



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN

LISTENING SESSIONS REPORT



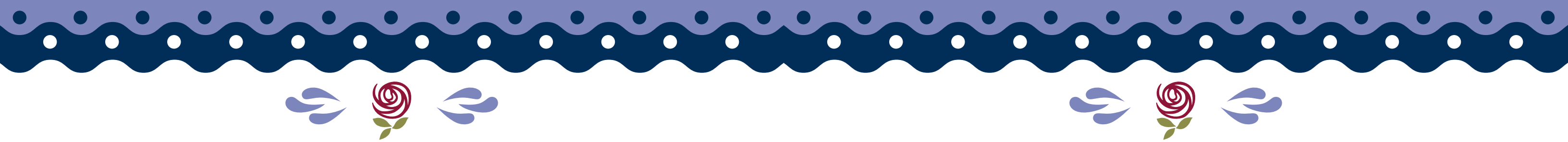


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was killed by four Minneapolis Police Officers. The incident was captured on video for the world to see. The four officers involved were not initially fired or charged in Floyd's death, however, in response to the outcry heard around the world, all four officers were subsequently fired and charged with murder.¹

In response to local protests that erupted after Floyd's death, the City of Santa Rosa developed the Community Empowerment Plan, with the vision of building a trusting and open relationship of respect between the Santa Rosa Police Department and the community, and that a space for ongoing, inclusive, constructive dialogue is available. One of the goals of this plan was to hold at least five (5) community listening sessions with members of Santa Rosa's People of Color (POC) communities.

Eighteen listening sessions were held between July and December 2020 with 215 POC community members. Sessions were held with then Mayor Tom Schwedhelm, Chief of Police Rainer Navarro, and staff from the Office of Community Engagement. Listening session participants were asked the following questions:

- ▶ What does safety mean to you in your community?
- ▶ What has your experience been like with the Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD)?
- ▶ What ideas do you have for strengthening relationships with the police?

Listening session participants were also encouraged to bring their own questions to the sessions. These questions were often for the Chief of Police and Mayor; however, some questions were broader City-related questions and were answered by Community Engagement staff.

Themes from Listening Sessions:

- ▶ Build relationships between Santa Rosa Police Department and community, including youth;
- ▶ Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities;
- ▶ Create police accountability and oversight mechanisms;
- ▶ Address institutional racism, systemic racism and the culture of white supremacy in Santa Rosa; and
- ▶ Uplift and celebrate Santa Rosa's POC communities.

Recommendations Based on Community Feedback:

- ▶ Engage Through an Anti-Racist Lens: Creating an Organizational Culture that Values Public Engagement with All Community Members and Increasing Access to Public Engagement Opportunities
- ▶ Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Transparency and Access
- ▶ Declare Racism as a Public Health Crisis in Santa Rosa
- ▶ Mandatory Trainings and Educational Sessions for all City Staff, Appointed and Elected Officials, and Members of City Boards and Commissions
- ▶ Restorative Community Justice Circles with the Community
- ▶ Continue to Explore Best Practice Responses to Protests and Demonstrations
- ▶ Civilian Oversight of SRPD

Based on input received from listening session participants, the City of Santa Rosa must address its role in the systemic racism that impacts our communities of color and address its own policies and practices that enable historical institutional racism. This includes making changes that will impact the structure and culture of the organization, adopting a variety of practices, policies and procedures that will change how the City serves all of its residents.

The following report provides a deeper dive into the development of the Community Empowerment Plan, historical context, listening session feedback, community recommendations and initial steps taken by the City of Santa Rosa.



INTRODUCTION

The deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, along with so many other People of Color (POC) are a reminder that racial inequity continues in our communities and amongst the structures meant to serve them. In the summer of 2020, a groundswell of protests erupted across the nation, including here in Santa Rosa, calling in part for changes in use of force policies, as well as other governmental policies and funding decisions that historically impact and continue to effect communities of color. These protests also called for systemic racism to be labeled as a public health crisis and demanded for communities to start examining and addressing how they continue to perpetuate systemic and structural racism.

Prompted by local protests, the City of Santa Rosa developed the Community Empowerment Plan (Appendix A) to address Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD) policies and practices through listening sessions, one-on-one conversations, informal group meetings, and other mechanisms of public input gathered at City meetings opened to the public. While initially focusing on the SRPD, the overall goal of the Plan is to improve the community's relationship with and trust in the City of Santa Rosa as a whole and to begin a community dialogue and take action on systemic and structural racism.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Before reviewing the outcomes of the listening sessions, it is important to discuss and acknowledge the history of systemic racism and social justice movements, as well as the history of police brutality in communities of color. This background adds not only to the historical context of the issues addressed in this report but also provides important information about the historical treatment of Black, Latino and Indigenous people and how this treatment continues to influence lives of POC communities today.

The history of systemic racism and social justice movements are a deep part of the history of the United States as well as local communities throughout the country. Systemic racism and oppression of POC can be traced back to the 1600s, when the kidnapping, enslavement, and transport of Africans² and Indigenous Central and South Americans³ began taking place at the hands of Europeans. The United States of America was built on the backs of African and Indigenous slaves and land was taken from Indigenous tribes and Mexican landowners during the expansion of the United States throughout the late 1700 and 1800s. Indigenous people either perished from disease and starvation or were forced onto reservations provided by the U.S. government.

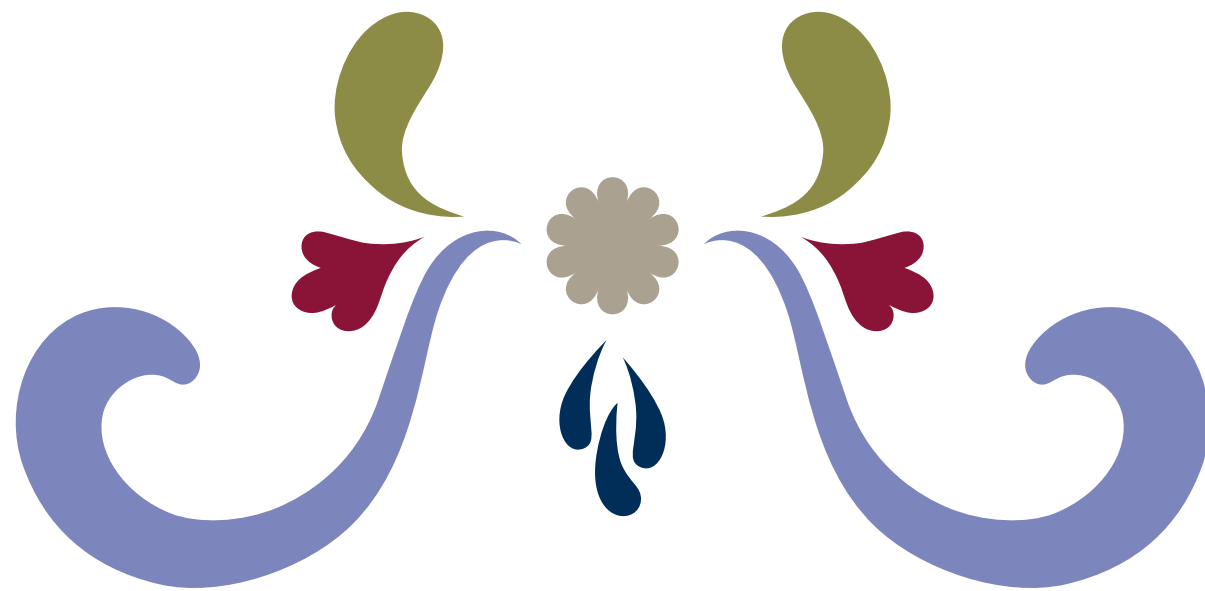
Some of the earliest known police groups in the United States were established in the early 1700s, with the primary responsibility for controlling the movement of the slave population – slaves were not allowed to leave their owners' properties, nor make decisions for themselves including who to marry, who they lived with, and who they communicated with outside of the property.

While slavery was eventually abolished in 1863, some white communities did not initially free their slaves⁴; and segregation, Jim Crow Laws⁵, systemic racism and racial violence continued to be perpetrated on POC communities throughout the country. In the 1960s, the Johnson Administration's war on crime led to the targeting of communities of color, particularly those living in poverty. White American perceptions of people of color, particularly Black Americans, as criminals led to the mass arrests and incarceration of many Black men during this time, often with little or no evidence of wrongdoing.⁶ The attitudes held by white Americans that people of color are dangerous and violent often led to the perception of guilt, even in a country where all its citizens are innocent until proven guilty. This belief continues to drive excessive sentencing policies today. In the 1980s, the war on drugs furthered the mass incarceration of Black Americans, many arrested and incarcerated for minor offenses, but sentenced to long prison terms.⁷

The United States incarcerates their citizens more than any other country in the world. Racial disparities are clearly seen in mass incarceration in the U.S. While people of color make up about 37% of the national population, they make up 67% of the U.S. prison system.⁸ Black men are six times more likely to be incarcerated than white men,

and Latino men are more than twice as likely to be incarcerated compared to non-Latino men. In addition, Black men are more likely to be convicted after arrest and given higher fines than white men.⁹

For more information on the historical context of structural and systemic racism, please view [*Tipping the Scale: Deconstructing Race and Racism Seminar*](#) with Dr. Sharon Washington, hosted by the Office of Community Engagement on January 27, 2021.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN: GOALS AND MODELS OF ENGAGEMENT

The Community Empowerment Plan (Plan) and associated projects and programs align with several Santa Rosa City Council goals and priorities including Public Safety Priorities and Reform, and Organizational Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. In addition, the Plan also supports Council's Tier 1 Continuing Priority of Government and Council Reform.

The vision of the Plan is to build a trusting and open relationship of respect between the Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD) and the community, and a space for ongoing, inclusive, constructive dialogue is available. This engagement has led to important and at times uncomfortable conversations centered around policies and practices to improve the City's relationship with, trust amongst, and service to the community. While the Plan initially focused on SRPD engagement, the SRPD does not stand alone in responding to the need for change. In addition to addressing SRPD specific issues, the Plan is meant to be inclusive of broader safety net solutions through other City departments and programs, such as economic opportunities, land-use planning, budgeting, hiring practices, etc.

The Plan has three goals:

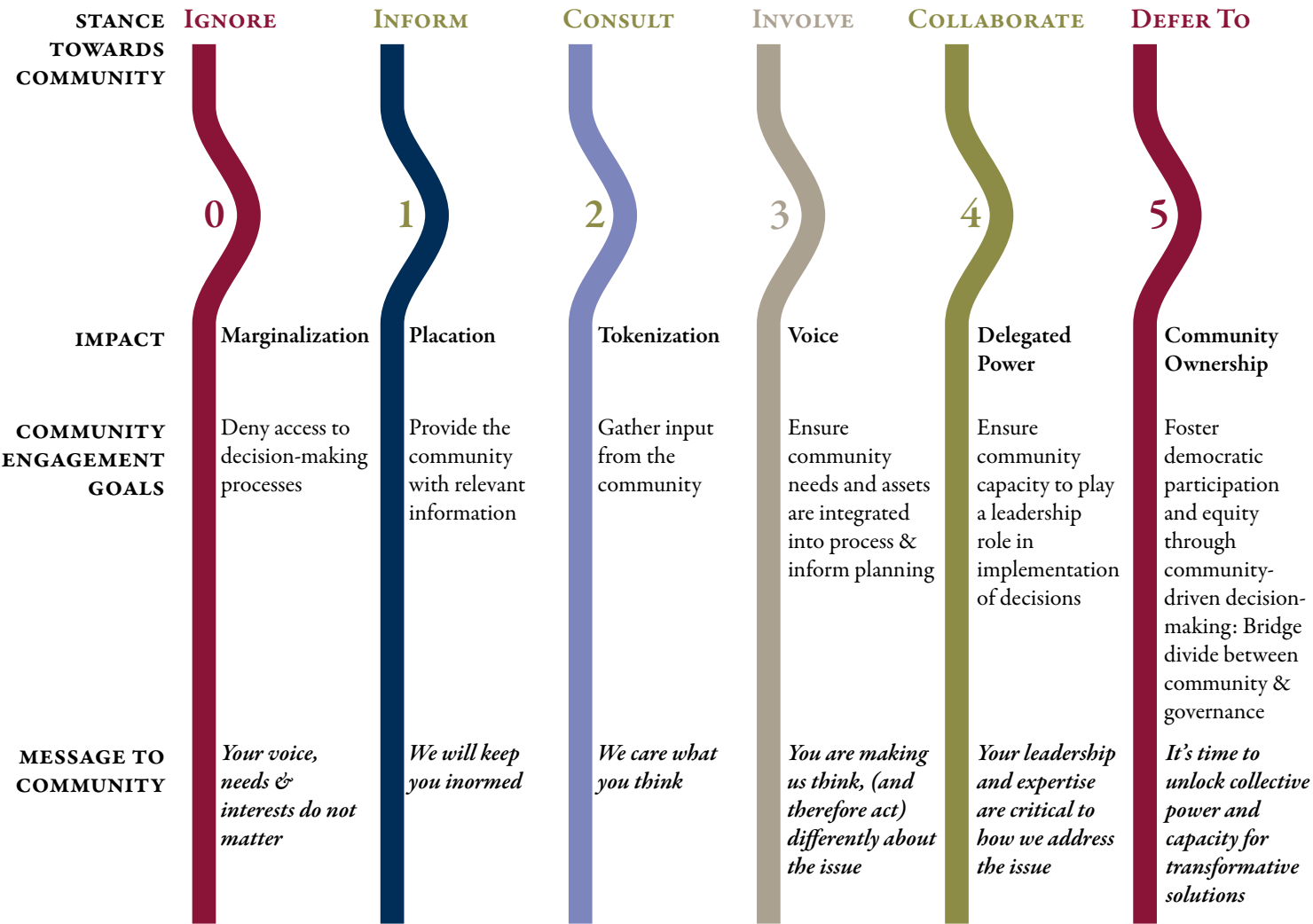
1. Increase constructive and inclusive dialogue between the City of Santa Rosa and leaders from People of Color (POC) communities in Sonoma County.
2. Community is provided with opportunities to review and provide input on Santa Rosa Police Department's use of force and community policing policies.
3. Establish a feedback loop to gauge effectiveness of efforts with and in the community, and among City staff.

The Plan is rooted in the principles of community engagement (Appendix B) developed originally, through extensive research, by Community Engagement staff, and is modeled in consideration of two foundational engagement documents: the 2014 Mayor’s Open Government Task Force (MOGTF) Recommendations (Appendix C), and the Spectrum of Public Participation developed by the International Association of Public Participation (Appendix D).

While the goal of the MOGTF was to obtain recommendations from a diverse group of Santa Rosa residents on how to improve openness and transparency in Santa Rosa municipal government, the community engagement recommendation called on the City to develop a culture that values public engagement and transparency. This includes a communication loop that values community input and participation, increased opportunities for diverse engagement and effective participation, and a strong civic infrastructure that allows as well as educates people about how to best engage.

The Spectrum of Public Participation lays out a grid of five levels of community engagement to help clarify the role of the public in planning and decision-making, and how much influence the community has over planning or decision-making processes. Moving from low to high levels of participation, the spectrum summarizes engagement levels as informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering. Historically, the City has communicated with the public about projects, programs and services utilizing public information tools, such as the City’s website, newsletters, mailing, social media, news media and paid advertising services. Additionally, the City often relies on consulting with the public to gather input on projects, programs and services, through community meetings, surveys, and other input collection methods. However, the City’s goal is to now add community ownership to our spectrum of community engagement, which would require a shift in the levels of participation.

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP





LISTENING SESSIONS: APPROACH AND KEY FINDINGS

Community Engagement staff held a series of one-on-one meetings, group meetings and formal listening sessions from June – December 2020. The initial intent was to complete these discussions by the end of August, however, several barriers kept staff from meeting this timeline. These barriers included meeting restrictions due to COVID-19, and multiple wildfires (LNU Lightning Complex and Glass), lack of staff, and conflicts in schedules with the community groups.

In total, staff met with 280 Santa Rosa residents, of which 265 were POC. Eighteen (18) listening sessions were held with 13 POC community groups (includes follow-up sessions), 18 one-on-one conversations were held, and 15 informal group meetings were held. Staff held listening sessions with four Black community groups, five Latinx community groups, one Indigenous community group, and three mixed-race/ethnicity community groups. A summary of each listening session can be viewed on the City's [Community Empowerment Plan](#) website.¹⁰ See Appendix E for a list of listening session groups.

Each listening session group was asked the same set of questions:

- ▶ What does safety mean to you in your community?
- ▶ What has your experience been like with the Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD)?
- ▶ What ideas do you have for strengthening relationships with the police?

In addition, if time permitted or if follow-up listening sessions were held, staff also asked participants the following questions:

- ▶ Outside of law enforcement and the SRPD, what other concerns or issues do you have that impacts your community?
- ▶ What are some of the things you want to know more about regarding the City of Santa Rosa?
- ▶ For monolingual Spanish-speaking groups: what are the biggest barriers to engagement and communication with the Spanish-speaking community?

Listening session participants were also encouraged to bring their own questions to the sessions. These questions were often for the Chief of Police and Mayor; however, some questions were broader City-related questions and were answered by Community Engagement staff.

ANALYSIS

Community Engagement staff reviewed all listening session summaries and coded each summary for reoccurring themes. This report contains the most prevalent reoccurring themes from all listening sessions. While other topics and themes came up, they will not be addressed in this report. However, any input or feedback with specific details (e.g. broken traffic light at a specific intersection) have been provided to appropriate City staff for review and follow-up. Community Engagement staff will continue to meet with each group for follow-up, if requested by the community group.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Build positive and collaborative relationships between SRPD and community, including youth:

Participants stated that while they had negative interactions with SRPD officers as young people, they believe positive interactions with officers are possible and need to happen starting with young children. These participants want to ensure that youth will be comfortable calling on public safety for help should the need arise.

