

# Community Engagement Overview

## Stanislaus 2030

December 5, 2022 | Community Meeting



**DEBRIEF**

# Level Setting & Agenda

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## Our Perspective to the Work

### Thesis

Our responsibility is to gather data and feedback that represents the different communities that make-up Stanislaus County, with special attention to the marginalized and underserved.

### Approach

Connecting with the community in **four strategic ways** that offer varying levels of intimacy to ensure we connected with as many people as possible:

- Focus Group (High-Touch)
- Community Meetings (High-Touch)
- Forums (Medium-Touch)
- Survey (Low-Touch)

## Contents

### Community Engagement Strategy

- *Engagement Findings*

### Economic Opportunity Survey

- *Engagement Findings*

### Formal Community Re-Engagement Plans

### How to Connect

# Community Engagement Strategy

# Community Engagement Methods

Our outreach engagements from mid-February to May to reach broad segments of the population

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## Community Meetings

Community Meetings were held with Metro Rotary, West Modesto, South Modesto, East Modesto, Patterson, and Riverbank



## Forums

Forums were held with CMN Catalyst, Young Professional, and University Students from MJC and CSU Stanislaus



## Focus Groups

Focus Groups were held with Women, Latin, and Black-owned businesses, Trade School administrators, and Civic Leaders

# Community Segments

The groups we prioritized for engagement.

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## Minority Business Owners

Small and mid-sized businesses founded and ran by people of color.



## Civic Leaders

Stakeholders who hold positions in social and public sector organizations, are members of local NPOs, or lead local congregations



## Developing Neighborhoods

Residents who live in historically lower income neighborhoods in West & South Modesto).



## Young Professionals

University students and early-career adults who are navigating building a career in Stanislaus County.

# Community Engagement Findings

# Minority Owned Businesses

Profile.

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“

I come from a small town called Linares in Mexico where I grew up seeing my grandma making fresh corn tortillas.

Since childhood I've dreamed of running my own business. When I came to the United States and faced a new language with a new culture my American dream felt beyond my reach...

My hope is businesses like mine find support in knowing the permit and legal process faster. People start a business with big dreams and hopes. Those dreams can end before they even can start because of all the legal, licensing, permitting, and tax laws. It is still hard for me. I hope it gets easier.

”



**Gabriela Hernandez**  
CEO & Founder, Masavena Tortillas (Patterson)

# Minority Owned Businesses

Highlights and takeaways.

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## Highlights



### Pre-Seed

Finding support (business model; pricing; etc.) to build their idea is a hurdle as founders feel they do not have the business acumen to launch.



### Startup

Access to capital for young companies, navigating legal landscape, and marketing that assists customer acquisition are expressed needs.



### Established

Recruiting the “right” talent is an internal hurdle and understanding and support navigating the tax system are expressed needs.

## Takeaways

1

Pre-launch expenses are large barriers (e.g., entity formation, permitting, etc.)

2

Lack startup funding and their networks are also similarly financially constrained

3

The more established the company, the more technical its needs are (e.g., tax law)

4

Economic “flattening” of low-income neighborhood entrepreneurialism

# Young Professionals

Profile.

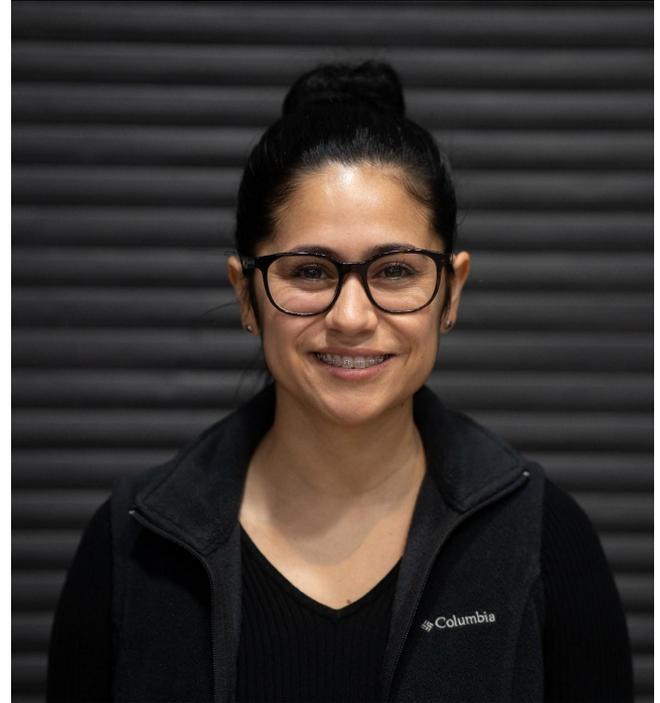


When I graduated from UC Merced it was the start of the pandemic, so I didn't really have anything [a job] lined up. While I was in school, I'd go to job fairs, but it wasn't clear [hiring process].

