
COUNTY OF SONOMA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT OCTOBER 31, 2007

Background

In August, 2007 the County of Sonoma, working with The Results Group, launched a public outreach and education effort to engage the residents of Sonoma County in a process of reviewing and soliciting feedback on the Draft Strategic Plan developed by the County during the past year. The following report describes the:

1. Selected audiences and the dates and locations where feedback on the Draft Strategic Plan was collected
2. Summary of Comments from the various stakeholder meetings
3. Recommendations as to any changes to the draft Strategic Plan
4. Public outreach efforts that were undertaken to generate participation in the meetings

Included as attachments are all comments generated by meeting, as well as participant contact information collected from sign-in sheets at the time of the meeting.

Input Gathering Meetings

Several processes were used in soliciting feedback from interested parties. One included planning a series of public meetings to present the Draft Strategic Plan and collect comments about the strategic direction the County was proposing to move towards. The primary target audiences included Community Based Organizations, County Advisory Boards and Commissions, the business community, county employee labor representatives and the general public. The following meetings were conducted.

Audience:	Location:	Date:
Sonoma County Mayors and Council Members	Cloverdale	August 9
Press Democrat Editorial Board	Santa Rosa	August 13
Sonoma County Employee Representatives	Sonoma County	August 29
Sonoma County Business Alliance	Santa Rosa Country Club	September 5
Community Based Organizations	Santa Rosa Veteran's Hall	September 7
General Public	Healdsburg/Villa Chanticleer	September 12
Sonoma County Advisory Boards/Commissions/CBO's	Santa Rosa Veteran's Hall	September 13
General Public	Santa Rosa Veteran's Hall	September 17
Santa Rosa City Council	Santa Rosa	September 18
General Public	Sebastopol Veteran's Hall	September 20
General Public	Sonoma Community Center	September 25
General Public	Petaluma Veteran's Hall	September 27
Sonoma County Office of Education	County Center	October 31, 2007

In addition, people were invited to post comments on the County's website, and or e-mail responses to The Results Group, their District Supervisors, or the County Administrator's Office. All data was reviewed and included.

Summary of Comments from Nine Community Input Sessions

Theme	Representative Comments
1. Focus on "upstream" efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want treatment over prisons. What is the cost difference between the two (\$ spent on treatment and \$) spent on incarceration? What is the percentage of inmates with mental health and substance abuse issues? Invest in upstream strategies and alternatives to incarceration. Treatment is prevention. • Invest the money for criminal justice facilities in early and evidence-based prevention and early-intervention practices to reap long-term benefits in lower rates of child abuse, kindergarten expulsion (Yale study) and arrests. • Put more money into mental health than jails and spend it more effectively.
2. Increase collaboration, especially with CBOs and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no mention of education. What is the role of education in keeping youth away from drugs and gangs? • The more resources going into the services non-profits provide, the better. They do valuable heavy lifting. We need to identify and support valuable non-profits. • The plan is missing a piece on strengthening collaboration between county government and CBOs.
3. Various implementation suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run government like a business. • Do not rely on Federal or State help to meet the Strategic Plan goals. • Have you considered decriminalization of possession of drugs? • We should look to non-profits for modeling past practices. • Can any of the County facilities be used for Residential or Outpatient services? • There needs to be more education in our schools about AOD issues that starts at the 2nd or 3rd grade. We need education programs for parents, as well.
4. We appreciate the future and big picture focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great work in the analysis phase. Tangential issues and aspects were brought in. • I appreciate the focus on the future. • I am pleased to see government addressing issues thoughtfully. Move higher in the list
5. Healthcare system impacts on our community are not addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a leadership role in managing public/private health needs. • I hope the plan analyzes all ends of healthcare issues to provide integrated, lower-cost services. • The SP needs to address health care- especially related to seniors
6. The plan needs more input from Latinos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can be done for youth to educate them to be leaders of the future? To actively participate in this process (primarily Latino youth)? Why aren't they here at this forum? • Look for ways to engage the Latino community in this process, tap into their energy and power • Have you received feedback from the Latino community re: gangs? • Hold focus groups between two largest demographic groups (over 60's & disables and Latino youth) – what are their needs/priorities?

7. We want to know more: Questions about facts, statistics and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategies look good on paper, but I want to know more about the specifics of implementation. How much of budget expenditure is result of unfunded mandates? What are all California counties doing to react to State and Federal requirements? What do the requirements mean in dollars?
8. Increase public participation and awareness of the County's role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public might not understand what we (County employees) do and therefore might not value our services. Increasing public understanding needs to be imbedded in the Plan. We need to make more noise to recruit Sonoma County- its people- businesses- citizens- to know what's going on and help implement positive changes. More public advertisements! More visible! If you want us, we have to know what's happening!
9. Solicit more input from key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the implementation process, working groups need to break into committees so others have a chance to give input. Hold focus groups with seniors, those with disabilities and Latino youth. What are their needs and priorities?
10. It is difficult to respond when we don't know what the implementation process will look like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategies look good on paper, but I want to know more about the specifics of implementation. How will the Board of Supervisors allocate resources to (e.g.) Mental Health vs. a Sheriff's deputy? How will Mental Health and substance abuse treatment be interwoven because of the obvious relationship between the two?
11. Water issues are glossed over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost nothing about the water- wastewater issues- jails got way more attention than services essential to ALL residents of Sonoma County. The costs of providing these services, already extremely high, will become even more critical in the near future. How is the Strategic Plan addressing the issue of the finite resource of water, especially considering: Growth? The loss of the Eel River? Climate change?
12. Build up the Plan's framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the horizon of the plan. What timeframe is being used? Why are mission, values, and vision not included? How will a possible change in the members of the Board of Supervisors affect the Plan?
Group Specific Themes	Representative Comments
CBOs High degree of willingness to collaborate with County Don't force us to run like the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to caution the County against placing outcome objectives on non-profits that would constrain non-profits and decrease their efficiency. It's costly for non-profits to hire IT people. We could use County support and help with software and developing and maintaining databases. Since CBOs keep separate databases, the County could facilitate integrating them.
Seniors: We want more focus on transportation for Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation for seniors isn't specifically addressed in the Plan. One of the biggest issues for the aging population is transportation. What does the County see to address this need (beyond bus stops – the 80+ population often can't get to the bus stop)? Presenting the plan at senior centers would increase input from seniors. Difficulty with accessing the Town Hall meetings may prevent their participation.
Employee Representatives: We are not represented in the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee costs represented as being the cause of the County's dilemma The Plan needs to have buy-in of county labor organizations or it will be business as usual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally the Plan is accurate and states what we have been saying for a long time
Sebastopol Town Hall: The Plan's focus is too internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider factors like global warming- especially as it relates to infrastructure plans • A lot of our issues are long-term- longer than 5 years. • Very serious issue: Peak oil- it <u>trumps</u> all of the other issues. SP focus is too internal and needs to be more external. Educate BOS on peak oil.
Sonoma Town Hall:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan seems too general when it comes to unincorporated areas. Sonoma Valley is not represented. We are looking at increased crime rates in Sonoma Valley. Satellite offices are a great idea. • The Supervisorial District system encourages regionalism. Connections and overlaps of organizations and budgets need to be connected. • Our present governing system separates Sonoma Valley into City and unincorporated County jurisdictions. In reality, the Sonoma Valley functions as an integrated whole. The strategic plan would be much more effective if we could find a way to get cooperation/integration with programs/plans in Sonoma Valley.

Recommendations

While there were plenty of comments and feedback generated in these meetings and from the website, including observations about county government, community needs and ideas and suggestions for implementation, relatively few changes to the plan itself are recommended as a result of what was learned in this process. In most instances the comments were already addressed in the plan. Some comments centered on implementation, which will be considered in the next phase, and some comments fell outside the purview of this planning effort. However, we do believe the County would be well served in “closing the loop”, i.e. posting measured responses to the themes on the County’s website. This demonstrates leaders listened, considered what was said, and responded with their best thinking.

Timing

There are some references in the plan to upcoming public outreach efforts. Those outreach efforts have now taken place and the plan needs to reflect those changes.

