

AGENDA ITEM 8A

MEETING: January 19, 2022
TO: Humboldt LAFCo Commissioners
FROM: Colette Santsche, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: **Strategy Session for 2022 Work Plan**

With the beginning of a new year, staff is proposing to hold a strategy session with the Commission to discuss activities and priorities for 2022. The following questions were sent out prior to the meeting to generate input. Responses will be collected and summarized prior to the meeting and there will be an opportunity to further discuss emerging concepts, interests, and priorities during the strategy session.

Below are the questions that were included in the survey along with responses received as of January 18, 2022 at 3:00pm. Please note, not all respondents provided answers to every question. As such, some questions may have fewer responses than others.

1. What do you think is LAFCo's most significant contribution to member agencies (county, cities, and special districts) and the community?

- To provide important information and guidance for future growth and development.
- Staff assistance in annexing, MSR (vitaly important), land use.
- * Expertise * Foresight * Professional Writing Skills * Contacts. The smaller "Special Districts" could not meet state requirements without the support of LAFCo staff. By assisting them services are improved. Second would be holding all member agencies to the requirements of the law so that through the years the public is better served.
- Shaping policies and conditions for annexation requests. Clearly stating the intended purposes of LAFCo's review and approval process.

2. What are ways we can improve the overall understanding of LAFCo's role among member agencies and the community?

- I think that LAFCo will mostly be an agency that unless you are involved in a government agency of some type, or have a specific issue that we deal with, that people do not understand nor have a great desire to know what LAFCo is about.
- Outreach. Radio talk shows, interviews/print media.
- By developing a one-page information sheet on the requirements of state law and how LAFCo serves agencies in meeting requirements. Continuing to offer assistance to agencies and meeting with their representatives when possible -

virtually or in person. Especially to small districts LAFCo is a big, overpowering, unnecessary agency - until you meet them!

- 1) Prepare a video that explains the role and have it presented every two years to local jurisdictions and district boards. 2) Focus less on individual decisions and more on the intended benefits from having LAFCo in California. Open Space, sensible development, minimizing exceptions to the purpose to avoid cumulative impacts over time. 3) Prepare a periodic insert for local newspapers that highlight the role of LAFCo and feature maps of recent changes that have been approved. Highlight one or two special districts.
- Have representatives from the agencies which don't have a commissioner be invited to our meeting.

3. What are the most critical issues and challenges LAFCo is dealing with now or anticipates coming down the road?

- I think large developments such as the McKay tract, working with the county and city, will take much focus from LAFCo.
- Prime agricultural land use as it pertains to commercial cannabis.
- It feels that LAFCo is in a unique position with the requirements of CHK but limited authority to enact recommendations that would be of service to communities years down the road. Continue to find ways to incorporate recommendations into reports so that they are part of the record and may ultimately serve the organization. The most critical issue is the effect of climate change - for our area sea level rise and fire risk. As always - wise use of land is a critical issue - protection of ag. lands. Find ways to present concerns so that the possibilities can be considered years ahead of time. Especially if agencies don't want to hear and deal with alternatives.
- 1) Climate change and issues related to where future residential areas can be most protected from the effects of fire, flood and sea level rise. 2) Efficient use of land. Curtailing expansion of public services to outlying areas. Focus more on infill and greater urbanization to minimize loss of open space needed for natural habitat. 3) Anticipating climate refugees moving to coastal area to escape extreme heat in the central valley and other inland areas over the next five decades.
- Timely resolution of all matters.

4. How should we address or prepare for these challenges?

- Learn as much as possible and have the best commissioners possible.
- Wouldn't it be interesting to gather a community in a "Strategic Planning Session" as they prepare for a revision of the MSR/SOI. Ask elected officials and community members to envision their community in 2050 - services, challenges etc. Would Manila be a viable community in 2050 or would infrastructure be underwater? King Salmon might have developed a plan for relocating - everything, by 2030!!

- Hold a study session for the Commission with representatives from areas mentioned in #3 to seek recommendations from the professionals and to establish future policy ideas to refine and adopt for a 25 year time-frame.
- Let the folks who bring matters to us know the timeline at the get go.

