligibility: Santa Rosa Residents and Employees;  
All ages and skill level.
- **Earthbound: Art for a Sustainable Future**  
Eligibility: CA Based artists; 18+
- **Big Belly Trash Can Art**  
Eligibility: Sonoma County artists; all ages and skill level
- **Colgan Creek Mural**  
Eligibility: US based mural artists; must be or work with local Native American tribe members, 18+
- **Brookwood Community Mural**  
Eligibility: Sonoma County mural artists; must work with local youth, 18+



**National Arts Program**

**EARTHBOUND**  
Art for a Sustainable Future  
Celebrating the intersection of art, environment, and innovation

**Featured Artists:**  
Yustina Salnikova  
Joel Stockdill  
Catherine Daley  
Hilary Tsai  
Martin Zuniga

**Santa Rosa Courthouse Square April 2025**  
[SRCity.org/ARTS](http://SRCity.org/ARTS)

**of PUBLIC ART**

# Call for Art!

## Santa Rosa Public Art Walk

**Applications open March 13- April 30, 2025**

- This program aims to transform our urban environment into an open-air gallery.
- Designed to connect the cultural hubs downtown to railroad square
- Project Plan approved APPC November 4, 2024
- Eligibility: US based artists
- Artwork temporarily displayed 2 years
- Up to 10 artists to be selected.



### City of Santa Rosa **CALL FOR ART**

Showcase your artwork in the creative hub of the North Bay, transforming our urban spaces into an open-air gallery.



Questions email  
[Arts@SRCity.org](mailto:Arts@SRCity.org)