Clarify Scope

One of the recurring themes regarded a noted absence in the plan of health care system issues, including access, services and cost. While the County has taken a leadership role in convening key stakeholders to address these issues, it may be worthwhile to include it as an on-going effort, given its importance to county residents.

In addition, a lack of attention on land use (General Plan) and water issues (Water Agency Strategic Planning Efforts) were noted by several, and in one community meeting comments were received about the limited attention given to larger global issues (energy, pollution, economics, etc.). While the County continues to take a leadership role in local land use and water issues, mention of this in the plan may be in order. As to the larger global issues, a reference to the Board’s continued engagement at both State and Federal levels to represent County interests may also be helpful.

Latino’s

Several comments were made about references in the report to the young Latino community which seemed divisive; more of a tone or way of speaking about this community that may lead to further polarization. One person commented it appeared they were unfairly characterized in the draft plan as a being a deficit or problematic. We were not able to identify any one statement or reference that clearly generated this feeling. However, while reviewing the plan we did see where some language and or references could be off putting. As an example, Finding 2 on page 9 of the draft plan states “*County population growth and demographic changes present both challenges and opportunities for Sonoma*

County's communities and will alter demands for County services. Continued growth in the Latino population (especially youth) and senior population, increasing economic pressure on low and middle-income families, increased gang activity, continuing high substance abuse problems, and unacceptably high rates of school drop-outs will become significant drivers of future policy and program planning decisions. While the fiscal and programmatic impacts of these demographic shifts will be felt throughout the entire County system, the criminal justice, health and human service systems will be most significantly involved in addressing these changes.

It would appear that people linked “*Latino population (especially youth)*”, with “*increasing economic pressure on low and middle-income families, increased gang activity, continuing high substance abuse problems, and unacceptably high rates of school drop-outs*” with the rest of the paragraph “*While the fiscal and programmatic impacts of these demographic shifts will be felt throughout the entire County system, the criminal justice, health and human service systems will be most significantly involved in addressing these changes*” which comes across as pejorative.

Our suggestion is to re-structure the Finding, providing a clearer context as to why continued growth in the Latino and Aging populations is an issue, i.e. “*The majority of County services have developed over time to fit a demographic picture that has sharply changed; a re-alignment of services to more accurately address the needs of large segments of our community who continue to redraw the demographic picture will clearly be required*”

In addition, we think it would be well advised to couch references to the Latino and aging populations as our Latino and aging populations as opposed to the Latino and aging population.

Finally, re-positioning “*our Latino Community*” within the paragraph, away from the references to economic, gang, high substance abuse and unacceptable drop out rates may mitigate some of this misunderstanding of the Finding's intent.

Another look at the document, specifically through the lens of the minority community's perspective, may serve to strengthen the document's relevance and impact as it moves forward.

Employees

We strongly concur that a statement acknowledging employee contributions in meeting the mission of the County, be included in the plan. It is clear there is sensitivity around compensation packages impact on the county budget. It is also clear that compensation packages are not the only source of acknowledging and validating an employees contribution to the effort, and any efforts that can be taken to reinforce this concept are well advised.

Goals and Objectives

Some refinement, eliminating duplication and further clarifying may be in order. It is, in fact, a living plan, and as the County gets more and more clear about specific goals and objectives, this will need to be incorporated into the plan.

Outreach Efforts

Press Releases

Two press releases were written and distributed to Sonoma County media outlets. The first press release focused on the Draft Strategic Plan and the issues contained therein. The press release also referred to the public meetings to be conducted in September, 2007. The second press release focused on the public meetings and the opportunity for the public to make a contribution in the County's effort to address future strategic problems.

Distribution Dates:
Media Outlets:

 August 7, 2007
 September 11, 2007

 Santa Rosa Press Democrat
 Petaluma Argus Courier
 Sonoma West Times and News
 Cloverdale Reveille
 Healdsburg Tribune
 Sonoma Index Tribune
 The Windsor Times
 The North Bay Business Journal
 La Voz (Spanish Language)
 El Superior (Spanish Language)
 Impulso (Spanish Language)
 KFTY-TV50
 KSRO
 KRCB
 KZST
 KBBF (Spanish Language)
 KRRS (Spanish Language)

Newspaper Ads

Newspaper ads announcing public meetings were placed in regional and local papers.

Newspaper:
Date:

Santa Rosa Press Democrat	September 11, 2007 September 17, 2007 September 24, 2007 September 26, 2007
Sonoma Index Tribune	September 21, 2007
Petaluma Argus Courier	September 26, 2007
Sonoma West Times and News	September 13-19, 2007

Newspaper Articles

Placement of newspaper articles were facilitated with articles and editorials appearing on the following dates, in the following papers.

Date
Newspaper:
Headline/Author:
Published:

September 26	Sonoma Index-Tribune	<u>County officials seek ideas</u> By Bill Hoban INDEX-TRIBUNE MANAGING EDITOR
September 26	Petaluma Argus Courier	<u>Public's help sought to address county challenges</u> News Brief
September 21	Press Democrat	<u>County priorities take a blistering</u> <i>West county residents say they want better roads,</i>

		<i>health care, treatment</i> By BLEYS W. ROSE THE PRESS DEMOCRAT
September 20	Sonoma Index-Tribune	<u>County brings Strategic Plan to Sonoma Meeting set for Tuesday at SCC</u> By Bill Hoban INDEX-TRIBUNE MANAGING EDITOR
September 18	Press Democrat	<u>Low turnout for county meeting</u> <i>Two dozen heed supervisors' call for input into Strategic Plan; three more sessions planned</i> By BLEYS W. ROSE THE PRESS DEMOCRAT
September 17	Sonoma Index-Tribune	<u>Meeting set for Strategic Plan</u> By Sandi Hansen INDEX-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER
September 16	Press Democrat	<u>Anybody here?</u> <i>Officials trying to put public back into public hearings</i> Editorial
August 18	Press Democrat	<u>County trying to get handle on big picture</u> <i>Citizens' opinions sought on some of biggest problems facing county, with hopes of forming plan to tackle them</i> By BLEYS W. ROSE THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

Radio Spots

The following radio stations interviewed representatives of the County and ran interviews:

Date:	Radio station:	Radio Host:	County Representative(s):
September 12	KRCB	Bruce Robinson	Tim Smith, Bob Deis
September 11	KRSO	David Glass	Tim Smith
	KZST	Debbie Abrams	Tim Smith

Grass Roots Focused Outreach

- The Volunteer Center of Sonoma County sent the press release and Town Hall Meeting announcement to all of their email lists.
- Press releases and Town Hall Meeting announcements were sent to key thought leaders in the **political, transportation, social service, and environmental** activist communities, who in turn sent the meeting announcements through their various email lists to member organizations.
- Flyers announcing the Town Hall Meetings were distributed in Healdsburg
- The Results Group staff attended the Sebastopol City Council meeting to announce the Sebastopol Town Hall Meeting

Community Based Organizations

Press releases, meeting announcements and invitations to Town Hall Meetings were sent to the following Community Based Organizations:

4-C's	Matrix Parents
4-H Youth Development	Memorial Hospice
Active 20/30 (Redwood Empire Chapter)	Mentor Me Petaluma
Actor's Theatre	Migrant Education, Area 1
Alliance Medical Center	Museum of Contemporary Art
Alzheimer's Association	NAMI of Sonoma County
American Cancer Society	National Latino Peace Officers Association
American Lung Association of the Redwood Empire	National Women's History Project
American Red Cross of Sonoma County	Non-Profit Asst. Group
Ananda Institute	North Bay Industries
Anderson Valley Food Bank	North Coast Builders Exchange
Angela Center	North Coast Opportunities, Inc.
Area Agency on Aging	North Coast Rental Housing
Arts Council of Sonoma County	Northern CA Center for Well Being
ArtStart	Oaks of Hebron
Assistance Dog Institute	Ocean Discovery!
Audobon Canyon Ranch	Peace and Justice Center
Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Sonoma County	Pediatric Dental Initiative
Becoming Independent	Petaluma Animal Shelter
Boys & Girls Club of Cloverdale	Petaluma Arts Council
Boys & Girls Club of Healdsburg	Petaluma Ecumenical Properties
Boys & Girls Club of Petaluma	Petaluma Elks Lodge
Boys & Girls Club of Rohnert Park	Petaluma Kitchen
Boys & Girls Club of Santa Rosa	Petaluma People Services Center
Boys & Girls Club of Windsor	Pets Are Loving Support (PALS)
Brain Injury Network of Sonoma County (BINSCI)	Pets Lifeline
Bucklelew Programs	Planned Parenthood GG
Burbank Housing	Polly Klaas Foundation
C.O.T.S.	Positive Images
CA Human Development Corporation	Raising a Reader
CA Parenting Institute	Reach Out & Read
CA Programs for the Autistic	Rebuilding Together of Santa Rosa
CA Rural Legal Assistance	Rebuilding Together of Sebastopol
CASA	Rebuilding Together Petaluma
Canine Companions for Independence	Recourse
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa	Redwood Children's Services

Center For Spiritual Living Santa Rosa	Redwood Chordsmen
CHDC	Redwood Empire Food Bank
Children & Family Circle of Sonoma County	Redwood Gospel Mission
CHOPS	River Child Care Services
Chrysalis Counseling	Routes for Youth
Cinnabar Arts	Salvation Army of Petaluma
Circuit Rider Productions	Salvation Army of Santa Rosa
Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County (CAP)	Santa Rosa Players
Community Child Care Council	Scottish Rite Children's Language & Learning Center
Community Resources for Independence	Senior Advocacy Services
Community Support Network	Slide Ranch
Council on Aging	Social Advocates for Youth
Drug Abuse Alternative Center (DAAC) aka New Beginnings	SOME- Family Connection
Earle Baum Center for the Blind	Sonoma County Adult & Youth Development
Early Learning Institute	Sonoma County Family YMCA
Extended Child Care Coalition	Sonoma County Farm Bureau
Face to Face	Sonoma County Literacy Coalition Sonoma County Office of Education
Farm Link	Sonoma County Task Force on the Homeless Chair
Forgotten Felines	Sonoma Job Link Center
Friends Outside in Sonoma County	Southwest Community Health Center
Giant Steps	
Girls Scouts	Spinal Cord Injury Network International
Good will Industries of Redwood Empire	St. Joseph Health System
Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County	Sunburst Projects
Hanna Boys Center	Survivor Project
Healdsburg Animal Shelter	Sutter VNA & Hospice Foundation
Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society	The Health Source at Kidsake
Hospice of Petaluma	True to Life Children's Services
Housing Advocacy Group	United Against Sexual Assault of Sonoma County
Housing Land Trust of Sonoma	
Humane Society	United Cerebral Palsy of the North Bay
Interfaith Shelter Network	United Way
Interlink Self Help Center	Vintage HouseSenior Center
Jewish Family & Children's Services	Volunteer Center of Sonoma County
Jewish Free Clinic	Valley Of The Moon Teen Center
Junior League	West County Community Services
Kid Street Learning Center	West County Health Centers
LandPaths	Wildlife Rescue
Las Comadres	Women's Recovery Services
La Voz Bilingual Newspaper	Women's Voices (Sonoma County)
Legal Aid of Sonoma County (Formerly Sonoma County Legal Aid)	YWCA of Sonoma County
Library Family Literacy Program	
Lifeworks	
Living Room	
Loving Paws	

Hispanic Community

Press releases, meeting announcements and invitations to Town Hall Meetings were sent to the following Hispanic community organizations:

Latino Service Providers	Santa Rosa Alliance Church
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Sonoma County	Redwood Covenant Church
Sonoma State University: Latino Student Congress	St. Sebastian's
MANA de Sonoma County	Our Lady of Guadalupe
Saint Joseph Health System- Sonoma County (SJHS-SC)	La Voz Newspaper
California Human Development Corporation (CHDC)	El Superior Spanish Newspaper
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa	Impulso Spanish Newspaper
City of Santa Rosa Neighborhood Revitalization Program	KBBF Bilingual Radio Station
St. Joseph's Catholic Church	KRRS La Maquina Musical Radio Station
St. John's Catholic Church	KRCB Public Radio
St. Vincent's Catholic Church	La Mejor/Radio Lazer Radio Station
Resurrection Parish	

Summary

This was the County's real first attempt to connect with it's constituents in a meaningful way around long term proactive strategic thinking. Many of the strategies employed assumed the content and subject matter was compelling enough to draw people to the table. Unfortunately, that was not the case. Participation was tepid, at best, despite efforts to engage the public through print and radio media and community based and faith based organizations.

It is always easier to mobilize people around a particular threat or topic that have some immediate and clearly defined impact. This may yet be a viable strategy as the county begins to make some decisions on service delivery and infrastructure issues. Nothing brings people to the table quicker than having someone tell them that a service they particularly value is going to be reduced or eliminated.

In the absence of this immediate threat, continuing to educate the public about the county's most pressing issues should be a constant effort. There are formal and informal communication networks that reach almost everyone in the community. With some effort the County could identify and mine these networks to build a communication infrastructure that provides easy access to specific communities. Coupled with a well defined communication plan and protocols, and enhanced relationships with key partners, public outreach and education efforts will result in more engagement.

ATTACHMENT A

Notes by Audience

Boards and Commissions 3

Community Based Organizations 8

Employee Representatives 11

Healdsburg Town Hall..... 14

Petaluma Town Hall..... 15

Santa Rosa Town Hall 18

Sebastopol Town Hall 20

Sonoma Town Hall..... 27

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (with some CBOs attending) Input Session Notes

September 7, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Draft Strategic Plan input session with the Boards and Commissions. In addition to identifying the Strategic Plan's strengths and weaknesses, many asked questions and gave suggestions about how implementation will occur.

General Comments:

- What if alcohol and drug treatment out-patient services could be linked with primary care – would that increase the number of people who entered treatment or succeeded in treatment?
- There are a number of support services that assist MH/elderly patients in staying independent (case management)- these could be expanded, as they are cost effective.
- It would nice to have a meeting on XX(illegible) (IWB? IU6?) in the unincorporated population areas such as Roseland and the lower river.
- I think the efforts to promote recovery from alcohol and drugs through prevention messages, e.g. “recovery happens” are good investments
- What are the redundancies that can be eliminated, e.g. direct health services that may be an unnecessary cost to county – family planning, MDP, tb? Lab?
- Some particularly effective programs that use a high proportion of state or federal \$ should be increased – e.g. – Teen Parent Connectors.
- Thanks for the good work & involvement of constituents/stakeholders.
- Look for expanded partnering w/ subcontractor agencies or businesses that can help bring a more cost-efficient service, and address diverting at-risk older youth into employment and skill paths that will result in a lowering of their exposure to gangs, crime, idleness, and twisted values.
- Rasmussen T.S.A.
- Also – offer County Property (or land leases) to NPOs whose services benefit the quality of life, this lowering their overhead or build costs, thereby making them even more effective.
- Funding – shared or compared to partnership country-wide.
- Needs – communication from one town to another.
- Assess – Identify greater needs and capacity to better invest in youth
- Assets – School – City – County – non-profit – business: Identify duplication and create better alliances
- Services – Can we pull from National Organizations' abilities in:
 - 1) Training
 - 2) Experience
 - 3) \$
- Non-profits – identify non-profits' ability to succeed
- Communication – to analyze and communicate to County citizens - success

- Government – Communicate to non-profits your needs and wants from us.
- Proactive activities to enhance the probability of the decrease in recidivism
- Mentoring (long-term)
- Life-skills learning, including learning that there is such a thing as ‘options’ or ‘choices’.
- Education – along the lines of re-training (also the extreme, to re-programming)
- Involve key people in person’s landscape, such as family, for support and changes.
- Re-training system player (CJ professionals) to support programs.
- And more
- Models exist in the US for similar activities, e.g. SF jail #8
- Utilize outcomes-based service design already in place – to build on what’s known effective vs. ‘reinventing the wheel’
- Sharing information electronically and defining ways to share clinic, jail, hospital information (within HIPPA guidelines) that will decrease repeated use/abuse of health systems.
- Communication of planning process to the larger community
- Communication of success to larger community
- An ongoing dialog with stakeholders/partners
- Start further upstream than you appear to be thinking
- Make prevention pay off by using evidence-based practices
- Include economic development in Strategic Plan!
- Buckelew programs is addressing individuals with severe mental illness and has an excellent reputation in Marin County and here. I feel it is essential that you investigate the non-profit sector as a major and much less expensive (than County employee) force to deal with many of the issues you have brought to light. If an individual goes to court 10 times, the real issues are clearly not being addressed. michelep@buckelew.org
- Would increased housing for the homeless reduce the “frequent flyer” incarceration?
- Can the County manage non-violent, victimless crimes in a different manner? Does it have to enforce laws on drug possession?
- Are you doing research on best practices to adopt in all areas of concern that can improve outcomes and/or reduce expenditures?

Financial:

- Invest the money for criminal justice facilities in early and evidence-based prevention and early-intervention practices to reap long-term benefits in lower rates of child abuse, kindergarten expulsion (Yale study) and arrests.
- Far-ranging cost containment efforts deep into the departments various activities/expenses.
- Poverty, uninsured and undereducated lead to a great deal of the problems today...need to improve the above, which is a long-term project. We need to look at the short-term with the long-term in focus.
- What can the County do to get more than 50 cents on the dollar?
- No mention of education...what is the role of education in keeping youth away from drugs and gangs?
- Pay parents to get & stay involved with kids
- Is there a way to transfer funding to the prevention activities from the more expensive criminal justice activities as prevention reduces the need for criminal justice expenditures? (assuming that does happen)

Infrastructure:

- Would more incorporation of City of Santa Rosa reduce the County expenses & is this generally advisable?
- Can dollars for homeland security & disaster preparedness be used to earthquake retrofit structures?
- Consider assessment over both rural (lesser used) circulatory systems & more urban (high-use) system properties for more equitable distribution of cost.
- Expand public transit opportunities – land use planning more focused on linkages/strengthening transit system (housing/jobs proximity)
- What is being done to address prevention while we have high need for funding for the criminal justice system? How can we transition to prevention activities while that huge cash vacuum exists?
- Reference the New Yorker article re: Million Dollar Murray. It takes much less money to provide housing and support services than to have people like him soaking up the OADS/Mental Health emergency room & criminal justice \$\$.

Jurisdiction:

- Can CBOs take a certain County services more efficiently & effectively & less expensively? ie: volunteer/intern program.
- Where are the school districts?
- Where are the cities?
- How will Mental Health and substance abuse treatment be interwoven because of the obvious relationship between the two?
- 5,700 inmates disclosed a Substance Abuse or Mental Health condition...yet there is not a table designated for treatment upstream???
- As a non-profit agency providing youth 'diversion' services, we've had difficulty with the change to 'fee for service' contracts. Its extremely difficult to retain staff on a "if there's a referral we'll call you to work."

Facilities:

- ID facility inventory / ID opportunities
- Engage RE expertise to validate
- Define/prioritize opportunities
- Evaluate impacts, positive & negative
- Mini CTRS / TD
- If transitioning County services to non-profits in 'surplus' County facilities (lumping health service non-profits together, etc.)
- Sell excess County buildings in County Center to Santa Rosa JC
- Rely more on leased property to provide county with flexibility
- Take advantage of current high sale values and low lease rates
- De-centralize County services in buildings closer to end user
- Any plan for a homeless facility on the Russian River where the majority of the unincorporated homeless live? Other homeless services?

Population Increase and Demographics:

- Hold focus groups between two largest demographic groups (over 60's & disables and Latino youth) – what are their needs/priorities?
- Welfare to work population is growing. How do we continue to serve population? Education is key. Resurgence of people needing WTW services again – were clients 10 years ago.
- With aging society, need to take care of people where they are at. People leave the County because they can't afford, but most services are in the County.
- Single parents struggle to make a livable wage. Once they earn more money they often lose funding (public assistance) and lose ground.
- We need to focus on outreach to young families
 - Access to resources and education so that from the onset our young people are more likely to succeed and less likely to become involved in 'downstream' funding.
- Look for ways to engage the Latino community in this process, tap into their energy and power
 - Non-traditional methods of gaining input
 - Culturally sensitive
 - Linguistically sensitive
 - Reaching out through schools/daycare/preschools, i.e. places where young people/families spend a great deal of their time
- Recognize that what's good for the senior population is good for the young families and vice versa, and that they don't have to be at odds.
- Keep children in mind when making all decisions
 - Policy
 - Infrastructural
 - Environmental
- Address barriers to integration into all community (e.g. language barriers)
- There needs to be more parental involvement to keep kids from gang involvement and drug abuse.
- High wage employers leaving County, more lower paying jobs are left. Can you bring in employers that offer higher wages back in?
- Of Latino youth that started High School four years ago, only 62% graduate.
- What can be done for youth to educate them to be leaders of the future? To actively participate in this process (primary Latino youth)? Why aren't they here at this forum?

Report-Back of ideas (these are probably duplications of table notes):

- Population growth / demographic change:
 - High wage of employees leaving County
 - Focus on outreach to young families, non-traditional methods of reaching out
 - Seniors and young families can help each other
- Real Estate
 - Sell excess County buildings in Town Center to SRJC
 - Long-term leases
 - Decentralize County services
- If transitioning County services to non-profits, lease at low cost to the non-profits
- Need to evaluate impact of this work
- Look for ways to engage Latino population – alternative ways to capture input.

- Spend more in elementary and secondary education to keep kids from being attracted to gangs and drugs/alcohol and thereby, hopefully, reduce impact on justice system

Q&A after presentation:

Q: How did the business community receive the Strategic Plan?

A: Lot of interest, feedback

Q: Upstream planning – how are you planning to tap into the expertise of the non-profit community?

A: Community providers/contracts, Human Service Commission, Mental health department, expand and build on these relationships, make more integrated, engaging in meaningful dialogue to decide best provider of services – collaboration, decentralizing services – services to go to clients

Q: Building relationships – how can we work together/organize to serve all cities/areas of the county?

A: Comments & ideas tonight

Q: Income – is there a place for attracting new sources of revenue?

A: Innovation council, Take story to community & get feedback about how willing people are to support these programs

Q: In implementing partnerships, are unions prepared to downsize employee base? How do we avoid 'turf wars'?

A: This will be a difficult conversation / new model, Not lay-offs, but how do we deal with attrition and hiring through 'corrective jobs' or apprenticeship program. 'Learning workforce'. The view might be a little short-term

Q: Does the County have people engaged in seeking funds from the state, etc?

Can we have some clarity on the time frame?

A: Five-year horizon

Q: How will this affect current/present contracts?

A: In the late fall, We will report back in the Spring/Summer

Q: Is there a plan for more collaboration with the DAs office? CPS? Substance?

A: Yes

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

September 7, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Draft Strategic Plan input session with Community Based Organizations. In addition to identifying the Strategic Plan's strengths and weaknesses, many asked questions and gave suggestions about how implementation will occur.

Draft Strategic Plan strengths:

- The strategies look good on paper.
- Great statistics and overall presentation.

Draft Strategic Plan weaknesses/areas for improvement:

General:

- The plan is missing a piece on strengthening collaboration between county government and CBOs.
- Presenting the plan at senior centers would increase input from seniors. Difficulty with accessing the Town Hall meetings may prevent their participation.
- Hard numbers with regard to substance abuse clients served should be included in the community presentation, as with mental health client data illustrated today.

Comments/questions about implementation:

General:

- We want treatment over prisons. What is the cost difference between the two? What is the percentage of inmates with mental health and substance abuse issues? Invest in upstream strategies and alternatives to incarceration. Treatment is prevention. (✓✓✓✓✓)
- The strategies look good on paper, but I want to know more about the specifics of implementation.
- I want to see the county develop a strategy to get MediCal to pay for Meals on Wheels.
- What is the nature of the relationship between the County and the municipalities?
- What are all California counties doing to react to State and Federal requirements? What do the requirements mean in dollars?
- We need to put more money into mentoring programs for Latino youth with Latinos as the mentors.
- Can any of the County facilities be used for Residential or Outpatient services? (✓✓)
- There needs to be more education in our schools about AOD issues that starts at the 2nd or 3rd grade. We need education programs for parents, as well.

- How will the County measure the effectiveness of money spent on upstream issues?
This is difficult to measure.

Issues related to CBOs:

- I want to caution the County against placing outcome objectives on non-profits that would constrain non-profits and decrease their efficiency.
- What are the expectations for CBOs in reporting positive outcomes? Is there a template CBOs can submit to report positive outcomes?
- It's costly for non-profits to hire IT people. We could use County support and help with software and developing and maintaining databases. (√√)
- Since CBOs keep separate databases, the County could facilitate integrating them.
- When a non-profit owns property it does against administrative overhead, which is difficult.
- County accounting principles don't align with non-profit principles, as non-profits have a different capacity.
- We need access to data regarding cost comparisons between, for example, Transitional Living Programs and incarceration.
- Especially in AOD, we need a unified training and recruiting plan used by CBOs and Health and Human Services.
- CBOs are expected to provide services on the same scale as County services, but with lower funding levels and lower pay for employees. For example, Women's Recovery Services contracts at a rate established by the County, which is about 1/3 of our cost to provide services. Incarceration costs are as much as 2/3 more than costs in residential treatment for substance abuse and mental illness.
- The County should discuss with CBOs what CBOs do best and marry those things with County needs. Then allow CBOs to do what they do best without County processes getting in the way. (√√)
- Success will depend on finding a beneficial common denominator for all parties. The 211 system is a great example of a common denominator.

Employee org.

• Change • Development

To the Board of Supervisors:

Hello my name is Peter Lloyd, and I am here to read a statement from NAMI Sonoma County (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

In the options section of the Strategic Plan document, it is indicated that 17% of jail inmates suffer from mental illness, and 70% have substance abuse problems. It is well known, that many people who have substance abuse problems, are in fact suffering mental illness, and are self medicating. Thus the percentage suffering mental illness, is probably significantly understated.

Mental Health programs in Sonoma County are being cut back dramatically. Norton Psychiatric Inpatient Services, has closed. Psychiatric Emergency Services can only hold patients for 23 hours. The Resource Teams are closing. The county is in the process of redirecting clients with the most severe illnesses from County psychiatric and case management services to other outsourced programs. The safety net is disappearing. Thus more mental health patients are ending up in the criminal justice system and the jail is being forced to increase its ability to handle patients. A prison or jail is NEVER an optimal therapeutic setting, as Sheriff Cogbill has been quoted as saying.

Treating people with mental health issues, as patients, rather than criminals, is not just more compassionate, it is more cost effective. Most mentally ill inmates are not bad people. They are simply people with an illness. Funding an effective mental health system within the county, including inpatient and adequate outpatient operations, is cheaper and more cost effective than expanding the inmate population and the jail facilities.

With treatment to stabilize someone in crisis, it can take on average 8 days, while a jail stay can take several weeks, to months. Early diagnosis, and prompt treatment, when the very first crisis occurs, can change the life of someone with a mental illness. The Memorial Fulton hospital has a capacity of 30 beds, but is operating well below capacity. This facility should be considered a temporary replacement for Norton until a long-term solution is found.

Spending money in the right areas can reduce total County expenditures. We need creative and cost effective solutions!! Don't just expand the jail. Look for creative solutions. Recovery is possible, and we want to aid the process, as this community strives to come to terms with its financial limitations.

Sincerely,

NAMI Sonoma County

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES

August 30, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Draft Strategic Plan input session with Employee Group Representatives. In addition to identifying the Strategic Plan's strengths and weaknesses, many commented on the process used to create it. Numerous participants expressed interest in better understanding the implementation of the Plan.

Draft Strategic Plan strengths:

- Good work, good vision.
- Great work in the analysis phase. Tangential issues and aspects were brought in.
- It's a good plan.
- I appreciate the focus on the future.
- The plan does accurately capture the situation with employee benefits. The more we pay for benefits, the less there is for paving roads.

Draft Strategic Plan weaknesses/areas for improvement:

General:

- Will the Plan address the closing of Sutter Hospital and the accompanying issues?
- Will the Plan address how the county is changing from agriculturally-based to more of a bedroom community?
- Funding for Alcohol and Other Drug treatment and Mental Health treatment does not match up with the demographics or the need within the county.

Related to the Latino population:

- The young Latino population is being presented as a deficit/problematic and the Plan polarizes this ethnic group.
- What about ethnic groups other than Latinos?

Related to Employees:

- We would like to see the salary and benefits differences between management and line-staff.
- Outsourcing and moving to more technology puts the emphasis on employees as the problem.
- Employee groups are not mentioned anywhere in the Strategic Plan.
- The Plan isolates employee costs as a problem, as opposed to the growing general cost of living. Employees are unfairly targeted, and we're concerned that community groups will react negatively to us.
- The public might not understand what we (County employees) do and therefore might not value our services. Increasing public understanding needs to be imbedded in the Plan. (✓✓✓)

Comments on the strategic planning development process:Related to the Latino population:

- A token expert should not have been used to represent the Latino community during the development of the plan.
- More bilingual/bicultural participants and people of color needed to be involved in the Plan development.

Related to Labor/Employees:

- Where are the “facts” on which information regarding County employees’ salaries and benefits are based? Are they valid?
- Which “County staff” developed the strategic plan? I think County staff refers to management only and not line-workers. Why weren’t line-workers included? (√√)
- Labor organizations asked to be included in the planning process, but were not. The Plan is being imposed, so it’s contradictory to approach us as if you want to work with us. Be honest about not including us. Why should we take a leadership role in supporting the Plan when we weren’t playing a leadership role in the development of the Plan? (√√√)

Questions about implementation:

- How will the Board of Supervisors allocate resources to (e.g.) Mental Health vs. a Sheriff’s deputy?
- The focus should be on what we’re going to do about these issues.
- What’s next?
- How will a possible change in the members of the Board of Supervisors affect the Plan?
- How long will the Plan be relevant? What is the length of its intended use?

09/27/2007 09:58 707-565-3778

BRD OF SUP/SO CO ADM

PAGE 03/06

J R

Handwritten: J.R.
employee
reps

TO: *Mr. Andersen*
Jim Andersen
DATE: 29 August 20007
FROM: D.P. Murray *Diana Murray*
RE: Strategic Plan Draft

I appreciated the opportunity in being able to attend the Strategic Plan Draft presentation meeting, Wednesday August 29th, 2007.

My vocal input regarding the manner in which the DRAFT specifically relates to the "Latino Youth" (as one of Sonoma County's major challenges) – hopefully did not come across too-negative.

I believe the intent and vision is to be highly commended and that the folks working on the evolution of the draft have noble intentions with this ambitious undertaking.

In the spirit of collaboration I'm routing some exerts from Dr. Millet, from "Missing Voices: A Personal Perspective on Diversity in Program Evaluation" with this Memo. I apologize if this may be inappropriate, but I've made my mistakes on how I describe ethnic populations, target populations and realize it is a continuous learning experience – it's all good.

I concur with many of my colleagues who made comments and suggestions on the "draft" and realize that these discussions are imperative if any productive outcome is to be afforded to such an expansive plan.

We're all in the same boat together. Management and consultants who have pulled this draft together, *who sat in that video presentation at the onset of this project*, need to come down to the engine room, kitchen and other parts of the ship. Don't be afraid to talk to the real folks who get their hands dirty to make the ship work. We all want a good navigational chart that will help our ship stay afloat well into the future. No one wants to be thrown overboard like excess baggage in event of a crisis and at this point of this plan's development, it appears that only those in First Class have identified the emergency exits.

C: BRobotka & R. Scardaci

HEALDSBURG TOWN HALL

August 30, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Draft Strategic Plan input session in Healdsburg.

Draft Strategic Plan strengths:

- Agrees with putting funds into upstream efforts (like schools), rather than downstream efforts (like jails).

Draft Strategic Plan weaknesses/areas for improvement:

- Clarify the horizon of the plan. What timeframe is being used?
- Why are mission, values, and vision not included?

