January 2024

The City of Sonora's Quarterly Insights

A Message from Mayor Mark Plummer

Happy New Year to all!

Great news! This past year has been momentous and successful for Sonora on a number of fronts. We are making good headway on staffing issues, we have an energetic new Community Development Director—Tyler Summersett— and we are steadily implementing our Strategic Growth Plan.

The 2023 Christmas Season was captivating, with the Christmas Town decorations and events delighting visitors and Sonorans alike. A special thanks to our Sonora Chamber of Commerce for all they did to make Christmas Town Sonora such a success.

Looming on the horizon, the County/Board of Supervisors has approved additional housing for more of the County's homeless population in our City. Your City Council is unanimous in their determination to resist this unilateral decision, and to chart our city's future ourselves. Our small city is home to roughly half of the county homeless population already, while the County, whose area and population is significantly larger, receives all the funding for the homeless and associated issues. The City would like to work with County leadership, but the County has limited the options available to appeal this decision. Look for updates on our efforts in next quarter's newsletter.

Upcoming Events

City Council Meeting
2/5, 2/20, 3/4, 3/18, 4/1, 4/15
1st and 3rd Mondays, 5pm

Second Saturday Art Night
sonorachamber.org
2/10, 3/9, 4/13

Sonora Selfie Trail
visittuolumne.com/sonora-selfie-trail
Ongoing, Downtown Sonora

Tuolumne County Art Week
visittuolumne.com/art-week
4/13-4/21

Sonora in the News

Visit Tuolumne County's ongoing media initiatives have garnered significant recognition for Sonora in both national and international news outlets. Since July 1, 2023, the City of Sonora has been prominently featured in thirty-seven articles, reaching an estimated 10.42 million people, and holding a collective value of $3.75 million. Explore Sonora's news coverage, visittuolumne.com/in-the-news.

Discover Sonora's Charm with the New Sonora Selfie Trail: A Unique Way to Explore Tuolumne County

MikesRoadTrip · 2023-12-28

SONORA, Calif. — Adventure seekers and photography enthusiasts have a new reason to explore Tuolumne County, California. Visit Tuolumne County proudly introduces the Sonora Selfie Trail, an innovative way to discover the city of Sonora's rich history and vibrant culture. Launched on December 27, 2023, this interactive experience is set to redefine tourism and local exploration.

City Updates

Chamber Partnership Expands

Three years ago, Christmas Town Sonora was a gleam in the eyes of the Sonora Chamber of Commerce President Katie Dunn and her board. Today, thanks to the efforts of the Chamber's Christmas Town Committee, the Visit Tuolumne County team and the City, local, national and international media have recognized Sonora's holiday charms. During the season, the ChristmasTownSonora.org site crashed twice due to heavy traffic!

Expect to see the Chamber play a larger role in the planning and execution of City celebrations and events in 2024. Since October, the Sonora Chamber now manages the rental and maintenance of the City's historic Opera Hall. Among the upgrades in services: wedding and event packages. For more information on Opera Hall rental, contact the Sonora Chamber of Commerce, (209) 694 4008, info@sonorachamber.org.

VOTE March 5!

New Employee Introduction

Welcome, Tyler!

On January 16th, Tyler Summersett was sworn in as Community Development Director for the City of Sonora. A familiar face to City residents, Tyler has worked in Tuolumne County for more than 15 years, most prominently as a planner for the Tuolumne County Transportation Council, then as Executive Director of the Blue Zones initiative. A foothills native, Tyler graduated from Bret Harte High and California State University Stanislaus with a Masters Degree in Public Administration. The City welcomes Tyler to our administrative staff!

City Spotlights

The number one need for our workforce in Tuolumne County is stress relief. This is brought to our attention in the Community Wellbeing Index (nation-wide poll) and the Community Health Needs Assessment (locally). Stress can be combated in many ways. A walk at lunch, meditation, regular exercise. Blue Zones Project Tuolumne County is offering its free Tai Chi Classes to the community, another great way to relieve stress. These classes are at the Opera Hall every Tuesday morning at 8am and are led by Laureen Campana. Classes are always free.

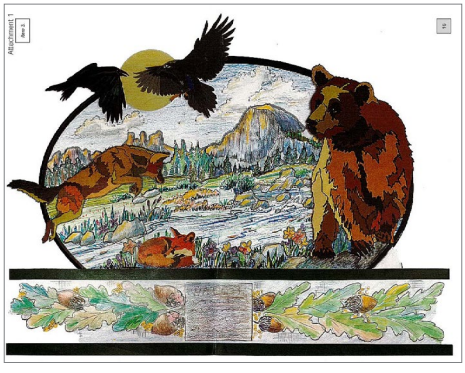
Public Safety Information

The Sonora Police Department (SPD) shares important winter driving tips:

- Vehicle brakes, windshield wipers, defroster, heater, tires and exhaust system should be in good working condition.
- Chains should be properly sized and appropriate for your vehicle—front, rear, or all wheel drive.
- Emergency road closures may cause lengthy traffic delays. Pack water, food, warm blankets and extra clothing.
- Carry a cell phone with pre-programmed contacts.
- Exercise caution when driving in winter conditions and adjust your speed accordingly.
- Think about staying home in hazardous conditions.
- Do not abandon a stuck vehicle in the roadway. Instead, alert the SPD (or CHP if outside of the city). Abandoned vehicles, if determined to be a hazard, will be towed.

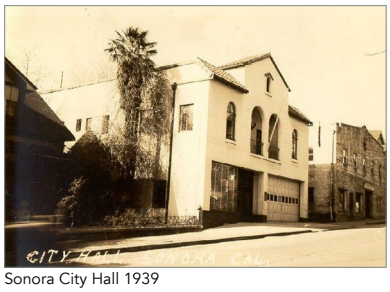
Business and Community Information

One element of vibrant, walkable downtowns is visual interest. Sonora has a plethora of charming, unique buildings and homes, which stimulate the senses. There is also a growing art scene as well, with murals in multiple locations. WATCH Resources will be further contributing to Sonora's downtown with a new Mural/ Mosaic. The Planning Commission approved a stunning nature scene that will be installed on the Washington side of a local business in downtown Sonora!



VOTE March 5!

A Look into Sonora's Past



Sonora City Hall 1939

Sonora did not have a City Hall until 1939, when the current City Hall was constructed as a multi-functioning municipal building. It originally housed the fire department, council chambers, offices, and the City library. The Building was funded through the Federal WPA program, designed to get the Country moving again after the Great Depression. The building served in this capacity from 1939 until 1997 when the Fire Department was relocated. The kitchen the firefighters used is still in place, but the firepole between the two floors was removed and a copy machine sits where the firefighters used to land!

Scan to sign-up for our e-newsletter!

Vision

With leadership and integrity, the City of Sonora commits to excellent service through collaboration and innovation.

Mission

Our mission is to foster a safe, vibrant and prosperous community that enhances the quality of life for all.

Core Priorities

Economic Development (General Plan) | Fiscal Stability | Homelessness | Infrastructure
Public Safety/Disaster Preparedness | City Staffing