



Legislation Text

File #: 2020-0527, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator

Staff Name and Phone Number: Katherine DiPasqua, 707-565-3779

Vote Requirement: Informational Only

Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Sonoma County Five-Year Strategic Planning Update

Recommended Action:

Receive report and provide feedback.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update to the Board of Supervisors on the Five-Year Strategic Planning process. Since the last time the Board engaged in this work in January 2020, staff have been working to refine the Strategic Plan pillar goals and objectives and develop an employee and community engagement plan. In light of the COVID-19 local emergency declaration, which has resulted in disparate impacts to people of color in the community, changing economic conditions, and new physical distancing requirements, we have adjusted the Strategic Planning materials and engagement plan to reflect the County's new reality. This item will provide more details on the five pillar goals and objectives, which have been reframed through the lens of economic resiliency and racial equity, and discuss the proposed engagement plan, updated timeline, and next steps.

Discussion:

Background

The County of Sonoma is in the process of developing a Five-Year Strategic Plan (Plan). County leaders will be asking our employees and community members to join in sharing input to identify strategic pillars, goals, and values to achieve a shared community vision. The Strategic Plan will provide the context to inform policies and projects that are prioritized for the next five years. The Plan will guide how we align short and long-term objectives with operations and budgets, so our actions reflect a clear sense of purpose and demonstrate meaningful progress.

Since late 2019, County leaders and Board members have been engaged in developing the base framework for the Strategic Plan. The Board of Supervisors discussed the base framework during its Strategic Planning Retreat on January 28, 2020 where five Strategic Pillars were identified and discussed. Those five Pillars are: Healthy and Safe Communities, Organizational Excellence, Climate Action and Resiliency, Racial Equity and Social Justice, and Resilient Infrastructure. A Steering Committee, consisting of two departmental leaders for each Pillar, was then formed to assist the County Administrator's Office with the development of the Plan.

Originally, staff anticipated the process to gather feedback from employees and the community and prepare the Plan would take six months, with the Board adopting the final Strategic Plan in August 2020. However, with the declaration of a local emergency to respond to COVID-19 in March 2020, Strategic Planning activities were temporarily suspended. As we begin to resume Strategic Planning activities, it is clear there will need to be some changes to the process and content in light of COVID-19's disparate impact on the County's Latinx population, a renewed focus on racial equity and public safety, changing economic conditions, and new physical distancing requirements. The CAO and Strategic Plan Steering Committee have worked together to evaluate the Plan through both Racial Equity and Economic Recovery and Resiliency lenses, updated the pillar goals and objectives, and reimagined ways to engage our employees and the community in a more virtual environment.

Strategic Plan Pillar Goals and Objectives:

The CAO and Strategic Plan Steering Committee have worked together to incorporate feedback received from the Board during the Strategic Planning Retreat and the Department Heads to update the Plan's strategic priorities. The Strategic Plan is comprised of five Pillars, which identify the most important strategic priorities for the County over the next five years. Each Pillar is supported by multiple Goals, the outcomes we want to achieve, and within each Goal, there are several Objectives identifying the milestones or measures of progress toward that Goal.

Below is a list of the updated Strategic Plan Pillar Goals and Objectives for Board consideration, prior to commencing the employee and community engagement efforts. The goals of the employee and community engagement process are to gather input and reactions to the Strategic Plan draft in order to refine the goals objectives, discover additional objectives for consideration, and understand the relative priority of the goals in the eyes of employees and community members. Please see Attachment 1 for a side-by-side comparison of the goals discussed with the Board in January and those presented today.

Healthy and Safe Communities Pillar

Provide quality and equitable housing, health, and human services for all.

Goal 1: Expand integrated system of care to address gaps in services to the County's most vulnerable.

- Objective 1: Seek legislation to eliminate barriers to data sharing between Safety Net departments (Human Services, Health Services, Community Development Commission, Probation, Child Support and others).
- Objective 2: Identify service gaps in the Safety Net system of services.
- Objective 3: Create a "no wrong door" approach to services to encourage individuals to enter services.
- Objective 4: Increase efforts to better integrate Health Action and Upstream Investments.

Goal 2: Establish equitable and data-driven distribution of services

- Objective 1: Safety Net departments will track results using result-based accountability (RBA) for key

programs in each department to establish common outcome measures.

- Objective 2: Develop dashboard tracking tools to collect data on common outcome measures across Safety Net departments.
- Objective 3: Identify and address disproportionate racial and social impacts.