Suggestions/questions about implementation:

- Offer incentives for public/private partnerships
- Take a leadership role in managing public/private health needs
- People are already complaining about roads, where as the growing senior population is farther down the road.

PETALUMA TOWN HALL

Sept 27, 2007

Lack of Engagement:

- The general population is frustrated with government in general; people feel unheard. That is why there is a low turnout here.
- There is a high level of apathy among businesspeople.
- Suggestion: get the word out about these meetings in some way other than the newspaper.
- We need to look at civic engagement as another way to explore why people aren't here. Direct, personal invitations are effective. There us more to understand about engaging people.
- The turnout can be explained partly because it is hard to explain what the county does; so many of the services are invisible.
- You need to bring in key participants over a given length of time. They key is commitment. The model used for HIAC and managed Medi-Cal would be a tool for Health & Human services.

Collaboration with CBOs:

- We should look to non-profits for modeling best practices. These best practices can be replicated in other environments. We should look at these with regard to the under-25 population in prison and use research-based best practices from both non-profits and business.
- Will there be further exploration of partnering with non-profits around mental health and substance abuse? One cost-effective way could be for non-profits and faith based organizations to address issues more fully. This could include in-jail programs.
- The more resources going into the services non-profits provide, the better. They do valuable heavy lifting. We need to identify and support valuable non-profits.
- The Petaluma Services Center is a good value for the dollar and is happy to partner with the County. PPSC provides diversion, etc. We are seeing a growing trend around funding – fee for services. It is hard for non-profits to work on fee-for-service basis; it makes it hard to keep qualified staff.
- Comparing government agencies with other government agencies is not as valuable as comparing government agencies to NGOs.
- The County is heading an important direction regarding the non-profit/County overlap.

Infrastructure:

- There are a lot of dead-end roads in the County that have served Agriculture in the past, but now serve only a few residences. Consider having those residents pay.
- We pay taxes to repair roads; gas taxes. General funds take this money that should go to the roads.
- There all some little-used roads that are used by tourists and bicyclists. There are many narrow roads, raising safety concerns.
- Are we considering these economies of scale/joint ventures? What about a joint ventures road department?
- What about the 'heritage road' idea?

Upstream Strategies:

- As far as upstream investments are concerned, I think we need to be looking at teaching parenting skills to parents of at-risk youth. We could look at schools, juvenile hall, and jail.
- My dream is that music, drama, and art are used to help at-risk youth. Positive recognition really helps. Music helps kids who don't have good English skills. Ex: the San Quentin choir.
- Implement positive re-enforcement programs for adults, too.
- Real estate assets – read about urban farming. In Petaluma, there are community gardens. This could be a symbiotic relationship with youth or offenders.
- We could use a symbiotic approach. The needs of one population may work with and have a positive effect on another population.
- We can't get parents to respond for at-risk kids. Need to figure out how to teach parenting skills.

Praise:

- I am pleased to see government addressing issues thoughtfully.
- Congratulations on the great start on the Strategic Plan.

Citizen Involvement:

- Citizens will help if asked. Big corporations/organizations can't solve all the problems.
- Local faith-based organizations have talented people. You could create a skills database/info database for volunteering.

Health Care:

- Under managed care, a lot of people who are currently using the hospital for their primary care will use a clinic. This will be more cost effective.
- Managed medical processes are working well. Taking services and combining them with other counties create savings.

General:

- County work needs to be studied for efficiencies.
- Regarding the gangs: I realize they have the right to freedom of speech and assembly, but we need to reform tort laws.
- Regarding County/City cooperation, we could look at the library, Sheriff and other areas.
- There are success stories combining County and private entities. One such example is the Restorative Justice Program.
- The issue of water is around infrastructure; we need to do something in the Dry Creek area.
- The cost of government is too high, especially around salaries and benefits. This needs to change.
- The Commission on the Status of Women report identified work training needs for older women. They are reaching out to educational institutions and non-profits.
- Regarding the language in the Strategic Plan: look at groups as resources rather than liabilities. They are ready to work.
- Another idea for real estate assets: consider work force housing. For reduced pay, you could provide transit-oriented housing in the urban core.

- Look at charging developers/development at appropriate rates.
- The County needs to work on setting & implementing priorities.
- The inclusive process of having meetings within the county can be used within other areas.
- You can use community-based information as a filter.
- One of the biggest issues for the aging population is transportation. What does the County see to address this need (beyond bus stops – the 80+ population often can't get to the bus stop)?

SANTA ROSA TOWN HALL

September 17, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Santa Rosa Town Hall Draft Strategic Plan input session. In addition to identifying the Strategic Plan's strengths and weaknesses, many asked questions and gave suggestions regarding both implementation and the public participation process.

Draft Strategic Plan weaknesses/areas for improvement:

- Transportation for Seniors isn't specifically addressed in the plan.
- An emphasis on water is missing.

Comments/questions about implementation:

General:

- I hope the plan analyzes all ends of healthcare issues to provide integrated, lower-cost services.
- Selling County land now may mean having to buy-back land at a more expensive rate later.
- Do not rely on Federal or State help to meet the strategic plan goals.
- There needs to be a massive consolidation of services within the county; there are too many school districts, etc.
- Economies of scale and regional governments
- There are no costs to cities to arrest/incarcerate (the cost gets passed to the County). There needs to be a fiscal incentive not to arrest/incarcerate.
- Money could be saved by elevating foundational healthcare.
- Consider "it takes a village" as a strategy in meeting the needs of the Senior population.
- During the implementation process, working groups need to break into committees so others have a chance to give input.
- Real estate development is seen in terms of revenue, but puts more demand on services.
- Make sure services farmed out to "for-profit" entities are actually provided for less cost than non-profits could provide.
- Make sure my ISO rating doesn't change and cause insurance costs to go up if they change police/fire response times.
- While maintaining competitive compensation packages for County employees, emphasis should be placed on privatization, outsourcing and consolidation.
- The criminal justice council and jail oversight committees have existed for over 20 years. What new initiatives have come forth? Other stakeholders need to participate in problem-solving effort.
- Plan needs to have buy-in of county labor organizations or will be business as usual.
- Look to successful private sector businesses for suggestions.
- I am deeply concerned with the question of transportation for seniors. There's a whole group of elders who can't get to a bus, or qualify for volunteer wheels or paratransit. We have been working for two years on this problem. Our model is that of the Beverly Foundation (from Pasadena) who have a working system in place. We are one of the

few major cities without a volunteer senior transportation program. That is totally unacceptable in a city/county such as ours. (570-2181) Bob Silverman, O.A.T.S. (Older Adult Transportation Services) (✓✓)

- Let's have a dialogue on incarceration and restorative justice – similar to the one on Health Services. If you leave it to the profession it will not get any more cost effective.

Comments/questions about the input process:

- Advertising the strategic plan opens the door to participation; thank you.
- There needs to be more publicity for these meetings.
- You should have focus groups and smaller events to get input.
- There should be signage in front of the events.
- We would like a meeting in the Rohnert Park/Cotati area.
- There should be afternoon meetings for Seniors.
- Broadcast meetings over the web and on public access.
- People don't know what a "strategic plan" is.

SEBASTOPOL TOWN HALL

September 20, 2007

The following themes and comments arose at the Sebastopol Town Hall Draft Strategic Plan input session. In addition to identifying the Strategic Plan's strengths and weaknesses, many asked questions and gave suggestions regarding implementation.

Education:

- County provide power infrastructure to education. Healdsburg power/keeping \$ local.
- Have you considered collaboration with education?
- Better education, \$ to schools> make accountable

Transportation:

- Don't forget the need to provide more and better bike trails since less people will be able to drive cars.
- More money needs to go to the roads

Public Input Process:

- I think this is a good first step in community involvement, but continued discussions will be required into the future with the public in order to 1.) tap the public as a resource, 2.) hold government accountable for their new strategic plan goals.
- An idea for this process- I suggest you provide 8 ½ x 11" pieces of paper for taking suggestions? A 3 x 5 is too small for nuance- a piece of butcher paper looks like something that will never get read...
- We need to make more noise to recruit Sonoma County- its people- businesses- citizens-to know what's going on and help implement positive changes. More public advertisements! More visible! If you want us, we have to know what's happening!
- Make public service announcements on TV to explain available mental health services and healthy living strategies- use website and cable channel. Direct people to these in mainstream media.
- Need to make opportunities for input more public- i.e., better publicity- not everyone (not very many at all) read the PD or listen to KRCB.

Water:

- How does the county plan to meet the growing need for safe, clean water for the North Bay?
- Almost nothing about the water- wastewater issues- jails got way more attention than services essential to ALL residents of Sonoma County. The costs of providing these services- already extremely high, will become even more critical in the near future. Hundreds of millions for new water and wastewater infrastructure will become necessary in the next 15 years.
- Particular concern for adequate water supplied to the West and East silos of the county. The infrastructure is old.

Upstream Spending:

- If the county believes that treatment in the most humane and least restrictive setting will not fit into the budget, it will commission a strategic analysis and long term plan from a

recognizable expert such as Institute of Behavioral Science, law and public policy at USC.

- The pre-teen and teen population in this country and this state need to be educated to this reality- Jail and especially state prison is not a summer camp to “hang with their buds”. These fantasy land dwellers need to be “scared straight”. Every year of their lives they are losing more regard for human life- why raise a generation of killer?
- Idea 2.) Avoid building jails. It’s a nation-wide racket. Insider traders are making a killing off of them. 1/25 County population/year being booked is crazy!
- I calculated 1/25 of our citizens are booked each year. Insane! Probably higher percentage of adults. Almost all drug/mental population booked each year! 15% general fund for employee benefits.
- Screening at intake for appropriate, effective treatment.
- Be proactive towards parenting! It will reduce crime! At risk youth training service dogs accomplishes that!
- Put more money into mental health than jails and spend it more effectively.
- Putting money into downstream strategies (like jails) is insane- better to spend on drug prevention.
- Stack solutions- one can lead to the lead, which can lead to the next.
- The mental health safety net is disappearing. Using the jails to treat people with mental illness is not effective or cost efficient. Don’t just expand the jails- look for creative solutions.

Health Care:

- Missing: healthcare- but the County needs to be involved. Where is the BOS?
- Take the NAMI report seriously
- Need to find money for mental health issues- prop 63 is only for new programs
- The SP needs to address health care- especially related to seniors

Larger Trends:

- The County needs to study the issues of peak oil- the fact that the world has reached the peak in oil production and the age of cheap energy is over. This will cause tremendous problems for the economy and all government. The Boars should study this issue and be prepared to deal with the ramifications especially in the area of transportation and agriculture! Sebastopol and Portland, Oregon have extensive peak oil plans and Richard Hem(?) from New College in Santa Rosa is a world (?0 expert. The end of cheap energy will be the biggest issue (?0 the next 20 years.
- Consider factors like global warming- especially as it relates to infrastructure plans
- A lot of our issues are long-term- longer than 5 years.
- Where are we addressing external issues- environmental – and otherwise- that we depend on to provide any services in Sonoma County?
- Very serious issue: Peak oil- it trumps all of the other issues. SP focus is too internal and needs to be more external. Educate BOS on peak oil.

Financial:

- Don’t count on Federal or outside money that can be raided.

- Two people have spoken to addressing the revenue side, and our comments were not even recorded. Would it be true to say that there is an agreement to look only at cost reduction?
- County needs to be part of stopping the diversion of funds to support war and jails so that money is available for healthcare, etc.
- Your presentation gave good info on fiscal challenges but there was no info on revenue. Are we only looking at relocating existing funds? What happened to the increase in taxes from higher property values? We need facts on revenue.
- We need info on % of discretionary funds that can be reallocated vs. funds that are already committed.
- How much of budget expenditure is result of unfunded mandates?
- How much of the costs of incarceration is paid locally vs. state or feds.
- Cut benefits for new employees. (New hires.) Make them work 10 years for maximum benefits.
- Some County employees are not paid enough- if healthcare reduces, \$ should go up.

General:

- We need adequate space provided for community gardens in the near future.
- Why doesn't the county open up all of the new park and open space lands to the public? Why do we need to build expensive trails and parking lots first? It is cheaper just to open the land to those who paid for it.
- Run government like a business!
- You're not alone and you know it. Many studies have been made about governance. Don't reinvent the wheel.
- Strategic Plan committee needs to include representatives of all Sonoma County.
- Negotiations/dialogue/red tape!
- Plan sounds great, revisiting it annually sounds great: only if there is accountability
- Keep the county pros.

Letter from Resident:

I am Heidi Gillen, a west county resident for 30 years. I have been working with others for the past 6 years as a member of the palm drive health care foundation to keep the doors of our small community hospital open.

The same effort is being made by others at Sonoma Valley Hospital and Healdsburg General Hospital, all publicly owned by Sonoma county citizens.

Many of us appreciate your efforts to involve the public in a dialogue regarding a strategic plan for Sonoma county's future. We know the enormity of your tasks.

I am joined by many here to urge you to listen to your community regarding health care needs in Sonoma county, and beyond.

We want you to know that across Sonoma county, citizens are very involved in working to make sure that our district hospitals survive.

We know that the board of supervisors does not want to be in the business of health care but we are not willing to wait for Sutter or Memorial to implement a plan which negates the value and need for our small community hospitals to remain open.

We are planning a health care forum in west county to take place on December 6 in the Analy High School auditorium. We will contact you to ask you to participate in this important forum.

We ask for your support & advocacy on behalf of these hospitals. We believe they may hold the key to sustaining quality healthcare in our future.

As a matter of fact, these hospitals are saving lives every day, and indeed, someday, it may be your own.

Thank you.

Letter from Resident:

Questions For Supervisor Brown and Transportation Director Phil Demery Regarding Bennett Valley Roads

Sponsored by the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association

**September 12, 2007
7:00 P.M., The Grange**

Background. The 25 miles of roads in Bennett Valley are vital to the health, safety and welfare of its residents. They are also important to many who live elsewhere and are used routinely by people going to and from Sonoma Valley to Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park and Petaluma. We have recently engaged in a lot of emergency planning, and our road system is one of our weakest safety links. Our main “through” roads- Bennet Valley Road, Sonoma Mountain Road, Grange-Crane Canyon Roads, Pressley Road, and Enterprise Road- have deteriorated in the last two years to a level that is unacceptable to local residents and may impact property values. The “pot hole brigade” cannot provide the sole maintenance for these roads, which increasingly resemble rural roads in third world countries.

The following questions highlight our community's interest in knowing the County's plans regarding the maintenance of Bennett Valley's roads. The questions are not necessarily "official" questions from the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association, and includes issues where the BVHA has not yet developed a position. All issues will likely arise at the meeting and are included so you can be prepared to respond.

1. Sonoma Mountain Road from Pressley Road to Glen Ellen has now been closed for 20 months. This interferes not only with travel for residents who live immediately adjacent to the site of the closure, but redirects road use by our entire community. It will soon be winter and the County has only just begun stop gap efforts to fix the road. According to an article in the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* on August 16th, the state budget has funds from Proposition 1B to fix this road. When will Sonoma Mountain Road reopen? Why has it taken so long?
2. All levels of government face fiscal challenges today. For example, most California counties have aging populations, health care challenges, aging infrastructures, etc. Independent assessments rank the condition of Sonoma County roads among the worst in the state. For many residents the roads are the most important service that the county provides and impacts them on a daily if not hourly basis.
 - a. What is County policy for maintenance of rural roads? Are there any plans for preventative maintenance to actually fix the problems?
 - b. The budget for fiscal year 2007-2007 had about 1% dedicated to road maintenance. What percentage of Sonoma County's proposed \$1.2 billion budget for fiscal year 2007-2008 is dedicated to road maintenance?
 - c. What percentage of the road maintenance budget for fiscal year 2007-2008 is dedicated to rural road maintenance?
 - d. How are the funds for rural road maintenance allocated? For example, why was Old Adobe Road repaved (which had no potholes) while our roads are left in total disrepair?
 - e. Why can other California counties maintain their roads so much better than Sonoma County? For example, Napa County is repaving parts of Oakville Road-Trinity Road during August, a rural road with light traffic which connects Sonoma and Napa counties. Does Napa County have more money than Sonoma County or is it a question of spending priorities?
 - f. How can residents submit claims against the county for damaged tires, broken wheels, and other repairs caused by the state of our roads?
3. The August 18th Press Democrat had an article stating that Sonoma County has begun a process to set spending priorities for the next five years. County Administrator Bob Deis was quoted as saying that road repairs may be allocated by usage. How would this be done (Bennett Valley roads are busiest during rush hours)? Does this mean that rural roads, the heart and soul of Sonoma County, may never improve and can get even worse?

