

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR ROGERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CHAIR WEEKS AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING
COMMISSION
FROM: AMY LYLE, SUPERVISING PLANNER,
ANDY GUSTAVSON, SENIOR PLANNER, AND
BEATRIZ GUERRERO AUNA, EQUITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH
PLANNER, PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: 2050 GENERAL PLAN VISION STATEMENT

AGENDA ACTION: STUDY SESSION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning & Economic Development Department that the City Council and Planning Commission receive a report and provide input on the 2050 General Plan Vision Statement Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vision Statement will help shape the goals and policies of the 2050 General Plan which is branded as the “Santa Rosa Forward” project. The draft Vision Statement is based on community input gathered at virtual public meetings, workshops, and surveys held between April and June 2021. The finalized Vision Statement will incorporate input from the Planning Commission and City Council and will be used by the Project Team to build land use and circulation alternatives for multiple General Plan scenarios. These alternatives will be presented in the Fall of 2021 for public review. Based on comments received one alternative will be chosen by the Council in order to move forward to the environmental review phase (2022). In this way, the preparation of the Vision Statement is a vital step to help ensure that Santa Rosa Forward represents the desires of the community.

BACKGROUND AND PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

In March 2020, the Planning & Economic Development Department started the Santa Rosa Forward project. This three-year project includes a comprehensive update of the City’s existing General Plan.

On March 3, 2020, Council authorized a comprehensive update of the 2035 General Plan for a total contract amount of \$2,500,000 (Professional Service Agreement F002144).

On August 25, 2020, Council accepted the Community Involvement Strategy (CIS) for the Santa Rosa 2050 General Plan Update. At this same time the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was assembled with representation from the City's diverse neighborhoods and interests and from each of the Council Districts. CAC members will provide an on-going input on project work products and will serve as liaisons to help to promote broad and inclusive public engagement. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was also convened with City departments to provide the Project Team with ongoing technical advice and guidance.

On October 13, 2020, Council amended the General Plan Update Professional Service Agreement to include an update to the Climate Action Plan and increase the total contract amount to \$2,599,909.

On December 8, 2020, Council accepted the Community Advisory Committee Member Selection Process and approved the Community Advisory Committee Organizational Framework.

SANTA ROSA FORWARD VISION PROCESS

The following Santa Rosa Forward work products and engagement activities have been completed to help to build draft Vision Statement.

1. Existing Conditions Report

The Existing Conditions Report was released in December, 2020. This technical background document analyzed and summarized a variety of data including demographic, economic, land use, community character, mobility, natural resources, infrastructure, environmental justice, community health, and other conditions in Santa Rosa. The Existing Conditions Report will serve as a backbone for all future work on this project with the goal of helping the community and project team understand the issues and opportunities facing the community. The analysis was used to support the initial development of the Vision Statement. The report is available on the project website: <https://www.santarosafoward.com/>

2. Briefing Book

The Briefing Book was released in February, 2021. The Briefing Book is a high-level summary of the major findings and take-aways from the Existing Conditions Report. The summary includes important background information and emerging opportunities organized into six key topical areas. It is meant to be a highly visual and concise tool for community engagement to help frame discussion around data and issues. The Briefing Book is available on the project website.

3. Community Survey #1: The Heart of Your Neighborhood

The first community survey was launched in February, 2021. The survey asked people to identify the “heart” of their neighborhood and to draw boundaries for their neighborhood. The neighborhood-focused questions allowed the project team to better understand specific information about individual neighborhood and community needs. For instance, the top answers to the “heart of your neighborhood” question included: (1) where people live; (2) where people shop or get services; (3) and is a place that reflects who we are as a community. The key takeaway is that these core services, amenities, and special places are how we are defining our neighborhood centers.

The survey also asked participants to identify the most important challenges facing Santa Rosa today and into the future. Top responses included: (1) protecting against natural hazards (fires, floods, earthquakes); (2) creating housing for all; and (3) enriching community public services and amenities (parks, services, retail). The survey concluded with a question about what excites people the most about the future of Santa Rosa. Top responses included: (1) more affordable housing for different incomes; (2) improved water, air and environmental protection; (3) equitable access to public services and community amenities for all residents; (4) and new jobs and employment opportunities.

Over 1,300 community members completed the survey and based on the demographic data collected, respondents included a diversity of residents, business and property owners, students, and employees representing all parts of Santa Rosa. Detailed Community Comments and Engagement Summaries are available at <https://www.santarosafoward.com/VisionFeedback>

4. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

On March 18, 2021, the TAC met to review the takeaways from the Existing Conditions Report and discuss their department priorities and vision. This discussion included identifying key challenges and opportunities facing the City and the community. This helped to confirm existing conditions and identify some initial vision statements.

5. Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

On March 31, 2021, the CAC met for the second time to review the Existing Conditions Report and Briefing Book and to have an open discussion around a future vision for Santa Rosa. CAC members, representing their particular groups, topics, and/or geographies, presented a wealth of ideas around key community assets, and challenges and opportunities facing Santa Rosa. This discussion expanded on some initial vision statements from the TAC, and resulted in a robust and comprehensive set of the initial draft Vision Statement.

