

Tourism and Economic Development

Economic Framework Strategy Development

Mayor and Council have formally adopted the six objectives and staff continues to work to activate these objectives. The framework objectives were not entirely captured within the new strategic plan and are currently being reviewed by the Economic Development Commission.

- Tourism and Retail Development with Mexico
- Maximize economic impact of municipal airport
- Improve and sustain parks and community events
- West End redevelopment
- Increase awareness of Sierra Vista
- Expand awareness and opportunity of military missions on Fort Huachuca

Priority 7: Enhance and improve infrastructure that supports Economic Development

Continue Ongoing Efforts to Revitalize the West End

Economic Development staff continues to work with Community Development to share the West End Partnership Grant opportunity with west end businesses and prospective businesses. Staff assisted and discussed the grant opportunity with new west end business Alien Pups Grooming, as well as Julie & Sammy's for their potential expansion.

Maximize Economic Impact of the Municipal Airport

Staff continues to work with Launch on Demand on the Spaceport Feasibility study for the potential spaceport re-entry Part 433 licensure. The feasibility study has reached 60% completion as of the August 6th meeting, with no indication of a negative outcome. The full study is still on track to be completed in October with a presentation to Fort Huachuca leadership and Council scheduled for October 8th.

Staff continues to engage with BlackStar Orbital and is happy to share that the company's CTO, Kit Carson, and his family have successfully relocated to Sierra Vista. CEO Chris Jeanette gave a successful brief at the July 9th Good Morning Sierra Vista. Staff coordinated a two-page advertisement focused on the spaceport and innovation that can be viewed at -

https://bit.ly/fdiallianceint_summer_issue_2024_sierra_vista

Priority 10: Actively engage economic development stakeholders, especially current and future potential businesses.

Expand support of, awareness of, and opportunity for military missions on Fort Huachuca

Nothing significant to report this period.

Economic Development Activities and Key Engagements

Bludot engagement software reports that so far this year staff has completed 2,083 total activities and engaged with 1,766 businesses out of 3,088. Here is how we are engaging.

Sky Islands Regional Partnership (SIRP) Engagements

Staff attended the Moonshot Rural Arizona state pitch competition in support of our Sierra Vista winner, Adam Mayer, founder and CEO of AIGM. Adam did a great job and gave a great pitch, but unfortunately did not win. He was, however, selected as the next tech-based business for the UACI Sponsored Launch Program. The City will share the cost of the sponsorship for AIGM through UACI's incubator program with the Sky Islands Foundation. Staff look forward to

receiving one more briefing from Port 194, the first tech-based business selected as a sponsored launch winner, as they approach the end of their year of sponsorship in November. Staff also supported ribbons cuttings and grand re-openings at Spruce and Sky, Haven Health, and Gunny's Barbecue.



University of Arizona Center for Innovation

August 19 at 3:01 PM

Congrats to Artificial Intelligence Game Master (AIGM) for winning the UACI Sponsored Launch, powered by the City of Sierra Vista and the Sky Islands Foundation! 🎉 They'll receive a year of incubation support to advance their AI-driven tabletop games.

Thank you to our partners and selection committee for making this possible. Together, we're driving innovation and economic growth in Southern Arizona! 🌟

#Innovation #AI #Gaming #UACI #CityofSierraVista #SkyIslandsFoundation #TechStartup



SEAZ Hispanic Chamber Partnerships

Staff continues to engage with the business members of the SEAZ Hispanic Chamber and attended two Chamber mixer events receiving updates from the City of Benson and Huachuca City.

SBDC and SBA Partnerships

Economic development staff continue to work with the Cochise SBDC on business engagement walks with local businesses and is working on plans for a 2024 Women in Business Conference on October 15th. Plans are also beginning for next year's DECA District competition.

Staff supported two AZ SBA VBOC Boots to Business classes, one for soldiers and family members on Ft. Huachuca and one new program specifically targeting military spouses held off the installation and hosted by Cochise College. There were several entrepreneurs interested in establishing a business locally upon their separation of service.

AREDF Partnerships

Staff participated in a tour of Ft. Huachuca hosted by the AREDF for members of Arizona Association for Economic Development. The event brought several economic developers from across the state to Sierra Vista to tour the Fort and gain a better understanding of the impact of military installations to their local communities. The event concluded with a mixer sponsored by Allo Fiber at Tombstone Brewing West End.

New Business

Staff distributed 25 donation boxes to various businesses and organizations throughout Sierra Vista and Cochise County. The total amount raised from city facilities and the hummingbird basket auction at the Visitor's Center re-opening totaled \$131.24. Businesses should be submitting their donations directly to SABO and we look forward to hearing the total raised by our Hummingbird Heros.