4. What are the potential additional funding sources for our rural roads such as those in Bennett Valley? Do these come with standards that would exclude rural roads?
5. The Sonoma County Transportation Authority has been focused on obtaining \$351 million to address safety and congestion issues such as the widening of U.S. 101. Is there any reason why this authority cannot address the maintenance of rural roads such as those in Bennett Valley?
6. The Circulation & Transit Element of Draft GP-2020 contains Policy CT-3j:

Consider designating certain older rural roads in the unincorporated areas as Heritage Roads in recognition of their unique aesthetic and historic character. Consider adoption of special design standards that would apply to proposed improvements in order to retain and protect that character where consistent with public safety.

What does Director Demery know about Heritage Road programs? Where have they been tried, and how have they worked out? How might these apply to Bennett Valley so that we can have modern, reliable roads with a rural character?

7. Sonoma County charges “traffic mitigation fees” of \$5,138 - \$10,983 for new primary building permits and somewhat less for secondary building permits. This money does not seem to be spent on our local roads. Where does it go?
8. If the County is not going to fix our roads, can residents privatize them, pay for the maintenance, and erect gates or charge tolls? Could residents be excused from part of their property taxes if they took over maintaining the roads?
9. While we don’t want to get distracted with bicycle issues, bicycles are a major component of our problems in Bennett Valley and are related to the conditions of our roads. The Department of Public Transportation has erected “Share the Road” signs on narrow, shoulder-less roads in Bennett Valley, essentially inviting bicyclists to ride them.
 - a. Can the Department of Public Transportation ask for input from local communities, before placing such signs? Does the Department of Transportation think every rural road, regardless of local conditions, is safe for bicyclists?
 - b. Does Sonoma County have authority to limit the size or frequency of bicycle tours? If so, would it consider doing so?
 - c. Can Sonoma County replace “Share the Road” signs with “Bicyclists Must Ride Single File?” Those signs are very common in many western states.
 - d. Are there any plans to encourage more bicycle transportation? Can the County create bike ways off road, making the roads safer with shoulders for both bikes and cars?

10. Many of our roads in (e.g., Sonoma Mountain Road between Bennett Valley Road and Pressley Road and much of Enterprise Road) lack modern road beds. The same pot holes form over and over and over again each winter. We can identify many of them for you. These pot holes, which were so enormous last winter that warning cones were placed in some and circles painted around others, contribute to accidents and damage vehicles and tires. Would a representative of the Department of Public Transportation and Supervisor Brown be willing to spend a few hours on our roads with representatives of our community to assess first hand some of our specific problem areas?

SONOMA TOWN HALL

Tuesday, October 25, 2007

Praise:

- Thank you from the Springs area
- Thank you for doing this tonight.
- This is a wonderful presentation

Quality of Life:

- These are quality of life issues. Other entities are part of that: the healthcare district, the school districts,these often function in fiefdoms, though there are overlapping budget issues. We need some organized way of getting everyone a seat at the table so they all get input from other agencies.
- Regional Parks are a quality of life issue. It is good to hear about the tobacco tax interest going to parks. Tolay and Taylor need to be opened.

Jurisdiction and Collaboration:

- The plan seems too general when it comes to unincorporated areas. Sonoma Valley is not represented. We are looking at increased crime rates in Sonoma Valley. Satellite offices are a great idea.
- Big issues for the Valley:
 - o Zoning issues (no one seems to be able to clarify what a 'single family dwelling' is) need to be more fully addressed
 - o Gangs/Crime
 - o Decentralization of administration – CHP, Sheriff, PRMD, Dog catcher)
- The Supervisorial District system encourages regionalism. Connections and overlaps of organizations and budgets need to be connected.
- Our present governing system separates Sonoma Valley into City and unincorporated County jurisdictions. In reality, the Sonoma Valley functions as an integrated whole. The strategic plan would be much more effective if we could find a way to get cooperation/integration with programs/plans in Sonoma Valley.
- Relationships need to be in the plan – how can we control this regionally? (This goes to Strategic Plan Goal #5)

Upstream Strategies:

- After the age of eighteen, young adults are dropped from the health care system. There are no parks and rec programs for adults either. They struggle. The Strategic plan could address that issue, which would affect arrest rates of young adults – CMSP.
- Need to focus some upstream dollars/efforts on employment & training programs for adults & youth.
- Gang Issues: I would like to see a crime prevention program for youth. \$200 million – set aside athletic programs for youth.
- Personal responsibility is key here. We need to remember our duty/responsibility to kids and what we each do individually and at a grass roots level.
- We need to advocate for mentoring
- What do we know about the repeat offenders – juveniles? E.g. – We don't know why they are substance abusers. Do we collect data (e.g. Mental Health tests so we know who

won't benefit from Mental Health services (e.g. budding sociopaths or lack of family involvement...)

Latino-specific:

- I'm suggesting a strategic needs assessment – Support for the Senior Latino/Hispanic population is lacking.
- Is the rate of mental illness the same for the Latinos in the County (as for whites – it should be, and if not, it speaks to other problems – some of them sociological, some not)?
- Also, have you received feedback from the Latino community regarding gangs?

General:

- I am impressed with the County's interest in health care. We need universal health care – there would be less paperwork and less bureaucracy.
- Let's pass the parcel tax in November
- Have you considered decriminalization of possession?
- Vineyard money needs to go to transportation and roads.
- The Springs Task Force Coordinating Committee (STFCC) exists as an open forum for Springs organizations. This might be an idea that could work county wide and/or within other local & non-incorporated areas. Law enforcement, health care, schools, etc. This would seem to fit nicely with finding #5. Sonoma County has excellent information & resources on the web. As an electrical contractor, I have to drive to Santa Rosa to get a permit for a simple service change. It would be time & cost efficient for both Sonoma County and its clients if transactions such as these could be completed on-line. A satellite office, even part-time, in Sonoma Valley would provide valuable services to its residents. Regular community meetings such as these are a great idea! Darrel Jones / 358 Patten St. / Sonoma, CA 95476 / WD6BOR@Vom.com
- You might consider a County public forum – like this one that allows people at the local levels to hear from the county, ask questions, offer opinions, etc, on a variety of topics – i.e., all 25 departments – the questions asked tonight seem to indicate a need for this.
- Regarding getting more value from the 5,000 County employees, doing more substance-type work and interaction with making information shared production to reduce waste. Make working together, everyone for the county as a whole. Every employee accountable, make the \$\$\$ work.
- How is the Strategic Plan addressing the issue of the finite resource of water, especially considering:
 - o Growth?
 - o The loss of the Eel River?
 - o Climate change?
- What role will volunteers play in Sonoma County?
- Why are there only two deputies in a 40 (500?) square mile area? We are dealing with 5 drug houses in our neighborhood. Saturdays, 150 cars come & go from there.
- Your plans are based on redistribution of existing revenues. Has there been any thought given to increasing revenue? (example: increased fees for contracting County services to cities or attempting to correct shortchanging Sonoma among the other counties – as with health care)
- Are your plans assuming no changes in Federal health or immigration policy – have you considered what affects this may have? For instance, is Latino growth based on current population or on expected immigration? If Rep. Thompson succeeds, Sonoma County will get a greater share of California health funds.

- Talking about coordination of agencies: When you are doing facilities and transit, are you referring to the recommendations of the Sonoma City Climate Action Plan? I am a volunteer on the team for the City of Sonoma as is Ray Gallian. galbride@comcast.net _ Laurie Gallian