



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: County Administrative Office
(831) 454-2100

Meeting Date: January 23, 2018

Recommended Action(s):

1. Accept and file this report on the "Vision Santa Cruz County" strategic planning process.
2. Direct staff to return with the draft vision, mission, values and focus areas on February 27, 2018.

Executive Summary

The County Administrative Officer initiated a countywide strategic planning effort in 2017-18, and this memo provides an update on the planning process. County staff spent the fall engaging with internal and external stakeholders and are using the input gathered to identify common themes. This information will be used to develop the draft vision, mission, values and focus areas.

Background

The purpose of strategic planning is to establish a long-term vision for the County and set a course of action through (1) overarching focus areas and (2) specific goals and objectives. This will require assessing the current landscape and trends, engaging internal and external stakeholders, and drafting and adopting a multi-year strategic plan and a shorter-term operational plan, which would inform County budget development.

Staff began preparing for this process by comparing existing models and formats in other counties and cities, reviewing department and subject-area plans, and receiving input on strategic plan development. This work led to the identification of five key strategic plan elements:

- **Vision** - reflects the collective understanding of the ideal situation
- **Mission** - identifies the County's role in pursuing the community's vision
- **Values** - provide the foundation on which the strategic plan is constructed
- **Focus areas** - represent strategic initiatives, which organize the goals of an organization into a limited number of categories or themes
- **Goals** - provide generalized statements of what the community wants to achieve consistent with its vision

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee (SPSC) met weekly for several months to finalize the strategic planning process that will lead to the development of these elements. This process has included internal and external engagement of the County's numerous stakeholders through a variety of in-person, electronic and other methods. Engagement efforts kicked off with employees in September and the community in November, which resulted in feedback from hundreds of staff and residents. Additional information on these efforts was provided to the Board on December 12, 2017.

Analysis

One component of our engagement was to release a community survey to internal and external stakeholders in mid-November. The online survey (available in English and Spanish) was distributed widely and closed at the end of December. By keeping the survey open for six weeks, which was longer than initially anticipated, we generated a large amount of input from the community. In total, the County received approximately 2,200 responses.

The survey consisted of seven questions and averaged 13 minutes to complete. It asked users to prioritize their vision and values based on a set of words derived from staff strategic planning meetings, including employee mixers. It also offered users a chance to give the County narrative input on trends impacting the County, County government's strengths and weakness, and what the County should be doing to maintain a high-quality standard of living. The result is a trove of information about where we are as a community and where we should be headed.

The County sent multiple press releases about the survey, which was the subject of several media stories. The County also emailed the survey to our community partners. Staff created email lists of as many members of various County Boards and Commissions as possible and sent survey links to those individuals. Staff also compiled email lists of nonprofit partners and sent survey links to leadership there, asking them to share with staff and clients. The Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Community Bridges, Pajaro Valley Shelter Services and the Salvation Army made bilingual paper surveys available to clients. Our local facilitator, Cynthia Cuéllar, provided additional outreach to the Digital Nest, Pajaro Valley Unified School District, Senderos, Center for Farmworker Families, Salud Para la Gente, Human Care Alliance and other personal contacts. With the assistance of the County's Economic Development Division, staff sent the surveys to various local chambers of commerce, which then shared the surveys through their newsletters.

County staff worked with the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) to reach local school districts, and several were able to make the materials available to their staff and local families. Staff also performed bilingual survey outreach at pop-up engagement events countywide by partnering with SCCOE Sueños participants, a program funded through the Workforce Development Board of Santa Cruz County to provide a supportive environment to improve job readiness for income-eligible youths. These events included Meals on Wheels lunch dining centers, farmers markets, the flea

market, Cabrillo College, and various community-based organizations such as the Gene Hoularis and Waldo Rodriguez Youth Center. Staff also attended farmers markets, two craft fair and holiday events, and a movie event held at the Santa Cruz County Veterans Memorial Building.

Links to the survey were posted on the County homepage, and the County ran regular Facebook posts and daily Twitter posts about the surveys. The County also ran parallel English- and Spanish-language paid Facebook campaigns to increase exposure of the survey. Each campaign ran for the duration of the survey period. About one-third of survey takers came from these paid Facebook ads, which give additional insights into survey takers.

- The English-language campaign ran countywide and had a reach of approximately 12,400. Of those, 64 percent were under age 45. The number of women filling out the survey outnumbered men by nearly 2-to-1.
- The Spanish-language campaign reached a younger audience, with 76 percent of its reach targeting people under 45. It also achieved greater gender balance than the English-language campaign, with 52 percent of its audience being women and 48 percent men.

Additionally, the vast majority of online users filled out the survey on either an iPhone or Android Smartphone device.

County staff continue to compile and review all of the input gathered through the engagement efforts to look for common themes. Utilizing this information, the SPSC will work with our strategic planning facilitator, Angela Antenore, to develop the draft vision, mission, values and focus areas.

Financial Impact

None.

Submitted by:

Carlos Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Recommended by:

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