

Chowchilla Strategic Plan

2018



City of Chowchilla
February 27, 2018



City of Chowchilla 2018 Strategic Plan



Chowchilla City Council



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Mayor



Ray Barragan
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Letter from the City Administrator

Mayor and City Council,

I am pleased to present the City of Chowchilla's 2018 Strategic Plan. This plan will serve as a roadmap of the City's vision for the future through defined goals and objectives. With committed participation during joint workshops with the City Council, the Administrative Management Team, City staff and community residents and stakeholders, the following five goals have been identified which create the foundation for the strategic plan:

- Provide a safe and secure community
- Strengthen infrastructure and become proactive in the planning of services, finances, and processes
- Fiscal reinforcement and growth
- Quality of life and sense of place
- Economic development and revenue production

The development of the 2018 Strategic Plan builds upon previous strategic planning efforts that refined a vision for the future and charted an updated course of achievable measures. The planning process validated the resolve to ensure financial viability, the alignment of resources to meet current and emerging needs, to create new economic opportunities, and identify measures to support and enrich a family-friendly community rooted in traditional values. The overarching result is a defined commitment to enhance our citizens' quality of living and provide a desirable community for those residents and stakeholders of today and for those who choose to call Chowchilla their home in the future.

As a community Chowchilla succeeds significantly because of the numerous collaborations among varying agencies, organizations, groups, neighborhoods and other entities whose missions and efforts bestow benefits enjoyed by much of the citizenry. As the City implements the various objectives outlined in the strategic plan, City staff will continue to work diligently to build upon the partnerships we have with our community and strive to formulate new bonds of alliance.

The completion of this strategic plan is a testament to the desire and commitment of the City Council, the organization and the community to enhance the quality of life for our residents and patrons. Their contributions have been, and will continue to be, invaluable as we work together to accomplish the objectives identified in the plan.

This 2018 Strategic Plan will serve as an organizational blueprint and foundation to help shape a safe, growing, vibrant, innovative and healthy city with firmly held traditions that affirm a strong value to our overall quality of life. I firmly believe Chowchilla to be on the path towards a successful and thriving place to live, work, invest, shop and dine.

Sincerely,



Brian Haddix
City Administrator



Elements of Strategic Planning

What is a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan is a clear statement of where the City is going and how it intends to get there. It includes a vision, a description of the mission of the organization, a set of guiding principles (values) that will guide actions, and a set of multi-year goals that guide decisions and objectives for each goal that lead to programs for implementation and accountability.

A strategic plan generally covers a period of time from one to five years and is primarily focused on organizational direction or purpose. Chowchilla's 2018 Strategic Plan looks forward three years. The intent of strategic planning is to ensure that the organization's direction dictates the development and focus of other planning efforts.

Thus this strategic plan will provide the framework to link identified objectives to the budget process, capital improvement plan, important policy considerations, economic development initiatives, and the organization's desire for continuous improvement. In summary, the plan helps translate the community's vision and City Council's goals to the organization – enabling the organization to better serve the community.

What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic planning is a tool that an organization can use to proactively plan their future.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IS A PROCESS THAT:

- examines where your organization is now, where you want it to be, and how you are going to get there
- involves your community in visioning your preferred future
- produces a flexible plan or road map of objectives or strategies derived from internal discussions and external sources of input
- steers your organization in a focused direction for future success
- allows proactive thinking beyond your current activities and traditions
- deals with change positively by responding to it effectively
- involves making decisions that consider changes or anticipated changes in the environment
- sets priorities for action that are reflective of all aspects of your organization

STRATEGIC PLANNING IS NOT:

- a one shot deal
- a box of tricks or a bundle of techniques
- a quick fix to solve immediate problems
- a report left to sit on a shelf

What are the Benefits of Strategic Planning?