There were also concerns voiced about lack of interest in certain jobs among youth, including the option of pursuing a career as a police officer. In order to change this way of thinking, it was suggested that having more officers present at schools and engaging

in classrooms (as opposed to being seen as a disciplinary presence) would help not only with relationship building and trust, but also with interest in the job. However, it should be noted that this was an opinion of some of those who participated in the listening sessions and is not reflective of opinions from other community members and local decision-makers.

All of the participating community groups did agree that strengthening the relationships between SRPD and POC was important and each group had different ideas for how to make that happen. Most commonly heard was the suggestion that SRPD officers go through a series of trainings which include learning about different races and cultures of people living in Santa Rosa, as well as cultural competency, awareness, and sensitivity trainings; power dynamics and power and privilege trainings; and systemic racism and white supremacy culture awareness trainings.

The Sonoma County Lowrider Council proposed creating a lowrider patrol car with the SRPD. Residents from Roseland and South Park have asked for more community events where residents can engage with SRPD officers. Additionally, these groups would like to see officers get out of their patrol cars and walk their assigned neighborhoods, engaging with residents they come across. Participants from the Indigenous community listening session expressed interest in having a cadet program for youth, as well as utilizing community space at Ya-Ka-Ama for activities with officers and the community. One resident of this group also proposed doing spiritual check-ins between members of the Indigenous community and officers before they start their shifts. Other ideas and suggestions can be viewed in the listening session summaries, which can be found at <https://srcity.org/1537/Community-Empowerment>.

In addition to earlier interactions with police officers and more opportunities to engage with SRPD, several groups stated that they would like to see more of a police presence in their neighborhoods. Some participants said that this presence of police would help to improve their sense of safety in the community. Most of the groups who asked for this increase in police presence were from south Santa Rosa neighborhoods and who mentioned have significant issues with homelessness in their neighborhoods.

Actions Taken/Programs Developed

▶ SRPD Lowrider Patrol Car

▶ After school youth programs

▶ Chief’s Community Ambassador Team (C-CAT)

▶ GREAT Program

▶ 911 Program

▶ Youth Community Police Experience

▶ Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership

▶ Elsie Allen Public Safety Program

2. Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities:

All of the participating groups stated that they would like to see the City of Santa Rosa invest in more community programming and resources for POC communities. Programming and resources include increased services and housing for individuals experiencing homeless; recreation centers for the Black community; financial opportunities for small POC businesses; financial assistance for culturally appropriate mental, behavioral and educational needs; community housing and development for older youth, ages 18-24; and violence prevention and healing strategies, such as mentoring programs and opportunities for youth.

Throughout the listening sessions, participants stated that they wanted more spaces in all seven Council districts to create positive competition, and to create learning and social development within Sonoma County in order to help implement social cultural activities, culture and ethnicity training, financial literacy, social internet gaming, resolution writing to the mayor; and vocational training. In the Open Mic event held prior to this listening session, other residents mentioned similar requests, particularly around building opportunities and programming for POC community members. Listening session participants also requested access to economic opportunities for their groups.

Actions Taken/Programs Developed

- ▶ [Community Advisory Board Grant Program](#)
- ▶ [Santa Rosa General Plan Update](#)
- ▶ [Public Arts Program](#)
- ▶ Intentional recruitment of Santa Rosa POC for City boards, commissions and committees

3. Create mechanisms police accountability and oversight:

Throughout these listening sessions, staff heard stories from participants about their experiences with SRPD. While some mentioned positive experiences, including positive experiences with school resource officers, many shared negative encounters. These experiences included stories from mothers about their children being targeted by officers and labeled as gang members. Youth shared stories about their experiences with being racially profiled by officers and witnessing family members violent experiences with law enforcement. One youth stated that she witnessed a family member being punched in the face by an officer, while a few others stated that they have heard their peers describe situations with officers that included brutal arrests, racist experiences, mistaken identities and being labeled as looking suspicious.

Participants brought up or alluded to the need for more accountability within the SRPD. In a July 2, 2020 Open Mic community event, many residents expressed the need for more accountability in law enforcement. Community members stated that the current training officers receive is lacking and a true, authentic shaking up of the culture must take place so that real change can occur. Officers must report their colleagues and not fear retaliation or discipline for speaking up. Participants agreed that until officers are held accountable for their actions, POC will continue to be mistreated.

Others stated that complaints often go unanswered or the follow-up is insufficient. Participants mentioned that the public perception is that officers are not held accountable when investigated. In addition, when an outside agency conducts an

investigation of a Santa Rosa officer, the public thinks there is a relationship between the officer and the investigating agency as all agencies are within the County. The community requests SRPD and other City departments need to do a better job of follow-up on complaints and investigations.

Hiring processes was another item that was brought up by multiple community groups throughout the listening sessions. One group suggested that officers be certified prior to starting their service with the police department and then re-certified every two years. In addition, others also mentioned making sure that specific questions be asked during the hiring process, including questions specific to views on race, equality, and bias regarding certain groups of people such as Black, Latino, women, and LGBTQ. In written statements from the NAACP and 100 Black Men of Sonoma County, there were suggestions about having a community committee that reviews officers coming up for re-certification and having community members involved in evaluations of officer conduct and interviews for promotional opportunities. Several youth and adult community members also mentioned that they would like to see more officers hired from their community.

Another suggestion provided is making tracking information related to officers who resign prior to disciplinary action or termination available to the public, as well as those who have been found to have multiple sustained complaints and/or violations whose personnel records are closed or unavailable. This would help when an officer leaves an agency, either voluntarily or due to termination, and applies for a position at another local agency.

Nearly all participants agreed that SRPD officers should receive additional trainings in order to address the needs of and work more effectively and appropriately with the community. These training suggestions include cultural competency, awareness, and sensitivity trainings; implicit bias trainings; power dynamics and power and privilege trainings; systemic racism and white supremacy culture awareness trainings; and emotional resiliency training. A member of 100 Black Men of Sonoma County stated that trainings must go beyond implicit bias trainings and that bigotry is just as problematic than racism within law enforcement mentality and treatment of community members, particularly in communities of color.

It is also important to note that the issue of respect came up several times throughout the listening sessions. One youth told a story about being approached by an officer who then drew his gun on him (the resident). He stated that he was afraid of cops and when asked what brought out the fear, aside from the gun, he stated that he did not feel treated with respect. Another participant stated that when interactions with officers are not positive and respectful, it diminishes the trust and integrity that other officers have tried to build with the community.

Actions Taken/Programs Developed

- ▶ Independent Law Enforcement Auditor
- ▶ Chief's Community Ambassadors Team (C-CAT)
- ▶ Change for the Better

4. Address institutional racism, systemic racism and the culture of white supremacy in Santa Rosa and, uplift and celebrate Santa Rosa's POC communities:

Nearly all participants mention that they often do not feel safe in their communities due to systemic racism and attitudes from the general public about people of color in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. There was a general agreement amongst participants that being a person of color in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County brings a level of suspicion from law enforcement and the general public. "My presence (in the community) is viewed as I'm guilty of something when I'm walking around."

Local youth brought up similar sentiments around treatment from both law enforcement and the community. Youth mentioned that they would have a greater sense of safety in their community if stigmas about their "part of town" did not exist anymore. "Times have changed, and our community has developed; other residents should know there has been change and there are good people in our neighborhoods." The youth stated that they want their community and the police to know that just because they hang out in large groups doesn't mean that they are up to no good or a threat.

Participants also spoke about the white supremacy culture and systemic racism in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. One member stated that the community needs to understand these concepts and how it impacts communities of color in their daily lives. This member also stated that as white people, including herself, "we need to stop taking up space" and allow POC to step into that space and lead the dialogue. SRPD officers, City Council and City staff are encouraged to step back and listen.

One community member became emotional when speaking about the shooting of Jacob Blake in Wisconsin, which was followed by the shooting of three protesters by a white youth vigilante a few days later. "Acculturation allowed this to happen. White supremacy culture and the expectation of people of color to assimilate to this culture is part of the reason we are seeing the continuing assault on people of color, particularly Black Americans. Addressing this culture of white supremacy must happen in order to see a shift in how people of color are treated and before real change can take place."

Both adults and youth throughout these listening sessions brought up the issue of respect towards Black individuals in the Santa Rosa community. Multiple comments were made at the July 2, 2020 Open Mic community event regarding systemic racism and the "dehumanization of Black people in our community." One community member stated that everyone in the community shouldn't have to ponder how they treat the Black community: "Everyone can make a decision now to respect Black people." One local youth passionately expressed her concern about POC in Santa Rosa. "I just don't understand why I have to explain to people why they should care about others. Black people should be treated with respect just like everyone else."

According to participants, experiences of racism also extend to other sectors in the community. Many participants described their experience in local school systems and educational experiences. "Growing up as a Black man in Santa Rosa is traumatic as (*expletive*). I do not want to raise children here." This resident described how he was labeled as a gang member because he liked to draw on his binder and wore baggy pants. Other participants described experiences in local schools which included racial bullying and lack of respect from teachers. One mother described her daughter's experience with racial bullying in a Santa Rosa school, which left her daughter traumatized and with severe physical stress as a result. Many participants also brought

up curriculum taught in local schools and their desires to see multicultural and ethnic studies taught in all schools to students of all ages.

Another point brought up was the issue of the City focusing all time, effort, and funding on the Latino community and not spending sufficient time or funding that addresses the needs of other communities of color in Santa Rosa. This inequitable distribution of resources has real impacts on underrepresented and vulnerable communities and the City is encouraged to look at how to better distribute resources to all members of the community who need them.

One suggestion that was made is to have the City of Santa Rosa make a statement on diversity, inclusion and racial equity. In addition, some groups also stated that there needs to be a public recognition of the issues people of color experience with law enforcement.

In addition to trainings for SPRD officers on the topics listed above, most participants agreed that City Council, members of boards and commissions, and City staff should also receive additional trainings in order to address the needs of and work more effectively and appropriately with the community. These training suggestions include cultural competency, awareness, and sensitivity trainings; power dynamics and power and privilege trainings; and systemic racism and white supremacy culture awareness trainings.

Actions Taken/Programs Developed

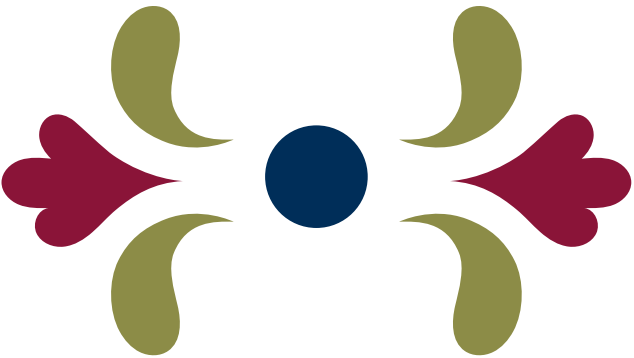
- ▶ Actions for Change Statement from the Santa Rosa City Council and City Manager
- ▶ Resolution: Santa Rosa is an Indivisible City
- ▶ Resolution: Santa Rosa Opposes Separation of Children and Families at U.S.-Mexico Border
- ▶ Multicultural Roots Project: Stories of Santa Rosa's Black, Indigenous, People of Color
- ▶ Tipping the Scale Seminar: Deconstructing Race and Racism with Dr. Sharon Washington

5. Homelessness

The issue of homelessness came up multiple times throughout the listening sessions, particularly in the south Santa Rosa neighborhoods of Roseland and South Park. Residents mentioned that there is a large population of individuals experiencing homelessness in their neighborhoods and both neighborhoods have issues with loitering and trash. Both stated that a response is necessary, whether it be from the police or from another agency that is trained in working with the homeless population; many residents in both neighborhoods expressed feeling unsafe around those loitering and those who have mental health issues that are not being addressed.

Actions Taken/Programs Developed

- ▶ Model of Response to Mental Illness and Homelessness (e.g. CAHOOTS)
- ▶ Debris Response Team
- ▶ Homeless Encampment Assistance Program (HEAP)





OUTCOMES: RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

It is clear from the input received that the City of Santa Rosa must address its role in the systemic racism that impacts our communities of color and address its own policies and practices that enable historical institutional racism. This includes changes that will impact the culture of the organization, adopting new or updated practices, policies and procedures that will change how the City does business to serve our residents.

ENGAGE THROUGH AN ANTI-RACIST LENS: CREATING AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THAT VALUES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND INCREASING ACCESS TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The development of the Community Empowerment Plan was a first step towards engaging through an anti-racist lens. While the City specifically set out to engage members from our POC communities around issues of community safety and concerns with the Police Department, the dialogue was not solely focused on SRPD. Of interest, and needing further engagement, are the broader safety net solutions such as economic opportunity, access to programs designed in consideration of the POC community and minority youth in particular, historic land use inequities that continue to shape neighborhoods, equity considerations related to the City budget, hiring practices, and more. To this end, the City will continue to make purposeful efforts to involve and engage our POC communities, as well as other community members who have been historically “left out of the conversation.”

The Office of Community Engagement is currently gathering information and developing tools on new approaches to engaging the community using equitable and anti-racist approaches for all City staff to use. These approaches, along with traditional

forms of community engagement, will become part of how the City does work with the community. Some of these approaches include creation of project advisory boards that create space for community members from underrepresented communities; developing “meetings in a box” to provide community members with information without having to attend meetings; and alternatives to community meetings, such as the use of a digital engagement platform.

In addition to tools and resources for City staff, the Office of Community Engagement is also working with the Community Advisory Board to develop a Citizens Guidebook and a citizens’ academy, both aimed at educating community members how their local government functions, how decisions are made, and how to get involved.

The City is also taking steps to ensure that members of our non-English speaking communities are able to participate in their local government. This includes translation of City Council agendas and City materials, as well as interpretation services available at City Council meetings and many City-hosted community meetings.

COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS

The Community recommends that the City of Santa Rosa make a public statement on the importance of diversity, inclusion, and racial equity. In addition, the community strongly urges a clear public statement supporting Black Lives Matter. Furthermore, the City Council should include diversity, inclusion, racial equity, and transparency as part of their mission statement. These statements will go a long way with building trust in the community and will show the community that the City is listening to their concerns and needs and committed to taking action.

The City took initial steps towards this recommendation during the summer of 2020. On June 28, then Mayor Tom Schwedhelm and City Manager Sean McGlynn released a letter to the Community titled [Actions for Change: A Commitment from the Santa Rosa City Council and City Manager](#). This letter outlined initial actions steps that the City committed to taking including signing the “My Brother’s Keeper” pledge for mayors, immediate updates to use-of-force policies, establishing a public safety subcommittee, and implementing the Community Empowerment Plan. Within this

letter, the Mayor and City Manager acknowledged the community's collective pain, grief and anger and also committed to making changes that allows Santa Rosa to be a city of inclusion, diversity and equity.

Current Mayor Chris Rogers recently released a letter to the community in support and solidarity with Santa Rosa's Asian American-Pacific Islander communities, which included a commitment to educating City Council, staff, and boards and commissions of the common, shared humanity and to promoting peaceful means to communicate and interact with one another. This commitment included supporting open and respectful dialogue that allows learning the diverse history and culture of AAPI, including the historic oppression of AAPI in the U.S. and condemning these acts of racial violence. Following the dissemination of the letter, City Council passed a Resolution in Support and Solidarity with the Asian American-Pacific Islander Communities and Denouncing Anti-Asian Racism and Violence on April 6, 2021.

In addition to these letters and resolution, the City has taken further steps to increase inclusion, diversity, equity, transparency and access over the last ten months. This includes adopting an Open Government Ordinance that increases transparency of and access to City government processes and decision-making through earlier agenda postings; translation and interpretation of City Council agendas and meetings; easier access to public records; and educational materials outlining local government decision-making processes, procedures and how residents can participate.

The City has also entered into an agreement with Seed Collaborative, an equity firm that will assist the Santa Rosa Police Department, Santa Rosa Fire Department and other service areas within the City of Santa Rosa in creating plans to increase inclusion, diversity and equity in hiring, staff retention, staff trainings, and engagement with the community. In addition to this partnership with Seed Collaborative, the City recently hired an Equity and Public Health Planner who is responsible for ensuring all City plans are inclusive, address community health disparities and incorporate public health best practices. In addition, the City hired a Diversity, Inclusion and EEO Officer (Equity Officer) whose employment began on March 30, 2021.

Through leading and participating in the listening sessions, the Office of Community Engagement has also created the *Multicultural Roots Project: Stories of Santa Rosa's Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)*. The goal of the project is to create visibility of Santa Rosa's POC community by highlighting the contributions of past and current local leaders that have helped to shape Santa Rosa and Sonoma County into what they are today. The project also highlights historical information about events and places that are significant to Santa Rosa's POC histories.

DECLARE RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN SANTA ROSA

The Community recommends the City Council declare racism a public health crisis for the City of Santa Rosa. According to the American Public Health Association, 145 cities and counties across 27 states declared racism a public health crisis in 2020, including the City of Long Beach, and Ventura, Sacramento and San Diego counties in California. In addition to those cities and counties, five states, along with the American Public Health Association, the American Medical Association, the California Endowment and numerous California universities, also declared racism a public health crisis since last summer.

Sonoma County joined other communities throughout California by echoing and supporting the collective action taken on March 16, 2021 by the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California, the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the County Health Executives Association of California, and the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems to declare racism as a public health crisis in California. The group of organizations issued a unified statement acknowledging the "historic and ongoing harms of systemic racism" and committed to addressing these harms through "client and community-centered action and accountability."¹¹

On December 7, 2020, the California State Legislature introduced [Senate Bill 17 \(SB 17\)](#), *Office of Racial Equity*. The proposed bill (as amended as of February 25, 2021) allows California to acknowledge the long-standing impacts of systemic racism and to declare racism as a public health crisis. The bill also states that California will approach laws and regulations with an antiracist, Health and Equity in All Policies focus that seeks whether policies play a role in creating, maintaining, or dismantling racist

systems, and secure adequate resources to address the crisis. In addition, SB 17 will require state agencies and departments to “review and identify existing policies, regulations, and practices in state government that contribute to, uphold, or exacerbate racial disparities in areas including, but not limited to, education, housing, land use, employment, environment, economic security, public health, health care, the wealth gap, policing, criminal justice, transportation, and public safety.” Finally, SB 17 would create the Office of Racial Equity to develop a Racial Equity Framework that provides “guidelines for inclusive policies and practices that reduce racial inequities, promote racial equity, address individual, institutional, and structural racism, and establish goals and strategies to advance racial equity and address structural racism and racial inequities.” While the State Legislature still has yet to vote on SB 17, the City Council could take a position of support on the bill and call for similar actions at the local level.

MANDATORY TRAININGS AND EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS FOR ALL CITY STAFF, APPOINTED AND ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND MEMBERS OF CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Based on community feedback, it is imperative that the City take the following initial steps:

1. Public acknowledgement of how institutional racism impacts communities of color, including those here in Santa Rosa
2. Development of Self Training – staff members examine their own humanity and the humanity of those they serve, and their role as public servants in the community.
3. Ethnic Studies Sessions with an Emphasis on History of Policing in the U.S. – staff receive ethnic studies education through sessions with a qualified facilitator. Integrate education on the history of policing in the United States and impacts of this system on communities of color in the ethnic studies sessions.

These educational sessions are an important step that the City needs to take towards healing their relationship with the community, particularly with POC. Not only will this assist in building trust with Santa Rosa’s communities of color, but these educational sessions will also broaden officers’ understanding of what POC communities face in their daily lives and will provide important information on how the criminal justice system in the U.S. has deeply impacted communities of color and how it continues to play a role in law enforcement relationships with the community today.

Furthermore, annual required trainings for officers should also include cultural competency, awareness, and sensitivity trainings; power dynamics (i.e. power and privilege) trainings; systemic racism and white supremacy culture awareness trainings; and emotional resiliency training and mental health resources. Additionally, community members suggested mental health screenings for officers.

The City currently offers training for all City staff that addresses issues of diversity, inclusion and harassment based on sex and gender. These trainings, part of the *Skills for Success* training series, required for all new employees, include Building an Inclusive Workplace and Emotional Intelligence. In addition, all City staff are required to take harassment in the workplace trainings.

In addition to the required new employee trainings available through Human Resources, the Santa Rosa Police Department also requires the following annual trainings for their officers: crisis intervention training and implicit bias training. The Police Department is currently working with a local community-based organization, Community Matters, to create a curriculum specific to Community Policing, Cultural Awareness, and Implicit Bias.

There will be additional training recommendations made through Seed Collaborative as well as the City’s new Equity Officer, once those assessments have taken place and plans are completed.

CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT OF SRPD

The community recommends the City develop a model of civilian oversight of law enforcement. The input from the listening sessions, as well as other mechanisms of input, included suggestions for having oversight similar to the County of Sonoma’s Independent Office of Law Enforcement Review and Outreach (IOLERO), which include an auditor and community advisory committee.

The Police Department has recently issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an Independent Police Auditor, a position that will be overseen by the City Manager. The RFP scope of work includes feedback received from listening session participants, as outlined in the Community Empowerment Plan Goal 2.3. The Police Department will

continue to explore additional components to law enforcement oversight, including the IOLERO model created by the County of Sonoma.

RESTORATIVE COMMUNITY JUSTICE CIRCLES WITH THE COMMUNITY

The community strongly recommended that SRPD work with the Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, along with local restorative justice organizations, to hold a series of ongoing restorative justice circles with members of the POC and protest communities. While just one step in a larger multipronged approach, this step is vital in healing together with the community. Community justice is a form of restorative justice; it brings groups together from within the community to resolve conflict and offenses made by one group towards another.¹²

CONTINUE TO EXPLORE BEST PRACTICE RESPONSES TO PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The community recommends the City continue to explore alternative responses to protests and demonstrations, so that all participants feel safe when speaking out about issues that impact them. As outlined in their webinar on Trauma Informed Response to Protests, the League of California Cities outlined several steps police departments can take to ensure trauma is not experienced at or during protests/demonstrations. These steps include:

1. Get to know the community you are serving and what issues are important to them.
2. Recognize the humanity of why protests happen - why are people protesting/demonstrating?
3. Also recognize that as long as there is no justice or it is delayed, then people will continue to come out and protest because they are frustrated, angry, fed-up, tired, etc. These issues are typically generational issues happening over and over, and we have to recognize the trauma behind the response.
4. With this knowledge, refrain from labeling protesters/demonstrators as dangerous individuals
5. Engage with the community and find out what they need to feel safe

Through the listening sessions, the City has taken initial steps in collecting information on what the community needs to feel safe in Santa Rosa, as well as learning about different community groups and the issues that are important to them. While the City is working on improving response to protests and demonstrations through its own investigations through third party consultants and conversations with the community, listening session participants mentioned the City is not solely responsible for making residents feel safe, protesting or otherwise.

Participants mentioned not feeling safe from other members of the community, particularly members of the white community. The community also urges both City staff and elected officials, along with white community members to get to know POC community members and refrain from passing judgement on them based on the neighborhood or part of town in which they live.

OTHER ACTIONS TAKEN BY CITY

In addition to the recommendations made by the community and initial steps taken by the City, other actions have also taken place. These include community-led projects that are in the early development stages and programs that are no longer taking place, as well as the creation of the City Council's Public Safety Subcommittee; the development of a model for response to mental illness and homelessness; and the Chief's Community Ambassadors Team.

City Council's Public Safety Subcommittee

In order to meet Goal 2.1 of the Community Empowerment Plan, the City created the City Council Public Safety Subcommittee. This subcommittee has initially addressed law enforcement related issues and concerns, including Police Department staffing, response alternatives to homelessness and mental health, and school resource officers. The subcommittee will also address other City public safety issues and concerns, but this is a forum where community members may attend and participate in these meetings, providing feedback as the City continues to address police reform issues.

Model for Response to Mental Illness and Homelessness

The Santa Rosa Police Department, with consultation from White Bird Clinic which implements the CAHOOTS Program in Eugene, Oregon, and in collaboration

with other City departments, is working on developing a program similar to CAHOOTS that can be implemented in Santa Rosa. In the most recent Public Safety Subcommittee meeting, Police Department staff provided information on the development of the program. Program development includes community engagement efforts, key community stakeholder engagement, identification of equipment needs, job descriptions and responsibilities of program staff, a budget, and a Request for Proposals for local non-profits to implement the program. The draft of the program will be presented to the Public Safety Subcommittee in the upcoming months.

Chief's Community Ambassador Team (C-CAT)

The Chief's Community Ambassador Team (C-CAT) is designed to be a bridge between the community and the Santa Rosa Police Department. It will facilitate and enhance communication and the relationship between the Police Department and the community. The Team will assist in informing the Police Chief of the broader community's concerns and views regarding public safety, thus guiding the focus of law enforcement services.

The Marylou Lowrider

The Office of Community Engagement and SRPD are teaming up with the Sonoma County Lowrider Council to build The Marylou, a lowrider patrol car that will be used to engage community members of all ages and serve as a public safety recruitment tool. Taking a retired SRPD patrol car, members from various car clubs around the county will install new tires, rims, hydraulics, and a stereo, and redo the exterior and interior of the car with new paint, art designs, and upholstery. The Marylou will appear at events such as the Rose Parade, Roseland Cinco de Mayo Festival, Juneteenth Community Celebration, and more. Similar projects have been done in other California cities, including Stockton, Oakland and San Diego.

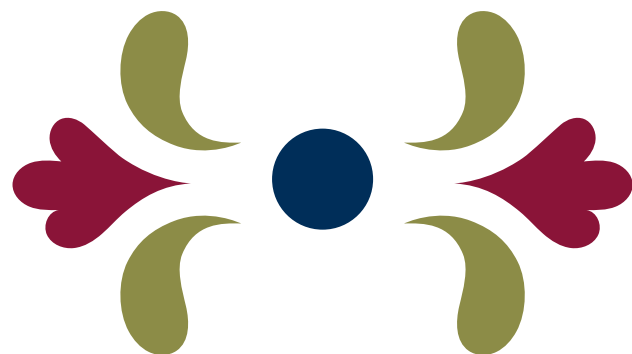


CONCLUSION

The City of Santa Rosa's Office of Community Engagement made extensive efforts to engage with members of the POC community here in Santa Rosa. Staff engaged 265 POC total in conversations around community safety, relationships and interactions with the police department, and solutions for moving forward. While conversations initially centered around participants' experiences with SRPD, these conversations expanded to address experiences with the broader City of Santa Rosa organization and community at-large. Specifically, input from participants pointed to community-wide issues and experiences with systemic racism, including discrimination, microaggressions, and acts of violence.

Participants believe that addressing issues of systemic racism and developing solutions must be a collective action from not just the City of Santa Rosa, but all community organizations and members. However, based on listening session feedback, there are steps the City can take to make Santa Rosa a better place for all residents, including:

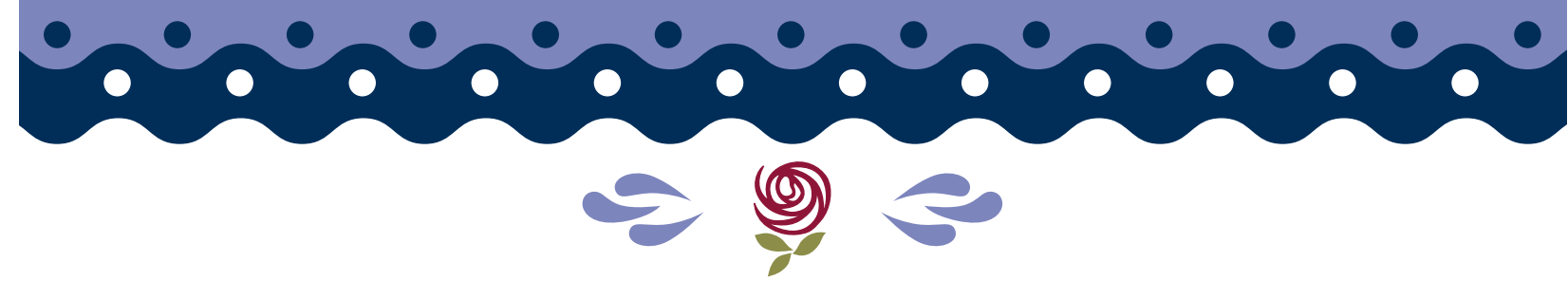
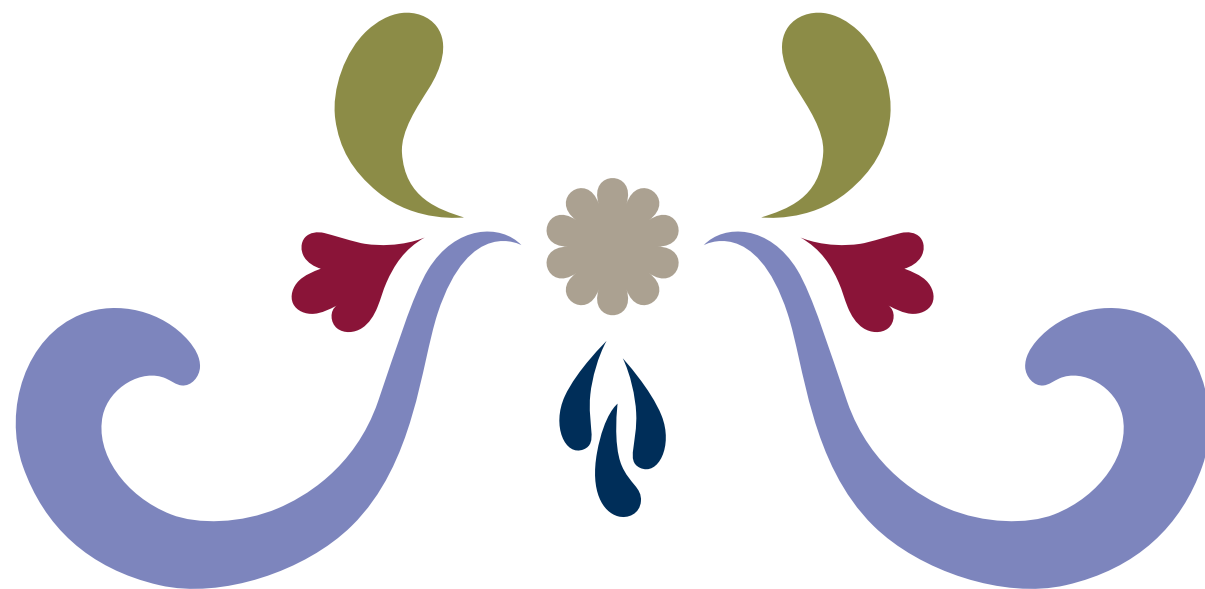
- ▶ Acknowledge its own history of systemic racism that impacts our communities of color;
- ▶ Address its own policies and practices that enable historical institutional racism;
- ▶ Declare racism as a public health crisis in Santa Rosa
- ▶ Commit to inclusion, diversity, equity, transparency in and access to City government
- ▶ Ensure mandatory trainings and educational sessions on inclusion, diversity, and equity for all City staff, appointed and elected officials, and members of all City boards, commissions, and committees;
- ▶ Create healing opportunities for community and Santa Rosa Police Department through community restorative justice circles;
- ▶ Increase civilian oversight of the Santa Rosa Police Department;
- ▶ Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities;



- Create an organizational culture that values public engagement with all community members; and
- Increase access to public engagement opportunities for all residents.

From addressing systemic and institutional racism, to providing more funding for our POC communities, to working with POC to find and implement solutions that will support them and improve their daily lives, the City has a great deal of work to do. This will not happen overnight – the process will be slow and will take time, however, it is important that the City continue to engage with POC and the broader community to ensure changes are made and the City is held accountable for what it says it is going to do.

The City must make a real, authentic effort to provide opportunities to heal with and build trust with the community. There must also be more robust opportunities for engagement with the community, in which the community is a partner with the City in decisions that impact their lives, providing sense of ownership in creating a vibrant, resilient, and livable Santa Rosa for all.



END NOTES

- [APPENDIX A: Community Empowerment Plan](#)
 - [APPENDIX B: Principles of Community Engagement](#)
 - [APPENDIX C: 2014 Mayor's Open Government Task Force Recommendations](#)
 - [APPENDIX D: Spectrum of Community Engagement](#)
 - [APPENDIX E: Listening Session Groups](#)
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SANTA ROSA COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

UPDATED JULY 14, 2020

This strategy is a starting point. It is a recognition that we, as an organization, need to reorient our efforts to not just inform the community about what the City is doing for you, but to more broadly involve and collaborate with the public so that all community members feel they have a voice and are empowered to seek and implement change.

The focus of the strategy below is to engage the community related to current protests. Through this, we have the potential to address policies and practices to improve the City's relationship with, trust amongst, and service to the community. While it is focused on Santa Rosa Police Department engagement, they do not stand alone in responding to the need for change.

This plan will grow and evolve, and with this, we take our first steps.

VISION

There is a trusting, open relationship of respect between the Santa Rosa Police Department and the community, and space for ongoing, inclusive, constructive dialogue is available.

GOAL 1

Increase constructive and inclusive dialogue between leaders from black, indigenous and Latino communities in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County, and the City of *Santa Rosa*.

This dialogue is not solely focused on SRPD, but will include broader safety net solutions such as economic opportunity, land use, budgeting, hiring practices, etc.

Objective 1.1 - Develop a process for regularly sharing progress and updates on this plan and related efforts.

Objective 1.2 - By July 31, 2020, at least 50 leaders have been engaged and a plan for broader community engagement is developed.

Objective 1.3 - By August 31, 2020, at least 5 community listening sessions are completed.

Objective 1.4 - By September 30, 2020, a report on community listening session outcomes is developed and presented back to community leadership.

Objective 1.5 - By December 31, 2020, a plan is developed for ongoing community engagement opportunities, with a focus on 2021.

GOAL 2

Community is provided with opportunities to review and provide input on Santa Rosa Police Department's use of force and community policing policies.

Objective 2.1 - Establish a forum to provide ongoing input on community policing practices, community issues, and ideas for improvement.

Objective 2.2 - Utilize feedback from listening sessions, one-on-one dialogues and Council's Public Safety Subcommittee to update SRPD use of force policies.

Objective 2.3 - Utilize input from listening sessions, one-on-one dialogues and Council's Public Safety Subcommittee to shape the independent police auditor scope of work.

GOAL 3

Establish a feedback loop to gauge effectiveness of efforts with and in the community, and among City staff.

Objective 3.1 - Train City staff on opportunities for and levels of community engagement, including reviewing and adjusting based on community dialogue/listening session feedback.

Objective 3.2 - Develop resource strategies to support and optimize community engagement opportunities related to specific programs, projects and services.

Objective 3.3 - Evaluate community engagement efforts; loop in educational institutions and local organizations

Objective 3.4 - Annually report to City Council on community engagement activities and progress towards each goal

In January 2014, the City convened a diverse group of Santa Rosa residents to create the Mayor's Open Government Task Force, the goal of which was to obtain recommendations about how to improve openness and transparency in Santa Rosa municipal government. Of the recommendations set forth by this Task Force, the following focused on community engagement:

Develop a Culture That Values Public Engagement

This overall recommendation was broken down into a subset of additional recommendations on how to accomplish this:

- 2.1: Genuinely engage and partner with neighborhoods, volunteers, businesses, institutions, and other organizations which support our community
- 2.2: Establish Santa Rosa as a leader in civic engagement with the goal of increasing Openness, Transparency and Accountability
- 2.3: Close the communication loop - Acknowledge the value of community input, wisdom, and participation
- 2.4: Increase opportunities for diverse community engagement and effective participation
- 2.5: Build a strong civic infrastructure – educate people about how best to engage.

Before we can start to build a culture that values public engagement or community engagement, we must understand the principles of community engagement and make them part of the work we do every day. The following principles were developed by the City of Alexandria, Virginia. Like Santa Rosa, Alexandria was tasked in 2012 to work with residents to improve and expand civic engagement throughout their city and increase openness and transparency of their local government. Through a series of community conversations and online participation, residents of Alexandria collaborated with city staff, and appointed and elected officials to talk about how Alexandrians could best participate in public decision-making processes that shape the city.¹

¹ City of Alexandria, Virginia. (January 2014). *What's Next Alexandria: Handbook for Civic Engagement*.
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/WhatsNext>

These principles serve as the foundation for civic engagement in Alexandria, VA, and can also help shape the foundation for community engagement in Santa Rosa. City leaders and decision-makers may want to consider convening a similar process with the community to develop Santa Rosa specific principles in the future.

1. Respect

All participants, including staff, residents, and appointed and elected officials, demonstrate respect in words and actions and approach decisions with open-mindedness so that everyone feels comfortable expressing their opinion regardless of differences.

2. Inclusiveness and Equity

Santa Rosa reaches out and encourages the participation of all members of the community in dialogue and decision-making processes, including those who will be affected by the issue as well as those who have not historically been engaged. All members of the community are informed and empowered to participate; all views are equally heard and inform the outcome; and all impacts and benefits are fairly distributed.

Additionally, Santa Rosa makes every effort to be culturally and linguistically inclusive; Spanish-language translation and interpretation are made available at all community meetings and in decision-making processes. Santa Rosa also agrees to look at culturally appropriate ways to engage those who may not have historically been engaged, particularly community members from our Latino and other ethnically diverse communities.

3. Early Involvement

Identify and involve stakeholders (e.g. residents, community leaders, businesses, etc.) early in decision-making processes. Community members are involved in framing issues before any conclusions have been drawn, requiring early and ongoing communication with participants through each phase in the process.

4. Easy Participation

Promote an open and readily accessible government (Open Government Task Force Recommendation 2.2). Communications and information are timely, easy to understand, and offered in a variety of formats, appropriate to a given process. Information will also be available in Spanish throughout each project and decision-making process. The City will provide clarity about the public decision-making process, including milestones and a defined endpoint. Participants have the flexibility to participate in a variety of ways, including online and in-person.

5. Meaningful Engagement

Santa Rosa provides opportunities for all community members to participate in an **open and unbiased** process, free of predetermined outcomes, to consider and deliberate feasible options. The City authentically solicits, acknowledges, incorporates, and responds to community input.

6. Mutual Accountability

The City and community are mutually accountable for a fair process, honest and respectful participation, informed and fact-based discussion, outcomes that reflect input, and acceptance of the result. City processes will include meaningful assessments to measure progress, implementation of improvements as needed, and effective communication of both.

7. Transparency

The City of Santa Rosa will act with integrity in an open process, and will provide timely access to clear, trustworthy information, presented and employed by all parties from the beginning to the end of the process, including the reasoning that leads to and supports policy conclusions.

8. Sustained Collaboration

Promote a culture of community engagement that enhances public decision-making processes and invests in long-term working relationships, learning opportunities and ongoing, open collaboration among community members, community groups, City leaders, and staff.

9. Evaluation

Santa Rosa will work in partnership with the community to assess community engagement efforts in decision-making processes. The evaluation will quantify participant feedback, document lessons learned, and identify strategies for improvement.



Mayor's Open Government Task Force Report

December 2, 2014

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TASK FORCE MEMBERS BIOS



Co-Chair: Vice Mayor Robin Swinth

Robin Swinth was appointed to the Santa Rosa City Council in January 2013. Robin was appointed Vice Mayor for November 2013-December 2014. She is a native of Santa Rosa and worked locally in the high tech industry as an electrical engineer for 14 years. Currently, she and her husband own a small sales and consulting business which provides assistive technology to people with disabilities. Prior to her appointment to the City Council, Robin volunteered extensively in local government. She served for five years on the Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities and for four years on the Santa Rosa Planning Commission. Robin also served on the Santa Rosa Program Management Team for the General Plan Update of 2000. Robin's priorities include working to ensure the longer term fiscal sustainability of the City budget, regional water issues, and economic development.



Co-Chair: Councilmember Erin Carlstrom

Erin Carlstrom was elected to the City Council in December 2012. She served as the Vice Mayor until November 2013. Erin is a business owner and practicing business attorney. Prior to being elected, Erin served on the Measure O Citizens Oversight Committee and on the Planning Commission. Erin has been an active member of Santa Rosa's community, having served on a number of non-profit and organization boards including as the past-President of the Redwood Business Alliance and as an executive board member of the Accountable Development Coalition. Erin is also a swimmer with the Santa Rosa Masters team which trains at Santa Rosa's Ridgway pool. Erin's priorities include supporting local businesses, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and maintaining and expanding park and recreation opportunities throughout Santa Rosa.



Tony Alvernaz

Mr. Alvernaz retired from the City of Santa Rosa in 2011 after a 27 year career as a Computer Programmer/Analyst. At the time of his retirement he was President of the Santa Rosa City Employees Association (SRCEA). During his time at the City he has served on many committees such as Strategic Planning, Internal Communications, Domestic Partners sub-committee, Financial Stabilization sub-committee, Healthcare Coalition and Pension Task Force to name a few. He is active in the Community serving on the Board of Directors of The Luther Burbank Rose Parade & Festival for the last 11 years, serving as President in 2008, 2009 and 2013. He is a member of the Sonoma County Alliance serving as President in 2007. He serves on the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and the Political Action Committee. Mr. Alvernaz served on the City of Santa Rosa 2011/2012 Charter Review Committee.



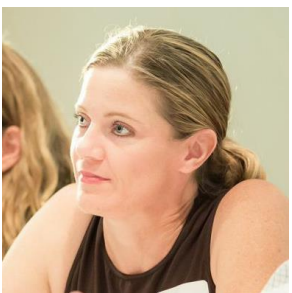
Dee Dee Bridges

Dee Dee was an educator for over twenty years as an elementary school teacher, junior high school computer applications teacher and most recently teaching English in the Business Core at Windsor High School. During her time as a teacher, she was a Technology Mentor for Gilroy Unified School District and she served on the Site Council of Windsor High School. After retiring she became active in the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County and has participated in numerous forums, served as Editor of The Voter, participated on the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, was the leader on Voter Registration Day for two years, worked on Smart Voter, served as Voter Service Chair and was League President. During her tenure as President, the LWVSC cosponsored the RUN workshop on Community Involvement, How to Get Appointed to Boards, Commissions and Committees. Currently she is serving as a LWVSC representative to the Task Force for the Homeless. She is also a member of the Sonoma County Forum, a Tutor for the Sonoma County Library Literacy Program, a member of the Fountaingrove II Landscaping Committee and a member of the Santa Rosa Quilt Guild. After living in several communities in northern California, she feels that being a resident of Santa Rosa has been and continues to be a wonderful place to live.



Ashle Crocker

Ashle is an attorney specializing in environmental, land use, and natural resource law, including compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Ashle currently serves on the Advisory Board for the Children's Museum of Sonoma County and, as the past Vice President of the Board of Directors, she worked with the City of Santa Rosa to secure necessary entitlements and CEQA review for the Museum's new permanent location. Ashle was appointed to the City of Santa Rosa Planning Commission in February 2014 and currently serves as a member of the Commission. In March 2014, Ashle was appointed by the Mayor of Santa Rosa to serve on the Mayor's Open Government Task Force and currently serves as a representative for the City's Boards and Commissions. Prior to her appointment to the Planning Commission, Ashle served on the City of Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board.



Shirleen DeRezendes-Claiche

Shirleen L. DeRezendes-Claiche's family has lived in Sonoma County for five generations that included the Bollinger's of Sebastopol, as well as the Faccini's and Pattengill's. Since preschool she attended local schools including Santa Rosa High School and Santa Rosa Junior College. She earned her B.S. Degree in Business at Pacific Union College in Angwin Napa, and is completing her final year of law school at John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill. She worked for six years at Mary's Pizza Shack with her first official customer after her training being "Mary" herself.

Shirleen relocated to Lake County in 1997 with her husband and two young children and was elected to the Lakeport City Council at the age of 29 from 1998-2002, she served on numerous local and regional boards and committee's including representing Lakeport at the League of California Cities annual meeting. She moved back to her hometown of Santa Rosa with her two son's Benjamin and Devon in 2005

to be closer to her extended family and to complete educational goals. Both boys attended schools in the Rincon Valley School District. In addition to her political experience while in Lake County Shirleen worked as Program Manager for the Health Department, a Newspaper Reporter and after moving back to Santa Rosa has worked at the Disability Services Legal Center assisting disabled clients.

While she has enjoyed her participation in the Open Government Task Force immensely and hopes to someday continue to serve her community in some capacity, her immediate goal is to focus on completing her educational goals and beginning her law career.



Rabbi George Gittleman

Rabbi Gittleman has been the spiritual leader of Congregation Shomrei Torah, in Santa Rosa, since 1996. He holds a B.A. in American History from the University of Vermont, a Masters in Hebrew Letters as well as Rabbinic Ordination from the Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion. Rabbi Gittleman is a Senior Rabbinic Fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem and a graduate of the Rabbinic Leadership Program of the Institute of Jewish Spirituality. Rabbi Gittleman is married to Laura Gittleman, a nurse and the Director of the Emergency Department at Kaiser Hospital in Santa Rosa. They are blessed with twins, Levi and Sophia who are both freshman in college.



Bruce Kyse

Bruce Kyse is a consultant in the newspaper industry. He was Publisher of The Press Democrat Media Group from 2005-2013, and Executive Editor of the Press Democrat from 1990-1999. In 1999, Bruce left the newspaper to be publisher of the New York Times' website Winetoday.com, a start-up website he founded in 1997. From 2001-2005, Bruce was Vice President for the New York Times Regional Newspaper Group. Bruce has served twice as a jurist on the Pulitzer Prize selection committee and during his tenure as editor The Press Democrat won the Pulitzer Prize. Bruce and his wife, Robin, reside in Santa Rosa with their daughter Taylor, 18.



Peter Stanley

Peter's career has spanned much of the design and development process. He started in construction before moving over into managing design and development projects for Simons & Brecht and later AXIA Architects. In 2001, he started his own facilities management and development consulting practice where his understanding of project management and development helped shape complex plans into reality. In 2006 he founded ArchiLOGIX, a design and development strategies consulting firm with a concentration on private development, commercial, institutional and mixed-use projects. Since 2007, the focus of his partnership in ArchiLOGIX with award winning architect Mitch Conner is the implementation of infill and smart growth development aligned with community engagement principles that include all interested stakeholders.

Complimenting his career, Peter contributes his time and expertise to nonprofit organizations like the Santa Rosa Chapter of Rebuilding Together; as well as Vice

Chair of the City of Santa Rosa's Planning Commission; also he is the Development Director for a community building project in Nicaragua that has funded, designed and constructed a neighborhood of low-income homes including infrastructure, schools and a community center. Peter is now Board Chair for Clinica Verde a medical focused international nonprofit committed to the development and operation of sustainable medical clinics in Central America and which will be expanding into the United States in 2015. Their first clinic was opened in January 2012 in Boaco, Nicaragua and has seen over 30,000 underserved patients since it opened its doors.



Karen Weeks

Karen was employed for almost 29 years by the City of Santa Rosa, working first as a Housing Specialist in the Economic Development and Housing Department developing the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, working on homeless programs as well as affordable housing projects. Her second position was as the Administrative Services Office in the Police Department responsible for the budget, facilities and council relations. During her tenure with the city she participated in a number of community events/activities including serving as a fund leader for the employee fund drive; facilitating DINE events; Citizens Police Academy; Santa Rosa Citizens Academy; participating in Leadership Santa Rosa Class 9 and facilitating community budget workshops. She has always valued being an active part of the community she loves and has served on the Boards of numerous organizations including Forgotten Felines of Sonoma County, American Association of University Women, World Affairs Council of Sonoma County, Sonoma County Taskforce on the Homeless, and Sonoma County Law Enforcement Chaplaincy. She has also volunteered in the Schools of Hope program. Upon her retirement she was appointed by Vice Mayor Robin Swinth to serve on the Measure O Citizens Oversight Committee. Currently she is on the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity Sonoma County, as well as volunteering at the California Welcome Center/Santa Rosa Visitors Center.

Supporting Members



We also want to acknowledge and thank **Arnie Barragan** and **Katie Barr** for their help and support on the Task Force. Arnie and Katie both served on the OGTf initially, and their work was extremely valuable in helping the Task Force move productively forward.

Arnie Barragan, Human Resources specialist at St. Joseph's Health System, has 20 years of experience as a community organizer and facilitator in Santa Rosa in support of community lead initiatives which promote social change and foster community engagement and leadership capacity. His volunteer work includes the Roseland Cinco de Mayo Festival, Santa Rosa Community Advisory Board, and Santa Rosa Together.

Katie Barr, Career Technology Education Grant Director for the Sonoma County Office of Education and former Executive Director for Tomorrow's Leaders Today, has volunteered extensively in Santa Rosa including as Board Trustee for the Rincon Valley Unified School District, Elsie Allen High School Foundation Board Member, and Youth Empowerment Council Facilitator. (Picture not available.)

LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Dear Mayor Bartley and members of the Santa Rosa City Council,

We are pleased to submit the Mayor's Open Government Task Force's (Task Force) report and recommendations.

As Co-Chairs, we were extremely impressed by the dedication of the Task Force members and the interest of the public in our work. We purposefully asked the Task Force members to drive the conversation at the meetings, and we covered a wide range of topics regarding open government. We feel confident that our report presents a constructive beginning to a new era of transparency, openness, and collaboration for Santa Rosa.

The recommendations reflect the deliberations and robust conversations of the dedicated and diverse members of the Task Force as well as of the community. We have actively met for eight months, held two community forums, worked as subcommittees, conferred with David Vossbrink (San Jose's Communication's Director), listened to and met with speaker Matt Leighninger (Deliberative Democracy expert) in coordination with Santa Rosa Together, and worked with Santa Rosa City staff members.

This report contains three general areas of recommendations for improving the transparency and openness of our local City government: improving community engagement, increasing communication, and strengthening policy related to transparency. While the Task Force believes all recommendations contained in the report need to be implemented, we also acknowledge that budget and legal constraints may hinder some efforts. We have thus sought to prioritize the recommendations for your, and the Council's, consideration.

We are deeply appreciative of the hard work and perseverance of the Task Force members, City Attorney Caroline Fowler, City Clerk Terri Griffin, Community Engagement Coordinator Jennifer Tuell, former Assistant City Manager Jennifer Phillips, and Administrative Secretary Catherine Noceti. We also want to acknowledge Santa Rosa's engaged citizenry for taking our work seriously, engaging productively to move this effort forward, attending our forums and Task Force meetings, submitting proposals, and broadcasting our work to the broader community.

Finally, we want to thank you, Mayor Bartley, for getting this effort started, working to bring the members of the Task Force together, and supporting our efforts during the last year.

Sincerely,

Co-Chairs: Erin Carlstrom and Robin Swinth

INTRODUCTION

In January 2014, Mayor Scott P. Bartley convened the Mayor's Open Government Task Force (Task Force), a diverse group of Santa Rosa residents, to obtain recommendations about how to improve openness and transparency in Santa Rosa municipal government.

The Task Force began bi-monthly public meetings in April 2014, utilizing a process of community engagement, informal discussions, and hearing from local and state leaders on the subjects of communication and community engagement. Through this process the Task Force concluded that the City already connects in many constructive ways with residents. Task Force members were educated about City policies and outreach programs used to promote open government, and concluded that staff works diligently to follow state and federal requirements for openness.

Through meetings and open forums it became apparent, however, that within our community there is a growing sense of mistrust and frustration with City government. Community members who addressed the Task Force asked for improved communication, collaboration and access to decision makers. Residents expect that their voices will be acknowledged and their efforts will be respected during governmental decision-making processes.

The Task Force concluded that the City – despite adhering to, and sometimes exceeding, the state's legal requirements – still has critical work to do. Openness and engagement should become a City priority in order to meet the changing expectations of the community.

The Mayor and the City Council, through the Open Government Task Force, have taken the first step to analyze the problem and to identify specific desired outcomes. Now community leadership must find innovative ways to allocate the resources to achieve these desired goals. We do not intend to imply that this process is either simple or fast, or that government is the only problem. The solutions to these issues will be solved through a comprehensive

community engagement strategy that invites everyone to the table.

To move forward, the Task Force has compiled a list of recommendations categorized in four sections. From the highest strategic level, the Task Force's first recommendation is that the City Council demonstrates its commitment to openness by adopting "Open Government" as an official Council Goal. This assures the citizenry that open government has been established as a high priority for the Council, City Manager and City staff. It also creates a sense of imperative for action.



To that purpose, the Task Force is recommending several specific actions the City can take to improve communication, access and public engagement. This report provides guidance for the City to fulfill its goal of greater transparency and openness. Effective change can only be accomplished through a long-term approach and with the dedication of City officials towards the adoption of policy changes, public engagement protocols, feedback to the community, and the monitoring of measurable outcomes that are outlined in this final report of the Mayor's Open Government Task Force.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mayor Scott P. Bartley convened the Mayor's Open Government Task Force, a diverse group of Santa Rosa residents, to obtain recommendations about how to improve openness and transparency in Santa Rosa municipal government. The Task Force met for eight months, held two community forums, hosted guest speakers, worked with staff, and conducted independent research.

Through this process the Task Force concluded that the City already connects in many constructive ways with residents and that staff works diligently to follow state and federal requirements for openness.



