



Santa Cruz County Business Council

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

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Greetings members and community partners,

It seems that every year, Santa Cruz County businesses face unique challenges. 2013 was no exception. Despite an improving economy, urgent issues still demanded our attention. This *2013 Annual Report* details the work we conducted over the past year to provide a strong, business-focused voice to meet these challenges.

Along with a review of the past year, we have also included an overview of our work plan for 2014. In addition to the information you will find inside, our Executive Committee has identified three focus areas for the next twelve months:

- [Regional Water Supply Policy](#)
- [Infrastructure Improvements \(emphasizing a strong "connection" between North and South County\)](#)
- [Local Vocational Education](#)

The Business Council (SCCBC) is an effective way to get involved with these and other local issues. Through SCCBC, you can work with other community leaders to find opportunities and solutions in keeping with our mission of supporting economic and community vitality.

SCCBC's standing and influence in the community grew significantly in 2013. We are often asked, both by public officials, media outlets and other local organizations, to comment on issues in order to represent "what the business community thinks." Our opinions are sought and valued.

We are not going to be shy: we need your input and participation moving forward. So please join a committee. Sign on to a letter. Comment on an initiative. We have been working on tools to make it easy to participate. We will explain how through the 2014 outlook in this *Report* and by communications coming your way throughout the year.

Thank you for your membership and support,

[Peggy Dolgenos](#)
CEO, Cruzio Internet
2014 Chair - Santa Cruz County Business Council



2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2013, SCCBC continued to successfully build upon the strong foundation we have established over the past few years. Keeping our focus on advocacy, engagement and education, we accomplished much over the past year.



4th Annual Forecast for the State and Local Economy

YEAR IN REVIEW - 2013

Advocacy

In 2013, we saw a number of issues arise that directly impacted the business community. From water, to broadband, to economic development efforts, the voice of the private-sector was engaged in policy discussions throughout the County thanks to the efforts of our members. For example:



City of Santa Cruz

Multiple times throughout the year, our leadership presented our priority areas to City officials. The following items were specifically addressed and positions were advocated for:

- *Regional Water Desalination Project* and other water supply-related issues
- Public pension/healthcare liabilities
- Specific development projects approved by the SCCBC Board of Directors



City of Watsonville

City of Watsonville

As a countywide organization, we place equal focus on topics affecting both northern and southern areas of the County. The following Watsonville-based issues were addressed in 2013:

- Measure T related to annexation of farmland by the City of Watsonville
- Downtown economic vitality through collaboration on an e-survey and public forums
- Concern over a lack of growth in municipal sales-tax and employment rate.



County of Santa Cruz

This past year saw County officials make a concerted effort to reach out to SCCBC in an attempt to further our working relationship and to include the business “voice” in policy discussions taking place. We advocated our positions/priorities on the following topics:

- Broadband infrastructure enhancement
- Our direct involvement in economic development initiatives including the *Economic Vitality Strategy* and *Sustainable Santa Cruz Transit Corridors Plan*
- Making the County more “business friendly” through streamlining the permitting process
- Re-writing antiquated County codes



SOQUEL CREEK
WATER DISTRICT

Soquel Creek Water District

We engaged with both the SCWD Board of Directors and staff to voice economic concerns over proposed policy changes related to the following:

- *Regional Water Desalination Project* and other supplemental supply options
- Mandatory water rationing and its effect on the local economy
- *Water Demand Off-Set Program* and how changes will affect local business
- A proposed moratorium on new hook-ups
- Specific development projects approved by the SCCBC Board of Directors

YEAR IN REVIEW - 2013

Engagement

Our work in the community relies a great deal on our engagement with local public-sector officials and our working relationships with other local business-focused organizations.

Government Relations

Members put forth considerable effort cultivating new and strengthening existing relationships with local officials. During 2013, we regularly visited with local leadership:



SCCBC with Supervisor Bruce McPherson

- City of Watsonville
- City of Santa Cruz
- City of Scotts Valley
- City of Capitola
- County of Santa Cruz
- Soquel Creek Water District
- Regional Transportation Commission
- State Assembly Member Mark Stone
- State Senator Bill Monning

Here are a few highlights from our engagement with local public officials:

- *Bruce McPherson, Santa Cruz County Supervisor, 5th District:* Engaged with members and staff on multiple occasions to outline SCCBC's direct involvement in the County's economic development efforts. Moving forward into 2014, one outcome is our role in the County's soon-to-be-launched *Business Retention & Expansion Program*.
- *Carlos Palacios (City Manager) and Kurt Overmeyer (Economic Development), City of Watsonville:* Members held working sessions on topics related to economic vitality, land use, and increasing the local

sales tax base. A major takeaway was the commitment to collaborate in 2014 on at least one (1) public forum centered on economic development to be held in Watsonville.

- *Hilary Bryant (Mayor) and Martin Bernal (City Manager), City of Santa Cruz:* Members held working sessions with City officials two (2) times during 2013 to discuss each others priorities related to water, economic development and enhanced communication from the City to the business community regarding public policy issues. One key outcome was the establishment of a direct channel of communication from the City to SCCBC related to upcoming policy discussions that impact local business.
- *George Dondero, Executive Director, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission:* Over the years we have maintained a close working relationship with SCCRTC. During 2013 we met with administrators on a regular basis to provide private-sector perspective on the following items:
 - *Regional Transportation Plan*
 - Highway 1 improvement projects
 - Rail line acquisition and management



Partners in the Business Community

Each year, SCCBC partners with other local business organizations on initiatives and discussions aimed at enhancing community vitality. Here are a few highlights from 2013:

Local Government Roundtable with the Silicon Valley Leadership Group

October 17, 2013 - Plantronics

Purpose: Private-sector leadership from Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz County briefing local public officials on private-sector priorities.

Be A Champion for Coverage with the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP)

September 30, 2013 - Watsonville Civic Center

Purpose: Local launch of Covered California

YEAR IN REVIEW - 2013

Education

Each year, we host/co-host a number of business-related forums throughout the County. These popular events provide educational opportunities for our members, public officials and the interested public. Here are a few highlights:

National Economic Forecast

February 20, 2013 - Santa Cruz

Comerica Bank's Robert Dye (Chief Economist) and Dennis Johnson (Chief Market Strategist, *pictured*) provided their analysis of national and state economic conditions for 2013. The luncheon was co-hosted by the S.C. Chamber of Commerce and the S.C.C. Farm Bureau

**Public Pension Reform: Examining State & Local Level Issues**

April 11, 2013 - Capitola

San Jose City Councilmember Pete Constant, a long-time proponent of public pension reform, spoke to members and invited guests about local and future state-level reforms. A key takeaway was the announcement of a potential pension-related state ballot measure in 2014.

**Partners in Economic Vitality: UCSC, Local Business & Local Government**

June 24, 2013 - Santa Cruz

*Photo - Santa Cruz Sentinel

SCCBC and UCSC hosted a forum on promoting better collaborative strategies between academia, business and government. The following served as speakers:



- Charles Canfield, Santa Cruz Seaside Co.
- Art Ramirez, UCSC Dean of Engineering
- Jess Brown, S.C.C. Farm Bureau
- Bob Murphy, Wells Fargo Insurance
- Hilary Bryant, Santa Cruz Mayor
- Ryan Coonerty, Entrepreneur
- George Blumenthal, UCSC Chancellor

Navigating the Affordable Care Act

July 30, 2013 - Aptos

Covered California's Michael Lujan conducted a Q&A seminar for local business owners on key points of the Affordable Care Act. This event was coordinated in partnership with the CA Office of Business Development, the Health Improvement Partnership, S.C. Chamber of Commerce and the Central Coast Small Business Development Center.

**Deep Water Desal: A "Private" Supplemental Supply**

September 19, 2013 - Watsonville

Members and guests participated in a discussion led by officials from Deep Water Desal (DWD) in Moss Landing. DWD is working to form partnerships with municipalities throughout the region in order to provide a "private" supplement water supply option.

**4th Annual Forecast for the State and Local Economy**

December 3, 2013 - Santa Cruz

Dr. Jeffrey Michael, Director of the Business Forecasting Center (University of Pacific), provided a detailed overview of the Center's annual state and local economic forecast. Over 150 guests attended.



