

**From:** [Victor Delpanno](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Saturday, March 4, 2023 2:46:12 PM

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Council Members,

I encourage you to think about these subjects when drafting your priorities for the coming year.

## **Biking**

In the past decade, we've seen a lot of improvement in our bike network. I already see many more cyclists than I used to when I started biking in 2017. Of course, there's still more work to do to create a new citywide mindset about active transportation, and if we want this to happen by 2030 rather than 2060, we need this investment to be bold, and for it to happen soon.

We already know the benefits of biking for our health, air quality, and carbon emissions. However, there are some underappreciated benefits:

- Bike infrastructure is cheaper per mile traveled. More cyclists means less roads are needed, less parking, less maintenance, and stronger city finances.
- Community. Cities with high bike mode shares are more pleasant to live in. It's easier to talk to strangers, stop when you see a friend, and spontaneously attend an event you weren't planning to. There's a loneliness epidemic in the country harming our health and politics, and social connections are more important than ever.
- Bike infrastructure is an anti-poverty tool. Car ownership is expensive, roughly \$2,000-\$5,000 per year once you account all costs. If a car stops being the price of admission to participate in society, many more people will be able to meet their other basic needs, like housing.
- Bike infrastructure is good for business, even when it means removing traffic lanes and parking. Here's a study from Portland State University showing the generally positive relationship between active transportation and business activity: <https://nrtc.trec.pdx.edu/research/project/1161>, and here's an article with reporting on this topic: <https://www.wired.com/story/the-battle-over-bike-lanes-needs-a-mindset-shift/>.

What can you do?

- Investment is number one of course. Bike infrastructure gets a small share of our transportation budget. Incredible things would be possible if that was increased to 10% or 15%. A safe and connected bike network in a reasonable timeframe would then be within reach.
- At a meeting regarding changes to Mendocino Ave, a Class 4 separated bike lane was rejected because the fire department said it would violate state fire codes around tall buildings. Since other California cities have separated bike lanes next to tall buildings, this is a misinterpretation of the codes. Projects could be authorized with low (6"-8") concrete barriers that fire trucks could go over.
- AB 122, a bill legalizing cyclists treating stop signs as a yield, was vetoed by the governor last year. You could, however, direct SRPD to make this rule the lowest

enforcement priority. These "Idaho Stops" have been shown to decrease cyclist injuries in states that allow them.

## **Walking**

The one thing I'll add to this is that raised sidewalks are excellent for pedestrians and underused in North America. This provides effective traffic calming and is much nicer to walk through, but also makes clear to drivers that this is a space for pedestrians where cars are guests, rather than the other way around. This would be a great fit for 4th St between B St and E St, but also anywhere in the city where vehicle speeds should be low and walking is encouraged, like Railroad Square and even collector roads like Sebastopol Rd.

## **Transit**

There's many positives to SR Transit. Frequent, comprehensive service is unfortunately not one of them. I have a bus route that passes right in front of my house, stopping less ~100ft from my door. I have yet to take it because it only comes once an hour, and the route has to cover so much ground that it becomes impractically slow. It's not great that from my house, even with that bus stop, almost every time it takes longer to take transit than to leisurely walk to my destination.

I know it's easier said than done, but a 15-minute frequency and more direct routes would make transit a much stronger competitor to personal vehicles for transportation.

Importantly, it shouldn't be designed with the goal of covering its expenses with fares. Roads don't pay for themselves either, they are a public good the city provides so their citizens can meet their transportation needs. And ultimately more people using transit would reduce road wear in a way that would save money overall.

## **Urban planning**

I couldn't find information online about Santa Rosa's residential and commercial building codes. However, if you have them, please get rid of parking minimums. It increases costs to buildings, effectively making non-drivers subsidize car infrastructure. Worse, they create sprawl by having buildings farther away from each other, which ultimately makes walking and biking harder. Businesses are in a better position to determine the amount of parking they'll need and are able to afford.

With regards to residences, you have the power to eliminate single family zoning. There are many reasons to do this, but here's a couple:

- It creates big areas of low-density development that take more money to maintain than they pay in taxes.
- It encourages housing monocultures without neighborhood stores or amenities in walking distance, which in turn exacerbate car dependency.

There's also the issue of what I call publicly-funded private streets. These are the winding streets within subdivisions that often lead nowhere. In practice, they're only used by the residents living there. They are a response to the fact that cars are unpleasant to be around, but ultimately they end up making neighborhoods less walkable/bikeable, reinforcing car

dependency and shifting traffic into other neighborhoods.

Finally, there's much you can do about something I experience every day: vehicle noise. Cities aren't loud, cars are loud. The worst offenders in terms of noise are customized cars and motorcycles that, maybe to give their engines 5% more horsepower, and a little tingle of enjoyment to their owner, make life worse for everyone within a 400ft radius. The city council could ban vehicles making high levels of noise within city limits (not necessarily banning the vehicles themselves if they're able to run quieter), equip police with sound measurement devices, and give citations to offenders. This would also combine well with ordinances against side-shows, since noise is one of their main negatives.

Thank you for your consideration and your work improving our beloved city,

-Victor Delpanno

**From:** [Chris Guenther](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Alexa Forrester](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Letter for Council Priority Setting  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 9:14:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [BikeableSR City Council Priorities Letter 2023-24.pdf](#)

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Please see attached.

Thank you,  
Chris Guenther & Alexa Forrester





March 5, 2023

The Honorable Natalie Rogers  
Mayor  
City of Santa Rosa  
100 Santa Rosa Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dear Mayor Rogers, Vice Mayor MacDonald, and Council Members,

We are writing on behalf of hundreds of Bikeable Santa Rosa supporters to communicate our recommendations for the City's priorities in the coming year. We have spent the last year in conversation with our neighbors across the city, in all seven districts, and we have heard resoundingly that people want streets built for communities, not just for cars. Meanwhile, with the growing impacts of the climate crisis, persistent social and economic inequality, and a mounting toll of deaths and injuries on our streets, it is clear we have no time to waste.

With this in mind, we are asking the City to adopt the following priority for the coming year:

**Accelerate the transformation of Santa Rosa's streets to fulfill the city's climate, equity, safety, and public health goals.**

This transformation will involve:

- A protected, low-stress bicycle network connecting all Santa Rosa residents to the places in the city they need to go.
- Full implementation of the Vision Zero Plan, including safe routes to schools.
- Increased transit options and appropriate street diets to calm traffic and create more space for all users.

Although the full transition of our streets will take time, we can and must make meaningful progress in the near term. In the coming year, the council and staff can take the following actions to support the above priority:

- **Transportation Planning**: Engage deeply with the City Thread Accelerated Mobility Playbook process over the next four months and take aggressive steps to implement the recommendations that emerge from that process.

- General Plan: Ensure the updated General Plan embeds Vision Zero traffic safety principles and charts a course for a future in which residents with *or without a car* have full access to housing, education, employment, recreation, healthcare, and retail opportunities.
- Quick builds: Use affordable quick-build methods to enact safe street crossings and pedestrian and bike facilities to serve area schools.
- Staff time: Budget staff time to move already planned projects from the shelf to the shovel, including:
  - Stony Point Road safety improvements
  - Santa Rosa Ave safety improvements
  - Dutton Ave safety improvements
  - 101 Bike-Ped overcrossing
  - Southeast Greenway acquisition
- Policy: Adopt policies (a) to ensure sustained funding commensurate with above goals and (b) to establish street design guidelines to ensure coherent and safe bicycle and pedestrian routes.

Thank you for your consideration,  
The Bikeable Steering Team



Chris Guenther & Alexa Forrester, co-leads  
 Aaron & Avery Figueroa  
 Cris Eggers  
 Justin Borton  
 Jen & Ken Mercado  
 Kevin Anderson  
 Minona Heaviland  
 Mike Lipelt

**From:** [Dan Woloz](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 10:06:40 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing you to urge the construction of a network of safe bicycling routes in and around the city in the coming year

This is crucial to me because driving feels like the only viable mode of transport right now and we need other options for the health of ourselves, our community, and the planet

Sincerely,  
Dan Woloz

**From:** [Minona Heaviland](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [bikeablesr@gmail.com](mailto:bikeablesr@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 11:08:28 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the coming budget year, particularly in the 1-mile area around schools. From [Hoen Ave](#) to [Stony Point Road](#) young people are being critically injured and killed by vehicle crashes and it is time for the City of Santa Rosa to prioritize implementing improvements to protect our children and families.

As we come out of the pandemic, children and families need safe areas to congregate and travel to and from schools to build community and improve public health. Please support our school communities by creating safe routes to and spaces around our schools. Actions that the City could take include the following:

- 1) implement bike routes on quiet streets or protected bike lanes on busy streets and communicate safe routes to school for families (see [City of Davis example](#))
- 2) lowering speed limits to 15 MPH in school zones ([as did the City of Oakland in 2022](#))
- 3) quick-build bulb-outs for crosswalks by schools ([NACTO](#) has design guidelines, implemented in many cities around the world, recent examples from Oakland)
- 4) reducing vehicular lanes near schools so there are fewer lanes of traffic for children to cross or closing streets to bike and pedestrian only traffic during school drop-off and pickup times ([look at what has been done in Queens, NY](#))

There are several projects in the pipeline from the City Transportation and Public Works that could help to improve safe routes to schools. Please prioritize funding implementation of these projects:

- **4th Street Corridor** from E Street to Farmers Lane
- **Montgomery Drive Corridor** from Alderbrook Drive to Hahman Drive
- **N Dutton Avenue** from W College Avenue to W 3rd Street
- **Stony Point Road** from W Third (3rd) Street to Sebastopol Road

- **Santa Rosa Ave** from Sonoma Ave to Hwy 12

In addition to these projects, there needs to be more development of projects to implement safe, connected bike and pedestrian routes across Santa Rosa. Please consider engaging with the City Thread process organized by [Bikeable Santa Rosa](#) to identify how to rapidly improve the safety and livability of Santa Rosa's public spaces in the coming 3 years.

Best regards,  
Minona Heaviland  
Bikeable Santa Rosa Steering Team Member

**From:** [David Becker](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Bicycle/Pedestrian safety central to planning  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 11:32:58 AM

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Please seriously consider Bike/Ped safety in your planning discussions.  
Add in a touch of traffic calming too.

Thanks,  
David Becker  
SRCC, SCBC, etc.  
[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**From:** [Andrew Rich](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 11:43:30 AM

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Santa Rosa needs safer, more connected bike infrastructure. Safe bike lanes need to be a priority, and not just an afterthought. People need to be able to commute across town through a connected network. Current approaches are not working.

Bike and pedestrian infrastructure is a cost effective approach to accomplishing many of the city's goals.

**From:** [Rich, Anita](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 5:19:50 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to request you prioritize safe bicycle infrastructure in the coming year.

This is important to me because a few years ago, I was bicycling behind three young men—probably middle schoolers. I witnessed one being struck by a car. Lucky only his bike was damaged, but it could no longer be ridden. The woman who hit him apologized and sped off. I, along with the young men, were just stunned and didn't know how to respond. And then I yelled, "Get her license plate!" and the two young men pursued her. There was no way in heck they were going to catch her. I realize now that my directive could have put them in further danger. I thought about this young man with this mangled bicycle having to explain this to his parents.

A couple weeks ago, I was bicycling earlier in the day than usual. Probably about the time K-12 schools was ending. About nine middle schoolers were sharing a sketchy part of the sidewalk on Montgomery Drive. A young man who was probably the leader and older because he was larger than the rest, sidled beside me. He gave a signal where he lifted his hand, folded his three middle fingers, then extended his thumb and index finger straight up. The young men gently passed me by on one side or the other. I gathered this was their signal for passing. Not having young people in my life and many times hearing the worst in the media, this was a generous and noble gesture. I'm happy that these young men devised their secret code, but better infrastructure needs to be provided in case something gets lost in translation.

Sincerely,  
Anita Rich  
Oakmont



**From:** [Barbara White](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 5:27:59 PM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Barbara and Robbie White Hawley



Santa Rosa Ca 95409

**From:** [Vazquez Guzman, Rafael](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 7:13:20 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Our city needs to build a protected, low-stress bicycle network connecting all Santa Rosans to the places in the city they need to go. In addition, we need to fully implement the Vision Zero Plan for traffic safety and increase transit options for residents.

This matters to me and my family because we love to go bike riding and walking and at times, the activity that is meant to make us destress, does the opposite. We need safe spaces for ourselves and our community members.

I hope you will prioritize multi-modal transportation infrastructure as one of the city's adopted goals for the coming budget cycle.

Respetuosamente,

Rafael Vázquez Guzmán



¡presente!

*I acknowledge that I live and work in land originally cared for by Indigenous People and wish to express my most humble respect for having the privilege to be here. I will continue to advocate for the return of the their land.*

*Reconozco que vivo y trabajo en tierras originalmente protegidas por gente Indígena y quiero expresar mis respetos por dejarme estar aquí. Continuare abogando por el regreso de sus tierras.*

*Please consider the environment before deciding to print this email.*

**From:** [Leah Halper](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] protected bike lanes, please!  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 10:01:11 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you to urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's [recommendations](#) for city priorities in the coming year.

They are great recommendations and I hope you closely follow them. I care about this because I have always been a dedicated bike commuter, but since I moved to Santa Rosa in 2020 my cycling is dropping to nearly zero—I don't feel safe here. There are no protected bike lanes or bike-safe streets, and there are many unprotected bike lanes with fast cars that don't respect the space. I hate to think I may never return to my good biking habits—I hope you will prioritize this, and make it work in all areas of the city.

In Roseland, for example, the streets are so deteriorated and traffic rules such as speech limits are so unenforced, there is a huge equity issue in terms of possibilities for a bikeable neighborhood. Please include equity in your plans!

Wishing you good biking!

Leah Halper  
Santa Rosa

**From:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] DAO Memo re Council Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 8:49:28 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[DAO Memo re Council Goal Setting.pdf](#)

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**From:** Cadance H. Allinson <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 3, 2023 3:09 PM  
**To:** Smith, Maraskeshia <[msmith@srcity.org](mailto:msmith@srcity.org)>; Dunston, Daryel <[ddunston@srcity.org](mailto:ddunston@srcity.org)>; Nutt, Jason <[jnutt@srcity.org](mailto:jnutt@srcity.org)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] DAO Memo re Council Goal Setting

Maraskeshia, Daryel, and Jason,

Attached is a memo that was sent to members of council today regarding next week's goal setting. It touches on the three key items that the DAO hopes council will include in their annual goal setting next week.

Very grateful for the work City staff has done to move these forward (especially recently with the EIFD) and want to reiterate that if there's anything we can do to help, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Cadance

**CADANCE HINKLE ALLINSON** | Santa Rosa Downtown District, Executive Director  
**SANTA ROSA METRO CHAMBER**  
50 Old Courthouse Square, Suite 110, Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
P 707-636-2845 | F 707-545-6914  
[DOWNTOWNSANTAROSA.ORG](http://DOWNTOWNSANTAROSA.ORG)





## Memo

To: Mayor Rogers, Vice Mayor MacDonald, Members of Council  
From: Downtown Action Organization  
Date: March 2, 2023  
Re: Downtown District – Key Items for Inclusion in Council Goal Setting

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The Downtown Action Organization appreciates the ongoing work of City staff and the continued interest and dedication of members of council to keep a critical focus on Downtown.

To ensure that Downtown is able to grow into a vibrant, welcoming and safe community center as well as become key economic driver for new housing and business, we urge you to adopt the following three key items in your upcoming goal setting:

1. Support and advocate for the expedited launching of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD)
2. Implement critical measures to address impacts from some unsheltered individuals on the Downtown community, including working with County and Catholic Charities to increase intervention and access to mental health services, finalizing an ordinance restricting camping, including daytime camping with personal goods, in Downtown core, allocate an Assistant City Attorney dedicated to quality-of-life and code enforcement, increase police presence, and allocate one time funds for additional safety deterrents.
3. Implement a multi-item policy that aids retention and expansion of downtown employment including revisions to sign policies, improved tenant improvement permit review, reduction in employee parking permit fees, a suspension of business license fees, and creation of an ordinance addressing abandoned and unmaintained properties.

We appreciate your ongoing partnership and eagerness to address the challenges and opportunities facing Downtown.

Thank you,

Hugh Futrell  
Chair

Pauline Block  
Vice Chair

Cadance Hinkle Allinson  
Executive Director

cc: City Manager Smith, Assistant City Manager Dunston, Assistant City Manager Nutt

**From:** [Susan Stewart](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] dangerous traffic in JC neighborhood  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 9:39:31 AM

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Dear Ciiy Council,

I live on King Street between College and Benton and am deeply concerned that our neighborhood has become a speedway for an increasing number of dangerous drivers, during the day and even at night. This behavior poses a threat to pedestrians, animals, cyclists, and vehicles moving at posted speeds.

I'm not sure what is needed to address the problem - increasing patrol cars, posting speed limit signs with flashing lights, installing speed cameras and ticketing offenders, installing speed bumps in the area, or...? - but am asking the council to address this issue in the best way they see fit.

Thank you for your assistance,

Susan Stewart



Santa Rosa 95404

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 9:57:49 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to support the building of a protected, low-stress bicycle network connecting all Santa Rosans to all the places in the city they need to go. In addition, we need to fully implement the Vision Zero Plan for traffic safety and increase transit options for residents.

I am in support of this plan as someone who uses multiple modes of transportation, including bikes, walking, public transport, and a car. Rich city life requires that citizens from all walks of life can get around different parts of the city to meet, engage in public life, and get to know each other. Right now, it does not feel like I can move through Santa Rosa safely or conveniently without a car. A trip that takes 20 minutes in a personal vehicle takes two hours by bus, and is too dangerous to bike because the bike paths are not connected or protected. Improving our bike transportation network makes biking safer, more enjoyable, and more likely to happen. I am deeply concerned about climate change, and I also have family members with disabilities who can't drive, and who are therefore cut off from the rest of the city.

I hope you will prioritize multi-modal transportation infrastructure as one of the city's adopted goals for the coming budget cycle. It can help prevent both immediate injury and death due to traffic violence, and it can help stabilize the climate to prevent the slower violence of climate change. Thank you for considering my input.

With gratitude,

Allison Ford  
Rincon Valley neighborhood, Santa Rosa

**From:** [Jessica Melvin](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 10:31:24 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's [recommendations](#) for city priorities in the coming year.

I support these recommendations because they are common-sense changes that will make our roads safer for bikers and pedestrians alike. I value walking or riding my bike to work and downtown Santa Rosa and should be able to do so safely.

Thank you for your leadership,

Jessica Melvin

JC Neighborhood

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa 95404



**From:** [Pardoe, Jessica](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 10:44:46 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's recommendations for city priorities in the coming year.

I support these recommendations because I am committed to walking my kids safely to school every day. I live near Manzanita Elementary and am concerned with the rising number of pedestrian/vehicle accidents that have occurred in the proximity of our neighborhood school and others. The right street infrastructure can dramatically reduce traffic accidents and make the streets safer for bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers alike.

Thank you for your leadership,

Jessica Pardoe and family (Dallas, Wyatt (6), and Dylan(3) Pardoe)

**Jessica Pardoe**  
[Santa Rosa Junior College](#)  
[ESL Faculty](#)  
[World Languages Department Chair](#)  
  
[Zoom Meeting Room](#)

*We acknowledge that we gather at Santa Rosa Junior College on the territorial traditional land of the Pomo People in Santa Rosa and the Coast Miwok People in Petaluma, past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.*

**From:** [Jorge DaCosta](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 10:56:23 AM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Thank you for your time and work.

Sincerely,

Jorge DaCosta  
resident, SRJC Santa Rosa campus neighborhood  
Santa Rosa, CA

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Mary Huber Graham](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Prioritize Safe Bicycle Infrastructure  
**Date:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 8:33:04 PM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Sincerely,

*Mary Huber Graham*  
 *Santa Rosa, CA 95404*

**From:** [Nathan Spindel](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 11:42:03 AM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Thank you for considering,  
Nathan Spindel

**From:** [Laura Westerling](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal-setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 12:11:37 PM

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>

> Dear Council Members,

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> We am writing to ask you to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety. In particular, we, am saddened by the recent life threatening car vs. pedestrian accidents that occurred near Spring Lake Middle school, a school my children have attended. I support connected bike lanes, improved mass transit options and safe pedestrian crossings which will enable our citizens to minimize car driving and green house grass emissions and also improve access/ mobility to those of us who cannot drive.

>

> Thank you for your attention,

>

> Sincerely, Laura Westerling and Eric Williams

>

>

>

> Sent from an iPad

**From:** [Cadance H. Allinson](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 1:38:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

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This email is being sent on behalf of the Downtown Action Organization, which represents 162 properties in the Downtown Santa Rosa Community Benefit District.

The DAO greatly appreciates the ongoing work of City staff and the continued interest and dedication of members of council to keep a critical focus on Downtown.

To ensure that Downtown is able to grow into a vibrant, welcoming and safe community center as well as become key economic driver for new housing and business, we urge you to adopt the following three key items in this year's goal setting:

1. Support and advocate for the expedited launching of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD)
2. Implement critical measures to address impacts from some unsheltered individuals on the Downtown community, including working with County and Catholic Charities to increase intervention and access to mental health services, finalizing an ordinance restricting camping, including daytime camping with personal goods, in Downtown core, allocate an Assistant City Attorney dedicated to quality-of-life and code enforcement, increase police presence, and allocate one time funds for additional safety deterrents.
3. Implement a multi-item policy that aids retention and expansion of downtown employment including revisions to sign policies, improved tenant improvement permit review, reduction in employee parking permit fees, a suspension of business license fees, and creation of an ordinance addressing abandoned and unmaintained properties.

We appreciate your ongoing partnership and eagerness to address the challenges and opportunities facing Downtown.