By carrying out strategic planning your organization will be able to:

- influence rather than be influenced
- clarify or redefine your role and your target groups
- deal positively with the inevitable change
- address critical issues you are facing
- find innovative ways to achieve goals
- decrease crisis management
- give continuity during changing times or when there is new leadership
- use resources efficiently and effectively
- anticipate issues and develop policies to meet future needs
- gain commitment and bring your organization together to work on common goals

Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles (Values)

The City of Chowchilla is committed to achieving a shared vision for the organization and its community. The vision, mission and guiding values are the result of a thoughtful and inclusive process designed to set the City and organization on a course that meets the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Vision

The City's vision sets the focus for the future. The vision is a statement that describes the ideal future of an organization, or what the organization would ideally like to be.

Embrace a rich heritage of small town appeal as a diverse family-oriented community with quiet and attractive neighborhoods, a growing downtown vitality, and vibrant local activities, where community isn't just a word, but a way of life.

Mission

The City's mission is a statement of the organization's purpose. It defines what the organization stands for and what it will do.

Deliver exemplary services that are responsive to community priorities, ensure a healthy and sustainable organization, and drive us toward our shared vision for the future.

Guiding Principles (Values)

The City's guiding principles (or values) provide the basis for how the organization and its members will work to achieve the mission and vision. As such, the strategic plan affirms the City of Chowchilla's commitment to assure public trust and confidence in the integrity of our local government with the establishment of the following guiding principles:

As an organization, we uphold the following values:

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are accountable to each other and the community we have sworn to serve.

INNOVATION

We encourage the advancement of our services and programs through inquiry, evaluation, problem solving and continual improvement.

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and the demonstration of high professional standards.

RESPECT

We believe in the dignity of every individual and value all members of the community and organization.

TEAMWORK

We are committed to a teamwork environment where every stakeholder is a valued contributor to our success.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

We embolden trustworthiness as it encompasses such qualities as honesty, integrity, loyalty and reliability.

The City's vision, mission statement and goals are based the City's *current* position and outlook for the future. As the City moves forward with the implementation of the strategic plan it should recognize that time may lend itself to modifying the vision, mission statement and goals based on the direction of the Mayor and City Council and the needs of the community.

Reading the Plan

The strategic plan highlights the priorities that the organization will complete in the coming years. This plan guides readers through the City of Chowchilla's five goals resulting from the City Council strategic planning workshops. Each goal has objectives to be implemented during the life of the strategic plan. Strategies will be developed as part of developing the annual budget that will support the defined objectives. Following is a brief definition of goals, objectives and strategies:

GOALS

Goals are general topics that are likely to involve multiple departments and encompass many objectives. Combining objectives within goals helps to ensure that activities covering similar areas are aligned to produce effective and efficient results.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives are multi-year in nature. The timeframe for achieving an objective is typically three to five years, although some may take longer to accomplish.

STRATEGIES

Strategies are the means to achieve the goals. The timeframe for implementing strategies can be within a single budget year or may span several years depending on the specific program or projects undertaken.

The strategic plan is a living document and should not be considered static by any means. The strategic plan will continue to evolve as City staff provides periodic updates to the City Council and its community during regularly scheduled Council meetings and the budget process. Since assumptions, community needs, the economy, legislation and other factors upon which this plan is based continue to change, it is necessary that this be considered as the beginning, rather than an end, to managing the organization and serving the Chowchilla community.

The City of Chowchilla is committed to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth in the plan based on current economic and political environment and will continue to modify the plan to meet the changing needs of the community.