**Theme: *Urban Renewal***

Applications open  
March 13 - April 30, 2025

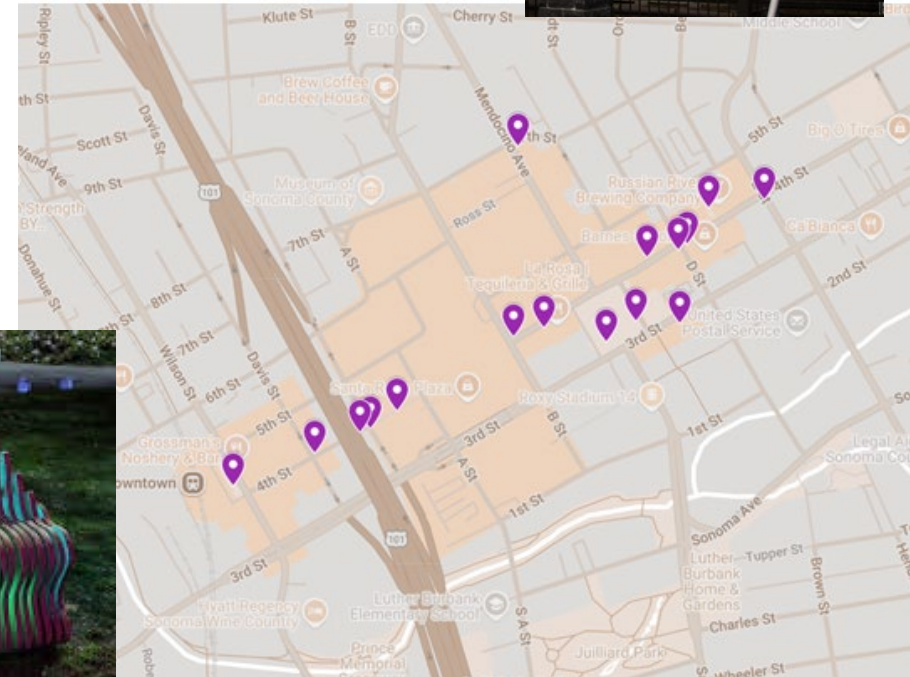
More info & apply at

**[SRCity.org/ARTS](https://srcity.org/ARTS)**

# Theme: Urban Renewal

## Vision of renewal and innovation.

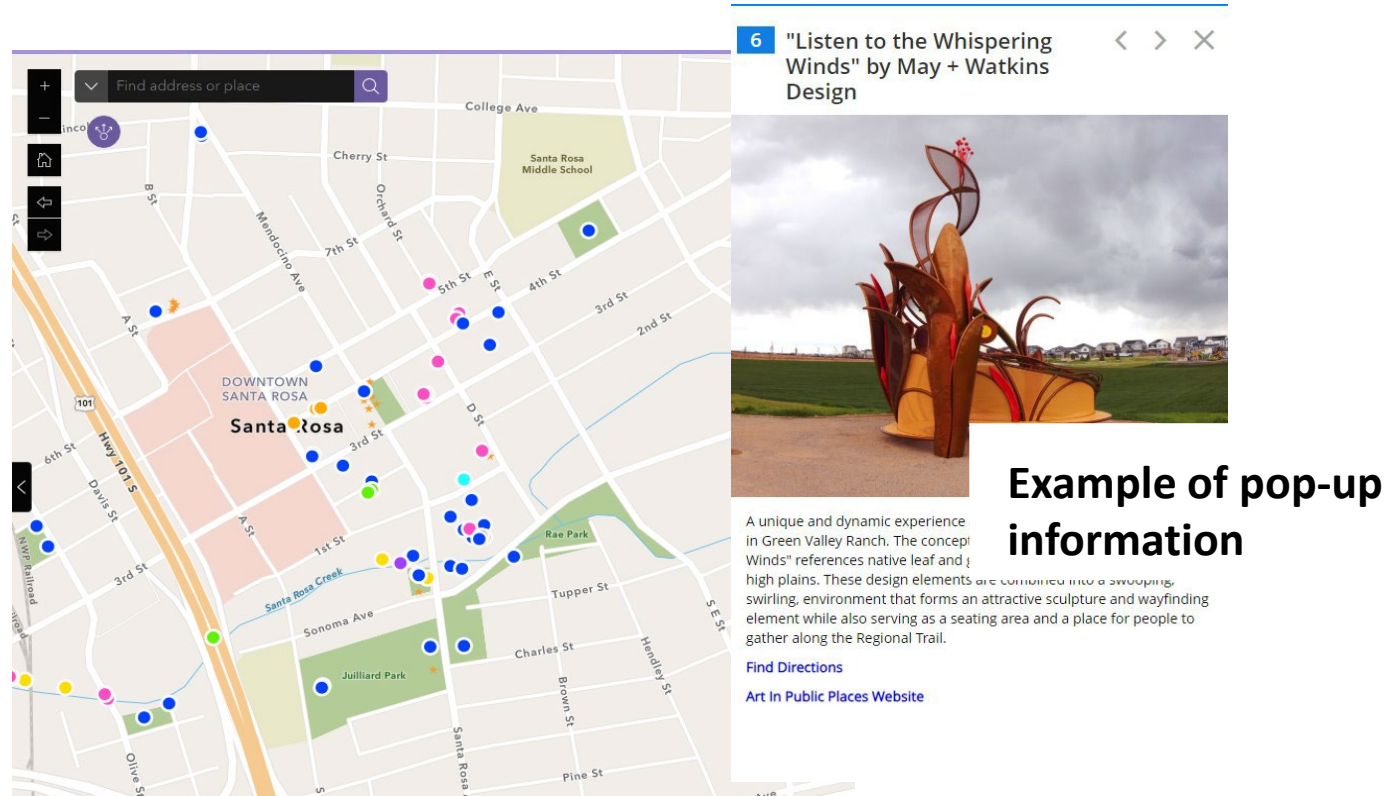
- **Playfulness and Innovation:** We welcome artworks that are **playful, imaginative, and visually engaging.**
- **Sustainability:** Reflect the principles of sustainability by incorporating **recycled or eco-friendly materials.**
- **Community Impact:** Showcase installations that resonate with local residents and visitors, **sparking conversations and connections.**





# Online Public Art Map

- Enhance tourism by providing an easy way for visitors to explore art-related sites.
- Position the city as an arts destination
- Increase art education opportunities
- Categories include art walks, permanent collection, public art in private development and more!
- Internally track maintenance needs



# Community Involvement

Updates on our website on how to **Get Involved!**

## Public Art Proposal Form

- Opportunity for all artists & mediums (performance, literature, experimental works)
- Project transparency
- Opportunity to seek funding
- Available in 19 languages

## Serve on an Art Selection Panel

- Inclusive ideas and voices
- Strengthen community bonds
- Educational opportunity

## Arts Roundtable

- Starting Summer 2025
- Facilitates open dialogue
- Identifies community needs
- Provides a space for feedback




# Event Support Funding

- SRTBIA Applications Close March 31  
Online ads:  
San Jose, Sacramento, SF, Seattle, Long Beach  
Event managers, organizers, planners
- Community Promotions applications  
open April 1 – May 15

## Follow Santa Rosa Arts and Culture!

Facebook.com/srpublicarts


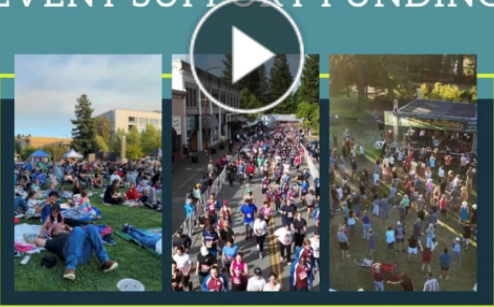
Instagram @srpublicart


 **Santa Rosa Arts & Culture** × ⋮  
Sponsored · 🌐

We're seeking unique and innovative events that are ready to make a lasting impact in Santa Rosa! With over 1,000 acres of park and civic space, Santa Rosa is the cultural hub of the North Bay, and we're here to help bring your vision to life.

Apply for Event Support Funding today!