Thank you,

Hugh Futrell  
Chair

Pauline Block  
Vice Chair

Cadance Hinkle Allinson  
Executive Director

**CADANCE HINKLE ALLINSON** | Santa Rosa Downtown District, Executive Director  
**SANTA ROSA METRO CHAMBER**  
50 Old Courthouse Square, Suite 110, Santa Rosa, CA 95404

**P** 707-636-2845 | **F** 707-545-6914

**[DOWNTOWNSANTAROSA.ORG](http://DOWNTOWNSANTAROSA.ORG)**



**From:** [Jones, Sara](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Planning for Biking and walking to SRJC  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 3:21:56 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Our city needs to build a protected, low-stress bicycle network connecting all Santa Rosans to the places in the city they need to go. In addition, we need to fully implement the Vision Zero Plan for traffic safety and increase transit options for residents.

This matters to me because I teach at and commute by bike to Santa Rosa Junior College. Many of my students and many potential student don't attend because they are mobility challenged. They do not have cars or parents to drive them. They need busses and safe bike routes so they can get to class. So many of the young people in Santa Rosa choose to continue their education during and after high school at SRJC. It is a great place to learn. Buses and bike routes should get them from their high schools to our campus. The investment in these transportation solutions will greatly benefit our city. SRJC helps students help themselves. We give citizens ways to be happy, productive, connected, and fulfilled. Transportation solutions will help us reach more students.

I hope you will prioritize multi-modal transportation infrastructure as one of the city's adopted goals for the coming budget cycle.

With gratitude,

Sara Jones



Santa Rosa  
Mathematics Department  
Santa Rosa Junior College



**From:** [Whyly, Sarah](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 4:30:55 PM

---

Dear Council Members,

For financial and environmental reasons, I am trying to drive less. However, I do not currently feel safe riding my bicycle to most of the places in the city I need to go, and the transit options are too infrequent to be practical. Historically, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

For these reasons, I hope the city will spend the next year prioritizing the creation of genuinely multi-modal streets and a robust transit system. The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,  
Sarah Whyly  
Roseland

**From:** [Denise Lasker](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 4:47:53 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the coming budget year, particularly in the 1-2 mile area around schools. It is time for the City of Santa Rosa to prioritize improvements to protect our children and families for both their physical and environmental health.

As we come out of the pandemic, families need safe areas to travel to and from schools to build community and improve public health. Our Girl Scout troop is coming up with ideas for a take action project where we discover issues in our community, address the root cause, and create a sustainable solution. One idea to address kids lack of physical activity is finding a way to encourage kids to be more healthy by riding, scooting, or skating to school instead of riding in a car. Vehicle traffic makes this difficult for children to do safely in our community. Please support our school communities by creating safe routes to and spaces around our schools.

Actions that the City could take include the following:

- 1) implement bike routes on quiet streets or protected bike lanes on busy streets and communicate routes to the community
- 2) reduce travel distance in crosswalks near schools by adding an “island” between many lanes of traffic and increasing curb area to make sharper vehicle turns which will slow vehicles.
- 3) reduce vehicular lanes near schools so there are fewer lanes of traffic for children to cross
- 4) closing streets for access to bike and pedestrian only traffic during school drop-off and pickup times

There are several projects in the pipeline from City Transportation and Public Works that could help improve safe routes to schools. Please prioritize funding implementation of these projects:

- **4th Street Corridor** from E Street to Farmers Lane
- **Montgomery Drive Corridor** from Alderbrook Drive to Hahman Drive
- **N Dutton Avenue** from W College Avenue to W 3rd Street
- **Stony Point Road** from W Third (3rd) Street to Sebastopol Road

- 

**Santa Rosa Ave** from Sonoma Ave to Hwy 12

In addition to these projects, there needs to be more development of projects to implement safe, connected bike and pedestrian routes across all of Santa Rosa. Please consider engaging with the City Thread process organized by [Bikeable Santa Rosa](#) to identify how to rapidly improve safety and livability of Santa Rosa in the coming years.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter,  
Denise Lasker

**From:** [Teresa Cuseo](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 7:02:51 PM

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We are writing to let you know that we expect that Santa Rosa prioritize (genuinely multi-modal streets) safety for pedestrians and bicycles in our city. It is unacceptable that people have had to die before this issue is taken seriously. Wouldn't it be great if Santa Rosa was known as a beautiful and community friendly city? It's past time.

Sincerely,

Teresa Cuseo and Ted Carter

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [JessicaGilleran](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 7:56:30 PM

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March 6, 2023

Dear Santa Rosa Council Members,

I am a long time citizen of Santa Rosa for 35 years. Over the years Santa Rosa has become a nicer city to live in because of the increased creation of protected bike lanes and safer pedestrian crossings. Making Santa Rosa streets safer for people who are not in cars is the #1 issue for me. Where I live in Montgomery Village, many children ride their bikes to school, walk to school with their families and older neighbors walk to the grocery stores and take city transit. In all areas of Santa Rosa, people need to be safe when they are biking, walking and transporting themselves without a motor vehicle. It is with deep sadness that I read that another innocent pedestrian was struck while crossing the street.

I would like to see reduced speed limits especially near all schools. Major crosswalks must be outfitted with flashing lights on the ground and on poles and intersections should be bike friendly. Sidewalks should also be regularly repaired and widened to accommodate wheelchairs and pedestrians.

Thank you for your service to our community.

With gratitude,  
Jessica T. Gilleran  
Montgomery Village Neighborhood



Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

**From:** [Michael Lipelt](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 11:54:36 AM

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Honorable Council Members,

I would like to see you make low stress, protected bicycle networks connecting all Santa Rosa residents a priority in the coming goal-setting session. We also need to fully implement the Vision Zero Plan for traffic safety and increase transit options for residents.

This is important to me because my bike is my primary mode of transportation and I don't feel safe getting to where I need to go around the city of Santa Rosa.

We must prioritize multi-modal transportation infrastructure as one of the city's adopted goals for the coming budget cycle particularly with all the new urban housing density.

With gratitude,

Michael Lipelt  
Santa Rosa Resident

**From:** [Sarah Williams](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 8:16:50 PM

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Dear Council members,

Please prioritize the safety of cyclists, pedestrians and other non car street users. It's important to have unobstructed bike lanes and , on busy roads, to have warning lights on the pedestrian crossings. It's frightening to be a pedestrian or cyclist.

Also, the condition of many sidewalks are unsafe; I have fallen on uneven sidewalks twice, in several neighborhoods.

Thank you,

Sarah Williams

Montgomery Village Neighborhood

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Emily Baker](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 8:24:36 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize safer streets for users who aren't in cars, including safe pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes. My family and I enjoy walking, biking or scooting from the Montgomery Village area to either Flat Rock park, downtown, Howarth park etc. We are often limited in where we will go by the lack of safe routes. There are many areas that could use more visible sidewalks, stoplights, wider and/or repaired sidewalks; or bike lanes that aren't bumpy, trashy, partially parked in, and un-level. It's hard to feel safe alone on a bike while navigating these many hazards, much less with my 2nd grade daughter.

With gratitude,

Emily Baker

Montgomery Village Neighborhood



**From:** [Wendy Krupnick](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 8:25:58 PM

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council members,

I have been following the campaign to make the SE Greenway a park since this effort began over 10 years ago. I have worked with dozens of volunteer led efforts over 40 years and have never seen such a well organized, effective and clear-visioned effort.

We are so close to the historic achievement of acquiring the Greenway property which the Campaign and Sonoma Land Trust are poised to move on with over two million dollars raised.

However, the grants promised must be used by October 2024. The City is an essential partner so must prioritize the staff work required to complete the acquisition process in time for these funds to be put to use.

As the City begins the park planning process, the SE Greenway must be a very high priority including additional staff in the Recreation and Parks Department to perform the tasks needed.

I hope the City will continue its support and engagement with the SE Greenway team and take all steps needed to bring to fruition the dream for what this amazing property can provide for residents, visitors and our planet.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Wendy Krupnick

Santa Rosa

**From:** [Heather Evans](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING March 2023  
**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 8:56:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [TLfavico.png](#)

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safer for users who aren't in cars, including pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes. More specifically, bike lanes that are directly adjacent to sidewalk, and NOT adjacent to parallel parking. I have personally been in two bad bicycle accidents, both in which a person exited their parked car without looking and swung their car door into me. A protected bike lane could have a 6" concrete curb (painted or with reflectors) or a product such as the one at link below, whichever is more economical.

Cycle Lane  
trafficlogix.com



Here is an example street configuration:

Sidewalk > parallel parking > traffic lanes > 2-way bicycle lane > Sidewalk.

Thank you for your hard work keeping our city walkable and bikeable, and safe for all.

Sincerely,

-Heather Evans

**From:** [crystal](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] goalsetting  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 7:47:36 AM

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----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**[EXTERNAL] goalsetting  
**Date:**2023-03-06 08:23  
**From:**crystal [REDACTED] >  
**To:**<comment@srcity.org>

Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

I have become disabled, and was stuck in a wheelchair for over a year. Thankfully I am able to walk a bit now, but I discovered just how impassible our city sidewalks, and roadways are. I was forced to use the road as the sidewalks cannot be used by any wheelchairs. In doing so, I was taking my life into my own hands.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in the BikeableSR's recommended actions for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Crystal Browne

[REDACTED], Santa Rosa, CA 95404

**From:** [Bolla, Rhonda](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Annexation of Moorland and other unincorporated areas  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 8:38:59 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[LETTER OF SUPPORT 3-6-23 FINAL RWG.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** Laura Hidalgo <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 6, 2023 2:27 PM  
**To:** Hartman, Clare <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Dick Ghilotti <[REDACTED]>; Brian Ongaro <[REDACTED]>; Dale Mahoney <[REDACTED]>; Willie Ghilotti <[REDACTED]>; Geoff Coleman <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Annexation of Moorland and other unincorporated areas  
**Importance:** High

Clare,

Please see the attached letter to the City Council in advance of the annual goal setting meetings on March 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

Let me know if you need anything further prior to forwarding to each council member.

Kind regards,

Laura Hidalgo  
Contracts Manager  
Ghilotti Construction Company, Inc.  
246 Ghilotti Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95407  
Direct: 707/303-2313  
Office: 707/585-1221  
Fax: 707/585-1601  
e-mail: [laura@ghilotti.com](mailto:laura@ghilotti.com)





March 6, 2023

Santa Rosa City Council  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Attn: Clare Hartman, Assistant City Manager and Director of Planning and Economic Development

RE: Annexation of Moorland and other unincorporated areas

Dear Mayor Natalie Rogers and Members of the City Council,

Ghilotti Construction Company, Inc. urges the City Council to select the "Annexation Boundary Option 1: South Santa Rosa" as a top priority during the Council's goal-setting session on March 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. As a long-standing Santa Rosa business community member, we believe the time has come to align the city's South Santa Rosa boundaries with the urban growth boundary. We believe the annexation of this area is a very positive step to providing much-needed services, including water and sewer, to residents and local businesses, including ours, many of whom have struggled for a long time.

Ghilotti Construction Company, Inc. started our company at our current location immediately south of Todd Road in 1992. We are proud to be headquartered in Santa Rosa and contribute to the local economy. Like many residents and businesses, we have struggled with existing groundwater levels. We have been unable to find a solution utilizing our existing wells and septic systems to support our current facilities. We would benefit from access to the City of Santa Rosa's municipal water and sewer services as would myriad other residents and businesses. The annexation will promote responsible growth and an opportunity for developers to help improve the City's infrastructure while bringing needed housing to the region.

We look forward to supporting the City with the annexation effort.

Best regards,

Richard W. Ghilotti

CEO of Ghilotti Construction / Principal Partner of IDC

— Engineering Contractor —

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246 GHILOTTI AVENUE • SANTA ROSA, CA 95407 • 707-585-1221 • FAX: 707-585-0129

[www.ghilotti.com](http://www.ghilotti.com)

STATE CONTRACTORS LICENSE #644515

**From:** [Steve Birdlebough](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#); [David Rabbitt](#)  
**Cc:** [Nutt, Jason](#); [Eddy Cumins](#); [Gallagher, Sue](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Jennings Crossing of the SMART Tracks | Sierra Club  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 8:11:35 AM  
**Attachments:** [SClub Ltr to SMART & SRosa re Jennings Crossing 2018-08-22.pdf](#)

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Good Morning Mayor Rogers, Chair Rabbitt, and others--

On behalf of the Sierra Club, I commend you for resuming work on the crossing of the SMART tracks at Jennings Avenue.

For your information, attached is a Sierra Club communication in support of the proposed at-grade crossing.

The document was delivered to your predecessors in 2018, and it is still valid. Please complete this project as soon as possible.

Cyclists need an east-west route across town that is free of speeding cars. And the residents of the Jennings Neighborhood need a convenient way to walk across the tracks.

In case you want to listen to the 2015 City Council hearing regarding the crossing it is at:

[http://santa-rosa.granicus.com/player/clip/597?  
view\\_id=2&redirect=true&h=fcaf6c2465f5ff0f43f9cc217fa7ab99](http://santa-rosa.granicus.com/player/clip/597?view_id=2&redirect=true&h=fcaf6c2465f5ff0f43f9cc217fa7ab99)

A discussion of CPUC oversight of crossings is at about 3:06 on the recording.

Steve Birdlebough,  
Transportation Chair, Sierra Club Sonoma Group



**From:** [Chris Thompson & Tom Amato](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 9:25:22 AM

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Dear Council Member:

We need safe streets for bikers and pedestrians-for their safety and a healthier climate.

With safer routes even more people will get out of their cars, helping us to get away from our car-centric culture.

Please prioritize safe streets for bikers and pedestrians.

Sincerely,

Chris Thompson

Tom Amato

**From:** [Melissa Hosking](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 9:25:53 AM

---

Dear Council Members,

For financial and environmental reasons, I am trying to drive less. However, I do not currently feel safe riding my bicycle to most of the places in the city I need to go, and the transit options are too infrequent to be practical.

For these reasons, I hope the city will spend the next year prioritizing the creation of genuinely multi-modal streets and a robust transit system. I urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's [recommendations](#) for city priorities in the coming year.

Currently, our society favors a car-centric way of life - but isn't this a very unimportant mode of transportation? Wouldn't it be better for Santa Rosa to be the poster child of what a bike and pedestrian-centric city could look like in America, one which doesn't favor cars, traffic, and pollution, but instead promotes safely biking or walking to downtown (and more easily patronizing our local shops, thereby bringing more tax revenue to the city) or safe, walkable areas where safety and a clean environment are the priority? Currently I see downtown dead - there is no where to park, it's crowded with cars, and feels bland because of this.

It's not surprising to me that walkable, bikeable cities like Sebastopol are the ones with more foot traffic and seem (at least to me) the more wealthy cities.

Maybe Santa Rosa could feel this same economic and environmental wealth!

Thank you for your attention,  
Melissa Hosking  
West Santa Rosa



**From:** [Adam Jaime](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 9:46:51 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars including safe pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes. Too many people are killed or severely injured transiting around vehicle traffic. It's not the most exciting topic but it's one where the city can very simply and inexpensively save many lives. More lights for crosswalks and perhaps even smart ways to slow traffic around schools and pedestrian-centric areas by painting the streets:

<https://streetartutopia.com/2021/10/08/they-paint-like-this-to-make-drivers-slow-down/>

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter.

With gratitude,  
Adam Jaime, Montgomery Village Neighborhood

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa City Council Goals: Southeast Greenway  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 10:05:00 AM

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For over 10 years I have been a member of the Southeast Greenway Campaign to create a linear park on the land which had been purchased by CalTrans to create an extension of the highway 12 freeway. I use my bicycle for transportation and recreation and hope to see the completion of a bike path connecting Farmers Lane with Spring Lake Park on the Greenway.

We have raised over 2 million dollars towards the purchase of the property but face a deadline of October 2024 for the grants to be used.

To achieve this goal we need prioritization from the city and staff of the legal, real estate, recreation and parks, and public works departments.

I encourage you to rank the Southeast Greenway Campaign high on your list of goals.

Vincent Hoagland  
[REDACTED]

--

Vincent Hoagland  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Thea Hensel](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal setting- Greenway  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 10:18:30 AM

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Dear Council members,

Please add the SR Greenway to City priorities for the following reasons:

- We are committed to funding the acquisition of the Greenway property and have raised over two million dollars in grants and donations toward this goal.
- The grants for Greenway acquisition must be used by **October 2024**.
- The Greenway acquisition will continue to require staff work by the City's legal, real estate, recreation and parks, and public works departments.
- City staff need this project prioritized to allocate time to work on the transaction with the State, local agencies and funding sources.

Regards,

Thea Hensel

CoChair, Southeast Greenway Campaign

**From:** [Jennifer Sturdy](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 11:47:40 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Thank you for all you do for Santa Rosa. I understand you are meeting on 3/9 to set priorities for this year. Please consider the following:

1. **Safe streets** - Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars including safe pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes. We had a nearby neighborhood child hit in a crosswalk just last month while walking to middle school. <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/north-bay/boy-struck-car-santa-rosa-crosswalk/3146489/> Our streets are treated like highways, with significant speeding in small neighborhoods such as our nearby Franquette, Claremont, Spring Creek and Haumann Drive streets. Data driven efforts such as painting our streets - particularly neighborhood streets - to reduce speed would be welcome considerations - <https://www.fastcompany.com/3035022/slowing-down-streets-with-art-under-your-feet>
2. **Resilient streets and neighborhoods** - Extreme heat is increasing. If you are going to consider painting our streets to reduce speed, consider painting them to reduce heat as well. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90779134/1-million-square-feet-of-la-roads-are-being-covered-with-solar-reflective-paint> This extends to streets and playgrounds. How do we work to reduce the heat of our little heat islands? Consider investing in solar reflective paint, white roofs, drought-tolerant trees, and other shade creation.
3. **Resilient schools**. Please do not let the recent tragedy at Montgomery be a justification to increase police budget or police presence. We need to invest in our schools - we need to address staffing shortages with salaries that pay a living wage (<https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06097/>), we need to make investments to address crumbling and hazardous infrastructure (<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/its-inhumane-raw-sewage-rotting-portables-not-enough-bathrooms-among/>), and we need to consider how we support the mental health needs of our children and adolescents immediately and into the future (<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0331-youth-mental-health-covid-19.html>). These problems will not be solved by a police presence in schools - these are difficult, long standing problems that require a long-term strategy and commitment to our children and their future.

Thank you for your consideration of these priorities - I understand how challenging it can be to prioritize investments that are not necessarily 'quick wins' - but now is the time to take a longer-term view of how we invest in our communities today to navigate the even bigger challenges of tomorrow.

Kind regards,  
Jennifer Sturdy, Montgomery Village neighborhood

**From:** [mark](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 3:00:21 PM

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For the past 70 years the city of Santa Rosa has pursued a policy building transportation infrastructure almost exclusively for cars. This has led to our current predicament. We need to make more than 50% reduction in CO2 emissions in the next ten years, but have a transportation network built only for cars. Some have suggested that electric vehicles will be our savior, and no doubt they will help, but the wealth does not exist to outfit even half our residents with EVs in that time frame.

That is why Santa Rosa needs to take a cue from Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Utrecht, which have built networks of safe, low stress, **protected** bikeways. The protected bikeways cost a pittance compared to infrastructure built for cars. Many streets can be retrofitted by simply ending the practice of providing free taxpayer subsidized car storage on the shoulders, and **reallocating that space for actual transportation needs**. The protected lanes can be utilized by people on bicycles, e-scooters, wheelchairs, and residents of all ages. In the city of Amsterdam, almost 2/3 of the residents use bicycles for their daily transportation needs.

**So I urge the city council, spend the next year prioritizing the creation of genuine multi-modal streets that will be instrumental in meeting our climate goals. Not to mention making our residents healthier and happier.**

*"Build a city that's great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, and you'll build a city that's great for all!" - Gil Penalosa*

thank you for your time

Mark Franaszek

**From:** [NINOTCHKA HORWITZ](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Bikeable/Walkable Safety Plans for 23/24  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 8:53:00 AM

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Dear City Council Members,

Please prioritize creating safety for bicycle riders and walkers throughout Santa Rosa as an alternative use of transportation. I am particularly interested in the SouthEast GreenWay as I live in that area. When my husband and I come back from traveling to other countries we lament that fact that it is not pleasant or safe to travel around on foot or bicycles in our town as we do while on vacation. It would be great to have safe and beautiful walkways and bikeways to easily get around town instead of depending on cars. I used to ride my bike everywhere but as I've gotten older, it is too scary and unsafe to do so.

Thank you,  
Ninotchka Horwitz  
Montgomery Village

**From:** [David Peoples](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal-Setting  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 3:26:08 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

One of the things that has always made Santa Rosa a very special place for me is the opportunity to live in the walkable, bikeable, friendly, interesting and eclectic Junior College Neighborhood. I've lived here happily, in the same home, for 38 years. However, in recent years, the changing ambience of our community has become increasingly apparent and our peaceful network of streets has lost a noticeable amount of it's quiet charm. Clearly, the main culprits for this change are distracted and uncaring automobile drivers.

I recognize that our neighborhood is not the only one with similar concerns but the JC neighborhood is in the heart of town and is surrounded by busy roads and thoroughfares, all with higher speed limits than our neighborhood's 25 MPH guidelines. Motorists trying to get across town increasingly use our streets for short cuts and traffic avoidance and they bring with them all the problems associated with speeding and ignoring traffic signs: crashes, noise pollution, flattened pets and certainly a marked increase in hazards for pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users.

I am hopeful that there are measures that could be taken to mitigate this emerging, unfriendly and even deadly rise in egregious driving on our quiet streets. I would expect that nearly all JC neighborhood residents stand united in the desire to nourish the peaceful livability of our community and we hope that you have some tools and techniques to help us achieve that goal. I fervently hope that the council will prioritize making our streets safer and dedicate the staffing and resources needed to accomplish this.

