

FEBRUARY 2025

2024 BUSINESS LISTENING TOUR

TRUCKEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



INSIGHTS FROM THE TRUCKEE CHAMBER BUSINESS LISTENING TOUR

In the fall of 2024, the Truckee Chamber undertook a Business Listening Tour to hear directly from businesses in our community. The program's goal was to better understand the issues of our businesses' recent successes and to learn how the Truckee Chamber can better support those doing business in our community. The interviews were kept anonymous. Following is a summary of what we learned during this first Business Listening Tour.

LISTENING TOUR SECTIONS

- Economic Challenges & Successes
- Workforce Recruitment & Retention
- Training and Development Needs
- Chamber Collaboration & Support
- Advocacy Issues
- Partnership Opportunities

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Biggest Economic Challenges:

- Labor costs and workforce shortages are significant issues for local businesses.
- Rising operational costs, including rent, snow removal, and compliance with state regulations, are key issues as well.
- Weather-dependent businesses are particularly vulnerable to economic fluctuations such as droughts and unseasonable weather.
- Inflation and housing affordability have created barriers to workforce retention and overall business growth.

Recent Successes:

- Effective marketing and strategic expansions have contributed to revenue growth despite challenges.
- Community collaboration has helped businesses leverage resources and amplify their reach.

Impact of Unhoused Neighbors:

- There is minimal direct impact on businesses, though some expressed concerns about broader community implications.

Regulations and Financial Support:

- Businesses face challenges navigating state labor rules and high costs associated with local permitting and fee structures.
- Suggestions were to create roles like a town business liaison to streamline the permitting process and improve business interactions with local government.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Challenges:

- High housing costs make it difficult to attract and retain employees.
- Workforce recruitment is hindered by a lack of local affordable living options, forcing reliance on commuters from neighboring areas.

Effective Strategies:

- Offering competitive wages and benefits, flexible work schedules, and opportunities for growth within organizations.
- Providing housing assistance and implementing creative solutions like carpooling programs.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Desired Training Programs:

- Customer service, middle management, and leadership training.
- Technical training in AI and technology to improve operational efficiency.
- Spanish language classes to enhance inclusivity and communication.

Certification Needs:

- CPR and hospitality-focused training for specific industries.
- Community-based internship and mentorship programs to build a skilled local workforce.

Future Workforce Needs

- Anticipated workforce gaps require addressing housing affordability and expanding training opportunities.
- Structural changes like co-op housing for the private sector were proposed to improve workforce sustainability.
- Interest in creating childcare solutions to support working families.

CHAMBER COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

Chamber Priorities:

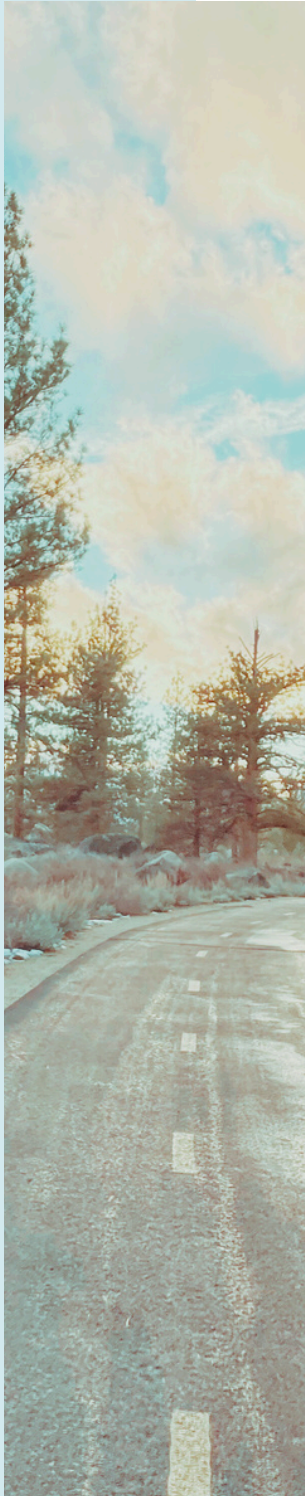
- Advocacy for affordable housing and streamlined regulations to support business growth.
- Providing resources and training programs tailored to the needs of local businesses.
- Strengthening partnerships with local organizations to foster a more robust support network.

Suggestions for Advocacy:

- Focus on improving accessibility to affordable healthcare and housing solutions for businesses.
- Collaborate with town agencies to enhance infrastructure and address systemic challenges impacting businesses



POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS & PARTNERSHIPS: EXPLORING IDEAS FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT



Throughout the Business Listening Tour, local businesses shared challenges and opportunities for improvement in Truckee's business environment. In response, we have outlined potential solutions and partnerships that could help address these concerns.

It is important to note that these ideas are not formal plans or commitments—rather, they represent possible collaborations and approaches that could be explored further. No partners or organizations listed have agreed to these solutions at this time. Instead, this section is meant to spark discussions and identify areas where businesses, community organizations, and local government might work together to create a more supportive economic environment.

These ideas focus on streamlining processes, improving business resources, and strengthening community partnerships, with the goal of making Truckee an even better place to do business. As these conversations continue, the Truckee Chamber of Commerce will work closely with stakeholders to explore feasible solutions that benefit both businesses and the broader community.

Permit & Zoning Improvements

- Streamline permitting and zoning processes to make it easier for businesses to expand, modify their spaces, or add outdoor features.
- Work with the Town of Truckee to create clear guidelines on what is allowed, reducing ambiguity in business operations.
- Create a “Get to Yes” culture within the Town of Truckee

Workforce & Housing Initiatives

- Most businesses recognize the impressive work the Town of Truckee and other community partners do in this space.
- Work with the Truckee Tahoe Workforce Housing Agency to expand housing programs to prioritize local workers.
- Work with partners to identify additional business incentives for housing solutions, such as employer-assisted housing credits.

Commercial Space & Infrastructure

- Work with Landlords and tenants to create a better system of understanding for tenant improvements.
- Work with the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association & Town of Truckee to analyze the current management and availability of parking.

Public Safety & Community Issues

- Work with the Truckee Police Department and businesses to improve the response to concerns related to unhoused neighbors, ensuring a balance of support and safety.
- Address downtown safety concerns without negatively impacting business foot traffic.

Local Marketing & Economic Support

- Work with Visit Truckee Tahoe and Truckee Downtown Merchants Association to enhance Shop Local campaigns and encourage year-round tourism that benefits small businesses.
- Support local events & promotions that drive business activity, particularly during shoulder seasons.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS



The insights from this Business Listening Tour will help shape the Truckee Chamber's advocacy efforts, programming, and strategic initiatives moving forward. We will continue working closely with our members, community leaders, and community partners to address these challenges and foster a thriving local economy.

If you have additional feedback or would like to discuss any of these findings in more detail, please reach out to Jessica Penman, at jessica@truckee.com, at the Truckee Chamber of Commerce.