MENDOCINO COUNTY
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2027

May 2022

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Foreword from the Board of Supervisors Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee

We're pleased to share Mendocino County's first five-year strategic plan with you. This plan will help guide the critical decisions the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will face over the next five years to improve the quality of life for County residents. Over the past eight months, County leadership engaged with over 1,000 County residents to explore the challenges we face and identify solutions that will result in **a more effective county government organization, a thriving economy, and a County that is safe, healthy, resilient, and prepared for future uncertainties**. We're grateful to so many constituents who voiced their opinions about what's important to them, their families, and our County's future.

We've identified ambitious goals with specific objectives that will enable us to achieve positive results. Accomplishing these goals will depend on allocating sufficient County staff to implement key tasks; designating resources via the budget process within the context of our mandated funding commitments; close collaboration with our community members, businesses, nonprofits, and local government organizations; and finally, the Board of Supervisors' commitment and leadership.

This strategic plan would not have been possible without the guidance from key County staff and our planning consultants. We'd like to thank project manager, Anne Molgaard, Director of Public Health, for leading this planning initiative. We're grateful for the leadership from the following employees who served on the Strategic Planning Task Force: Buffey Bourassa, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services; Katie S. Ford, Human Resources; Elizabeth Garcia, Agriculture; Izen Locatelli, Probation; Michael Oliphant, Planning & Building; and Megan Van Sant, Social Services. We appreciate the project assistance provided by Maya Stuart, Public Health. We'd also like to thank consultants B.J. Bischoff and Sarah Stierch, Sonoma-based Bischoff Consulting, and Gary Hochman, The HR Matrix, a Santa-Rosa-based firm, for providing our planning framework and coaching our Strategic Planning Task Force.

We welcome comments and ideas from our Mendocino County friends and neighbors as we work together to build a bright future. We're confident this plan will help us focus on moving in the right direction.



Glenn McGourty
First District Supervisor



John Haschak
Third District Supervisor

$ Currently Funded Keeping an eye out for $$ & partners No current funding identified

Overview of the Planning Process

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors formed an Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of First District Supervisor Glenn McGourty and Third District Supervisor John Haschak, January 5, 2021, to work with County staff to explore the development of a strategic plan for the County. Based on the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation, the full Board voted to invite two consulting firms to submit a written proposal and participate in an interview with the Board at its public meeting on June 9, 2021. In July 2021, Mendocino County entered into an agreement with Sonoma-based Bischoff Consulting (Consultant B.J. Bischoff) in partnership with The HR Matrix (Consultant Gary Hochman) to facilitate the development of a five-year strategic plan for Mendocino County. The consultants worked with Project Manager Anne Molgaard, Director of Public Health, and a Task Force comprised of six County employee leaders with knowledge of County government operations. Task Force members included Buffey Bourassa, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services; Katie S. Ford, Human Resources; Elizabeth Garcia, Agriculture; Izen Locatelli, Probation; Michael Oliphant, Planning & Building; and Megan Van Sant, Social Services. Maya Stuart, Public Health. County Supervisors McGourty and Haschak served as Ex Officio members of the Task Force.

The Task Force met twice per month between July 2021 and January 2022 with the planning consultants to develop goals and objectives for the Strategic Plan based on information obtained from County employees and community members. To inform the direction of the plan, the Strategic Planning Task Force and consultants gathered input through the following sources:

- Individual interviews with the 5 members of the County's Board of Supervisors
- Individual interviews with the County's Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Group meetings with all Department Heads
- Group meeting with staff from the CEO's office
- 3 virtual town halls, attended by 206 County residents
- 6 community focus groups, averaging 8 community leaders per group, representing the following sectors:
    - Cities & towns in the County
    - Community-based organizations
    - Businesses
    - Public safety
    - Healthcare
    - Latino community service providers
- Individual interviews with Mendocino County Tribal Council Leaders
- One-on-one interviews and 6 focus groups with 41 County staff leaders
- Survey responses from 432 County employees
- 330 comments received via email from County residents
- Documents from existing County planning efforts, including the following, among others:

    - MOVE2030: Community Economic Action Plan

- Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness
- Mendocino County Public Health Department's 6 Priorities
- Priorities of the Mendocino County Climate Action and Advisory Committee, the Grassroots Institute, and Climate Action Mendocino

Additional information regarding public input provided to inform the strategic plan may be found on the Mendocino County website.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic plan consists of 17 goals under these 4 priority areas:

- An Effective County Government Organization
- A Safe and Healthy County
- A Thriving Economy
- A Prepared and Resilient County



These priorities and goals are supported by specific actionable objectives, identified on the following pages, for County staff to implement. The first priority of an effective County organization is critical to the implementation of the other three priorities. A strong internal organization, with a healthy culture, participative leadership, clear communication channels, and departments fully staffed with qualified individuals, will make it possible for the County to achieve results in the additional three priority areas.