Sincerely,

David Peoples

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa, CA 95404

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 3:53:31 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's [recommendations](#) for city priorities in the coming year. I support these recommendations because...

As a long time resident of Santa Rosa, I am constantly aware of how dangerous it is to walk or bicycle around town. This creates all sorts of problems

- people have to have a car to get around - resulting in more expenses, and more pollution
- children aren't safe making simple trips such as to school or a park.
- there are terrible accidents all the time: There were two recent and separate [pedestrian-car collisions](#) on Hoen Ave that sent two young people -- one 13-year-old and one 19-year-old -- to the ICU with severe head injuries.

Santa Rosa can do better than this! We have a good climate and geography for bicycles. It is time to invest in our citizens not our cars!

Thank you for your leadership,

Abigail Zoger

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa, CA 95405

[Address or neighborhood if you feel comfortable]



**From:** [Kaare Iverson](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 5:36:31 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars including safe pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes.

The Montgomery Village Community in which I live is made up largely of young families who moved here because of the access to schools and walkable amenities. However, our family is feeling very anxious about our safety here as stories of pedestrian strikes continue to mount. Most recently, a child was struck on their way to Spring Creek and has been in the ICU for over a month.

It seems overall, that this area is overdue for a road facelift that considers pavement quality, and pedestrian and cyclists safety. It's a smaller point in the issue, but our road, Wanda Way, is so degraded that it's been challenging to teach our children how to roller skate and bike.

As Santa Rosa housing continues to increase in cost and expand in volume I hope that the city will consider prioritizing some of the property taxes for the deferred maintenance and updating of our roads and pedestrian/cyclist routes.

\*curb delineated bike routes would be an incredible asset and improve both safety and quality of life here.

With gratitude,

Kaare Iverson, Montgomery Village Neighborhood

**From:** [Paul Scolari](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] March 9 Goal Setting Session - Resident Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 6:16:19 PM

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Dear City Council Members-

I am writing to urge you to make a focus on implementation of traffic calming measures in the Junior College neighborhood one of your priorities in your goal-setting exercise on March 9.

I and my wife have lived in the neighborhood since 1998. We raised our daughters here. We rehabilitated our home to suit family life, and we will do so again in the coming years as we prepare to retire and continue to reside in the neighborhood. All this is to say we are long term, invested community members. Walking and biking the streets has and will continue to be a joy.

We have conversed and met with neighbors to discuss our shared concern for vehicles that pose a life/safety threat in our neighborhood due to inattentive driving at high rates of speed. The personal testimony we can share in this regard is that two of the vehicles we have owned during our residence have been hit and severely damaged while parked in front of our corner house, one on Benton Street, and the more recent instance on Wright Street in 2019. Anecdotal as it is, we believe this may be an indicator of a systemic problem.

Thus, we request that you consider the totality of testimony presented to you on this matter and that you make it a priority in the coming year to implement reasonable traffic calming measures designed to mitigate the kind life/safety threats we have experienced first hand in the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Paul and Lynnette Scolari  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Isabella Barnard](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 8:13:27 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to urge you to adopt Bikeable Santa Rosa's [recommendations](#) for city priorities in the coming year. There have been too many grave injuries as a result of our streets leaving bikers unprotected.

Thank you for your leadership,  
Isabella Barnard  
Forestville, CA (SRJC Student)

**From:** [Ben Hough](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 7:50:51 AM

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Dear Council Members,

As a frequent cyclist in the city, the current state of biking infrastructure is unacceptable. I do not currently feel safe riding my bicycle to most places in the city I need to go, and the transit options are too infrequent to be practical. Safe, dedicated bike lanes are needed, and it's time for an upgrade. Invest in a protected bike network - it's a crucial step in making biking a safer, more viable mode of transportation in Santa Rosa.

Not only will it improve safety for riders, but it'll bring a host of benefits for the community. Think reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, less noise pollution, and increased accessibility for all ages and abilities. And with the rise of e-bikes, biking is becoming even more accessible. People are realizing that they don't need to own a car to get around. Bikes and e-bikes are cheaper to own and operate and take up less space for parking. Plus, they produce zero emissions.

It's a no-brainer. Santa Rosa needs to catch up with other cities and provide a safe, sustainable mode of transportation for its residents.

I hope the city will spend the next year prioritizing the creation of genuinely multi-modal streets and a robust bike network.

Thank you for your attention,  
Ben Hough

**From:** [Perla Sanchez](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 8:14:40 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to request you prioritize safe bicycle infrastructure in the coming year.

This is important to me because I want my younger siblings to feel safe while biking. I want us to go biking safely. My siblings love to bike, but it's dangerous so they never do it on the streets. Just around our neighborhood. Which is disappointing, they should be able to bike around their city without any fear.

Sincerely,  
Perla Sanchez  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Marcie Dahlen](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 8:31:57 AM

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Affordable housing is a more critical need than parking. If you are dedicated to the well-being of Santa Rosa residents, give them a place to live.

Respectively,  
Marcie Dahlen

**From:** [Sarah Friedman](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 8:41:12 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to supporting safe, people-friendly streets. I am a teacher. Many of my students walk or bike to school. I am a wife. My husband is an avid biker. I am a mother. My daughter used to walk to her school as a young girl. This email is for them, and for the many others in our community who walk or bike.

Please prioritize safe bike lanes and crosswalks in your up and coming focuses for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

All the best,

Mrs. Sarah Friedman, SLMS Art & Yoga Teacher

*"A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows."*

~ St. Francis of Assisi



**From:** [Maren Roche](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 5:19:05 PM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Sincerely,  
Maren Roche

[REDACTED], Santa Rosa, CA, 95404



**From:** [Laura Haupt](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 8:47:15 AM

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To the members of the Santa Rosa City Council:

I'm writing in request that you prioritize safe streets for pedestrians on the Santa Rosa City budget. I'm a teacher at Spring Lake Middle School and one of our students was severely injured while crossing the street in a crosswalk on Hoen Avenue. I also have a son who walks to school at Montgomery high school. As a resident in Bennett Valley I know that cars drive pretty fast on Hoen, Summerfield, Mayette, and Yulupa. Sometimes the sun is also quite bright. Please prioritize pedestrian safety in our budget!

Thanks,

Laura Haupt



Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**From:** [Adrian Covert](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 9:54:20 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Thank you for inviting public comments regarding the city's 2023 goals. In short, the city should be prioritizing on resolving unsheltered homelessness, housing production, and reducing car dependency.

- **Unsheltered homelessness** drastically increases the risk of chronic and infectious disease, assault, homicide, and accidental death. Just weeks ago, an unsheltered homeless man in Santa Rosa accidentally burned alive in his tent. The city should prioritize saving lives by guaranteeing access to minimum shelter and sanitation, even if at the expense of permanent housing.
- **Housing production:** The city must continue to deliver on promises to develop housing on surplus land downtown. Parking currently accounts for 25 percent of all land use in downtown, more than is used by all housing, parks, and pedestrian space combined. Yet on a typical busy day, 70% of those parking spots go unused. The city must move forward developing surplus parking sites into badly needed housing.
- **Car dependency:** The city's current plans to focus housing development downtown is consistent with sustainable urban development. However, without safe and protected bike infrastructure, these new residents will be forced to drive even for small trips, creating pollution and congestion and harming quality of life. Today, just 1.6% of all trips in Santa Rosa are taken by bike, despite world-class weather and 25% of all trips being less than 2 miles. This is largely an infrastructure problem stemming from Santa Rosa's near total lack of Class IV protected bike lanes. The current bike master plan is woefully inadequate, and calls for just 2 miles of Class IV lanes between now and 2040. We can do much better. Santa Rosa needs a network of safe, Class IV bike lanes connecting neighborhoods with parks and commercial districts.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering our views.

Adrian Covert  
Local Lead, Santa Rosa YIMBY

**From:** [Kevin Gilleran](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 10:19:52 AM

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Dear Council Members,

For too long, our city has treated pedestrians and people on bikes as less important than drivers in planning decisions. This mindset has led to high rates of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities, large per capita climate emissions, persistent geographical and racial inequalities, and burdensome road maintenance costs.

I am a small business owner who currently employs 6 people in the City of Santa Rosa. All of my staff have above living wage jobs with full benefits. We have purposely created a work space that is accessible to all of our staff via bicycling or SMART train or both. I ride my bicycle to work each business day and commute on the city streets.

It is important that this community consider what the next 5, 10 and 20 years will look like in terms of transportation and lets be honest many people will need to be using non-motor vehicle transportation to do so. Improvements in what will likely be a very important part of this cities infrastructure: public transportation, cycling and walking, should be considered and implemented now.

It is time for the city to change its mindset and to build streets and transportation options for people who cannot or who choose not to drive.

The council can begin by following the steps laid out in BikeableSR's [recommended actions](#) for the coming year.

Lets lead Sonoma County on the adoption of very real change.

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Gilleran



Santa Rosa CA 95405

**From:** [Cami Petriello](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 10:41:16 AM

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Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you today to request you prioritize safe bicycle infrastructure in the coming year.

This is important to me because I know a lot of people who use the bike lane and I would hate for anything to happen to them. Some accidents can be prevented, and I strongly believe that by adding barriers to the bike lane a lot more accidents will be prevented.

Sincerely,  
Camille Petriello

**From:** [Ananda Sweet](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Cc:** [City Council Public Comments](#); [CMOffice](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Council Goal Setting  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 10:48:32 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[Council Priorities 2023.pdf](#)  
[Local and State Policy Platform 2023 print.pdf](#)  
[Wildfire Action Plan for Sonoma County.pdf](#)

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Good morning Mayor Rogers and Council Members,

Please see the attached letter regarding City Council priorities for this week's City Council Goal Setting sessions. I have also attached our 2023 Policy Platform and Wildfire Mitigation Action Plan referenced in our priority letter.

Thank you,

Ananda Sweet

**ANANDA SWEET** | VP of Public Policy & Workforce Development  
**SANTA ROSA METRO CHAMBER**  
50 Old Courthouse Square, Suite 110, Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
**DIRECT** 707-636-3662 | **P** 707-545-1414 | **F** 707-545-6914  
**[SANTAROSAMETROCHAMBER.COM](https://www.santarosametrochamber.com)**





March 8, 2023

Santa Rosa City Council  
City Hall  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

RE: City Council Goal Setting

Mayor Rogers and Members of the City Council,

As you discuss goals and priorities for Santa Rosa, we urge you to focus on supporting a vibrant community and stable economy, while taking a data driven and evidence-based approach. The following are the areas we believe are necessary to boost economic activity and vibrancy, and are key to healthy economy and thriving community for all:

**Economic Development & Business Support** - It will be critical that our recovery efforts include investments to promote business recruitment, retention, and entrepreneurship. Local policies, tools and services should be designed to help local companies become more competitive and grow and thrive where they are rather than relocate. We support investments in infrastructure that will help attract desired businesses with good paying jobs and development that will generate the tax base to sustain and produce a return on those investments. To support our local economic recovery and success, businesses must have sustained support including prioritization of local vendors for government contracts and refraining from imposing new or increased permitting, local development impact or other construction-related fees for a meaningful period of time.

**Housing** - Our housing crisis is the greatest threat to our long-term economic, business, and cultural success. We need incentives and opportunities that create more housing of diverse types at all market levels. Without significantly expanding the housing supply for our residents, housing costs will continue to be an overwhelming burden to many and make future disasters more acutely painful for our community. We support housing policies to improve the time, certainty, and cost of housing development, including by right development, to meet our local and regional housing needs. It is critical that these streamlined policies are implemented with oversight for consistency at a department level to be sure they are being prioritized as intended and to maintain the trust and certainty they were meant to create. A high-level staff person should be empowered to align and coordinate departments in order to increase efficiency in the entitlement and permitting process. In order to encourage development projects while increasing Santa Rosa's competitiveness for grant funds, the city should strive to receive the State's Prohousing Designation.

**Homelessness** - We support policies, partnerships, and funding to increase our stock of housing for low- and extremely low-income individuals and families. We support safe and structured short and long-term interim solutions to the homelessness challenges that are having a negative impact on our entire community. We encourage incentives, protecting dedicated local housing funds, and securing partnerships and initiatives to build or repurpose shelter for the unhoused with wrap around services. This focus should not decouple housing from services to address the root causes of homelessness, and funding should be tied to data and to accountability, prioritizing programs that have demonstrated results. Addressing unlawful behavior is not the

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criminalization of homelessness itself. We support law enforcement efforts to stop and prosecute property and violent crime, and to stop risky health and safety conditions throughout the community including our homeless population.

**Minimizing Risk of Fires** - The fires we have experienced in recent years highlight the need to use our natural resources in a manner that is sustainable in the long-term and to promote land use and management practices and building codes that minimize the impact of natural disasters. Wildfires have become a part of living in this region, underscoring the need for preparedness, response, and mitigation as an ongoing effort rather than one-off projects. We support an ongoing and comprehensive vegetation management program in Santa Rosa. To help mitigate the risk locally, we support the implementation of the Wildfire Action Plan provided by the Chamber's Advocacy Council.

**Downtown** - Investment in our downtown represents an opportunity to generate lasting benefits including thriving employers and access to good jobs, environmentally sustainable development, and increased tax revenue. The support of our small downtown businesses is key to accelerating our economic recovery and to support economic growth and vibrancy. We support the use of City resources and tools such as Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts to encourage critical housing and commercial developments downtown, and the adoption of the current interim policy directing park development fees from downtown projects to parks and recreation facilities within the downtown core as a permanent policy. To capture the return on investment to develop Courthouse Square funding and resources for events and cultural opportunities; beautification, lighting, and wayfinding; and support for the addition of missing components such as grocery options are critical.

**Early Care & Education** - There is a clear economic case for investing in access to early education and care. Parents rely on child care to help them enter, re-enter, or remain in the workforce and employers depend on that access for recruitment and retention of their workforce. We support investments in quality early education and care, including incentives and funding for retention and expansion of existing child care facilities and development of new child care facilities.

We believe that successfully addressing these priorities is critical for the future of Santa Rosa. As always, we stand ready to participate and assist in these efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Rumble". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Peter Rumble  
CEO, Santa Rosa Metro Chamber

Attachments: Metro Chamber Policy Platform  
Wildfire Mitigation Action Plan



# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023





# SANTA ROSA METRO CHAMBER

## LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023

We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce.

We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

The Policy Platform includes nine issue areas, with a limited number of focused objectives. The goal of our Policy Platform is to establish a focused framework for developing and responding to local, state and national issues that positively or adversely affect our community and our members. The Metro Chamber uses its Policy Platform to inform communication with elected leaders and members, and to guide its engagement on community efforts.

Thank you to the member representatives of the Metro Chamber's Advocacy Council, who volunteered their time and expertise in the establishment

of this Local and State Policy Platform.

### **Economic Development & Business Support**

We support policies that encourage and enable businesses to locate, expand, and prosper in our community. These policies should be designed to ensure that local, diverse startups and businesses of all sizes have access to the resources, opportunities and workforce they need to innovate and sustainably grow. We believe a strong business community and economy is one which enables a thriving community and prosperity for all.

### **Government**

A high-performing, responsive, and responsible government is essential to the success of our community. At its best, local government is regionally collaborative, supports public/private partnerships and innovative initiatives, and

creates policies to encourage economic development and business attraction, expedite housing development, provide safety and community services, and maintain recreation facilities and other vital services for residents.

### **Downtown**

A vibrant downtown is crucial in recruiting a high-quality workforce and for existing and new business development, providing recreation and retail opportunities for residents, and providing attractions for tourism. A vibrant downtown should include a mix of dense residential and active street level use, including retail, and should offer a safe and visually appealing customer experience. Investment downtown represents an opportunity to generate lasting benefits including thriving employers and access to good jobs, environmentally sustainable development, and increased tax revenue. Economic studies conducted by

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the City of Santa Rosa demonstrate the highest tax return and property value are in the city's downtown areas, providing the highest economic return on investment. Further, creating a destination for residents and visitors alike in the downtown core through expanded public art, walkable spaces including temporarily closing streets for pedestrian access and expanded commerce—can boost economic activity and vibrancy.

## Housing

Our housing crisis is the greatest threat to our long-term economic, business, and cultural success. The Chamber will advocate for incentives and opportunities that create more housing of diverse types at all market levels and will organize the private sector to support new housing development at all market levels. Crisis after crisis has exposed how fragile our housing infrastructure is to economic fluctuations. Without significantly expanding housing supply for our residents, housing costs will continue to be an overwhelming burden to many and make future disasters more acutely painful for our community. We support housing policies to improve the time, certainty, and cost of housing development by streamlining and reducing the cost of the entitlement and permitting processes, including increasing by right development opportunities, to meet our local and regional housing needs.

## Homelessness

The causes of homelessness are multi-faceted and require that multiple levels of support be made available. Our region needs a comprehensive strategy as well as a commitment to, and regional collaboration on, a strategic homelessness plan. We support the full use of the Continuum of Care Board for this intended purpose, which will require the participating governments to begin acting as intended on a consistent, ongoing basis. We support policies, partnerships, and funding to

increase our stock of housing for low- and extremely low-income individuals and families. We support safe and structured short and long-term interim solutions to the homelessness challenges that are having a negative impact on our entire community.

## Energy & Natural Resources/Disaster Preparedness

The extraordinary quality of the physical environment of our region is critical to the quality of life we enjoy. It is also the underpinning of various sectors of our local economy, particularly our tourism and recreation industries. Successful resiliency planning requires that we include our region's energy and natural resources including awareness of threats and opportunities. The droughts and fires we have experienced in recent years highlight the need to use our natural resources in a manner that is sustainable in the long-term and to promote land use and management practices and building codes that minimize the impact of natural disasters. Moreover, based on the experience of Sonoma County in combination with the experience of Mendocino, Lake, and Napa Counties, it has become clear over the last several years that natural disasters have become a part of living in this region. This fact underscores the need for preparedness, response, and mitigation as ongoing efforts rather than one-off projects.

## Education

Ensuring that our community's youth have a strong academic foundation along with equal and ongoing opportunity for educational success is key in the development of our future workforce. We support investments that will strengthen access to quality early child care, early education, and K-12 education; that address the teacher shortage; and that align postsecondary programs with employer needs, including a focus on STEM (science,

technology, engineering and math) and CTE (career technical education) opportunities. CTE opportunities for students are crucial to integrate real world examples and opportunities that help all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

## Transportation

Over the past few years, there have been many significant improvements to our transportation infrastructure, and funding is now in place to properly maintain and upgrade our long-neglected roads; however, there is ongoing work to be done. Investment in and maintenance of our transportation systems are critical for the health and growth of our economy. We support transportation policies and funding that increase mobility, relieve congestion, and expand alternative commute options. We support continued improvement to the collaboration between agencies to improve the overall transportation system, including connectors between different modes of public transportation, while making our region more competitive for funding opportunities.

## Tourism

Sonoma County's allure as a global destination for high-end wines, craft beer, outdoor recreation, and cutting-edge cuisine is a critical component of the region's ongoing economic success. Large employers, small businesses, and entrepreneurs all rely on the strength of the local tourism economy, which generated \$1.86 billion spent by visitors to Sonoma County in 2021, and also provides amenities and recreation opportunities for locals. While Sonoma County has a diverse economy, tourism is foundational to it. Investment in the industry, the arts, and in special events must be encouraged to help the industry continue to recover as quickly as possible, and will play a critical role in our local, regional, and state level economic success.

# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS SUPPORT



We support policies that encourage and enable businesses to locate, expand, and prosper in our community.

These policies should be designed to ensure that local, diverse startups and businesses of all sizes have access to the resources, opportunities and workforce they need to innovate and sustainably grow. We believe a strong business community and economy is one which enables a thriving community and prosperity for all.

### **Business Retention & Recruitment**

It will be critical that our recovery efforts include investments to promote business recruitment, retention, and entrepreneurship. Local policies, tools and services should be designed to help local companies become more competitive and grow and thrive where they are rather than relocate. We support investments in infrastructure that will help attract desired businesses with good paying jobs and development that will generate the tax base to sustain and produce a return on those investments. Further, local government must support the Chamber and other groups in attracting new employers and industries to Sonoma County that can increase local wages and generate new economic growth. We support the installation of tax credits and incentives to eligible businesses that encourage job creation—particularly focused on good paying jobs—workforce development, and business growth and investment. Strong relationships between local businesses, government, and the community will foster prosperity community wide.

As the economy recovers and changes, it will be important to protect key community sectors whose business models have been impacted, such as health and human services, arts and culture, and the media.

### **Government Contracting**

Numerous economic impact studies cite an economic multiplier effect when local governments spend their money with local businesses, that in turn rely on local supply chains boosting local economic activity, employment, and tax revenue. Local governments must maximize use of

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local business to fulfill logistical, material, food, medical, and other needs not available within the local governments' normal functions.

### **Development/Construction Fees**

To ensure strong recovery of the construction industry and to avoid another slowdown of homebuilding, government should do what it can to offset the impact of inflation and rising interest rates by reducing fees for multifamily housing development and refraining from imposing new or increased permitting, local development impact or other construction-related fees for a meaningful period of time.

We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce. We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

The Policy Platform includes nine issue areas, with a limited number of focused objectives. The goal of our Policy Platform is to establish a focused framework for developing and responding to local, state and national issues that positively or adversely affect our community and our members. The Metro Chamber uses its Policy Platform to inform communication with elected leaders and members, and to guide its engagement on community efforts.

Thank you to the member representatives of the Metro Chamber's Advocacy Council, who volunteered their time and expertise in the establishment of this Local and State Policy Platform.

# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 GOVERNMENT



A high-performing, responsive, and responsible government is essential to the success of our community.

At its best, local government is regionally collaborative and creates policies to encourage economic development and business attraction, expedite housing development, provide safety and community services, maintain recreation facilities, and other vital services for residents.

## **Accountability and Transparency**

The process of creating policy solutions should be data-driven and include input from the business community and topically related industry and sector experts. Government staff should be consistently responsive to policy direction as set by elected officials, and accountable to using a quantitative evidence-based approach when tasked with exploring policy solution models.

## **Budget**

We support budget policies that maintain core services, public safety, infrastructure, and economic development while controlling spending. Santa Rosa's—and other city budgets—should balance expenditures with existing revenue and should include investment in a sustainable reserve. We must be prepared for future disasters and economic downturns by maintaining sustainable finances that allow for unplanned fluctuations in revenue, changing demands on government resources, and support lasting economic recovery. We also support investments that have the promise of increasing the responsiveness of and access to City Council, such as council compensation and virtual platforms for public comment.

## **Community Safety**

Public safety agencies must continue to be responsive to community needs, evolving with expectations and technology. Strong public safety agencies are critical to the well-being of communities. The Chamber will continue to support the efforts of local public safety agencies to deter criminal behavior while building and maintaining the public's trust.

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We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce. We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 DOWNTOWN



A vibrant downtown is crucial in recruiting a high-quality workforce and for existing and new business development, providing recreation and retail opportunities for residents, and providing attractions for tourism.

Investment downtown represents an opportunity to generate lasting benefits including thriving employers and access to good jobs, environmentally sustainable development, and increased tax revenue. Economic studies conducted by the City of Santa Rosa demonstrate the highest tax return and property value are in the city's downtown areas, providing the highest economic return on investment. Further, creating a destination for residents and visitors alike in the downtown core through expanded public art, walkable spaces including temporarily closing streets for pedestrian access and expanded commerce—can boost economic activity and vibrancy.

## **Downtown Development**

To capture the return on investment to develop Courthouse Square, we support using city resources in the form of land and/or incentives to encourage critical housing and commercial developments downtown.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFD) provide the ability of property tax increment financing of critical infrastructure costs in defined areas. EIFDs provide a dual benefit of revenue for these improvements along with cost avoidance for housing and commercial projects, which in combination provide significant incentives for needed development imagined by the Downtown Specific Plan, and other planned development areas in the city. The Chamber supports this approach for downtown as well as Roseland and other potential areas in Santa Rosa.

We support initiatives to expand housing and the employment base downtown and efforts to retain city/county employment downtown. This includes support of events and cultural opportunities; beautification, lighting and wayfinding; and the addition of missing components such as grocery options; and the use of government land for housing and other redevelopment opportunities.

Support of our small downtown businesses is key to accelerating our economic recovery and to support economic growth and vibrancy.

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Further, available commercial space in the downtown core should be leveraged to attract new business to Sonoma County with changing workforce and transportation patterns post-pandemic having broadened the options for a company's base of operations and making Sonoma County an increasingly attractive and financially sensible option.

We support the adoption of the current interim policy directing park development fees from downtown projects to parks and recreation facilities within the downtown core as a permanent policy. This is a meaningful opportunity to maximize investments downtown as the path to vibrancy and to solidify the message to potential developers that the city is a partner in this effort.

We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce. We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

The Policy Platform includes nine issue areas, with a limited number of focused objectives. The goal of our Policy Platform is to establish a focused framework for developing and responding to local, state and national issues that positively or adversely affect our community and our members. The Metro Chamber uses its Policy Platform to inform communication with elected leaders and members, and to guide its engagement on community efforts.

Thank you to the member representatives of the Metro Chamber's Advocacy Council, who volunteered their time and expertise in the establishment of this Local and State Policy Platform.



# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 HOUSING



Our housing crisis is the greatest threat to our long-term economic, business, and cultural success.

The Chamber will advocate for incentives and opportunities that create more housing of diverse types at all market levels and will organize the private sector to support new housing development at all market levels. Crisis after crisis has exposed how fragile our housing infrastructure is to economic fluctuations. Without significantly expanding housing supply for our residents, housing costs will continue to be an overwhelming burden to many and make future disasters more acutely painful for our community. We support housing policies to improve the time, certainty, and cost of housing development by streamlining and reducing the cost of the entitlement and permitting processes, including increasing by right development opportunities, to meet our local and regional housing needs.

## **Housing Production**

As we work to address our historic housing shortage and affordability crisis, we support the production of diverse housing types to meet a wide range of affordability and demand. Plans and policies in Santa Rosa should reflect a commitment to pro-housing policies. In addition to policies to directly encourage development projects, opportunities for housing production can be maximized by actively seeking funding opportunities and competing for the millions of dollars available in the state's various housing grant programs. The city should commit to enacting the policies necessary to support a strong application for the Prohousing Designation, which will in turn increase its competitiveness for such grants. Additional opportunities with city, school district, and all public land should be explored and assessed for housing development. We support incentives for in-fill and affordable housing and the encouragement of ADUs.

## **Permitting and Regulation**

We began to see immediate benefits from the updating and passage of the Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan to support needed development and streamlining of the local permitting process to encourage housing development. It is critical that these streamlined



policies are implemented with oversight for consistency at a department level to be sure they are being prioritized as intended and to maintain the trust and certainty they were meant to create. Additionally, similar improvements to the entitlement process are critical to gain process consistency and create needed certainty for developers throughout the city and in priority development areas. Lack of certainty is burdensome for all developers and particularly stifling of development below market rate.

Housing developers, other homebuilding industry professionals, and internal staff have recommended empowering a high-level staff person to align and coordinate departments with an eye toward increasing efficiency in the entitlement and permitting processes.

The misuse of CEQA is obstructing housing development, contributing to our insufficient housing stock, high development costs and high home prices. CEQA must be modernized to preserve the law's original intent while preventing abuse for purposes unrelated to environmental protection. CEQA amendments must be addressed to streamline the process and to ensure it is not an obstacle for high density development, particularly for in-fill urban development.

## Rent Control

The preponderance of evidence and research show rent control and just cause eviction laws do nothing to provide housing, reduce homelessness or provide affordable housing for renters, and experts agree that these policies exacerbate housing shortages. Home development is the most effective way to ease the cost of housing. Support for tenants under financial strain needs to come with public funding so that rental housing providers aren't forced to sell their homes resulting in substantial and lasting loss to our rental housing stock.

Just cause eviction and local habitability related laws are superfluous to the strong tenant protections existing under California law. Adding unnecessary local regulation grows the city's budget, increases the workload of city departments, adds to the county courts' congestion, and threatens the profitability of rental housing. Unnecessary local regulation hurts all rental housing providers instead of targeting the few bad actors. The city would be better served by a modestly priced public information campaign designed to inform tenants of how to avail themselves of the legal protections.

We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce. We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

The Policy Platform includes nine issue areas, with a limited number of focused objectives. The goal of our Policy Platform is to establish a focused framework for developing and responding to local, state and national issues that positively or adversely affect our community and our members. The Metro Chamber uses its Policy Platform to inform communication with elected leaders and members, and to guide its engagement on community efforts.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 HOMELESSNESS



The causes of homelessness are multi-faceted and require that multiple levels of support be made available.

Our region needs a comprehensive strategy as well as a commitment to, and regional collaboration on, a strategic homelessness plan. We support the full use of the Continuum of Care Board for this intended purpose, which will require the participating governments to begin acting as intended on a consistent, ongoing basis. We support policies, partnerships, and funding to increase our stock of housing for low- and extremely low-income individuals and families. We support safe and structured short and long-term interim solutions to the homelessness challenges that are having a negative impact on our entire community.

## **Housing & Services/Mental Health**

Increased housing production is key in addressing the homelessness crisis, with an emphasis on building housing that is affordable for low-income residents. A comprehensive approach to increased housing options should include additional interim and long-term solutions such as tiny homes, sanctioned camp sites, RV and car parking locations. We encourage incentives, protecting dedicated local housing funds, and securing partnerships and initiatives to build or repurpose shelter for the unhoused with wrap around services.

While shelter is a critical foundation for services to be effective, the way that Housing First has been implemented, decoupling housing from services, ignores the root causes of homelessness. This has been expensive, ineffective, and is not setting up our community or our most vulnerable for success.

We support aggressive action locally to secure funds for shelter and wrap around services as the first step to getting the homeless back into our society, increased support for local behavioral health (i.e., mental health and substance abuse) services, and best practices advice to local jurisdictions to assist them in grappling with this challenge. This funding must be tied to data and to accountability, prioritizing programs that have demonstrated results.

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Addressing unlawful behavior is not the criminalization of homelessness itself. We support law enforcement efforts to stop and prosecute property and violent crime and to stop risky health and safety conditions throughout the community including our homeless population. We support proposals for conservatorship reform and the institution of conservatorship programs so that those who are unable to make decisions for themselves due to behavioral health issues are provided care rather than left to live on the street.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023

## ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



The extraordinary quality of the physical environment of our region is critical to the quality of life we enjoy.

It is also the underpinning of various sectors of our local economy, particularly our tourism and recreation industries. Successful resiliency planning requires that we include our region's energy and natural resources including awareness of threats and opportunities. The droughts and fires we have experienced in recent years highlight the need to use our natural resources in a manner that is sustainable in the long-term and to promote land use and management practices and building codes that minimize the impact of natural disasters. Moreover, based on the experience of Sonoma County in combination with the experience of Mendocino, Lake, and Napa Counties, it has become clear over the last several years that natural disasters have become a part of living in this region. This fact underscores the need for preparedness, response, and mitigation as ongoing efforts rather than one-off projects.

### **Minimizing Risk of Fires**

Much of California has seen a significant increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. To help mitigate the risk locally, we support the implementation of the Wildfire Action Plan provided by the Chamber's Advocacy Council. The plan includes: vegetation management and fire safety; reduction of the volume of combustible materials in the forests and woodlands of Sonoma County; reduction of the impact of new development in WUI areas; and improvements to the electric distribution system.

Hardening of the electric distribution system is critical to lessen the likelihood of fires being initiated and the impact of Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events. Large scale PSPS events have come at an enormous economic cost to our region. Even when areas are not impacted with the loss of power, during the recent wide-spread PSPS the community at large was unable to continue with normal routines and patterns, making small business in particular endure economic hardship and uncertainty. With losses in the millions of dollars per event, we need investments in hardening, microgrids, and other energy back-up solutions.

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## Water and Environment

In the midst of a historic drought, water conservation and reuse are critical to our long-term economic vitality. With the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Subbasin, we support resources and action to enhance water supplies in our region. Protection of our natural resources in Sonoma County is vital to numerous industries, including tourism, hospitality, recreation, and agriculture. The Chamber supports policies that help preserve these assets in partnership with the industries that rely on them and employ significant numbers of our community members.

## Clean Energy

We support incentives for investment in renewable energy that engage the private sector to work toward California's goal of net zero emissions. This investment and private sector innovation will be critical to create the needed systems, products, innovations, and infrastructure to reach our clean energy goals.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 EDUCATION



Ensuring that our community's youth have a strong academic foundation along with equal and ongoing opportunity for educational success is key in the development of our future workforce.

We support investments that will strengthen access to quality early child care, early education, and K-12 education; that address the teacher shortage; and that align postsecondary programs with employer needs, including a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and CTE (career technical education) opportunities. CTE opportunities for students are crucial to integrate real world examples and opportunities that help all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

## **Early Care & Education**

We know that high-quality, affordable, and accessible child care has a significant impact on the economic growth and competitiveness of our companies and economy, and yet child care is difficult to find and afford for most families. Labor force participation of working parents has faced a steep decline since the start of the pandemic. Our child care crisis is damaging the productivity and strength of our workforce. In terms of our future workforce, studies show that investments in early education set the foundation for learning, ensure school readiness, and narrow the persistent achievement gap for the region's most vulnerable children. This is the best investment we can make locally to improve outcomes that increase cost savings in education, health, economic productivity, and crime reduction.

We support policies that encourage an investment in quality early education and care, including the expansion of high-quality preschool. We support efforts that strengthen California's birth-through-third-grade mixed delivery infrastructure, particularly critical as Universal Preschool is implemented. Failure to invest meaningfully in child care will irreparably damage California's already fragile child care system, immediately hindering our current workforce and creating long-term negative effects for our future workforce, while stifling California's economic recovery.

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## K-12 Education & Postsecondary Access

Improved P-3 alignment within school districts and engaging students in STEM subjects during these early years are critical building blocks for future success. At the high school level, we support the alignment of A-G requirements and CTE opportunities, so that all students will have access to pathways to sustainable jobs and careers, and support efforts to leverage our region's higher education opportunities that meet our region's workforce demands for education and training in science, technology, engineering and math. Equitable distribution of resources, including broadband access, is crucial. We support improved collaboration at all points of the cradle to career continuum.

## Higher Education

We support funding for higher education and improved collaboration across education and workforce sectors. Postsecondary education drives economic development, and Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University are tremendous assets in our region. These systems represent opportunities for our residents to secure meaningful employment, to launch a next generation of entrepreneurs and job creators, and to provide the skill-building, certificate, and degree programs required to support our diverse local economy. We support the active effort of our local school districts to learn from the robust data obtained through the YouthTruth survey to inform the improvement of curriculum, school culture, and staff professional development.

## Youth Mental Health

Experts agree that child and youth mental health is at crisis-level concern. In Sonoma County, high school students are failing classes at rates never before seen in our community. Sonoma County high school students who participated in the national YouthTruth survey over the last few years have reported "feeling anxious about the future" as their number one barrier, and our incoming workforce has the highest numbers of anxiety, depression, and stress ever recorded.

With rates of anxiety, depression and suicidality on the rise, we support policies and funding to provide social emotional wellness and mental health resources for students such as mental health screenings, suicide prevention, and extended learning opportunities that address the pandemic learning loss and that help students to feel connected to their future potential. Our educational institutions and elected school officials must do better to care for our kids.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 **TRANSPORTATION**



Over the past few years, there have been many significant improvements to our transportation infrastructure, and funding is now in place to properly maintain and upgrade our long-neglected roads; however, there is ongoing work to be done.

Investment in and maintenance of our transportation systems are critical for the health and growth of our economy. We support transportation policies and funding that increase mobility, relieve congestion, and expand alternative commute options. We support continued improvement to the collaboration between agencies to improve the overall transportation system, including connectors between different modes of public transportation, while making our region more competitive for funding opportunities.

Transportation funding sources must be maintained as this is critical to our economic success and recovery. The elimination of gas and other taxes, while attractive short-term options in times of economic hardship, create significant funding shortages to complete critical infrastructure projects. Funding should ensure long-term stability of our roads, bridges, and infrastructure, all necessary to support a vibrant economy.

## **Airline Attraction**

We support the expansion of flights and destinations for, along with the modernization and terminal expansion of, the Charles M. Schulz – Sonoma County Airport. With each new route, our airport estimates an average of \$23 million in economic value including 70 jobs in our community. In addition, connecting to new destinations enhances our ability to attract new employers and bolster our tourism industry.

## **Road Improvements**

Investments in local road repair and maintenance improve safety and movement of traffic, improving the travel experience for locals and visitors alike. We support investments in city and rural road maintenance.

We support reconstruction of Highway 37 to withstand sea level rise and storm surges, to relieve congestion, and to improve safety. Growing housing demand has increased this priority as a local workforce issue. Average annual daily trips are projected to increase from 45,000 in 2013



to 58,000 by 2040. We would support alternative financing and project delivery methods including public private partnerships to address this crucial infrastructure need.

## **SMART**

We believe that SMART has an important role to play in the future of transportation in the North Bay. We are committed to advocate for increased transparency and fiscal responsibility and for resources to fund final mile gaps and needed expansion, not only north/south but also east to major metropolitan connectors.

## **Safety**

We support policy and infrastructure improvements to reduce fatal or serious accidents through the launch of Vision Zero.

## **Climate & Infrastructure Investment**

We support funding to meet the infrastructure needs of the state's zero emission vehicle goals as well as ensuring that the energy grid is prepared to meet this demand. As the market penetration of zero emission vehicles increases, fuel taxes will bring in less and less revenue, impacting transportation and infrastructure funding if not replaced. California must prepare for this impact and find a new funding mechanism for critical transportation and infrastructure projects.

We support opportunities for walkable and bikeable communities to support climate goals and vibrant downtowns while easing transportation system burdens.

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# LOCAL AND STATE POLICY PLATFORM 2023 TOURISM



Sonoma County's allure as a global destination for high-end wines, craft beer, outdoor recreation, and cutting-edge cuisine is a critical component of the region's ongoing economic success.

Large employers, small businesses, and entrepreneurs all rely on the strength of the local tourism economy, which generated \$1.86 billion spent by visitors to Sonoma County in 2021, and also provides amenities and recreation opportunities for locals. While Sonoma County has a diverse economy, tourism is foundational to it. Investment in the industry, the arts, and in special events must be encouraged to help the industry continue to recover as quickly as possible, and will play a critical role in our local, regional, and state level economic success.

We support the expansion and development of hotel rooms, in particular those providing extended stay and large conference amenities. Local employers depend on access to hotel rooms and insufficient large conference amenities locally mean that we aren't able to compete adequately for large meetings, conferences, and events that would bring a positive economic impact to our region.

We support the expansion of full service and luxury properties, ensuring access to a target market that brings higher TOT and BIA funding. We support and invest in events, facilities, and other cultural resources that promote Santa Rosa and the region as a world class destination.

Transient Occupancy Taxes provide vital funding for tourism support, advertising and marketing Sonoma County and Santa Rosa as a desirable destination, and for making investments to improve the community in ways that enhance the desirability of our destination. Careful consideration needs to be given to increases in TOT that could drive customers away and on areas of investment that deliver high returns for the community.

As policies are considered regarding vacation rentals, we support the use of data to make policy decisions. As a vital segment of the tourism economy, any policies limiting or governing them must use data to separate issues from perception.

Homelessness, as noted in this platform as to the impact downtown, is



negatively impacting tourism and visitor willingness to book room stays. The challenges that homelessness is creating for this industry that is foundational to our economy are yet another reason to address unlawful behavior, focus funding on interim shelter with services, and implement proven solutions to help the most vulnerable.

We support policies that are consistent with the creation of a vibrant urban core, significantly increased housing for all income levels, a more diversified and inclusive economy, and a strong workforce. We believe this will create a healthy business environment and thriving community for all. We will endorse policies and practices that support business start-up, innovation, expansion and attraction. We believe that the best policies use a data driven, evidence-based approach.

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# **Wildfire Action Plan for Sonoma County**

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Reduce fuel load in forests and woodlands***

#### **PRESCRIBED BURNS**

- ❑ Advocate for governmental entities and agencies responsible for land management and fire prevention to significantly expand prescribed burn programs and to assist, where appropriate, in coordinating their efforts in these regards
- ❑ Seek to have insurers streamline, to the extent possible, insurance requirements affecting prescribed burns
- ❑ Advocate for the state to set higher goals for prescribed burns and to appropriate funding to meet those goals
- ❑ Advocate for changes to air quality regulations as may be required to facilitate prescribed burns

#### **INCREASE AGRICULTURAL USE OF LAND**

- ❑ Pursue policies that help to retain and expand land devoted to agriculture

#### **PROMOTE BIOMASS EXTRACTION AND CONVERSION**

- ❑ Expand the County's Residential Chipper Program to process biomass collected by property owners from their entire property and not be limited to defensible space around residences
- ❑ Promote the development of biomass processing facilities, especially new/improved technologies that have the potential to lower costs and improve performance when operating in environments that prevail in the North Bay
- ❑ Facilitate the collection/aggregation of biomass and its transport to processing facilities
- ❑ Facilitate arrangements under which landowners can make biomass available to biomass processing facilities
- ❑ Advocate for incentives to promote the collection of and processing of biomass

#### **INCREASE TIMBER HARVESTING**

- ❑ Promote the conversion of currently unproductive forests and woodlands into productive timberland producing timber that has commercial value provided that timber management is combined with other strategies—such as grazing and biomass extraction—as may be required to limit the buildup of biomass residue
- ❑ Facilitate arrangements under which landowners can pool their lands so as to
  - Enable commercial operations to selectively harvest timber from their properties
  - Capture carbon credit payments as their forests continue to grow

### ***Reduce impact of new development in WUI areas***

- ❑ Promote solar/storage systems (sometimes called “microgrids”), where applicable, in new and existing residences in WUI areas as complete energy supply solutions as a substitute for propane and extensions to and connections to the electric grid
- ❑ Explore mechanisms whereby property owners in high fire risk areas who have decided they do not want to rebuild burned down houses can dispose of the land in such a way that a new residence is not built on the site provided that the property is not within a residential development and due to size, proximity to other undeveloped land, or other characteristics, promotes other goals outlined in these recommendations.
- ❑ Advocate for use of resources such as the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space program to acquire properties in high fire risk zones to facilitate managing such properties in a manner so as to reduce fire risk

### ***Represent County’s interests with respect to PG&E’s system improvement program***

- ❑ Monitor and comment on, as appropriate, the WSD’s oversight of PG&E’s efforts to update and upgrade its systems to represent the interests of the County’s residents in seeing that PG&E’s work is performed in a manner that most effectively reduces risks as rapidly as possible.

# Wildfire Action Plan for Sonoma County

After four years of destructive wildfires, it is clear that wildfires have become the single most important long-term threat to the economy of the region.

There are multiple factors causing wildfires to be numerous and destructive and different levels of government each have a role in reducing the risk that wildfires will be initiated and lessening their intensity and scale once started.

This document focusses on the what local government can do in these regards. While it is addressed to Sonoma County, as this is our home, it is intended that Sonoma work with the state, other counties, municipalities, applicable governmental agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations wherever possible since broad regional actions are far more likely to be effective and efficient than one county attempting to take action by itself. A report prepared by EB Alive [Reference 1 at the end of this document] discusses ways in which this can be accomplished.

