

STAFF REPORT

City Council Business Item

DATE: December 15, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Amy Nilsen, City Manager

SUBJECT: **Update on the City of Fortuna Listening Campaign to Inform the City of Fortuna’s Strategic and General Plan Updates**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the City of Fortuna Listening Campaign which will inform the Strategic and General Plan updates.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Fortuna initiated a Listening Campaign during the summer and fall of 2025 to inform the public engagement process for updates to the City’s General Plan and Strategic Plan in 2026. This campaign, designed to be more proactive and collaborative than traditional formal comment processes, utilized open-ended inquiries to capture the anonymous sentiments, perspectives, and needs of a diverse sample of City staff.

The staff and community members, including a Design Team of eight residents and staff, conducted interviews and focus groups to foster knowledge, relationships, and collective co-ownership of the results. This document presents a robust initial synthesis of findings from 19 staff interviews (23% of full-time staff). These results served as a foundation for a staff workshop in November to begin to establish a cohesive sense of purpose, decision-making criteria, and values.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Fortuna began listening to staff and the community during the summer and fall of 2025 to inform the public engagement process for updates of the City’s General Plan and Strategic Plan in 2026. Open-ended questions during interviews and focus groups were designed to discover what City staff and community members anonymously think, feel, hope for, and prioritize about the City’s future operations and development. Listening was designed to understand the sentiments, perspectives, and needs of a diverse sample of City interests:

- Staff Interviews: across departments of those closest to City operations about their experiences and internal strategic interests
- Community Interviews: a broad cross-section of residents about how they feel about and what they hope for in their community

- Focus Groups: more time with immigrants and struggling teens, two groups that often lack influence on and yet are greatly impacted by government decisions

In 2026, results from all interviews will be shared, reviewed, and expanded upon at staff and community workshops to seek additional feedback, fill in gaps, surface shared vision, highlight opportunities, and confirm priorities for the City's next 5 years of operations and development.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The first phase of this project was approved on March 19, 2025, and included the approval of a professional services agreement with Jen Rice Consults.

The second phase of this project is estimated to cost between \$55,000 and \$70,000 and can come from the General Plan Update set aside. A supplemental budget request will be brought to your Council later.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

1. Receive staff presentation and review Council questions
2. Open public comment;
3. Close public comment;
4. Motion to accept the Update on the Fortuna Listening Campaign. Roll Call vote.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Staff Listening Campaign PowerPoint
- B. Listening Campaign - City Staff Conversational Questions
- C. 2025 Anonymous Employee Survey Results
- D. 2025 Listening Campaign Staff Interview Results