

Vision Sonora



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Vibrant Community*

Vision Sonora
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Vision Sonora

Existing Documentation and Data Summary



Welcome to Historic
SONORA



Introduction

The purpose of Vision Sonora is to provide strategies and implementation tools necessary to revitalize the local economy, promote unique historic character and improve the quality of life for both residents and visitors in the City of Sonora. The purpose of this memorandum is to gather the background information, review existing planning regulations and policies and summarize the key findings.

The following existing documents were investigated and are summarized in this memorandum.

- The City of Sonora 2020 General Plan
- The City of Sonora Municipal Code
- The City of Sonora Downtown Revitalization Plan
- Tuolumne Tomorrow: Tuolumne County Regional Project Report
- The City of Sonora Traffic Circulation Study
- Transit Development Plan Update for Tuolumne County Transit
- District 10 Park-and-Ride Plan
- Tuolumne County Bicycle and Trails Plan
- Tuolumne County Recreation Master Plan
- North-South Connector Feasibility Study
- Planning for Prosperity: Building Successful Communities in the Sierra Nevada

Table 1 demonstrates the existing documents reviewed and the applicable portion of the scope the background document can facilitate.



Table 1: Background Document Summary

Document	Date Published	Outreach	Circulation - Vehicular Traffic	Circulation - Parking	Circulation - Bicycle / Pedestrian	Circulation - Transit	Urban Design - Gateways	Urban Design - Aesthetics	Urban Design - Historic	Economic - Analysis
The City of Sonora 2020 General Plan	May-07		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
The City of Sonora Municipal Code				X						
The City of Sonora Downtown Revitalization Plan	Dec-1985		X	X			X	X	X	X
Tuolumne Tomorrow: Tuolumne County Regional Project Report	Aug-2011		X							X
The City of Sonora Traffic Circulation Study	1982		X	X	X		X	X		
Transit Development Plan Update for Tuolumne County Transit	Feb-2011					X				
District 10 Park-and-Ride Plan	Mar-2004					X				
Tuolumne County Bicycle and Trails Plan	2004	X			X		X			
Tuolumne County Recreation Master Plan	Feb-2002		X	X	X	X				
North-South Connector Feasibility Study			X	X	X	X				
Planning for Prosperity: Building Successful Communities in the Sierra Nevada	1997		X		X	X		X	X	X



Background Document Summary

City of Sonora 2020 General Plan

Adopted May 30, 2007

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302, a California General Plan must include seven (7) elements, Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety. The *City of Sonora General Plan 2020* includes five (5) additional elements, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Economics, Community Identity and Recreation. The following provides some additional information on each mandatory and non-mandatory element in the *City of Sonora General Plan 2020*.

Land Use

Land Use section includes the following data.

- Project Population Growth City of Sonora: 2006-2020 – City of Sonora is anticipated to have a population growth of 5,144 to 5,948 by the year 2020.
- Establishes goals and policies for each Land Use, including Community Design, Historic Preservation, Residential, Jobs and Housing Balance, Commercial, Industrial, Sphere of Influence, Planning Review Area and Annexations, Transportation, Interjurisdictional Coordination, Special Planning Areas
- States Land Use Designations and Maximum Density and Intensity Standards
- Land Use Density and Intensity Standards – Compares 1986 and 2020 Land Use Designations by Acreage

Circulation

The Circulation section includes the following data.

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 10 oversees State Highway 108 and 49.
- Tuolumne County Transportation Council oversees regional transportation planning.
- City of Sonora Parking District consists of 1,319 total parking spaces both on-street and off-street.
- The Sierra Railroad passes through the southern side of the City, crossing South Washington Street and passes through the City twice a day. Passenger trains may pass through the City occasionally.
- Tuolumne County Transit operates with fixed routes, flex-routes and Dial-A-Ride within the City. There are no park and rides within the city limits as of 2004. There is a park and ride on State Route 120 near Ponderosa Lane and five (5) planned park and rides were identified in March 2004.
- There are no airports in the city limits.
- Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Standards



- Local Roads = LOS C, except at intersections with arterials (LOS D)
- Collector Roads = LOS C for roadway segments, intersections with arterials (LOS D)
- Arterial Roads = LOS D
- State Highways = LOS C/D (consistent with Caltrans standards)

Housing

- Identified projected housing needs by income group.
- Determined population characteristics, including growth trends, population by age group, population by gender, population by ethnicity.
- Stated income information, including employment trends, household income characteristics, age of housing stock, owner/renter occupation and special needs households.