Goal 3: Increase housing development near transportation and services

- Objective 1: Identify two or three County-owned properties for housing options, partnering with developers and the community.
- Objective 2: Create innovative funding sources for housing development.

Goal 4: Reduce homelessness by enhancing services based on coordination and collaboration

- Objective 1: Partner with cities to build a strategic plan for homeless strategies.
- Objective 2: Reduce current homeless population by 10% annually.
- Objective 3: Create a housing resource tool for Safety Net departments to efficiently assist residents with housing.

Goal 5: Continue to invest in public safety so that residents and visitors feel safe in our community.

- Objective 1: Focus on cultural competency training and de-escalation training and techniques for County workforce.
- Objective 2: Better integrate services and handoffs within the Safety Net departments.
- Objective 3: Expand the Mobile Support Team to work with law enforcement.
- Objective 4: Explore and expand detention alternatives with the goal of reducing the jail population and reducing recidivism.
- Objective 5: Conduct Outreach and engagement campaign with communities to build and strengthen community and law enforcement relationships, including education on the difference between calling 2-1-1 and 9-1-1.

Racial Equity and Social Justice Pillar

Achieve racial equity in County service provision and employment opportunities.

Goal 1: Foster a County organizational culture that supports the commitment to achieving racial equity.

- Objective 1: Develop a shared understanding of key racial equity concepts across the County and its leadership.
- Objective 2: Conduct a baseline assessment of racial equity awareness and understanding among County staff and assess progress annually.
- Objective 3: Establish an ongoing racial equity learning program.
- Objective 4: Establish equity-focused work groups to advance equity initiatives across all departments in collaboration with Office of Equity and Equity Officer.

Goal 2: Implement strategies to make County workforce reflect County demographic across all positions.

- Objective 1: Identify opportunities to enhance recruitment, hiring, employee development, and promotional processes to reflect the value of having the perspectives of people of color represented at all levels in the County workforce.
- Objective 2: Begin implementing strategies to recruit, hire, develop, promote and retain County employees of color, produce annual report card assessing progress, and update strategies as needed.

Goal 3: Assure racial equity throughout all County policy decisions and service delivery.

- Objective 1: Establish a Sonoma County Office of Equity and a permanent Equity Officer position.
- Objective 2: Establish a racial equity analysis tool for departments to use for internal decision-making, policy decisions and implementation, and service delivery.
- Objective 3: Establish regular reporting on racial equity in County policies, programs, and services.

Goal 4: Engage key community and internal stakeholders to develop priorities and to advance racial equity.

- Objective 1: Develop a community engagement plan with a focus on racial equity, and establish a process for engagement and collaboration.
- Objective 2: Collaborate with community stakeholders to incorporate a racial equity lens into County economic recovery and resiliency planning.
- Objective 3: Begin implementing strategies for regular community engagement to guide racial equity efforts.

Organizational Excellence Pillar

Be an innovative, effective, engaged, and transparent organization focused on quality programs and services.

Goal 1: Strengthen operational effectiveness, fiscal reliability, and accountability

- Objective 1: Align policy and operational goals with funding.
- Objective 2: Establish master list of technology needs that support operational/service improvements, establish priority order, and develop fiscal strategies to fund improvements.
- Objective 3: Establish expectations and performance measures for customer service.
- Objective 4: Streamline routine administrative procedures and work flows and delegate more operational authority in order to re-direct workforce resources to more strategic priorities.

Goal 2: Increase information sharing and transparency and improve County and community engagement

- Objective 1: Develop a community engagement and outreach strategy that is focused on inclusion and diversity.
- Objective 2: Ensure County budget process and information is understandable and accessible.
- Objective 3: Develop a website that is more customer friendly and community focused.
- Objective 4: Develop a baseline of community expectation and satisfaction, and develop a community

relations management strategy.

Goal 3: Become an employer of choice with a diverse workforce that reflects our community, and an employer with a positive work culture that results in engaged and developed employees.

- Objective 1: Implement programs and opportunities to support employee work-life balance and positive work environment, including a Telework Policy.
- Objective 2: Conduct an employee engagement survey, and develop and implement strategies to address employee feedback.
- Objective 3: Continue developing employees and leaders through high-quality and multi-dimensional training and succession planning.

Goal 4: Seek out grant funding to enhance programs and improve infrastructure

- Objective 1: Secure \$60 million in grant funding for strategic priorities.

Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar

Make Sonoma County carbon neutral by 2030.

Goal 1: Make all County facilities carbon free and zero waste.

- Objective 1: Design or retrofit County facilities to be carbon neutral and zero waste.
- Objective 2: Design or retrofit County facilities that promote and maximize telework to decrease greenhouse gas emissions of employee commute.

Goal 2: Maximize sustainability and emissions reductions in all County Fleet vehicles.

- Objective 1: Any County car, van or truck, leased or owned, will be 100% all-electric by 2030.
- Objective 2: Improve the fuel efficiency of all County Fleet medium and heavy-duty vehicles by 25% by 2030.
- Objective 3: Invest in the County's employee Clean Commute program to allow for the use of County all-electric vehicles at key public transportation hubs to support a 'Last Mile Transit' Program for the County.
- Objective 4: Upgrade the existing County's Electric Vehicle charging station infrastructure by 2023, and expand to new locations by 100% by 2030, prioritizing locations accessible to disadvantaged and hard to reach populations.

Goal 3: Maximize Carbon Sequestration through land conservation work and land use policies.

- Objective 1: County General Plan and other county/special district planning documents will incorporate policy language that includes climate actions, resiliency measures and maximizes sequestration on both public and private lands, while mitigating for natural disasters such as fires and floods.
- Objective 2: Develop a carbon sequestration program, where carbon is captured and stored in plants or

soils, with an emphasis on maximizing sequestration on working lands and other open space lands by 2030.

Goal 4: Invest in the community to become carbon neutral by 2030.

- Objective 1: Develop permit fee reductions for carbon neutral construction for new and existing homes.
- Objective 2: Support microgrid communities/energy grid resilience to eliminate carbon producing alternatives during power shutdowns, prioritizing critical infrastructure and vulnerable populations.
- Objective 3: Provide grants or funding that incentivizes property managers and renters to retrofit existing multi-family housing towards achieving carbon neutral buildings.

Resilient Infrastructure Pillar

Enhance services to the community by investing in County facilities and infrastructure; including roads, buildings, communications, and flood protection.

Goal 1: Invest in County buildings and technology solutions to enhance service delivery and improve employee mobility.

- Objective 1: Design new County Center to be carbon neutral and zero waste; and pursue carbon reduction and zero waste plans for remaining County facilities.
- Objective 2: Adopt design standards for County office improvement projects to maximize opportunities for telework and incorporate revised workstation space standards.
- Objective 3: Develop technology tools that enhance employee mobility and promote virtual service delivery models in order to reduce County facility space needs.
- Objective 4: Establish neighborhood/regional and satellite service centers in order to improve access to services.

Goal 2: Invest in capital improvements to ensure resiliency of services and improve disaster preparedness.

- Objective 1: Strengthen critical communications infrastructure and information technology tools relied upon during disasters to ensure critical services continue.
- Objective 2: Ensure resiliency of electrical power at County facilities used for evacuation sites, warming/cooling centers, or as alternate facilities for delivery of critical services.
- Objective 3: Replace aging and undersized Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to improve disaster preparedness and response.

Goal 3: Continue to invest in critical roads infrastructure.

- Objective 1: Continue to maintain road segments, increase efforts on vegetation removal and drainage features, and improve pavement conditions in neighborhoods.
- Objective 2: Increase investment on preventative maintenance on all infrastructure/facilities.
- Objective 3: Seek out funding for critical transit corridors and future transit opportunities.
- Objective 4: Construct new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, where appropriate, and adopt

maintenance guidelines on roads to consider bicyclists and pedestrians.

- Objective 5: Develop policies to promote installation and install infrastructure for electrical vehicle charging stations.

Goal 4: Implement countywide technological solutions to promote resiliency and expand community access.

- Objective 1: Invest in communications infrastructure within the community to improve broadband and internet access.
- Objective 2: Leverage existing fiber optic infrastructure and grant opportunities to expand broadband access across County.

Goal 5: Support, fund, and expand flood protection.

- Objective 1: Develop partnerships with cities, tribal governments, and private organizations regarding flood protection and sustainability to identify gaps and address climate change impacts.
- Objective 2: Implement land use planning and assessments to address flood protection, including river setbacks and riparian corridors.
- Objective 3: Evaluate the feasibility, creation, and/or update of Flood Protection Plans and seek out financing mechanisms to establish protection zones countywide.

