



## Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, June 8, 2021

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER VIDES

**SUBJECT:** 2021-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

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### **STATEMENT OF ISSUES:**

Every two years, the City Council sets in place a Strategic Plan that aligns the work priorities to the budget and sets forth a vision and priorities for the City and the services for the community.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council approves and adopts the Strategic Plan for 2021-2023.

### **DISCUSSION:**

**Background:** Since 1994, the Watsonville City Council has developed a Strategic Plan to reinforce long-term planning for both operating and capital projects. The Council Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the future that:

- Articulates the Council's priorities and guides its policy decisions.
- Enables staff to develop feasible, actionable strategies to address the Council's priorities, implement policies, and allocate resources effectively.
- Focuses the City's efforts to engage community members and agency partners in achieving the City's Mission.
- Enables the City to prioritize time and resources in alignment with the Council's priorities.
- Assists the City to be accountable in meeting the community needs.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

On April 10, 2021, City Council and Department Heads convened for a Strategic Planning Workshop to discuss and identify the priorities for the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan. The workshop was open to the public and facilitated by an outside consultant who helped the City Council review progress, past accomplishments, conducted a SWOT

Analysis and to lead a process to identify new Strategic Priorities for the next two years. In preparation for the Workshop the Consultant met with each Council Member to identify and document individual priorities.

After priorities were identified, Council and staff worked to prioritize the supporting strategies and work that will be executed by City Departments in support of the Council Strategic Priorities. Council and staff worked diligently to pare down an extensive list of important issues and created an extensive list of projects, initiatives, services and programs that will be part of the work plan for the next fiscal years.

The seven priorities identified during the Council Workshop were:

- Priority 1: Housing
- Priority 2: Fiscal Health
- Priority 3: Infrastructure & Environment
- Priority 4: Economic Development
- Priority 5: Community Engagement & Well-Being
- Priority 6: Public Safety
- Priority 7: Efficient and High Performing Government

The Strategic Plan will be a living document that features a comprehensive framework that can be adjust based on the current needs of the community. The Council will receive progress report on work accomplished during the midyear and annual budget report. At that time, the Council could consider adding, deleting or modifying the goals and strategies set forth in this document to address emerging priorities or in response of community needs.

The draft of the Strategic Plan is attached for review and final adoption by the Council.

#### **OUTREACH EFFORTS:**

**It is a priority of the Council to compile community input during the process of preparing the strategic planning document. For this effort, the following outreach was conducted:**

**Farmers Market** - Staff members attended the local Farmer's market to collect feedback regarding what they believe should be the Council's priorities using hands on interactive bilingual posters.

**Cabrillo College** – Staff stationed a booth outside Cabrillo's Watsonville Campus to capture the opinion of college students on what they believe should be Council's priorities. The same interactive bilingual posters were used to capture the information.

**Community Survey:** the City contracted with Great Blue Research to develop, conduct and interpret results of a survey directed to residents to gauge input on various topics ranging from City services to equality. The main goal of the survey was to inform the Council on the Strategic Planning Process by conveying community priorities. A total of 500 surveys were captured through phone fielding, 89 through social media links and another 145 were

captured through in person outreach at local fields, laundromats and supermarkets. The survey was designed to capture the following information from City residents:

- Level of satisfaction with City programs and departments
- How do City residents receive their information about the City
- Needs not being addressed by City Program or departments
- Assess current recreational /youth opportunities and support for new youth programs and
- sports facilities
- Perceptions of crime, drug use, and gang activity in the City, and support of funding to increase programs to address such issues
- Perceptions on the development of Watsonville's economy and affordable housing

This survey provides a statically valid sample of community opinions regarding all the priorities explored by the Council. Here is a summary of the input received per priority area:

### **Housing**

- Over four-fifths (84.1%) reported housing security and homelessness are very prevalent issues in the City.
- About two-thirds of respondents indicated the development of affordable housing units (40.5%) should be priorities for the City.
- More than three-quarters of respondents support encouraging more housing developments in the City.

### **Fiscal Health**

- About three-fifths (61.4%) of respondents support paying an amount in sales tax for the improvement and expansion of recreation programs, parks and open space.

### **Infrastructure & Environment**

- Nearly all residents (95.5%) of respondents support creating additional jobs and housing near existing infrastructure.
- Nearly three-fifths or respondents (63.9%) of respondents prioritized paving and repairing streets and roads.

### **Economic Development**

- More than three-fifths or residents indicated they are satisfied with dining opportunities in the City.
- About three-fifths of those surveyed (56.6%) see the City as an excellent or good place to work.

### **Community Engagement & Wellbeing**

- About three-quarters (74.1) reported they are satisfied with the opportunities to participate in community matters while 68.7% were satisfied with the opportunities to volunteer in the City.
- Roughly three-fifths (63.4%) of residents surveyed rated the sense of community in the City as Excellent or good

- Three quarters of respondents, (74.4%) rated the City as an excellent or good place to live.
- Nearly all respondents (96.7%) agree the Library is important to the vitality of the area.

### **Public Safety**

- Roughly two-fifths (39.5%) of respondents indicated reducing crime should be a priority for the City.
- The majority of respondents (87.5%) indicated there is a need for the City to develop more programs designed to reduce crime, drug use, and gang activity.
- 82.6% of respondents are satisfied with Police Department's efforts to reduce crime.
- 89.2% indicated they are satisfied with the Watsonville Fire Department's engagement with community.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

As the Council adopts this Strategic Plan to guide the City's work for FY 2021-2023, it is important to note next steps to evaluate and assess progress towards meeting these goals. The Strategic Plan is used to guide decision-making at all levels of the organization. It allows the City to focus on core functions and ensure that every department is working together towards common goals. To validate that progress was made towards that end, the City Manager Office will prepare two Strategic Plan Progress Report per year. The report will track progress by describing key accomplishments for each identified priority area and the investment that has been made in support of that priority. This reporting is a critical tool of communicating successes and challenges to staff and the community at large.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact associated with the approval of the Strategic Plan 2021-2023. Any individual programs and projects requiring budget allocations will be included in the proposed budget (to be reviewed by the City Council) or brought to the City Council for approval.

### **ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

The City Council may choose to direct staff to continue current services without the implementation of a Strategic Plan or may choose to edit the draft plan as necessary.

### **ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):**

None.