Dear Friends,

Since 1994, Sierra Business Council has been a steadfast community leader and an implementer of proactive solutions. Drawing on our history and experience, we met the needs of 2021 head-on, addressing our region’s greatest challenges while accelerating the transition to a restored, revitalized, and regenerative Sierra Nevada.

Over the last year, we successfully advocated for increasing state budget allocations for forest management, wildfire resilience, and achievable workforce housing. We expanded our small-business services and distributed millions of dollars to local entrepreneurs and businesses through the Sierra SBDC and our Economic Empowerment programs. We played a key role in expanding energy efficiency and climate planning in the Sierra Nevada, ensuring that the unique energy needs of our rural communities were addressed. We helped the region prepare for climate vulnerabilities by scaling proven, big-picture adaptation measures to the local level.

This work was guided by Sierra Business Council’s vision of a diverse, inventive, and sustainable region where the economy is vibrant, the land is thriving, and the communities offer opportunity for all. As we look ahead to the future opportunities and challenges in the Sierra Nevada and tailor our programs to meet changing needs, this vision will continue to guide our work.

Our focus areas in economic empowerment, regional advocacy, and climate action reflect the interwoven, dynamic, and nimble role Sierra Business Council plays in the region. Over the coming year, we will continue to cultivate a thriving post-COVID Sierra economy, advance recovery initiatives in wildfire-impacted communities, advocate for increased state investments in the region, accelerate workforce housing solutions, publish a Sierra-wide climate vulnerability assessment, bridge the digital divide in rural California, elevate recreation and outdoor access solutions, and increase regional capacity for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Here at Sierra Business Council, our work is grounded by the triple-bottom-line as it extends into a broad range of overlapping issues and correlating solutions. Moving forward, we will continue to deliver tangible solutions through our innovative projects and programs. For more on what is on the horizon for Sierra Business Council and how our existing programs and priorities fit into our vision for the future, please see the graphic on the following page.

With Gratitude,

Steve R. Frisch  
President & CEO

Allan Pietrasanta  
Board Chairman

FROM OUR LEADERSHIP
HOW OUR PROJECTS AND FOCUS AREAS FIT INTO OUR TRIPLE-BOTTOM-LINE VISION:
MISSION
Sierra Business Council pioneers and demonstrates innovative approaches and solutions to increase community vitality, economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social fairness in the Sierra Nevada.

VISION
In the Sierra Nevada, change and challenge create opportunities. Through innovation, integrity, and respect, Sierra Business Council harnesses these opportunities by implementing projects that model proactive change. Our goal is a diverse, inventive, and sustainable region where the economy is vibrant, the land is thriving, and the communities offer opportunity for all.

We act as steward leaders of the region, taking responsibility for the care and responsible management of our place, guided by the triple bottom line that considers the economy, environment, and community simultaneously.

OUR FOCUS AREAS

Economic Empowerment
We work with small businesses, local governments, and community nonprofits to build the foundation for a vibrant local economy because dynamic communities are one of the region’s most important resources.

Climate Action
We assist communities throughout the Sierra to proactively plan for climate change by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to changes already impacting the Sierra.

Regional Advocacy
We advocate for the Sierra’s social, environmental, and economic interests. We work to elevate the issues that most impact our communities while ensuring the region’s value is recognized in legislative outcomes.
Economic Empowerment includes the Sierra SBDC, the Sierra Economic Development District, and various loan and economic development programs. The Sierra SBDC provides one-on-one consulting and workshops to local entrepreneurs to help their businesses start, grow, and thrive. The Sierra SBDC currently serves El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Placer, and Sierra counties.

