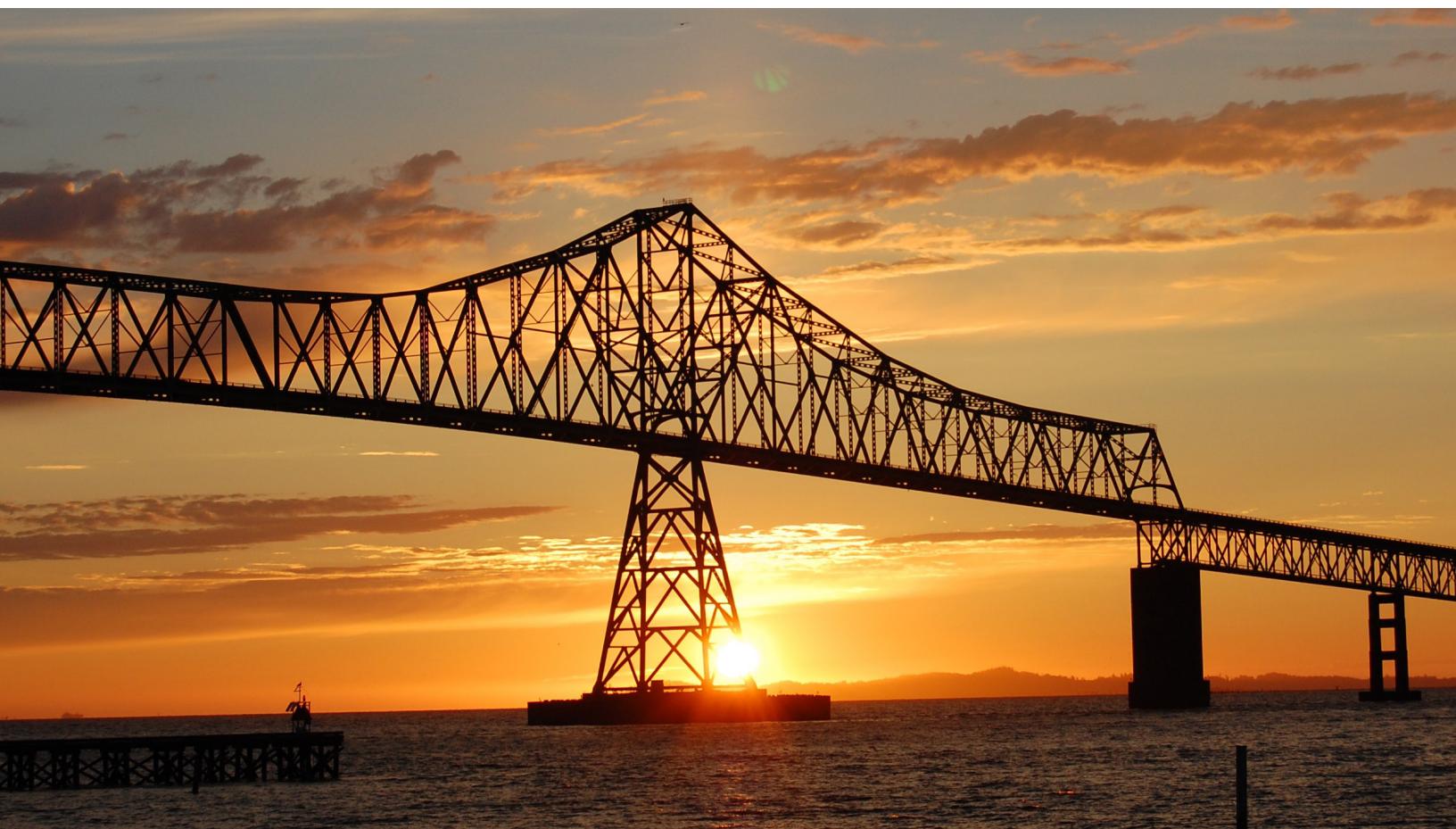


# Strategic Plan for Clatsop County

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DECEMBER 2020





## Acknowledgments

In January 2020, Clatsop County partnered with the Center for Public Service (CPS) at Portland State University to work on a variety of topics related to county governance, planning, and policies. First, this work focused on the development of a Strategic Plan (the Plan) to guide the County's priorities and actions during FY 2021–22.

CPS and the County Board of Commissioners worked jointly to create the Plan:

CPS' role:

- 1) Designed the planning process (including products, tasks, and schedule);
- 2) Provided technical analysis and drafted the Situation Assessment, and Vision, Mission, and Values;
- 3) Facilitated Board of Commissioner work sessions to discuss, modify, and identify interim and final products; and
- 4) Consolidated and organized all work into a draft report.

Clatsop County's role:

- 1) Co-produced and managed the project with CPS;
- 2) Organized and supported focus area work groups, then prepared focus area reports; and
- 3) Reviewed all materials and products.

This project was a collaborative effort and greatly benefited from the active leadership and participation of the Board of Commissioners, the County management team, and stakeholders/partners representing a wide range of community-based organizations and interests.

For more information about this report:

Go to the Strategic Plan section of the Clatsop County website:

[www.co.clatsop.or.us/boc/page/draft-strategic-plan-2020](http://www.co.clatsop.or.us/boc/page/draft-strategic-plan-2020)

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# Summary

In January 2021, the Clatsop County's Board of Commissioners adopted this Strategic Plan. This coordinated effort allowed for the County to identify local priorities and outline its course of action for the next 18 months. The following plan confirms the County's foundation for action (our vision, the mission, and guiding values), assesses the current situation, establishes our priorities and outlines projected actions, and provides additional information on the various details involved in this complex process.

## OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Plan, and the effort that created it, were built from the assumption that there are ways in which Clatsop County's services can be improved. The Board of Commissioners developed the Plan during six work sessions and 15 meetings related to five selected focus areas (Chapter 1 provides more information about the planning process). The process design allowed the Board, staff, and stakeholders to identify and agree on a range of priorities and actions, and demonstrate to others the reasons for their decisions. Through the process, about a dozen supporting documents were developed. They primarily addressed:

- The County's Vision, Mission, and Values (Chapter 2).
- Factors (current, potentially in the future, and internal to County operations and external) that the County should consider as it continues to move forward with its priorities and actions (Chapter 3).
- The decisions of the Board of Commissioners about focus areas and actions (Chapter 4).