Conservation and Open Space

- Identified Mineral, Energy, Scenic, Biological and Water Resources.

Noise

- The City of Sonora has identified noise-generation sources. Within the project limits this includes highways and major arterial resources and construction activities.

Safety

- The City of Sonora has identified emergency or disaster situations, including geological hazards (earthquakes, unstable slopes, collapsing mines, limestone, erosive soils, volcanic activity), floods, hazardous materials, fire, water supply, transportation accidents, severe weather, agricultural disasters, radiological incidents, civil disturbances and utility failures.

Public Facilities & Services

- County facilities used by city residents are paid, in part, through a Tuolumne County Services Impact Mitigation Fee.
- This chapter lists all the City, County, State and other facilities.

Air Quality

- Sonora is in the Mountain Counties Air Basin.
- California Air Resources Board (CARB) operates an air quality monitoring station on Barretta Street.
- The City of Sonora's air quality is affected by both ozone and carbon monoxide.



Cultural Resources

- Certain areas of the City of Sonora may be eligible for California Register and this chapter provides guidelines for their management in accordance with CEQA.
- This chapter also aims to encourage cultural heritage tourism.

Economics

- Multiple organizations and agencies aim to encourage a healthy business environment in Tuolumne County and the City of Sonora including Tuolumne County Chamber of Commerce, Historic Sonora Chamber of Commerce, Tuolumne County Visitor's Bureau and City of Sonora Special Programs.
- Includes list of employers with more than 10 employees.

Community Identity

- Goal of this chapter is to assist in the preservation of those aspects of the city's natural scenic and cultural character which contribute to Sonora's quality of life.
- The programs implemented include Hillside Preservation Ordinance, Tree City, USA, Sonora Parks, Recreation and Beautification Committee (PR&B), Scenic Highways and Cultural Resources.

Parks and Recreation

- The City of Sonora has identified several facilities to provide park and recreation benefits, City/Community Parks, Work-Live Parks, Pocket Parks, Tot Lots and Children's Adventure Parks and Regional Parks and Trails.
- Existing facilities options and opportunities are identified.



The City of Sonora Municipal Code

The City of Sonora Municipal includes seventeen (17) Titles, including the following.

- Title 1. General Provisions
- Title 2. Administration and Personnel
- Title 3. Revenue and Finance
- Title 4. Reserved
- Title 5. Business Taxes, Licenses and Regulations
- Title 6. Animals
- Title 7. Integrated Waste Management
- Title 8. Health and Safety
- Title 9. Public Peace, Morals and Welfare
- Title 10. Vehicles and Traffic
- Title 11. Reserved
- Title 12. Streets and Sidewalks
- Title 13. Water and Sewer (Reserved)
- Title 14. Reserved
- Title 15. Building and Construction
- Title 16. Subdivisions
- Title 17. Zoning



The City of Sonora Downtown Revitalization Plan

Prepared by Valley Planning Consultants, December 1985

The plan focuses on organizational and physical changes that will improve the retail economy in the City of Sonora, including short term and long term goals to reduce congestion on Washington Street. Maintaining and improving the historic character of the downtown is also a priority.

The Sonora Downtown Revitalization Plan includes seven (7) elements, Land Use Master Concept Plan, Circulation, Parking, Historic, Aesthetics and Beautification, Promotion and Business Development and Finance and Implementation.

The plan establishes five (5) goals.

- Goal #1 – Reduce traffic congestion on Washington Street and provide for smooth, efficient traffic flow.
- Goal #2 – Create a distinctive shopping environment in downtown with attractive streets, appealing shops and convenient parking.
- Goal #3 – Promote and coordinate downtown as a shopping entity that serves both local and visitor shoppers.
- Goal #4 – Protect and enhance the historic buildings and character of the downtown.
- Goal #5 – Emphasize and encourage public/private partnerships to leverage dollars for improvements.

