



SIERRA
BUSINESS COUNCIL

Sierra Business Council

2025–2027 Strategic Plan

This page was left intentionally blank.



A Letter from SBC Leadership

The Sierra Nevada faces significant challenges. Impacts on our environment, driven by climate change and a legacy of resource extraction, affect the treasured landscapes beneath our feet. Economic opportunities for our young people and working families are diminishing, the cost of housing is increasing, and wages relative to the rest of California are falling. Our rural communities and residents sometimes struggle to find their way in a rapidly changing world and economy.

For each of these systemic challenges, we believe there is a corresponding opportunity for learning, acquiring new skills as a region, rekindling our sense of community, improving our resilience, and unlocking innovation.

For 30 years, Sierra Business Council has sought to identify the region's most difficult problems and apply new ideas, methods, and partnerships to solve them. We have seen success in many endeavors and occasional setbacks. Still, our core strategy has never wavered: identify problems that need solving and systems in our region—social, environmental, and economic—that require intervention, and chart a new path.

Over the next 30 years, we are committed to bringing the same approach to our work. We are guided by our core values and engage our partners with integrity, accelerating positive change by valuing diversity and differences of perspective to improve our communities, environment, and economy at a regional scale.

We hope you will join us in our work and make it yours.

Sincerely,

Steve R. Frisch *Allan Pietrasanta*

Steve Frisch
President
Sierra Business Council

Allan Pietrasanta
Board Chair
Sierra Business Council



Table of Contents

Letter from SBC Leadership	4
Table of Contents	5
About Sierra Business Council	7
Our Past and Our Future	8
Mission & Vision	9
Theory of Change	10
Our Foundational Values	11
30 Years of Impact	12
How we Drive Change in the Sierra	13
Strategic Goals	15
Strategic Goal 1: Regional Policy and Advocacy Leadership	16
Strategic Goal 2: Energy and Climate Action Expertise	17
Strategic Goal 3: Catalyze Sustainable Economies	18
Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen Operational Sustainability	19





SIERRA

BUSINESS COUNCIL

Contact:

sierrabusiness.org
info@sierrabusness.org

Board of Directors:

Allan Pietrasanta, Board Chair
John Singlaub, Board Vice Chair
Connie Gallippi, Board Secretary
Steve Noll, Board Treasurer
Teal Brown Zimring
Bill Feyling
Tim Frank
Betony Jones
Dennis Meyer
Jason Moghaddas
Charles Segerstrom
Robert Weygandt



About Sierra Business Council

Sierra Business Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation established in 1994 and has dedicated 30 years to enhancing the Sierra Nevada region through community empowerment, environmental stewardship, and economic development.

Headquartered in Truckee, California with satellite offices in Bishop and staff located throughout the region, the organization promotes sustainable regional growth by supporting businesses, solving rural issues, and addressing climate change. SBC's initiatives include economic empowerment through direct technical assistance and development strategies, climate action programs that enhance energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, and regional advocacy to elevate the Sierra's interests in policy discussions.

Notable achievements include collaboration on establishing the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, launching the Sierra Small Business Development Center, and promoting energy resilience and climate planning via the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch. By integrating social, environmental, and economic impacts, SBC works towards a thriving, resilient Sierra Nevada with diverse economies and restored ecosystems.

Our Past and Our Future

In 1994, a small group of community, environmental, and business leaders began organizing to address the rapidly changing nature of the Sierra Nevada. Inspired by their commitment to place, they formed Sierra Business Council to build a future in which resilient communities, environmental stewardship, and prosperous economies work together to create a stronger, more vibrant region.

Since then, Sierra Business Council has become one of the Sierra's most important forces for good, taking on the toughest issues in our region in partnership with our citizens, communities, leaders, and partners. Thanks to our thousands of network members within and outside the region, Sierra Business Council has managed hundreds of projects and leveraged more than a billion dollars of new investment into the region to improve our communities, environment, and economies.

With gratitude to our founders, in partnership with our communities, and led by our regional vision for a better future, Sierra Business Council looks forward to the next 30 years of progress.



Mission & Vision

Mission

Sierra Business Council advances and demonstrates innovative approaches and solutions to increase community vitality, environmental quality, economic prosperity, and social equity in the Sierra Nevada.

Vision

In the Sierra Nevada, change and challenge create opportunities. Through innovation, integrity, and respect, SBC is a trusted partner and innovator. We implement projects that model proactive and positive change on the ground, enabling the region to adapt to the needs of its diverse population, a shifting environment, and a sustainable economy. These projects empower the Sierra Nevada to be the best place to raise a family, seek adventure, learn, engage in community, grow a business, and find meaningful work – a place of hope and accomplishment. We act as steward leaders of the region, taking responsibility for the care and responsible management of our place. Our work is focused on finding common ground among the diverse voices of our region to advance positive impact in this place we call home.



Our Theory of Change





Our Foundational Values

Integrity

We lead with honesty, accountability, and commitment to our mission. We adhere to high ethical standards while striving for excellence.

Stewardship

We carefully and responsibly partner to lead the region and manage its resources to advance healthy, equitable, and sustainable natural and human communities.

Innovation

We help create new ways to proactively address complex issues where the collective solution exceeds the sum of the parts.

Prosperity

We strive to build a flourishing Sierra Nevada where the people and the environment can mutually benefit from our efforts and investments.

Positivity

We engage in positive thinking and positive behaviors, like kindness and generosity, striving for the best outcome for all involved. We believe that optimism is a force multiplier.

Systemetic Change

Our most aspirational value is to develop strategies and model new systems that are qualitatively more efficient, just, and equitable.