Staff also supported one courtesy inspection, four zoning compliance inspections, three pre-submittal development meetings and two DRC meetings for new development approvals. The City's inaugural summer internship opportunity has concluded. Of the 6 interns selected, one is now employed full-time as a CSR at the OYCC, and one has extended her tenure in Community Development until the end of the year. Interns completed a short exit survey to provide feedback on their experiences. All rated their experiences highly, stated they would consider City employment in the future, and felt that it was an experience that helped prepare them for future employment.

"I liked that I was able to gain work experience. As a high school student, I have found it hard to get a job."

"The team I worked under built the confidence to make headway for growing my professional experience."

"I loved meeting all the incredible staff and would love to continue to help improve the City of Sierra Vista."

"The TED department truly provided a wonderful internship experience that I hope will continue into the future."

Staff is looking forward to meeting with department directors and managers to gather their feedback and inputs for the future of the program.

Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission met on August 14th and selected the 2024-2025 business recognition program winners. Recognition of the 2024 minority-owned business of the year will take place at the September 12th city council meeting.

Staff will meet with Dean Packard, Chair of the Commission, on September 19th to discuss the commissions insight and finalization of a city economic development SWOT analysis. This analysis will serve as the basis for further discussion and development of an updated plan for prosperity at the next commission meeting, scheduled for Sept. 27th.

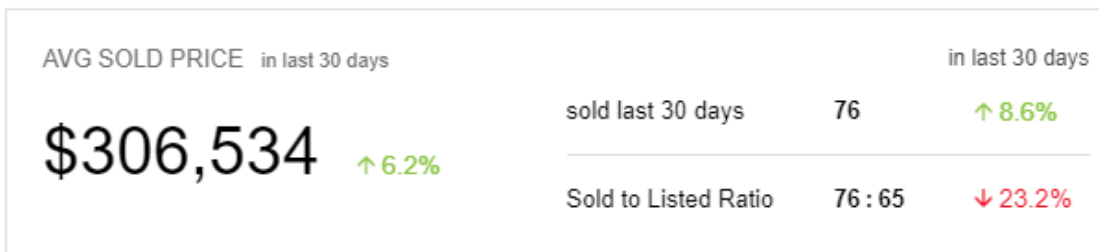
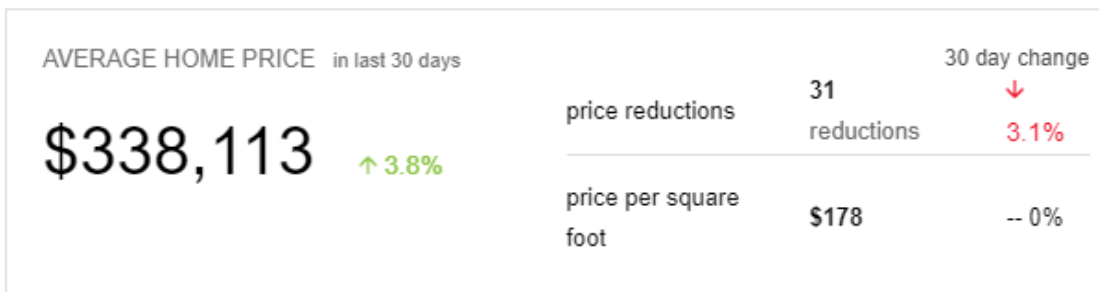
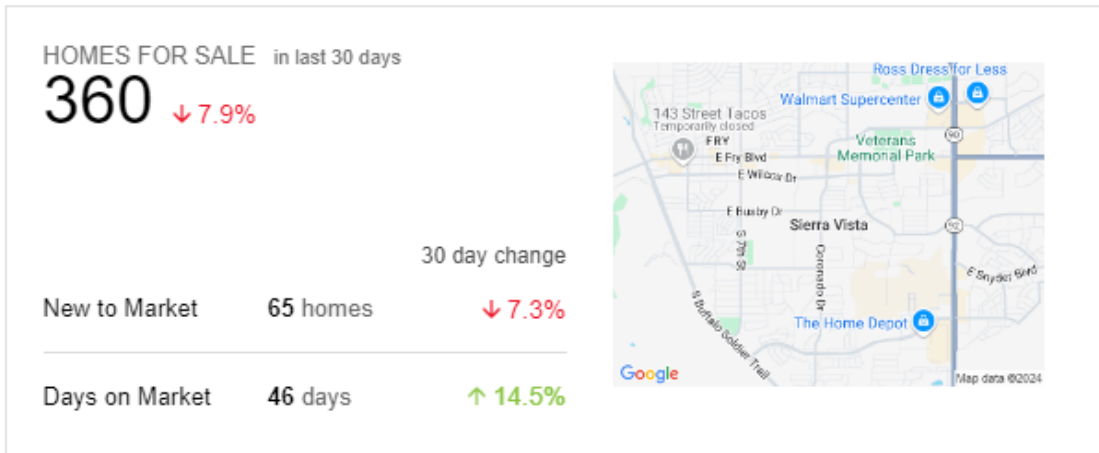
Jobs Report

The latest jobs report from AZ@Work shows 1042 vacant positions across Cochise County with 373 being in Sierra Vista, and 262 on or in direct support of Ft. Huachuca. Jobs in high demand on the Fort continue to be primarily in the information technology, cyber, and intelligence industries. In Sierra Vista nearly 46% of available jobs are direct care jobs within the medical field. Job vacancies in education remain the second highest, at almost 23%.

Housing Report

According to the August end of the month real estate report courtesy of Long Realty, the number

of homes for sale is down while the number of days on the market is up. Average list price and sold price are both up however price adjustments and reductions are being reported more frequently in the past 30 days, also representing a change from this time last year.



Initiative 14.2: Evaluate and consider Visitor’s Center and Museum Options

Nothing significant to report this period.

Initiative 14.4: Conduct Feasibility study for a regional convention center

This initiative has been overcome by the acquisition of the Sierra Vista Golf Center @ PDS. Staff have met with a structural engineer as well as an architect to identify the potential concepts to open up the golf center’s clubhouse to accommodate additional people for events, dinners, and other meetings.

Tourism Commission

The Tourism Commission is scheduled to meet November 4th at 1pm in the Oscar Yrun Community Center Conference Room. They will continue discussion of short term, mid-term, and long-term projects as well as upcoming community tourism events. They recently in July finalized volunteer work for Grand Re-Opening of the Visitor Center and the Southwest Wings Summer Festival. Staff worked in tandem with the commissioners and manned a booth at the Southwest Wings Festival.



Advertising- Print and Social Media

In July, staff put in an application with the Arizona Office of Tourism to participate in their Co-Op Program, where AOT pays for 50% of a DMO's ad selection. This year, staff made new selections for Google Ads, *San Diego Magazine*, Cactus League Digital Destination Guide in USA Today.com, AMERICA Journal, and Content Creator Evaluator from HypeAuditor. In August staff received word that they received all ads that were applied for. The Content Creator Evaluator was a deal, offered at no cost, and gives staff the ability to see the analytics of influencers to help determine audiences they may reach in advertising with an influencer.

In July, staff also launched a blog called Exploring Sierra Vista, with the hopes of reaching different audiences on Facebook and Instagram. The blog features itineraries, firsthand accounts of activities and events the city puts on, and advertising for upcoming events.

Visitor Center

At the end of July, staff hosted the Grand Re-Opening of the Visitor Center. Turnout was successful, with at least 70 individuals showing up. The Hispanic Chamber and Sky Islands Regional Partnership showed their support at the event.