Tuolumne Tomorrow: Tuolumne County Regional Blueprint Project Report

Prepared by Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC), August 2011

The purpose of this study is to direct future growth and enhance quality of life in Tuolumne County across the next few decades. As part of this study, alternative growth scenarios were determined and a preferred alternative was identified. The preferred alternative is the Distinctive Communities Alternative and includes the following elements.

- Builds upon sense of community and preserves community identity
- Conserves energy/resources
- Creates walkable and bike able communities
- Financial viability
- Attractive to younger generations
- In line with new real estate market
- Only dislike was implementation may be difficult



The City of Sonora Traffic Circulation Study

Prepared by Omni-Means, Ltd, 1982

The purpose of the study is to develop alternatives for providing the safest, most cost-effective traffic circulation pattern for both local traffic and through traffic within the City. As part of the study, the following circulation improvement alternatives were identified.

- Alternative 1: Utilize existing circulation system with traffic safety enhancements
- Alternative 2: One-way couplet of Washington Street and Stewart Street between Mono Way and Elkin Street
- Alternative 3: One-way couplet of Washington Street with two-way flow on South Washington Street between Mono Way and Stockton Street
- Alternative 4: Primary two-way on Stewart Street with one-way flow on Washington Street between Stockton Street and Elkin Street

A preferred alternative was not identified as part of this study.

Transit Development Plan Update for Tuolumne County Transit

Prepared by Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC), February 2011

The purpose of this plan is to develop a Five (5) Year Transit Development Plan Update to improve and enhance regional public transportation in Tuolumne County Transit's service area. The plan describes the existing fixed route transit services, including the four (4) routes with major transfers at Junction Shopping Center in East Sonora.

- Route 1: Central & East Sonora – Circular route with the most ridership
- Route 2: Columbia – Mi-Wuk Village through Central & East Sonora – Includes the widest geographical area and links isolated locations and has experienced the largest growth in passenger productivity
- Route 3: Jamestown-Columbia, through Central & East Sonora – Most populated and commercial areas and includes two (2) portions
- Route 4: East Sonora – Twain Harte & East Sonora – Includes two (2) portions, one (1) fixed and one (1) flex route

The plan states that the Junction Shopping Center transfer location is problematic, because it is not centrally located and only one (1) bus can be served at a time.

Recommendations are included for each fixed route service, including the following.

- Route 1 – Double loop around Central Sonora, new stop north of Courthouse Park
- Route 2 – Operate as currently does, from Sierra Village through Central Sonora to Columbia College. Remove Junction as a stop.
- Route 3 – No longer serve north of Central Sonora's Courthouse Park



- Route 4 – Continue as a deviated fixed runs between Crossroads and Tuolumne City and Black Oak Casino. No longer operate the Sonora to Twain Harte segment
- Route 5 – From Crossroads through Junction to Twain Harte along Highway 108 (previously part of Route 4)
- Route 6 – Crossroads to Jamestown via Sonora
- Route 7 – Jamestown, Central Sonora, Columbia College, taking route north of Sonora, providing additional service
- Visitors Trolley starting in May 2011, Yosemite National Park May 2011, Dodge Ridge Ski Bus, Taxi voucher

District 10 Park-and-Ride Plan

Prepared by California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), March 2004

The purpose of this study is to identify park-and-ride facilities based on a 20-year demand for public and private use or exclusively public use. Two (2) planned park-and-rides are identified in East Sonora near State Route 108 from Standard Road to Via Este in the East Sonora Area and from Via Este to Sunshine Road in the East Sonora Area.

Tuolumne County Bicycle and Trails Plan

Prepared by Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC), 2004

The purpose is to develop a comprehensive long-range plan to develop bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trails to connect City of Sonora and surrounding communities. The document meets the California requirements for the Bicycle Lane Account funding.

The document provided the following priority project list.