Chapter 5 describes key supporting documents and how to find them.

## BROADLY, THE COUNTY WANTS THIS PLAN TO HELP IT:

### EARN THIS REPUTATION (ITS VISION)...

In a world of change and uncertainty, people trust Clatsop County to provide public facilities and services—effectively, efficiently, equitably, and in partnership with other public, non-profit, and private service providers—that are essential elements of a high quality of life, including economic prosperity, ecosystem integrity, health, safety, and social connection.

### BY CARRYING OUT ITS MISSION...

The County will (1) clearly specify the broad services it believes community members want and are willing to support, and then (2) provide those services effectively, efficiently, within budget, fairly, and in partnership with other public, private, and nonprofit sector service providers.

### WHILE HONORING ITS VALUES.

As it carries out its mission to pursue its vision for service, the County will pay attention to:

- **Engagement and Collaboration.** Leadership in county-wide coordination of services and problem solving: convene, engage, listen to, and cooperate with community members and stakeholders of various and diverse backgrounds, experiences, thoughts, and perspectives.
- **Equity.** Equitable treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency.** Decision-making and operations that effectively achieve outcomes consistent with the vision, and do so efficiently.
- **Transparency and Accountability.** Public policy decisions made in open meetings; County accountable for its decisions and their implementation.

## MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE COUNTY WANTS THIS PLAN TO HELP IT:

MAKE IMPROVEMENTS IN FIVE FOCUS AREAS (PRIORITIES)...	Governance	Infrastructure	Economic Development	Environmental Quality	Social Services	
BY DIRECTING COUNTY RESOURCES TOWARDS THESE ACTIONS.	G1	I1	ED1	EQ1	SS1A	TIER 1
Improve governance processes	Housing strategies (Part 1)	North Coast Business Park	Environmental Quality Action Team	Drop-in center	SS1B	
G2	I2	ED2	EQ2a	Childcare strategy		
Community Engagement Plan	Housing strategies (Part 2)	Evaluation of regulatory barriers/gaps	Water assessment			
	I1b		EQ2b			TIER 2
	Internet strategy		Fire protection education			
	I2b		EQ2c			
	COL-PAC Broadband Action Team		Visitor education			

# 1) Introduction

## WHY CREATE A STRATEGIC PLAN?

The primary mission of local governments, including Clatsop County, is to deliver services. In Oregon, the majority of county services and funding sources are prescribed by statute and are similar across counties. What varies are unique geographic, demographic, cultural, and economic attributes; aspirations for quality of life; and the willingness and capacity to work on those aspirations. These local conditions inform and influence elected governing bodies as they set policy-making approaches and priorities. Though counties have similar broad visions and missions, these differences lead to unique approaches and outcomes in each county.

Clatsop County engaged in a standardized strategic planning process to collaboratively identify, define, and prioritize public-policy initiatives, based on an assessment of past trends and possible future conditions. The process engaged elected officials, staff, stakeholder groups, and the general public in a discussion and decisions about:

- ***What we want.***

A vision for the future of Clatsop County.

- ***How we will act.***

Clatsop County's role will be to achieve the mission derived from its vision and guided by its values.

- ***The factors our decisions should consider.***

An assessment of the past, current, and potential future conditions that create opportunities and present constraints for achieving the mission.

- ***Our priority areas for County action.***

Needs and desires always exceed resources—priorities help allocate them where they are most needed.

- ***What we will do.***

Specific actions Clatsop County will pursue to address identified priorities.



The Plan was developed in phases:

- ***Jan–Feb, 2020, Process Design.***

Preliminary review of documents; facilitate two focus groups and interviews with the Board of Commissioners; revise scope of work.

- ***Mar–Jun, 2020, Situation Assessment.***

Review and evaluation of reports, data, and opinions to create a description of (1) the factors (demographic, social, technological, economic, environmental, and political) affecting the County's ability to deliver services, (2) County performance in service delivery, and (3) implications for content, development, and focus of the Strategic Plan.

- ***Apr–Aug, 2020, Vision, Mission, Values.***

Services residents and stakeholders want, and their hopes for a future (vision) and the role the County should play in trying to achieve it.

- ***July–Oct, 2020, Focus Areas and Actions.***

Based on the prior work, (1) identification of areas requiring attention (County priorities), and (2) outlining actions to address the issues.

- ***Oct–Dec, 2020, The Plan Document.***

Draft plan, Board of Commissioners discussions, revisions, and final plan.

- ***Jan, 2021, Plan adoption.***

End of the planning process and beginning of the implementation process.

The Board of Commissioners developed the plan during six work sessions and 15 meetings related to five selected focus areas. Through the process, a dozen supporting documents were developed (see Appendices, Chapter 5). The process design allowed the Board of Commissioners, staff, and stakeholders to identify and agree on a range of priorities and actions, and demonstrate to others the reasons for their decisions.

A couple of notes to further frame the Plan:

1. The Plan does not conclude that the selected focus areas are the most important services the County provides in absolute terms. Many critical services (e.g., public safety and justice, transportation) are not included in the FY 2021–22 focus areas. The Board of Commissioners selected the focus areas based on (1) interpretation of public interest priorities for FY 2021–22; (2) quality of life goals; and (3) areas where County leadership is required to move initiatives forward.
2. COVID-19 is clearly a critical issue for Clatsop County. In February 2020 the County began developing policy and implementing operational changes focused on the COVID-19 response and mitigation. The County Commissioners decided not to make COVID-19 a focus of the strategic plan because it is already receiving significant political and administrative attention.