I felt like I didn't know enough about myself, and it sucked because although you were able to learn about your major in school, I didn't learn how to use my degree to find the ideal job.

Here I am trying to find my own way with so many challenges, but one thing that has helped me is my community.

It really has been them; my growth didn't stop in those programs [college]. My growth has continued through my community, and it has helped me grow personally as well as professionally.



**Gabriela Diaz**  
Volunteer, CMN (Modesto)

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# Young Professionals

Highlights and takeaways.

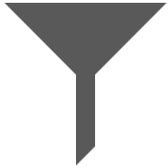
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## Highlights



### Lack Career Navigation

Career building is patch-worked: they feel there no support for those who want to enter certain fields but lack skill sets.



### Entering Local Industries

Lack awareness of the hiring process for local large business; concerns around the lack of transparency in the hiring process and DEI training.



### Career Training & Education

Believe that career training happens to late in the education journey. And they feel it is rushed at the university level.

## Takeaways

1

Building generational wealth is a priority, but lack the investment aptitude to do so

2

Unsatisfied in their career trajectory but do not know how to change careers or reskill

3

Have a sense that large local companies prefer outside talent and don't look local

4

Have an interest in entrepreneurialism but are too debt burdened to take the risk

# Young Professionals

Selected quotes.

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“The challenges I currently face as a college graduate is finding a career that pays enough and includes benefits.”

**Monica Hernandez**, *Youth For Christ*

“As a fitness coach, some compare the price of a gym membership to the price of hiring an actual coach. Because they struggle to make ends meet it's harder for them to spend on someone's services. So, my worth automatically goes down based on economy.”

**Jorge Rodriguez Jr.**, *Private Fitness Coach*

“The rising cost of living combined with inflation is impacting me the most.”

**Naythn Lopez**, *Modesto Police Department*

# Civic Leaders

Profile.

“

How I got into farming was that my parents both immigrated, separately, from Holland after World War II. When my dad came to the United States, he started as an agrarian. Then in 1983, my family got into almonds, and we have been doing it ever since.

My vision for the community is that agriculture remains a large part of our local community.

My hope is that there's an increase in technical education and jobs here, especially when it comes to agriculture and some of bigger local industries, and especially when it comes to youth. I envision an increase in training of mechanical jobs to support local industries and the economy.

”



**Paul Van Nes**

Partner, Van Nes Farms (Modesto)

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# Civic Leaders

Highlights.

## Highlights



### **Youth Career Building**

Concerns that the network of youth programs are not adequately preparing youth for adulthood; expressed interest in career placement and training.



### **Prioritizing Underserved Communities**

Concern that a “perfect storm” of inflation, higher rent, wage gaps, lack of community trust and access to services will increase wealth inequity.



### **Desire Clear Direction for Collaboration**

Social sector leaders know they play a role in supporting economic development, but do not what that role is or how to get involved.



“I hope that this efforts goals get accomplished through its collaborative focus which in turn will strengthen our economy and address current and future needs of our residents”

-- Maria Arevalo

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# Developing Neighborhoods

Profile.

“

Our family still qualifies for WIC and MediCal, which I am so thankful for because even though my kids are off in college, we still qualify because of our income so that really helps. It gives me peace of mind knowing they don't have to pay out of pocket.

There's a lot going on here in West Modesto that can be improved. Just because our communities are of poverty doesn't mean we are not human.

There's people who work full time. Not everyone in the community belongs to gangs, not everyone does drugs... A lot of people in the community who are hardworking.

”



**Blanca Marin-Candelario**  
Program Manager, WMCC (Modesto)

# Developing Neighborhoods

Highlights and takeaways.

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## Highlights



### **View the Economy as an Access Issue**

Concerns that a lack of access to essential services (e.g., banking, public transportation, healthy food) hinders economic vitality.