Economic Recovery and Resiliency Framework for Strategic Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected federal, state, and local economies, and it is clear that Sonoma County's Five Year Strategic Plan will need to address the County's economic recovery and resiliency. The Steering Committee considered a few options to accomplish this, including creating a new Economic Recovery Pillar, either by adding a sixth pillar or replacing one of the other pillars. However, it was determined that it would be most effective to maintain the existing pillars, and instead evaluate each pillar through a lens of economic recovery and resiliency.

Using recommendations from National Association of Counties (NACo) and contributions from Department Heads during a November 2019 Strategic Planning session, the Steering Committee undertook an exercise of evaluating each pillar through three economic resiliency strategies; Long Range Planning, Support for Targeted Industries, Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs, and Workforce Development and Education.

Examples of How Economic Resiliency Strategies Fit Within Strategic Plan:

1. Long-Range Planning

Identifying the County's strengths and weaknesses and investing resources to help build capacity to bolster resilience to changing economic conditions. For example, by investing in critical County facilities, roads, and communications infrastructure, the County is using Long-Range Planning to be more resilient and adaptable to changing environmental and economic realities (Investing in Infrastructure Goals).

2. Support for Targeted Industries, Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs

Building stronger local economies that are more resilient to changing conditions by assisting existing businesses, growing local entrepreneurs, and supporting reimagined service delivery models for a post-COVID reality. For example, by investing in green technologies and supporting virtual and regional service delivery models, the County can also help support local businesses and public-private partnerships, and potentially develop clean energy entrepreneurs (Climate Action and Resiliency Goals).

3. Workforce Development and Education

In a time of substantial job loss, high unemployment rates, and long-term job displacement, the County needs a strong and stable workforce to attract and grow industry, support local livelihoods, and foster competitive regional economies. As the Sonoma County's largest employer, the County will be able to retain a strong workforce and bolster resilience to changing economic conditions by strengthening our operational effectiveness and fiscal reliability, maintaining a diverse workforce, and promoting a positive work culture (Organizational Excellence Goals).

The Strategic Plan will also be informed by the efforts of the Economic Development Board's (EDB) Economic Recovery Task Force, which was formed in June 2020. In partnership with the Office of Recovery and Resiliency (ORR), the Economic Recovery Task Force will work to support business and community recovery and develop a long-term Economic Recovery Strategic Plan. The Economic Recovery Task Force, which includes three Work Groups, is comprised of community leaders from the business community, Latinx community, nonprofit agencies, labor and workforce, local government, and education.

The three Work Groups will focus on Business Recovery, Workforce Recovery, and Community Recovery. The Business Recovery Work Group is focusing on disaster readiness, access to capital, regulatory innovation and urgency ordinances, and economic diversification. The Workforce Recovery Work Group is focusing on re-skilling/training childcare solutions, talent retention, and safety net (for the workforce). And finally, the Community Recovery Work Group is focusing on access and functional needs, creative placemaking, housing and transportation, and climate and energy.

Much of the Work Group focus areas align with the goals and objectives included the Five-Year Strategic Plan, including disaster preparedness, housing, climate and energy, workforce development, and economic diversification. As the Economic Recovery Task Force's efforts progress, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, which has representatives from EDB and ORR, will work to make sure both plans are aligned and also support the goals and objectives of the County Recovery and Resiliency Framework approved by the Board in December 2018.

Employee and Community Engagement

The goals of the employee and community engagement process are to gather input and reactions to the Strategic Plan draft, discover additional objectives for consideration, and understand their relative priority in the eyes of employees and community members.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement on the Strategic Plan will begin in October. There will be a variety of ways for employees to engage with the Strategic Planning process. The first is an online survey that will be sent to all employees seeking input on the Pillar goals and objectives. We will also host a series of facilitated, virtual focus groups on each of the five pillars with a targeted number of employees. We have asked Department Heads to select employees of varying job classes and from different program areas to participate in the focus groups, with the goal of reaching 5% of the total employee population. The virtual focus groups will be 1 ½ to 2 hours long with 10-12 participants in each group. Background materials will be provided to participants in advance of the sessions as a primer for the discussions. Depending on interest levels and time available, we will do our best to accommodate as many employees as we reasonably can.