Note that this document does not address fire mitigation—*i.e.*, firefighting capabilities, strategies, and institutional organization, or the hardening of structures to withstand fires. These are important subjects and have received substantial attention from the state as well as from local governments/agencies in recent years. Our focus, instead, is on the drivers that have led to more frequent and more intense wildfires and what can be done about them.

## ***The past four years***

Wildfires are having a devastating impact on California with Sonoma County among the worst hit counties in the state. Over the past four years, multiple large wildfires have caused record-breaking levels of destruction in the state:

- ◆ Over 8 million acres burned
- ◆ Over 100 people killed
- ◆ Some 35,000 structures destroyed
- ◆ Tens of billions of dollars of property losses

In addition to these direct losses, there have been other negative impacts:

- ◆ Evacuations ordered to protect residents under imminent threat of fires have disrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, with some out of their homes for weeks
- ◆ Hazardous smoke from nearby fires as well as those hundreds of miles away remaining in the air for weeks at a time has become an all-too-common occurrence during the late summer/early fall
- ◆ Public Safety Power Shutoffs (“PSPS”), initiated by utilities as protective measures to keep utility equipment from initiating fires, have cut off electric power to large groups of customers for days on end with a total economic cost possibly exceeding \$10 billion for the year 2019 alone
- ◆ Some fire insurers have left the state, others are terminating policies in higher risk areas, and all who are still active in the state appear to be raising premiums to cover the increased fire-related losses that they are incurring

Sonoma County has experienced more than its proportionate share of these impacts due to the number of people living in Wild Urban Interface (“WUI”) areas and its dependence on tourism.

After four years, it is clear that destructive fire seasons and their detrimental effects on individuals and the economy will persist going forward unless some dramatic new actions are undertaken.



## ***Economic impacts of wildfires are significant***

PSPS events, evacuations (mandatory as well as warnings), hazardous smoke lasting days or weeks, and the intermittent warnings of possible fires occurring over a period of three or more months of each year are beginning to have significant long-term economic impacts on the County:

- ◆ The repeated disruption to daily life and the mental toll exacted by these events is leading to an increasing number of current (and potential future) residents to decide Sonoma County is no longer a desirable place to live
- ◆ The hospitality industry—which includes tourism, lodging, restaurants, and recreation—is losing business as fewer visitors come during what used to be the three most popular tourism months of the year
- ◆ The operations and direct marketing activities of the wine industry—arguably the County’s single most important economic sector and a key driver of the hospitality industry—are disrupted by PSPS events and evacuations; at the same time, its primary raw material—grapes—is subject to smoke damage
- ◆ Businesses may conclude that the interference to their operations and to the ability of their employees to focus on work, or even come to work, caused by actual or potential wildfire events are negatively affecting the productivity of their businesses and that Sonoma County is no longer a desirable location

The key word here is “disruption”. Daily life for individuals and normal operations for businesses are being disrupted at a level that people and businesses are finding unacceptable and it is hard to escape the conclusion that population losses and business losses will occur over time.

## ***Why wildfires are more numerous and destructive***

Multiple factors have led to the increased frequency and severity of wildfires:

- ◆ **Climate change:** Climate change has led to longer, dryer, hotter summers, lengthening the fire season and creating the conditions for more fires and for fires to be more intense.
- ◆ **High fuel load in forests and woodlands:** Without human intervention, a natural cycle of wildfires and regrowth limits the buildup of biomass. In addition, prior to European settlement, Native Americans routinely engaged in burning to clear and condition land for agriculture. Nearly a century ago, that cycle was upended when a policy of putting out all wildfires as rapidly as possible was broadly adopted across the West. Over the decades, the biomass level in forests and woodlands has built up. As a consequence, there is now a huge “fuel load” in many forests of the West. Once ignited, fires burn with unusual ferocity, leading to huge updrafts that carry embers long distances, spreading fires rapidly over a broad area. This renders the job of fire suppression very difficult.
- ◆ **Development in WUI areas:** There are far more people living in Wildland Urban Interface (“WUI”) areas than there were decades ago. This has multiple consequences: more lives and property exposed to fire risk; more demands for aggressive, rapid fire protection; constraints on managing uncontrolled fires and on proceeding with prescribed burns; increased need for public safety and firefighting personnel and, consequently, higher costs for fire management.
- ◆ **Electric utilities’ failure to properly maintain and to modernize their systems:** For decades, electric utilities in California failed to properly maintain and upgrade their equipment and systems. Old equipment was not replaced and, in some cases,

became decrepit and susceptible to failure in high winds or when impacted by vegetation. Vegetation management adjacent to power lines was neglected. Obsolete control systems were not updated which made it difficult to detect problems and intelligently manage the transmission and distribution system. The system was not segmented so as to facilitate isolating problems. Modern sensing equipment was not installed. Public information systems were primitive and made only minimal use of the capabilities of modern communication systems such as the internet and alert systems. In combination, these failures led to utility equipment initiating several major fires and left the utilities with limited tools to deal with the aftermath once fires took hold.

### ***How to reduce the occurrence and intensity of wildfires***

The key components of a program to reduce the incidence and severity of fires and the loss of life and property are

- ◆ Reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses
- ◆ Change forest/woodland management practices so as to reduce fuel loading and to limit the spread of fires
- ◆ Strictly control future development in WUI areas
- ◆ Upgrade electric utility equipment and control systems

### ***We are doing some things right***

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

California has been a world leader in confronting climate change, adopting a broad-based approach to reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses by promoting renewable energy, mandating increases in energy efficiency across the energy sector, and facilitating the transition away from fossil fuels. Sonoma County and the City of Santa Rosa have undertaken complementary actions within their respective jurisdictions. These have included implementing changes in building codes and creating Sonoma Clean Power which has shifted procurement of power from fossil fuels to renewables and promoted the shift from gasoline-fueled vehicles to electric vehicles.

California has also revised building codes to require new buildings and the areas around them to be more resistant to catching fire and to impede the progress of fires once started.

#### **UPGRADING THE ELECTRIC SYSTEM**

The initiation of the PSPS system for de-energizing utility power lines under high wind/hot, dry weather conditions where the lines may initiate fires has been remarkably effective in reducing the incidence of wildfires. However, it is a brute-force strategy that inflicts considerable inconvenience on individuals and operating losses onto businesses.

The California Public Utility Commission (“CPUC”) has directed the state’s utilities to undertake a major long-term program to correct the multiple problems with their transmission/distribution and control systems as outlined in the prior section. The improvements that will result from this program will, over time, greatly reduce the likelihood that electric utility equipment will initiate fires.

PG&E is taking a number of actions under this directive, but it has come under criticism for focusing more on the appearance of progress than on working as quickly and as efficiently as possible to reduce the risks that its equipment will initiate fires. Hopefully, the new ownership team that took over after the bankruptcy this past June will bring about the management changes needed to improve performance.

In any case, it is likely that within a few years, PG&E equipment will be far less likely to initiate wildfires, the number of customers affected by PSPS events will be greatly lessened, and public information systems will function much more smoothly. In fact, there has already been some improvement in all of these areas.

### **RESIDENTIAL CHIPPER PROGRAM**

Sonoma County has instituted a program under which the County will chip, at no charge, woody material collected at residential properties. The purpose of the program is to help residents create a defensible space around occupied dwellings and to reduce vegetation along access routes.

While limited in scope, this program could be seen as a first step that could potentially lead to a broader program to remove biomass from forests and woodlands.

### **BUT NOT ENOUGH**

Despite progress in these areas, however, little is being done to address the high fuel load in forests and woodlands and continued development in WUI areas. In fact, in regard to the latter, the approach of the County and the City of Santa Rosa has been to rebuild as rapidly as possible in high risk fire areas of Sonoma County where fires burned down thousands of houses, a policy directly counter to the goal of reducing the future risk of wildfire-related life and property losses.

The lessons to be drawn from the fires of the past four years is that we need to urgently address these areas.

### ***Recommended action plan for the County***

The report by EB Alive [Reference 1] discusses in detail how the County can work with other governmental entities, non-profit groups, and private landowners to pursue the actions outlined below.

### **REDUCE FUEL LOAD**

Various factors make fuel load reduction particularly complex:

- ◆ Over half of the land in the County is forests and woodlands with nearly 90% of that owned privately, mostly in small holdings by about 16,000 owners
- ◆ There are multiple types of forests and woodlands of Sonoma County—coastal redwoods, mixed conifer and hardwood, riparian, chaparral—with very different characteristics
- ◆ Multiple agencies within different levels of government have jurisdiction over these areas

Reducing fuel load in such a situation is strategically, operationally, and organizationally difficult; there is no magic bullet solution. Instead, the fuel load problem must be addressed by a variety of strategies, each one suitable for a particular set of circumstances, each one contributing a part of the solution.

These strategies can be costly and will require increased governmental expenditures. In this context, it is important to recognize that wildfires are destroying a substantial amount of property each year. Furthermore, as discussed earlier in this document, they are creating the conditions for the exodus of population and businesses with huge negative long-term economic consequences. These are real economic costs that will be incurred by individuals and businesses going forward if we don't find a way to reduce the risk of and damages resulting from wildfires.

Despite the difficulties associated with reducing fuel load in the circumstances that prevail in Sonoma County, it is central to lessening the intensity and spread of wildfires and it is critical that it be addressed.

Various strategies for reducing fuel load are discussed below.

### ***More prescribed burns***

Prescribed burns involve the deliberate burning of forests under controlled conditions that limit the spread of fires and prevent fires from affecting property.

Prescribed burns are routinely used in the Southeastern US: Florida burns 2 million acres per year; Georgia 1.2 million acres; and Alabama 950,000 acres. In contrast, in California, a state with far more land area, only 50,000 acres per year are deliberately burned, leaving an enormous fuel load to feed uncontrolled wildfires. The federal and state agencies responsible for land management and fire prevention in Western states have been slow to move away from the century-old policy that emphasizes suppressing all fires as rapidly as possible while mostly ignoring the unnaturally large fuel load that has built up and which makes wildfires so much more intense and dangerous. In part, progress in this regard has been hampered by air quality regulations and dealing with liability risk. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a number of eastern states have managed to proceed with large-scale prescribed burn programs and California has not.

The magnitude of fuel that has built up in the Western US means that in the first few years of an accelerated prescribed burn program, the effort devoted to this activity will be greater than will be required later when the fuel load has been reduced and something akin to an equilibrium situation has been achieved.

In the North Bay area, several groups—including Good Fire Alliance and the Humboldt Prescribed Burn Association—have formed to promote prescribed burns. The members of these groups include landowners, nonprofit organizations, and volunteer firefighters. These groups work together with landowners, CalFire, local fire agencies, public safety personnel, and volunteers to conduct prescribed burns.

Conducting prescribed burns on small areas of land can be prohibitively expensive. The cost per acre drops sharply as the acreage covered expands. More than half of Sonoma County is in WUI or WUI intermix or influence areas, meaning that residences are mixed in with wildlands. In such areas, the interspersed residences make it difficult to put together large contiguous areas for prescribed burns that also meet other constraints. The corollary of this is that there nevertheless remains a significant amount of land in the County that is outside of WUI where prescribed burning over larger areas is more feasible.

Prescribed burns will inject smoke into the air and adversely affect air quality at times where this would otherwise not occur. For this reason, waivers from air quality regulations are required to allow prescribed burns to proceed. But by reducing fuel load in forests and woodlands, prescribed burns reduce the likelihood of and scale of fires that would otherwise occur and which would emit far greater quantities of smoke during fire season.

California has taken some steps toward increasing the annual level of prescribed burns in the state but current goals, even if achieved, would still cover only a fraction of the forestland on which prescribed burns could beneficially reduce fuel load. More realistic goals need to be established that result in a more rapid pace of reduction of excess fuel load.

#### **➤ What government can do:**

- ☐ **Advocate for governmental entities and agencies responsible for land management and fire prevention to significantly expand prescribed burn programs and to assist, where appropriate, in coordinating their efforts in these regards**
- ☐ **Seek to have insurers streamline, to the extent possible, insurance requirements affecting prescribed burns**
- ☐ **Advocate for the state to set higher goals for prescribed burns and to appropriate funding to meet those goals**
- ☐ **Advocate for changes to air quality regulations as may be required to facilitate prescribed burns**

### ***Increase land devoted to agriculture***

About one-third of the roughly 1 million acres of land in Sonoma County is rangeland or is used to grow feed crops for livestock. Additionally, 6% of the land is devoted to grape production for winemaking. In total, 40% of the land is used for some type of agriculture.

Ranching has a nearly 200 year-long history in Sonoma County. In recent decades ranching has undergone a considerable decline. Today, the numbers of sheep and cattle grown in Sonoma County are each about one-quarter of what they were at the peak of ranching in the state decades ago.

Land devoted to agriculture contains less combustible biomass than untended woodland/grassland. Grazing, by its very nature, reduces the quantity of grasses, shrubs, and trees that would otherwise proliferate. Commercially grown fruit plants are watered and therefore much less prone to burning than dry plants on untended fields would be at the end of the summer.

In short, agricultural land has less biomass or contains biomass with sufficient water content that wildfires either do not burn on such land or burn with less ferocity. Retaining agricultural land and, where feasible, increasing the acreage devoted to agriculture should be a component of a strategy for reducing fuel load.

#### **➤ What government can do:**

- ❑ **Pursue policies that help to retain and expand land devoted to agriculture**

### ***Biomass extraction and conversion***

Technologies exist for converting biomass of various types into commercial products such as liquid fuels, electric power, fertilizer, soil amendments, and/or plastics precursors. The economics of these conversion technologies is dependent on the costs of collecting and transporting the raw biomass material to the plant site, processing it, and then storing and transporting the resulting products to customers. To be profitable, these technologies generally require (a) scale to achieve operational efficiency which, in turn, means there must be a large local supply of biomass that can be relied on for many years; (b) that the biomass raw material be aggregated and available for easy pickup; and (c) that the resulting products have commercial value.

While biomass conversion facilities are employed to some extent in a number of countries, generally speaking, the conditions for profitably turning biomass into commercial products rarely exist in the United States and these technologies are not widely deployed here. Nevertheless, because they can potentially play such an important role in reducing fuel load in forests, it is important that biomass conversion technologies be considered as an element of a broader strategy for reducing the fuel load in forests and woodlands.

A number of research groups and startup companies are working on improving existing technologies and developing new approaches to biomass conversion including portable systems that can be moved from site to site.

#### **➤ What government can do:**

- ❑ **Expand the County's Residential Chipper Program to process biomass collected by property owners from their entire property and not be limited to defensible space around residences**
- ❑ **Promote the development of biomass processing facilities, especially new/improved technologies that have the potential to lower costs and improve performance when operating in environments that prevail in the North Bay**
- ❑ **Facilitate the collection/aggregation of biomass and its transport to processing facilities**

- ❑ **Facilitate arrangements under which landowners can make biomass available to biomass processing facilities**
- ❑ **Advocate for incentives to promote the collection of and processing of biomass**

### ***Timber harvesting***

A substantial amount of timber is commercially harvested in California from privately-owned forests as well as National Forests and land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Removal of trees, by its very nature, removes substantial biomass from forests. Commercial harvesting when performed sustainably leaves in place trees with a range of diameters to promote future forest health and concentrate carbon sequestration on the larger, older stems.

There are operating sawmills in the North Bay region, focusing today on redwood harvested from the forests in the North Bay. The potential exists to commercially produce other wood products from Douglas-fir such as lumber or cross-laminated timber, thereby expanding the scope of timber harvesting in the region.

Obstacles to expanding timbering operations in the North Bay are (a) the small size and large number of individual landholdings which makes timber extraction less efficient and requires the approval of many landowners; (b) only a portion of the standing timber meets the species and size requirements for commercial harvest in any given year, complicating supply reliability over time.

Timber harvesting and biomass extraction can be synergistically combined to significantly reduce the fuel load in forests. Timber harvesting leaves behind biomass residues from treetops, branches and non-commercial vegetation as “come-along” volume. In effect, timber harvesting accomplishes the first steps of biomass collection and aggregation and thereby reduces the overall costs of biomass extraction.

#### **➤ What government can do:**

- ❑ **Promote the conversion of currently unproductive forests and woodlands into productive timberland producing timber that has commercial value provided that timber management is combined with other strategies—such as grazing and biomass extraction—as may be required to limit the buildup of biomass residue**
- ❑ **Facilitate arrangements under which landowners can pool their lands so as to**
  - **Enable commercial operations to selectively harvest timber from their properties**
  - **Capture carbon credit payments as their forests continue to grow**

### **REDUCE IMPACT OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN WUI AREAS**

From a wildfire perspective, residential development in WUI areas is problematic for several reasons:

- ◆ It adds highly concentrated fuel sources to WUI areas such as structures built of and containing a variety of combustible materials, propane tanks, vehicular fuel tanks, wood piles, and landscaping trees/shrubbery
- ◆ Human activity is a prime ignition source for wildfires and adding residents to WUI areas increases the risk that fires will be initiated
- ◆ Electric power lines serving residences add to the risk that the electric distribution system will initiate wildfires

Compared to residential development in in high density areas, each new house built in WUI areas adds disproportionately to the costs associated with wildfire prevention and suppression and the losses incurred as a result of wildfires. Furthermore, more residences in WUI areas add more physical and organizational impediments to implementing measures to reduce the



risk of fires and to efforts to control fires once started. Overall, development in WUI areas increases the cost of government services.

In short, new residential development in WUI areas does not advance the goal of reducing wildfire risk.

Wildfire risk associated with new residential development in WUI areas can be reduced by ensuring that structures are hardened, defensible space is maintained around structures, and concentrated fuel sources such as propane tanks and woodpiles are avoided.

➤ **What government can do:**

- ❑ **Promote solar/storage systems (sometimes called “microgrids”), where applicable, in new and existing residences in WUI areas as complete energy supply solutions as a substitute for propane and extensions to and connections to the electric grid**
- ❑ **Explore mechanisms whereby property owners in high fire risk areas who have decided they do not want to rebuild burned down houses can dispose of the land in such a way that a new residence is not built on the site provided that the property is not within a residential development and due to size, proximity to other undeveloped land, or other characteristics, promotes other goals outlined in these recommendations.**
- ❑ **Advocate for use of resources such as the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space program to acquire properties in high fire risk zones to facilitate managing such properties in a manner so as to reduce fire risk**

## **REPRESENT COUNTY’S INTERESTS WITH RESPECT TO PG&E’S SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Wildfire Safety Division (“WSD”) of the CPUC was set up in June of 2020 “to ensure electric utilities are taking effective actions to reduce utility-related fire risk”. The Division develops criteria for assessing the wildfire risk mitigation plans of the electric utilities and evaluating how effective utilities are in implementing the plans.

Given the history of PG&E’s equipment initiating major fires and the disruption to daily life and business that PSPS events have on the residents and businesses in the region, the County has a strong interest in seeing that PG&E’s efforts to harden its transmission and distribution system and upgrade its control/management systems are performed as quickly and as effectively as possible.

➤ **What government can do:**

- ❑ **Monitor and comment on, as appropriate, the WSD’s oversight of PG&E’s efforts to update and upgrade its systems to represent the interests of the County’s residents in seeing that PG&E’s work is performed in a manner that most effectively reduces risks as rapidly as possible.**

## Background information

Background information on the various topics discussed in this paper can be found in the following sources:

- 1) EB Alive, *Guidance for Recovery and Resiliency Planning in Sonoma County Forest Ecosystems*, Report prepared for the Sonoma county Office of Recovery and Resiliency
- 2) California Council on Science and Technology, *The Costs of Wildfire in California*, October 2020  
<https://ccst.us/wp-content/uploads/The-Costs-of-Wildfire-in-California-FULL-REPORT.pdf>
- 3) *Timber Harvesting on Federal Lands*, Congressional Research Service, R45688, April 12, 2019  
<https://crsreports.congress.gov>
- 4) Malcolm North, Brandon M. Collins, and Scott Stephens, *Using Fire to Increase the Scale, Benefits, and Future Maintenance of Fuels Treatments*, Journal of Forestry, October/November 2012, 110(7):392-401  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5849/jof.12-021>
- 5) Eric Westervelt, *Experts To Western States: Time To Finally Fight Wildfires With More Fire*, NPR, October 27, 2020  
<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/27/927901189/experts-to-western-states-time-to-finally-fight-wildfires-with-more-fire>
- 6) *Grazing*, University of California Cooperative Extension information bulletin,  
<https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Prepare/Treatment/Grazing/#:~:text=Livestock%20grazing%20reduces%20fire%20fuels,which%20can%20pose%20fire%20hazards>
- 7) Felix Ratcliff, Devii Rao, Sheila Barry, Luke Macaulay, Royce Larsen, Matthew Shapero, Shane Dewees, Max Moritz, Rowan Peterson, and Larry Forero, *Benefits of Cattle Grazing for Reducing Fire Fuels and Fire Hazard*, Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of California , August 31, 2020  
<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=43533>
- 8) Heather Anu Kramer, Miranda H. Mockrin, Patricia M. Alexandre, Volker C. Radeloff, *High wildfire damage in interface communities in California*, International Journal of Wildland Fire, 2019, 28, 641-650  
[https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2019/nrs\\_2019\\_kramer\\_001.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2019/nrs_2019_kramer_001.pdf)



**From:** [Gordon Stuck](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 9:36:12 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars including safe pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes.

The crossing infrastructure, in particular, is important to me because it saves lives. Please improve pedestrian crossing safety by implementing the upgrades suggested on the site: <https://public.omniapartners.com/resources/industry-insights/the7bestwaystoimprovenighttimepedestriansafety>  
See list below highlighting the changes.