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal One

PROVIDE A SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITY

Police Department

1. Promote a proactive environment within the department as exemplified through our services
2. Develop collaborative crime prevention resources and programs to empower residents – in partnership with the Police Department – to become the first level of defense, neighborhoods the second level, followed by businesses as the third level
3. Enhance policing partnerships with neighboring agencies, such as Madera County COPS (Citizens On Patrol)

Fire Department

1. Increase recruitment activities to enhance the volunteer firefighter crew
2. Strive to meet the elements of favorable ISO Ratings (e.g. Maintain vital firefighting infrastructure including fire hydrants)
3. Coordinate with the Department of Public Works to maintain the City's firefighting infrastructure
4. Conduct commercial fire inspections regularly
5. Promote the residential smoke detector program
6. Develop and implement additional fire safety education programs
7. Enhance partnerships with neighboring entities with the purpose of enhancing firefighter training programs and opportunities

Code Enforcement

1. Coordinate enforcement efforts among the Building, Fire and Police Departments
2. Enforce the City's Municipal Codes through a combination of constructive tools and aggressive compliance measures

Goal Two

STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BECOME PROACTIVE IN THE PLANNING OF SERVICES, FINANCES, AND PROCESSES

1. Develop a Capital Improvements Program with regular updates around which we develop budget priorities
2. Update the Pavement Management Program
3. Coordinate with Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) to pursue funds for road maintenance
4. Develop an Infrastructure Master Plan to include water/sewer, stormdrains, sidewalks, parks, etc.

Goal Three

FISCAL REINFORCEMENT AND GROWTH

1. Maintain an accurate and consistent Five-Year Financial Plan
2. Seek new and innovative revenue streams
3. Adhere to existing fiscal policies; regularly review and update the policies as needed; and develop new ones as needed
4. Maintain a strong, healthy reserve
5. Maintain and improve the City's bond rating

Goal Four

QUALITY OF LIFE AND SENSE OF PLACE

1. Utilize existing amenities to increase activity, citywide functions and visibility (including Berenda Reservoir, airport, parks, fairgrounds)
2. Consider use of the airport for private sector events such as fly-ins
3. Encourage greater business sector involvement/participation in all community events
4. Enhance recreational activities provided by the Senior Center
5. Increase recreational activities and programs for all ages
6. Work with the Chamber of Commerce for a downtown street banners program
7. Partner with other organizations to provide youth activities and programs
8. Build a stronger relationship with the Greenhills Estates Homeowners Association, including conducting an annual joint-meeting with the City Council
9. Partner with the Chowchilla High School District to open the high school pool for public activities in the summer
10. Research opportunities for park enhancements and modernizations (such as a spray park) with an emphasis on parks in low-moderate income neighborhoods
11. Evaluate opportunities for food truck events
12. Utilize shopping centers, large parking lots, parks, fairgrounds, or sections of streets to regularly host classic car shows
13. Work with Chowchilla Fair and Event Center staff on facility development and utilization

Goal Five

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REVENUE PRODUCTION

1. Collaborate with school districts on locating new facilities
2. Explore the opportunity for City-owned and leased business operations in City-owned buildings
3. Develop community-centric housing projects
4. Market the city to the family friendly entertainment industry (such as a jump zone, bowling alley, theater, miniature golf, etc.)
5. Complete a feasibility study for long-haul truck parking on vacant City-owned properties (south side)
6. Pursue retail opportunities in the downtown area and along the Highway 99 corridor
7. Develop new marketing ideas and opportunities for industrial properties
8. Participate in retail and industrial trade shows to attract future businesses
9. Complete the Industrial Specific Plan and complementary infrastructure

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Assessment (SWOT analysis)

Performing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis for a city helps to develop a strategic plan that maximizes the municipality's strengths, minimizes its weaknesses, takes advantage of opportunities and limits its threats. This technique can be used to evaluate individual city departments or the city as a whole (e.g. infrastructure, businesses, services, citizens, amenities, economy and politics). Along with its internal benefits, a city SWOT analysis can also be used to market the community and surrounding area to potential residents and prospective businesses.

Following is the descriptions of what comprises a SWOT analysis:

STRENGTHS

The strength section examines the city's internal processes, capabilities and amenities. These include human resources, physical resources, finances and programs. Examples may include the park funding program, excellent customer service rankings, strong school system and geographic location as strengths.