For employees who were not selected to participate in the focus groups, we will host virtual Drop-In Open House sessions for each of the five pillars. These will be 3 ½ hour blocks of time, where employees can participate for up to 30-minutes. Each Open House will have a facilitator and Strategic Plan resources available so that employees can provide feedback or ask questions in an interactive environment. The format will be flexible in order to encourage broad participation. Employees will be able to drop in to share their ideas and listen to others, and then leave the session. In addition, we have created a Strategic Planning email address so employees can contact us if they have questions about the process or pillar goals and objectives.

Racial Equity and Social Justice Employee Engagement

In light of the COVID-19 impacts to the Latinx and other indigenous language-speaking communities, it is clear that Sonoma County's collective well-being and prosperity are impacted by racial inequities. The Black Lives Matter demonstrations and demands, both locally and across the nation, provide a critical lens through which to view the challenges and opportunities before us. By focusing on racial equity and social justice in the Strategic Plan, the Board of Supervisors can begin to institutionalize equity, address the disparate impacts of disasters on people of color, and address the disparate access to resources and support both internally as an organization and in the community. During the Board's Strategic Planning session in January 2020, Board members included Racial Equity and Social Justice as a pillar to mark their commitment to addressing racial equity issues. In July 2020, the Board reaffirmed that commitment by approving the creation of a new Office of Equity and the appointment of an Interim Equity Officer to focus on the immediate needs of the County.

In partnership with the new Interim Equity Officer, Sonoma County Racial Equity Alliance and Leadership (SoCoREAL), and Sonoma County Latinx Employee Resource Network (SoCoLERN), we have updated our engagement plan on this Pillar accordingly.

Over the next three months, the Office of Equity and key partners, will be convening a series of small group discussions to design a strategy and launch an employee engagement process that will support this Pillar. In November, we will also host targeted Strategic Plan focus groups for employees who either work on racial equity and social justice efforts within their departments or have received prior racial equity and social justice training. In addition, we will be hosting a virtual Drop-In Open House session that will be available to all employees. As with the Open Houses on the other four Pillars, the format will be flexible in order to encourage broad participation.

Community Engagement

We will be launching community engagement in mid-October. Similar to employee engagement, there will be

a couple of ways community members will be able to provide input on the County’s draft Strategic Plan. One way to provide input will be an online survey, which will be available in English and Spanish. Community members will be able to review each Pillar’s goals and objectives and rank their level of support and identify which are the most important for the County to pursue. They will also have the opportunity to let us know if they think there is something missing from the goals and objectives that should be considered.

We also will be developing a “Session-in-a-Box” for County stakeholder groups, including business, Latinx and other community groups, to engage their members and collect feedback. These packages will include the Strategic Plan materials, talking points, and exercises that will allow community partners to provide input on the Strategic Plan materials before they are finalized. And like the employee engagement Open Houses, we will host a virtual Open House for community members to provide input. This Open House will be an all-day session, covering all five of the Strategic Plan pillars, and will be facilitated by a Spanish speaker. Strategic Plan Steering Committee members and resources will also be available to answer questions and collect feedback. To encourage broad participation, community members will have the option of calling in or participating by video. They can also reach out to us by email with questions or input at StrategicPlanning@sonoma-county.org <<mailto:StrategicPlanning@sonoma-county.org>>.

Timeline and Next Steps

After today’s review with the Board of the Plan’s goals and objectives, proposed engagement plan, and timeline, we will begin the next phase of development and planning for the employee and community engagement, launching in October. We will also be working with the Information Systems Department to develop informational webpages and an Online Strategic Plan Dashboard, which will allow employees and members of the public to view the County’s progress on each of the Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives over the next five years. Below is summary of the next major milestones in the Strategic Planning process:

Strategic Plan Activity	Estimated Start
Employee Engagement	October 2020
Community Engagement	Mid-October 2020
Employee Engagement on Racial Equity Pillar	November 2020
Incorporate Employee and Community Feedback into Plan	November 2020
FY 2021-22 Budget Instructions Sent to Departments	December 2020
Board Reviews Draft Strategic Plan	January 2021
Board Adopts Final Strategic Plan	February 2021
Launch Online Strategic Plan Dashboard	February 2021

Prior Board Actions:

January 28, 2020 - Board of Supervisors Strategic Planning Retreat

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			

Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This item is informational only, there is no fiscal impact at this time.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Attachments:

1. Comparison of Pillar Goals (from January 2020 to Current)
2. Pillar Goals and Objective Details
3. Strategic Plan Handout
4. Presentation

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board: