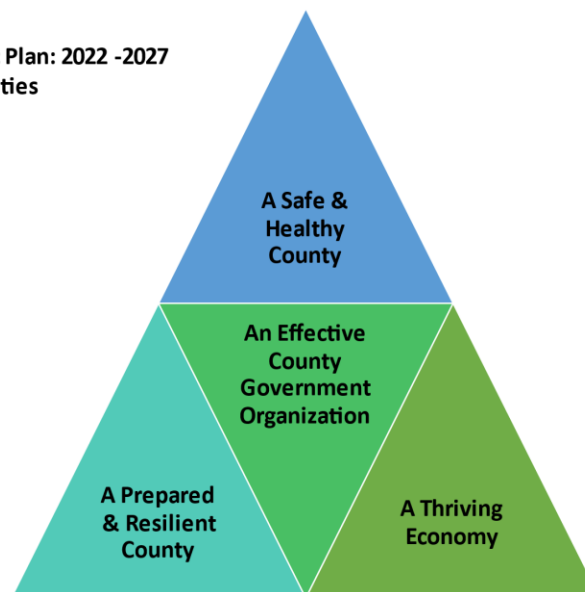


**Mendocino County Strategic Plan: 2022-2027**  
**Update prepared by B.J. Bischoff and Gary Hochman, Project Consultants**  
**November 9, 2021**

In July 2021, Mendocino County entered into an agreement with Sonoma-based Bischoff Consulting (Consultant B.J. Bischoff) in partnership with The HR Matrix (Consultant Gary Hochman) to facilitate the development of a five-year strategic plan for Mendocino County. The consultants are working with Project Manager Anne Molgaard and a Task Force comprised of six County employee leaders with knowledge of County government operations. County Supervisors McGourty and Haschak serve as Ex Officio members of the Task Force. To inform the direction of the plan, the consultants have gathered input from all five Supervisors, the CEO, five County government leaders identified by the Task Force, six focus groups comprised of a total of 35 County employees, all Department Heads, and staff from the Executive Office. The current version of the plan draft consists of 17 goals under these four priority areas: (1) An Effective County Government Organization; (2) A Safe and Healthy County; (3) A Thriving Economy; and (4) A Prepared and Resilient County. These priorities and draft goals with corresponding objectives appear below. In alignment with the County leadership's expectations, the objectives presented in this draft plan are designed to be specific, actionable, and primarily achievable through the County's existing budget and available resources. In November and December 2021, the consultants will continue to refine these goals and objectives through continued input from the County Supervisors, the Task Force, County employees and community members. The next steps in the planning process include administering a survey among all County employees to obtain input on priorities; conducting virtual focus groups of County residents from specific, targeted sectors and individual interviews with key stakeholders; and conducting three virtual town halls that each address a specific priority of the plan. The consultants expect to complete the project in January 2022.

**Mendocino County Strategic Plan: 2022 -2027**  
**Strategic Priorities**



# **Draft Priorities, Goals & Objectives**

Revised 11/9/21

## **I. An Effective County Government Organization**

### **A. Define clear roles, responsibilities, and processes for government leadership**

1. Make determinations about key roles for county governance, including the CEO/CAO and CFO/Director of Finance.
2. Create operating agreements for how the Supervisors will work with one another and with the CAO/CEO, CFO/Director of Finance, and Department Heads.
3. In collaboration, Supervisors, Department Heads, CAO/CEO, and other elected County leaders create a *Code of Conduct* that defines acceptable behavior and sets expectations for accountability.
4. Create groupings of departments with similar functions and assign Supervisors as liaisons with the Department Heads from those groups to conduct regular meetings that promote healthy communication and greater cooperation across departments.

### **B. Create a thriving organizational culture**

1. Attract and retain the best employees by identifying why people join, stay, and leave County government and making needed improvements informed by annual surveys for current employees and exit interviews for all departing employees.
2. Invest in employee professional growth and retention by continuing to offer high quality training, development, and leadership programs.
3. Create a compensation and benefits philosophy, participate in salary surveys, and complete competitive market matching every two years. Adjust wages as appropriate.
4. Continue Department Heads meetings. Identify leadership behaviors to move the County closer to the ideal High Performance Organization culture and hold leaders accountable for implementing new behaviors and encouraging leaders at all levels of the organization.
5. Strengthen the County's Leadership Initiative and High-Performance Organization culture through the implementation of projects, coaching, and performance improvement initiatives that promote leadership at all levels with support from senior leaders and the Board of Supervisors.

### **C. Implement new approaches to demonstrate our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**

1. Adopt definitions and create a shared understanding of what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean.
2. Launch DEI training for all County leadership, beginning with the Board of Supervisors and CAO/CEO.
3. Hire an Equity Officer and create a multi-year plan to address disparities in treatment of County employees due to race, ethnicity, and other protected classes through training, coaching, and providing toolkits and other resources.
4. Broaden the list of organizations invited to contract with the County to include a more diverse set of organizations.
5. Develop a consultation policy with the ten federally recognized Tribes to build deeper working relationships.
6. Through the guidance of the Equity Officer, review existing processes and policies in every department to determine adverse impact against County residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in service delivery or access.

7. Boost pay premium for bilingual employees who use multiple languages in their positions.
8. Implement strategic job outreach and recruitment efforts to attract a more diverse candidate pool.

