

General Plan Sonoma

Community Vision Phase (Phase 1)

Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Sonoma County
June 12, 2025

GENERAL PLAN
Sonoma
Envisioning Our Future Together



What is the General Plan and Why Does it Matter?



The General Plan is a long-term vision and policy document that guides how the county grows, develops, and protects resources. It shapes:

- Where and how land is used in unincorporated areas
- How neighborhoods look and feel
- How easy it is to get to jobs and services
- Decisions about growth and conservation



Evolution and Achievements



First General Plan Adopted 1978

- Emphasized protection of agricultural lands, open spaces, and community character with polices intended to focus development in urban areas
- Introduction of "community separators"

First Update 1989

- Addition of several new mandatory elements
- Focused on preservation of agricultural and resource lands that form the scenic resources of the county
- Additional protections for designated streams and greater protections for scenic resources

Second Update 2008 (General Plan 2020)

- Added affordable housing, resource protection, and water resource policies
- Audited specific plans and adapted specific area policies under the Land Use Element

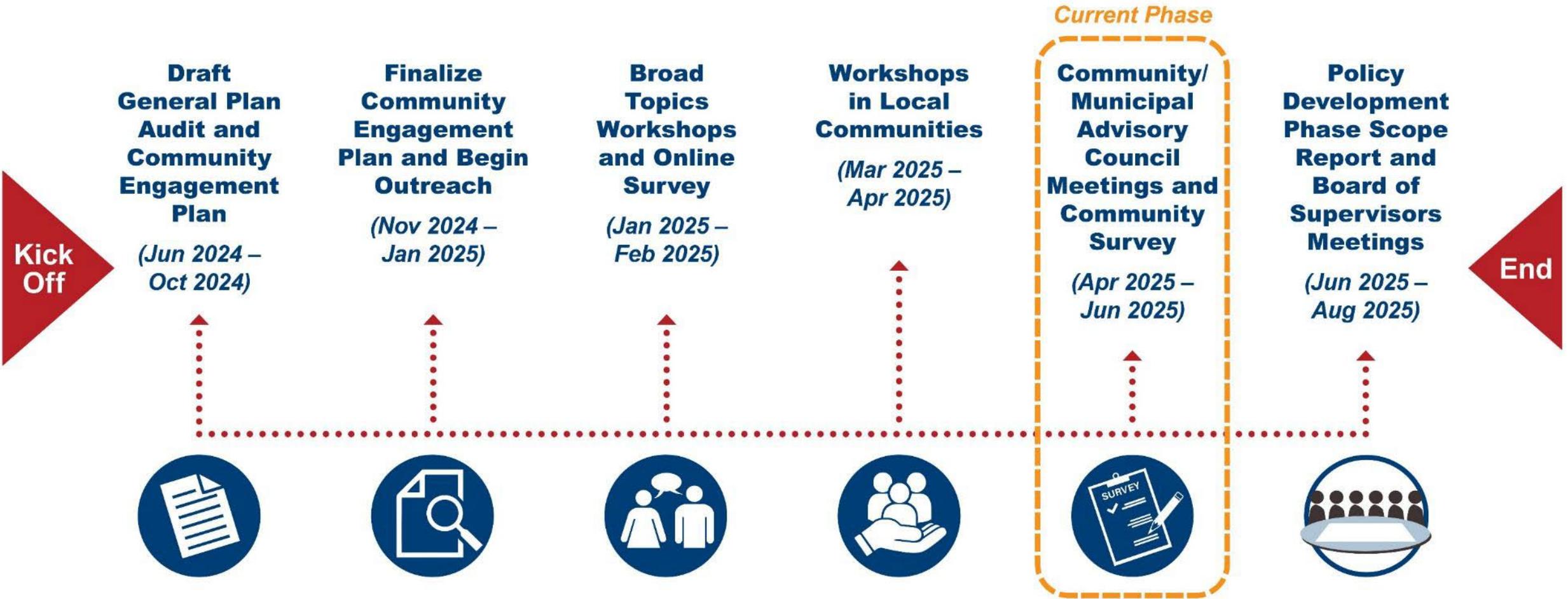
General Plan Sonoma



- **General Plan Update** needed to reflect changes in State law, best practices, and community values
- **General Plan Sonoma Community Vision Phase (Phase 1)** includes:
 - General Plan 2020 audit
 - Community Engagement Plan and implementation
 - General Plan Scope Report to guide policy development
- **Upcoming: Policy Development Phase (Phase 2)**



Phase 1 Timeline



General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles



- Describe the future of Sonoma County as you would like it to be in 20 years
- Express shared community values
- Relate to topics in the General Plan
- Guide preparation of General Plan content
- Guide how the General Plan will be realized
- Are unique to Sonoma County



Community Vision Phase 1 Outreach

Community Engagement Process



Collecting Feedback

- Collecting Feedback
- Community Visioning Workshops
- Online Surveys
- Workshops in Local Communities
- Focus Group Meetings with Underserved Communities
- Statistically-Significant Survey
- Community Events
- Community/Municipal Advisory Council Meetings
- Tribal Consultation

Spreading the Word

- Permit Sonoma Website
- Newsletters
- Social Media
- Community-Based Partners

Number of Outreach Activities

 **33**

including meetings, workshops, community events, and online engagement

Phase 1 Completion Metric (%)



Number of People Engaged

 **1,648**

Number of Comments Received

 **2,862**

Total Mailers Sent Out

 **51,799**

Social Media Posts and Newsletters

 **25**



COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOPS

- 6 WORKSHOPS
- 271 PEOPLE ENGAGED
- 1,552 COMMENTS



FORESTVILLE COMMUNITY LIBRARY WORKSHOP

- DATE: 01/30/25
- 47 PARTICIPANTS
- 320 COMMENTS



LOCAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

- 11 WORKSHOPS
- 214 PEOPLE ENGAGED
- 590 COMMENTS

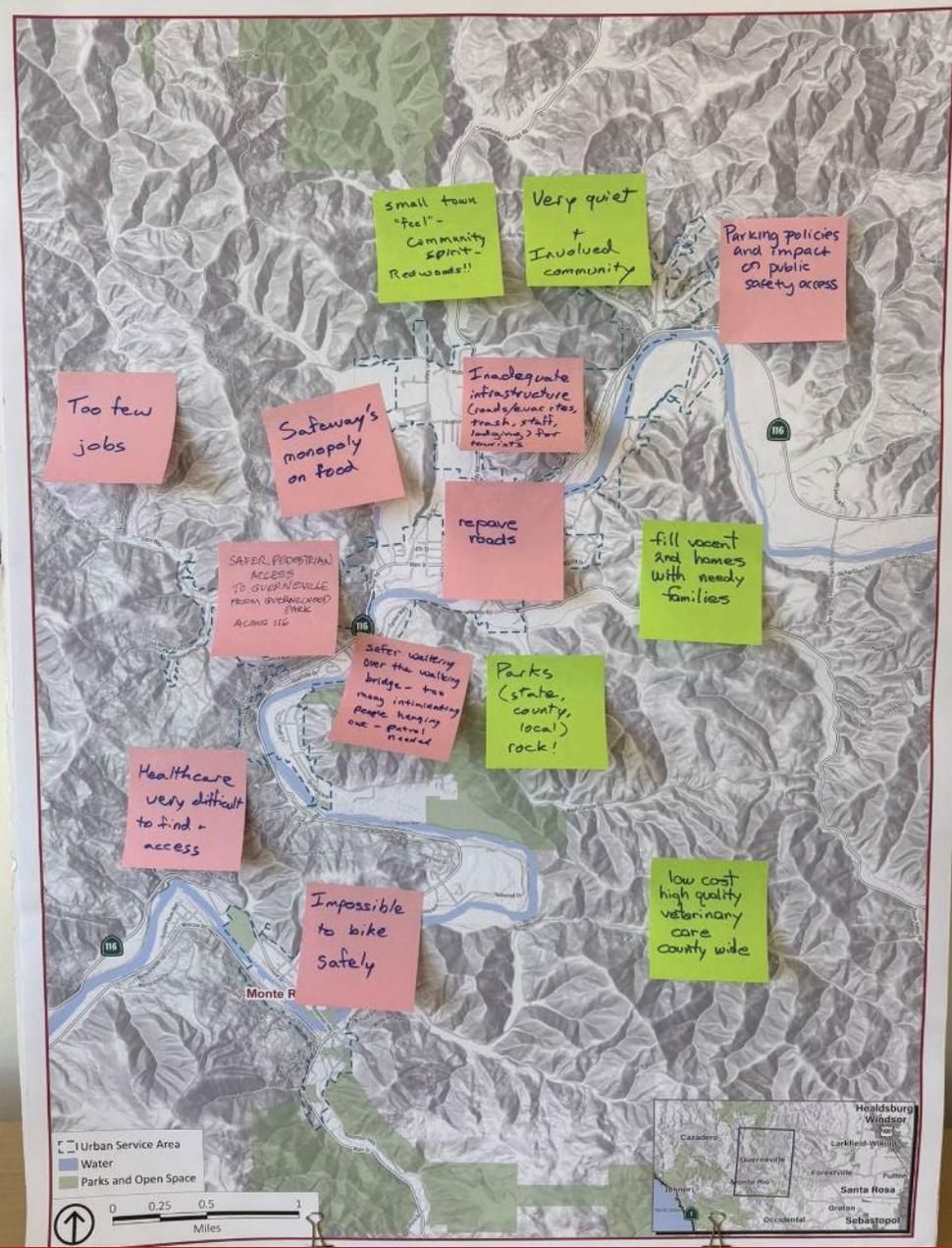




GUERNEVILLE SCHOOL WORKSHOP

- DATE 03/10/25
- 8 PARTICIPANTS
- 37 COMMENTS





Small town
"Feel" -
Community
spirit -
Redwoods!!

Very quiet
+
Involved
community

Parking policies
and impact
on public
safety access

Too few
jobs

Safeway's
monopoly
on food

Inadequate
infrastructure
(roads, bus stop,
trash, stairs,
loading) for
tourists

repave
roads

fill vacant
and homes
with needy
families

SAFER PEDESTRIAN
ACCESS
TO GUERNEVILLE
FROM OVERLOOKED
TRAIL
ALONG US

safer walking
over the walking
bridge - too
many intimidating
people hanging
out - more
needed

Parks
(state,
county,
local)
rock!

Healthcare
very difficult
to find -
access

Impossible
to bike
safely

low cost
high quality
veterinary
care
county wide

“Small town feel – community spirit – Redwoods!”

“Too few jobs.”

“Impossible to bike safely.”

“Safer pedestrian access to Guerneville from Guerneville Park”



