

DRAFT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Community Quality of Life Assessment
Government Services and Planning in Sonoma Valley

A Collaboration of the City of Sonoma and County of Sonoma

Prepared by the [Consensus Building Institute](#)



PURPOSE

The past several years have been characterized by significant change as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and other interrelated social and cultural shifts. Emerging from this period of change, the City of Sonoma and County of Sonoma are embarking on significant planning initiatives to frame the future vision of the Sonoma Valley, including the The County General Plan, The City General Plan, the Springs Specific Plan, among others. The City of Sonoma and County of Sonoma and community-based organizations are partnering on a community quality of life assessment to gain a better understanding of community needs and specifically how municipal government service delivery could be improved in Sonoma Valley. The results of this assessment will inform effective planning for the future and responsive government services to improve the lives of Sonoma Valley residents.

The initial phase of the effort is to conduct a community quality of life assessment where local officials can gain a better understanding of the community's quality of life and their experiences interacting with and accessing important government services. It also aims to assess opportunities to improve government services into the future.

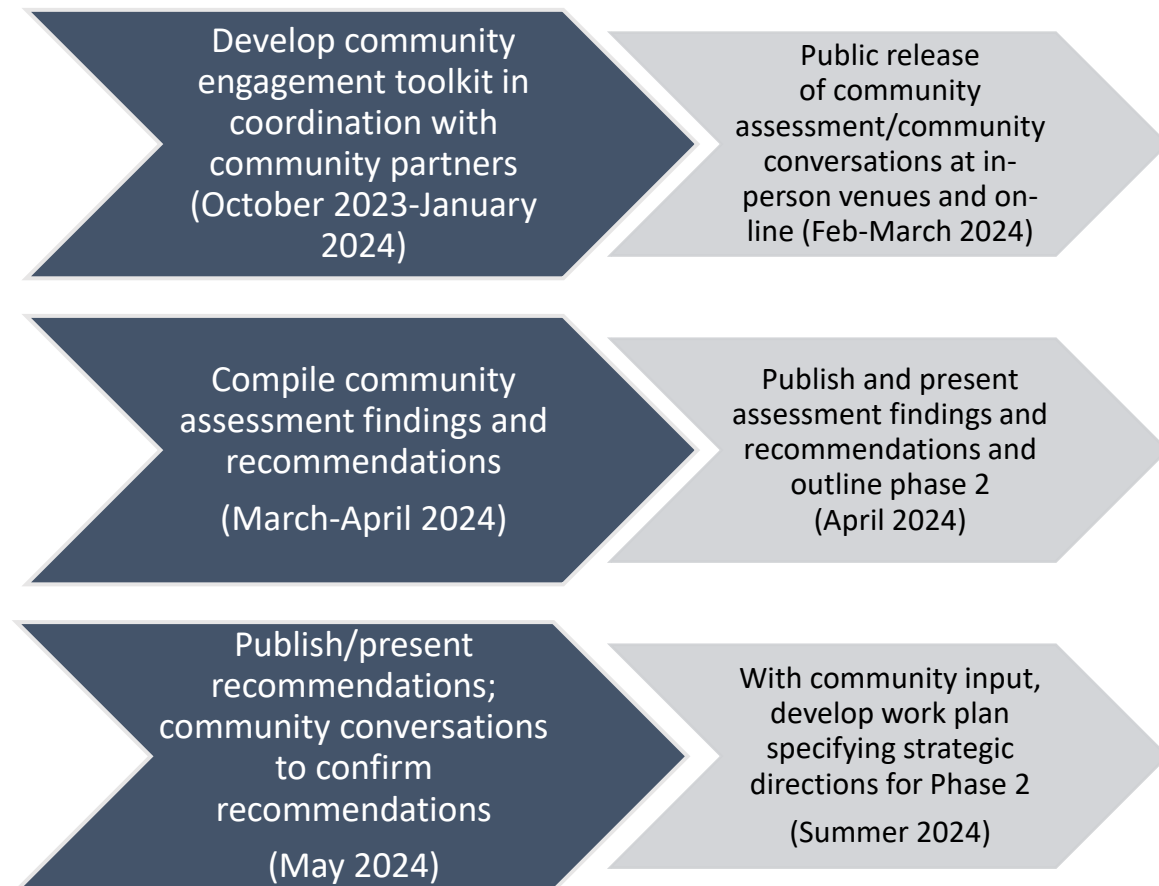
DEFINING COMMUNITY & GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The assessment aims to be inclusive of groups that have been chronically underrepresented and underserved including the Spanish-speaking community, youth, seniors and harder to reach neighborhoods in Sonoma Valley to participate in government led planning initiatives and decision-making forums that affect their lives and those of their communities now and into the future.

