

APPENDIX H: OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Appendix H documents public input collected at the Planning Commission Study Session and Online Survey.

Public Outreach efforts

Public outreach was a key part of the process during the development of the Energy Action Plan (EAP). To this effort, one publicly noticed study session was hosted by the Planning Commission on June 12th, 2017 and an online survey was released to collect public input on the EAP and proposed Goals, Strategies and Actions from community members who were unable to attend the study session. The public input collected at the Planning Commission Study Session and from the online survey was incorporated into the development of the goals and strategies highlighted in Chapter 3 and used to prioritize the implementation actions Chapter 4. The online survey was kept open from May 25th, 2017 to June 30th, 2017 and received 28 responses. Both the survey and study session were publicized in the Union Democrat, at the City Hall offices, and directly distributed to more than 100 local businesses. A summary of this input is detailed below.

June 12th, 2017 study session workshop

The study session provided a detailed presentation on the development process of the energy action plan, current California regulatory context, case studies detailing what EAP success looks like, a summary of public input collected in the online survey, and a summary of Residential and Non-Residential energy use, along with questions regarding the potential goals and strategies designed to create discussion and collect input.

The Planning Commission and members of the community attended providing a number of excellent comments that helped inform the next phase of the process – development of the goals, strategies, and implementation actions. A summary of the key comments is provided here:

Table H-1: Comments from Study Session Workshop

Topic	Comments
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of plan, but certain barriers that relate to Sonora will have to be addressed. These barriers include education/awareness, financing/affordability, public engagement, housing market limitations, and Title 24 standards.
Energy Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of reducing energy consumption Town has developed and new buildings meet Title 24 standards Interest in weatherization, low-cost home improvements such as insulation, double-paned windows, and other small adjustments for easy and substantial savings Interest in replacing/upgrading inefficient and outdated appliances, HVAC (energy efficient swamp coolers) – suggest looking into appliance drop-off programs, incentivizing energy efficient appliances (residential and commercial) Residents are concerned about energy bills, many have switched to LED lighting
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of solar – residential and commercial can use financing and other incentives to install, City and County have advantage of leading community by example with solar installation. In real estate – resale value of houses with solar and energy efficiency is high Take advantage of viable space for solar, such as on government buildings, parking lots, and other “solar deserts” Solar + storage is worth looking into, battery storage is important to renewable energy management. Other renewable technology options: hydroelectric, wind (if wind is sporadic, hydro can make up for the difference), and biomass

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood products – wood is abundant resource, efficient woodstoves for heating, (what are air quality restrictions?), take advantage of excess wood with proper utilization of biomass.
<p>Barriers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonora experiences extreme weather – space heating and cooling are a substantial energy usage issue • Historic value and conservation • Title 24 is extreme and costly, going beyond will be difficult – concerns on how to pay, and codes are very technical • Retail customers will pay the burden of increased costs • Solar is often costly, especially without subsidies • Consider burden of diesel, propane, and wood burning – Sonora does not have access to natural gas • Streetlights are expensive to replace/upgrade • Burden of space heating and transportation hurdles • High number of 2nd homeowners, transient/tourist population
<p>Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify most interested/best beneficiaries: Home and business owners are concerned about energy bills, have outdated technology, likely to participate in plan when upgrades, energy efficiency technology, and behavior changes to make a difference in the community are financially incentivized. City has opportunity to lead by example and to show people the incentives by putting money back into the community. • Education on new technologies, benefits, energy efficiency, school programs such as energy efficiency curriculums. • No expected new development (built out), may be opportunities for major renovations
<p>Community Engagement and Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and outreach most important way for habit/behavior change and participation, and to spark value of savings • Educating public on plan by having meetings (attendance), going on radio and local television to get message out, using social media/internet to reach people.

Online survey

In an effort to expand outreach to local residents and businesses, Sierra Business Council developed an online survey to garner input on the proposed goals and strategies. This survey was activated May 25, 2017 and closed June 30, 2017. A series of questions about the goals, strategies, and focus of the plan were asked and respondents were provided multiple choices for an answer plus an opportunity to provide additional written comments. A summary of the survey responses follows.