Mendocino County Strategic Plan: 2022-2027

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Draft Priorities, Goals & Objectives

I. An Effective County Government Organization

A. Define clear roles, responsibilities, and processes for government leadership

1. Make determinations about key roles for county governance, including the CEO/CAO and County elected officials. $
2. Create operating agreements for how the Supervisors will work with one another and with the CAO/CEO, County elected officials, and Department Heads. $
3. In collaboration, Supervisors, Department Heads, CAO/CEO, and other elected County leaders create a *Code of Conduct* that defines acceptable behavior and sets expectations for accountability. $
4. Create groupings of departments with similar functions and assign Supervisors as liaisons with the Department Heads from those groups to conduct regular meetings that promote healthy communication and greater cooperation across departments. $
5. Identify an organizational leader to work closely with Department Heads and CEO/CAO Office to guide the implementation of the strategic plan by establishing responsibilities, priorities, and annual budgets. 

B. Create a thriving organizational culture

1. Attract and retain the best employees by identifying why people join, stay, and leave County government and making needed improvements informed by annual surveys for current employees and exit interviews for all departing employees. $
2. Invest in employee professional growth and retention by continuing to offer high quality training, development, and leadership programs. $
3. Create a compensation and benefits philosophy, participate in salary surveys, and complete competitive market matching every two years. Adjust wages as appropriate. $
4. Continue Department Heads meetings. Department Heads integrate the County's Leadership Philosophy into the development and implementation of management practices. Department Heads take accountability for ensuring that staff demonstrate effective leadership behaviors throughout the organization. $
5. Strengthen the County's Leadership Initiative and High-Performance Organization culture through the implementation of projects, coaching, and performance improvement initiatives that promote leadership at all levels with support from senior leaders and the Board of Supervisors. 

C. Implement new approaches to demonstrate our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

1. Adopt definitions and create a shared understanding of what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean. $

2. Appoint an Equity Officer who will create a multi-year plan to address disparities in treatment of County employees due to race, ethnicity, and other protected classes. 
3. Launch DEI training for County leadership, beginning with the Board of Supervisors and CAO/CEO. Provide coaching, toolkits, and other resources, as needed. 
4. Broaden the list of organizations invited to contract with the County to include a more diverse set of organizations. $
5. Develop a consultation policy with the ten federally recognized Tribes to build deeper working relationships. $
6. Through the guidance of the Equity Officer, review existing processes and policies in every department to determine adverse impact against County residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in service delivery or access. $
7. Boost pay premium for bilingual employees who use multiple languages in their positions. 
8. Implement strategic job outreach and recruitment efforts to attract a more diverse candidate pool. $

D. Improve operational efficiency by streamlining processes and implementing technology-based solutions

1. Redesign the hiring process to drastically reduce cycle time from open requisition to new employee start date. $
2. Evaluate the existing portfolio of County software and applications based on pre-determined criteria including reliability and ease of use, among others. Identify and prioritize the software that needs to be updated and budget for it accordingly. $
3. Audit core processes for conducting business in every department to determine where technology can support organizational effectiveness and efficiencies. Perform a cost-benefit analysis of moving to a technology-based solution and prioritize investments across departments. $
4. Establish expectations for every department to complete a minimum of one process improvement project each year to improve efficiencies, reduce costs, and increase customer service. $

E. Increase transparency in government operations to build trust with employees, communities, and partners

1. Strengthen internal communications to provide equitable access and increased understanding among County employees of organizational information, budgets, decisions, and emerging changes in direction. $

2. Identify a Public Information Officer to build an inter-departmental communications team that increases information sharing with the public and conducts periodic public forums with the aim of improving community engagement and trust.
3. Simplify the County website for ease of use and access to information. $
4. Offer all County communications, including the website, with a Spanish language option. $
5. Offer automated and paper-driven processes to serve the needs of diverse communities. $
6. Proactively initiate collaboration with local jurisdictions to advance priorities identified in the strategic plan. $

F. Assure financial sustainability of the County

1. Create a collective approach to grant funding, from research of funding opportunities to spending, with the expectation that all departments will collaborate. $
2. Identify new sources of money to align with the discretionary funding required to deliver on strategic initiatives.
3. Annually, match the cost of implementing strategic planning objectives with available and anticipated funding to ensure that priorities can be achieved.

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II. A Safe and Healthy County

A. Provide a person-centered approach to help under-resourced individuals and families thrive

1. Enhance collaboration among departments to provide a *one door* approach to services so community members can access services from multiple departments through one point of entry. $

2. In partnership with Family Resource Centers, Consolidated Tribal Health, and other local community-based organizations, design and implement approaches to providing individuals and families easier access to programs and services that match their needs, including providing both printed and online information and satellite offices. $

3. Support community partners' efforts to achieve food security and improved nutrition among County residents. $

4. Increase access to services and resources to enable older adults to age in place. $

B. Deliver culturally relevant public health services that focus on prevention and are guided by social determinants of health

1. Review public health programs to be sure they are based on sound research, lead to positive results, and focus on prevention. $

2. Develop a strategy for how best to engage Community Health Workers (CHWs) to conduct culturally responsive interventions throughout the County. $

3. Fill open requisitions to ensure adequate staffing for effective program delivery. 

4. Implement the Public Health Department's six strategic priorities to improve emergency preparedness, external communication, immunizations, organizational culture, prevention, and collaboration among staff and community partners. 

