

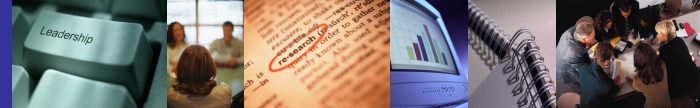
# Alachua County Strategic Plan Process

*John Streitmatter*

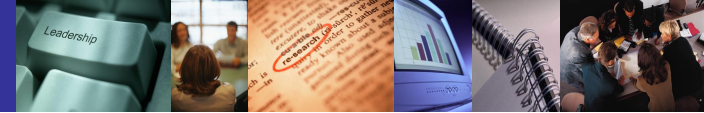
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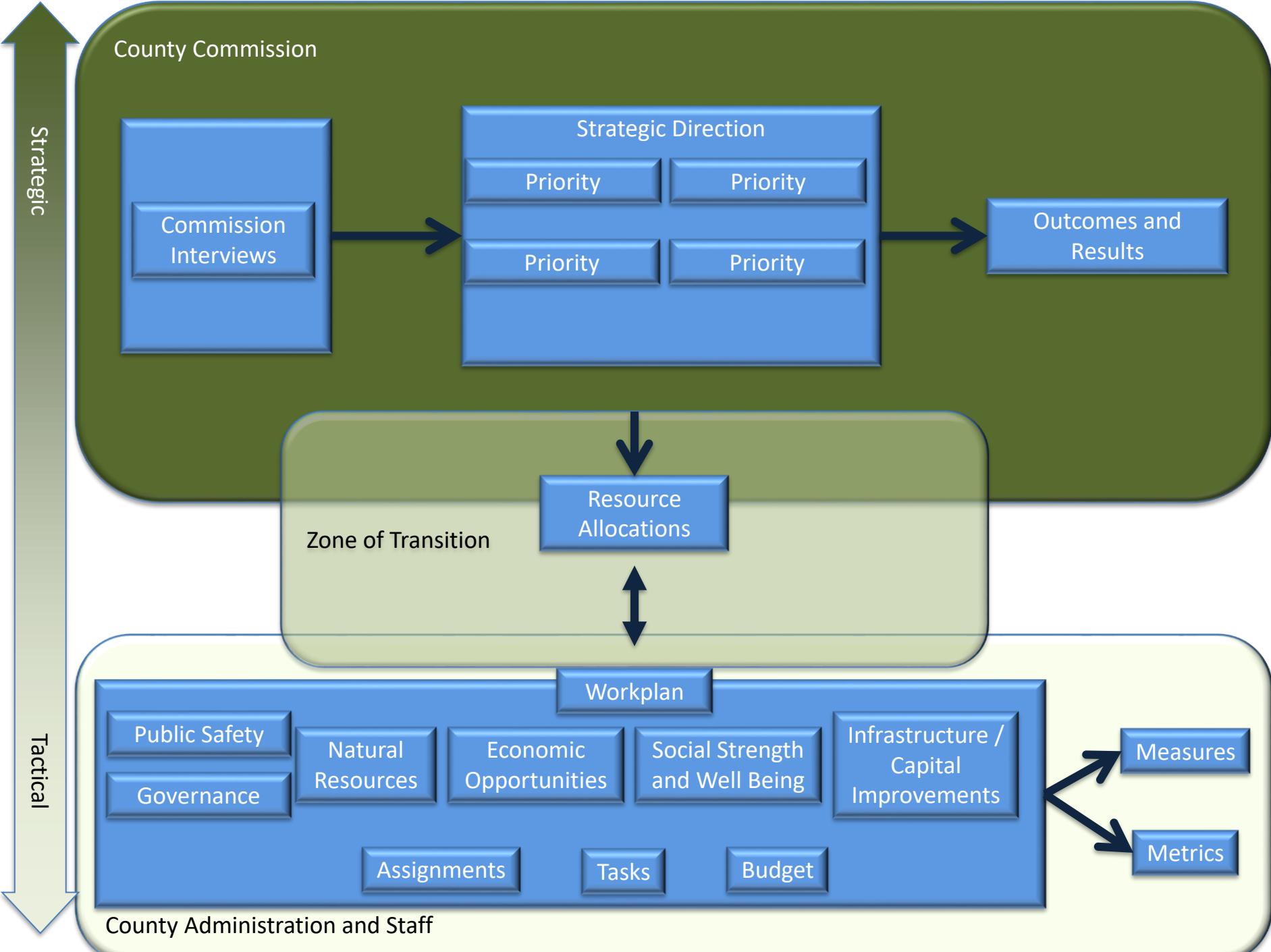


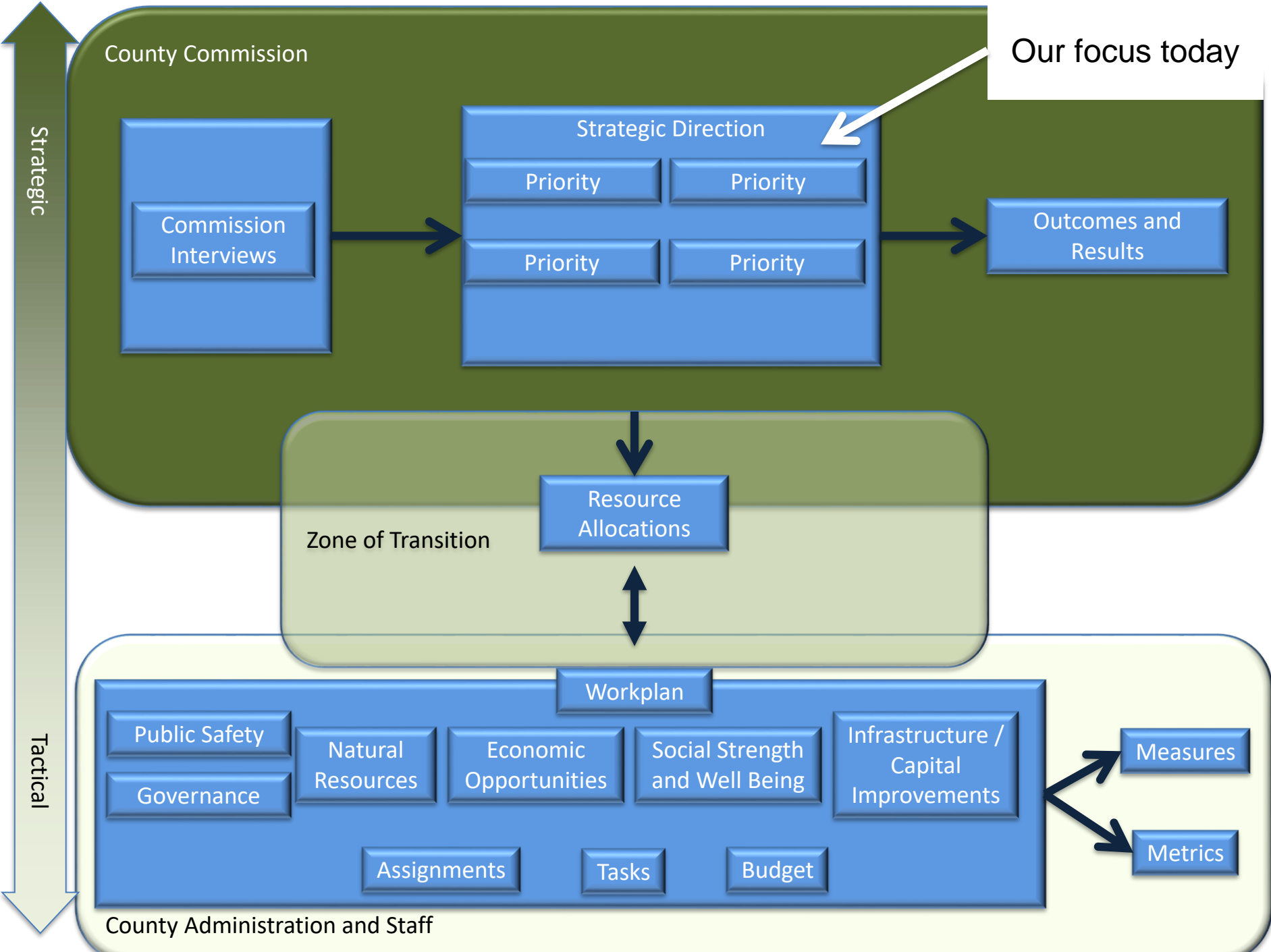
# ORIGINAL PRESENTATION SLIDES

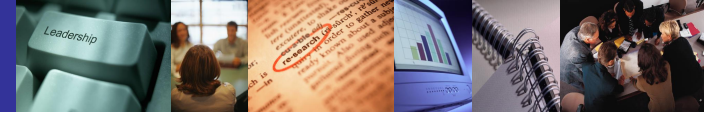


# Agenda

- Framing of the Day
- Interview Themes
  - Describe the County
  - Progress update on existing Strategic Plan priority areas
  - Future ideas
- Working Sessions
- Synthesis







# INTERVIEW THEMES

# How would you describe Alachua County today?

A tale of two cities

- Urban – Rural
- Progressive - Conservative
- Comfortable for most, but inequitable outcomes and meaningful divisions

As diverse as the entire state, all in one county

Behind on Infrastructure – especially roads

Financially sound

Have protected our natural assets

Work to be done with regard to human and social assets

Heavily reliant on Healthcare and UF/Santa Fe

How would you like the County to be described in the future?





## How would you like the County to be described in the future?

Everyone has a future. That means safety, opportunity, and a future path for everyone.

A prosperous county that's known for addressing the basic needs of all our citizens – food, shelter, education, job opportunities.

Be a place where everyone who lives there is proud to live there – because they feel heard, know where to express their opinions and to get the help they need. Everyone has a reasonably good opportunity to live and thrive. Bridge the divides that we have across those dimensions.

High tech, high growth place with lots of opportunity for young people. Safe.

Destination for people to want to live and work and even to visit. Lots of natural resources along with the University.

# How would you assess the County based on the elements in the current Strategic Plan?

## Public Safety

- Have dealt with the cuts and scrapes, but haven't dealt with the terminal diseases
- Roads and Signage are safety issues
- Court Services improvements
- Fire Rescue and Law Enforcement on the right track
- Strong disaster planning

## Governance

- Strong staff and financial office
- Develop collaborative and inclusive relationships with City and Municipalities

## Natural Resources

- Working on all the right things
- Need to think about natural resources in a more integrated way
- Conservation lands

## Social Strength and Well Being

- People at cusp of eviction
- Food insecurity
- Court Services
- Literacy rates for children of color
- Lots of non-profits and agencies trying to make a difference – need to work in a coordinated and integrated way
- Increased CAPP funding
- Children's Trust

## Economic Opportunities

- Have opportunities for some, but not for everyone
- Feast or famine with job opportunities – need the “well fed” jobs in the middle
- Missing some tools for economic development, like Community development foundation, Community financing

## Infrastructure / Capital Improvements

- Road backlog
- Septic to Sewer
- Government Buildings are behind
- Parks and active recreation
- Continue progress on stormwater

If you knew that you had the ability to change only one process, policy, or direction in the next 4 year, what would it be?

- Affordable Housing. We need more affordable units in the places where people can have access to jobs.
- Food and health care. Providing for the basic needs of our community.
- Making sure that all the municipalities are involved in the development of the County so that they felt like they were being treated fairly.
- An actionable climate plan that we're sticking to.
- Locally focused economic development at the individual and small enterprise level so that it makes a difference to a broad set of the community.
- Declare our next normal state. Where are we working?, How are we working? We need to think about the best way to deliver services in the new way.

What is the one thing that you would be least willing to change in the next 4 years?

- Protection of land
  - Environmentally sensitive, urban boundaries, biomass, regenerative farms
  - Land use program
  - Sustainability
- Road funding. Can't be tempted to divert those dollars elsewhere
- Consolidated MSTU's – integrated approach is much more effective and wouldn't want to go back.
- Keep our momentum going on rolling back the millage rate.

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## The BIG 4

(Mentioned in some way by everyone)

Address the  
Housing Crisis

Build Systems for  
Prosperity

Criminal Justice  
Equity

Make Progress on  
Infrastructure

## The Next 5

(Mentioned in some way by multiple people)

Provide for basic needs














More integrated approach  
to sustainability

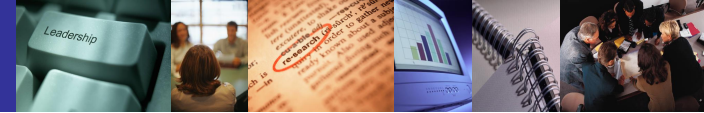
Cultivate collaborative  
relationships

Fertile environment for  
economic development

County facilities and  
building plan

Most of the priority areas will require actions across multiple areas of the County Administration

	Public Safety	Governance	Natural Resources	Social Strength and Well Being	Economic Opportunities	Infrastructure / Capital Improvements
Address the Housing Crisis						
Build Systems for Prosperity						
Criminal Justice Equity						
Make Progress on Infrastructure						



# WORKING SESSIONS

What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

The BIG 4

Address the  
Housing Crisis

Build Systems for  
Prosperity

Criminal Justice  
Equity

Make Progress on  
Infrastructure



# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## Address the Housing Crisis

- In order to address social strength, opportunity, and infrastructure we need to fundamentally address our housing crisis.
- Need to shore up our regulatory environment as well as other approaches to keep properties up to standards, and reduce costs as a result.
- Determine how to use the Housing Trust Fund. Will need to determine how and what we're going to fund with that, and to determine the various roles that the cities, county, and other agencies will play in support of the community.
- One potential use - create incentives for focusing on increasing efficiencies and reducing demand. For instance, upgrading housing stock (AC, windows, etc.) in exchange for agreements for keeping it affordable.
- Believe that we need to help the landlords (they've been hit hard too), while at the same time making progress on the housing stock.
- Housing is a City issue, but County's role is to provide the services to support those families, like case management and social service delivery. The Cities are the infrastructure part of the community, and the County is the people and management part.
- Consider an infrastructure sales tax that would run for 10 years concurrent with Wild spaces, public spaces. Would use the incremental half penny for housing issues, in conjunction with the cities – using the roles of City for infrastructure and County for services and case management.
- Eventually we're going to have increased senior living needs, especially with the working class people.

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

- Have to break the cycle of poverty. Jobs, education, the ability to learn, vocational training, living wage, the justice system all need to work together for our community.
- The root cause of so many of our issues (housing, food, economic opportunity) is the fundamental ability for people to be able to provide for themselves without needing a safety net.

## Potential ideas:

- A vocational school would be an important part of enabling the workforce to attract businesses to fill the middle.
- Collaborate with our workforce partners to move the needle on equity.
- Work with schools and the school board to improve equity.
- Innovation hub that provides job opportunities in the longer term.
- Need to be sure to take advantage of the tremendous amount of healthcare resources – like UF Health, HCA, VA.
- that resource. Integrating those resources along with our own is the best thing for our community as a whole.
- Long term we need to invest in early education for our kids. The Children's trust fund was helpful, but far from complete. We need all groups (agencies, governments, others) to align around taking care of our kids.
- We need to partner with the City to make progress in regard to homelessness. Rapid re-housing, and support services for that population will need to be addressed to get them back on their feet.
- The Housing issue has created transportation issues. There aren't transportation lines to get people from the outlying areas into the employment centers, or in some cases from parts of the City to the employment centers of the City.

Build Systems for  
Prosperity

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

- We have a lot of information about what's wrong, but don't have a clear articulation of what the actions are that we should take.
- We need to work on equity with respect to health, especially mental health and addiction, and we need to work on equity with respect to the criminal justice system.

## Potential ideas:

- Help create diversion programs and monitoring programs that give people options to going to jail while they're awaiting trial. Court services should be providing the judge with all the information necessary to determine the right options and not be advocating for a course of action, and should be tapping into the available options.
- Work to have the sheriff's department not be the first responders in issues of mental health, addiction and alcohol use, homelessness, and perhaps even some nonviolent offenses like shoplifting. Instead, send social workers, substance abuse specialists and mental health counselors.
- Central receiving facility so that we use our limited resources in the best possible way.
- Recognize bail as an outdated incentive to return to court and utilize other methods of tracking our citizens.
- Focus less on work release and focus more on reentry programs including education, job training programs and housing needs.

Criminal Justice  
Equity

## What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

- Invest in road maintenance
- Consider not building a new administration building and instead invest that money in road maintenance.
- Leverage the fact that money is historically cheap.
- Commit to be ready to take advantage of federal infrastructure investments that are likely to come – shovel ready.

Make Progress on  
Infrastructure

What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

The Next 5

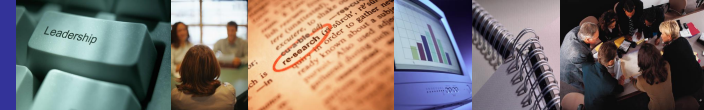
Provide for basic needs

More integrated approach  
to sustainability

Cultivate collaborative  
relationships

Fertile environment for  
economic development

County facilities and  
building plan



# SLIDES DEVELOPED DURING THE SESSION

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## Working version of potential ideas

### Address the Housing Crisis

### Policy Direction

- Intentional public investment
- Proactive coordination with agencies and municipalities and other entities
- Clarity of policies and expectations to make it predictable and more likely to be implemented
- County's role is to focus on extremely low and low income housing
- Take a "whole cost" approach, including operating costs, not just construction of development costs.

- Engage the development community as part of the solution to create affordable units across the county, especially in the Western portion of the County.
- Ensure that affordable units are where the jobs are and sync with the Comprehensive Plan (TOD).
- Consider backing financing to enable affordable development as a way to enable developers to secure financing that might otherwise not be attractive to banks and investors.
- Recognize that infrastructure and municipal services gaps in the Eastern portion of the County impede development in that area. Will require cooperation with Municipalities to best utilize CRA's and other tools to develop the area and not result in gentrification and other issues.
- Public / Private partnerships as a way to drive progress on affordability while also providing a return to the private developer.
- Articulate a clear set of important priorities for development so that the environment is predictable and therefore attractive to investment.
- Need to attend to the "operating costs" of our housing in addition to the just the pricing of the unit itself. Provide incentives for building energy efficient units, especially at the lowest end.
- Anticipate a surge in low income senior housing needs.
- Focus is on Extremely low and Low income workforce housing
- Coordination and role clarity among the many agencies and entities involved in housing is a critical enabler, and we should invest in the resources necessary to deliver that coordination. Proactive focus on the Housing Trust Fund and supporting them instead of going forward on our own
- An internal example could be someone focused on supporting the smaller entity that's focused on extremely low and low income housing move their project through the process.
- Include rental and existing housing, not just new housing.
- Ensure community involvement to preserve the culture and feel our our neighborhoods`

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

Build resilient and equitable systems for everyone

## Policy Direction

- Proactive collaborative leadership to make the most of the resources we have.
- Build equitable access to health (physical and mental), safety, and opportunity, especially those that haven't traditionally had access to those systems.
- An inclusive process that gets all the voices heard
- Focus our Economic Development efforts on local businesses and removing barriers to economic opportunity

## Working version of potential ideas

- Emphasis on local systems for prosperity.
- Equitable economic resilience.
- Our role is to make sure that the system works for everyone, especially those that haven't historically had access to opportunity.
- Our growing immigrant population needs support and systems.
- Rethink our internal systems, including how we work, to support a community that is now working differently.
- Make sure that we hear from the whole community. Access, Involvement, and Providing a Voice are critical to ensure that we're taking the appropriate actions.
- Collaboration with agencies like Career Source, and Community Centers, and the School Board to develop skills for financial literacy and life skills are a critical driver to help people break the cycle of poverty.
- Life Skills program as a diversion program and skills development program instead of incarceration.
- Invest in developing leadership skills/programs so that we can ensure that all of our community is represented and has opportunity to participate in leading and advocating in their communities.
- System / Process / Framework for how we interact with other agencies so that everyone knows the rule of the road.
- Build systems to support mental health issues – especially important in a COVID / post COVID world.
- Consider investing in mental health resources and counsellors – like we did by leading with living wage. To ensure that we're thinking about all of our systems from the mental health perspective.
- Support systems for community banking and funding to support local business investments



# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

Criminal Justice  
Equity

Policy Direction

## Working version of potential ideas

- Life Skills program as a diversion program and skills development program instead of incarceration.
- Collaboration is the key driver because this isn't our primary role. There are other's who have it as their primary mission. We should get together with those for whom it's their primary role to express our priorities and work together to shape the system to achieve those outcomes
- Racial equity and mental health are the key aspects of criminal justice equity
- Encourage creative approaches to traditional systems like bail and work release.
- Focus is to address the root causes of people entering the criminal justice system and their reentry out of the system. We believe that our role is to build opportunity and equitable access in order to break the cycle of poverty – that's how we make the most impact on criminal justice.
- Drive the discussion regarding a central receiving facility as a way to deliver services in a coordinated way, with the intent of getting it implemented.
- Build on what we do well.

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## Make Progress on Infrastructure

### Policy Direction

- Transparent priorities and progress dashboard
- Investigate Infrastructure Sales Tax in conjunction with Housing Trust Fund, and renewal of Wild Spaces, Public Places
- Be ready for Federal investments
- Today's design for tomorrow's roads and infrastructure mindset

## Working version of potential ideas

- Be ready to leverage the anticipated Federal, and possible State infrastructure investments.
- Ensure that we incorporate extreme weather and it's effects into our policies and plans.
- Today's design for tomorrow's roads and infrastructure mindset.
- Develop a new Master Plan in conjunction with the School Board for how we best use our collective facilities to deliver services.
- Utilize a process to gather and incorporate community input regarding that Master Plan
- Complete the prioritization process for road improvement projects and then proactively and publicly communicate that priority list and show progress on it (Dashboard). Ensure that equity is included as part of the at prioritization process.
- Investigate an infrastructure sales tax that could run concurrently with wild spaces, public places, that could be used for road improvements and other infrastructure improvements. Also integrate to include Housing Trust Fund.

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## Equitable and resilient community

- Resiliency means integrating the environment, the local economy, and equity to achieve sustainability
- Equitable means striving to treat everyone justly according to their circumstances providing opportunity and access for everyone, while focusing on closing existing equity and access gaps

### Guiding Principles:

- Address the root cause of issues and inequities
- Utilize a collaborative approach where we're sure to hear from all the voices, consider other points of view, and coordinate leverage relationships to get more done than we could on our own

Address the  
housing gap

Achieve social  
and economic  
opportunity for all

Accelerate  
progress on  
infrastructure

Invest in and  
protect our  
environment

# What are the most important priorities or ideas for the future?

## Address the Housing Crisis

### Policy Direction

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- Take a "whole cost" approach, including operating costs, not just construction of development costs.

## Build resilient and equitable systems for everyone

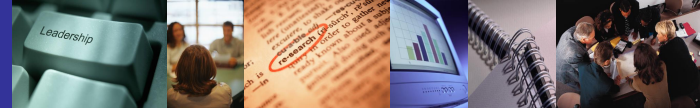
### Policy Direction

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- Build equitable access to health (physical and mental), safety, and opportunity, especially those that haven't traditionally had access to those systems.
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## Make Progress on Infrastructure

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This section contains my recommendation for how you could format the Strategic Plan slides for communication

Strongly encourage you to both revise the content, and edit the format to better suit your wishes

# SLIDES REVISED AFTER THE SESSION (VERSION 2.0)

## Equitable and resilient community

- Resilient means integrating the environment, the local economy, and equity to achieve sustainability
- Equitable means striving to treat everyone justly according to their circumstances, providing opportunity and access for everyone, while focusing on closing existing equity and access gaps

### Guiding Principles:

- We prefer to address the root cause of issues and inequities
- We prefer to utilize a collaborative approach where we seek to hear from all the voices, consider other points of view, and coordinate and leverage relationships to get more done than we could on our own

### Address the housing gap

- Intentional public investment
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### Achieve social and economic opportunity for all

- Proactive collaborative leadership to make the most of the resources we have.
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### Accelerate progress on infrastructure

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### Invest in and protect our environment

- Continue Wild Spaces, Public Places
- Desire to include agricultural lands as well

This is how you could show it on one page



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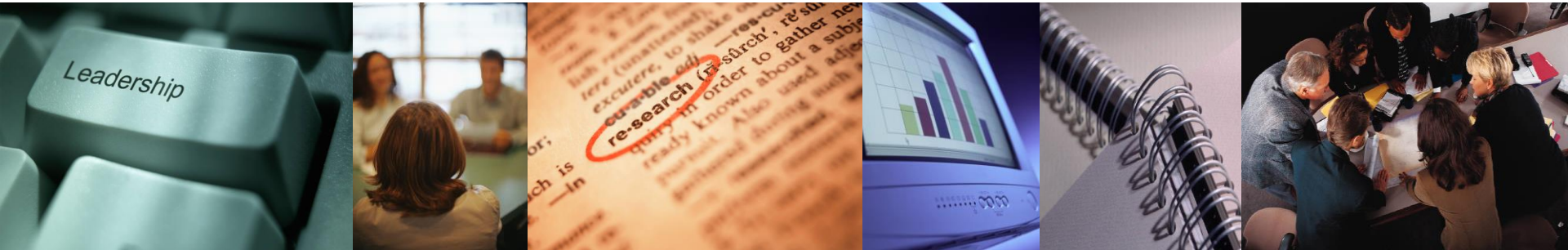
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