



Legislation Text

File #: 2020-1063, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office and Economic Development Board

Staff Name and Phone Number: Ethan Brown (707) 565-7589 Christel Querijero (707) 565-7071

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Sonoma County Economic Recovery and Action Plan

Recommended Action:

Review and approve the Sonoma County Economic Recovery Action Plan

Executive Summary:

The County Administrator's Office and Economic Development Board (EDB) seek acceptance of the Economic Recovery Action Plan, a roadmap of where to focus efforts immediately and over the next five years so the county's economy and entire community can recover from hardships caused by COVID-19 and other disasters. The recommended Action Plan is in addition to the Board's \$2.5 million allocation for immediate Business Assistance grants, made in compliance with Government Code section 26227 as the Board deems necessary to meet the social needs of our community.

Discussion:

In May 2020, during the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors asked the EDB and the Sonoma County Administrator's Office (CAO) to collaborate to develop an Economic Recovery Action Plan, with broad based community input. The initial impetus of the plan was to present guidance for Sonoma County's economic recovery from the pandemic. During the development of this plan, disaster struck the county again, in the form of the Glass, Walbridge, and Meyers fires. As a result, community leaders recommended for this plan to guide the county's recovery not only from the coronavirus, but from current and future disasters.

This Economic Recovery Action Plan aligns with Sonoma County's Recovery and Resiliency Framework, adopted by the Board of Supervisors as a roadmap for recovery from the 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires. The County implemented a whole community approach in developing this framework to establish a vision for Sonoma County of a healthy economy, an inclusive recovery, and a resilient community. The whole community approach drove the development of this action plan, as well, resulting in 13 strategies, with key actions and tactics that support the framework's vision for disaster recovery and community resiliency. To successfully implement these 13 strategies over a 5-year period, the County of Sonoma will continue this whole community approach by partnering with many businesses, professional associations, educational institutions, community- and faith-based organizations, and the general public. The plan also supports and reinforces major actions included in Strategic Sonoma, a 2018 economic strategy approved by the Board of Supervisors after the 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires.

Between June and October 2020, the Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) and the CAO reached out to leaders of businesses, government agencies, professional associations, educational institutions, community- and faith-based organizations, and the general public to obtain input on what needs to happen in Sonoma County to achieve an economic recovery after enduring the impacts of COVID-19 and other disasters. This plan reflects the feedback we received from 500 community members regarding ways that our businesses, workforce, and community can recover and become resilient.

To guide the development of this plan, EDB/CAO assembled a Steering Committee, comprised of senior leaders from throughout Sonoma County. Three work groups informed the work of the Steering Committee. Work groups included Business Recovery, comprised of business leaders knowledgeable about current business needs; Workforce Recovery, comprised of business, nonprofit, and education leaders knowledgeable about workforce development needs and solutions; and Community Recovery, comprised of community-based leaders who understand the community's recovery needs. After the work groups and steering committee developed the basic framework of the plan, with 13 priority strategies, EDB/CAO turned to the community for ideas on how to implement these strategies. Staff conducted two 60-minute Listening Sessions in Spanish and English via Zoom Webinar and Facebook Live. We also developed an online survey in both English and Spanish, designed to obtain input from the business community, primarily, and any other members of the community, as well.

The Economic Recovery Action Plan includes the following 13 strategies, organized in three categories: business recovery, workforce recovery, and community recovery:

Business Recovery

1. Make funding, equipment, and facilities easily accessible to businesses.
2. Provide innovative regulations and temporary laws (called urgency ordinances) to keep businesses operational.
3. Support hardest-hit business sectors, while increasing economic diversification throughout the county.
4. Ensure that businesses are prepared for future disasters.

Workforce Recovery

5. Provide creative solutions to enable the county's childcare industry to thrive.
6. Provide workforce re-skilling and training opportunities.
7. Retain and attract Sonoma County's workforce.
8. Ensure that social safety net services are available to help low income residents meet their basic needs.

Community Recovery

9. Serve the access and functional needs of local community members, including individuals with disabilities, older adults, children, individuals from diverse cultures, and people with limited English proficiency.
10. Address housing and transportation needs.
11. Expand broadband infrastructure and services to increase internet access.
12. Leverage the creative power of our community, including artists, cultural workers, and their organizations, to develop and implement innovative solutions for our recovery.

13. Address climate and energy impacts.

In addition to the above needs identified by the community through the primary perspective of recovery, staff anticipates the Board of Supervisors will approve a five-year Strategic Plan in calendar year 2021. At this point, the plan includes the following five pillars, each also framed through the lens of economic recovery and resiliency:

1. Organizational Excellence
2. Climate Action and Resiliency
3. Resilient Infrastructure
4. Healthy and Safe Communities; and
5. Equity and Social Justice

The Strategic Plan directly aligns with the Sonoma County Economic Recovery and Action Plan's Whole Community Approach. Staff understand the depth and breadth of partnerships necessary to execute these community priorities, and anticipates working closely with the Board of Supervisors and CAO in engaging agency and communication partners as important next steps.

To provide accountability, a *Strategies, Key Actions and Tactics* matrix, included in the Action Plan, will be updated as progress continues, and will guide work over the short, medium and long-term. Immediate next steps include EDB outreach to internal and external partners to identify shared programmatic objectives, and further address short-term recovery goals.

This item requests the Board accept the Economic Recovery Action Plan, intended to provide a roadmap for efforts over the next five years to help community members become resilient as we recover from the fallout of COVID-19 and other disasters.

Prior Board Actions:

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Attachments:

Sonoma County Economic Recovery Action Plan

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board: