



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: County Administrative Office

(831) 454-2100

Subject: Progress Report on 2019-21 Operational Plan

Meeting Date: June 30, 2020

Recommended Action(s):

- 1) Accept and file second biannual progress report on the Santa Cruz County Operational Plan for Fiscal Years 2019-21; and
- 2) Direct the County Administrative Office to return in December 2020 with the third biannual progress report.

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 Board subsequently approved the first of three two-year operational plans on June 25, 2019. For the 2019-21 Operational Plan, 37 (21%) of the 180 objectives are complete, 12 (7%) objectives have been amended, 70 (39%) are in progress and on time, and 61 (33%) have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

The Santa Cruz County Strategic Plan for 2018-2024 was approved by the Board in June 2018. The plan was the result of a year-long effort led by the County Administrative Office (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 also developed a two-year operational plan that was approved by the Board in June 2019. To create the plan, the CAO convened an Operational Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) and six subcommittees made up of County leaders and subject-matter experts. In addition, the County conducted extensive community outreach, convening six focus groups of key informants, holding six open houses in the community, and presenting to over 20 local boards and commissions. The result is a plan reflective of community priorities, imbued with County values, and dedicated to achieving equitable, sustainable outcomes for all Santa Cruz County residents.

The operational plan adds countywide strategies, department objectives and key steps 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 Time-bound (SMART) actions that work towards strategic plan goals and countywide strategies.
- **Key Steps** – Critical activities or steps necessary to achieve each department objective.

The operational plan is a living document, and County successes and challenges will be transparent. Through the website www.SCCVision.us, the County will track progress on each objective, as well as local, State and national indicators that demonstrate progress towards achieving the County’s goals, mission and vision. The website will be refreshed biannually in December and June.

Analysis

All 180 operational plan objectives have been updated on the County website. The following analysis provides a brief summary of the County’s performance to date:

- 180 Total Objectives
 - 37 (21%) Completed
 - 70 (39%) In progress and on time
 - 12 (7%) Amended
 - 61 (33%) COVID-19 impacted
- June 2020 Deadline
 - 44 Objectives scheduled for completion
 - 17 (39%) Completed
 - 2 (5%) Amended
 - 25 (57%) COVID-19 impacted
 - 13 (52%) Delayed to December 2020
 - 12 (48%) Delayed beyond December 2020

Completed Objective Highlights

- **Objective 27:** Voting equipment has been upgraded to a new, more accessible system meeting state and federal requirements. (County Clerk)
- **Objective 56:** 827 County staff (a more than 15% increase) enrolled online in County benefits programs (Personnel)
- **Objectives 71:** Almost 4,000 service days of withdrawal management were provided, doubling the availability and provision of this service within the County. (Health Services)
- **Objective 76:** A Complete Streets to Schools Plan, identifying 19 safe routes to schools in the unincorporated area and Scotts Valley was completed. (Health Services and Public Works)

- **Objective 89:** Over 65% of the seniors participating in the MENU program reported less food insecurity according to a USDA assessment. (Human Services)
- **Objective 108:** A Community Education Specialist was hired and assisted over 10 farmers and ranchers in adopting farm practices that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. (Agricultural Extension)
- **Objective 114:** Phase I of the LEO's Haven playground at Chanticleer Park, an inclusive park for children of all abilities, was completed. (Parks)
- **Objective 131:** Amendments to the County's General Plan and land use regulations were completed to support the preservation of existing housing, including Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) policy, Enhanced Density Bonuses, and a new Permanent Room Housing Combining Zone District. (Planning)
- **Objective 174:** The County achieved a 20% reduction in the organization's carbon footprint compared to 2015, largely as a result of implementing Community Choice Energy. (County Administrative Office)

Amended Objectives

- **Objective 29:** Disposition of the property near 17th and Capitola Road delayed from June 2020 to December 2020 due to evidence of toxins in the soil. A mitigation plan is being developed, but has delayed the overall agreement. (Economic Development)
- **Objective 39:** Installation of additional electric charging stations delayed from June 2020 to June 2021 due to grant application not being funded. Applications are being prepared for the next round of funding. (General Services)

COVID-19 Impacted Objectives

The County's emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been a collaborative effort of the entire organization. Every department has altered its workload, and contributed staff and expertise to helping the community through this time. This shift in priorities was necessary, and meant reduced attention and bandwidth directed towards achieving the objectives of the operational plan.

A total of 61 (33%) objectives are reported as impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty-five of those objectives were due to complete in June 2020. Of those 25, 13 (52%) are anticipated to complete in December 2020. In other words, when departments are able to phase back into full operations, work on these objectives will resume and be completed.

A secondary impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the economic disruption. State and local budgets across the nation are under severe stress as demand for services increase. The County is closely monitoring federal legislation, the state budget

process, and local tax revenues in order to create a revised budget proposal for the Board to consider in August. Additional changes may be necessary through the fall.

For the remaining 48 COVID-19 impacted objectives, departments will report in the December 2020 update that they will either be completed on an amended timeline or discontinued. Objectives may be discontinued for several reasons, including not aligning with 'new normal' work environments, or budget impacts limiting resources.

A Bridge to Resiliency

The 2019-21 Operational Plan is at its halfway mark. Under normal circumstances, the CAO would be convening departments this fall to begin planning the 2021-23 Operational Plan. Due to the uncertainty created by the global pandemic, it is not practical to create a new two-year operational document.

Rather, the CAO intends to implement a one-year addendum to the current operational plan that focuses on department resiliency and community recovery. This will be done in three phases:

1. Fall 2020 - Implement a planned training for department staff on measurement using the principles of Results-Based Accountability (RBA). RBA tools can help departments focus their energy and resources on measuring impact, and focuses on three core questions:
 - a. How much did we do?
 - b. How well did we do it?
 - c. Is anybody better off?
2. Winter 2020 - Complete the assessment of COVID-19 impacted objectives for the December 2020 update. By this time, departments will be better positioned to project their operational capacity for the final six months of the current plan, and have early economic indicators for building their 2021-22 budgets.
3. Spring 2021 – Work with departments to create a one-year addendum to the operational plan adding objectives on department resiliency and community recovery. New objectives would build on ongoing resiliency and recovery efforts, would have to be completed within one year, and would focus on themes including but not limited to:
 - a. Ensuring an equitable recovery
 - b. Employee-driven improvements to adjust to the 'new normal'
 - c. Learning from the pandemic and preparing for the next emergency

The CAO continues to work closely with departments on reporting and measurement. All departments reported promptly and transparently for the June 2020 update, and we thank them for their incredible work during this trying time. The next update of the operational plan is due in December 2020.

Strategic Plan Element:

6.D (Operational Excellence: Continuous Improvement) - 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 Vision Santa Cruz County (www.SCCVision.us)