The recent huge injuries to 13-year old boy Atticus Pearson and more recently, a 19-year old female critically injured at the Hoen Avenue and Sierra Creek Lane crosswalk, bring this need into sharp focus.

Note that 75% of deaths occur in the dark, and 70% in non intersections. However the suggestions on this site also help during the day:

- 1. Upgrade to More Reflective Signage**
- 2. Replace Static Signs with Flashing LED Signs**
- 3. Install RRFB Technology...I suggest the type that automatically senses the pedestrian**
- 4. Install a Crosswalk Illuminator...huge help at night**
- 6. Focus On Left-Turn Collisions**
- 7. Redesign the roadway if none of the above are the right solution.**

Also, for the benefit of non drivers, please also prioritize:

- \* Have clearly marked and wide bike lanes on all mid and major streets
- \* Reduce speed limits around schools
- \* Upgrade all intersections to be bike friendly
- \* Repair or widen sidewalks where needed

Thanks,  
Gordon Stuck  
Satna Rosa resident near Montgomery Village area

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[Gordon Stuck](#)  
[Santa Rosa, CA](#)

**From:** [Ben Hough](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 11:04:51 AM

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To Santa Rosa City Council,

As a high school student in Santa Rosa, I'm writing to express my concerns about the state of biking infrastructure in our city. It's not safe for students like me to bike to school and around town with the lack of protected bike lanes. We need more options to get around safely.

I understand that investing in a protected bike network would not only improve the safety for students, but it would also bring many benefits to our community. It would reduce traffic congestion around schools, promote better health and fitness, and increase accessibility for students who may not have the option to drive. It would also help to promote sustainable transportation and reduce the carbon footprint.


Furthermore, I believe that protected bike lanes can play a significant role in reaching the goal of zero traffic fatalities, it will create a safer environment for everyone, not only for cyclists but for pedestrians and drivers as well. With the addition of protected bike lanes, it will also encourage more people to choose biking as a mode of transportation and that could lead to reduction in the number of cars on the road, which can help to reduce the chance of fatal accidents.

I urge you to invest in a complete, protected bike network for Santa Rosa. By doing so, we can create a safer, healthier, and more vibrant community for all residents, including students like me.

I hope you take our concerns into consideration, thank you for your time.

**From:** [Shannon Cavanagh](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 11:14:42 AM

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I support safer streets.--  
Shannon Cavanagh  


**From:** [Jason Curtis](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:31:30 PM

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for prioritizing safe, people-friendly streets in Santa Rosa for the upcoming year. As a parent of two children who have gone through the Santa Rosa schools, I am particularly concerned about the safety of our streets for our children to walk and bike.

I believe that investing in safe, people-friendly streets will benefit our community in a variety of ways. Not only will it improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, but it will also encourage more active transportation and reduce traffic congestion. This can lead to better air quality, improved public health, and a more vibrant local economy.

As the city council prepares to set priorities for 2023-2024, I urge you to consider the following actions to create safer, people-friendly streets:

1. Implementing traffic calming measures such as speed bumps, roundabouts, and other measures to slow down traffic and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
2. Increasing investments in bike infrastructure such as protected bike lanes, bike parking facilities, and bike-friendly intersections.
3. Improving pedestrian infrastructure such as crosswalks, sidewalks, and pedestrian-friendly intersections.
4. Reducing speed limits on residential streets to ensure the safety of all users.

I believe that these actions will help make Santa Rosa a more livable, safe, and enjoyable place to live, work, and play. As a resident of Santa Rosa, I strongly urge you to prioritize safe, people-friendly streets in your upcoming decision-making process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Curtis

**From:** [Heidi Newton](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal-Setting  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:43:13 PM

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Hello,

I'm a teacher at Spring Lake Middle School. In January one of my first-period students never showed up to class. Later that day I learned that Atticus Pearson had been hit while in a crosswalk on his way to school. This morning I participated in a walk for Attison to bring awareness to the safety issues our children and community face.

I would like to encourage you to make safe, people-friendly streets a priority as you discuss goals for next year.

Sincerely,  
Heidi Newton

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Thank you,  
Heidi Newton  
7th and 8th Grade History Teacher  
Spring Lake Middle School

**From:** [Jon Haupt](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:45:12 PM

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council,

My name is Jon Haupt, a resident of Santa Rosa.

In terms of goal-setting for the next fiscal year, I would like to suggest a couple of items for strong consideration:

\* Continue to forward the plans for the Hearn Community Hub. I work in the Sonoma County Library system and our little Roseland Library is always so busy for such a small location. Residents in that part of town could really use a bigger facility along with the fire station and other services planned for the Hub.

\* Increased support for InResponse and other creative solutions to mental health support in our community. I work in Healdsburg and have found the CORE Team very effective there. I think something like that could work really well in our schools. Most of our students have had almost no experience with a "normal" school year and are struggling with mental health problems and social interactions.

\* Continue to move toward providing excellent transportation options and community hubs for pedestrians and people using bikes, scooters, and other non-powered vehicles. There are several roadways and intersections that need changing and that will require resources devoted to urban planning. I am, in particular, called to action by the two recent major pedestrian-auto injury accidents on Hoen Avenue. As a driver in that area, I can attest to the difficulty of seeing people in that crosswalk, especially in the morning and evening when it is dark. Many people do need to cross Hoen Avenue regularly, but a simple crosswalk is not working there.

Thank you,  
Jon

**From:** [Marisa Taylor](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:18:04 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars including pedestrian crossings and protected bike routes. My son is an 8th grader at Spring Lake Middle School and walks and or bikes to school. With the accident involving his classmate, Atticus, it brought additional concerns with the short jont to school and safety in general.

With gratitude,  
Marisa Taylor  
Montgomery Village Neighborthood

**From:** [Sorelle Levy](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:21:08 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Please prioritize making streets safe for users who aren't in cars, including safe pedestrian crossing and protected bike routes. There are many bikers and families in our neighborhood who would be a lot safer if there were bike-friendly intersections and dedicated bike lanes.

I would also love to see priority given to the opening of the greenway. More paths, safe crossings, open nature space, a children's playground/park, sculptures, community gardens... all ideas for this beautiful and untouched natural strip with great potential.

With gratitude,  
Sorelle Levy, Montgomery Village Neighborhood



**From:** [Bolla, Rhonda](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Inclusion in City Goals  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:28:54 PM

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**From:** Katharine Anderson [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:26 PM  
**To:** \_CityCouncilListPublic <citycouncil@srcity.org>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Inclusion in City Goals

Dear Santa Rosa City Council Members

As a member of the Southeast Greenway Campaign, I am very interested in having the city of Santa Rosa do its part to help move this amazing potential greenway forward.

The Greenway Campaign and Sonoma Land Trust are committed to funding the acquisition of the Greenway property and have raised over two million dollars in grants and donations toward this goal. The grants for Greenway acquisition must be used or committed by October 2024.

Completing the Greenway acquisition will continue to require staff work by the City's legal, real estate, recreation and parks, and public works departments.

City staff need this project prioritized to allocate time to work on the transaction with the State, local agencies and funding sources.

As we begin the park planning process, we must keep the Greenway prioritized in City Goals and provide the Recreation and Parks Department with the additional staff needed to do this work.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Best regards, Katharine Anderson, [REDACTED]  
Santa Rosa City Resident

**From:** [Colin Miller](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 10:54:23 AM

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Dear Council Members,

Our city needs to build a protected, low-stress bicycle network connecting all Santa Rosans to the places in the city they need to go. In addition, we need to fully implement the Vision Zero Plan for traffic safety and increase transit options for residents.

This matters to me because I am a resident of Santa Rosa and care about the people that live here. After hearing about the recent tragic accident, I felt it was time for a change to make this city safer.

I hope you will prioritize multi-modal transportation infrastructure as one of the city's adopted goals for the coming budget cycle.

With gratitude,  
Colin Miller

**From:** [David Long](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:43:45 PM

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Submitted by David Long

I am urging the Council to place a high, near-term priority on adopting a permanent Short-Term Rental Ordinance that severely restricts the operation of Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals in all residential zoning districts.

In October 2021, the Council hastily adopted an Urgency Ordinance in an attempt to control Short-Term Rentals, but in doing so ignored the fact that Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals are a use that is not consistent with either the City Zoning Code or General Plan for residential neighborhoods. During the ensuing 18 months, City staff and Council have allowed Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals to gain a foothold in our residential neighborhoods by failing to enforce the Urgency Ordinance and using lax permit application review and approval procedures.

Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals are transient lodging enterprises devoid of on-site supervision for which the City collects operational taxes and fees. These traits classify them as a (commercial) use and given the recent history of the Short-Term Rental issue, this commercial use is clearly not a “compatible accessory use” as defined in the Code.

The purposes of the City’s Zoning Code are to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan and to protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of residents. By allowing Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals to operate in nearly every residential zoning district, the City has not stayed true to either of these purposes. Now is the time to correct this oversight.

By initially allowing Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals to be permitted in residential zoning districts, the Council has also blundered its way into having to consider the ramifications of regulatory take when adopting new regulations for them. However, this does not mean that Council must simply resign itself to doing nothing to further restrict the operation of Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals. Courts have consistently ruled in favor of municipalities in cases where new regulations remove previous permissions for Short-Term Rentals to operate in residential neighborhoods.

Council should take steps to protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of residents by adopting the following regulations that severely restrict operation of Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals.

1. Prohibit future Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals in all residential zoning districts by removing such districts from the list in City Code Section 20-48.040.
2. Allow Non-Hosted Short-Term Rentals that were issued permits within the established cap of 198 to continue operating but limit their rentals to a maximum of 60 days per calendar year.

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Thanks!

**David Long**



**From:** [steve.rabinowitsh](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Southeast Greenway  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:49:36 PM

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Dear Mayor Rogers and City Council Members:

I have been involved with the Southeast Greenway Campaign for over ten years. The City has been an integral part of the progress of this wonderful project. This has been a model joint effort including the City of Santa Rosa, the Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma County Recreation and Parks Department, the Sonoma Land Trust, Landpaths and the Southeast Greenway Campaign. We are very close to beginning negotiations to acquire the parcel from Caltrans. Substantial funds have been acquired, parcel maps have been created, the appraisal process is about to begin and negotiations will begin soon thereafter.

It is essential that the City continue its involvement and its critical role in this process. I urge you to make this project one of the main goals for this coming year as we need to complete this transaction by October, 2024 to make sure grant funds will remain available. We look forward to working with the City and our community to create a Parks Master Plan. The Southeast Greenway has potential to greatly expand our open space system, connect neighborhoods throughout our community to Spring Lake Park with bikeways and trails, restore the environment and advance our efforts to deal with climate change. Thank you for your continued support of this inspiring community effort. Sincerely, Steve Rabinowitsh

**From:** [Ken MacNab](#)  
**To:** [Smith, Maraskeshia](#)  
**Cc:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#); [tim massey](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Economic Analysis on South Santa Rosa Annexation Areas  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 10:30:37 AM  
**Attachments:** [Economic Analysis of SR Annexation Options.pdf](#)  
[Summary Memo - Economic Analysis.pdf](#)

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Hello Maraskeshia-

Attached for the City's consideration is an Economic Analysis prepared by Dr. Robert Eyler and Dr. Jon Haveman of Economics Forensics and Analytics, Inc. that evaluates three annexation scenarios for unincorporated areas in southern Santa Rosa, including the 2010 Area. A memo summarizing the key findings of the report is also attached.

Upon review of this information, you will find that the economic benefits of annexing the "2010 area" are significant with respect to job creation, wages, and new revenues for local businesses. Further, the net positive contribution to the City's budget associated with annexation of the 2010 Area may be great enough to offset most of the negative budgetary impacts associated with annexation of other unincorporated areas in southern Santa Rosa.

Thank you for your consideration of this information. We look forward to continued discussion and collaboration on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact Tim Massey ([tim@uprightcapital.com](mailto:tim@uprightcapital.com)) or myself if you have any questions.

Respectfully-

Ken

**Ken MacNab** | KMac Advising, LLC

Email: [ken@kmacadvising.com](mailto:ken@kmacadvising.com)

# TRANSMITTAL

**To:** Maraskeshia Smith, City Manager, City of Santa Rosa

**From:** Tim Massey, Representative of Property Owners in the “2010 Area”

**cc:** Mayor Rogers, Santa Rosa City Councilmembers

**Date:** March 8, 2023

**Re:** Economic Impacts of Annexation of Unincorporated Areas in South Santa Rosa

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Attached for your consideration is an economic briefing report prepared by Dr. Robert Eyler and Dr. Jon Haveman of Economics Forensics and Analytics, Inc. evaluating three annexation scenarios for unincorporated areas in south Santa Rosa. The annexation areas considered in the economic briefing include the following: the unincorporated area west of Highway 101, including Moorland and Industry West (Area 1); the unincorporated area between the east side of Highway 101 and the “2010 Area”, mostly consisting of the south Santa Rosa Avenue corridor (Area 2); and the “2010 Area,” a 453-acre undeveloped area generally located east of Santa Rosa Avenue and south of Winterhaven Avenue (Area 3).

Unlike a “fiscal analysis,” which typically focuses on direct impacts to city revenues and expenditures, the economic analysis considers broader benefits to the community, including job creation, local business revenue and wages. The following is a summary of key findings of the report by Drs. Eyler and Haveman.

## Key Findings

### IMPACT ON LOCAL BUSINESS AND JOBS

- Spending by new residents in Area 3 will result in **increased revenues of approximately \$108 million** annually for local businesses after the area is fully developed and occupied.
- Increased revenues generated by development of Area 3 will support **an additional 680 jobs** in the local economy, **with wages in excess of \$33 million**.

### CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

New development in Area 3 will:

- **Result in the full-time construction employment of 1,280 people** in each year of construction
- **Result in an increased in construction worker wages of \$890 million**, cumulatively over construction (projected to last for 12 years).

## FISCAL IMPACT

- The potential impact of Area 1 on the City's budget ranges from slightly negative to slightly positive.
- Area 2 is likely to have a negative impact on the City's budget.
- ***Area 3 has the greatest potential to contribute positively to the City's budget.***
- ***The net positive contribution of Area 3 is potentially substantial enough to offset negative impacts of either Area 1 or Area 2.***
- ***The net positive contribution of Area 3 is potentially substantial enough to offset 100% of the negative impacts of Area 1 and 80% of Area 2.***

The benefits to the community with respect to job creation, wages and revenues to local businesses associated with annexation of Area 3, in addition to property tax and impact fee revenues, would be significant. While it is understood that the City Council has a fiduciary responsibility to consider budgetary impacts, the economic well-being of the City's residents and businesses should also be considered.

**Santa Rosa Plan 2010 Annexation**

**An Economic Impact Brief**

**March 6, 2023**

**Economic Forensics and Analytics, Inc.**

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## SUMMARY

There is an area of land just south of Santa Rosa that is under contemplation and discussion for annexation into the City of Santa Rosa. In this report, we evaluate the relative merits of annexing different parts of this area and how doing so might contribute to the City's financial well-being.

The annexation region is broken out into 3 separate areas. The first (Area 1) is the area to the west of 101. The second (Area 2) is the area to the east of 101 and to the west of the "2010 Annexation Area". The third (Area 3) is the "2010 Annexation Area".

Broadly, our findings are that only Areas 1 and 3 have the potential to contribute positively to the City's budget. However, Area 3 is the most attractive, with net positive contributions that significantly exceed those of Area 1. Area 2 is likely to negatively affect the City's finances.

Over a 20-year period, which accounts for one-time revenues from development, we find that the fiscal benefits of Area 3 vastly exceed those of the other two areas. Over this period, the average annual contribution of Area 3 to City revenues is positive (\$11.3 million), while it is negative for both Areas 1 and 2 (\$-2.6 million and \$-11.0 million, respectively).

The report further breaks down the economic and fiscal implications of the development proposed for Area 3. The construction phase brings with it significant spending in Santa Rosa, which creates jobs, higher wages, and revenues for existing businesses. The addition of more than 2,710 new housing units to the region also facilitates population growth, which in turn increases local spending.

### Main Findings

A housing development is being contemplated for the "2010 Area". This report shows the potential economic impacts to the Santa Rosa economy as a result of these 2,728 units being built, a net increase in dwellings of 2,710, for a total of 2,744 units on the land. Affordable units comprise 10 percent or 275 units of the total. Economic impacts are business revenues, supported jobs, and state and local tax revenues.

The economic impacts come in two phases:

- **Construction:** the 2,728 units have construction costs of approximately \$1.6 billion, which have impacts like any other construction work to build single-family and multi-family residences;
  - This spending over the life of the project supports an additional \$2.2 billion in business revenue, over 1,280 jobs in each year of construction, \$890 million in wages and over \$115 million in state and local taxes, some of

which is ongoing (property tax) from on-site improvements and also other real-estate sales in Santa Rosa.

- As much as \$8 million in increased sales and property tax revenues could accrue to the City of Santa Rosa as a result of the construction phase.
- Permit/City fees: \$116 million.
- Property taxes associated with the new residences: \$13.6 million.
- **Occupancy:** We assume the occupancy rate of these units is 95 percent, where the market-rate units (2,469 units) have households with \$84,823 area median income (AMI) in 2021 (the latest data); the remaining 275 affordable units have households with 50 percent of AMI at \$42,412.
  - These household incomes provide new spending in Santa Rosa based on the 95 percent occupancy rate for an annual total spending of \$201 million.
  - This spending supports 680 workers and nearly \$10 million in state and local tax revenues on an ongoing basis.
  - As much as \$1.1 million in additional revenues (property and sales taxes) could accrue to the City of Santa Rosa on an annual basis because of spending by the additional residents.

In the broader context of annexing the entire area under consideration, annexation of the 2010 Area (our Area 3), is the most financially viable. It is more likely than the other two areas to result in a positive flow of revenues to the City over a 20-year period. Area 3 has an expected positive cash flow of \$11.3 million, while Areas 1 and 2 have expected *negative* cash flows of \$-2.7 million and \$-11.0 million, respectively. However, there are other considerations with regard to annexing Areas 1 and 2. The general welfare of those living in those areas being chief among them.

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Santa Rosa is actively considering annexation options. One option focuses on an area of land at the southern tip of the City, straddling Highway 101. Another option is annexation of this area plus other islands of unincorporated land within the City's urban growth boundary.

This report discusses annexation plans for the area south of the City, without treating the unincorporated islands within the City. Rather than discuss the area as a single option for annexation, we consider it as three separate areas, each with a different set of concerns (costs) and merits (benefits) regarding annexation:

- **Area 1:** West of 101 – While there may be socially-based reasons for consideration of this area, in terms of economic impact, this area has little development potential, brings little in the way of new sales tax revenues, and requires significant spending on infrastructure.
- **Area 2:** East of 101, West of the 2010 Area – again, has little additional development potential, but brings with it some significant sales tax revenues. This area also requires spending on infrastructure. It is unlikely that the sales tax revenues would cover the additional costs to the City of Santa Rosa. Further, as most of the residences are mobile home parks, they bring in relatively little in the way of property taxes.
- **Area 3:** 2010 Area – as a largely undeveloped plot of land, this area has the most development potential, with a developer already eyeing an opportunity to build a significant residential neighborhood. Not only will such a development help satiate the City of Santa Rosa's regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) targets, the development generates significant economic activity and revenues that will likely exceed infrastructure costs.

This is an area designated in the City's General Plan as the "area not to be developed prior to 2010". The northern portion of the area is often referred to as Todd Creek.

This report starts with a general overview of each area. This is followed by an evaluation of the economic implications of the development plans for Area 3, specifically. No comparable economic report for the other three areas is possible as we are unaware of any significant economic development plans for those areas. We assume throughout that the costs and benefits of annexation for Areas 1 and 2 can reasonably reflect the status quo.

There is a general perception that annexations result in negative economic impacts to a city:

"Annexation – the act of bringing property outside of the city limits into the municipal boundaries – is rarely more than an economic

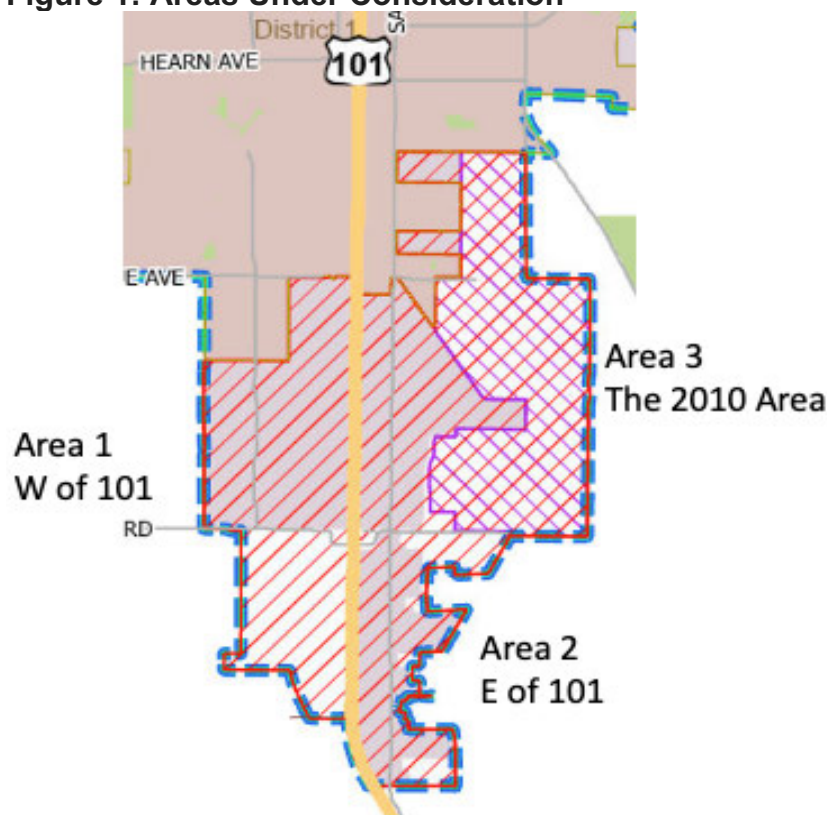
sugar high for a city, one with long-term consequences that are nearly always negative.”<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, it is well worth considering in some detail the relative merits of each area within the region being contemplated for annexation.

