

# 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan

*Please review the proposed draft of the 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan and give any feedback you wish to be considered.*

All On Forum Statements sorted chronologically

As of December 23, 2015, 10:51 AM



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As of December 23, 2015, 10:51 AM, this forum had:

Attendees:	45
On Forum Statements:	2
Minutes of Public Comment:	6

This topic started on December 7, 2015, 4:07 PM.

## 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan

Please review the proposed draft of the 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan and give any feedback you wish to be considered.

Tom Allard inside City Limits

December 9, 2015, 9:35 AM

I truly do not see a plan, just a list of goals or a mission statement. A true plan would have specifics for each goal, such as, a list of needed infrastructure improvements or replacements with a estimated cost and timeline to implement and how they would be financed.

This list of goals or mission statement is good start, but you must now fill in the blanks so the community can see your vision.

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Name not shown outside City Limits

December 8, 2015, 4:06 PM

As a past president of the Association for Strategic Planning, I find this to be a very weak plan. In fact, there's no plan at all, just a collection of vague intents. And there's very little linkage between the "plan" and the desired vision. For example, the vision includes the phrase "California's safest beach community", a worthwhile aspiration. But nothing in the "plan" hints at how this will be achieved. Most of the actions involve "proactively" doing what any good governance structure should do. What distinguishes MB? This may be a reasonable starting point, but I think you've got more work to do.

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**From:** [Dan Stern](#)  
**To:** [Kendra Davis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Strategic Plan feedback  
**Date:** Monday, December 14, 2015 7:19:06 PM

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Hi Kendra,

Thank you for taking the time to send me the draft Strategic Plan. My major comment is that it could just as easily be the Strategic Plan for any city in the country. At this stage it is generalities that no one could criticize, but don't give any real direction.

Dan Stern

-----Original Message-----

From: Kendra Davis <kdavis@citymb.info>  
To: 'danstern88@aol.com' <danstern88@aol.com>  
Sent: Tue, Dec 8, 2015 11:33 am  
Subject: Draft Strategic Plan feedback

Dear Mr. Stern

Thank you for endeavoring to give feedback on the final draft of the City's Strategic Plan. I'm so sorry that it gave you such difficulty! I went back to the system and the links seem to be working fine for me – however, there might be some compatibility issues that surpass my technical expertise, so we'll have our IT department look it over.

In the meantime, I've attached a copy of the Strategic Plan draft and would be happy to receive any feedback you'd like to submit to the City Council. We appreciate you using the Open City Hall platform and hope that you will forgive the hiccups in the system – obviously there are still elements that require attention, and we are grateful for patient participants like yourself who can help us work them out!

Please let me know if you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Open City Hall forum, the Strategic Plan draft or other elements within the City that I might be able to address. Again, my apologies that this was such a prohibitive process for you, and I hope it doesn't deter you terribly from participating again!

Best,

**Kendra Davis**  
**Management Fellow**

P: (310) 802-5063  
E: [kdavis@citymb.info](mailto:kdavis@citymb.info)



2015 City-Wide strategic plan Final Draft Feedback

Gary Osterhout

12/22/15

Please find my feedback formatted as a markup and comments on the strategic plan, further below.

The following more general, narrative feedback immediately follows.

General Feedback:

The rollout of this phase of the Strategic Plan is clumsy, and as a result you have likely lost a considerable portion of your desired residential audience. This is evidenced by the two comments currently on Open City Hall. Clearly there was an expectation from residents of more detail--and more clarity--than was presented or was suggested by the amount of consultant activity. A more professional introduction would have been to identify that this is merely the start of an on-going process where clarity would be provided by workplan items, and that Council did not intend for it to be a Strategic Plan, but instead was meant to be a strategic plan (small "s," small "p"). This would include what is meant by your "pillars of success."

If you are waiting for "enhancers," and this is only "60%-70%," then that needs explained in communications. Also, I believe it dangerous to deploy any plan that is not closer to "99%" completed, or you have folks interpreting and acting on false or incomplete assumptions.

As usual, even the request for feedback suggests more than occurred. For instance, Nadine Nader's e-mail suggested "the City Council received valuable community input that helped them significantly in establishing these six pillars for success." Actually, these pillars were pulled in whole cloth from the March 2015 at the Council retreat.

The invitation to the October 15 meeting read: "In order for the Strategic Planning process to succeed, the City of Manhattan Beach needs its residents to provide input and perspective on where the City should focus its energies in the coming years." There is little I can discern in the final draft that was developed or influenced by the October 15 Strategic Plan Community Input meeting—from my perspective the community input meeting was a window-dressing charade. There was no direct link from the answers solicited from the community and this final draft.