COMMUNITY POP-UP EVENTS

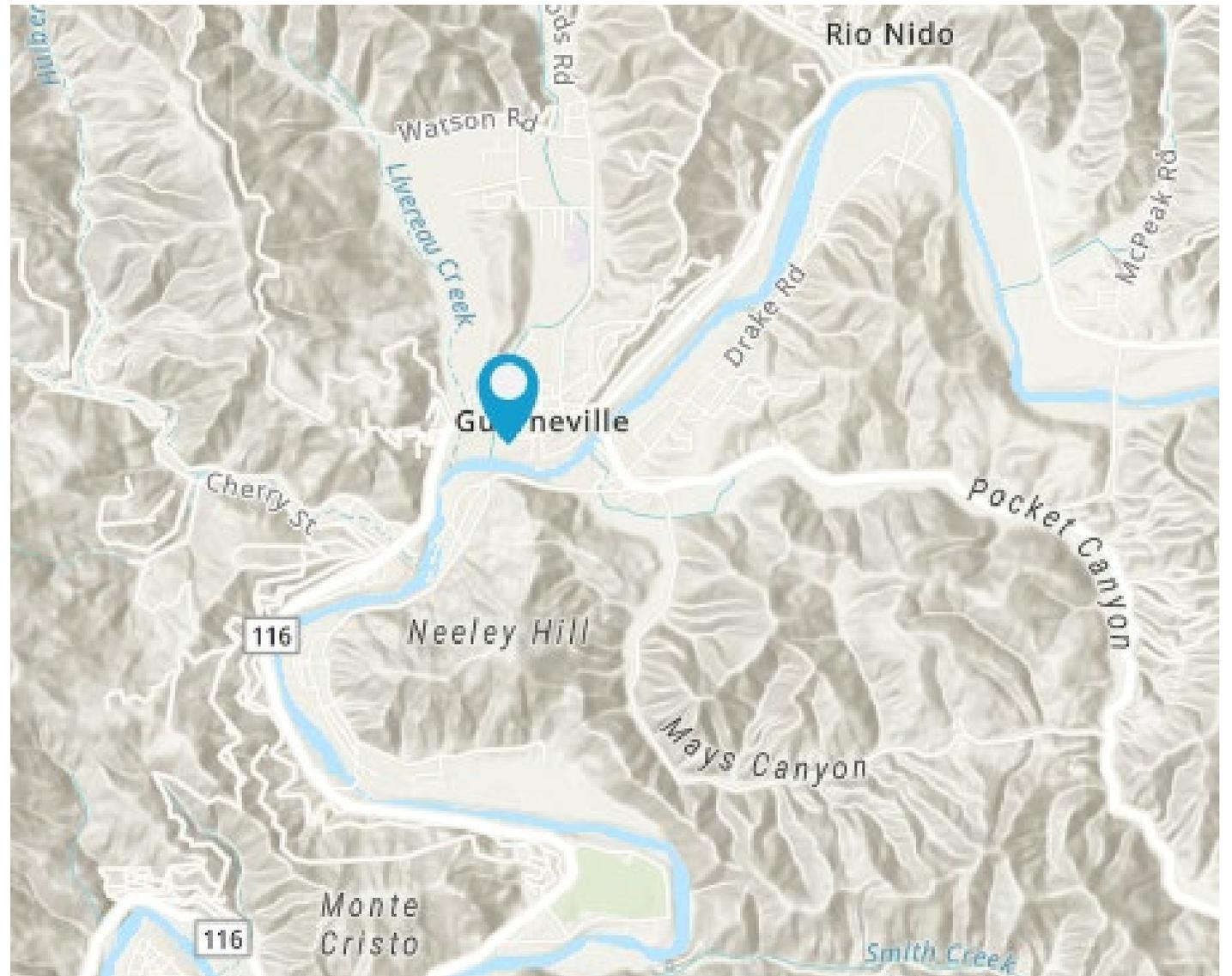
- 11 EVENTS SO FAR!
- 482 PEOPLE ENGAGED





SAFEWAY GUERNEVILLE E AND D5 OFFICE

-  SAFEWAY,
16405 HWY 116
GUERNEVILLE, CA
95446
- DATE 05/13/25
- 25 PARTICIPANTS



Next Steps



- Complete engagement activities for Phase 1
- Prepare Vision and Guiding Principles
- Prepare Outreach Summary
- Prepare General Plan Scope Report
- Board of Supervisors Meeting planned for August to discuss and confirm the plan for Phase 2



We Want to Hear From You!



Advisory Council reflections and input

- What makes your community special to you?
- What are your priorities or concerns?
- What do you hope to see in the future for your community?
- How would you like to stay involved with the General Plan update?

Stay Up-to-Date!



Visit Our Website!



permitsonoma.org/generalplan

Stay connected and subscribe to our email list via our website or get in contact with us!
GeneralPlan@sonoma-county.org

Questions?

Thank You!

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Community Outreach Lower Russian River Area



Countywide Community Visioning Workshops:

- January 30 – Forestville Community Library

Local Community Workshops:

- March 10 – Guerneville School

Community Events:

- April 13 – Safeway Guerneville and D5 office

Community Vision Workshops



Number of Comments Received

 **1,552**

Total Mailers Sent Out

 **51,799**

Number of Social Media Posts

 **7**

Number of Workshops

 **6**

(4 in-person and 2 virtual)

Number of People Engaged

 **271**



Key Themes

- Diversify agriculture and protect small farms.
- Focus growth in and around cities where there are already services and development.
- Provide housing options for all residents, including seniors and young families.
- Expand open space and recreation opportunities.
- Protect communities from wildfires.
- Preserve and improve water supply and quality.
- And much more!