## THE RELATIVE MERITS OF THE THREE AREAS

The area just south of Santa Rosa’s city limit (as shown in Figure 1) is under consideration for annexation. In this report, we divide this area into three regions and discuss the relative merits of each.

**Figure 1: Areas Under Consideration**



These areas are worth considering separately as each area has significantly different features, benefits and costs associated with them. The relative merits of a region with regard to annexation depend on the costs associated with providing services to the new communities as compared to the benefits associated with bringing those communities into the City (primarily new tax revenues collected elsewhere before annexation). There are also social reasons for annexation that may outweigh the economics of the annexation, but here, we focus on the economics.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/6/11/when-is-it-okay-to-annex-property>

Santa Rosa has expressed a commitment to providing annexed areas the same level of services provided to current residents. It has also committed to not reducing the quality of services of current residents as a result of any annexation. This makes potential annexation costly. There are a host of different services that are provided to current residents. These include, but are not limited to:

- Police;
- Fire;
- Transportation and public works;
- Water;
- Parks and libraries;
- Sewage and drainage; and,
- Planning and economic development.

Each of the three areas will place different levels of demand on these services, based primarily on each area's population. Furthermore, these services come with both up-front and recurring costs. With the exception of "Planning and economic development", each category likely involves some infrastructure upgrades to bring the service levels into line with those currently provided. All cost categories require ongoing budget expenditures for both daily service provision as well as ongoing maintenance.

As these services are costly, they must be considered against any increased City revenues that might come from the area's annexation. These benefits include increased sales taxes, increased property taxes, and development fees that are associated with projects that arise subsequent to the annexation. The movement toward satiation of RHNA housing units assigned to Santa Rosa also reduces potential funding lost or withheld by the state of California after 2031.

### **Evaluating Area 1: West of Highway 101, Moorland and South**

Area 1 includes the Moorland neighborhood in the northern end and primarily industrial uses in the southern end. Given the numbers of residences, approval by the residents will have to be obtained. The existing residential neighborhood is a source of demand and hence sales tax revenues, but much of their spending likely occurs in Santa Rosa, whether they are City residents or not.

The western and southern parts of this area are largely industrial, with some sources of retail sales. The area appears to be largely occupied, without significant potential for future development.

Of the three areas, Area 1 appears to have the largest costs relative to benefits. Providing services to this significant area will be expensive relative to new tax revenues. There will be property tax benefits for Santa Rosa, but those benefits are unlikely to cover the costs of service provision. We show estimates in later sections that substantiate that lack of cost coverage. However, there may be benefits to this area's residents in terms of improved services and infrastructure after annexation.

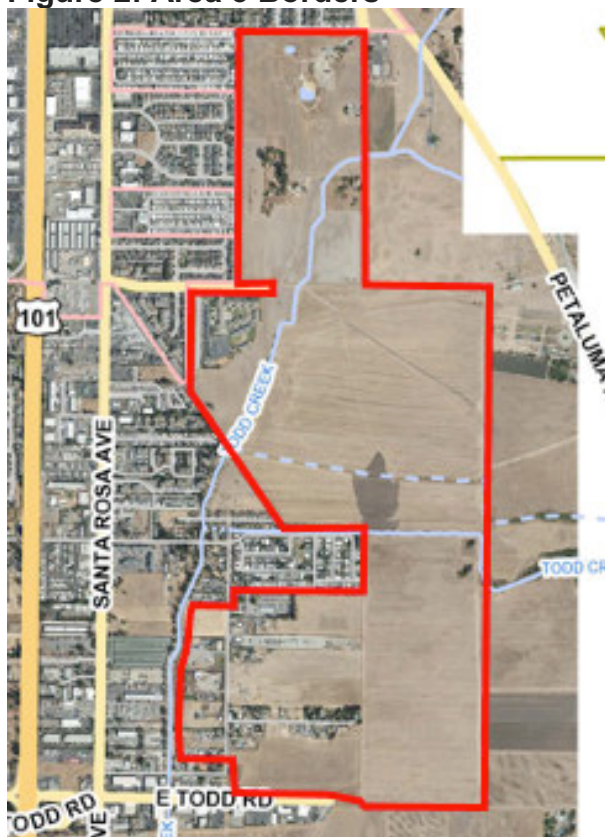
## Evaluating Area 2: East of Highway 101

Area 2 is more densely developed, having both more residential and commercial properties, than is Area 1. There is less in the way of permanent residential structures, but more in the way of potential sales tax revenues. As the preponderance of residential structures are mobile homes (and some apartment complexes), property tax revenues associated with residential land in this area are likely to be relatively low. Property taxes associated with commercial real estate will add positively and perhaps significantly to the City's revenues. The presence of several significant retail establishments is also of benefit in terms of sales tax revenues. As shown below, however, annexing this region has the potential to be expensive.

## Evaluating Area 3: The 2010 Area

Area 3 is largely undeveloped. Other than several mobile home parks, an elementary school, a small number of single-family residences and commercial enterprises, the land is largely vacant. Once developed, providing services to this area will be expensive, but as we will see, the economic impact of the development process along with upfront development fees more than compensates for the higher ongoing cost for some time into the future.

**Figure 2: Area 3 Borders**



## Putting Numbers to The Evaluation

Having discussed the relative merits of each of the three areas, it is worth trying to estimate actual numbers in terms of revenues for the City of Santa Rosa associated with each of the areas. We do this below, providing an annual estimate as well as a 20-year stream of revenues from each area. This 20-year stream is important to evaluate the contribution of one-time revenues resulting from the annexation of each area.

Expanding the City boundaries is not without costs. As discussed above, the City will now be providing services to a broader population and geographic area. Any consideration of the revenue derived from annexation must be relative to the added cost burden of servicing the additional businesses and residences.

To that end, Figure 3 presents estimates of the cost of providing services to the City of Santa Rosa as it is currently configured. The first column presents annual expenditures from the 2022-2023 budget. The second column is an estimate of spending per person, for the current 177,400 residents of Santa Rosa. The final 3 columns provide an estimate of the annual costs of servicing each of the Areas, were they currently fully developed and a part of the City of Santa Rosa.

**Figure 3: City Expenditure Obligations in Each Area**

			Total for Each Area		
Expenditure Category	Agg Spend	Per Person	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
Housing and community services	\$54,918,800	\$3101	\$702,800	\$2,028,400	\$2,003,600
Fire Department	\$54,094,200	\$305	\$692,300	\$1,998,000	\$1,973,500
Planning & Economic Development	\$18,180,000	\$102	\$232,700	\$671,500	\$663,300
Police Department	\$73,459,900	\$414	\$940,100	\$2,713,200	\$2,680,000
Recreation & Comm Engagement	\$12,672,800	\$71	\$162,200	\$468,100	\$462,300
Transportation & Public Works	\$79,053,500	\$446	\$1,011,700	\$2,919,800	\$2,884,100
Water	\$158,776,400	\$895	\$2,032,000	\$5,864,400	\$5,792,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$451,155,600</b>	<b>\$2,543</b>	<b>\$5,773,800</b>	<b>\$16,663,400</b>	<b>\$16,459,400</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

Source: Operations and Maintenance Budget Fiscal Year 2022-23

<https://www.src.ty.org/DocumentCenter/View/36504/FY-2022-23-Operations-and-Maintenance-Budget-Book>

In Figure 4, we provide estimates of post-annexation revenues from three sources. There are ongoing annual sources of revenues from annexation and in the case of Area 3, there are a pair of one-time revenue sources. First, with regard to recurring revenues, there is the contribution of spending by residents and sales of local businesses to sales tax revenues. For Areas 1 and 2, this revenue derives from the spending of local residents as well as that collected by local businesses.<sup>2</sup> We are making the conservative

<sup>2</sup> This likely results in some double-counting, but not to an extent that alters significantly the conclusions that one might reach in interpreting the data. With regard to comparisons across areas, this will bias any such comparison in favor of Areas 1 and 2, relative to Area 3.

assumption that spending by Area 1 and 2 residents results in sales taxes for the City of Santa Rosa after annexation, whereas it did not before annexation.<sup>3</sup> For Area 3, the increased sales taxes result only from the occupation of newly constructed residences in Area 3. Consistent with our treatment of Areas 1 and 2, all of the expenditures of these new households are assumed to generate sales tax revenues for the City of Santa Rosa.

Second, there is the contribution of both residential and commercial real estate to property taxes. For Areas 1 and 2, residential property taxes are estimated as 1% of the value of the existing properties; valuing each housing unit at the area median home value.<sup>4</sup> Commercial properties in Areas 1 and 2 are assumed to be equivalent to 2 percent and 4 percent of the City's current commercial property tax receipts.

Area 3, when developed, will be almost exclusively residential. For the purposes of property tax estimation, values of the residences are assigned based on a set of properties that are deemed to be comparable to the units proposed by the developers. Approximately 21% of property taxes collected are assumed to return to the City.

For all three areas, property tax results are broken out into those resulting from residential and commercial property as well as those that result from increased consumer spending within the City of Santa Rosa.

The "Annual Net" is calculated by subtracting the City expenditure obligation (last row, Figure 3, "Annual Costs" in this table) in each area from "Annual Benefits", the addition to revenues. This row provides an estimate of annual net expenditures in each of the three areas following annexation.

Finally, there are one-time revenues associated with Area 3's development. In particular, there are significant development fees that will be paid to the City, estimated to be approximately \$116 million. In addition, there are economic benefits associated with the construction of these new units, as detailed in the next section, before new residents arrive.

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<sup>3</sup> This assumption will bias the net revenues associated with annexation upward for these areas.

<sup>4</sup> Median home values are taken from the American Community Survey.



**Figure 4: Contribution of Each Area to Santa Rosa Revenues, Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Revenue	Area		
Source	1	2	3
Sales Tax	\$1,573	\$3,216	\$993
Property Tax	1,541	2,491	6,312
- Residential	664	573	4,236
- Commercial	694	1,388	1,380
- Consumer Spending	184	530	696
<b>Annual Benefits</b>	<b>\$3,114</b>	<b>\$5,707</b>	<b>\$7,305</b>
<b>Annual Costs</b>	<b>\$-5,774</b>	<b>\$-16,663</b>	<b>\$-16,459</b>
<b>Annual Net</b>	<b>\$-2,660</b>	<b>\$-10,956</b>	<b>\$-9,154</b>
One Time Revenues	0	0	118,392
- Development Fees			116,000
- Construction Related			2,392
<b>20 Year Revenue Stream</b>			
Total	-53,184	-219,130	226,812
<b>Per Year</b>	<b>\$-2,660</b>	<b>\$-10,956</b>	<b>\$11,341</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

There are significant differences in net revenues derived from the annexation across the three areas. Each area brings with it the potential for negative net expenditures on an annual basis. As presented in the “Annual Net” row in Figure 4, Areas 2 and 3, because of their greater estimated populations, are associated with higher expenditures relative to expected revenues than with Area 1.

Including the one-time revenues presents a dramatically different picture. At the bottom of Figure 4, we consider one-time revenues and distribute them over a 20-year period.<sup>5</sup> This provides a better sense of the revenue implications for the City over time. Area 3 provides an estimated average annual net contribution to City revenues in excess of \$11 million. The average annual contributions for Areas 1 and 2 are unchanged by the longer time horizon.

<sup>5</sup> Construction is assumed to take 10 years to complete. We assume that no units are occupied until the third year of construction. We further assume that units are occupied as they are completed during construction, with both market-rate and affordable units coming on line at a pace of 10% per year.

## THE ECONOMICS OF DEVELOPING AREA 3

Area 3 is the easternmost region under consideration for annexation by the City of Santa Rosa. This section examines the economic impacts of a proposal to increase the number of residential units in this Area by 2,710. This involves the construction of 2,728 units, replacing 18 of the existing units and leaving six of them in place.

The economic impacts of this project come in two stages:

- Stage 1, Construction: the 2,728 units have a construction cost of approximately \$1.6 billion.
  - This construction is assumed to occur over a 10-year period.
- Stage 2, Residential occupation, and the spending of additional households in the region:
  - The 2,710 units are expected to be 95% occupied, based on the current number of people per household in Santa Rosa of 2.53 (2021 estimates from US Census Bureau) for all City households; 2.51 for those that own their residence and 2.55 for those that do not;
    - 271 of the units (10 percent) are to be designated affordable; 2,439 units would be at the market rate;
      - 10 percent of the units are for residents with household income of 50 percent of area median income (AMI);
    - We assume here that there would be 6,513 residents (approximately 95 percent occupancy on average), based on 2.53 residents per household;
    - All residents of these units would be considered new households to Santa Rosa given that the land was not previously a part of the city;
    - 95% of the residences are assumed to be occupied within eight years of the beginning of construction; and,

The residential spending in the second stage creates economic impacts from this development once the housing units are occupied. The market-rate units are assumed to have household incomes equal to the median household income in Santa Rosa for 2021 of \$84,823 to remain conservative in these estimates<sup>6</sup>; the affordable or below market-rate units would have household incomes of 50 percent of that median level, equal to \$42,412 as of 2021. These income levels drive the household spending effects shown below.

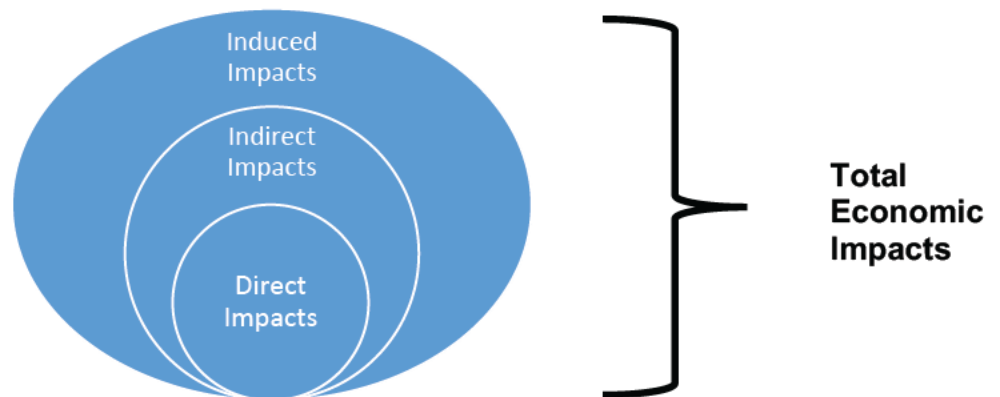
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<sup>6</sup> American Community Survey, Census Bureau, December 2022, <https://data.census.gov>.

## Basic Ideas<sup>7</sup>

The broader effects of building 2,728 residences and adding 2,710 units to Santa Rosa's economy include supported jobs, annual business revenues and new tax receipts. Figure 5 shows the multiplier effect of these rounds of new spending in theory. Economic impacts come in three "flavors" starting with the same way ripples come from throwing a rock into a still pond; the rock is the construction and operations of these new rental units, rippling out into the broader economy as **direct** effects. **Indirect** effects come from vendor relationships and generate broader spending. For example, the purchase of construction materials provides demand to local businesses not there previously without these new units.

**Figure 5: Economic Impacts**



This indirect spending fuels **induced** effects, including construction and merchant employees spending their wages on groceries, medical visits, restaurant meals, and various other industries that are tied to household spending primarily. The important, ongoing aspect of the economic impacts are new residents' spending. Their income adds more **induced** spending to broaden the economic impacts. Let's first look at the construction impacts.

## Estimated Economic Impacts: Stage 1 - Construction Spending

The new 2,728 residential units have an estimated construction cost of approximately \$1.64 billion. This cost includes hard costs of construction (labor and materials) and other costs that support construction efforts (design, management). The assumption is that each unit will cost approximately \$600,000 to build. Construction is assumed to take 10 years to complete. The results presented in the Figures below are an aggregation of the construction benefits; they assume that the construction takes place over ten years. This timeframe is uncertain, but the results are intended to give a sense of the overall benefits associated with the new construction.

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<sup>7</sup> A glossary in the Appendix provides more explanations of some of the major industries affected below.

Land improvements and thus higher property values obtain after construction versus the current, assessed valuation. This increase is a benefit for the City economy; there are net property tax gains for the City of Santa Rosa as a result. Other fees and taxes are paid directly and indirectly because of construction spending. The IMPLAN® model estimates the full-time equivalent workers that would be on site for construction and also the taxes and business revenues supported by this construction spending.

Not all of the construction in the project is the same. There will be a mix of single-family and multi-family residences. The economic effects differ according to the type of project. Roughly two-thirds of the units will be single-family residences and one-third will be multi-family. Accordingly, the results are broken out by construction type.

## Construction Summary

Figures 6 and 7 summarize the economic benefits of the construction phase. These benefits come in the form of local business revenue, jobs, wages, and tax revenues. The “Economic Benefits” represent revenues, jobs, and wages that are attributable to the project. In other words, they are revenues that are available to the Santa Rosa economy. There is likely to be some leakage as some construction spending may go to entities outside of Santa Rosa. The results are calibrated so that all of the benefits in Figure 6 will accrue to Sonoma County, with the majority going to the City of Santa Rosa. Figure 7 has Santa Rosa specific estimates broken out.

In total, there are more than \$2 billion in revenues available from this project, resulting in the full-time employment of 1,280 people in each year of construction, and an increase in worker wages of \$890 million, cumulatively (Figure 6). These numbers represent an enormous potential benefit for the Santa Rosa Economy.

**Figure 6: Summary of Economic Benefits of Construction**  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars over Ten Years of Construction

Type	Revenue	Jobs/Year	Wages
Single-Family Housing	\$1,452,314	830	\$573,746
Multi-Family Housing	\$703,184	450	\$316,046
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,155,498</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>\$889,792</b>

Notes: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

Along with all of this spending come significant tax benefits. The IMPLAN® model reports tax revenues as a total for state and local governments (Figure 7). These totals are presented in the second column. For two of the categories, we are able to estimate the revenues accruing to the City of Santa Rosa, presented in the third column. Assuming that the majority of the sales taxes are collected in Santa Rosa, and with the City collecting 0.75 percentage points of the overall 9.25% sales taxes in the City, we can estimate that because of the construction, local sales tax revenues could increase by as much as \$2.4 million. This is a one-time increase in sales tax revenues, but would occur over the course of design and construction.

**Figure 7: Summary of Tax Benefits of Construction**  
**Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Category	Total Amount	Santa Rosa
Employment Taxes	\$5,015	\$0
Sales Taxes	29,496	2,392
Property Taxes	26,740	5,615
Personal Income Tax	36,456	0
Other Taxes and Fees	17,672	0
<b>Total State and Local Taxes</b>	<b>\$115,379</b>	<b>\$8,007</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

In California, as elsewhere, property tax revenues are collected by the state, with some portion returned to the local jurisdiction. Our estimates assume 21% of property tax revenues collected from properties in Santa Rosa will be returned to Santa Rosa. IMPLAN® estimates a potential increase in property taxes as a result of construction to be in the neighborhood of \$26.7 million, with \$5.6 million accruing to the City. This increase comes about because of businesses that are supported by the construction and the property taxes that they pay while under contract with the developers.

In addition to the one-time nature of these benefits, there are annual property taxes associated with the new residences. With an estimated assessed value for each single-family residence of \$630,033 and an average assessed value on apartments of approximately \$108,000, with 2,036 SFRs and 674 apartments, this amounts to \$13.6 million in annual property tax revenues once all of the residences are complete. The property tax revenues will begin to accrue as residences are completed, beginning in year three of the project.

The 10-year construction project, costing in excess of \$1.6 billion, will increase incomes and revenues throughout Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. These higher incomes and revenues will affect property taxes, in an ongoing way, beyond just those derived from the new units. In other words, the property tax increases that occur during the construction phase will persist. We estimate an increase in property taxes of \$13.1 million to result. These property taxes are assumed to result from increases in both the value of commercial and residential properties.

Combined with the property taxes associated with the new development (\$13.1 million), the total increase in local property taxes is estimated to be about \$26.7 million, with revenues of \$5.6 million accruing to the City of Santa Rosa (Line 3 in Figure 7).

## Single-Family Housing Construction

Comprising two-thirds of the housing units to be built, there is direct spending in excess of \$1 billion on the construction of these units. Figure 8 to 11 present detailed results for this construction spending. Figures 8 to 10 provide evidence on sectors of the Santa Rosa economy that will most benefit from the construction. Figure 11 provides a breakdown of the state and local tax revenues that result; reflecting single-family housing construction's contribution to the results in Figure 7. The estimated increase in revenues for the City of Santa Rosa approach \$6 million.