Get all the details here:  
[SRCity.org/EventSupport](https://srcity.org/EventSupport)

  
**APPLY FOR**  
EVENT SUPPORT FUNDING  


 srcity.org  
**Event Support Funding | Sant...** [Learn more](#)

**SR  
PUBLIC  
ART**



**[SRCity.org/ARTS](http://SRCity.org/ARTS)**

## 9.6 Metrics and Indicators



# (Economic Dashboard)

## Economic Development Dashboard



# Economic Development Dashboard

These key indicators gauge the city of Napa's economic performance and are updated on a quarterly basis as needed



## The City's Economy at a Glance

**\$** **\$457**  
Hotel Average Daily Rate  
(Sept. 2024, 6 Month  
Moving Average)

**69.7%**  
Hotel Occupancy Rate  
(Sept. 2024, 6 Month  
Moving Average)

**+0.5%**  
Hotel Occupancy Rate  
past year difference  
(Sept. 2023 - Sept. 2024)

**-0.9%**  
Hotel Occupancy Rate  
past two year difference  
(Sept. 2022 - Sept. 2024)

**\$** **\$7.48 Billion**  
City of Napa Gross Regional Product  
Economic Output (2023 est.)

**+0.3%**  
City of Napa Taxable Sales Percent  
Increase (2023 Q2 to 2024 Q2)

**-1.8%**  
Napa County Taxable Sales Percent  
Increase (2023 Q2 to 2024 Q2)

**-0.7%**  
California Taxable Sales Percent  
Increase (2023 Q2 to 2024 Q2)

**\$** **\$891,950**  
Median home price within the City as  
of Sept. 2024 (Zillow Research)

**-0.1%**  
City of Napa one year home price  
growth rate (Sept. 2023 - Sept. 2024)

**+2.7%**  
City of Napa two year home price  
growth rate (Sept. 2022 - Sept. 2024)

**-1.5%**  
City of Napa Housing Market Forecast  
(% change in median home price) to  
July 2025

Updated 12/2024

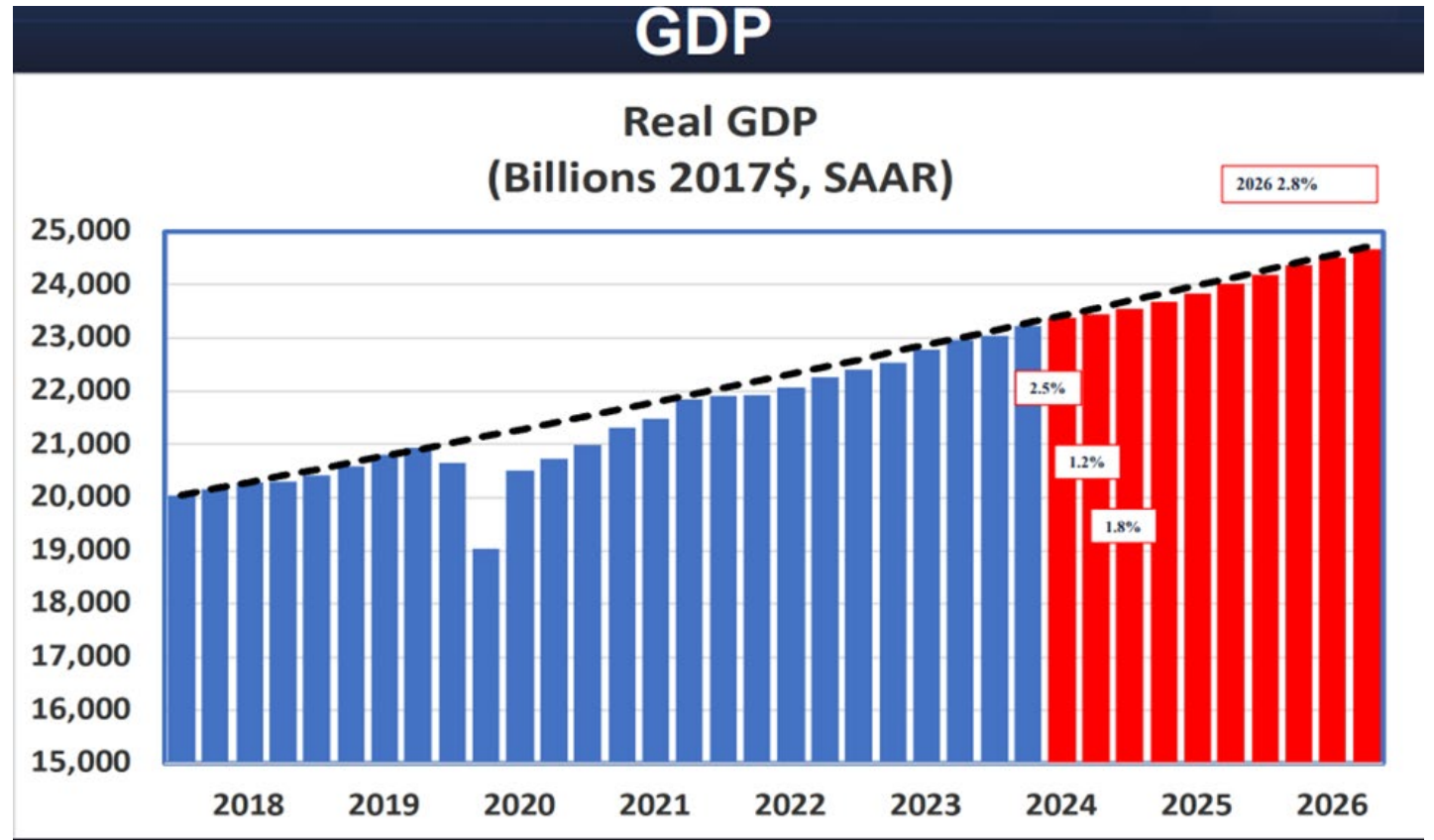
Share

made with infogram

# 2024 in review

CHANGES in RED for 2025						
Job		Range or	Annually or	Bottom of Range	Top of Range	
Code	Job Title	Step	Hourly	or Step 1	or Step 2	Step 3
23X4	MEDIA SERVICES ASSISTANT	Range	Hourly	20.30	31.57	-
90X7	OFFICE & PROGRAM AIDE	Range	Hourly	17.87	26.67	-
90Y3	INTERN - GENERAL	Range	Hourly	17.87	26.00	
43Y3	ENGINEERING INTERN	Range	Hourly	19.17	26.00	
43Z3	ENGINEERING AIDE	Range	Hourly	17.87	25.54	
79Y7	ACTIVITY SPECIALIST	Steps	Hourly	20.37	20.87	21.37
50Z9	MAINTENANCE AIDE	Steps	Hourly	20.37	20.87	21.37
79Z7	ASSISTANT ACTIVITY SPECIALIST	Steps	Hourly	19.37	19.62	-
80Z5	LIFEGUARD	Steps	Hourly	18.87	19.12	-
80Z4	SWIM INSTRUCTOR	Steps	Hourly	18.87	19.12	-
80Y7	RECREATION LEADER	Steps	Hourly	18.37	18.62	-
80Z7	RECREATION AIDE	Steps	Hourly	17.87	18.12	-