## HOW TO READ IT

This Plan addresses the typical elements of strategic plans as summarized below:

- ***Chapter 2: Foundation for Action***  
What the County wants (the vision) and how it will act (the mission and guiding values).
- ***Chapter 3: Situation Assessment***  
Past, current, and potential future conditions that create opportunities and present challenges for achieving the mission (and vision).
- ***Chapter 4: County Priorities and Actions***  
What the County will do.
- ***Chapter 5: For More Information***  
A list and short description of documents that the Plan used, and in many cases created, to support the conclusions in Chapters 2, 3, and 4.



## 2) Foundation for Action



Clatsop County is committed to meet and exceed the expectations of the community it serves. As it does so, it will be directed by its vision, mission, and guiding values.

### OUR VISION

In a world of change and uncertainty, people trust Clatsop County to provide public facilities and services—effectively, efficiently, equitably, and in partnership with other public, non-profit, and private service providers—that are essential elements of a high quality of life, including economic prosperity, ecosystem integrity, health, safety, and social connection.

### THE MISSION

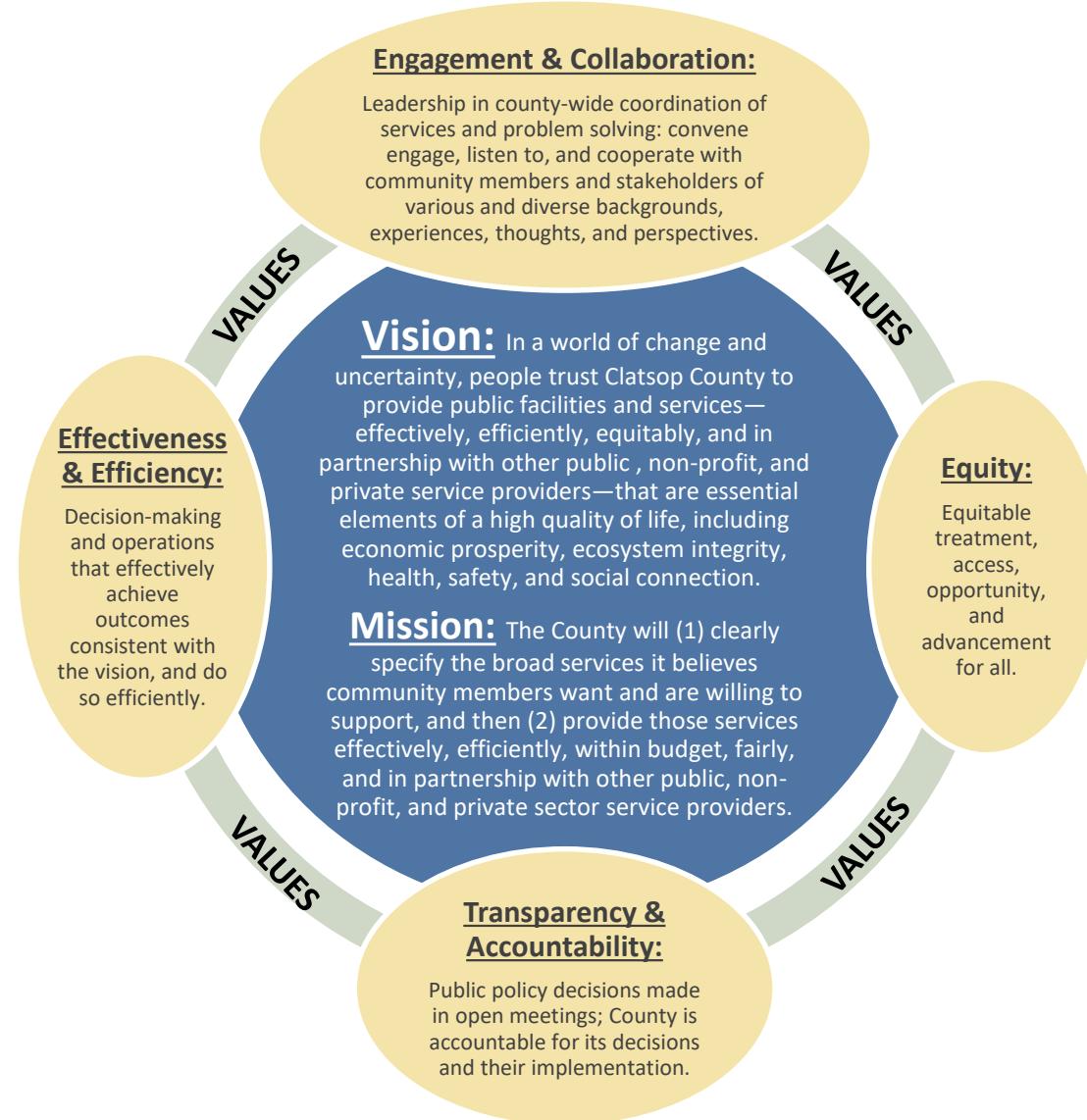
The County will (1) clearly specify the broad services it believes community members want and are willing to support, and then (2) provide those services effectively, efficiently, within budget, fairly, and in partnership with other public, non-profit, and private sector service providers.

### GUIDING VALUES

As it carries out its mission to pursue its vision for service, the County will pay attention to:

- **Engagement and Collaboration.** Leadership in county-wide coordination of services and problem solving: convene, engage, listen to, and cooperate with community members and stakeholders of various and diverse backgrounds, experiences, thoughts, and perspectives.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency.** Decision-making and operations that effectively achieve outcomes consistent with the vision, and do so efficiently.
- **Equity.** Equitable treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all.
- **Transparency and Accountability.** Public policy decisions made in open meetings; County accountable for its decisions and their implementation.

**Exhibit 2-1:** Diagram illustrating the relationship between the County's vision, mission, and guiding values



### 3) Situation Assessment

The Assessment provided information about opportunities and challenges to inform the Plan's priorities and actions. It relies on information from a review of relevant documents provided by the County: interviews with staff, elected officials, and stakeholders; a survey of senior County staff; and a review of reports and articles on a broad range of external factors that may influence the delivery of services in the future.

The Assessment identifies the County's internal strengths and weaknesses related to its primary mission (the delivery of certain public services to County households and businesses), and the external opportunities and challenges that it faces as it goes about delivering those services. The presumption is that the information and discussion about those factors will help the County government identify and prioritize areas for improvement and action.



#### CURRENT FACTORS SHAPING SERVICE DELIVERY

A range of external factors impact the County's ability to deliver services. This Assessment looks at some of the key ones in five categories:

- **Demographic and Social.** The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the population largely determine the type and quantity of services the County provides.
- **Technological.** Change may allow or require a County to reshape its service infrastructure to improve the cost or quality of services.
- **Economic.** Fluctuations in County, state, national, and global economies will affect the services residents need and can afford, and the County's ability to provide those services at an affordable cost.
- **Environmental.** Some environmental issues are local and can be partially controlled; broader issues and state and federal mandates are conditions that a County cannot control, but must respond to.
- **Political.** The actions of other political entities can affect County service provision directly (e.g., federal or state mandates); local interest groups can sometimes cause policy to shift unexpectedly and rapidly.

At least two important issues intersect with these five categories of external factors. First, all factors have associated uncertainty. For several, the level of uncertainty seems to be growing, especially environmental (to climate, wildfire, and earthquake/tsunami) and economic (this time strongly related to the pandemic). Second, the negative impacts of these factors are more severe for minority and underrepresented populations. The current political climate continues to shift, giving more attention and resources to addressing issues of inequity. The Assessment examines these issues, not as a separate category of factors, but as a component of each of the five categories of external factors listed above.

*At the end of 2019, the documents reviewed painted this picture:*

#### **POSITIVES**

- Good economy nationally and locally; expectations of population growth and economic growth for the County
- County government: good cash reserves; good staffing; commitment to work on improving “governance”

#### **ISSUES**

- Socio-demographic: aging population; childcare; addictions; affordable housing
- Economics: historical reliance on a few industries (natural resource and tourism); need for diversity and resilience; distribution of income among households
- Environment: sustainable practices for renewable resources; climate change
- Technology: digital gap (certain locations and household types with poor or no access to internet); aging facilities and infrastructure, with some deferred maintenance
- Policy: need for stronger partnerships with agencies and interest groups; political polarization

*By March 2020, the effects of a global pandemic radically changed forecasted trajectories and issues:*

#### **POSITIVES: DECREASED SUBSTANTIALLY**

- Economic growth goes negative; immediate demands on cash reserves

#### **ISSUES: NEW ONES**

- Need to direct County resources (funding and staff time) to COVID and away from some programmed activities and improvements
- New and expanding health and social issues
- Restructuring County practices to deal with social distancing (short-run costs, but potential longer-run benefits)

#### **ISSUES: EXISTING ONES GET MORE**

#### **COMPLICATED AND ACUTE**

- E.g., jobs, income, childcare, digital gap, homelessness, partnership, prioritization

#### **SUCCESES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH**

The conditions described above are important in the context of this Plan because they affect the County’s ability to successfully perform on its stated mission: to effectively, efficiently, and fairly provide services that community members want and are willing to support. As a baseline, this Assessment looked at how well the County is doing on that mission now:

#### **POSITIVE**

- New County Manager; focus and improvement on management / staff / Commission communication and relationships
- Good evaluations of County services: internal (department manager surveys), and external (stakeholder interviews and focus groups)
- Willingness to evaluate and improve

#### **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- Governance: evaluation, documentation, decision-making
- Partnerships with stakeholders/customers and co-producers of services
- Specific service areas: e.g., homelessness, childcare, disaster preparedness

During the Assessment and its discussion by the Board, many ideas surfaced about issues and opportunities this Plan might address. The Board recognized the challenge: the County does not have the resources and time to work on all the issues simultaneously—a subset of priorities must be selected. That was addressed in the next phase of work on the Plan, described in the next Chapter.

## 4) County Priorities and Actions

### IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

Through the planning process, the County identified opportunities and challenges for further consideration and evaluation. It refined its preliminary list by identifying: (1) issues most important to address (County priorities) in FY 2021 and FY 2022, and (2) actions to address the issues.

The Plan identifies areas that require special attention of the Board of Commissioners and staff. Such attention could be needed because the issues are new, emerging, and important, the development and implementation of solutions to older issues need a boost from renewed County commitment and resources, cross-departmental or cross-institutional issues make it difficult for individual departments or institutions to make progress, or some other reason.

The Board of Commissioners discussed some aspect of potential issues in every work session. In July and August it settled on five categories of issues, called focus areas (also called priority-issue areas). In September and October, five work groups (each led by a Commissioner and composed of key staff members and outside stakeholders) met to create, debate, and agree on a report about each focus area (issues and potential actions).

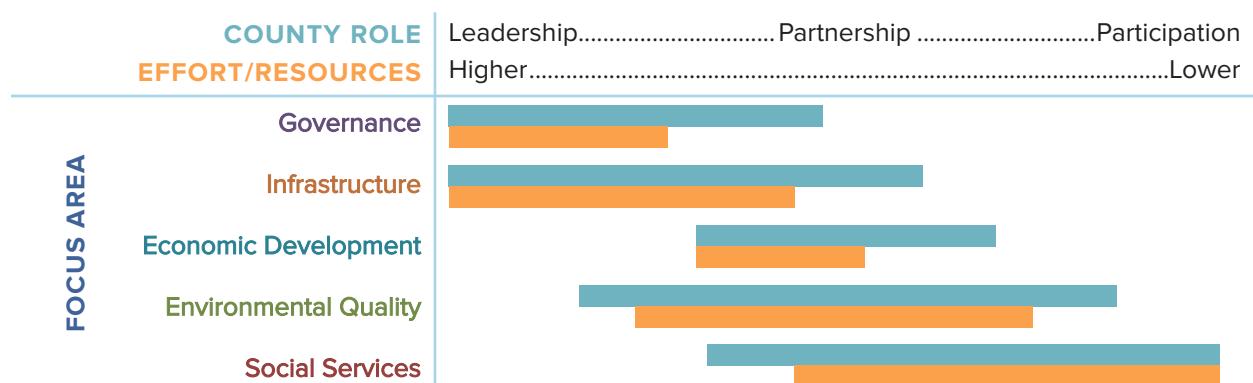


The five focus areas (and the Commissioner assigned to chair each):

- **Governance** (Commissioner Sullivan): The roles, relationships, and processes that allow the County to choose and deliver valued services (consistent with the County's Vision, Mission, and Values) in ways that are effective, efficient, and transparent.
- **Infrastructure** (Commissioner Thompson): A narrow and typical definition of public infrastructure is utilities provided by the public sector (e.g., roads, water and wastewater treatment plants and pipes). A broader definition includes buildings and public spaces. For the purposes of this first version of the Strategic Plan, "Infrastructure" is simply an umbrella term for three issues the Board identified for special attention: affordable housing, broadband and child care.
- **Economic Development** (Commissioner Kujala): Actions related to creating and sustaining a strong, diverse, and resilient economy, including, for example, ones that address job retention and creation, family wage incomes, infrastructure, land development and specific sectors such as the arts.
- **Environmental Quality** (Commissioner Wev): Actions that conserve, protect, and promote the sustainability of natural resources.
- **Social Services** (Commissioner Nebeker): Members of the community need assistance in a variety areas that the County addresses in partnership with state and nonprofit partners, for example: mental health, addictions, homelessness, and trauma (particularly in youth).

In November, the focus area reports were the basis for a Commissioner work session that led to refinements and agreements on a subset of actions to include in this Plan. Staff developed, and Commissioners discussed and approved, a structure for organizing and prioritizing actions. It organizes actions not only by focus area, but also by the level of attention and resources that the actions will need. Exhibit 4-1 illustrates the concept.

**Exhibit 4-1** Structure for thinking about how many actions the County can effectively address in its first phase



The County has a clear *leadership* role in the provision of many direct services: the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney, Juvenile Services, Community Development, Assessment and Taxation, County Clerk, Public Health, and Public Works are some examples. These critical community services are supported by the majority of the County budget. They have many moving parts that require continuous attention, which puts continuous and considerable demands for time on the Board of Commissioners, other elected officials, and staff.

In other cases, the County works in *partnership* with others to deliver services. This role may be performed via financial support, technical assistance, or serving as a "convenor." Examples of partnership include (1) economic development and the County's partnership with Clatsop Economic Development Resources; (2) mental health and addiction services with Clatsop Behavioral Health (CBH) and other nonprofit partners; and (3) convening multi-agency action teams to develop responses to affordable housing, homelessness, and more.

Yet, in other cases the County does not have any management or operational responsibility, but agencies that do have such responsibilities benefit from the County's participation (e.g., via advice, advocacy, public relations).

The County role in service delivery often determines the level of effort required by the Board of Commissioners and staff. This is important to recognize as the Board of Commissioners and staff cannot devote an infinite amount of time to the new actions the Plan proposes. A majority of their time is and must be spent on existing operations (service delivery), as well as management and oversight.

The five focus area reports generated a total of 33 suggested actions. The reports recommended that 19 be considered for inclusion in the Plan for accomplishment in the next 18 months (to the end of fiscal year 2021/22). At the Commission's work session in November, the County Manager noted that (1) all 33 actions have merit; (2) they differ in relative importance based on urgency, ripeness of the opportunity, and resource requirements; and (3) it will be challenging to implement the higher-priority actions in 18 months. The actions were categorized in the following tiers:

- **Tier 1.** Actions that address a key issue, need some significant Board and staff time (i.e., are mainly in an area where the County has a leadership role as a direct provider or co-provider of a service), and are important and possible to get done in 18 months. The County Manager suggested that the Commissioners and staff would be able to work on up to seven actions in **Tier 1**.
- **Tier 2.** Actions that are also important, but secondary in the next 18 months. Some are already in process, and some have the County in a partnership or support role—thus, the effort to make some progress may not be great. The aspiration is to accomplish these actions in 18 months, but that goal is subject to the stronger directive to get **Tier 1** actions accomplished. The County Manager suggested that the Commissioners and staff would be able to work on up to seven actions in **Tier 2**.
- **Tier 3.** Actions of merit that will be pursued with minimal Board of Commissioner or staff investment, may be led or convened by a partner agency, and may be carried forward to FY 22–23.



The Board of Commissioners evaluated and categorized the proposed actions by the following:

- Does the action address a pressing need? Does the action need to be completed or started soon?
- To get action started or completed, is the special attention of the Board of Commissioners and staff necessary? Or will the current budget, staff work plan, and normal operations of staff be able to make progress on the action without a new initiative?
- What are the potential and likely benefits and costs of the action?

In advance of its work session on actions, the Board of Commissioners agreed to narrow its focus to the 19 actions that the focus area reports recommended as candidates for accomplishment in the next 18 months. At its work session, the Board of Commissioners discussed the actions in the context of the ranking considerations above, and agreed on their assignment to tiers. Exhibit 4-2 shows the results, which organizes first by tier (1, 2, 3), and then within tier by focus area (G = Governance; I = Infrastructure; ED = Economic Development; EQ= Environmental Quality; SS= Social Services). It results in seven actions each for **Tier 1** and **Tier 2**, as suggested by the County Manager.