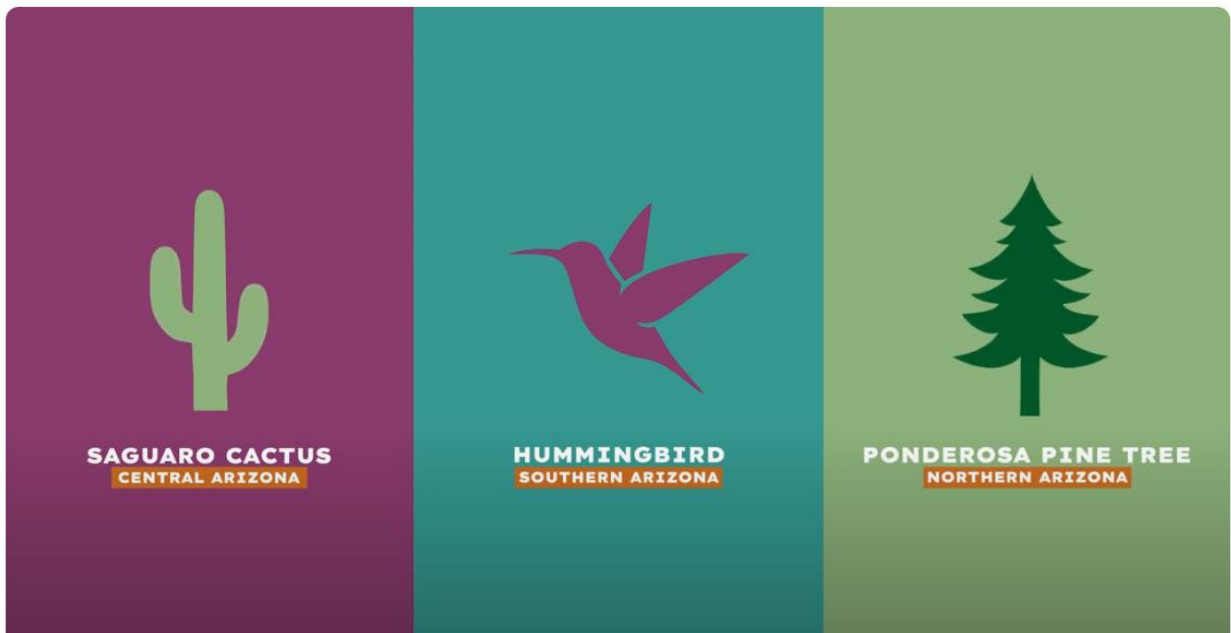
Sierra Vista Adventure Guide App

The Sierra Vista Adventure Guide App continues to be advertised at the Visitor Center, on social media, and the city website. By the end of August, staff saw 193 downloads of the app.

Governor's Conference on Tourism

In August, staff attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism. Staff took this opportunity to learn more about AI in tourism, sports tourism, micro-influencers, and wellness tourism. At GCOT, AOT revealed the new logo for Arizona and AOT that city staff supported by coordinating a listen session in Sierra Vista. One version of the logo features a hummingbird in homage to Sierra Vista being the hummingbird capital of Arizona. The video explanation can be watched:

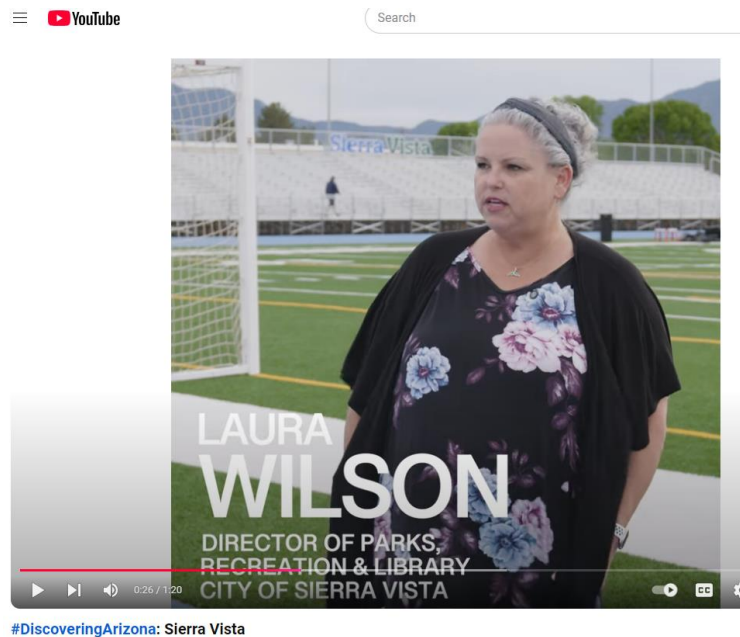
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvJAgVQ-AQ0>





Tourism Staff coordinated with AOT on their Discovering Arizona campaign with the City of Sierra Vista video highlighting our Parks, Recreation, and Library Sports Division and the community - Check out the Video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2sO4U2G0fo>





ExploreCochise.com

Cochise County Tourism and Economic Council (Explore Cochise) Executive Report

The City of Sierra Vista Tourism and Economic Development report includes a regular report for the Cochise County Tourism and Economic Council (CCTEC). The activities of the CCTEC are defined through an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the participating communities and Cochise County. Funds received from each entity are cooperatively invested in marketing efforts to promote Cochise County as a destination for tourists and economic investment. The Council committee members, defined through the IGA, are the Cochise County administrator and city managers from each invested community, which include Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Sierra Vista, and Willcox.

Ads: Print and Digital

Staff received data from the Visit USA Parks campaign that kicked off in May and ended in August. The campaign ran around the itineraries and blog posts put out from Sydney Rasmussen's visit to Cochise County back in April. The campaign received the following analytics:

- Impressions: 306,000
- Engagement rate: 28% (industry average is 8-12%)
- Link clicks: 5,300 (approx. 2,000 of these were to explorecochise.com)

Staff applied for the Arizona Office of Tourism Co-Op for CCTEC and took a focus on history, RV, culture, and arts to further represent all cities and towns in Cochise County. Notably, staff applied to ads for AZ RV guide, Smithsonian, *Sojern*, and *True West*. Staff was informed in August that they got all ads that were applied for and have begun to meet deadlines.

Benson City Council Visit: 12 August, 2024

Staff traveled to Benson on August 12th to go before Benson's City Council and propose a return for Benson to CCTEC. Benson City Council voted to pass this motion and Benson has begun the process to rejoin CCTEC.