It also became apparent through this process that within our community there is a growing sense of mistrust and frustration with City government. Community members asked for improved communication, collaboration and access to decision makers. Residents expect that their voices will be acknowledged and their efforts will be respected during governmental decision-making processes.

The Task Force concluded that the City – despite adhering to, and sometimes exceeding, the state's legal requirements – still has critical work to do. Openness and engagement should become a City priority to meet the changing expectations of the community.

"Help us learn about each other and figure out a way to be part of an active partnership."

- Participant in public forum

The Task Force's report and recommendations fall into four groups:

1. Immediate Actions For Council
 - 1.1 Set a Council goal of "Open and Transparent Government"
 - 1.2 Set three strategic objectives for the organization
 - Hire a communications director
 - Adopt a sunshine ordinance based on Task Force recommendations
 - Create a City mission statement which embraces community engagement
2. Develop a Culture that Values Public Engagement
3. Develop a Culture Focused on Communication
4. Develop Policies that Promote Openness

Establishing a Council "goal" with strategic objectives establishes priority and accountability for the important work of creating a more open and transparent Santa Rosa City government.

Developing a municipal culture that values community engagement creates openness. While we have an elected City Council, community members affected by City policies want substantively greater opportunity to be part of the process.

Developing a municipal culture focused on communication is foundational with regard to creating openness and transparency. Openness and transparency are fundamentally about communication – two-way communication.

Developing specific policies that promote openness and transparency codify the best practices that establish the basis for openness and transparency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Immediate Actions Recommended for Council

There are numerous recommendations and detailed suggestions contained in this report. Although we feel that each specific recommendation has value and importance, there are four actions the Task Force is recommending for immediate action by Council. These first steps will begin to move Santa Rosa City government forward toward more openness and transparency.

1.1. Set Council Goal of “Open and Transparent Government”

Establishing such a goal ensures that City staff and Council members prioritize the important work of creating a more open and transparent Santa Rosa City government. As a goal, the City Council would take measurable action that would be reviewed quarterly during City Council meetings.

1.2. Set three strategic objectives for the municipal organization

Hire a Communications Director:

The most important step the City could take towards developing an organizational culture which values public engagement and communicates more openly and transparently would be to hire a Communications Director. The Task Force envisions the Communications Director as a position that champions open and transparent government within the municipal organization. Currently, no one in Santa Rosa’s 1200 person municipal organization holds sole responsibility or accountability for setting

clear expectations and developing municipal wide processes about consistent and constructive community engagement and communication. No one person is accountable for setting clear and measurable expectations about communication. It is important that the Communications Director value communication between the City and the public as a two way process: providing information to the public and promoting the opportunities for the community to provide input to the City. This position must have the authority and standing, which comes from participating at an executive level within the City organization, to prioritize the value of communication, community engagement, and sunshine policy during the organization’s executive level decision making. Details are contained in section 3.1 of the recommendations.

Adopt a Sunshine Ordinance based on Task Force recommendations:

Clearly outline in one procedural document all of the City’s open government processes, procedures and policies (referred to as a “Sunshine Ordinance”) along with considering the recommended improvements in this report, with the goal of increased transparency, restored public trust and a higher degree of public participation. Details are contained in section 4 of the recommendations.

Create a City mission statement which embraces Community Engagement:

Formulate a mission statement for community engagement and work to create a pervasive culture of open and collaborative partnerships between elected officials, city staff, and the community. Details are contained in Section 2 of the recommendations.



2. Develop a Culture that Values Public Engagement

Developing a municipal culture that values community engagement is one of the most impactful actions that Santa Rosa City government can take to increase government openness. Community engagement is the mechanism or process by which citizens engage in their democracy. There was a strong sense from the Task Force that Santa Rosa needs to do more to engage and listen to the diverse voices and stakeholders within our community. While we have an elected City Council, the community desires and expects to participate in the processes which create policy choices and

recommendations to Council - especially when the community faces tough problems which require a more diverse perspective for resolution. The following sections describe more specific strategies for strengthening community engagement.

“Create an environment that we can all learn and share from.”

- Participant in public forum

2.1. Genuinely engage and partner with neighborhoods, volunteers, businesses, institutions, and other organizations which support our community

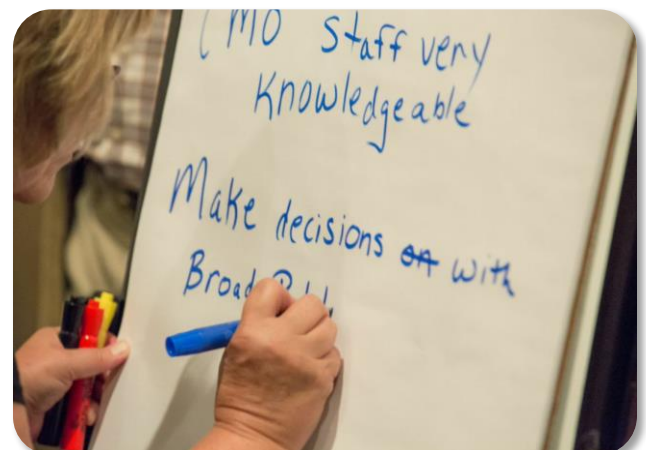
Residents’ knowledge, wisdom and experience is the backbone of any successful community. Santa Rosa is an amazing City of talented and engaged citizens. Decision makers – both elected and employed by the City – should acknowledge, embrace, and invite the input from all stakeholders with the understanding that by addressing social equity, environmental sustainability and economic development, we have the potential to shift decision making from an adversarial to a collaborative process. Genuinely engaging and partnering will result in better decisions which have more buy in from the community and, by virtue of the process, will also result in increased trust and equity as well as reduced frustration for both the public and public officials.

Through public/private partnerships as well as engaging nonprofits, neighborhood organizations and the business community, we increase our opportunities for success. Those who are willing to honestly and respectfully engage with their community and government must be assured that their input is at the very least being considered in the decision making process.

There is already an infrastructure in place that can be enhanced, improved and utilized to help implement this goal. The Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership (formerly known as the “Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force”) utilizes an integrated

network of neighborhood groups, interagency relationships and regular meetings in order to create an infrastructure that is very effective in bringing various groups together to problem solve. The City would be well served in emulating that same model in partnering with a broader cross section of community organizations to help engage and encourage community participation. The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is also a City board that is already engaged and should be better utilized to engage and educate the community.

There was a strong sense from Task Force members that the conversation about Open Government must continue for Santa Rosa. There should be a forum where staff and residents can collaboratively work together to move ideas for improving openness and transparency forward.



Opportunities to accomplish this include:

2.1 Recommendations: Genuinely engage and partner with neighborhoods, volunteers, businesses, institutions, organizations and other local government agencies

- a. Shift definition of partnership to include Community Involvement*
- b. Coordinate use of volunteers City-wide*
- c. Look for opportunities to form partnerships with other community organizations and neighborhood groups*
- d. Create opportunities for partnerships and ask for help in getting people engaged*
- e. Further incorporate the Community Advisory Board (CAB) in civic engagement practices*
 - *Clarify role and mission*
 - *Education and outreach about participatory government*
 - *Work with Teen Council*
 - *Emergency preparedness*
 - *Regular communication with Council*
- f. Explore reassessing and restructuring CAB so that it can help facilitate and activate more effective practices for community engagement*
- g. Build on excellent engagement model of the Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership (formerly known as the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force)*
- h. Make use of key strategies outlined in Matt Leighninger's discussion (also contained in National League of Cities Document entitled "Planning for Stronger Local Democracy: A Field Guide for Local Officials") to effectively engage the community during decision making*
 - *Actively recruit diverse viewpoints.*
 - *Involve those citizens in structured, facilitated small-group discussions, interspersed with large forums for amplifying shared conclusions and moving from talk to action.*
 - *Give the participants in these meetings the opportunity to compare values and experiences, and to consider a range of views and policy options.*
 - *Produce tangible actions and outcomes.*

2.2. Establish Santa Rosa as a leader in civic engagement with the goal of increasing Openness, Transparency and Accountability

The Task Force recommends establishing Santa Rosa as a leader in civic engagement with the goal of increasing openness, transparency and accountability. Accomplishing this requires a cultural shift for our local government and, therefore, the commitment of the City Council and the City organization.

The Task Force also believes that the organization needs to develop a City mission statement aligned

with this goal and which clearly articulates the intent of the organization -something to the effect of: "The City of Santa Rosa is an engaged, open and transparent government; hearing, valuing and honoring all those who live in the community is our goal." This Mission Statement should be at the root of all City decisions thereby sending a message to the community that openness and transparency are not just goals for the City, but are both cultural and organizational imperatives.



This can be accomplished by acknowledging the great work done to date while realizing that despite these accomplishments, negative perceptions, whether real or imagined, will drive the relationship between the community and its government. Building on what works, and fixing that which doesn't, requires bringing diverse stakeholders together for community conversations which produce tangible outcomes and actions. Learning from the past and focusing on advancing new ideas will inform this process.

Opportunities to accomplish this include:

2.2 Recommendations for Increasing Transparency

- a. *Develop a cross-departmental framework in order to institutionalize a more collaborative approach to public engagement, including a mission statement and measurable outcomes*
- b. *Expand the use of City mailing lists*
- c. *Increase direct communication from the City Council and City Manager*
 - *Brown bag lunches*
 - *Electronic newsletters*
 - *Coffee with Council member or local leader*
 - *Listening forums*
- d. *Create strategically located, electronic, and bilingual kiosks for public information*
- e. *Overhaul City Website – see Section 3.2*
- f. *Encourage next charter review committee to explore*
 - *District elections*
 - *Pay for Council*

2.3. Close the communication loop - Acknowledge the value of community input, wisdom, and participation

There is a strong perception in the community that residents' input is not valued by City staff or Council members. This sentiment has been expressed to Task Force members by people who engage productively and care about the community. When decision makers fail to acknowledge input, residents assume it has been disregarded. It is critical that the community members who engage with City processes be assured that their input, whether followed or not, has been heard and considered. Residents' efforts to engage need to be acknowledged; we need to find ways to close the communication loop. Critical and difficult decisions deserve a meaningful public engagement process.

This will foster a spirit of collaboration within government and further promote an engaged population.



Opportunities to accomplish this include:

2.3 Recommendations for Acknowledging the value of Public Input

- a. *Make time at the beginning of Council meetings for public comment*
- b. *Close the communication loop*
 - *Standard Operating Procedures for all questions and complaints, central point of contact*
 - *Address all inquiries (Close the feedback loop)*
 - *Find ways to improve active listening by Council members and staff*
- c. *Foster a spirit of collaboration in problem solving and decision making*
- d. *Communication in times of crisis needs significant improvement*
 - *Move from "We are in compliance with the law." to "Are we meeting the spirit of the law?"*
 - *Town Hall meetings should be convened as soon as possible to improve communication*
 - *City should focus on two-way communication in times of crisis*
- e. *Start critical conversations earlier with the community and hold such meetings at times and places conducive to public participation*
 - *Chance for community to deliberate, discuss and help develop solutions*
 - *Establish Participatory Budget Process*
 - *Council Goal Setting Process*
 - *Community input for hiring key City Officials, such as executive level staff*
- f. *Find ways to demonstrate that public input has been heard. Track complaints and resolutions – make visible online*
- g. *Find ways to make it easier to get City information*
- h. *Encourage City Staff to utilize best practices in customer service with the goal of helping the customers or residents solve the problem, achieve the goal or explain why it cannot be accomplished; adopt an earnest approach of "How may I help you?"*
- i. *Central point of contact- ombudsman to help citizens navigate City processes such as Planning*

2.4. Increase opportunities for diverse community engagement and effective participation

Community members want meaningful opportunities to participate in and influence planning and decision making. In order to promote inclusive, collaborative and robust community involvement, especially for under-served and under-represented individuals, the City should evaluate best practices and experiment with a wide variety of tools for public engagement and effective participation.



New and creative engagement opportunities are going to require new and creative ideas. Empowering residents as well as City staff to experiment with new strategies for community engagement requires shifting to a learning and knowledge based approach. Constructive feedback through community engagement opportunities will engender a communication paradigm that supports working together to solve problems. The necessity of capitalizing on the strong social networks within the City and bringing diverse interests to the same table cannot be over emphasized.

Residents expect opportunities to work together to bring constructive ideas to the table in order to address the issues we face as a community. The notion that "democracy is messy" is true, but without respectful interaction and setting and monitoring of goals through measurable outcomes, we will only succeed in closing down and missing the important opportunities we need in order to move forward.

Opportunities to accomplish this include:

2.4 Recommendations to "Increase opportunities for diverse community engagement and effective participation"

- a. Give the "Communications Director" the responsibility and authority to work within the City organization to activate and promote more effective public engagement.*
- b. Hold meetings at various locations throughout the City (other than Council Chambers)*
- c. Go beyond conventional feedback tools of community meetings and surveys*
 - Regular DINE events (Discussions Inspiring Neighborhood Engagement, a program that brings small groups of people together at homes or community centers for a potluck dinner to discuss challenges facing our City.)*
- d. Assist Neighborhood Groups to organize and engage*
- e. Make use of neighborhood apps, such as Nextdoor*
- f. Schedule quarterly public forums/Town Hall Meetings with City Council*
- g. Increase outreach through media, events webcasts, surveys, newsletters (English/Spanish)*
- h. In times of crisis focus on two way communication*
- i. Make public noticing understandable – move away from "government speak"*
- j. Explore how technology can increase accessibility at Council meetings*
- k. Explore organizing City government in a way that better meets the needs of residents*
- l. Make the website resident-centric*

2.5. Build a strong civic infrastructure – educate people about how best to engage.

Daniel Lathrop and Laurel Ruma, in their book Open Government, state, “Open government without a corresponding increase in an informed, concerned, and engaged citizenry is no solution; in fact, it makes no sense.” Educating the public in how City government works is not a luxury but a necessary goal to engaging and informing our citizenry. The Task Force recognizes that it is essential to develop and support civic structures and processes that encourage active and meaningful community involvement. This approach would strengthen the capacity of individuals and the community to participate in budget allocations, planning processes,

permitting, volunteering, and other decisions impacting civic life in Santa Rosa.



Opportunities to accomplish this include:

2.5 Recommendations: Build a Strong Civic Infrastructure - Helping people know how, when and where to engage

- a. Launch an educational series to build the civic skills and capacity of those who live in Santa Rosa through technology (YouTube, website, social media)*
 - *“Citizen Guides”*
 - *How to request Public Records*
 - *How to participate in a Council meeting*
 - *Local Government 101*
 - *General Plan*
 - *Citizen’s Academy to actively involve all community stakeholders in their government*
- b. Encourage and support school districts to include curriculum focused on local government*
 - *Support Student Curriculum by providing speakers and information to districts*
 - *Partner with existing organizations to reengage the Teen Council and explore expanding the reach*
 - *Explore with educational institutions best way to partner to encourage engagement*
 - *Design youth contests for City Apps*
 - *Youth Council (Teen)*
 - *Working with State Legislators on Curriculum that focuses on local government*
 - *Utilization of Internships with credit*
 - *Job shadowing*

3. Develop a Culture Focused on Communication

Developing a municipal culture focused on communication is foundational with regard to creating openness and transparency. Openness and transparency are fundamentally about communication – two-way communication.

The City has dedicated and diligent staff that have worked to follow the law with regard to communication. Yet, the City organization is perceived as holding information tight and resistant to public engagement. When the City is ineffective at or seemingly unwilling to communicate basic decisions or clear explanations for their decisions - when managing legal limits and liability define communication - the intent of the communication is actually lost, and the lack of communication damages the relationship between the City government and community members. The City needs to do a better job of communicating with its residents.

Communication between the City and the public should be a two-way process: providing information

to the public and promoting the opportunities for the community to provide input to the City. In the City of Santa Rosa, a 1200 person municipal service organization, there should be municipal wide processes to enable consistent and constructive communication with the public.

The following sections describe specific strategies for strengthening communication between the City and its residents.



3.1. Create a Communications Director Position

The most important step the City must take towards developing a municipal culture which values public engagement, communicates more clearly with the community, and champions open and transparent government policy would be to hire a Communications Director. Residents expect their



City government to communicate, listen, acknowledge their input, and respect their role in participating in decisions which affect them. Yet, presently, no one person in Santa Rosa's 1200 person municipal organization is tasked with or accountable for developing municipal wide processes about consistent and constructive community engagement and communication. No one person is accountable for setting clear and measurable expectations about communication, and there is not a champion at the executive level of the organization for transparency.

It is important for the City as an organization to create effective two-way communication with the community so that information is provided to the community and effective channels are established and promoted to receive input from the community. Even in the City's best attempts to communicate

clearly about impactful decisions, the City has found itself under fire from the community. Currently, communication and community engagement is handled on a case-by-case basis within each department. The Communications Director should be responsible, at a strategic level and across the organization, for developing and facilitating the organizational tools, processes, and structure necessary to promote effective and robust public engagement strategies.

The Communications Director must have the authority, which comes from participating on the City Manager's executive team, to prioritize the value of communication, community engagement, and open and transparent government in the organization's executive level decision making. The Task Force envisions the Communications Director as a position that champions transparency and openness at the executive level within City Government.

Opportunities to accomplish this include:

3.1 Recommendations for "Create a Communications Director Position"

- a. Executive management level authority
- b. Oversee community engagement
- c. Oversee website
- d. Partner with local media and neighborhood groups
- e. There needs to be a more consistent and resident-focused approach to the communication from the 1200 person service organization of Santa Rosa City
- f. Oversee communications efforts in all departments

"I found it very refreshing to listening to the meetings of this task force... gives me hope about the democratic process."

- Participant in public forum

"We need to think differently about ways to engage the public."

