

Supervisors Vote to Adopt First-Ever Strategic Plan

May 11, 2024



History was made last Tuesday at the Board of Supervisors meeting. After weeks of study, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors has adopted its first-ever Organizational Strategic Plan effective fiscal year 2024 /25, as recommended by the Strategic Planning Team (SPT). The adoption of this document precedes the release of the State budget, before an anticipated \$35 billion deficit has been addressed.

The 69 page document addresses operations and ongoing projects for the 15 different departments and establishes a road map of priorities overseen by the Board.

According to the Strategic Plan document, the purpose of this strategic tool is to document the results of discussions with the Board, County Leadership and a public workshop held February 29, 2024 and in subsequent public meetings prior to passage. The Plan outlines the Supervisors' strategic direction in better serving citizens of Del Norte.

The Strategic Planning Team (SPT) consists of top County administration who answer to the Board of Supervisors. Assistant CAO Randy Hooper was the lead presenter who delivered the Document to the Board. Don Ashton of Nevada County and consultant for Municipal Services Group acted as facilitator for the SPT.

Prior to adoption of the comprehensive Plan, a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) survey was sent out to the public and upon return of the surveys the Foundational Elements of County Vision, Mission and Values were established and adopted by the Board.

Board priorities were divided into four Focus areas:

- County Staffing and Capacity (CSC)
- Infrastructure and Economic Development (IED)
- Law, Justice and Homelessness (LJH)
- General Governance and Budget.

Supervisors shared their comments and concerns. 3rd District Supervisor Chris Howard indicated a reluctance to approve the entire scope of recommended actions due to the capacity of the County's existing staff to take these items on. Joined by 2nd District Supervisor Valerie Starkey, Howard also expressed hesitation with approving the actions without a subsequent opportunity for the Board to consider the items in the Plan. Starkey hoped to see details at the Tuesday last meeting. She also questioned the salary compensation analysis with the reality the County may be unable to meet recommended salary thresholds. Starkey also addressed County housing needs on a limited General Fund budget.

1st District Supervisor Darrin Short emphatically opposed any Ordinance concerning short-term vacation rentals. 4th District Supervisor Joey Borges countered Short's motion and openly asked Short if restrictions on vacation rentals existed. Short said other than septic requirements, there were no restrictions on short-term rentals. Borges responded, "...it's a good thing to have a discussion on vacation rentals." The motion by Short to remove vacation rentals from the Strategic Plan was seconded by 5th District Supervisor and Board Chairman Dean Wilson. The vote to exclude vacation rental discussion from the Strategic Plan did not pass. Starkey, NO; Borges, NO; Short, YES; Wilson, YES. The vote was 2-2 with Supervisor Chris Howard ABSTAINING.

Chair Wilson spoke in support of the Organizational Strategic Plan. "The Plan sets options for Board direction. Only emergency items can alter Board priorities, and then only by majority vote of the Board. The Board can now chart a course and all progress on projects may be monitored by the public."

The vote to approve the 24/ 25 Strategic Plan PASSED in tact: Starkey, YES, Short, NO. Borges. YES, Wilson, YES. Final was 3-1. Howard again ABSTAINED.

The document can be read on line at <https://county-del-norte-ca.cleardoc.cleargov.com/438/> or can be obtained at the Board of Supervisors office, second floor of the Flynn Center.

The Board meets Tuesday, May 14 at 10am.