In the last 30 years, SBC has:



600 Directly managed more than 600 community and environmental improvement projects.

\$1.2 Billion Directly managed projects that brought more than \$1.2 billion in investment to the region.

\$3 Billion Worked with partners to direct more than \$3 billion to the region.

6,000 Provided technical assistance to more than 6000 businesses.

15 Worked with partners to foster the creation of 15 community-serving social sector organizations.

40 Served more than 40 jurisdictions with climate planning work.

SNC Worked with partners to help create the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

\$1.5 Million Managed more than \$1.5 million in revolving loan funds for regional entities.

250k Acres Worked with partners to permanently conserve more than 250,000 acres of farmlands, ranchlands, forests, and grasslands.

20 Published more than 20 research papers and reports describing the region's social, environmental, and economic conditions to the public and decision-makers.



How We Drive Change in the Sierra



We are Place-Based:

We are of, for, and about the Sierra Nevada. Our love for the region translates to a deep knowledge of its lands, people, and communities. The connections and relationships we have in the Sierra are the foundation that grounds our work in this region. We are committed to deep collaboration to solve problems and create opportunities.



We are Data-Driven:

We use the best available information, data, and science to create a strong knowledge base, sharpen insights, and focus attention. We value the lived experience in the region's communities and we make fact-based decisions. We believe that by measuring and understanding the data about our region, we can best address changing conditions.



We are Triple Bottom Line Focused:

We believe that the Sierra is best served when the community, the environment, and our economy are considered as an interdependent system. By equally valuing these three forms of capital—social, natural, and economic—we create social well-being, environmental health, and a just economy.



We Believe in Diversity:

We value all the people of this region and respect them as current and future partners who are integral to our success. We value, respect, and learn from tribal and native communities as the region's original residents while welcoming and supporting newcomers and new ideas. We have a responsibility to understand and correct injustices of the past. We are committed to valuing and working with everyone to improve our region.



We are an Intermediary:

We navigate the complex networks, partnerships, and community dynamics of the Sierra to share knowledge, convene, connect, facilitate, increase resources for, add capacity, and advance work that addresses the region's most difficult problems. We leave behind new capacities and partnerships to carry on the work.



We Look to the Future:

We work to increase social capital by creating new partnerships to amplify impact, financial capital by attracting new financial investment to solve problems, and environmental capital by restoring the resilience of our natural environment. We work across these three forms of capital to gain maximum advantage to improve our region.



Strategic Goals





Regional Policy & Advocacy Leadership

1

SBC is a respected and effective regional policy advocate at the state and federal levels. SBC drives positive impact in the Sierra through progressive, game-changing policy and is sought after for our expertise. We focus our efforts on the most impactful legislation and policy with the greatest potential return for the Sierra. Our advocacy advances triple bottom line solutions and intervenes to lift and link policy, planning, and implementation.

The primary strategies to advance this goal are:

1. Focus on mission-aligned, high-impact areas, including a broader range of social and economic policy interventions.
2. Build coalitions and partnerships for change across the urban-rural divide and throughout the state.
3. Expand partnerships with local governments and community organizations.



Energy & Climate Action Expertise

2

SBC is a trusted resource for local governments and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, maximize energy efficiency, and adapt to climate change across all sectors – including the natural environment, built environment, transportation, housing, and land use fields. We amplify and champion climate action and alternative energy solutions.

The primary strategies to advance this goal are:

1. Offer educational awareness, connections, coalition building, and workforce development activities
2. Provide direct climate mitigation and adaptation planning services to public and private sector partners.
3. Offer energy efficiency implementation services.
4. Develop and implement new projects on a case-by-case basis, focusing on energy codes, sustainability services staffing, energy storage, ZEV expansion, and increasing carbon sequestration.



Catalyze Sustainable Economies

3

SBC is seen as the sustainable economic development partner in the region. We help leverage capital into the Sierra to expand businesses, support NGOs, and increase capacity in local governments. We provide technical assistance and objective input to determine project feasibility and scalability. We acknowledge that small businesses are the economic engine of the region and support their success.

The primary strategies to advance this goal are:

1. Maintain and expand existing SBDC and Economic Development District Efforts.
2. Open and operate Eastern Sierra Business Resource Center.
3. Increase access to capital in the region by expanding revolving loan funds and community capital models.
4. Create specific workforce education and training programs to meet strategic objectives.
5. Create a program for Economic/Social Benefit Impact Analysis.
6. Implement and leverage Sierra Jobs First program.



Strengthen Operational Sustainability

4

SBC is known as an efficient, trusted partner with regional understanding, connections, and the ability to lead and implement critical work within the region. We effectively leverage our strong relationships and reputation to accelerate positive change. We operate in a fiscally responsible manner in pursuit of our mission. We invest in our mission by empowering our purpose-filled staff.

The primary strategies to advance this goal are:

1. Cultivate high performance, purpose-driven culture with improved retention and performance.
2. Promote transparent fiscal management, maintain fiscal responsibility, and strengthen cash reserves to sustain and safeguard SBC's future.
3. Secure organization stability and opportunities for leadership by developing a capital campaign to raise a \$3 million "Enterprise Fund."
4. Create a diversity, equity, and belonging program with a focus on diversifying SBC's staff and Board, increasing the staff's creative culture, and expanding program offerings to promote equity throughout the Sierra Nevada region.
5. Strengthen communication and marketing infrastructure and tools to support organizational objectives.



SIERRA
BUSINESS COUNCIL

sierrabusiness.org
November 2024