6. Community Engagement

The City is committed to providing a transparent, inclusive, engaging, and far-reaching community outreach and engagement process. Between April and June 2021, the project team launched a robust outreach and engagement process to discuss the vision of Santa Rosa with the full community. Building from the CIS, the project team launched a range of engagement activities and events to allow the community to review and respond to the draft Vision Statement. A key priority is to engage with individuals and groups who don't ordinarily participate in civic activities. The engagement included a series of virtual workshops, meetings with community organizations, CAC led workshops, presentations to City Boards and Committees, and an online survey.

7. Community Vision Workshops

In May 2021, the project team hosted ten virtual Community Vision Workshops to gather community feedback on a draft Vision Statement on a District. Although the number and scope of these meetings was not in the CIS, the effort was expanded based on public comments received at the second CAC meeting. At least one meeting was held in each Council District (all with translation options) and three additional Spanish language only meetings. All of the workshops were conducted virtually through Zoom.

These interactive workshops provided community members an opportunity to: (1) learn about the Santa Rosa Forward process and the importance of the General Plan; (2) learn about the findings and major take-aways from the Existing Conditions Report; (3) discuss a Vision for the future of Santa Rosa; (4) discuss what they like about Santa Rosa and what they would improve or change in the future; and (5) identify ways they can stay actively involved in the project. Approximately 160 people participated in the virtual workshops. Based on the polling during the workshops, the community's top Vision Statements were (1) Sustainable / Sostenible; (2) Healthy / Saludable; (3) Equitable / Equitativo; and (4) Resilient / Aguantador. Attachment 3 includes the detailed workshop results.

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

The draft Vision Statement is based on all the input gathered from the community vision workshops, meetings with organizations, discussions with individuals, and Board/Commission meetings. The Vision Statement is an aspirational expression that frames community needs and desires and, when finalized, will serve as a foundation for all the remaining General Plan work. In particular, it will inform the land use and transportation alternatives, new and updated General Plan goals, policies, and programs; and will ensure that the General Plan fully addresses the needs and desires of the community. The following draft Vision Statement will be updated with additional input collected from community organizations, City boards and commissions, and the survey held after the writing of this Staff Report.

Santa Rosa is a place where:

- **Just:** Social and environmental justice is achieved for everyone—all abilities, ages, ethnicities, gender identities, immigrants, income levels, language speakers, races, religions, sexual orientations, EVERYONE.
- **Sustainable:** Natural resources are restored, protected, and expanded to provide accessible green space for everyone in all neighborhoods, mitigate drought, and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Inclusive:** Everyone is welcome and actively encouraged to join in neighborhood and citywide decision making, and barriers to participation are identified and eliminated.
- **Healthy:** Neighborhoods are healthy, vibrant, connected, full-service communities, with the resources to be civically organized, and anchored by inclusive and accessible public outdoor spaces and buildings offering safe and welcoming places for everyone.
- **Resilient:** All facets of the community, including housing, infrastructure, and social services are sustainable and resilient to hazards and economic changes.
- **Prepared:** The health and safety of everyone is supported by neighborhood, City, and county-wide efforts to prepare for natural and human-caused hazards, and roadways are optimized to support efficient evacuations.
- **Sheltered:** A diverse mix of high quality, safe, thoughtfully designed, efficiently planned, and well-served housing at all affordability levels is available throughout the community to accommodate everyone, including formerly homeless, immigrants, local workers, multigenerational households, seniors, and students.
- **Equitable:** Everyone has equitable and affordable access to meet their daily needs—including healthy food, recreation, education, childcare, employment opportunities, reliable internet, and physical and mental health services—and community members enjoy long, fulfilling, healthy lives.
- **Successful:** Top employers gravitate; Black-, Latino/Latina-, and other minority-owned businesses are in all corners of the community; equitable investments are made in all neighborhoods; local shops, food and beverage establishments and food trucks, and entertainment spaces support a vibrant city; and meaningful work in a thriving economy is available for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- **Connected:** High-quality, reliable, and safe transit service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other forms of mobility connect all ages across the city and region at all times and support healthy lifestyles, clean air, equity, and resilience.
- **Safe:** Streets are safe; public safety services are provided by caring and thoughtful community members who are representative of and familiar with the

neighborhoods, groups, and individuals they serve; and everyone, including immigrants and people of color, can safely access these services.

- **Educated:** Life-long education, enrichment, and supportive services and resources engage and empower young people, strengthen families (of any family structure), connect and activate seniors, and foster the success and well-being of everyone.
- **Cultural:** Art, cultural resources and activities, historic assets, and live music thrive in every neighborhood, are accessible to everyone, and work to celebrate our diverse community, bring people from all areas of the city together, and support the local economy.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact related to this item as the funding has already been allocated to the Santa Rosa Forward project. The Vision Statement is a component of the authorized work plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This discussion and acceptance of Vision Statement is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project and does not have potential for resulting in either a direct, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. The full scope of the General Plan Update process includes a programmatic Environmental Impact Report to commence in 2022 once a project (policy document) is developed.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project team has met most City Boards and Commissions to inform the members about the Santa Rosa Forward project and receive their individual input on the opportunities and challenges facing the City. No action was taken by the individual Boards or Commissions and their discussions and comments have been incorporated into the Vision Statement.

NOTIFICATION

A variety of notification and promotion was completed as part of the Visioning process including the use of print and radio media, printed flyers, email blasts, website advertisements, targeted emails to community groups, promotion through members of the Community Advisory Committee, and discussions with individuals; all while adhering to State and County Health Orders.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Presentation

Detailed Community Comments and Engagement Summaries are available at
<https://www.santarosaforward.com/VisionFeedback>

CONTACT

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