WEAKNESSES

The weakness section looks at internal problem areas. These include the same human resources, physical resources, finances and programs as strengths. For instance, an agency's weaknesses may be a lack of primary headquarters, limited broadband Internet connections, lack of urban planning and a disconnect with the state government. External input from community members can be key to identifying problem areas in the community.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are the external factors that offer potential for the city. Possibilities include trends, economy, environment and legislation. Examples could include the redevelopment of a downtown business section, a civic center complex, the utilization of volunteers, marketing efforts and energy conservation programs as possible opportunities. Consider ways that your community can take advantage of trends, features or the economy to improve its economic stability.

THREATS

Unlike businesses, cities do not face direct competition. Instead, threats come from competition for funding, changes in citizenry and restrictive legislation. Examples of threats may be socially economic challenges, loss of businesses, limited business development, a restrictive tax structure, decreasing population and citizen perceptions among other things.

At the initial City Council strategic planning workshop a SWOT analysis was conducted to determine a snapshot evaluation of the whole city organization.

Strengths *(Internal)*

Good leadership

Loyal and dedicated employees

Good teamwork

Community-oriented employees

Friendly employees and friendly atmosphere

Enjoyable workplace

Staff humility in not seeking special attention for doing their jobs

Mutual respect for coworkers

Competent staff that cross-train/work multiple disciplines

Employee safety practices

Strong and responsive customer services

Perseverance to complete tasks and meet challenges

Dedicated volunteers, commissions and committees

Collaborative with many agencies and organizations

Fiscally solvent

Efficient business practices

Available facility spaces

Diversity that comes with broad past employee experiences (outside perspectives)

Willingness and openness to innovate, learn and solve tasks and situations

Knowledgeable and experienced staff

Parks and recreational opportunities (events, parent-run sports groups and relationships)

Weaknesses *(Internal)*

Aging infrastructure

Lack of resources

Limited staff

Limited training opportunities (due to time and finances)

Recruitment and retentions capabilities

Incomplete policies and procedures

Outdated codes

Records management limitations (history reference)

Fiscal vitality to substantially improve services and facilities

Planning for facilities maintenance

Generally function reactively rather than being proactive

Opportunities *(External)*

Increasing future development

Partnerships with other agencies, schools, civic organizations and employee associations

Current good economy

Opportunities for alternative funding sources or tax revenues

Geographical location; proximity to State Highways 99 and 152

Airport (business services, recreation, fly to work)

Proximity to National Parks

Technology improvements in tools and resources to connect with residents

Information kiosks

Citizen's academy (train future leaders)

Youth councils (train future leaders)

Market the City at events

Vehicle wraps and advertising

Good traffic counts

Enhance relationships with universities and colleges (classes and staff relocation)

Commuter Rail (ACE Train)

Proximity to UC Merced, a world-class university

Low crime rate

Threats *(External)*

High Speed Rail

Limited Highway 99 overpass access

Truck route identifiers and highway access

State regulations limitations (CalTrans, Legislature, etc.)

Lack of state fiscal resources

Lack of infrastructure in annexed areas

Groundwater quality and availability

Contaminated soil sites

Attrition of seasoned staff and knowledge loss

Working relationship with County government

Too high of rents (business locations particularly)

Older wastewater treatment plant

Lack of rooftops to attract business developments

Less-than-competitive staff compensation

Out-of-town landlord

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Acknowledgements

The development and adoption of the City of Chowchilla 2018 Strategic Plan was possible due to the work and commitment from our City leadership and staff along with other employees, community members and stakeholders.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Brian Haddix City Administrator
Joann McClendon City Clerk
Marty Piepenbrok Director of Recreation & Community Engagement
Rod Pruett Director of Finance & City Treasurer
David Riviere Chief of Police
Jason Rogers Director of Public Works
Harry Turner Fire Chief

The City of Chowchilla 2018 Strategic Plan was adopted by the City Council on February 27, 2018.