C. Increase access to behavioral health services

1. Increase partnerships and collaboration with community partners, including Tribes and Latinx groups, and law enforcement to deliver services to people in need. $

2. Engage Community Health Workers, Promotores, and Community Health Representatives to communicate with under-resourced populations to help increase access to mental health services and reduce the associated stigma. $

3. Implement Measure B plans to create a Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), Crisis Residential Treatment Facility (CRT), and Behavioral Health Regional Training Center. $

4. Collaborate across County health and human services departments to secure additional grant funding from state and federal sources to address the County's behavioral health needs. $

D. Help people feel safe in their communities

1. Continue to develop and implement innovative approaches for law enforcement organizations and criminal justice partners to work in coordination with other County departments and community-based organizations to reduce recidivism and incarceration. $

2. In collaboration with schools, nonprofits, employers, Tribes, and other organizations, continue to implement multiple types of collaborative community-oriented law enforcement solutions based on best practices in public safety to increase citizen engagement and understanding. 

3. Identify and implement strategies that prevent youth entry into the criminal justice system. 

E. Implement practices that support a sustainable environment and responsible stewardship of natural resources

1. Develop a strategy for a sustainable water supply that includes the identification of potential new sources of water, expansion of existing surface water delivery systems, and storage. $

2. Reduce the carbon footprint of County facilities and operations by installing solar microgrids, purchasing electric vehicles, reducing the use of fossil fuels, installing electric charging stations in select County parking lots, and implementing other practices. 

3. Support sustainable forestry, agriculture, and landscapes as a County policy with a focus on lowering carbon emissions. $

4. Collaborate with local Tribes to incorporate Tribal perspectives on environmental management, integrating Tribal traditions to inform natural resource conservation practices, long-term stewardship, and maintenance of our resources. 

III. A Thriving Economy

A. Support a vibrant economy

1. Collaborate with economic development partners, including local jurisdictions and Tribes, to identify actions the County can take to support their business development, expansion, and attraction goals. $
2. Implement policies and practices to make it easier for businesses to start-up and expand. $
3. Support policies to encourage legal cannabis cultivation operations, while ensuring aggressive code enforcement for unpermitted cannabis facilities. 

B. Support increased housing stock at a range of affordability levels

1. Explore the creation of a workforce housing initiative and other creative programs to enable County employees to be able to afford to live in Mendocino County. $
2. Identify one County executive with the responsibility to implement a wide array of housing programs, including market-rate housing and housing for unsheltered residents, as well as to identify and acquire additional State and Federal grants. 
3. Interview developers and housing industry stakeholders and develop a plan to reduce barriers and time relative to permitting, as allowed within the parameters of California State laws. $
4. Work with water and sewer districts to identify and prioritize expansion of services where needed to facilitate the increased density of housing development. $
5. Discover and implement strategies to provide permanent and temporary housing opportunities and supportive services for people who are unhoused. 
6. Implement online permitting processes and record searching functions to streamline construction and provide the County with additional sources of revenue. 
7. Create forums and dialog with County residents about the value of and need for housing and commercial opportunities. $

C. Ensure that affordable and reliable broadband communications is available to all County residents

1. Identify a County employee to serve as the Broadband Manager to advance and coordinate multiple broadband initiatives with partner organizations, including identifying funding sources, obtaining funding, developing strategies, mobilizing resources, and managing negotiations. 
2. Partner with Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County, cell companies, Tribes, and others to improve access to broadband, wireless, and cell services. 

$ Currently Funded  Keeping an eye out for $$ & partners  No current funding identified

IV. A Prepared and Resilient County

A. Increase disaster/emergency preparedness and resiliency

1. Revise the County's Emergency Operations Plan to be consistent with current County ordinances and emergency powers and implement accordingly to ensure 24/7 readiness of the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). $
2. Develop a site for a permanent EOC, supplemented by mobile and/or satellite facilities, with necessary, up-to-date equipment. 
3. Provide ongoing training to ensure that existing employees are prepared to seamlessly operate the EOC at any time. 
4. Coordinate with community disaster response organizations, Tribes, and other community- and faith-based organizations to post social media messages, provide training programs, and conduct public meetings in English and Spanish throughout the County on the topic of emergency preparedness. 
5. Develop a comprehensive wildfire management plan for the County. 

B. Ensure access to rural fire protection and emergency medical services

1. Support recruitment efforts of firefighters for paid and volunteer fire departments. $
2. Work with the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council to develop Neighborhood Fire Safe Councils in communities throughout the County. $
3. Seek funding to increase the number of available ambulances with advanced life support features. 

C. Improve and maintain transportation and road systems/access routes

1. Identify supplemental funding sources to implement priority road system improvements. 
2. Determine the feasibility of increasing Mendocino Transit Authority routes and access points and implement changes accordingly. $
3. Encourage the development of road associations through public education and support. $
4. Identify, prioritize, and pursue funding for secondary emergency access routes for areas with single in and out access to improve disaster response. 

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