5. In terms of opportunities, what are some creative and innovative things LAFCo can do to respond to/partner with member agencies?

- Maybe offer the opportunity for LAFCo officials to lead a Strategic Planning exercise - for a reasonable fee. Our LAFCo leadership would certainly be great at doing so. Such an exercise certainly fits within the goals of LAFCo and the resulting report would be of much value to boards and individual departments as part of the agency and would help set priorities for application of resources. If you don't dream it - you won't see it! Granted, this is not a LAFCo responsibility - but who better?
- This depends on the nature of the requests.
- Send meeting minutes to all our partners.

6. How satisfied are you with each of the following?

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
MSR/SOI Schedule	40%	60%	-
MSR/SOI Content	60%	40%	-
Application Processing	80%	20%	-
Staff Reports	80%	-	20%
Budget	80%	-	20%
Website	60%	20%	20%
Member Agency Interaction	60%	40%	-
Staff Communication	100%	-	-

*No categories were rated *Somewhat Dissatisfied* or *Very Dissatisfied*.

7. Are there topic areas that should be incorporated into MSRs on a regular basis? If so, what are those topics and should they be incorporated into our MSR policy?

- Of course environmental issues should always be part of the discussion as well as public safety.
- That depends on the MSR. Cities are different from fire districts. So far, having the preview and review is working very well.
- Agencies should more firmly identify meeting requirements (time, place, virtual or in person, public participation etc.), as COVID restrictions will continue. Also review the procedure for election and retention of officials - public service being a more challenging aspect of operating an agency.

- Add a section on future conditions based on anticipated changes brought on by climate change to guide future planning. Include a review from the previous MSR to see how well municipality has done.
- I am satisfied with the current situation.

8. Should updating policies and procedures be a staff priority in 2022? If so, what additional topic areas would be useful to guide decision making? (Currently the Commission has administrative policies, outside agency services policies, boundary change policies, SOI policies, and MSR policies.)

- Many times the administrative policies will guide other policies like the MSR policies so keeping those policies dated is very important.
- So far I don't see much of a need for change.
- Updating should probably be done every 4-6 years. Any policy outside 6 years should be reviewed.
- I believe I have laid this out in earlier responses.
- No.

9. Should the Outside Agency Services policy be updated to provide more specific conditions for when such a request may be approved in order to encourage annexations rather than outside agency connections?

- Each situation is unique and needs to be examined separately but if the policy limits or discourages annexations then maybe they do require updating.
- Just let the folks involved know they may have options regarding annexation.
- Yes (x2)

10. With regard to legislation, LAFCo staff regularly reports on CALAFCO legislative efforts and occasionally responds to CALAFCO calls for legislative action/letters of support as requested. Do you have any suggestions on how we should track or respond to legislative topics of interest?

- Always keep in mind that our community is very different from most of the communities, especially in the bay area beginning with Ukiah south.
- CALAFCO spearheads our voice in Sacramento. Possibly a Call to Action from LAFCo members on actionable items.
- Continue to use the services of CALAFCO, respond as you determine necessary and then inform the Commission.
- Target items that have relevance to Humboldt County. Some Statewide issues focus on other areas of the state.
- The current system seems to work well for me.

11. What is one thing that would make a difference in your Commissioner role or increase your enthusiasm for LAFCo?

- So far so good.
- Members respect and value one another the more they know one another - continue to build this working relationship as a way of serving communities. Bringing the more difficult issues and challenges to the forefront in a respectful, understanding and supportive way will continue to build trust, the working relationship and hopefully, the quality of life in our communities.
- A) Double our salaries. B) Show old-time cartoons before each meeting. C) When we reconvene in person, allow me to make margaritas for each meeting.
- I am a happy camper.

12. Please add any additional thoughts, feedback or suggestions for LAFCo staff and commission consideration in 2022.

- I believe staff does an outstanding job in providing the necessary information and guidance that we need.
- I'd like to hear about interesting (good or bad) stories.
- You are to be commended for the job you do especially reaching out to and supporting member agencies.
- Thanks for the survey. This has been very helpful for me. How will you present the input, or will you simply internalize to modify future meetings?
- In person meetings.