**Exhibit 4-2** Commissioner decisions on actions, by tier

<b>TIER 1</b>		<b>TIER 2</b>	
G1	Improve governance processes	G2	Community engagement plan
I1a	Housing Strategies (Part 1, Overview)	I2a	Housing Strategies (Part 2, Specific)
I1b	Internet strategy	I2b	COL-PAC Broadband Action Team
ED1	N Coast Business Park	ED2	Eval. of regulatory barriers/gaps
EQ1	Environmental Quality Action Team	EQ2a	Water eval. (focus Clatsop Plains)
SS1a	Drop-in center (multiple services)	EQ2b	Fire protection education
SS1b	Childcare strategy	EQ2c	Visitor education
<b>TIER 3</b>		<b>NOTES:</b>	
G3a	Internal communication plan	For a few actions, the order and numbering changed from what was used in focus area reports and in presentations and discussions at Commission Work Session 4. In Exhibit 4-2, the Capital Letters identify the focus area; the number identifies the tier.	
G3b	Equity/Inclusion program for Co. Services		
G3c	Youth Advisory board		
G3d	Review and update Board rules		
ED3a	Toolkit of business incentives	Action SS1b was action IC1 in the focus area report for Infrastructure. It was moved to reflect that it is more a policy about Social Services, though it does overlap Economic Development, and could overlap Infrastructure (if facilities needed).	
ED3b	Use of state video lottery funds		
ED3c	Partner on Eval. of EcDev agencies activity		
ED3d	Expand transit options for tourist traffic		
ED3e	Continue support of Clatsop Co. Arts Comm.		
ED3f	EcDev training for County Board of Comm.		
ED3g	Eval. EcDev opportunities Jewell & Westport		
EQ3a	Adopt the tsunami overlay zone	Action I2a is a combination of focus area report actions in Infrastructure and Social Services that all address housing.	
EQ3b	Countywide salmon recovery plan		
SS3a	Resource Development Team for trauma		
SS3b	Sober-housing options		
SS3c	Strengthen Mobile Crisis Intervention		

More detail about the actions contained in the Plan are in the appendices (see Chapter 5 for web-links to those documents). That information includes:

- How an action will address the issue of importance
- How an action will fit with other current policies and activities
- Tasks and assignments
- Schedule
- Funding
- Monitoring progress and evaluating success

## TURNING PRIORITIES INTO ACTION

The Plan describes 14 actions that the County hopes to begin in 2021, though it is unlikely to complete them all, even in 18 months. The County Commissioners agree that the [tier-1](#) actions have a greater priority, and are likely to take more time and resources than the [tier-2](#) actions.

Some ranking and sequencing is essential for the multiple actions to be addressed effectively. The committee work in September and October to create the five focus area reports aimed to provide enough detail about actions for the Commissioners to gain a sense of their purposes, activities, and potential benefits and costs. That information allows Commissioners to make evidence-based decisions about the priorities for action across focus areas.

Those reports, however, do not provide a work plan that describes the tasks, roles, budget, product, schedule, and expected outcomes of each action. Thus, the expectation is that in the first quarter of 2021 staff will create a work plan for each of the 14 [tier-1](#) and [tier-2](#) actions, and then integrate those work plans into an overarching, integrated plan whose tasks and schedule is mindful of budget constraints and other demands on the Board of Commissioners and staff.

The rest of this Chapter summarizes the [tier-1](#) and [tier-2](#) actions for each of the five focus areas.



## GOVERNANCE

Most people, if asked about what local government is and does, would be most likely to respond with a list of a few facilities and services that they use or care about: emergency services, parks, schools, roads, .... A few might talk about a mayor, commissioner, council, or board that makes decisions. But only a small percentage would have a clear idea of which local government was delivering the services, how it made decisions, and all of the policy and personal interrelationships among local governments, state and federal government, and nonprofit institutions that each local government must manage.

This Plan uses the term *governance* to refer to all the decisionmaking and management policies and procedures that aim to make Clatsop County operate effectively, efficiently, fairly, and transparently as it pursues the Vision, Mission, and Values and the delivery of relevant public policy and services.

Effective governance requires knowledge of roles and the resources and training to deliver them well. The roles in a Commission / Manager form of government can overlap but generally include the following:

#### Governing Body

- Represent community interests
- Collegial deliberation and decision-making
- Value and data-based policy making
- Organizational oversight/accountability
- Community leadership

#### Staff

- Effective and efficient operations
- Assistance with policy formation
- Policy implementation
- Policy and service evaluation
- Reporting/accountability to board and community



The focus area report on governance recommended three top actions. For **Tier 1 (G1)** and **Tier 2 (G2)**, Commissioners agreed on these actions:

- **G1, IMPROVE GOVERNANCE PROCESSES.**  
Document and initiate implementation and training to integrate annual planning, budgeting, performance benchmarks and reporting to the public.
- **G2, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN.**  
Develop Community Engagement Plan and enhance capabilities to execute.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Public infrastructure is used commonly to refer to utilities provided by the public sector (e.g., roads, water and wastewater treatment plants and pipes). A broader definition includes buildings and public spaces. For the purposes of its investigation of priority issues and actions, the Board of Commissioners included under “Infrastructure” three issues it agreed might need special attention: affordable housing, broadband (internet), and child care. It recognizes that definition does not encompass all the infrastructure needs of the community. It expects, however, strategic planning to be an annual exercise, and that other aspects of infrastructure actions will be evaluated and included in future iterations of the Plan.

The focus area report on Infrastructure recommended one to three actions in each of three areas for improvement. For Tiers 1 and 2, Commissioners agreed on these actions:



## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- **I1a, Housing strategies (Part 1, Overview).** Form a working group to develop strategies for the County to be an active and strategic partner in the development of public, private and non-profit affordable housing units. Also identify county-owned property potentially suitable for affordable housing; initiate a process to engage public, private and non-for-profit partners in site-specific development options/strategies.

- **I2a, Housing strategies (Part 2, Specific).** The Board of Commissioners agreed to combine three potential actions related to housing (two from the Infrastructure report and one from the Social Services report) into one:

- Form a working group to identify barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to identify what types of housing are missing.
- Create a dashboard of all housing units in the development pipeline, including location, type, number of units/bedrooms, affordability, and development timeline.
- Identify a variety of housing options that allows individuals to be able to transition from one environment to the next as their situation allows or warrants a change.

## **BROADBAND**

- **I1b, Internet strategy.** Develop and implement a geographic specific strategy to improve internet connectivity to the most under served communities in the short/medium term. Begin with the Jewell/Elsie/Vinemapple area based on the highest percentage of families without internet service. Develop a process that can be replicated in other communities in future phases.

- **I2b, COL-PAC Broadband Action Team.** Participate in the COL-PAC Broadband Action Team (BAT) process to develop a strategic plan to improve the hard fiber infrastructure for Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook and western Washington County.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

A strong, diverse, and resilient economy is essential to meet the educational, social, environmental, infrastructure, equity, and quality of life goals for the community. “Economic development” actions aim to help create and support such an economy, and include actions that address job retention and creation, family wage incomes, transportation, infrastructure, comprehensive community planning, and removal of regulatory barriers where feasible and appropriate.