- Participant in public forum



3.2. Overhaul City's website to create an effective tool for residents

We heard from the community and staff that the current website is a significant barrier for residents who want City information. The website is cumbersome and difficult to navigate - even for simple tasks. Many other communities design their websites to help citizens work effectively with City government, inform the public, attract visitors, showcase resources and community events, and manage legislative information. Openness and Transparency necessitate an intuitive website where everyone can find up to date information easily. Creating a website that is an effective informational tool for residents must a top priority of the City.



Opportunities to accomplish this include:

3.2 Recommendations for “Overhaul City’s Website to create an effective tool for residents”

- a. Focus website on how residents get information, not how the City is structured*
- b. Investigate how technology can help with openness and transparency (i.e. Open Data, Public Records, and resident participation during Council meetings)*
- c. Make City policies and procedures available on website*
- d. Employ diverse community feedback during design process*
- e. Up-to-date City Wide calendar on City’s website*
- f. Make City information available to and understandable by residents on the website – i.e. improve Public Noticing*
- g. Focus communication on how people actually get their information*
 - *Social media*
 - *Video*

4. Develop Policies that Promote Openness

The Policy Subcommittee of the Task Force is recommending several steps the City can take to improve transparency and open government. These findings and recommendations are the result of extensive review of open government policies from several cities and counties that have adopted Sunshine Ordinances. While the Policy Subcommittee determined the City strives to comply with – and in some cases exceed – requirements of the state and federal open government laws, there are opportunities to create a more transparent and accessible City government by revising select policies and procedures. In forming its recommendations, the Policy Subcommittee reviewed many of the

“Sunshine Ordinances” that have been adopted by cities and counties in California. Detailed analysis of the several Sunshine Ordinances are included in the Policy Subcommittee’s full report. (Attachment 2)

“Give weight and importance to decision making roles, it is going to take more than one person.”

- Participant in public forum

4.1 Draft and adopt a Sunshine Ordinance that supports transparency and open government through policies that exceed minimum requirements and statutes for meetings and public records

At the forefront of the Policy Subcommittee’s recommendations is the creation and adoption of a Santa Rosa “Sunshine Ordinance.” The statute would serve as an open-government policy document for the City, as well as a tool to inform the public on ways to engage with the City. The Subcommittee further recommends that the City Council appoint a Task Force comprised of Council, City and public representatives to develop the comprehensive open government statute.

A Sunshine Ordinance, however, is only as effective as the policies contained within the document. Such an ordinance should focus on policies and procedures that exceed openness statutes in the Brown Act and California Public Records Act. It should also codify any existing procedures and practices that provide greater access and more openness than required state and federal law.

“Safety, connection, resilience and communication will all be fostered if our neighborhoods are organized.”

- Participant in public forum



4.2 Policy Recommendations that exceed minimum requirements and statutes for meetings and public records

The Policy Subcommittee also recommends several specific policy and procedure changes. These recommendations represent “best practices” from cities that have adopted Sunshine Ordinances as a method to establish more open governance and enhance community engagement. The Subcommittee’s recommendations are important, if not essential, elements of a Sunshine Ordinance.

However, the list is not exhaustive, and the City should be open to any reasonable procedure or policy that serves to inform or engage its citizenry.

The full report by the Policy Subcommittee (Attachment 2) provides a more detailed list of policy recommendations and explanations. Following are some of the key areas the City Council should address in a new Sunshine Ordinance.

Opportunities to accomplish this include:

4.2 Recommendations for “Policy Recommendations that exceed minimum requirements and statutes for meetings and public records.”

Council agendas and comment:

- Formally adopt and codify existing practices and procedures to provide earlier notice of City Council agendas, as well as supporting documents, staff recommendations and potential impact on budget and City services.
- Publish written guidelines – in print and on the website – to help the citizenry interact more effectively with the City, including public comments at City Council meetings.
- Establish time-certain periods for public comment that are more accommodating to the public, while balancing the need for time-certain schedule of public hearings. (Numerous examples are included in the Policy Subcommittee’s full report.)
- Move Council reports to the end of the meeting or at a more flexible time.

Closed meetings:

- Require that the governing body disclose the reason for any closed meeting as part of the agenda, or verbally announce the reason for emergency items being discussed prior to the closed session.
- Expand requirements for disclosure of settled litigation, including a quarterly public report identifying settlement agreements over a certain size.

Public records:

- Hire or designate a public records coordinator to ensure each department is compliant with open-government statutes, and expedite response times.
- Provide clear guidelines on how to make a request for public records, maintain a public records index that identifies records that are maintained by the City, and establish a formal appeals process when the request for a public record is denied.

Website:

- Revise and update the City website to make it easier for the public to find information about the City, including guidelines for public access and participation.
- Make City policies and procedures available on website.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Engagement Subcommittee Recommendations and Supporting Information
2. Policy Subcommittee Recommendations and Supporting Information
3. Policy Subcommittee Tables
4. Supplemental Information

Attachment 1

Community Engagement Subcommittee Recommendations and Supporting Information

Subcommittee Members:

Rabbi George Gittleman, Dee Dee Bridges, Karen Weeks and Peter Stanley

PREAMBLE

There is an inherent difficulty in addressing an issue as complex and layered as government transparency and openness. Clear, affective policies that foster Open Government are essential, yet policy alone will not ensure Open Government. Simply put, one cannot legislate good behavior. Legislation and policy give us an outline of what an open, engaged and transparent government can look like but for the policy to be effective you need something more: a clear statement of values that fills in the picture of the true intent of the policy.

Why is this important? Despite compliance with State law and the Brown Act and a commitment from elected officials and city staff to offer superior service to its constituents, there is still a perception in the community that local government does not make open, transparent and engaged government a priority. Our analysis suggests that the only way to change this perception which we believe is rooted in experience, is, along with new policies, to change the city culture as well.

A culture of openness and engagement with the community must be a part of the DNA of the city and must be nurtured through a **Vision Statement** and **Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)** that are the basis for evaluation of all decisions the City makes. Establishing KPI's is an excellent way of measuring whether intended outcomes are being achieved and helping evaluate how to adjust if they aren't. The measure isn't simply "are we following the rules?" the greater more important question is, "are we being effective at it?" This Vision must be a part of the leadership model that begins with Council and is embraced by the City Manager's office and then throughout the entire organization. Only through a systemic, long term change in public engagement can the community feel as if they are an integral part of the decision making process. This cultural and operational value system must be strong enough to transcend political and staffing changes within the City.

In order to try and understand how other municipalities addressed similar problems, the Community Engagement Subcommittee looked at approaches from other Cities including Portland Oregon. The City of Portland has taken a proactive approach to involving its citizenry in local governance. The **Portland Public Involvement Principles** are a series of objectives that go beyond a policy approach. The Principles set the ground work for a cultural shift in the way political leadership and City staff, educate, inform and continuously engage with their residents. The following goals, based on those principles are in no way intended to create an

exhaustive list of priorities but the beginnings of cultural change that can strengthen the engagement process and trust within the City.

Vision Statement

The City of Santa Rosa is an engaged, open and transparent government; Hearing, valuing and honoring all those who live in the community is our goal.

GOAL 1: Community Involvement as a Partnership

The City and our neighborhoods should work together as **genuine** partners. The City should build and maintain relationships and communication with individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, organizations, institutions and governments. Decision makers should be **connected** to the community, and they should inspire others, including staff and residents, to act together toward common goals.

GOAL 1: Implementation

Despite many efforts on the part of Council and staff this goal has been difficult to achieve in a consistent manner yet it is potentially the most important objective in bringing the community together. There is already an extensive infrastructure in place that can be enhanced, improved and utilized to help implement this goal. The Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force utilizes an integrated network of neighborhood groups, interagency relationships and regular monthly meetings in order to create an infrastructure that is very effective as a preventative measure in addressing education and gang prevention related solutions. The City would be well served in emulating that same model in partnering with neighborhood groups to help engage and encourage community participation. CAB is also a City board that is already engaged and could be better utilized to inform and educate the community. This would require better defining goals and outcomes expected of the neighborhood representatives as well as nominating and appointment structure that ensures the greatest level of community engagement and participation.

GOAL 2: Transparency and Accountability

City planning, policy, investment and development decision-making processes are clear, open, documented and work to balance a variety of community interests. The City makes it clear to the community who is responsible for making decisions, and how community input was taken into account in decisions made. It is critical that the community members who engage with the City process be assured that their input, although not always followed, is heard, considered and communicated through a feedback loop. Public apathy begins when the public feels that what they have to say is unimportant to the conversation and decisions that are made.

GOAL 2: Implementation

Transparency and accountability must be a communicated goal of the City Council. This is the institutional structure that provides direction and leadership for staff and residents. It is no small task to communicate consistently that informing the public is of the highest priority within the City. But it is also incumbent upon the citizenry to educate themselves to the issues the City

faces. It is hard to take seriously complaints that are not informed by an understanding of any and all obstacles a regulating body must follow.

City Council members should engage with the community through regular Town Hall meetings that take place in different venues throughout the City. These meetings can give residents an opportunity to educate themselves as well as provide direct access to elected officials. The City Manager is also a critical member of this engagement principal since he/she is the day-to-day face of the leadership structure of our City. The City Manager needs to be known and visible in the community and easily accessible to those who wish to address the office. The basic philosophy of the City structure should be that when it comes to information and engagement, we should always err on the side of transparency and openness.

In times of crisis Town Hall meetings should be convened as soon as possible to allow information to be shared by all affected. This will allow the City to see how best it can help the community and also make the community aware of what the City can do.

GOAL 3: Value of Community Wisdom and Participation

Ensure that community members that provide knowledge and input receive some response from decision-makers, including a feedback loop with the rationale for final decisions. It is critical to the process when inviting public participation that there be a system by which information that is provided by the public can be effectively evaluated and addressed by the City.

GOAL 3: Implementation

This is another way in which the City website could be used to post and respond to public feedback. It is not to say that all public suggestions and solutions will be implemented but it is critical to an engaged citizenry that they know they have been heard. There are many implementation strategies outlined throughout this document that would be helpful in acknowledging the important input from the community. It is also important to have a system by which complaints from the community are tracked and addressed.

GOAL 4: Accessible and Effective Participation

City planning, policy, investment and development decision-making processes are designed to be accessible and effective, evaluating best practices and using a wide variety of tools to promote inclusive, collaborative and robust community involvement including under-served and under-represented individuals. Community members have meaningful opportunities to participate in and influence all stages of planning and decision making. The City shall be proactive in helping the community navigate processes, planning and permitting with the objective in all interactions with the public being; ***"How may we help you"***.

GOAL 4: Implementation

One of the most difficult barriers to simply getting information about the City is the structure and format of the City's website. This is potentially an incredible tool for informing the public of what is happening and yet virtually everyone who commented on the website, including staff and task force members, say it is impossible to navigate easily. The website as an effective informational tool must be made a top priority of the City.

Effective participation and robust community involvement can be achieved through a methodical adherence to the notion that directly engaging with the community is imperative. Town Hall meetings as suggested in Goal 2 implementation strategy is one way to provide accessibility to City governance. The Community Engagement Subcommittee also feels strongly that the City needs a dedicated “Community Engagement Director” tasked with creating a robust outreach program with both budget and staff support needed for success. This position, assigned to the City Manager’s office, must have the authority, and be part, of the Executive Team reporting directly to the City Manager to implement strategies and empowered, and protected, to implement and test engagement solutions. In order to ensure that these implementation strategies remain a part of the ongoing goals of the City, it is recommended that Council continue a form of the OGTF that will review, monitor and report back to Council on a regular basis.

GOAL 5: Building Strong Civic Infrastructure

The City recognizes that it is essential to develop and support civic structures and processes that encourage active and meaningful community involvement and strengthens the capacity of individuals and communities to participate in budget allocations, planning processes and civic life in Santa Rosa.

GOAL 5: Implementation

Daniel Lathrop and Laurel Ruma in their book ***Open Government*** state that, “Open government without a corresponding increase in an informed, concerned, and engaged citizenry is no solution; in fact, it makes no sense”. Educating the public in how City government works is not a luxury but a necessary goal to engaging and informing our citizenry. Leadership training for staff is critical as well as classes for the community to teach those interested in how various mechanisms within the City structure work; budget, planning, permitting, volunteering, etc. This is an excellent opportunity to not only educate but also connect with the community in a meaningful way. It not only empowers the community, it can empower staff to better understand the issues and concerns of those whom they serve. There are a variety of ways to accomplish the implementation of this goal. In the past the city hosted a Citizens Academy which was essentially a Santa Rosa Government 101 class, some ongoing form of this program is recommended.

Conclusions

As stated earlier, this is not an exhaustive list of recommendations and issues related to a public engagement approach. It is intended as a first step to understanding and implementing a strategy that can be tested and evaluated through measurement of Key Performance Indicators. There is an ideation philosophy that says; in order to identify and solve problems we must be willing to “Fail fast and fail often”, not for the sake of failing but for the sake of learning. Government by nature is risk adverse, generally for very good reason, making mistakes is amplified in the public eye. Failure is often interpreted as incompetence even though any successful person or organization will tell you that their failures were their greatest lessons, not learning from those lessons is the fatal error. Creativity requires us to think differently and in order to succeed with this goal we need to empower and protect City staff if we hold any hope

of moving down a path of creative solutions. The community is looking for access, education, a feeling that their voice is important and means something to the decision-making process. Implementing a strategy through policy along with the less tangible elements outlined above can help move our community to a position of trust.

Culture, values and character are critical human characteristics that help define public trust; it's a gauge by which people evaluate their leaders. We will need to implement a process that inculcates a value system that can connect with the community in order to begin to overcome current obstacles. Geoff Smart's book *Leadocracy* condenses the implementation process to three critical elements:

- Analyze: and determine the desired outcomes.
- Allocate: scarce resources; money, people and time.
- Align: resources to achieve the desired goals.

The City Council through the Open Government Task Force has taken the first step in beginning to analyze the problem and to identify certain desired outcomes. Now community leadership must find a way to allocate the resources needed and apply them to achieve these desired goals. We do not intend to imply that this process is either simple or fast, or that government is the only problem. The solutions to these issues will be solved through a comprehensive community engagement strategy that invites everyone to the table.

Attachment 2

Policy Subcommittee Recommendations and Supporting Information

Subcommittee Members:

Ashle Crocker, Bruce Kyse, Tony Alvernaz, Shirleen DeRezendes-Claiche

ISSUE

Should the City Council consider adopting additional policies and procedures designed to improve transparency and open government in the City of Santa Rosa?

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Rosa currently complies with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act, as required by State law. The City also has enacted Council Policy 000-35, which sets forth additional requirements primarily focused on proper noticing for meeting agendas. The Subcommittee notes this Policy was enacted in 1999 and is therefore quite out of date and does not reflect the current state of technology for public access to information via the internet.

In addition, the City currently implements a number of unofficial practices and procedures focused on transparent governance. These procedures have not been formally adopted by the City and are not codified in any document accessible by the public.

The Policy Subcommittee of the Open Government Task Force was created to review the requirements of the Brown Act and the California Public Records Act, and to consider whether the City of Santa Rosa should adopt additional policies focused on transparency and open government. As part of its review process, the Policy Subcommittee reviewed a number of Sunshine Ordinances to determine whether the policies and recommendations contained therein, or similar policies, should be considered by the City of Santa Rosa.

Specifically, the Policy Subcommittee reviewed Sunshine Ordinances adopted by the cities of Alameda, Oakland and San Francisco and the County of Contra Costa. In addition, the Open Government Task Force invited David Vossbrink from the City of San Jose to attend the Task Force meeting on July 7, 2014, to discuss San Jose's various policies and procedures focused on open government. Of particular interest to the Policy Subcommittee was the city's Sunshine Ordinance which includes policies and procedures designed to enhance the State's open government requirements as set forth in the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

The information reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee was voluminous. In order to summarize the policies enacted by various jurisdictions, the Subcommittee prepared a spreadsheet to

compare Santa Rosa to the above-referenced jurisdictions. This comparison spreadsheet, attached hereto as Exhibit A, summarized the following data:

1. The requirements of the Brown Act, focused on the following categories:
 - Required Notices and Agendas; specifically addressing regular meetings, special meetings, emergency meetings, closed session agendas and agenda exceptions.
 - Closed Sessions; specifically addressing personnel exemption, public security, pending litigation, labor negotiations and real property negotiations.
 - Public Rights; specifically addressing public testimony, non-discriminatory facilities, copy of recordings, public vote, closed meeting actions, taping or broadcasting, conditions to attendance and public records.
2. The policies enacted by Santa Rosa to exceed the Brown Act in the above-referenced categories, and
3. The Sunshine Ordinances enacted by, or under consideration by, other jurisdictions to exceed the Brown Act and Public Records Act in the above-referenced categories.

As described further below, the Policy Subcommittee concluded that, while Santa Rosa exceeds the Brown Act requirements in a handful of the areas mentioned above, both through Council Policy 000-35 and through unofficial City practices and procedures, there are a number of areas in which the City would benefit by strengthening its existing policies.

ANALYSIS

After comparing various jurisdictions, the Policy Subcommittee determined that Santa Rosa exceeded the Brown Act in the following categories, either by and through Council Policy 000-35 or through unofficial City practices and procedures:

- Required Notices and Agendas - Regular Meetings, Special Meetings and Agenda Exception.
- Public Rights - Public Testimony, Non-discriminatory Facilities, Copy of Recording, Public Vote, Condition to Attendance and Public Records.

In other areas, Santa Rosa meets but does not exceed the Brown Act requirements. Given Santa Rosa's population and government structure, as well as the political climate surrounding transparency at City Hall, the Policy Subcommittee believes the City of Santa Rosa should consider enhancing current policies and procedures and adopting new policies aimed at improving open government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Santa Rosa exceeds the Brown Act by and through Policy 000-35 and through the City's unofficial practices and procedures. The Policy Subcommittee recommends creating one

procedural document to institutionalize and consolidate all of the City's open government processes, procedures and policies along with considering the recommended procedural improvements which are designed to increase transparency, restore public trust and encourage public participation.