YEAR IN REVIEW - 2013

Items of Interest & Recognition

Board of Directors Guest Speakers

In order to better educate our members and to put faces behind the SCCBC name, our Board invites guests to brief the group on local issues at each monthly meeting. These briefings typically center on policy-related issues impacting the private-sector. Guests during 2013 included:

- Zach Friend, County Supervisor, 3rd District
- Jim Weyermann, G.M., Santa Cruz Warriors
- Randy Johnson, Mayor, City of Scotts Valley
- John Leopold, County Supervisor, 1st District
- Bonnie Lipscomb, Economic Development, City of Santa Cruz
- Barbara Mason, Economic Development, County of Santa Cruz

Member Support

Special thanks to the following SCCBC members that hosted events and meetings during 2013:

- Chaminade Resort & Spa
- Cruzio Internet
- Santa Cruz County Association of Realtors
- Dominican Hospital
- PAMF/Sutter Health
- Graniterock
- Physicians Medical Group of S.C. County
- The Crow's Nest
- UCSC
- Hotel Paradox
- Shadowbrook Restaurant

Administrative Accomplishments

Under the guiding hand of Executive Director Joe Foster, building a strong infrastructure to support the organization was a major focus during the last calendar year and we're proud of the results.



Planning Retreat-Oct. 31st

Accomplishments include:

- Held 1st annual "all-members" meeting (*February - Cruzio*)
- Conducted first Board of Directors planning retreat (*October - Chaminade*)
- Development of new website (*2014 launch*)
- Social media reach expanded (*Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn*)
- All committees met on a regular basis
- Expanded the Board of Directors
- Strategically increased membership

Special Recognition

Each year individuals and organizations merit special recognition for their service to SCCBC.



Individual

Bob Murphy,
Wells Fargo
Insurance Services
SCCBC Chair 2013



Organization

Shadowbrook Restaurant,
for contributions toward
strengthening & growing
our membership

New Members in 2013



SCCBC IN 2014

Looking Ahead

With 2013 in the rearview mirror, we turn our attention to 2014 and beyond. The following section provides information on our leadership for the next year, as well as key details pertaining to our individual committee work plans.

2014 Executive Committee

Chair	Peggy Dolgenos	Cruzio Internet
Vice Chair	Karl Philipovitch	Graniterock
Treasurer	Mike Machado	Community Member
Government Affairs	Tom Hart	PAMF/Sutter
Membership	Ted Burke	Shadowbrook Restaurant
Infrastructure	Karl Philipovitch	Graniterock
SCCBC Staff	Joe Foster	Executive Director

2014 Board of Directors



SCCBC IN 2014

Committee Work Plans

Government Affairs & Economic Development

Objective for 2014

Be future-minded in all committee activities, promote opportunities; avoid negativity.

Focus Areas

- Public Policy
- Government Relations
- Workforce Development

Work Plan Highlights

Public Policy

Be vigilant on policy issues that affect the business community. From Scotts Valley, to Santa Cruz, to Watsonville, communicate on a monthly basis with governing bodies.

Workforce Needs

Committee members will work with the local education community to assist in better addressing the workforce needs of local employers through vocational training.

A “Business Friendly” Santa Cruz County

Committee members will work with the County’s Economic Development staff to communicate successes achieved through private- and public-sector collaboration.

Infrastructure & Transportation

Objective for 2014

To provide issue-specific education for the private-sector, and by the private-sector, related to infrastructure projects and policy.

Focus Areas

- Regional Water Policy/Initiatives
- Connecting the County (North & South)
- Regular Meetings with Public Works Officials

Work Plan Highlights

Connecting the County

Committee members will promote policy positions that enhance the connectivity of the

entire County. Areas of emphasis will be broadband, water and transportation.

Transportation-Business Survey

The Committee will facilitate a survey of businesses focusing on the needs/challenges they face with current conditions of local transportation infrastructure. Policy recommendations will be made.

Regional Water Policy

Committee members will monitor and participate in water policy discussions throughout the County. SCCBC will have direct representation on the City of Santa Cruz’s *Water Solutions Citizens Advisory Committee*.

Membership & Programs

Objective for 2014

To ensure that members feel their investment in SCCBC benefits their organization and the county-wide business community.

Focus Areas

- Membership Retention and Recruitment
- Public Forums and Member Events
- Communications (Internal and External)

Work Plan Highlights

Enhanced Advocacy

Committee members will manage advocacy efforts through *VoterVoice*, software which facilitates easy and effective participation in public policy discourse. At least one initiative monthly.

Public Forums and Member Events

Members-only and public events will be held throughout the year. The goal is to hold an event every other month. We plan to partner with other local business organizations when appropriate.

Communications

A new website will be introduced, along with a more clear, concise monthly e-newsletter.



**Santa Cruz County
Business Council**

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