The geographic boundary for the assessment is within Sonoma County District 1 with a focus on the City of Sonoma and the Springs area and will be defined by the Sonoma Valley Unified School District boundary and include:

- Shellville region (Route 121)
- Creekside/Temelec/Seven Flags region (Arnold Road)
- City of Sonoma
- The Springs—Aqua Caliente, Boyes Hot Springs, Fetters Hot Springs, and Verano
- Glen Ellen
- Northeast of City of Sonoma
- East of Sonoma

TIMELINE FOR EFFORT



GATHERING INFORMATION

Below are three principal ways in which assessment information will be gathered using the below questions as a guide from a range of stakeholders (see stakeholder list).

- Focus Groups (See Facilitator Focus Group Guide below)
 - Discussion groups of approximately 8-12 people who represent specific subgroups led by a moderator using pre-planned questions (similar to survey questions)
- Interviews (additive to focus groups, as warranted)
 - With key opinion leaders representing the target communities, as warranted

- Surveys (in person and online)

FOCUS GROUP AND SURVEY QUESTION GUIDE

- A. Demographic Information
- Where do you live? (Neighborhood, Street, or address)
 - Do you have children at home?
 - Do you have persons with special needs at home?
- B. Municipal, Health and Human Services
- The County of Sonoma, City of Sonoma and Community-based Organizations provide numerous public municipal services. For each service below, please indicate if you feel the services are meeting your needs and those services should be high priority for attention by the County and City. Please provide specific ideas that would improve your quality of life:

Services	For each of the services, rank how effectively each meets your needs 1- does not meet my needs at all 2- insufficiently meetings my needs 3- sufficiently meets my needs 4- Fully meets my needs 5- I have No Experience with this service	Choose Up to 5 Services that you consider a priority (Choose up to 5 services from drop down menu)	Offer specific ideas for how you would like to see any of these services improved (Write in responses)
Police / Public Safety			
Fire /Emergency Medical Services (EMS)			
Medical Services			
Mental Health Services			
Water / Sewer			
Traffic			
Pedestrian / Bike Safety			

Public Transportation			
Emergency Evacuation Planning			
Wildfire Safety Planning			
Streets & Infrastructure (i.e., sidewalks, lighting)			
Parks and Recreation			
Housing Assistance Services (rental vouchers, improvement funding, ADA)			
Homelessness Services			
Planning and Development			
Business Support Services			
Trash, Recycling, and composting			
Other			

C. Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share?

FACILITATOR FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Each focus group meeting will be 90 minutes total. See timing for each agenda topic below.

1. Introductions **(15 minutes)**
 - a. The facilitator introduces themselves, gives an overview of the agenda and describes their role
 - b. The facilitator invites each participant to briefly introduce themselves with name, affiliation (if relevant), and where and how long they have lived or worked in Sonoma Valley
2. Describe the purpose of the Focus Group and how the input will be used (see purpose statement on page 2 of toolkit)

3. Remind everyone that their input will be anonymous
4. Describe the Outline of the Focus Group Activities
 - a. Anonymous Survey of Services—participants will take **15 minutes** to fill out the survey independently.
 - b. Group Exercise to identify priority focus areas and ideas for how services could be improved **(20 minutes)**
 - i. A chart of services will be printed in large format and posted on the wall. Each participant will receive 5 sticky dots and will place a dot next to up to 5 service areas (only one dot per service, per person)
 - ii. Flipsheets with services written on them will be placed around the room and participants will be given a post-it notes and markers and given time to post ideas about how any of the services they would like to comment on could be improved.
 - c. Grouping the Major Themes & Ensuring Clarity of Comments **(30 minutes)**
 - i. Following “b” above, the facilitator will highlight major common themes that emerged in the exercise, solicit additional group discussion and summarize key outcomes from the conversation.
 - d. Closing **(10 minutes)**
 - i. Let participants know that Information will be compiled for use by the County and City – anonymously
 - ii. Inform Participants of the On-line companion survey and ask them to inform others in their community to provide feedback. Provide an informational ‘flyer’ with the link to the survey.
 - iii. Thank focus group members and describe next steps (see timeline on page 3)
 - e. After Session
 - i. Facilitator will compile the information (post-it comments, major themes and ideas) for use by County and City.