- Sonora – Columbia – Construct a bicycle and pedestrian facility from Sonora to Columbia College
- Twain Harte-Tuolumne – Utilize the Sugar Pine Railway from Twain Harte to the vicinity of Tuolumne as a bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian path
- Standard-Tuolumne - Utilize the Sierra Railway from Tuolumne to Standard as a bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian path
- East Sonora – Provide better bicycle, pedestrian and possibility equestrian facilities along Highway 108 corridor in East Sonora
- Jamestown – Columbia – Construct a trail from Jamestown to Columbia via the vicinity of Jamestown Rd. to Shaw Flats Rd., to Springfield Rd, to Parrotts Ferry Rd.
- Jamestown-Sonora – Construct a trail from Sonora to Jamestown utilizing Highways 49 and 108, the Sierra Railroad, or Woods Creek
- Groveland – Construct a bicycle and pedestrian facility along Ferretti Road in Groveland from Highway 120 to Tioga High School



Tuolumne County Recreation Master Plan

Prepared by Tuolumne County, February 2002

The purpose of this study is to provide a description and rating / prioritize ranking of proposed trail facilities in Tuolumne County, including the following trails in Sonora.

- Sierra Railroad Trail
- 36 mile trail from Tuolumne County line through Jamestown, Sonora, to Tuolumne.
- Portions are adjacent to SR 108 and Washington Street

North-South Connector Feasibility Study

The goal of this project is to plan and prioritize a road or system of roads that will improve traffic circulation in Tuolumne County north and east of Sonora. A history of the study was discussed and documented the following studies.

- Greenley Road Extension was No. 7 priority 1978 RTP.
- Greenley Road Extension was No. 1 priority 1986 RTP.
- “Residents Against the Greenley Road Extension” (RAGE) was formed in 1986.
- “Rotelli Alternative to the Greenley Extension” included removal of all parking on Washington St to increase capacity of roadway, construction of off-street parking and improvements to Jamestown Road west of Sonora. The project included ROW acquisitions on Greenley with no roadway improvements.
- 1987 County Board of Supervisors found Greenley Road Extension was in public’s best interest and authorized final design and ROW acquisition.
- 1991 reinvestigated and renamed the project the “North-South Connector” and included investigating 13 alternative routes.

As part of this study, several scenarios were analyzed to determine the preferred roadway alignment. Alternatives were compared based on earthwork, ROW, environmental impacts, acquisitions, impacted homes, traffic and construction cost. It was determined that it would encourage traffic to divert from downtown Sonora, resulting between 5,600 and 11,700 vehicles per day (vpd). Traffic on Highway 49 would experience a decrease in traffic except for south of Parrots Ferry Road.

The project recommended advancing four (4) scenarios based on the most traffic being diverted from Highway 49 and the greatest congestion relief. The following are the four (4) recommended scenarios.

- Scenario II – Hess Ave to Highway 49 in Browns Flat
- Scenario II+ - Same as Scenario II, but extends Greenley Road to bypass
- Scenario VI – Mono Way near Fir Drive to Highway 49 in Browns Flat
- Scenario VI+- Same as Scenario II, but extends Greenley Road to bypass



Planning for Prosperity: Building Successful Communities in the Sierra Nevada

Prepared by Sierra Business Council, 1997

The goal of this publication is to help Sierra Nevada communities plan wisely and effectively for the future. The following 10 principles were established.

- Principle 1 - Safeguard the rural character of the Sierra Nevada by maintain a clear edge between town and country
- Principle 2 – Preserve historic assets
- Principle 3 – Build to create enduring value and beauty
- Principle 4 – Enhance the economic vitality of our small towns through ongoing reinvestment in the downtown core
- Principle 5 – Anticipate and address the housing needs of all community residents
- Principle 6 – Conserve and showcase each community’s natural assets
- Principle 7 – Maintain the economic productivity of our region’s agricultural lands and forests
- Principle 8 – Do not place people and structures in harm’s way
- Principle 9 – Maintain the heath of the natural systems which support life in the Sierra Nevada
- Principle 10 – Expand local and regional transportation options to reduce traffic congestion and the intensity of public dependence on the automobile