



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

From: County Administrative Office
(831) 454-2100

Meeting Date: May 8, 2018

Recommended Action(s):

1. Accept and file report on the "Vision Santa Cruz County" strategic planning process.
2. Direct staff to return on or before June 12, 2018 with the draft strategic plan.

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 used the input gathered to develop the draft elements for the strategic plan.

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 requires 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 prepared 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 has led 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 began with employees in September and the community in

November, which resulted in feedback from thousands of county residents and employees.

Analysis

The SPSC took the data generated over the past six months and distilled it into the draft vision, mission, values and focus areas presented to the Board on February 27, 2018. Staff then used the input gathered through community meetings, employee mixers, surveys and emails to draft a set of goals in each focus area. The draft goals draw from numerous local community-based strategic plans and reflect the collective wishes and interests of thousands of county residents and employees who participated in the process.

There continues to be great interest within the community to participate. In order to allow everyone an opportunity to consider and prioritize the draft goals, staff released an online survey in April and extended the deadline to May 4, 2018. The results so far affirm the direction of the draft goals.

English- and Spanish-language versions of the survey have been distributed widely throughout the community, including direct emails to those who participated in the original survey or events, non-profits and members of County boards and commissions, local City Councils and additional groups as described below. The County has received more than 625 responses in English and eight in Spanish. Reaching Spanish-only speakers continues to be a challenge given the national climate regarding immigration and other issues impacting immigrant communities. However, more than one-quarter of English-language survey respondents have identified as non-white.

Staff have been coordinating with our local facilitator, Cynthia Cuéllar, to conduct targeted outreach to Spanish-language speakers. This has included reaching out to the Center for Farmworker Families, Senderos, Salud Para la Gente and Indivisible South County, meeting with the Parents Advisory Committee of the Migrant Education Program, and tabling at the Climate of Hope Community Gathering in Watsonville. There is also a plan to attend the Cradle to Career Celebration and Community Forum in Live Oak. Staff will continue to cultivate relationships and build on them as the strategic planning process moves forward.

Staff are also working on boosting participation among youth and their families. This has included reaching out to the County Office of Education, school districts and Digital Nest, and attending the Youth Services Teen Expo hosted by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Santa Cruz County and Youth Violence Prevention Task Force in Live Oak.

Lastly, our facilitator, Angela Antenore, facilitated small group meetings with employees at the end of April to solicit their overall impressions of the draft goals.

Staff are in the process of compiling and reviewing the results of this recent internal and external engagement in order to refine the elements and prepare the draft strategic plan, which will be presented to the Board on or before June 12, 2018.

Financial Impact

None.

Submitted by:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Recommended by:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

cc:

County Administrative Office