The County’s role in economic development could be as a direct service provider, a partner, or a supporter. The County currently functions primarily as a partner and supporter; this Plan recommends that it continue in those roles. Economic development efforts at the local level require collaboration with the state and all manner of public, private, and nonprofit partners. The actions in this Plan assume collaboration and partnership among Clatsop County, the state, Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR), chambers of commerce, education partners and business interests.

The focus area report on economic development recommended three top actions. For Tiers 1 and 2, Commissioners agreed on these actions:

- **ED1, North Coast Business Park.** Formalize plan to market/sell North Coast Business Park for development purposes; include assessment of private/public partnership opportunities.
- **ED2, Evaluation of regulatory barriers/gaps.** Initiate process to review local regulatory barriers to economic development. Include evaluation of opportunities to reduce the cost of development such as (but not limited to):
  - Conduct wetland delineations in particular geographic areas where wetlands are prevalent; and/or
  - Assist with surveying costs or preparation of elevation certificates for properties within Special Flood Hazard Areas.



## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Clatsop County lies at the mouth of the Columbia River, one of North America's greatest navigable river systems, and along the Coast of the Pacific Ocean. For millennia, the river and the ocean, the many streams and the immense forest, has provided life and sustenance to a succession of civilizations and offered abundant resources that fuel economic vitality in its community. The County's ecosystem is composed of intertwined resources that are highly depended on the health of each other. Together, these natural resources have been the backbone for thriving communities, more recently attracting tourists to enjoy the cultural heritage and natural splendor of this wonderful place.

However, the environment is changing. Fish stocks are declining, old forests are disappearing, species are going extinct, fresh water quality and quantity are at risk as hydraulic systems are being altered in unplanned ways with potential negative consequences, winter storms are projected to become more frequent as the atmosphere continues to warm, wildfires threaten our forests, and ocean levels are rising—leading to more frequent flooding and impeding runoff from land.



The focus area report on environmental quality recommended four top actions. For Tiers 1 and 2, Commissioners agreed on these actions:

- **EQ1, Environmental Quality Action Team.** Create an Environmental Quality Action Team that will:
  - Assess existing studies and State and local initiatives on climate conditions and natural climate solutions that apply to Clatsop County.
  - Initiate, oversee, and review studies of natural resource conditions where information is lacking. Priority should be given to fresh water sources.
  - Review the mapping of “resilient lands” completed for Oregon to ensure those systems and places remain resilient.
- **EQ2a, Water assessment (focus on Clatsop Plains).** Initiate a moratorium on building homes with septic systems on less than one acre in the Clatsop Plains area. Complete a water assessment study to analyze groundwater quality and quantity and prepare projections for future use. Such study should also include surface water.
- **EQ2b, Fire protection education.** Partner with the Clatsop County Fire Defense Board and Oregon State University (OSU) Extension staff to prepare education and preparedness exercises related to defensible fire space. These may include webinars; program to promote smarter development; and use of appropriate building materials in forested areas.
- **EQ2c, Visitor education.** Work with the Tourism Studio to develop an education program for visitors/tourists to promote “leaving no trace” tourism.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Many services that local governments provide have a social component. Education, recreation, and public safety, for example, all contribute to the social good. However, “social services” are typically defined more narrowly. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines social services as ones that “improve the well-being of individuals, families, and communities,” and lists programs like job assistance, aid to low-income households, child support enforcement, child care, health care, senior support, homelessness, and more.

The Social Service report for this Plan concluded that there are a variety of issues county-wide that intersect and lead to the ongoing need for increased services around mental health, addiction and treatment services, homelessness, housing in a variety of types, and a pro-active approach to trauma (particularly for youths). Among the challenges for such programs are (1) taking a holistic approach to addressing the individual needs, (2) streamlining service delivery and reducing duplicated services, and (3) finding stable funding streams.

The report also noted that for the majority of these issues the County’s role would be less as a provider (other agencies and institutions have lead roles for service delivery), and more as a convener to facilitate work groups and identify the necessary partners to find a resolution.

The focus area report on social services recommended three top actions. For Tiers 1 and 2, Commissioners agreed on these actions:

- **SS1a, Drop-in center (multiple services).** Develop with the cooperation of community partners a Navigation/Drop-In Center that would be a single location that an individual can drop into throughout the day to be able to access a variety of services such as showers, laundry facilities, meals, public health services, mental health services, foot care, art therapy, Social Security, ID’s, housing, Veteran Services, employment services, and more.
- **SS1b, Childcare strategy.** Clatsop County to convene, participate and support an enduring effort to identify and implement a broad range of strategies to expand and retain quality, diverse and sustainable child care resources. This process includes a literature review of best practices deployed in other communities and strategies to leverage public, private and nonprofit expertise and resources.

Both of these actions are **Tier 1**: they occur at the same time and independently. In both, the County is an instigator and convener. What its role would be in developing the specifications of the drop-in center and the strategies for childcare would be developed, in concert with partner organizations, as a first phase of both actions.



## NEXT STEPS

### IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND PLANNING

By creating and adopting this Plan, the Board of Commissioners and staff are making a commitment to an on-going process of strategic planning. That means some improvements to existing processes, and the creation of some new ones, for communication and evaluation.

Action G1 of this Plan (improve governance processes) is the foundation of an improved process for decisionmaking and operations. The improvements in institutional capacity that it envisions and will pursue are critical to its success to achieving its goals in the other focus areas. It seeks fundamental improvements in the rigor with which the County chooses its priorities and evaluates its actions (e.g., clearly defining how desired outcomes will be measured; tying those measurements to best practices and reasonable benchmarks; getting more input from the community and partners about the quality of service delivery). For County staff to deliver desired services effectively and efficiently, they need the support of effective and efficient management and central services.

A few of this Plan's actions are already underway. Some are less difficult than others. Some immediate and tangible results are possible. But in most cases, there is much to be done before action should be taken. With this Plan the County has stated its priorities for issues that need special attention. It has documented why the chosen focus areas are priorities, considered many ways to address issues in those areas, and chosen a small number of priority actions for the next 18 months. The Plan has not, however, created a detailed work plan for each action (e.g., with measurable objectives; specific tasks, products, and assignments; a schedule; a budget)—such work plans are at the core of better governance and the objectives of Action G1.

Moreover, individual work plans for [tier-1](#) and [tier-2](#) actions have to be considered as a whole, matched to fiscal resources and the available time of Commissioners and staff, and then incorporated into an integrated work plan for addressing the chosen [tier-1](#) and [tier-2](#) actions. Thus, the County expects that in the first several months 2021 staff will create these work plans, and that more specific work on the 14 [tier-1](#) and [tier-2](#) actions will begin in April or May.



#### Tier 1A: HOUSING STRATEGIES (PART 1, OVERVIEW)

Form a working group to develop strategies for the County to be an active and strategic partner in the development of public, non-profit, and private affordable housing units. Also identify county-owned property potentially suitable for affordable housing; initiate process to engage public, non-profit, and private partners in site-specific development options/strategies.

#### Tier 1B: INTERNET STRATEGY

Develop and implement a geography specific strategy to improve internet connectivity to the most underserved communities in the short/medium term. Begin with the Jewell/Elsie/Vinemapple area based on the highest percentage of families without internet services. Develop a process that can be replicated in other communities in future phases.

#### Tier 2A: HOUSING STRATEGIES (PART 2, SPECIFIC)

The Board of Commissioners agreed to combine three potential actions related to housing (two from the Infrastructure report and one from the Social Services report) into one:

- Form a working group to identify barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to identify what types of housing are missing
- Create a dashboard of all housing units in the development pipeline, including location, type, number of units/bedrooms, affordability, and development timeline.
- Identify a variety of housing options that allows individuals to be able to transition from one environment to the next as their situation allows or warrants change.

#### Tier 2B: COL-PAC BROADBAND ACTION TEAM

Participate in the COL-PAC Broadband Action Team (BAT) process to develop a strategic plan to improve the hard fiber infrastructure for Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, and western Washington County.

#### Tier 1: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACTION TEAM

Create an Environmental Quality Action Team that will:

- Assess existing studies and State and local initiatives on climate conditions and natural climate solutions that apply to Clatsop County
- Initiate, oversee, and review studies of natural resource conditions where information is lacking. Priority should be given to fresh water sources.
- Review the mapping of “resilient lands” completed for Oregon to ensure those systems and places remain resilient.

#### Tier 2A: WATER ASSESSMENT (FOCUS ON CLATSOP PLAINS)

Initiate a moratorium no building homes with septic systems on less than one acre in the Clatsop Plains area. Complete a water assessment study to analyze groundwater quality and quantity and prepare projections for future use. Such Study should also include surface water.

#### Tier 2B: FIRE PROTECTION EDUCATION

Partner with the Clatsop County Fire Defense Board and Oregon State University (OSU) Extension staff to prepare education and preparedness exercises related to defensible fire space. These may include webinars, program to promote smarter development, and use of appropriate building materials in forested areas.

#### Tier 2C: VISITOR EDUCATION

Work with Tourism Studio to develop an education program for visitors/tourists to promote “leaving no trace” tourism.

#### Tier 1: IMPROVE GOVERNANCE PROCESS

Document and initiate Implementation and training to integrate annual planning, budgeting, performance benchmarks, and reporting to the public.

#### Tier 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Develop Community Engagement Plan and enhance capabilities to execute.

#### Tier 1: NORTH COAST BUSINESS PARK

Formalize plan to market/sell North Coast Business Park for development purposes; including assessment of private/public partnership opportunities.

#### Tier 2: EVALUATION OF REGULATORY BARRIERS/GAPS

Initiate process to review local regulatory barriers to economic development. Include evaluation of opportunities to reduce the cost of development such as (but not limited to:

- Conduct wetland delineations in particular geographic areas where wetlands are prevalent; and/or
- Assist with surveying costs or preparation of elevation certificates for properties within Special Flood Hazard Areas.

**Exhibit 4-3:** Diagram illustrating the County's focus areas (priorities) and actions

## 5) For More Information

Over the nine months during which this Plan was developed, staff created around 20 documents to support discussion and decision-making by the Board of Commissioners. This chapter lists the subset of those documents that provide any interested reader with more detail about information considered by the Board of Commissioners, their discussions about that information, and the conclusions they agreed to. Read or download these documents at the County website: [co.clatsop.or.us/boc/page/draft-strategic-plan-2020](http://co.clatsop.or.us/boc/page/draft-strategic-plan-2020)

### OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS (CHAPTER 1)

- Scope of work for the planning process
- Overview of the Strategic Planning Process. Why local governments create a strategic plan, and how it is typically structured; why and how Clatsop County created this Plan.
- Work session presentations and recordings. There were four main work sessions for County Commissioners from February through November, 2020. All after the first one were online. Each started with a slide-based presentation that provided information about the session's agenda items. The presentations are a good summary of progress, but they lack the presenters' narrative, so they are not always self-explanatory. Thus, the recordings of each work session are online as part of Board meeting materials.

### VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES (CHAPTER 2)

- Technical memorandum on concepts (July)
- Presentation for Work Session 2 (July). Concepts and possible language.
- Presentation for Work Session 3 (August). Summary of final draft language.
- Technical memorandum on adopted language (August)

### SITUATION ASSESSMENT (CHAPTER 3)

- Presentation for Work Session 2 (July). Summary of final assessment
- Situation Assessment report
- Technical appendices to the Situation Assessment report: (1) list of key County documents reviewed; (2) summary of survey of staff about key issues.

### FOCUS AREAS AND ACTIONS (CHAPTER 4)

- Presentation for Work Session 3 (August): priority focus areas; process for developing focus area action reports.
- Five technical memoranda (staff reports) that describe potential issues and actions for the five focus areas in Chapter 4.
- Presentation for Work Session 4 (November): summary of focus area reports; items for Commissioner discussion and decisions.