Local Community Workshops



Number of Workshops

 **11**

(9 in-person and 2 virtual)

Number of People Engaged

 **214**

Number of Comments Received

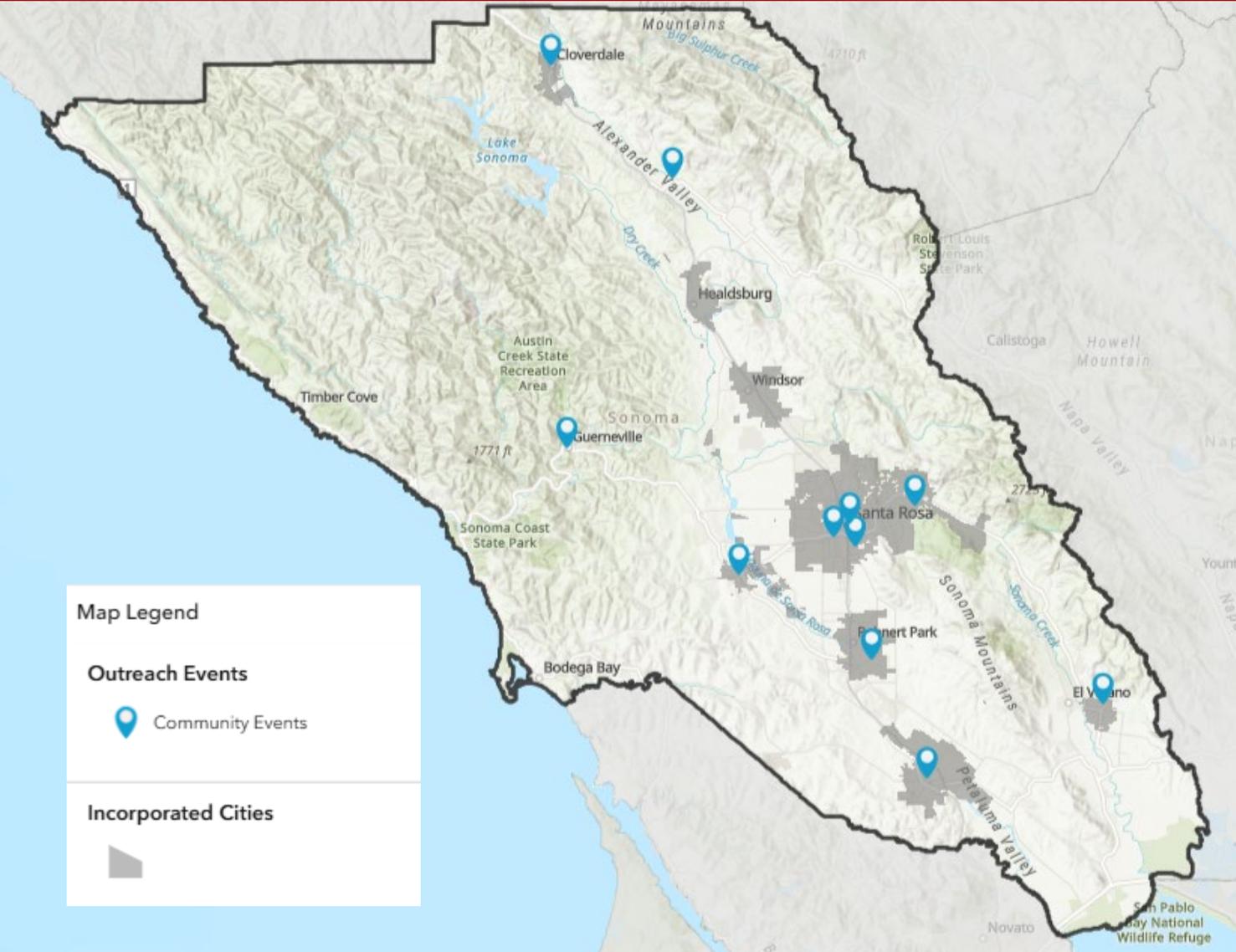
 **590**



Key Themes

- **Preserve community character and open space between communities.**
- **Maintain dark skies.**
- **Protect agriculture and support farmers.**
- **Preserve green spaces and parks.**
- **Expand safe bicycle connections.**
- **Increase roadway safety and reduce traffic.**
- **And much more!**