Table H-2: Online Survey Summary for City of Sonora

Survey Questions	Responses
<p style="text-align: center;">Respondent Profile</p>	<p>28 total responses 86% from City of Sonora residents 4% age 19 to 24 25% age 25 to 44 64% age 45 to 64 7% age 65+ 64% homeowners 46% business owners 46% own business space</p>
<p>Have you used utility rebates for energy efficiency measures or participated in utility efficiency programs?</p>	<p>58% Yes 42% No</p>
<p>If you answered 'Yes' to the previous Question, have you seen cost savings or other benefits from participating in these programs?</p>	<p>50% Yes 4% No 46% N/A</p>
<p>If you are a plans examiner, building inspector or contractor, could you benefit from a local, no-cost Title-24 Training?</p>	<p>8% Yes 8% No 84% N/A</p>
<p>What is your average monthly home electrical bill?</p>	<p>15% \$80-100 25% \$100-125 60% Over \$125</p>
<p>Are you familiar with energy efficiency practices that can reduce energy usage (and costs associated with energy use) in your home?</p>	<p>90% Yes 10% No Comments: My home does not have central air or heat and I am dependent on space heaters and window A/C units. If I don't use them, my bill is less than \$50 / mo. If I do, then bill is \$150+/mo. Windows are single-pane last replaced in early 1900s. Landlord has no incentive to make home energy efficient.</p>

Survey Questions	Responses
<p>If applicable, what steps have you taken to lower energy usage and associate costs?</p>	<p>50% Participate in PG&E/Utility programs 50% Other (please specify): Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solar, LED's, EV's, insulation, efficient appliances - Replace lighting, thermostat settings - Bought Energy efficient appliances, light bulbs - Change light bulbs to more energy efficient led - Less usage - Turning off lights, setting my thermostat to a higher setting in the summer and lower in the winter. My appliances are energy efficient. - Cut usage. Conserve. - Temp increase on thermo. New lights, energy efficiency curtains, pellet stove, skylights - Installed solar hot water and pool heating
<p>What area of your home uses the most energy?</p>	<p>From highest to lowest response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HVAC (heating and cooling) 2. Electronics (large) 3. Kitchen 4. Laundry 5. Compressors, electric vehicle space, water heating, appliance (other)
<p>Are you interested in completing an energy audit of your home?</p>	<p>25% Yes 75% No</p>
<p>What is the average monthly electricity bill at your business?</p>	<p>11% Under \$80 6% \$100-125 39% Over \$125 44% Not sure</p>
<p>Are you familiar with energy efficiency practices that can reduce energy usage and associated costs for your business?</p>	<p>56% Yes 44% No</p>
<p>Have you heard of or participated in the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch (SNEW) program?</p>	<p>11% Yes, participated 11% Have heard of SNEW, but have not participated 78% No</p>
<p>What area of your business uses the most energy?</p>	<p>Ranked from highest to lowest response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HVAC 2. Lights 3. Computers 4. Automobiles

Survey Questions	Responses
Are you interested in a free energy audit of your business?	22% Yes 78% No
Please rank the following forms of renewable energy generation in the order of the most viable to least viable in Sonora:	Ranked from highest to lowest: 1. Solar 2. Biomass 3. Hydro-electricity 4. Wind 5. Geothermal
Do you currently own or lease a renewable energy system?	12% Yes 88% No
If you are interested in having a renewable energy system, what barriers do you face?	1. Cost 2. Rent/leasing property 3. Space, exposure 4. Blocked by agency 5. Bills not high enough
Are you interested in a site assessment of your home or business for solar?	18% Yes 82% No
What is your average monthly water and sewer bill?	18% Under \$35 24% \$35 to \$70 24% \$70 to \$100 34% Over \$100
Are you aware of any programs that exist to help you save water, lower your bill, and/or reduce water consumption?	41% Yes 59% No
Have you participated in any utility rebate or incentive programs for water efficiency or conservation?	12% Yes 88% No
Are you interested in getting an assessment of your indoor or outdoor water use?	18% Yes 82% No
What would help you achieve further water savings?	1. Don't know/NA 2. Lower rates 3. Better designs (tankless water heaters, flushless toilets, water-saving appliances) 4. New landscaping with local plants and rocks 5. Storm water collection 6. Drought monitoring 7. Grey water systems