Looking  
ahead in  
2025

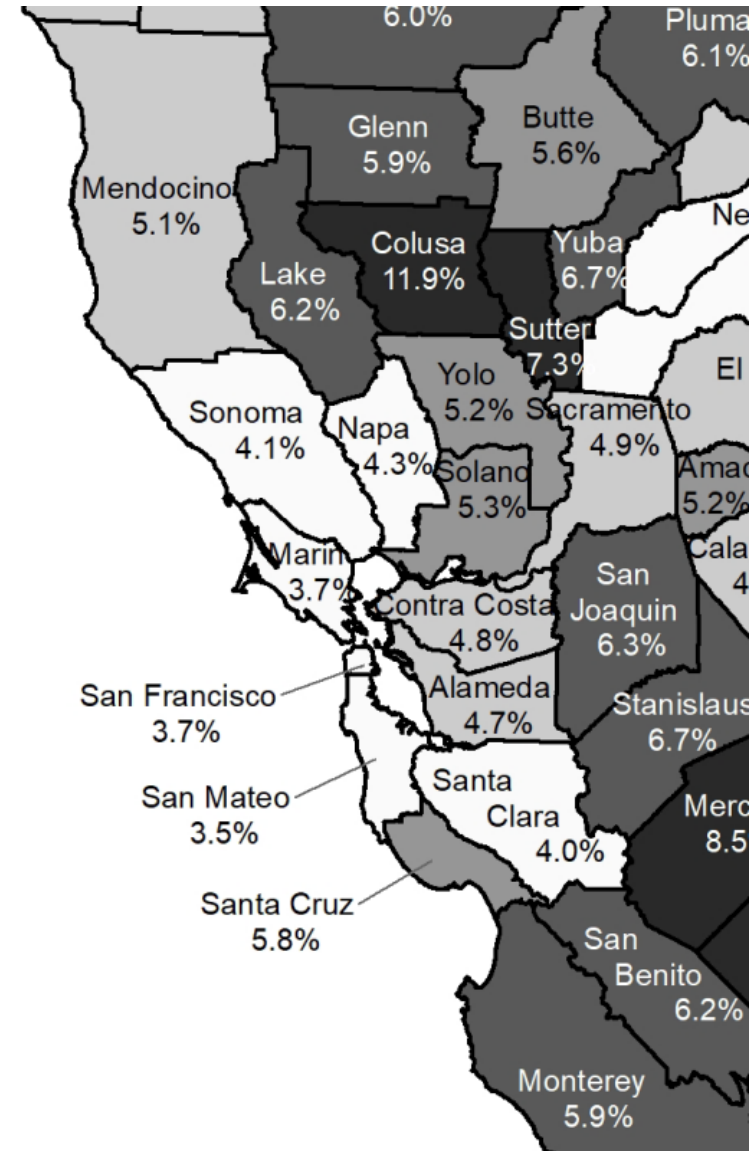


Business Attraction,  
Retention and Expansion

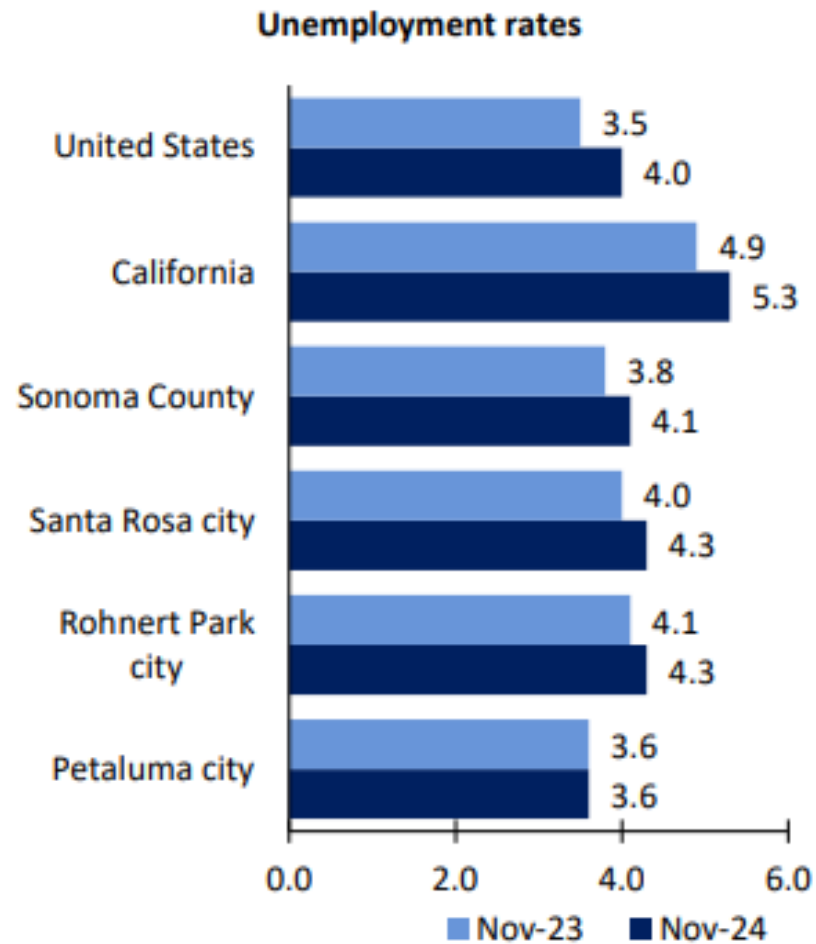
Create a business-friendly, sustainable, and strong economy  
by attracting new businesses and expanding, retaining, and  
supporting existing businesses.

Goal		Action	Implementation	Measurables	Point Person	Incorporated in Workplan	Partners	Overlap w/Council Workplan	Completion	3	6
										FY 24-25 Q2 (Oct-Dec)	FY 24-25 (Jan-Mar)
A.Create fiscal stability for the City, businesses, and property owners.	1	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 San Joaquin Small Business Development Center.			Economic Development Specialist (Ombudsman)						
B.Support a thriving workforce.											
C.Establish Santa Rosa as a business- friendly city.											
D.Develop a communication strategy for the promotion of services and interactions with business owners.	2	Obtain software platforms for tracking and reliable demographics.			Economic Development Analyst						
E.Increase the number of medium and large businesses in key industries.	3	Conduct a business gap analysis, existing cluster industry analysis, and key emerging industry sectors analysis.			Economic Development Analyst						
F.Create a business retention and expansion strategy for existing industries.	4	Identify key opportunities and land development sites and work with outside partners to prepare and market			Chief Economic Development Officer						

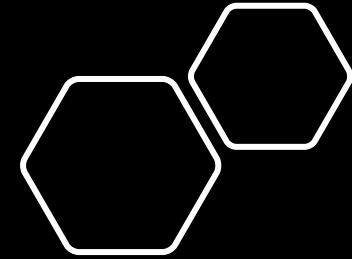
# Market Comparisons



Unemployment rates for the nation and selected areas



Source: U.S. BLS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.





Median Income by Types of Families



in Santa Rosa city, California  
*S1901*

Measure	Value
Families	\$110,245
Married-couple families	\$137,527
Nonfamily households	\$73,893

Median Income by Types of Families



in Windsor town, California  
*S1901*

Measure	Value
Families	\$151,234
Married-couple families	\$169,222
Nonfamily households	\$58,188

Median Income by Types of Families



in Rohnert Park city, California  
*S1901*

Measure	Value
Families	\$111,500
Married-couple families	\$129,058
Nonfamily households	\$70,550



## Santa Rosa Rankings

Niche rankings are based on rigorous analysis of key statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and millions of reviews.

