



**County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors
Agenda Item Submittal**

From: County Administrative Office
(831) 454-2100

Subject: Update on Operational Planning Process

Meeting Date: December 11, 2018

Recommended Action(s):

- 1) Accept and file update on the Santa Cruz County Operational Planning Initiative; and
- 2) Direct the County Administrative Office to return in February 2019 with a further update and study session on draft countywide strategies.

Executive Summary

On June 26, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved a six-year strategic plan defining what the County stands for and what we want to achieve. The County Administrative Office (CAO) is now leading the development of a two-year operational plan, an actionable blueprint to fulfill the County's mission and realize the County's goals. An Operational Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) and subcommittees have been convened to develop the plan. The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the operational planning process.

Background

The Santa Cruz County Strategic Plan for 2018-2024 was approved by the Board on June 26, 2018. The plan was the result of a year-long effort led by the CAO and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee (SPSC). The SPSC engaged with thousands of County residents and staff to develop a vision, mission, values, focus areas and goals. Each of the strategic plan's six focus areas contains four goals, for a total of 24, which are presented online at www.SCCVision.us.

As outlined in the strategic plan, the County is working this year to develop a two-year operational plan for Board approval in June 2019. This will be the first of three operational plans aligned with the strategic plan. Each operational plan will develop further as the County implements complementary initiatives, such as continuous process improvement, and organizational change.

The operational plan will add countywide strategies, department objectives and key steps (formerly referred to as tactics) for achieving the 24 strategic plan goals. These elements are defined as follows:

- **Countywide Strategies** – Approaches for achieving strategic plan goals.
- **Department Objectives** – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely (SMART) actions that work towards strategic plan goals and countywide strategies.

- **Key Steps** – Critical activities or steps necessary to achieve each department objective.

The following diagram shows the hierarchy of strategic plan and operational plan elements. The full inventory of department objectives and key steps will be presented in the two-year operational plan, and a snapshot of department objectives and key steps will be presented in the two-year budget.



The OPSC and subcommittees, comprised of a diverse group of leaders and subject-matter experts from each functional area of the County organization, have been convened to develop the operational plan elements for each strategic plan focus area (Comprehensive Health & Safety, Attainable Housing, Reliable Transportation, Sustainable Environment, Dynamic Economy, and Operational Excellence). A copy of the committee structure is attached.

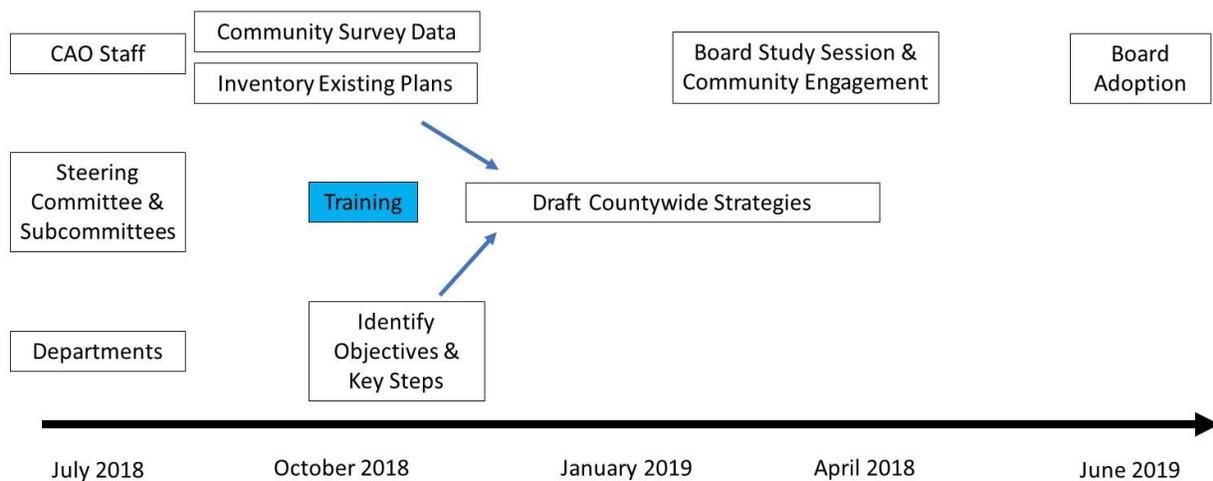
Analysis

In October, the CAO provided a staff training on SMART objectives and key steps. The goal of the training was to create a common language around setting accountable targets. Participants learned about the SMART framework and were encouraged to teach it to others in their department. All OPSC and subcommittee members, as well as department representatives, participated in the training and started their work shortly thereafter.

Following the training, departments were given instructions to draft objectives and key steps, and they submitted initial drafts by the end of November. The CAO is in the process of compiling this work and will present it to the OPSC and subcommittees in December. The OPSC and subcommittees will provide preliminary feedback to departments by January as well as proceed with the following work:

- **Countywide Strategy Formulation** – Using department objectives and key steps, as well as community survey data from last year’s strategic planning effort and an inventory of existing strategic and other plans, the OPSC and subcommittees will draft countywide strategies defining our approach to achieving the strategic plan goals.
- **Key Informant Conversations** – Subcommittees will solicit input and feedback on emerging countywide strategies through conversations with key informants, who have subject-matter expertise in a focus area.
- **Board and Community Engagement** – The CAO will conduct a study session presenting draft countywide strategies to the Board for input and feedback. In addition, the CAO will solicit public comment on the drafts in a similar manner to the efforts conducted during the strategic planning process.

A high-level timeline of the operational planning process is provided in the diagram below.



In conclusion, the OPSC and subcommittees are in the process of identifying themes and drafting strategies and will continue this work, with input and feedback from key informants, through January. The CAO will then return in February 2019 with the next update and study session on draft countywide strategies, and again in May 2019 with the proposed operational plan for Board consideration and feedback. A final plan will be brought to the Board for approval in June 2019.

Strategic Plan Element:

6.D (Operational Excellence: Continuous Improvement) - The development of the two-year operational plan is the next step in strategic plan implementation, and represents the blueprint for how the County will achieve its vision for a healthy, safe and more affordable community.

Submitted by:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Recommended by:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Attachments:

- a Operational Planning Initiative Committee Structure