Community Events/Pop-Ups



Number of Community Events



Number of People Engaged



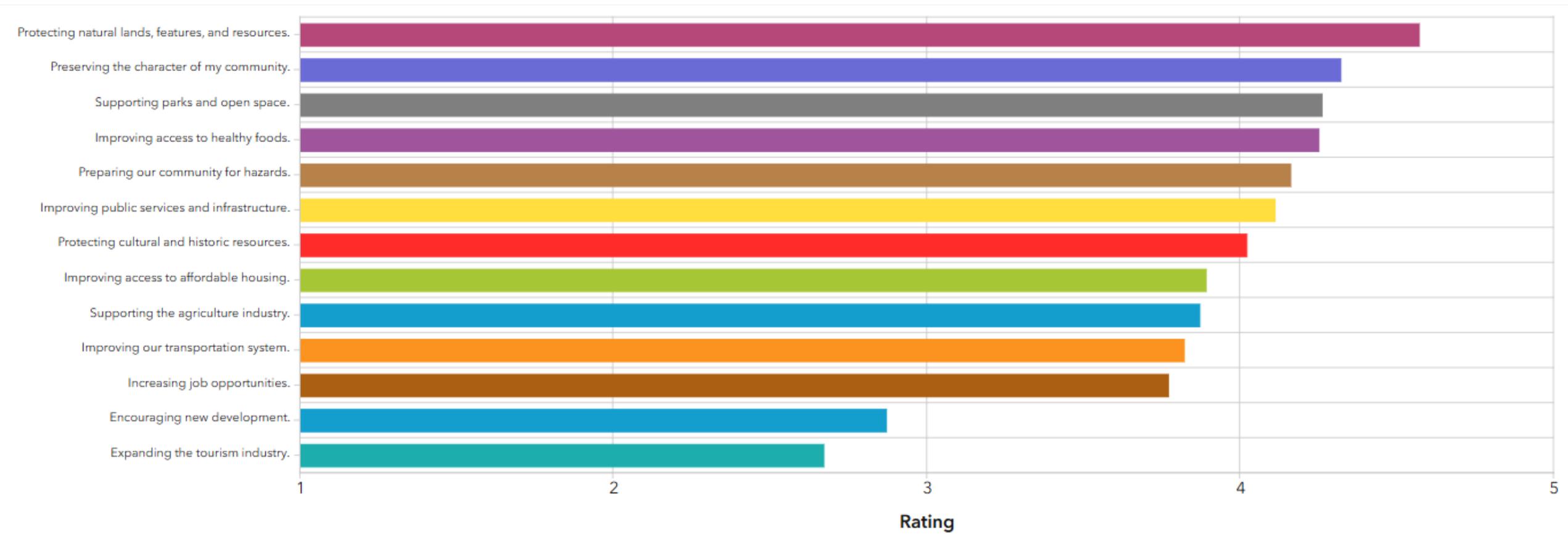
Vision Survey



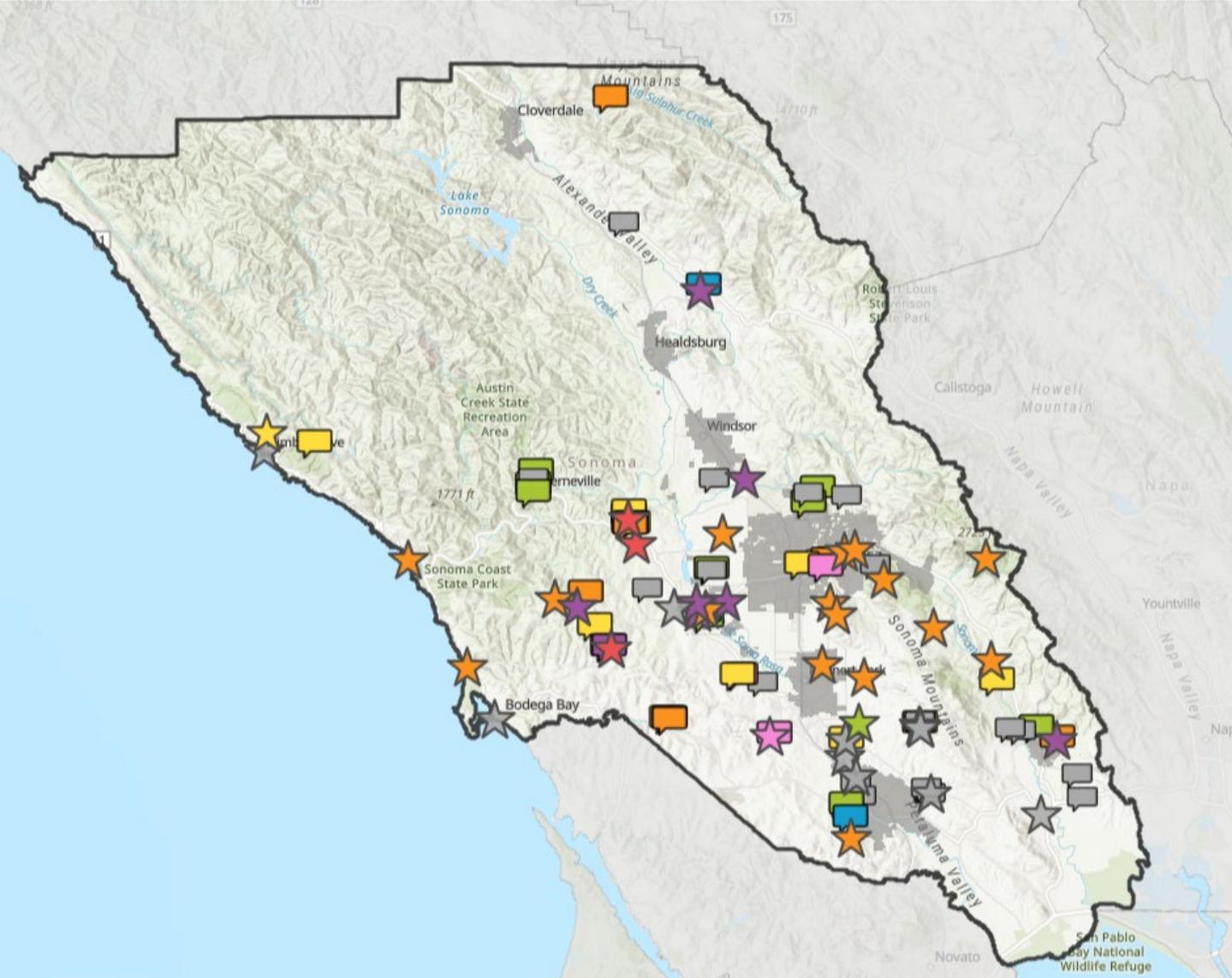
Priorities for the General Plan

The vision survey asked respondents to rank their top priorities for the General Plan to address. The survey response data is presented below, with the higher rating numbers indicating a higher priority for the community.

Number of Survey Responses
 **671**



Mapping Tool



Map Legend

Comment Category

- 1. Community and Culture - Traditions, events, history, and sense of belonging
- 2. Jobs and Local Economy - Businesses, tourism, and job opportunities
- 3. Housing and Neighborhoods - Affordability, availability, and types of housing
- 4. Agriculture and Food - Farms, food production, and local agriculture
- 5. Nature and Outdoor Spaces - Parks, trails, and environmental concerns
- 6. Getting Around - Roads, sidewalks, public transit, and accessibility
- 7. Public Services and Utilities - Schools, healthcare, water, electricity, and internet
- 8. Other Issues or Ideas - Anything that doesn't fit in the categories above

Star symbol - Likes



Comment symbol - Challenges



Incorporated Cities



Number of Map Comments Received

 107

? Questions Asked

1. What do you love most about your community? Share the places, traditions, and features that make Sonoma County feel like home. Place a comment on the map to highlight where you'd like to see something supported, preserved, or improved.

2. Show us where there are challenges in your community. Place a comment on the map to mark where you would like to see something changed to make your community a better place to live or work.