Best Cities for Outdoor  
Activities in America

#54 of 229

Healthiest Cities in  
America

#60 of 229

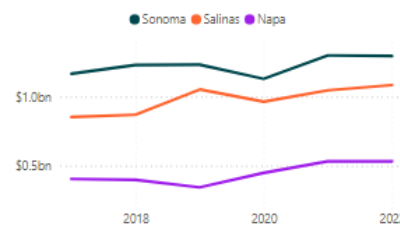
Healthiest Places to Live  
in America

#60 of 229

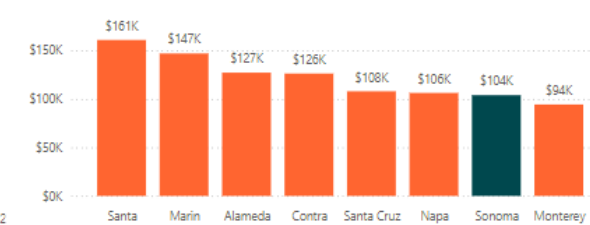
# New Regional Indicators Coming



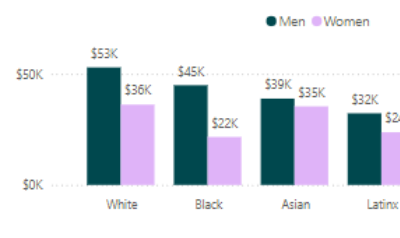
Value of Exports  
Billions of Dollars (2018-2022)



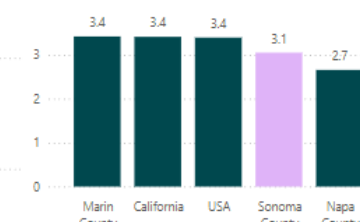
Median Household Income by County  
Thousands of Dollars (2024)



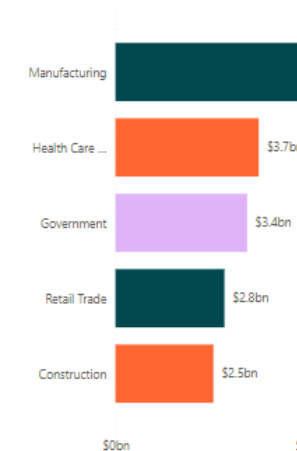
Median Earnings by Race & Gender  
Thousands of Dollars (2022)



Nonemployer Establishments  
Relative to Pay-Rolled Businesses (2020)



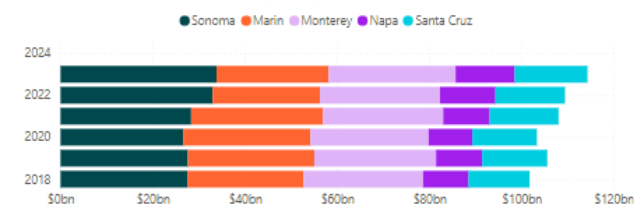
Annual GRP by Sector  
by Sector (2023)



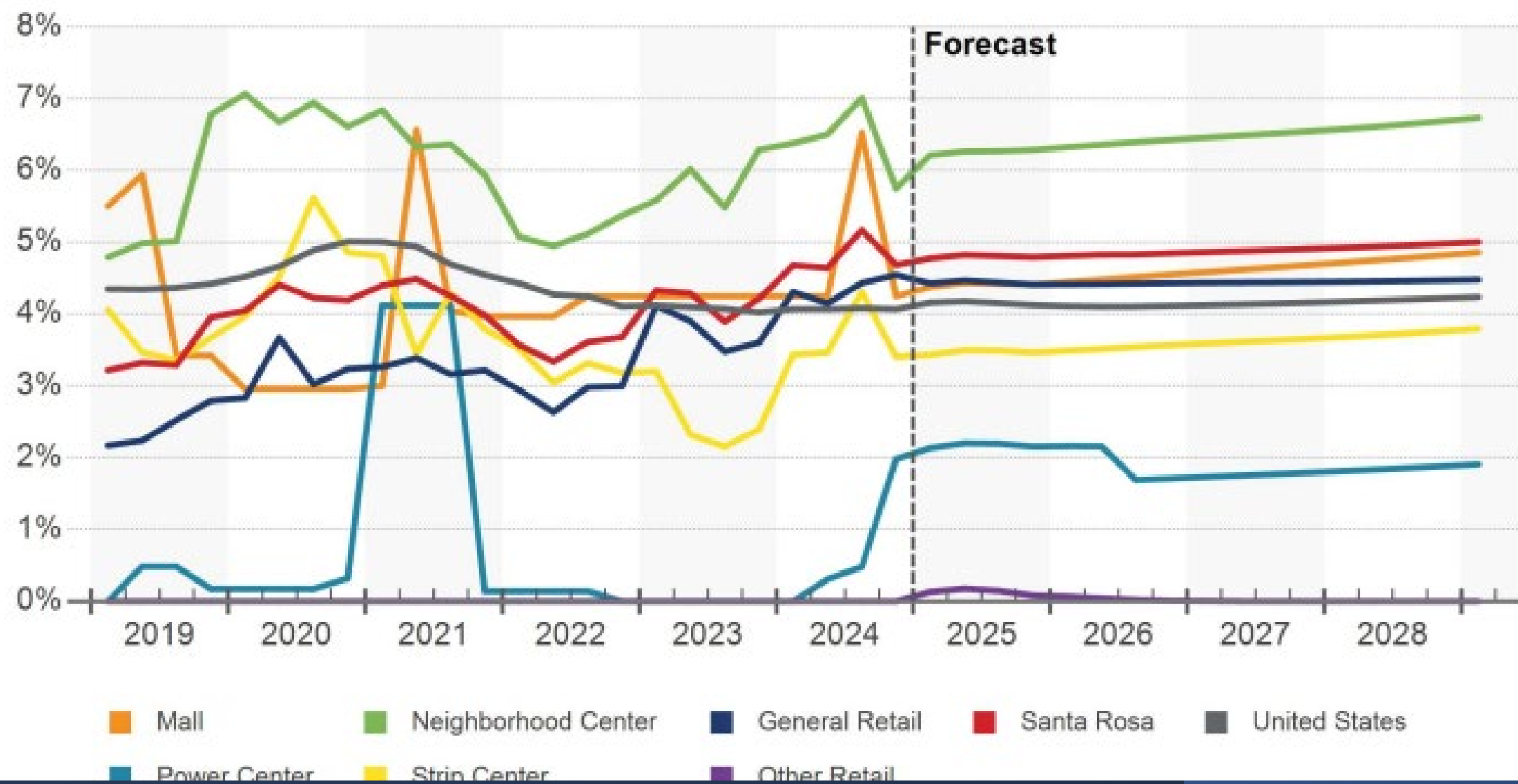
Annual Unemployment Rate  
by County (2023)