**Figure 8: Business Revenue Effects, Single-Family Construction**  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Construction of new single-family residential structures	\$1,090,667	0	0	\$1,090,667
Retail – Building material and garden equip and supplies stores	0	70,094	1,626	71,721
Wholesale – Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	0	46,453	46,453
Other real estate	0	0	13,641	13,641
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	7,538	5,027	12,564
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	139	11,898	12,037
Wholesale – Machinery, equipment, and supplies	0	10,488	1,375	11,864
Truck transportation	0	2,929	4,986	7,915
Petroleum refineries	0	2,188	5,531	7,720
Employment services	0	677	6,318	6,996
Banks and Credit Unions	0	235	5,536	5,771
Retail – General merchandise stores	0	5,499	199	5,698
Waste management and remediation services	0	334	5,140	5,473
Landscape and horticultural services	0	0	5,250	5,250
Commercial and industrial machinery repair and maintenance	0	4,757	337	5,093
All Others	0	45,944	97,509	143,452
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,090,667</b>	<b>150,822</b>	<b>210,825</b>	<b>\$1,452,314</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 9: Employment Impacts, Single-Family Construction**  
**Full-Time Equivalents Supported in Each Year of Construction**

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Construction of new single-family residential structures	610	0	0	610
Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	0	50	0	50
Other real estate	0	0	10	10
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	0	10	10
Wholesale - Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	0	10	10
Employment services	0	0	10	10
Retail - General merchandise stores	0	0	10	10
Truck transportation	0	0	10	10
Landscape and horticultural services	0	0	0	0
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	0	0	0	0
Couriers and messengers	0	0	0	0
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	0	0	0
Wholesale - Machinery, equipment, and supplies	0	0	0	0
Warehousing and storage	0	0	0	0
Banks and Credit Unions	0	0	0	0
All Others	0	40	70	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>830</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 10: Wage Impacts, Single-Family Construction**  
**Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Construction of new single-family residential structures	\$467,220	0	0	\$467,220
Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	0	23,307	541	23,848
Wholesale - Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	0	7,413	7,413
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	0	3,882	3,882
Wholesale - Machinery, equipment, and supplies	0	38	3,275	3,313
Employment services	0	927	2,342	3,269
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	2,707	355	3,062
Retail - General merchandise stores	0	0	2,404	2,404
Truck transportation	0	0	2,279	2,279
Banks and Credit Unions	0	138	2,120	2,257
Waste management and remediation services	0	423	1,833	2,256
Landscape and horticultural services	0	2,163	78	2,242
Commercial and industrial machinery repair and maintenance	0	88	2,070	2,157
Other real estate	0	0	1,958	1,958
Management of companies and enterprises	0	713	1,213	1,926
All Others	0	14,628	29,631	44,259
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$467,220</b>	<b>45,132</b>	<b>61,394</b>	<b>\$573,746</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 11: State and Local Tax Receipts from Single-Family Construction**  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars

<b>Tax category</b>	<b>Total Const</b>	<b>Santa Rosa</b>
Employment Taxes	\$3,234	\$0
Sales Taxes	21,764	1,765
Property Taxes	19,730	4,143
Personal Income	23,446	0
Other Taxes and Fees	11,739	0
<b>Total State and Local taxes</b>	<b>\$79,913</b>	<b>\$5,908</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

## Multi-Family Housing Construction

Comprising one-third of the housing units to be built, there is direct spending in excess of \$545 million on the construction of these units. Figures 12 to 15 present detailed results for this construction spending. Figure 12 to 14 provide evidence on sectors of the Santa Rosa economy that will most benefit from the construction. Figure 15 provides a breakdown of the state and local tax revenues that result; reflecting multi-family housing construction's contribution to the results in Figure 3. Multi-family housing construction may add as much as \$2 million in revenue to the City of Santa Rosa.

**Figure 12: Business Revenue Effects, Multi-Family Construction**  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>	<b>Induced</b>	<b>Total</b>
Construction of new multi-family residential structures	\$545,333	0	0	545,333
Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	0	0	25,756	25,756
Wholesale - Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	17,692	902	18,593
Other real estate	0	0	7,559	7,559
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	40	6,594	6,634
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	2,317	2,786	5,103
Employment services	0	3,130	762	3,892
Petroleum refineries	0	202	3,502	3,704
Truck transportation	0	694	2,763	3,457
Landscape and horticultural services	0	321	3,066	3,387
Banks and Credit Unions	0	69	3,069	3,139
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	0	0	2,910	2,910
Waste management and remediation services	0	16	2,849	2,865
Retail - Sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments and book stores	0	1,247	959	2,207
Retail - Furniture and home furnishings stores	0	0	2,082	2,082
All Others	0	15,259	51,304	66,563
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$545,333</b>	<b>40,988</b>	<b>116,863</b>	<b>\$703,184</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.



**Figure 13: Employment Impacts, Multi-Family Construction  
Full-Time Equivalents Supported in Each Year of Construction**

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Construction of new multi-family residential structures	350	0	0	350
Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	0	0	10	10
Other real estate	0	10	0	10
Employment services	0	0	10	10
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	0	0	0	0
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	0	0	0
Wholesale - Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	0	0	0
Landscape and horticultural services	0	0	0	0
Retail - Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book stores	0	0	0	0
Truck transportation	0	0	0	0
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	0	0	0
Retail - Electronics and appliance stores	0	0	0	0
Couriers and messengers	0	0	0	0
Retail - Furniture and home furnishings stores	0	0	0	0
Retail - General merchandise stores	0	0	0	0
All Others	0	20	50	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>450</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 14: Wage Impacts, Multi-Family Construction  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Construction of new multi-family residential structures	\$269,833	0	0	\$269,833
Retail – Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	0	5,883	300	6,182
Wholesale – Other durable goods merchant wholesalers	0	0	4,108	4,108
Architectural, engineering, and related services	0	0	2,152	2,152
Employment services	0	11	1,815	1,826
Commercial and industrial machinery rental and leasing	0	136	1,298	1,434
Landscape and horticultural services	0	0	1,332	1,332
Truck transportation	0	0	1,264	1,264
Retail – Miscellaneous store retailers	0	7	1,175	1,182
Retail – Electronics and appliance stores	0	26	1,147	1,173
Commercial and industrial machinery repair and maintenance	0	119	1,016	1,135
Banks and Credit Unions	0	0	1,086	1,086
Other real estate	0	808	197	1,005
Retail – Furniture and home furnishings stores	0	0	842	842
Waste management and remediation services	0	169	672	841
All Others	0	5,025	15,626	20,652
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$269,833</b>	<b>12,183</b>	<b>34,030</b>	<b>\$316,046</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 15: State and Local Tax Receipts from Multi-Family Construction**  
**Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Tax category	Total Const	Santa Rosa
Employment Taxes	\$1,781	\$0
Sales Taxes	7,733	627
Property Taxes	7,010	1,472
Personal Income Tax	13,009	0
Other Taxes and Fees	5,933	0
<b>Total State and Local Taxes</b>	<b>\$35,466</b>	<b>\$2,099</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

## Estimated Economic Impacts: Stage 2 – Spending of New Households

There are 2,710 new residences estimated in Area 3 after units are constructed. Assuming a five-percent (5%) vacancy rate for market-rate housing and 100% occupancy for low income, and using recent estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau on residents per housing unit; there would be an estimated 2,621 new households (2,317 market-rate units and 271 below market-rate units occupied) in Santa Rosa. The key parameter for the household spending profiles is estimated annual income levels. Given the residents are to be occupying 10-percent affordable housing units, with the rest market-rate units, we assume those households in affordable units have a household income equal to 50 percent and current median household income estimated for Santa Rosa.

The American Community Survey (ACS) provides data on the median income levels for Santa Rosa as of 2021 (see <http://data.census.gov> for more information, where 2021 is the year for the latest data). We use \$84,823 for annual, median household income as the income measure for the occupied market-rate units; while this may be low for some households in market-rate units, the estimates remain conservative through this assumption. We are also not increasing incomes over the time of construction and occupancy.<sup>8</sup>

These conservative estimates can be summarized as follows:

- For the occupied, market-rate units, median household income is assumed as \$84,823, becoming approximately **\$197 million** of annual income from the market-rate units; and
- For the occupied, affordable units, the median income in Sonoma County is \$42,412 for those units with households earning 50 percent of the AMI, becoming approximately **\$3.9 million** annually from the affordable units;
- **The sum is \$200.9 million of new income from which local residents will spend annually** starting in the first year of units being 95% occupied, here assumed to be eight years after construction begins.

<sup>8</sup> Incomes are likely to grow over time, even after adjusting for inflation. This assumption results in a conservative (low) estimate of potential economic benefits.

Using the IMPLAN® model, these income profiles have a typical spending pattern in Sonoma County.<sup>9</sup> The annual income levels do not include incomes that may come from wealth, insurance, retirement, and other income sources. Figures 16 and 17 illustrate the revenues, jobs, and increased wages supported by the spending of these new households. Notice the spending level (last row of Figure 16) is not equal to income level due to the exclusion of income taxes and savings from the gross income levels to become “disposable” income for spending locally. There is also leakage from the local markets, and the IMPLAN® model takes such leakages into account.

Comparing the economic impacts from construction and resident spending once the units are occupied, two differences are apparent. First, household spending only has an “induced” impact, as there are no ripple effects otherwise. Household spending is not employment or investment; the only effects are spending and what that spending supports in the local economy. This analysis assumes that all new residents come from outside Santa Rosa (i.e., the spending is new spending for Santa Rosa). That is, that the new residences are additive to Santa Rosa’s population. Again, some of this spending will occur outside of the City, but within the county. However, we believe that the vast majority of this spending will occur within the City. Spending outside of the county is considered by the IMPLAN® model and incorporated in these results.

The \$200.9 million in new income will result in increased revenues for local companies in the amount of approximately \$108 million. These revenues will support an additional 680 jobs in the local economy, with wages in excess of \$33 million. From Figure 13, we see that local tax revenues will be bolstered on an annual basis by as much as \$3.6 million; nearly \$300 thousand in sales tax revenues and more than \$3 million in additional property tax revenues.

Those that live in the new units may not be the only people that come to Santa Rosa and spend money. Visitors to these residences are likely coming on a daily basis and spending money is part of such travel. Hotel stays may also be increased. Because there is not a basis in the data or literature to compare visitor spending to residential spending or the growth of multi-family units, this study does not estimate that amount specifically. Also, the vacancy estimates are critical to these household spending estimates; if vacancy rates remain low in Sonoma County and in this region, the economic impacts above are likely fully realized.

COVID-19 may have effects on these estimates based on how the Santa Rosa City economy changed as a result (retail mix, number of employed residents, etc.). Depending on when construction begins on these units, the overall estimates may be affected. With continued, low vacancy rates in rental and a need for new units otherwise, funded developments such as this create jobs and provide support for Santa Rosa’s merchants at a time where the future of similar developments may be few and far between.

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<sup>9</sup> The county is the smallest geographical area of IMPLAN available.

**Figure 16: Business Revenue Effects Annually  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Industry	Revenues	Jobs	Wages
Owner-occupied dwellings	\$20,158	0	\$0
Hospitals	7,953	30	4,322
Limited-service restaurants	6,074	50	1,672
Insurance carriers, except direct life	3,357	10	436
Outpatient care centers	2,960	20	2,188
Banks and Credit Unions	2,790	10	679
Tenant-occupied housing	2,789	10	76
Retail - General merchandise stores	2,672	30	1,131
Other real estate	2,645	10	189
Individual and family services	2,582	70	1,681
Full-service restaurants	2,573	30	962
Retail - Food and beverage stores	2,483	30	1,024
Automotive repair and maintenance, except car washes	1,856	20	1,092
Offices of physicians	1,850	10	1,255
All Others	45,327	350	16,517
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$108,069</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>\$33,224</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

**Figure 17: State and Local Tax Receipts from Resident Spending Annually  
Thousands of 2022 Dollars**

Tax Category	Total	Santa Rosa
Employment Taxes	\$187	\$0
Sales Taxes	3,658	297
Property Taxes	3,316	696
Personal Income Tax	1,167	0
Other Taxes and Fees	1,652	0
<b>Total State and Local Taxes</b>	<b>\$9,980</b>	<b>\$993</b>

Note: Rows may not add up to the total because of rounding.

## References and Limited Glossary

Data on people per household is from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates on housing and population as of 2021 (the latest data available as of March 2023). The following definitions pertain to line items referenced here. Many of these definitions come from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Please see [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) for further details.

- **Architectural, engineering, and related services:** This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in applying physical laws and principles of engineering in the design, development, and utilization of machines, materials, instruments, structures, processes, and systems.
- **Automotive repair and maintenance, except car washes:** This U.S. industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing automotive repair and maintenance services (except mechanical and electrical repair and maintenance; body, paint, interior, and glass repair; motor oil change and lubrication; and car washing) for automotive vehicles, such as passenger cars, trucks, and vans, and all trailers.
- **Community food, housing, and other relief services, including rehabilitation services:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in one of the following: (1) collecting, preparing, and delivering food for the needy; (2) providing short-term emergency shelter, temporary residential shelter, transitional housing, volunteer construction or repair of low-cost housing, and/or repair of homes for individuals or families in need; or (3) providing food, shelter, clothing, medical relief, resettlement, and counseling to victims of domestic or international disasters or conflicts (e.g., wars).
- **Full-service restaurants:** Establishments primarily engaged in providing food service to patrons who order and are served while seated, and pay after eating. These establishments may sell alcoholic beverages, provide take-out services, operate a bar or present live entertainment, in addition to serving food and beverages.
- **Individual and family services:** Establishments primarily engaged in providing one or more of a wide variety of individual and family social, counseling, welfare, or referral services, including refugee, disaster, and temporary relief services. This industry includes offices of specialists providing counseling, referral, and other social services.
- **Insurance carriers:** insurance agents and other insurance-related businesses.
- **Limited-service restaurants:** any establishments whose patrons generally order or select items and pay before eating. Food and drink may be consumed on premises, taken out, or delivered to customers' locations.
- **Management of companies and enterprises:** This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in managing companies and enterprises and/or holding the securities or financial assets of companies and enterprises, for the purpose of owning a controlling interest in them and/or influencing their management decisions.
- **Owner-Occupied Dwellings:** The income made by owners of homes they occupy, through rent payments or other savings due to home ownership.
- **Wholesale Trade:** Businesses that connect goods producers to retailers, classic distribution and wholesale businesses, including Costco.

**From:** [Linda Proulx](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting - Southeast Greenway  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:36:35 PM  
**Importance:** High

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Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for providing opportunities for community members to weigh in on important goals and priorities for our city in 2023. **Please add the Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway to City Goals and Priorities.**

For many years the Southeast Greenway has been part of city priorities: to provide sustainable infrastructure that supports active transportation, economic vitality, and the health and well-being of community members. The Southeast Greenway Campaign has been working diligently with City staff and Greenway Partner organizations like Sonoma Land Trust for over a decade to pave the way for this important project and raise funds for acquisition of the property.

**Now it is time to bring this project home! Our funding agencies and foundations have given us a deadline of October, 2024 to acquire the property.** With the help of the City's Real Estate and Planning Departments, we have made significant progress. However, much still remains to be done in a short time.

**Please support the final phase of this project by adequately funding staff time in all relevant departments - Real Estate, Planning, Legal, Public Works, Parks and more.** We may also ask you to use your political muscle to overcome any roadblocks the project may encounter at the state level. Working together, we can make this happen!

Thank you for all you do to make Santa Rosa a great place to live.

Linda Proulx  
Volunteer and Founding Member  
Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Campaign

[REDACTED]  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Gaisers](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] March 2023 Goal Setting - Southeast Greenway  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 2:58:43 PM

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March 8, 2023

Re: March 2023 Goal Setting - Southeast Greenway

Mayor and City Council Members,

For many years, the Southeast Greenway project has been part of the City's goals to support active transportation and the health and well-being of the community. In 2019, after an 18-month planning process funded by the City, the Council adopted a general plan amendment and zone change for the property. Since then, our group has been working with the City, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Water, Regional Parks and other local organizations to satisfy the legal and procedural requirements for acquiring the land from the State. The City's real estate division and other City staff have led the way in this work and in the frequent communications with Caltrans. Significant progress has been made, and all involved are hopeful for completion of the acquisition in the coming year.

**It is very important that City staff be given the support to continue their work in fiscal year 2023-24 to complete the acquisition of the Greenway property.** We are committed to funding the acquisition of the Greenway property and have raised over two million dollars in grants and donations toward this goal, but a deadline of October 2024 has been set for using the large grants. Please support the final phase of this project by adequately funding staff time in all relevant departments - Real Estate, City Attorney, Planning, Parks and more.

Looking ahead, when the Southeast Greenway property is in City hands, a specific park development plan must be prepared and adopted by the City. City Goals should continue to support this park planning process and provide the Recreation and Parks Department with the resources needed.

Thank you for all you do to make Santa Rosa a great place to live. We look forward to working with the City to create a valuable public space and asset.

Robert Gaiser, CoChair  
Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Campaign





**From:** [Pam Granger](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal setting request  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 2:59:18 PM

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March 8, 2023

Dear Mayor Rogers and Santa Rosa Council Members,

On behalf of Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition I'm requesting that a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) ordinance be included as a priority during your goal setting session as an important part of a strategy to prevent youth nicotine addiction. It is great that nearly 2/3 of California Voters passed Proposition 31 restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products effective last December 21<sup>st</sup>, but Santa Rosa does not have way to enforce that restriction.

At the very least, a TRL would charge an annual fee covering the cost of administration and ongoing compliance checks to Santa Rosa retailers who choose to continue selling their deadly products in the largest city in the county. At best, Santa Rosa would follow the lead of Sebastopol, Windsor, and Petaluma to provide a uniform front in fighting against the tobacco industry whose business model depends on hooking our young people to ensure future customers to sustain their existence.

No ONE strategy will keep kids from starting to use the wide variety of tobacco products offered up with promises of popularity, inclusion, stress relief, etc. That is why Sebastopol, Windsor and Petaluma have combined proven strategies that interrupt youth access and availability. They set goals to reduce the overall number of retailers that each use product placement to advertise for Big Tobacco and they keep retail locations away from schools and parks and other youth sensitive locations. Their policies have provisions that include minimum pricing, pack size and restricting the use of discounts/coupons because young people are particularly price sensitive.

And if protecting youth and improving health equity are not enough reason to further regulate tobacco/vape sales, protecting the environment is one more consideration. Reducing tobacco use as a strategy to protect the environment has been growing in importance worldwide.

Tobacco product waste contains all the toxins, nicotine, and carcinogens found in tobacco products, along with the plastic non-biodegradable filter attached to almost all cigarettes sold in the United States and in most countries worldwide. E-cigarette waste is potentially a more serious environmental threat than cigarette butts, since e-cigarettes introduce plastic, nicotine salts, heavy metals, lead, mercury, and flammable lithium-ion batteries into waterways soil and to wildlife.

Want more reasons? Drought and fire have been a large part of the Sonoma County experience. Although our big fires have not been as a result of smoking, studies indicate smoking is a leading cause of fires and residential fire deaths in California. Reducing purchases reduces fire odds in Santa Rosa.

We hope you agree that a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) which provides system for enforcement and regulates the location of tobacco retailers near youth sensitive locations can play an important role in reducing environmental waste and fire damage and help to reduce youth uptake while improving health equity by ending predatory industry marketing practices in our communities.

Tobacco-Free Sonoma County has extensive information, model ordinances and the enthusiasm needed to assist you in improving the health of the Santa Rosa community. All we need is your support!

With warm regards,

Pamela Granger, chair  
Tobacco-free Sonoma County

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Pam Granger



**From:** [Christine franaszek-gann](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GOAL-SETTING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 2:59:50 PM

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With the damage caused by climate change becoming more and more evident every year, Santa Rosa has a moral obligation to become carbon neutral by 2045. This will require bold, ambitious changes in housing and transportation policy that the city needs to start implementing now.

First, Santa Rosa needs to face the reality that Electric Cars will not magically rescue us from climate change. These cars generate twice the greenhouse gasses to produce because of their large resource intensive batteries, and don't actually become a net positive until the second or third year of ownership. Furthermore, EVs currently account for just **1.2 percent** of cars in California. At this slow rate of adoption, it will be a case of *too little too late* to head off climate change.

Therefore, the city needs to prioritize the creation of compact walkable neighborhoods integrated with local businesses. Building more housing in urban areas promotes sustainable urbanization by reducing the need for long commutes and transportation. This in turn reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from cars. Additionally, compact, walkable neighborhoods can promote active transportation and reduce the use of cars, further reducing emissions. Finally, the additional housing created will lessen California's severe housing shortage which fuels homelessness and human misery.

Secondly, Santa Rosa needs to get serious about building **protected bike lanes**. Cycling is the most cost effective form of transportation, and Santa Rosa's mild climate and lack of hills make it an especially good fit. More than half of all car trips are less than three miles, so cycling can play a major role in local transport. In cities with safe, low stress bike networks, anywhere from 25-60% of people use bicycles for transportation daily.

I want to point out that a stripe painted on the ground is near useless for increasing the uptake of cycling. Most people don't have the stomach to ride the bike next to 3-7 ton vehicles moving at 35-50 mph. These need to be protected bike lanes, and have a substantial physical barrier to keep people safe. A lot of times this can be done with a row of parked cars forming the barrier, in other cases concrete "armadillos" and bollards can be used.

Please build for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not 1965.

Christine Gann

**From:** [Paige Mattei](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Zoger, Abigail](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Goal Setting  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 3:16:56 PM

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Hi Santa Rosa City Council,

My name is Paige Mattei, and I have been living in Santa Rosa since 2020. I taught myself how to drive here, got my first job here, and have been working on finding a community of people here where I feel like I fit in. I live in an older neighborhood on a hill, so it was really difficult for me to find my peers without having to learn how to drive. For most of the stuff I do around town I don't really need to use a car, in fact I do have an e-bike and would love to start using that. However, driving around Santa Rosa is stressful enough, I couldn't imagine getting around on a bicycle without massive amounts of stress. Public transport here also isn't really a good option unfortunately. I am trying to drive less and would love to feel comfortable riding a bike around the city. I hope the Santa Rosa city council begins to start making this city more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, many are not privileged enough to have a car and their safety shouldn't be put in the line because of that. Providing better infrastructure for cyclists isn't asking too much, I urge you to look into Bikeable Santa Rosa's list of recommendations. Thank you for prioritizing the safety of the people who live in this city.

Thank you,

Paige Mattei

Bennett Valley