

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: GABE OSBURN, DIRECTOR  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

AGENDA ACTION: NONE

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Council hold a Study Session for Council to receive information, ask questions, and provide direction related to the City's Draft Development Services Strategic Business Plan. No action is required.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2022, the City of Santa Rosa's Planning & Economic Development Department initiated the process to develop a Development Services Strategic Business Plan to guide development-related processes supported by staff within multiple City departments. The strategic planning process has examined the core functions within the Development Services arena including general customer service, development preapplication meetings, private development public meetings and specific processes associated with the processing, plan review and inspection of private development applications. The draft Development Services Strategic Plan has identified 37 individual recommendations that will encourage mission alignment across City departments and divisions and develop common priorities, performance and reporting measures, and objectives. The study session will provide the City Council with an update regarding the community, stakeholder, and staff engagement process to gather feedback and insight and will review the proposed recommendations for the Department to focus on over the next three years.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the City of Santa Rosa (City) conducted a Request for Proposals process to identify a consultant to conduct a thorough analysis of the development services system, development-specific customer services efforts, and mission alignment across City departments and divisions, and develop a three-year Development Services

Strategic Plan (Plan). Matrix Consulting Group, LTD, (Matrix) was selected and the City entered into Professional Services Agreement F002543 in October 2022.

To assess the current state of the development services system, Matrix gathered and analyzed data and information pertaining to the staffing and financial structure and permitting workflow process, and then engaged staff, community members and other stakeholders to review and provide feedback about the findings of the assessment through surveys and focus groups. Community stakeholders included representatives from the business community, developers, builders, and members of the public who have engaged in the permitting process.

With survey responses from 56 staff and 522 community stakeholders, along with feedback from 90 staff and stakeholder focus group participants, Matrix compiled initial findings for further exploration. In September 2023, Matrix conducted a workshop with 72 cross-departmental staff, focused on evaluating these initial findings through a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Challenges (SWOC) assessment. The result of the SWOC assessment resulted in the creation of a draft mission and vision statement that highlight the purpose and values of the development services system, while also aligning with City Council's mission, vision, and values.

#### **Development Services Vision Statement**

In our vision for Santa Rosa, we aim to facilitate sustainable development through high-quality and efficient service for the benefit of all.

#### **Development Services Mission Statement**

It is the mission of the Development Services team to enhance the quality of life for every resident through a transparent, efficient, and collaborative approach. We aspire to provide innovative service that not only meets the community's present needs, but also plans the way for a resilient and thriving future. Together, we will build a foundation that establishes a safe and sustainable environment for all in Santa Rosa.

The SWOC assessment also produced 37 recommendations under the key focus areas highlighted below. These recommendations are further defined in Appendix A of Attachment A to this staff report.

- Strategic Plan Framework
- Management and Administration
- Technology
- Customer Interaction and Information Sharing

#### **PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW**

None.

## ANALYSIS

The 37 recommendations resulting from this Plan were based upon the foundation of the following four pillars.

- Unite the development services teams in providing service to the community.
- Provide a predictable development review and permitting process.
- Have a culture focused on providing a high level of customer service.
- Leverage technology to provide efficient service.

As the identified goals, policies and strategies evolve through the community engagement process, the Planning and Economic Development Department will move forward with finalizing the draft Plan and return to City Council for formal adoption. The department will continue to work with staff from other departments, along with community stakeholders, to review the recommendations to determine realistic, reasonable, and achievable timelines and outcomes over the next three years. The final Plan will incorporate a three-year implementation strategy that includes a nimble approach to implementing the identified recommendations in alignment with City Council goals.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This Draft Development Services Strategic Business Plan Study Session does not contain additional funding recommendations outside of discussions and decisions made through the traditional budget process.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council finds that the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 as there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.

## BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

## NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Strategic Business Plan for Development Services (Draft)

PRESENTER

Gabe Osburn, Director Planning and Economic Development Department