### **Perception Hinders Growth**

Residents point to closed store-fronts, lack of maintained public spaces, and dirty streets prevent business growth and push businesses out.



### **Educational Disparities**

Believe lack of school quality in poor areas creates poverty because children are less interested in college and not a degree is needed for a good job.

## Takeaways

1

**Community revitalization is viewed as helping grow, attract, and keep business**

2

**A strong belief that racial and income discrimination keeps communities poor**

3

**Lack of trust and information keeps the underground economy from mainstream**

4

**Legal status, criminal records, and debt burdens create hurdles to employment**

# Developing Neighborhoods

Selected quotes.

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“Talento tenemos todos; nada más nos falta el permiso para trabajar. Si nos dieran permiso para trabajar a los que ya estamos aquí, hubiera más trabajadores y crecería mucho la comunidad”

“We all have talent; all we need is permission to work. If those of us who are already here were given permission to work, there would be more workers and the community would grow a lot”

“Mi amiga se la pasaba llorando hasta que un sobrino de Los Angeles le ayudo y pudo entender sobre los permisos que se ocupaban para abrir una panadería. Tuvo que invertir todos sus ahorros, pero gracias adiós ya la abrió y toda va muy bien.”

“My friend spent her time crying until a nephew from Los Angeles helped her and was able to help her understand the permits that were required to open a bakery. She had to invest all her savings, but thanks to God, she opened it and everything is going very well.”

“My hope would be to see more opportunities for small business growth and guidance.”

**Sterling Fountain, King Kennedy Center**

# **Economic Opportunity Survey (EOS)**

# The Economic Opportunity Survey (EOS) spotlights community member views on economic opportunity in Stanislaus County

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The survey defined economic opportunity as how community members can realize economic mobility to attain their personal goals and potential.

Survey questions were asked to track the following sentiments:



How are community members feeling.



How do community members perceive a high-functioning economy.



What is the outlook of community members.

# EOS was meant to gather personal experience with the state of the economy, post-pandemic, from broad segments of the public

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## EOS by the Numbers:

**Total Survey Submissions: 765**

**Total Survey Completions: 527**

**Centricity of Submissions: 71.3% Modesto** *(via telemetric)*

## Representation by Cities:

- Turlock: 6.2%
- Ceres: 1.1%
- Riverbank: 2.8%
- Oakdale: 3.2%
- Patterson: 4.3%
- Newman: .7%
- Salida: .3%
- Hughson: .7%
- Waterford: .4%



La encuesta para residentes sobre oportunidades económicas de [Stanislaus 2030](#) destaca las opiniones de los miembros de la comunidad local sobre las oportunidades económicas, los obstáculos que enfrentan y el camino que sigue para crear una economía más inclusiva.

Su participación ayudará a ilustrar el estado actual de la economía local y su trayectoria siguiendo adelante.

Todas sus respuestas se mantendrán confidenciales y anónimas.



## Distribution Channels:

**Key Distribution Channel:** Paid social media ads

**Rationale:** 83.7% of Latina/o adults use social media and offered the largest reach (*EOS in Spanish/English*)

# EOS Key Findings

# Demographic breakdown of EOS represents an emergent segment responses from the local population

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## \*Demographic Breakdown:

### Racial

- **Non-White:** 61.2%
- **White:** 34.6%
- **Did Not Respond:** >5%

### Gender:

- **Female:** 45.5%
- **Male:** 42.1%
- **Non-Binary:** >2%
- **Transgender:** >1%
- **Other:** >2%
- **Prefer Not To State:** >7%

### Household Income

- **Less than \$50,000:** 43.4%
- **More than \$50,000:** 55.8%

### Education:

- **High School or Less:** 32.5%
- **Some College:** 12.2%
- **College Graduate:** 55.4%

### Employment:

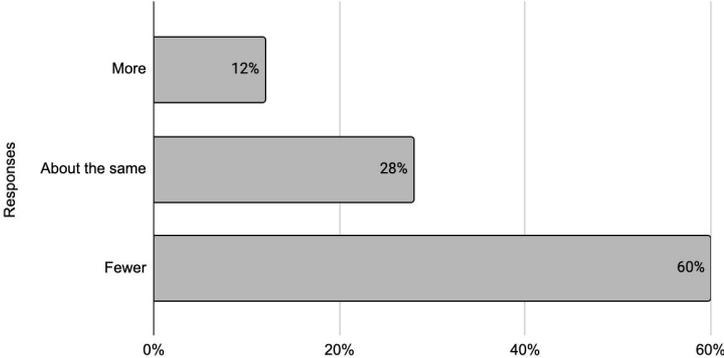
- **Employed:** 81.9%
- **Unemployed:** 11.6%