**D. Improve operational efficiency by streamlining processes and implementing technology-based solutions**

1. Redesign the hiring process to drastically reduce cycle time from open requisition to new employee start date.
2. Evaluate the existing portfolio of County software and applications based on pre-determined criteria including reliability and ease of use, among others. Identify and prioritize the software that needs to be updated and budget for it accordingly.
3. Audit core processes for conducting business in every department to determine where technology can support organizational effectiveness and efficiencies. Perform a cost-benefit analysis of moving to a technology-based solution and prioritize investments across departments.
4. Establish expectations for every department to complete a minimum of one process improvement project each year to improve efficiencies, reduce costs, and increase customer service.
5. Provide opportunities for employees to have the information they need to perform their jobs and provide training and coaching to help them analyze the best data available to make informed decisions.

**E. Increase transparency in government operations to build trust with employees and community**

1. Strengthen internal communications to provide equitable access and increased understanding among County employees of organizational information, budgets, decisions, and emerging changes in direction.
2. Build an internal communications team to increase information sharing with the public and conduct periodic public forums with the aim of improving community engagement and trust.
3. Simplify the County website for ease of use and access to information.
4. Offer all County communications, including the website, with a Spanish language option.
5. Offer automated and paper-driven processes to serve the needs of diverse communities.

**F. Assure financial sustainability of the County**

1. Create a collective approach to grant funding, from research of funding opportunities to spending, with the expectation that all departments will collaborate.
2. Identify new sources of money to align with the discretionary funding required to deliver on strategic initiatives.

## II. A Safe and Healthy County

**A. Provide a person-centered approach to help under-resourced and vulnerable families thrive**

1. Enhance collaboration among departments to provide a *one door* approach to services so community members can access services from multiple departments through one point of entry.

2. In partnership with local community-based organizations, design and implement approaches to providing families easier access to programs and services that match their needs, including providing both printed and online information and satellite offices.
3. Support community partners' efforts to achieve food security and improved nutrition among County residents.

**B. Deliver culturally relevant public health services that focus on prevention and are guided by social determinants of health**

1. Review public health programs to be sure they are based on sound research, lead to positive results, and focus on prevention.
2. Fill open requisitions to ensure adequate staffing for effective program delivery.
3. Implement the Public Health Department's six strategic priorities to improve emergency preparedness, external communication, immunizations, organizational culture, prevention, and collaboration among staff and community partners.

**C. Increase access to behavioral health services**

1. Increase partnerships and collaboration with community partners and law enforcement to deliver services to people in need.
2. Utilize Community Health Workers and Promotores in Tribal Communities and among Latinx populations to reduce the stigma of seeking help for mental health.
3. Implement Measure B plans to create a Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), Crisis Residential Treatment Facility (CRT), and Behavioral Health Regional Training Center.
4. In conjunction with other health and human services departments, apply for additional grant funding from state and federal sources to address County needs.

**D. Help people feel safe in their communities**

1. Develop new approaches for law enforcement organizations and criminal justice partners to work in coordination with other County departments and community-based organizations to reduce recidivism and incarceration.
2. Design and implement multiple types of collaborative community-oriented law enforcement solutions based on best practices in public safety to increase citizen engagement and understanding.
3. Identify and implement strategies that prevent youth entry into the criminal justice system.

**E. Implement practices that support a sustainable environment and responsible stewardship of natural resources**

1. Develop a strategy for a sustainable water supply that includes the identification of potential new sources of water and/or expansion of existing surface water delivery systems
2. Reduce the carbon footprint of County facilities and operations by installing solar microgrids, purchasing electric vehicles, and reducing the use of fossil fuels.
3. Support sustainable forestry, agriculture, and landscapes as a County policy with a focus on lowering carbon emissions.

### **III. A Thriving Economy**

#### **A. Support a vibrant economy**

1. Collaborate with economic development partners in the County to identify actions the County can take to support their business development, expansion, and attraction goals.
2. Implement policies and practices to make it easier for businesses to start-up and expand.

#### **B. Support increased housing stock at a range of affordability levels**

1. Explore the creation of a workforce housing initiative and other creative programs to enable County employees to be able to afford to live in Mendocino County.
2. Identify one County executive who would have accountability for housing programs, from market-rate to housing for unhoused residents, and have responsibility for obtaining additional State and Federal grants.
3. Interview developers and housing industry stakeholders and develop a plan to reduce barriers and time relative to permitting.
4. Discover and implement strategies to provide housing opportunities for people who are unhoused.
5. Create forums and dialog with County residents about the value of and need for housing and commercial opportunities.

#### **C. Improve broadband communications infrastructure throughout the County**

1. Seek grants and partner with cell companies to expand communications infrastructure within the County to improve access to broadband, wireless, and cell services.

### **IV. A Prepared and Resilient County**

#### **A. Increase disaster/emergency preparedness and resiliency**

1. Create and implement training and an operational plan to ensure 24/7 readiness of the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
2. Develop a site for a permanent EOC with necessary, up-to-date equipment.
3. Post social media messages, provide training programs, and conduct public meetings in English and Spanish throughout the County on the topic of emergency preparedness.

#### **B. Ensure access to rural fire protection and emergency medical services**

1. Support recruitment efforts of firefighters for volunteer fire departments.
2. Work with the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council to develop Neighborhood Fire Safe Councils in communities throughout the County.
3. Seek funding to increase the number of available ambulances with advanced life support features.

#### **C. Improve and maintain transportation and road systems/access routes**

1. Identify supplemental funding sources to implement priority road system improvements.

2. Determine the feasibility of increasing Mendocino Transit Authority routes and access points and implement changes accordingly.
3. Encourage the development of road associations through public education and support.