The spirit of an open and transparent government will embrace innovative methods of exchanging information with the public, continue to increase community engagement and involvement, develop sustainable practices of operation to be effective and efficient in the functions of city business. These city functions include budget development, providing essential services such utilities and public safety matters, improving policies and procedures to strive to be reflective of the diverse needs of the community and making decisions that effectuate trust and security of the public.

It is the request of the Policy Subcommittee that the City of Santa Rosa leadership embrace the principles of an open and transparent government. While the Subcommittee was unable to articulate specific policies in the limited time provided, the Subcommittee identifies the following issues as being of utmost importance and makes the following recommendations.

The Subcommittee recommends that the City formally adopt the following practices and procedures; while the City currently adheres to these practices to the extent feasible, the Subcommittee believes it is important to codify these practices into formal policy, either as part of a Sunshine Ordinance or other policy document aimed at improving transparency:

- Post preliminary agendas on the website 12 days prior to city meetings (Policy 000-35 requires posting 9 days prior to the meeting).
- Provide more detailed agenda summaries to better inform the public about the issue being considered by the council, the proposed recommendations and potential budget impacts (Brown Act requires 20 word summary, Policy 000-35 does not address).
- Post preliminary agenda packets, including supporting documents, on the website 12 days prior to the meeting date (Policy 000-35 requires publication and posting the packet at the public counter 9 days prior to meeting date).
- Post final agenda packets, including supporting documents, 5 days before the meeting (Brown Act requires 3 days).

In addition, the Subcommittee recommends the City adopt formal policies to address the following issues, none of which is currently addressed by policy or by unofficial practice and procedure:

- Public Education: Provide written guidelines for members of the public, explaining the City's policies regarding public participation, public comment.

The purpose of this policy would be to enhance public knowledge of the City's policies and to better inform the public as to its important role in City government.

- Public Access to Information: Hire a public records coordinator and/or public information officer to work in coordination with the City Clerk, City Manager, City Council and legal counsel to ensure each department is compliant with any Sunshine policies or ordinances that may be adopted by the council, including responding to requests for information under the Public Records Act.

The Subcommittee believes this is an important step toward improving transparency, and from the Subcommittee's research on this issue it appears that where other cities have hired an information officer it has been very successful.

- Closed Session Agenda: Prior to closed session, the governing body should disclose reason for the closed meeting as part of the agenda, or verbally announce the reason for emergency items being discussed in close session.

Such a policy would serve to reduce supposition or suspicion as to topics discussed by the council in closed sessions.

- Agenda Exceptions (Non-agenda items): In addition to Santa Rosa's current policy regarding agenda exceptions, provide a detailed explanation of the reason the material could not be provided to council or public with normal advance notice.
- Public Testimony: There are numerous examples on how the city council and city entities can accommodate public comment, providing time-certain opportunities to comment on agenda and non-agenda items. For public comments on matters not on the agenda, consider a policy whereby the order of speakers is chosen by random drawing and the speakers are limited to three minutes each for a total comment period of 15 minutes; after the close of the 15 minute comment period, any speakers that did not get to speak but wish to address matters not on the agenda can provide those comments at the end of the council meeting, after the public hearing.

The purpose of this policy would be to better inform the public regarding the time for public comment and ensuring the public arrives at meetings at the proper time and with reasonable expectations for providing comments. This policy would also provide certainty regarding the start of public hearings, because when members of the public provide lengthy testimony on matters not on the agenda, the result can be to delay public hearings and thereby create uncertainty for those persons attending to speak on matters on the agenda.

- Access to Online Meeting Recordings: For online video recordings of council hearings, provide an index and date stamp to show where each matter on the agenda begins on the video. For example, provide an index showing that the public hearing on "XYZ Project" begins at hour 2 on the video, and provide a link by which the public can click on "XYZ Project" and the video will automatically jump to the start of the hearing item.

The purpose of this policy is to improve the public's ability to quickly and easily access information regarding the council item of most interest.

- Closed Meeting Actions: Expand requirements for disclosure of settled litigation. Litigation settlement currently goes unreported (unless someone inquires directly) when the final approval of settlements rests with the other party. There are numerous options, including a list of reported settlements included monthly on the council agenda. Suggest the City provide a quarterly report identifying any settlement agreements entered into by the City with a settlement amount over \$50,000.

The purpose of this policy is to provide access to important information and to thwart the appearance of secrecy in settlements.

- Access to Public Records: Provide a clear guide for the public, explaining how to make a request for public records; post this guide on the website and at the City Manager's office. Provide training to City staff so they are well versed on this topic and can provide efficient service to the public. The City should also maintain a public records index that identifies the types of records that are maintained by all departments and offices.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the public and the City staff are both informed regarding the City's process and to improve communication between the parties and increase access to records.

- Response to Public Records Act Requests: Provide a written acknowledgement of all requests for public records within one business day. Where the request for documents is fairly routine, respond by providing the requested documents within three business days. For more complex matters, the Brown Act provides guidance regarding responses that are required within ten days.

The purpose of this policy is to let the public know their request(s) have been heard and the City is endeavoring to fulfill the request, and also to ensure the City is using its best efforts to timely reply.

- Appeals Process to Gain Access to Public Records. Provide a formal process by which a person making a public records act request can appeal a determination by the City Attorney that the requested documents cannot be provided.

This policy is important because it ensures that any request that is denied by City staff or by the City Attorney's office may be appealed to a higher body, and thereby provide the public with a mechanism to pursue their request.

- New Website. The City should devote substantial effort and resources to revising and updating its website to make it more user-friendly. The Subcommittee finds the current website to be difficult to navigate and difficult to find information, even where we know such information exists.

This should be a top priority for the City as it is essential to fostering community engagement and access to information.

CONCLUSION

The City of Santa Rosa can improve community involvement by providing information in an accessible method, being proactive in anticipating concerns and addressing those matters in an appropriate manner, inviting input from members of the community, and using that input to make decisions so that the citizenry feels their voice is heard. A positive step toward improving the cooperation and collaboration between the members of the public and the City of Santa Rosa is to strive to govern by going beyond the minimum of what the local, state or federal law requires. To this end, the Policy Subcommittee strongly recommends the City adopt a Sunshine Ordinance designed to improve transparency and openness in governance.

Attachment 3

Policy Subcommittee: Review and Comparison

Required Notices						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Regular Meeting	Brief general description (approx 20 words). Posted at least 72 hours prior to meeting. Posted at least 72 hours prior to meeting. (3 day's)	(=/+) Advanced (preliminary) agenda posted 12 days prior to meeting. Staff / consultant reports available on CM public counter 12 day's prior. Provide background information for report items, prior actions taken by Council, Name of parties, location of properties, budget impacts, sources of funding, contract amounts and recommendations. Agenda packet on website 24/7 at no charge and available for inspection at Central library and CMO. QR code prior to every meeting for electronic access to agenda packet. Meeting agenda on website, bulletin board (2) and meeting location	(+) Provides for a greater noticing period For Redevelopment Agency, Board of Port Commissioners, Public Ethics Commission, and Their Standing Committees for City Council post online and in accessible location 10 days before meeting date, unless supplemental agenda which is 72-hours before meeting date. Other local bodies not specified in 10 day requirement, must provide 72 hour notice. (Secs. 2.20.080(A) & (C).)	(=) Post agenda on website with meaningful description of each item on agenda 72 hours before meeting. Sec. 67.7(a).	(+) Provides for a greater noticing period. All such staff material must be distributed to the policy body and be made available to the public 96 hours before a scheduled meeting or 24 hours prior to a meeting when the agenda item has been added to the agenda at a previous meeting of the policy not more than 7 days prior to the scheduled meeting. Records which are releasable and which are distributed during a public meeting but prior to commencement of their discussion shall be made available for public inspection prior to and during , their discussion. (Sec. 2.206(A) & (c)	(=/+) 12 day's for City Council ; 7 day's for all other policy bodies (2-91.5a) Agenda posted on website ; cable channel & available @ library (2-91.5d) Agenda packet on website (fiscally + technologically feasible) and reviewable at library & City Clerks office during normal business hrs (2-91.5d) Agenda available 'upon request' to speech & hearing impaired thru telecommunication relay services or equivalent systems and 'upon request' to sight impaired thru Braille or enlarged type. (2-91.5h) Include 'Know your rights under sunshine ordinance' (2-91.5i) Limit ceremonial presentations & proclamations to no more than 15 Minutes (2-91.5j) Agenda covered by Sunshine ordinance 'Shall' include the address, area code, phone#, fax#, email address and a contact persons name for the Open Government Commission. (2-91.5k)

Required Notices						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Special Meeting	24 hour notice to members of legislative body and media outlets. Brief general description.	(=) Special meeting notice is typically greater than 72 hours	(+) Provides for a greater noticing period. 48 hour notice to media, legislative body, agenda subscribers and publicly posting. Sec. 2.20.070(A).	(=) 72 hour notice to legislative body and local media. Sec 67.6(f).	(=) Not specifically addressed.	(=/+) Delivering personally or by written mail notice to each member of the policy body and the local media who have requested written notice to each of special meetings in writing. Notice shall be delivered as described in 2-91.4 (e) at least 7 days before, with the exception of any urgent matter beyond the control of the City. (2-91.4f)
Emergency Meeting	1 hour notice in case of work stoppage or crippling activity except in the case of a dire emergency.	(=)	(=) Not specifically covered. Ordinance provides that Brown Act fills gaps. (Sec. 2.20.050.)	(=) Not specifically covered. Ordinance provides that Brown Act fills gaps.	(=) Not specifically addressed.	(=) Not specifically covered. Possibly covered in 2-91.4d and reference to Gov. code sec. 54956
Closed Session Agenda	Described in the notice or agenda for the meeting. Generally must report the action at the conclusion of the closed session.	(=)	(=) Described in notice or agenda for the meeting. (Sec. 2.20.100(A).) Must announce in open session the reason for the closed session. Sec. 2.20.110(A). Must report action taken at conclusion of closed session under specified circumstances. Sec. 2.20.130(B).	(=) Described in notice or agenda for the meeting. (Sec. 87.8.) Prior to the closed session, policy body must state reason for closed session and specific statutory authority for it. Sec. 67.11. Must report action taken at conclusion of closed session related to real property negotiations, litigation, settlements, employee actions, and collective bargaining. Sec. 67.12(b).	(+) Requires disclosure of justification for closed session Prior to holding a closed session pursuant to this section, the policy body shall disclose the justification for its closure either by entries in the appropriate categories on the agenda or, in the case of an item added to the agenda based on the finding of necessity and urgency, by oral announcement specifying the same information. Sec. 2.402 (e) Agenda items that involves existing litigation 'shall' identify the court, case # and date the case was filed on the written agenda. For each agenda item for a group that involves anticipated litigation, the city attorney's office or the policy body 'shall' disclose at any time requested and to any member of the public whether such anticipated litigation developed into litigation and 'shall' identify the court, case # and the date the case was filed, unless the city attorney determines that lifting the exemption from disclosure would be detrimental to the city. (2-91.8b)	(=/+) Specify and disclose the nature of any closed session by providing specific information (2-91.7a 1-7) Minutes of all closed sessions, except on charter officer performance 'shall' be taken by the city clerk or designee. City attorney 'shall' semi-annually (6 months) make a determination whether disclosure would be detrimental to the city, and 'shall' provide a report to council (2-91.8a)

Required Notices						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Agenda Exception	Proceed without an agenda in the case of emergency circumstances or where a need for immediate action came to the attention of the governing body after posting of the agenda.	(= / +) Item not on prelim agenda can be added to agenda if: it appears on final agenda at least 72 hours prior to meeting, council finds that due to exceptional circumstances outside control of council compliance would impose substantial burden on the city’s ability to conduct business or result in prejudice to private party. Requires five council members unanimous vote if less than seven members are present	(+ / =) Provides detail regarding how agenda exceptions are implemented. Proceed if: 1) Majority vote of local body that matter is an emergency; or 2) 2/3 vote of local body present or if less than 2/3 unanimous vote that matter is urgent and came to attention after agenda was posted. 2.20.080(E).	(+ / =) Provides detail regarding how agenda exceptions are implemented. Proceed if: 1) Majority vote of local body that matter is an emergency; or 2) 2/3 vote of local body present or if less than 2/3 unanimous vote that matter is urgent and came to attention after agenda was posted; or 3) the matter was continued from a previous agenda. Sec. 67.7(e).	(+ / =) Provides detail regarding how agenda exceptions are implemented. 2.206 (a). The policy body may, by a æ vote, waive these times when, in its judgment, it is essential to do so, providing that the County Administrator, appropriate Department Head or staff member furnishes the Board of Supervisors or other policy body a written explanation as to why the material could not be provided to the Board or other policy body and the general public within the (otherwise required) time limit.	(= / +) Majority vote that an accident, natural disaster or work force disruption poses a threat to public health and safety. Two-thirds (2/3) vote or less than 2/3 present then unanimous vote of those present that the need to take action is so imperative as to threaten serious injury to public interest (2-91.5g 1 and 2). 9191.5g1,2)

Closed Session						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Personnel Exemption	To consider appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, discipline or dismissal of an employee. With respect to complaints or charges against an employee brought by another person or another employee, the employee must be notified, at least 24 hours in advance, of his or her right to have the hearing conducted in public. (Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.)	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Sec. 2.20.120 (D) incorporates Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957 by reference.	(+/-) Provides additional provisions regarding use of closed sessions for the review of municipal executive compensation A body may consider the appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, or dismissal of a City employee, if the policy body has the authority to appoint, employ, or dismiss the employee, or to hear complaints or charges brought against the employee by another person or employee unless the employee complained of requests a public hearing. (Sec. 67.10 (b).) Executive compensation Committee established pursuant to an MOU with the Municipal Executives Association may meet in a closed session when evaluating an individual subject to the MOU, or when establishing performance goals requires discussing the individual's performance. (Sec. 67.10(c).)	(=) Nothing substantially different than Brown Act.	(=) Same as Brown Act (2-91.10g)
Public Security	A body may meet with law enforcement or security personnel concerning the security of public buildings and services. (Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.)	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Sec. 2.20.120 (D) incorporates Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957 by reference.	(=) A body may meet with the Attorney General, district attorney, sheriff, or chief of police, or their respective deputies on matters posing a threat to the security of public buildings or a threat to the public's right of access to public services or public facilities. (Sec. 67.10 (a).)	(=) Nothing substantially different from Brown Act.	(=/+) Meet with Attorney General, district attorney, City Attorney or chief of police or their respective deputies, or a security consultant or a security operations manager on matters posing a threat to the security of public buildings, a threat to the security of essential public services, including water, drinking water, wastewater treatment, natural gas service and electric service or a threat to the public's right of access to public services or public facilities.

Closed Session						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Pending Litigation	A body may meet in closed session to receive advice from its legal counsel concerning existing litigation, initiating litigation, or situations involving a significant exposure to litigation are expressly defined in section 54956.9(b)(3). (Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54956.9.)	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Sec. 2.20.120 (D) incorporates Cal. Gov. Code Sec. Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54956.9 by reference.	(+) Provides additional provisions regarding the prohibition of closed sessions to evaluate independent contract attorney services A body may, based on advice of its legal counsel, and on a motion and vote in open session to assert the attorney-client privilege, to confer with, or receive advice from, its legal counsel regarding pending litigation when discussion in open session concerning those matters would likely and unavoidably prejudice the position of the City in litigation. Pending litigation includes: (1) An adjudicatory proceeding; (2) there is significant exposure to litigation against the City. A closed session may not be held however, to evaluate independent contract attorney or law firm to engage in services or otherwise. (Sec. 67.10 (d).)	(+) Provides additional requirements regarding reporting of legal action or settlements. Sec. 2.406 (a) A policy body shall publicly report any final action taken in closed session and the vote or abstention of every member present thereon, as follows: 1) Litigation: Direction or approval given to the policy body's legal counsel to prosecute, defend or seek or refrain from seeking appellate review or relief, or to otherwise enter as a party, intervener or amicus curiae in any form of litigation as the result of a consultation under govt. code 54956.9 shall be reported in open session as soon as given, or at the first meeting after the adverse parties have been served if, in the opinion of legal counsel, earlier disclosure would jeopardize the county's ability to effectuate service of process or to conclude existing settlement negotiations to its advantage.	(=) Same as Brown Act (2-91.10c,d,e)

Closed Session						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Labor Negotiations	A body may meet in closed session with its negotiator to consider labor negotiations with represented and unrepresented employees. Issues related to budgets and available funds may be considered in closed session, although final decisions concerning salaries of unrepresented employees must be made public. (Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.6.)	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Sec. 2.20.120 (D) incorporates Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.6 by reference.	(=) To meet with the City’s designated representatives regarding collective bargaining or meeting with public employee organizations when a policy body has authority over such matters. (Sec. 67.10(e).)	(+) Provides additional wording regarding reporting of closed sessions. Sec. 2.406 (a): After a closed session, a policy body may in its discretion and in the public interest, disclose to the public any portion of its discussion the disclose of which is not prohibited by federal or state law. The body shall, by motion and vote in open session, elect either to disclose no information or to disclose the information which a majority deems to be in the public interest.	(=) Same as Brown Act (2-91.10h)
Real Property Negotiations	A body may meet in closed session with its negotiator to consider price and terms of payment in connection with the purchase, sale, exchange or lease of real property. (Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.8.)	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Sec. 2.20.120 (D) incorporates Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.8 by reference.	(=) A body may meet in closed session with its negotiator to consider price and terms of payment in connection with the purchase, sale, exchange or lease of real property. (Sec. 67.8(a)(2), citing Cal. Gov. Code Sec. 54957.8.)	(+) Provides additional wording regarding disclosure Sec, 2.406 (1) : Real Property Negotiations: Direction or approval given to the policy body’s negotiator concerning real estate negotiations pursuant to GC 54956.8 shall be reported as soon as the agreement is final. If its own approval renders the agreement final, the policy body shall report that approval, the substance of the agreement and the vote thereon in open session immediately. If the final approval rests with the other party to the negotiations, the county shall disclose the fact of that approval, the substance of the agreement and the policy body’s vote or votes thereon upon inquiry by any person, as soon as the other party or its agent has informed the county of its approval.	(=/+) Same as Brown Act (2-91.10b) With an applicant and applicant’s attorney, if any, when a policy body determines it is necessary to discuss and determine whether an applicant for a license or license renewal, who has a criminal record, insufficiently rehabilitated to obtain the license, and consistent with the requirements of Gov Code Sec. 54956.7 (2-91.10a)

Public Rights						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Public Testimony	On agenda items before or during consideration. Time must be set aside for public to comment on any other matters under the body's jurisdiction.	(=+) Public Comment on non-agenda items: Prior to 1st public hearing at 5:00 pm if time allows otherwise after all other city business is completed on any issue. When item is taken up on the Agenda. Time limit set by mayor. Currently 3 minutes	(+) Prohibits limitations on public criticism. Provides specific time limitations and presiding officer's discretion in enforcing time limitations. Must provide time for public comment on any matter within body's jurisdiction. Presiding officer may request speakers representing similar views to designate a spokesperson in the interest of time. Minimum of two minutes per person per agenda items. No local body shall abridge or prohibit public criticism. (Sec. 2.20.150.)	(+) Prohibits limitations on public criticism. Provides specific time limitations and presiding officer's discretion in enforcing time limitations. Must provide time for public comment on any matter within body's jurisdiction. Minimum of three minutes per person per agenda items. No local body shall abridge or prohibit public criticism. (Sec. 67.15.)	(+) Public comment must be allowed on each agenda item and during a general comment period. Sec. 2.205 (B)	<p>(=+) Public to directly address a policy body on items of interest to the public that are within the policy body's jurisdiction providing that no action shall be taken on any item not appearing on the agenda unless the action is otherwise authorized by section 2-91.5e. The agenda shall provide 15 minutes for this use. The agenda does not have to provide time if an item was considered by a subcommittee made up of council members only at a public meeting unless the item has been substantially changed since the subcommittee heard the item. The council will determine whether the item has been changed. If the number of speakers exceeds the 15 minute period under public comment additional time will be made available at the end of the meeting. When more speakers than can be accommodated</p> <p>within 15 minutes the Clerks office will randomly select the order in which speakers will be chosen to speak at the beginning of the meeting. Regular and special meeting agenda to provide opportunity to address council before they take action. Public comment on closed session items shall be taken before closed session is convened. Presiding official may request speakers representing similar views to designate a spokesperson in the interest of time.</p>

Public Rights						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Non-Discriminatory Facilities	Meetings may not be conducted in a facility that excludes persons on the basis of their race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry or sex or that is inaccessible to disabled persons or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase.	(=) Same as Brown Act Agenda provides contact information if accommodation is needed. All Council, PC and BPU meetings are closed captioned on cable broadcast and on archived video on website.	(=) Meeting may not be held in any location that is inaccessible to persons with physical disabilities, or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase. (Sec. 2.20.140(A).)	(+) Provides additional accessibility options for the hearing impaired and whose English-speaking abilities are limited. No local body shall conduct a meeting that excludes persons on the basis of actual or presumed class identity or characteristics, or which is inaccessible to persons with physical disabilities. Sign language interpreters or note takers should be provided at each meeting, provided that a request is received at least 48-hours before a meeting. Translators may be provided where translation is necessary to enable city residents with limited English proficiency to participate. (Sec. 67.13.)	(+) No policy body shall conduct any meeting, conference or other function in any facility that excludes persons on the basis of actual or presumed class identity or characteristics, or which is inaccessible to persons with physical disabilities, or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase. (Sec. 2.602	(=/+) Provide sign language interpreters or note takers provided that a request to the clerk at least 48 hours before the meeting. Monday meeting deadline is 4:00 pm of the last business day of the preceding week. Chemical sensitivity statement on each agenda. Translators for non/limited English speaking citizens when requested 48 hours in advance. For Monday and Tuesday request made by noon on last business day of preceding week. Meeting can proceed w/o one. Meetings to adjourn no later than 11:00 pm unless extend by majority vote. (2-91.13a-f)
Copy of Recording	Public may obtain a copy, at cost, of an existing tape recording made by the legislative body of its public sessions and to listen to or view the body's original tape on a tape recorder or viewing device provided by the agency.	(=/+) Video retained 2 years on DVD Archived Meeting content on website:7 years meeting videos, 11 years of agenda packets, 16 years of resolutions, ordinances and minutes Paperless agenda packet.	(=) Every meeting must be recorded. The video tape must be available for copying and inspection without charge on player or computer provided by the local body. Sec. 2.20160(B).)	(=) Every meeting must be recorded. The video tape must be available for copying and inspection without charge on player or computer provided by the local body. (Sec. 67.14(b).)	(=) No substantial change from Brown Act.	(=/+) No cost for recording (2-91.14b) Available 72 hours after the meeting on website. Digitally archived for a period of 10 years. (2-91.14c)
Public Vote	All votes, except for those cast in permissible closed session, must be cast in public. No secret ballots, whether preliminary or final, are permitted.	(=) Same as Brown Act Council Chamber voting system publicly displays how each member voted.	(=) Immediately following the closed session a local body shall publicly report any action taken in closed session and the vote or abstention of every member present thereon. (Sec. 2.20.130.)	(=) A policy body shall publicly report any action taken in closed session and the vote or abstention of every member present thereon. (Sec. 67.12.)	(=) No substantial change from Brown Act	(=) Same as Brown Act

Public Rights						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Closed Meeting Actions	At an open session following a closed session, the body must report on final action taken in closed session under specified circumstances. Where final action is taken with respect to contracts, settlement agreements and other specified records, the public may receive copies of such records upon request.	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Public has right to comment on any closed session item before closed session convenes. (Sec. 2.20.110(D).) Local body must disclose action taken with respect to real property negotiations, litigation and settlements. (Sec. 2.20.130(B).) Local body must state prior to the closed session the statutory authority and reason for the closed session. (Sec. 2.20.110(A).)	(=) Prior to the closed session, policy body must state reason for closed session and specific statutory authority for it. (Sec. 67.11.) Must report action taken at conclusion of closed session related to real property negotiations, litigation, settlements, employee actions, and collective bargaining. (Sec. 67.12(b).)	(=) No substantial change from Brown Act.	(=/+) At policy body's discretion and in the public interest may disclose any portion that is not confidential under federal or state law, the charter or non-waivable privilege. Made by presiding officer or designee present in closed session. (2-91.12a) Shall publicly report any action taken and the vote or abstention of every member present based on criteria outlined in 2-91.12b 1-4. Reports required to made immediately with supporting documents provided to any person who has made a written request or who has a standing request. (2-91.12c) Summary posted at the close of business on the next business day (2-91.12d) City Attorney shall prepare and present on consent calendar a list of documents which have been determined to be public after previously being determined to be unavailable to the public. Presented at least semi-annually and available on the website. (2-91.13e)
Taping or Broadcasting	Meetings may be broadcast, audio-recorded or video-recorded so long as the activity does not constitute a disruption of the proceeding.	(=) Same as Brown Act	(=) Any person may record, photograph or broadcast a meeting unless the activity constitutes a persistent disruption (Sec. 2.20.140(B).)	(=) Any person may record, photograph or broadcast a meeting unless the activity constitutes a persistent disruption. (Sec. 67.14(a).)	(=) Not addressed.	(=) Same as Brown act (2-91.14a)
Conditions to Attendance	Public may not be asked to register or identify themselves or to pay fees in order to attend public meetings.	(=) Same as Brown Act Speaker card indicates that completion and submission is voluntary.	(=) Public may not be asked to pay fees in order to attend meetings. (Sec. 2.20.140.) All other gaps in Oakland Sunshine Ordinance are filled-in by the Brown Act (Sec. 2.20.010(C).)	(=) Public may not be asked to pay fees in order to attend meetings. (Sec. 67.13(a).) All other gaps filled in by the Brown Act (Sect. 67.5.)	(=) See non-discriminatory Facilities	(=) Same as Brown act (2-91.14a)

Public Rights						
	Brown Act	Santa Rosa	Oakland	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Alameda
Public Records	Materials provided to a majority of a body which are not exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act must be provided, upon request, to members of the public without delay.	(=/+) All Agenda material for public inspection in public binder in CMO and available for download 24/7 at no charge from website. Materials provided to majority of body prior to meeting are provided simultaneously to public for inspection in public binder and website (time permitting). Provided to the public immediately upon Request when possible; otherwise provided without delay and in compliance with PRA	(+/-=-) Clarifies public disclosure requirements for materials provided to the majority of a body. Request to inspect or copy public records must be responded to within three days. If additional time is required, that must be communicated to the requesting individuals in no event shall it take longer than 14 days after the extension is communicated. Sec. 2.20.030(A) & (B).	(=) Agendas and documents distributed to members of a policy body must be made available as soon as possible. (Sec. 67.9(a).)	(+) Additional wording to expand on CPRA 25- 4.608: Justification of withholding: b) No records or information shall be withheld on the basis of the public interest balancing test in Govt. Code Sect 6255, Or by citing any case law application of that statute. c) A withholding on the basis that disclosure is prohibited by law shall cite the statutory authority of the Publics Record Act or elsewhere:	(=/+) Records subject to disclosure shall be made available to public. Except for exempt material. May charge direct cost for a copy. No charge for digital versions. (2-91.9a-e)

Attachment 4

Supplemental Information

Presentations:

Open Meeting and Due Process Presentation: Santa Rosa City Clerk and City Attorney (April 17, 2014)
http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/3.%20Brown%20Act%20%20Due%20Process%20Presentation2.pdf

David Vossbrink, City of San Jose Communications Director (July 17, 2014)

Open Government webpage:

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=220>

Sunshine Reform Task Force:

<http://www3.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/TaskForce/SRTF/SunshineOrdinances.asp>

Draft Open Government Ordinance:

<https://www.piersystem.com/external/content/document/1914/2195554/1/06-30-14CLERK.pdf>

San Jose Media Policy:

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16106>

Presentation Notes from July 17, 2014:

http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/20140717%20OGTF%20Notes%20of%20Guest%20Speaker%20Vossbrink.pdf

Matt Leighninger: Community Engagement (September 25, 2014)

Planning for Stronger Local Democracy:

<http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/governance-and-civic-engagement/democratic-governance-and-civic-engagement/planning-for-stronger-local-democracy>

PowerPoint Presentation:

<http://www.slideshare.net/mattleighninger>

Community Meeting Notes:

Task Force Brainstorming Meeting: May 15, 2014

[http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/May%2015%20Categories%20from%20Breakout%20BRAINSTORMING%20DRAFT%20\(1\).pdf](http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/May%2015%20Categories%20from%20Breakout%20BRAINSTORMING%20DRAFT%20(1).pdf)

Public Forum Brainstorming Meeting: May 27, 2014

http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/May%2027%20Categorization%20from%20Public%20Forum%20DRAFT.pdf

Public Forum Notes: September 29, 2014

Community Engagement Subcommittee

<http://srcity.org/doclib/Documents/Engagement%20Subcommittee%20Public%20Forum%20Notes%20092914.pdf>

Policy Subcommittee

<http://srcity.org/doclib/Documents/Policy%20Subcommittee%20Notes%20092914.pdf>

Resource Information:

ABC's of Open Government Laws (Institute for Local Government)

http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/1.%20ilg_abc_br_2010_web_no_water_mark.pdf

California Newspaper Publisher Association

http://www.cnpa.com/legislative_and_legal/legislative_bulletin/public_records/

City and County of San Francisco - Sunshine Ordinance (Section 67)

<http://www.sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=4463>

City of Alameda - Sunshine Ordinance (Chapter II – Article VIII)

<https://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=16753&stateId=5&stateName=California>

City of Oakland – Sunshine Ordinance (Article II)

https://library.municode.com/HTML/16308/level3/TIT2ADPE_CH2.20PUMEPURE_ARTIIPUACME.html

City of Portland, Oregon – Community Connect Final Report

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/182408>

City of Santa Rosa Policies and Ordinances

City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols

http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/5.%20Manual%20of%20Procedures%20and%20Protocols.pdf

Policy No. 000-35 – Early Agenda Policy

http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/4.%20Council%20Policy%20000-35.pdf

Policy No. 000-23 – Procedure for Filling Council Vacancies (Provided to Policy Subcommittee)

[http://cityweb.srcity.org/departments/citymanager/Council/City%20Council%20Policy%20Library/Council%20Vacancies,%20Procedure%20for%20Filling%20\(000-23\).pdf](http://cityweb.srcity.org/departments/citymanager/Council/City%20Council%20Policy%20Library/Council%20Vacancies,%20Procedure%20for%20Filling%20(000-23).pdf)

Ordinance No. 3954 – Lobbying

http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/Ord.%203954%20Regulating%20Lobbying%20Activities.pdf

Community Engagement Program: DINE V Feedback

<http://srcity.org/doclib/Documents/DINE%20V.pdf>

Contra Costa County – Better Government Ordinance (Chapter 25)

<https://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=16286>

First Amendment Coalition

Sunshine Ordinances

<http://firstamendmentcoalition.org/public-records-2/california-sunshine-ordinances/>

Open Meetings

<http://firstamendmentcoalition.org/open-meetings-3/>

Getting the Most Out of Public Hearings: An Idea Inventory (Institute for Local Government)

http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/ILG%20Getting%20The%20Most%20of%20Public%20Hearings.pdf

Open and Public IV: A Guide to the Ralph M. Brown Act (League of California Cities)

<http://www.cacities.org/Resources-Documents/Resources-Section/Open-Government/OpenPublic2010.aspx>

9/2013 Supplement

http://www.cacities.org/Resources-Documents/Member-Engagement/Professional-Departments/City-Attorneys/Publications/OP-IV-Supplement_Final_2013-09-16.aspx

Public Engagement (Institute for Local Government)

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/public-engagement>

Sonoma County and Community Engagement

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/community/>

Best Practices in Action: Strategies for Engaging Latinos, Seniors and Low-income Residents of Sonoma County

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/community/pdf/report.pdf>

The People's Business: A Guide to the California Public Records Act (League of California Cities)

<http://www.cacities.org/Resources/Open-Government/THE-PEOPLE%E2%80%99S-BUSINESS-A-Guide-to-the-California-Pu.aspx>

8/2011 Supplement

http://www.cacities.org/Resources/Open-Government/The-People-s-Business_August-2011-Supplement.aspx

Transparency, Sunshine and Public Engagement Presentation (City Clerks Association of California)
http://srcity.org/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/Presentation%20for%20August%207.pdf

Understanding the Basics of Public Service Ethics Laws (Institute for Local Government)
http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Documents/2.%20understandingbasicsethicslaws_finalproof_0.pdf

Newspaper Articles:

March 21, 2014: PD Editorial: The need for a Santa Rosa sunshine law
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/1859604-181/pd-editorial-the-need-for>

April 2, 2014: Santa Rosa open-government task force meets Thursday
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/1793406-181/santa-rosa-open-government-task-force>

May 26, 2014: Santa Rosa open government task force hosts public forum
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/1863517-181/santa-rosa-open-government-task>

September 27, 2014: Santa Rosa hosts open government forum Monday
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/2891207-181/santa-rosa-hosts-open-government>

October 6, 2014: Government Wilting from Too Much Sunshine
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/opinion/2919637-181/government-wilting-from-too-much>

October 15, 2014: PD Editorial: Open forum on Santa Rosa council openness
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/opinion/editorials/2974961-182/pd-editorial-open-forum-on>

October 19, 2014: Close to Home: Changed by Andy Lopez tragedy
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/opinion/closetohome/2988840-184/close-to-home-changed-by>

Correspondence:

In the months that the Task Force met, we received a number of correspondence from residents and have combined them all into one document viewable at:
<http://srcity.org/doclib/Documents/All%20Public%20Emails%20in%20one%20File.pdf>




SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Spectrum of Public Participation is an internationally recognized model developed to help clarify the role of the public in planning and decision making, and how much influence the community has over planning or decision making processes.

The model identifies 5 levels of community engagement. **The further to the right on the Spectrum, the more influence the community has over decisions,** and each level can be appropriate depending on the context.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THESE ARE LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT, NOT STEPS.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decisions including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solutions.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input informed and influenced decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input informed and influenced decisions.	We will co-create and co-produce solutions with you. You will be a true partner in making and implementing decisions for your community. Your advice and recommendations will be incorporated.	We will support your decisions and work to implement solutions. You are part of the solution.
Examples	Meeting participation In person visits Factsheets Websites Social Media Posts Emails Open Houses	Public comment Focus groups Surveys Public meetings Online engagement tools Pop-ups Walking tours Community mapping	Visioning workshops Deliberative polling Summits Online engagement tools	Resident advisory committees Citizen advisory committees Seats on governing boards Consensus building Participatory decision-making	Advocacy training Resident juries Resident budget-making Ballots Delegated decision

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN

LISTENING SESSION GROUPS



The following groups participated in listening sessions with the City of Santa Rosa from July through December 2020.

- 100 Black Men of Sonoma County
- Bayer Farm Community Garden Group/LandPath Volunteers
- Community Action Partnership – Community Conversations on Race (August 10, 2020)
- Open Mic Community Event hosted by NAACP
- Roseland Community Building Initiative
- Santa Rosa – Sonoma County Chapter of the NAACP
- Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership Community Partners Group
- Sonoma County Indigenous Community Leaders Group
- Sonoma County Lowrider Council
- South Park Community Building Initiative
- United Black Voices of Sonoma County
- Youth Group 1 – Boys and Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marin, Community Action Partnership, Latino Service Providers
- Youth Group 2 – Sonoma County Juvenile Hall Residents