\*not every responded completed every demographic question

# Insight #1: Community members' current overall outlook is not optimistic

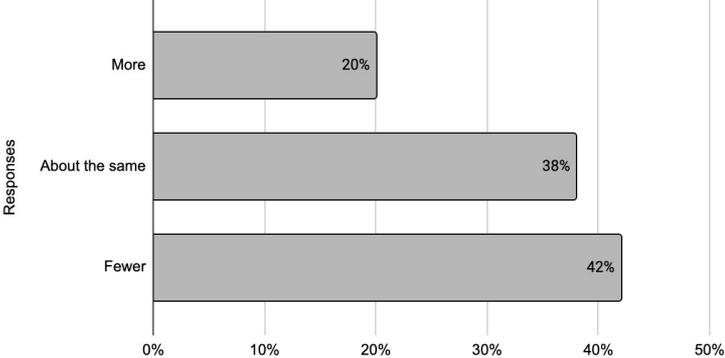
More than half of all respondents feel they have fewer economic opportunities than 12 months ago.

Would you say that you and your family have more or fewer economic opportunities now compared with 12 months ago?



Most respondents feel there will be about the same or fewer economic opportunities in the next 12 months.

Do you think that during the next 12 months, people in the community you live in will have more or fewer economic opportunities?

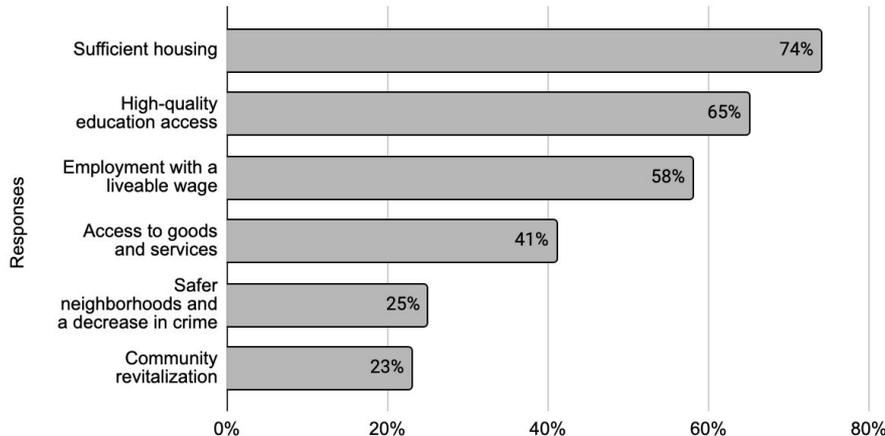


# Insight #2: Community members view the economy as an access issue

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**Most respondents believe a lack of access to essential services hinders socio-economic vitality.**

Which of the following demonstrates a strong local economy?  
(each respondent selected three options)



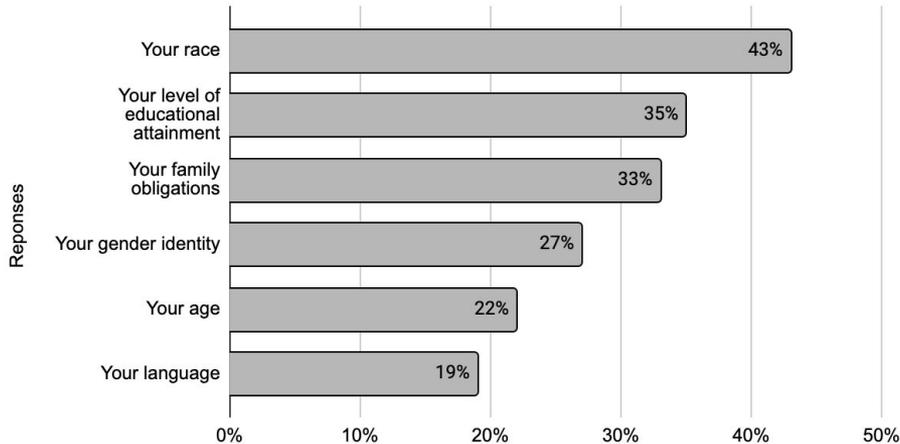
**In prior engagements, civic leaders expressed concern that a “perfect storm” of inflation, higher rent, wage gaps, lack of community trust, and access to services will exacerbate wealth inequity.**

# Insight #3: Many community members believe that their identity unfairly affects their job prospects

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**Certain groups we more likely to report that their identities negatively affect their career and job opportunities.**

To what extent, if at all, do you believe each of the following has a negative impact on your future job prospects?