2021 Program Impacts:

- Hosted 54 workshops attended by 1,481 individuals
- Supported 22 new businesses
- Helped small business clients access $21.4 million in capital
- Infused $12.48 million in loans, grants, and other capital into the region via the Sierra SBDC, Placer Invests Grants, Nevada County Relief Fund Grants, and COVID relief loans
- Made 24 loans totaling appx $400k
- Published the Resilient Infrastructure Plan and updated the Sierra Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Served 875 unique clients
- Provided 3,697 hours of one on one business consulting:
- Supported approximately 2,500 jobs
- Provided early $1.75m in Down Payment Assistance to 35 first-time homebuyers through the Martis Fund
- Started the Sierra Chapter of the California Green Business Network
Gold Country Broadband Consortium was formed to leverage regional, state, and national resources as an investment in improving and expanding broadband access in rural areas. Its goal is to increase internet access and speed in Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Sierra, and eastern Alpine counties.

2021 Program Impacts:

- Assisted Nevada and Placer County in allocating $2.5 million dollars to Internet Service Providers to build out internet connections to over 2,000 homes over the past two years
- Developed pilot programs in Placer and Nevada County intended to be replicated with other jurisdictions in the GCBC region
- Developed a Planning 101 Internet Service Provider’s Toolkit which outlines the California Environmental Quality Act Process Flow in a simplified manner to guide local internet service providers through the permitting process
- Worked with Placer County Staff to develop the county’s first Broadband Strategy, develop and launch an Internet Service Satisfaction Survey to identify gaps in broadband service, and develop the county’s first Last-Mile broadband Grant program
- Worked with Nevada County staff to rewrite the county’s Broadband Strategy, develop and release their first Last-Mile BB Grant program, advance a second Last-Mile BB Grant program, conduct a comprehensive user survey and initiate the State’s first Countywide Programmatic Environmental Impact Review Report study
The Lake Tahoe Water Trail (LTWT) is a designated water route along the 72-mile shoreline that connects public beaches with launch and landing sites to help paddlers have a safe recreation experience and protect the watershed. The Water Trail bilingual sustainable recreation program supports climate resiliency, job creation, and equitable access through low-impact nature-based activity that cultivates diverse future generations of conservationists.

2021 Program Impacts:

- Produced and donated 180 Spanish-translated Map & Access Guides to fire protection districts and non-profit youth programs
- Distributed 7,500 English and 7,500 Spanish-translated brochures in the Tahoe Basin, Truckee, Placerville, Auburn, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles
- Leveraged Tahoe Basin regulatory, conservation and water safety public education efforts
- Provided Spanish-translated education materials to Tahoe Basin and Truckee paddle outfitters, lodging properties, visitor outlets

SIERRA NEVADA GEOTOURISM

Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide helps travelers get off the beaten path and experience the Sierra through the eyes of a local. Through online submissions on the Geotourism website, Sierra Nevada enthusiasts are able to showcase the businesses, activities, and destinations they love in the Sierra. The project is currently without funding but exists as a self-sustaining website that remains at the heart of our sustainable tourism and recreation efforts.
The Government Affairs team is an established voice for the Sierra in Sacramento. SBC works with partners to drive funding to the region, bridge the urban-rural divide, and strengthen local communities by engaging in rural equity, natural resource protection, wildfire mitigation, access to broadband, climate resilience, and other issues that impact the Sierra. The government affairs team stands up for the region by testifying in hearings, commenting on legislation, tracking agency grant programs, developing partnerships, weighing in on draft regulations, and campaigning to pass ballot measures.

2021 Program Impacts:

- Helped secure $123.25 million for the Sierra Nevada and California Tahoe Conservancies in the State Budget
- Advanced support in the Legislature for prescribed fire, ecological thinning, and workforce development to increase wildfire resilience
- Helped pass AB 9, AB 642, AB 697, AB 825, SB 208, and SB 456
- Produced series of forest biomass utilization education films
- Successfully advanced climate priorities in the 2021-22 State Budget, helping result in a $3.7 billion climate package
- Advanced Sierra priorities in California’s 30 by 30 Initiative
- Led the advocacy efforts of the Mountain Housing Council of Tahoe Truckee and completed the 2021 Regional Housing Implementation Plan
- Advanced housing policies that balance housing and wildfire resilience needs in the Wildland Urban Interface
- Led Sierra Consortium to advance regional conservation, climate resilience, and wildfire priorities
Sierra Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership (CAMP) is a cross-sector partnership that promotes and facilitates regional climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, serves as a climate action capacity-building hub for Sierra communities, and fosters urban-rural connections to build state-wide investment in our region’s communities and natural resources. In 2022, Sierra CAMP activated the Sierra Nevada on climate action through the following actions:

2021 Program Impacts:

- Hosted and facilitated 4 webinars, 4 forums, and dispatched 21 e-newsletters to foster regional climate collaboration
- Provided in-depth analysis of California climate policy and budget throughout the year
- Shared curated monthly grants e-newsletter with membership
- Analyzed climate data in 22 counties for Vulnerability Assessment
- Hosted 7 adaptive capacity workshops for the Sierra Nevada Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- Hosted 8 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings for the Sierra Nevada Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- Began drafting the final report, “Sierra Nevada Climate Vulnerability Assessment,” to build capacity for communities needing to fulfill SB 379 requirements and inform future policy, project, and funding prioritization in the region.
The Climate & Energy team assists communities throughout the Sierra to proactively plan for climate change by saving energy, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and adapting to climate change impacts. The team works closely with local governments, school districts, public agencies, community members, and hard-to-reach businesses to provide technical and funding assistance to implement energy efficiency measures, conduct GHG inventories, develop GHG reduction plans, and execute projects that make communities more resilient, efficient, and vibrant. 2021 Climate & Energy programs and projects included the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch (SNEW), Lake Tahoe GHG Inventory Update, Calaveras County GHG Inventory, the Angels Camp GHG Inventory, and the Climate Transformation Alliance.

2021 Program Impacts:

- Accelerated energy efficiency and climate mitigation efforts for over 18 agencies around the Sierra Nevada region including:
  - Calaveras County, City of Angels Camp, City of Sonora, El Dorado County Transit Authority, Grass Valley, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District, Mariposa County Unified School District, Nevada City, Nevada County, Placer County, Placer County Air Pollution District, Plumas Unified School District, Plumas County District Hospital, Sierra County, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Town of Truckee, Truckee Donner Public Utility District, and Truckee Tahoe Airport District
- Completed 3 GHG emissions inventories
- Continued to implement 5 energy action plans and began 2 GHG reduction plans
- Helped facilitate 13 energy audits and began 6 energy benchmarking analyses
- Released 3 SNEW monthly updates via e-newsletters, 4 Climate & Energy quarterly newsletters, an Energy Efficiency Toolkit, the Biggest Bang for your Buck guide, co-hosted 2 webinars, and overhauled the SNEW website.
FINANCIALS

Revenue: $2,864,478

- Grants: 43%
- Contracts: 43%
- Other Revenue: 10%
- Contributions: 4%
Expenses: $2,257,222

- Economic Empowerment: 54%
- Climate Action: 20%
- General Administrative: 13%
- Advocacy: 11%
- Fundraising: 2%
Allan Pietrasanta, Chairman
Former small business owner/Sales Manager

John Singlaub, Vice Chairman
Ascent Environmental, Inc.

Steve Noll, Treasurer
Design Workshop

Connie Gallipi, Secretary
BitGive Foundation

Bill Feyling
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Tim Frank
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Betony Jones
Fourth Sector Strategies

Jason Moghaddas
Spatial Informatics Group

Dennis Meyer
Andregg Psomas

Charles Segerstrom
Energy Efficiency Consultant

Robert Weygandt
Placer Co. Board of Supervisors

Teal Brown Zimring
Galvanize Partners
Thank you for your continued support of and investment in Sierra Business Council. The Sierra is an amazing place for many reasons, and high up on that list are community members and passionate advocates like you who invest in its future. There’s a small team behind SBC’s substantial impact, and you have our most sincere gratitude.
HOW YOU CAN HELP
SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL

DONATE
Make a one time or recurring donation to support resilience in the Sierra at sierrabusiness.org/contribute

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