Yearly GRP Totals  
by County (2018-2023)

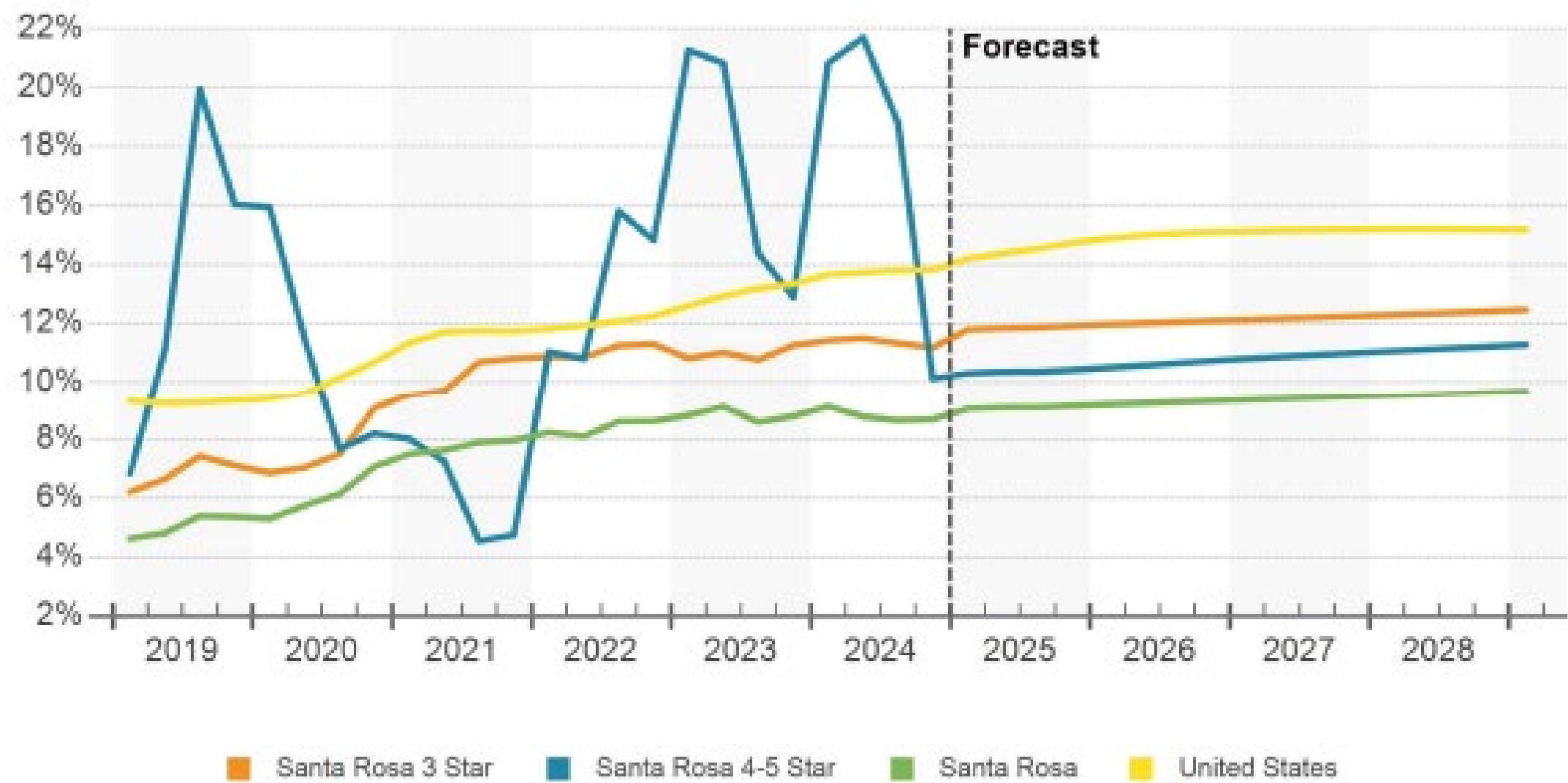


VACANCY RATE

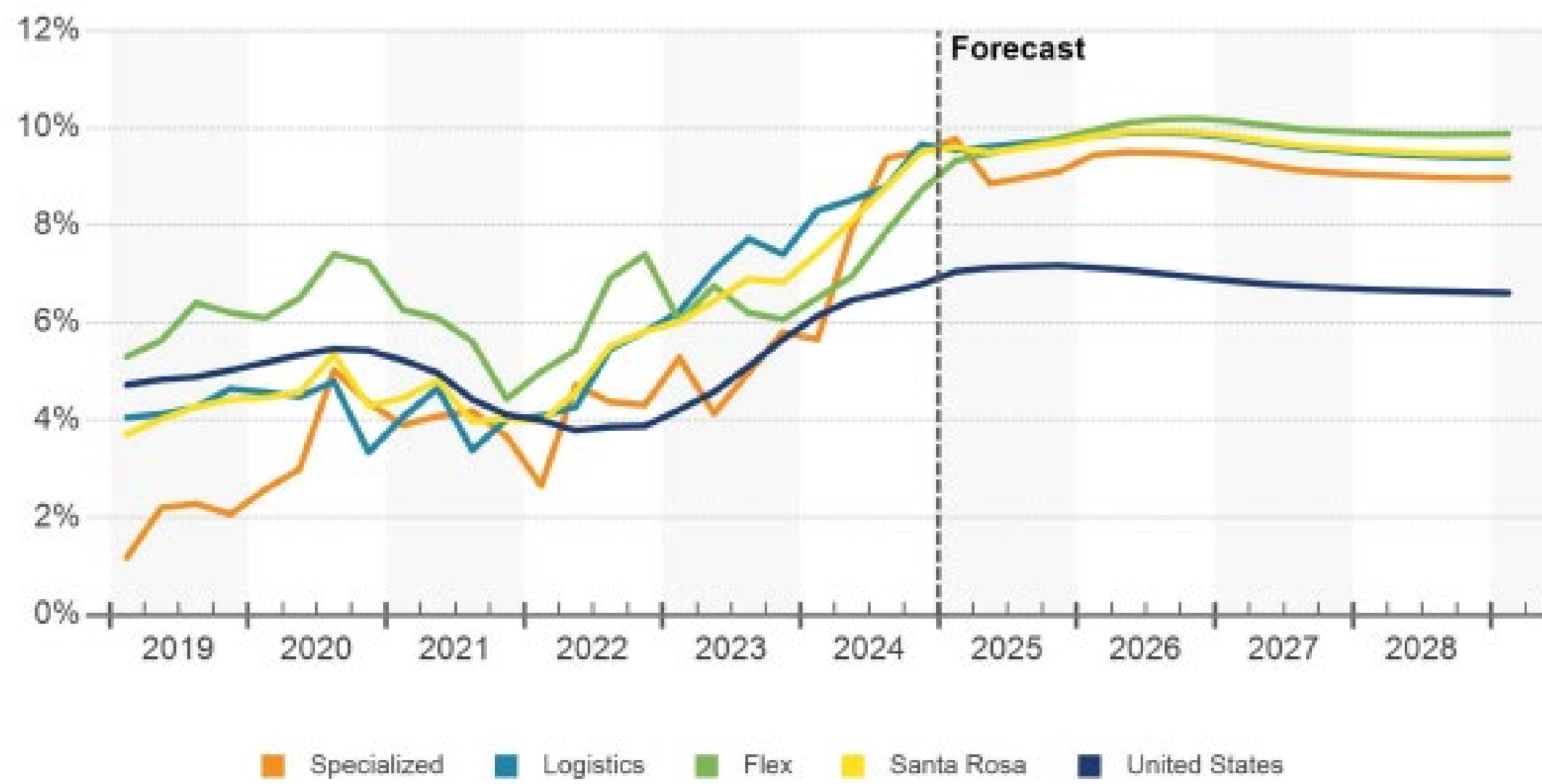




VACANCY RATE



VACANCY RATE



## 9.7 Special Projects Update

# HARRY'S HOUSE

## Pop Up Program



# Pedestrianization







# Farmers Market



One Stop Shop

# End New Business



## 10. Matters Held In Committee

# 11. Department Reports

## 12. Adjourn