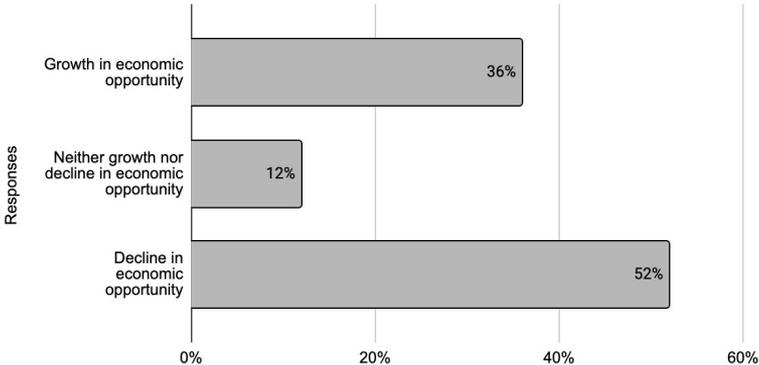


**Such perceptions can harm the economy by undermining employers' abilities to maximize employee engagement and effectiveness.**

# Insight #4: Community members are skeptical about their long-term economic prospects

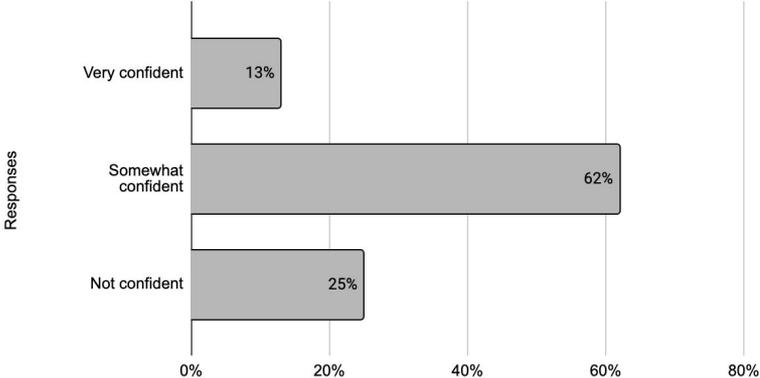
More than half of all respondents feel that economic opportunities will decline in the next 5 years.

Looking ahead over the next five years, which would you say is more likely: that as a whole, in the community you live in, there will be continuous growth in economic opportunity, or that economic opportunities will decline?



Respondents are unsure that they can reach economic prosperity with the current opportunities available to them.

Overall, are you confident in your ability to reach economic prosperity with the current opportunities presented in the community you live in?



# Formal Community Re-Engagement Plans

# December Timeline

Outlook of engagements for this month.



## Commitment to Public Access to Information

12/7 – Access to data and webpage summarizing engagement available

### Do you have recommendations for location?

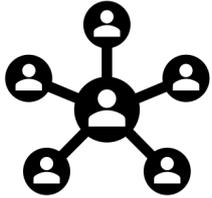
Please let us know if you have communities that you would like for us to connect with. At every meeting, we will distribute Spanish and English versions of the (1) Executive Summary and (2) Investment Blueprint. We are open to your perspective and partnership to disseminate the information.

# How to Connect

# Stay Connected

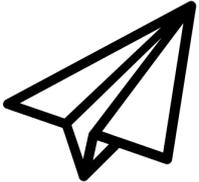
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## EMAIL

Emmanuel Escamilla  
[eescamilla@debriefmethods.com](mailto:eescamilla@debriefmethods.com)  
Nancy Martinez  
[nmartinez@debriefmethods.com](mailto:nmartinez@debriefmethods.com)  
Jose Borroel  
[jborroel@debriefmethods.com](mailto:jborroel@debriefmethods.com)

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