

# Capitola City Council

## Agenda Report



**Meeting:** February 4, 2025

**From:** City Manager Department

**Subject:** Strategic Plan Draft Review

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**Recommended Action:** 1) Receive a presentation from the City's Strategic Plan Consultant BerryDunn; 2) review the draft Strategic Plan and provide feedback; and 3) authorize staff to release the draft Strategic Plan for public review.

**Background & Discussion:** In Fiscal Year 2023-24, the City Council directed staff to initiate a Strategic Planning Project aimed at defining five-, ten-, and fifteen-year goals for the City. Recognizing the need for a structured approach, the Council allocated \$50,000 in the FY 2023-24 budget for this effort and approved a contract with BerryDunn, a consulting firm experienced in strategic planning, on December 14, 2023.

In March 2024, the City paused the project until the fall to allow for alignment with other City initiatives. In late summer, staff collaborated with BerryDunn to prepare for community and staff engagement, including writing surveys, developing outreach strategies, and coordinating stakeholder interviews. Staff presented an update on the Strategic Plan Project to the City Council on September 12, 2024. Also in September, staff met with BerryDunn project managers to evaluate progress and plan next steps.

### **Outreach & Public Input**

The project was publicly introduced to the community at the Capitola Wharf Grand Opening Event on September 25 and at an in-person community forum on October 1. Staff publicized the project to encourage broad engagement and participation with press releases, social media content across multiple channels, several articles in the biweekly City newsletter, and bilingual flyers distributed throughout the City. To reach a wider audience, staff utilized paid social media ads (reaching more than 30,000 accounts) targeting both English and Spanish speaking communities. Staff also modified the City website for easy, one-click access to project information and the community input portal.

In addition to the community forum, City residents and employees could provide input on their vision for Capitola in the following ways:

- Taking a digital or hardcopy survey (220 received, including Advisory Board members)
- Taking an employee-specific survey (33 responses received)
- Attending one of three virtual employee workshops (45 attendees)
- Visiting and contributing to the online community input/data collection portal (1,900 visitors)
- Emailing or writing to the City (several emails were sent directly to staff, and forwarded along to our consultant to be included in data synthesis)
- Participating in an individual or group stakeholder interview (45 held); stakeholders included:
  - City of Capitola advisory body members
  - Leaders of partner agencies such as Central Fire, Soquel Union Elementary School District, Soquel Creek Water District, Cabrillo College, etc.
  - Local non-profits & recipients of Capitola Community Grants, such as Friends of County Parks, the SC Children's Discovery Museum, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
  - Local business owners, commercial property owners, hoteliers, and developers
  - City Council Members and City Council Candidates
  - City Department Heads

## Drafting the Plan

After receiving and synthesizing the community input received, along with existing data from City documents such as Annual Budgets, Climate Action Plan, General Plan, years of likely-voter surveys, and the community-driven visioning document *Vision Capitola*, BerryDunn prepared an environmental scan of the City. This scan, along with further analysis of Capitola, was presented to the City Council during a public planning session on November 13, 2024. The scan was then amended to include additional public input data in January 2025.

During the meeting on November 13, BerryDunn worked with the City Council and Council Candidates to: develop mission and vision statements and core values for the City and assist in identifying key priorities for the strategic plan. This planning session allowed for visioning and brainstorming so the Council could synthesize public and employee feedback with existing City data to identify potential community priorities for Capitola over the next five years.

Since the planning sessions and to gain even more public feedback, staff agendized the strategic plan survey and provided hard copies to advisory body members who may not have already contributed; 12 additional surveys were received to achieve a nearly 100% response rate from all advisory body members.

## City Council Draft Plan Review

BerryDunn consultants will present the draft plan to City Council during the public meeting on Tuesday, February 4.

The draft plan includes two different options for both a City Mission and Vision Statement, a modified list of Capitola Values, and the following six proposed priorities for the City of Capitola:

1. **Community Safety:** We will be a safe and resilient community, relying on our trusted Police Department to collaboratively provide public safety and emergency preparedness.
2. **Sustainable Infrastructure:** Our community will build safe streets and public facilities that improve connectivity, fostering a vibrant City that is accessible and welcoming for all.
3. **Attainable Housing:** We will implement our Housing Element that balances diverse housing opportunities, supports varied income levels, and ensures thoughtful, community-focused attainable housing.
4. **Economic Opportunity:** We will create a thriving economy and maintain our regional shopping identity by supporting local businesses and national establishments in the Village, Bay Avenue, and 41st Avenue corridor.
5. **Healthy Families, Community, and Environment:** We will promote a thriving, inclusive City where families and individuals can grow together and connect in community spaces.
6. **Accountable Government:** We maintain the trust of our community by engaging residents through collaboration and effective communication while responsibly managing City resources and finances to ensure long-term stability.

Each priority includes five to six objectives with performance measures to aid the City in tracking how goals are achieved.

During the special meeting on February 4, the City Council will have the opportunity to review the entire draft document, ask questions, make changes, and formally receive the draft. After the meeting, the draft plan will be available for a public review period, allowing for the community to provide feedback with an online portal and survey.

Staff anticipates the adoption of the final Strategic Plan in early spring 2025.

## Public Review Period Outreach Plan

During the public review period, residents and employees will be asked to take a short, simple survey reacting to the draft plan and can contribute to an ideas wall. To encourage public feedback on the draft plan, staff intends to publicize the review period with a press release, social media content across multiple

channels, one-click access to the community input portal from the City website, articles in the biweekly City newsletter, and bilingual mailers to City residents.

Fiscal Impact: \$50,000 was allocated for this project in the FY 2023-24 budget. Future activities related to the strategic plan may require additional budget allocations as needed.

Attachments:

1. Draft Strategic Plan

Report Prepared By: Chloé Woodmansee, Assistant to the City Manager

Reviewed By: Julia Gautho, City Clerk

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager