

2 – Vision



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VISION

Vision

CREATING OUR VISION

Public Involvement

Plan Morro Bay included an extensive public outreach process to support creation of a plan that encompasses community values. *Plan Morro Bay* is a policy document, but it is also a document meant to capture the voice of the community's future vision for Morro Bay. Public involvement was essential for the success of *Plan Morro Bay* to understand how residents, business owners, community organizations, and visitors view Morro Bay's existing conditions and their vision for the future.

Over the course of three years, the City implemented an extensive outreach program to obtain insight into the community goals and vision. *Plan Morro Bay* engaged community members from diverse groups across the city through a multitude of community events ranging from workshops to surveys to stakeholder focus groups. The City advertised these community input opportunities through its website, sign postings, email blasts, mailings, and specific invitations to increase the scope of public participation.

The City gained insight on topics ranging from the required elements of the General Plan to important issues specific to Morro Bay such as economic development and preservation of the town's unique character. The input received throughout the public outreach process represents the community's passions and concerns for the future and helped shape *Plan Morro Bay* policies.

The major participation opportunities are summarized below by type of engagement.

General Plan Advisory Committee

The General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) was a group of community members appointed by the City Council to provide input and guidance to City staff during the planning process. GPAC members represented the business community, advocacy community, design and planning professionals, and a member of the Planning Commission. The GPAC



served as the liaison between the community and the City during the *Plan Morro Bay* process to ensure that the General Plan and the Local Coastal Program (LCP) are consistent with the community's vision. The GPAC's monthly meetings addressed community concerns and served as a community participation resource providing perspective during the planning process. The GPAC met more than 20 times over the course of the *Plan Morro Bay* process.

Community Events

Community Workshops



The City held three community-wide workshops to support development of *Plan Morro Bay*. The first workshop was held on June 16, 2016, at the Veterans Memorial Building to inform the public about the efforts of *Plan Morro Bay* and to gather input to develop a community vision for the future. Participants were encouraged to identify assets and opportunities in

town to summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the existing conditions. Participants also submitted activity postcards describing their future vision for Morro Bay. The ideas from the various exercises were collected to inform development of a community-wide vision and values statement. Comments related to coastal resiliency were used to inform future conversations about sea level rise issues for the City, and the assets and opportunities collected through the exercises informed the location of focus areas in local neighborhoods for potential areas of improvement.

The second workshop was held on October 12, 2016, at the Veterans Memorial Building to continue the discussion of *Plan Morro Bay* efforts related to the Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan (DWSP). The DWSP focuses on the city's downtown and waterfront areas and is a 5- to 10-year plan to focus city resources and facilitate economic development in downtown and the waterfront area. Participants identified that the downtown should be a combination of traditional and eclectic themes, while the waterfront should retain a nautical character.

The third workshop for *Plan Morro Bay* and the DWSP was held February 2, 2017, at the Morro Bay Community Center. This workshop included a substantial amount of content presenting the draft DWSP to confirm that it reflected the community's vision while also gathering input on the land use alternatives for the General Plan/LCP. Following a presentation of information about numerous opportunity sites and land use alternatives for *Plan Morro Bay*, a small group activity was conducted to address land use alternatives for opportunity sites throughout the city and in adjacent areas.

Focus Groups

Thirty-one stakeholder meetings were held from October 12 to 14, 2016, to discuss key issues and policies for *Plan Morro Bay*. Consultation with key stakeholders on draft issues was intended to gather input from diverse and targeted groups representative of the greater community. Attendees were invited to join one of six focus groups based on their areas of expertise on various important issues for *Plan Morro Bay* as follows:

- Focus Group 1 – Growth and Measure F, Water Supply, and the Planning Area
- Focus Group 2 – Economic Development, Overnight Visitor Accommodations, and Downtown and Waterfront Connections
- Focus Group 3 – Neighborhood Compatibility, Historic and Cultural Resource Management, and Viewsheds and Viewpoints
- Focus Group 4 – Measure D and the Commercial Fishing Industry
- Focus Group 5 – Multigenerational Community, Transportation Metrics, and Parking Issues
- Focus Group 6 – Sea Level Rise, Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas and Natural Resources, and Coastal Access

Through these discussions, the groups were able to focus on the best policy options and ideas to respond to these key issues for the future of Morro Bay.

Online Engagement

Plan Morro Bay Webpage

The City's website featured a web page dedicated to the background and purpose of *Plan Morro Bay*. The web page included draft and final documents, materials presented at project meetings, public comment received, and notes from meetings and outreach. The page was updated regularly as the project developed and evolved, and it gave users the option to sign up for alerts to be notified of GPAC meetings and agendas.

Online Survey

An online survey was conducted in February 2017 to gather input from the larger community on land use alternatives for opportunity sites in *Plan Morro Bay*. The online survey was structured as a series of questions addressing opportunities and constraints on proposed opportunity sites. The online survey demonstrated that community members value the natural environment and recreational opportunities with a mix of land uses to support both tourism and affordable housing. Community input from this survey was used to further refine the land use alternatives and develop the Land Use Element of *Plan Morro Bay*.

Other Engagement

City Voice Survey

In September and October 2015, a City Voice telephone survey was activated throughout Morro Bay, with signs posted at various locations around the city advertising the survey. City Voice was used to increase local outreach to residents, business owners, and visitors in Morro Bay by encouraging feedback on Morro Bay's vision and values. The survey asked participants to identify the top three values that should guide the City over the next 20 years. City Voice tracked these suggestions, accounting for the corresponding location of each responding resident, to better shape the *Plan Morro Bay* and DWSP goals. This information was used to update the Vision & Values Statement.

Community Survey

The City issued a hard-copy survey to Morro Bay residents during the same time period as the online survey in February 2017. The hard-copy version of the survey was mailed to residents in the City's February utility bill to ensure residents who prefer a hard copy to online participation had the opportunity to submit input. The survey allowed residents not in attendance for any community workshops to offer feedback and give comments about the land use alternatives. The survey had the same questions as the online survey. Combined with the online survey, a total of 535 community members participated in the survey. The survey provided respondents' feedback on the preferred use for each land use alternative site, and it allowed respondents to add any additional comments regarding the opportunity sites.

COMMUNITY VISION

Vision & Values

Community Vision

A community vision is a long-term aspiration describing what a community wants to achieve in the future. Put simply, it describes the ideal condition of Morro Bay in 2040 and outlines the factors that will sustain long-term community character and values over time. The Community Vision was crafted by the GPAC and City staff, based on input provided by the community during the community engagement process. The vision was reviewed by the Planning Commission and the City Council early in the *Plan Morro Bay* process. The Community Vision represents a summary of the future aspirations underlying the General Plan.

In 2040, Morro Bay remains a small oceanfront town and thriving year-round destination, known for its natural beauty, creative people, outdoor recreation, working waterfront, and welcoming community spirit. It is a friendly, safe, resilient, and healthy place where people of all ages and economic levels live, work, play, and visit.

The natural environment and wildlife are cherished and conserved and are essential elements that integrate with and define our urban landscape. Our healthy wetlands, iconic Morro Rock, and bustling harbor are complemented by expansive parks, connected bicycle lanes, safe streets, and pathways that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

We have a deep appreciation for nature and honor our native, cultural, and maritime heritage. We maintain and support our working waterfront and carefully preserve our estuary, watershed, natural shoreline, and surrounding open space. We adapt to changes in the climate, economy, and culture without compromising our small-town character.

Our vibrant economy is strengthened by sustainable resource practices, a responsive City government, and leading-edge technology that empowers local business owners and attracts new businesses and investors. We are a diverse, multigenerational community where head-of-household jobs, sustainable living wages, and affordable housing options serve as a foundation that allows people of all ages and income levels to thrive.

Modern, well-maintained public amenities and supportive community services nurture our residents, community organizations, and neighborhood groups. We actively participate in government decisions and take pride in volunteerism. We welcome personal expression and creativity, as reflected in our varied visitor attractions, bustling dining scene, vibrant arts culture, community events, public art, and outdoor activities. Our diverse housing, safe and eclectic neighborhoods, and reliable transit system are enhanced through suitable urban infill and mixed-use development that accommodates modest residential and commercial growth.

Mindful of our rich heritage, we take great pride in our community and work together toward a bright future.

Community Values

The following values, supporting the Community Vision, are intended to guide future City decision-making. These values were created through the GPAC's work and reviewed by the City Council early in the General Plan update process. They are an overarching rationale for more specific *Plan Morro Bay* goals and policies. Each value describes an aspect of the community Morro Bay wants to be in 2040, while underscoring both challenges and opportunities. Projects supporting these values will be pursued over the time frame of *Plan Morro Bay*, subject to available funding.

- **Natural Environment:** Our estuary, shoreline, and open green spaces are sustainably conserved, and our parks and recreation spaces are healthy, resilient, and accessible to all.
- **Heritage & Identity:** We welcome visitors while maintaining our small-town character and honoring our maritime heritage.
- **Jobs & Housing:** A range of affordable housing options and living wage jobs provide for a high quality of life.
- **Economic Vitality:** Our diverse and sustainable economy supports both new and existing locally owned businesses, including community-supporting tourism.
- **Infrastructure & Amenities:** We have modern, resilient infrastructure and public amenities.
- **Mobility & Access:** Safe and accessible streets, trails, and multimodal transportation options conveniently connect people and places throughout town and to surrounding destinations.
- **Good Governance:** Our government is supportive, collaborative, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all segments of the population.
- **Resident Services:** We provide a range of public services that support a diverse and multigenerational community.

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