Notwithstanding, the strategic plan memo of August 27 said, "The Strategic Plan will establish long term goals and strategies while re-affirming the City's mission, vision and values, which were developed during the last strategic planning process." I see no evidence that "strategies" have been developed, nor any indication when they will be.

The consultant's infographic shows "action planning meetings" in December and January. I don't see where those meetings and these steps occurred (I see the November meetings exactly as the graphic suggests, and no more). However, Nader's December 8 resident communication e-mail says "the 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan final draft will go before the City Council at their meeting on Tuesday, January 5,

2016 for review and adoption.” So it appear that the “action planning meetings” were missed—yet one expects these were both (i) critical to the mission and (ii) part of the consultant’s contract.

Other summary comments:

- This document is confusing in who it is directed toward: the City as in the larger group of residents? The City Council? City Staff? Staff and Council (City Hall)?
- This process is still lacking in transparency and accountability as the consultant’s RFP and fees are still unavailable to the public. So residents have no idea of what formally was to be accomplished.
- You should have provided a timetable when the workplan items will be developed. Drawing out the time that such will be accomplished far from the October 15 meeting significantly dampens the effectiveness of resident engagement.
- If this strategic plan was to be multi-year and of long “timeless” and “enduring” duration, saying it is the “2015 Strategic Plan” suggest something different (especially if it won’t be formally approved until 2016). Also, if this is to be a multi-year plan and is supposed to also guard against a lapse in focus toward areas where we are already doing well, then there needs to be a “pillar” focusing on a community welfare (for all those that intersect with our city as well as our responsibilities to needs of the larger community outside of M.B.).
- I do not understand your focus toward attracting “Silicon Beach” and a “talented and innovative workforce.” To me, this has no place in the strategic plan. The only time one would include a particular workforce is to populate a need in a local business (e.g., coal miners). Why would we not want to attract policeman and teachers, or Hollywood, or Raytheon engineers? If such professions all fall within your definition of “talented and innovative,” then those terms are overly broad and thus meaningless. Who are you then excluding -- Retirees? Syrian immigrants? CPA’s?
- I do not understand the orientation that residents have a responsibility to volunteer or participate in the life of the community (as summarized by the consultant). Certainly volunteerism is good and should be encouraged when present (but not artificially developed), but the city is not a country club. Actually, this sounds more like a High School booster club moan, that “there is no school spirit.”
- I do not believe you folks are ready for “Policy Governance,” as is suggested by the plan’s format and approach. As I have said before, Policy Governance needs to be comprehensive and also provide restrictions. You are again trying to “piece-meal” policy governance, and all the experts I’ve read assert that piece-meal doesn’t work. That the consultant divided these target areas into “Policy” and “Governance,” that you folks turned around and collapsed solely to “governance,” suggests uncertainty on how this method plays out properly.
- I disagree with your frequent use of “proactively” in the governance activities. If you mean that there are processes set up that schedule a review on a periodic basis instead of merely reacting to a problem, then I suggest you say as such, and require development and conformance to a schedule (and do not let those dates slip by without comment—as often seems the practice).

## MARKUP FEEDBACK ON 2015 FINAL STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT

### Our Vision

The City of Manhattan Beach ~~is recognized for~~ ~~provides providing~~ exemplary ~~and responsive~~ municipal services and ~~faciliates contributing to the the~~ exceptional quality of life ~~prescribed by~~ ~~afforded to its~~ residents, ~~businesses and visitors who enjoy living in and visiting California's safest Beach community.~~

### Our Vision Pillars for Success

Our Vision is achieved by ~~following appropriately balancing competing priorities among the following~~ ~~Pillars-pillars~~ for ~~success~~:

- Strong Governance that Values ~~Accountability and~~ Meaningful Resident ~~Engagement~~ ~~Input~~
- Excellent City Services Provided by an Aligned and Committed Workforce
- Financial ~~Sustainability~~ ~~Efficiency~~
- Environmental Stewardship
- Effective Physical Asset Management; ~~and~~
- Economic Vitality

**Comment [g1]:** Or capitalize "Success."

### Our Values

The City recognizes the following Core ~~Values~~:

- Excellence
- Fiscal responsibility
- Ethical Behavior
- Mutual respect
- Integrity
- Dedication to the community
- Professionalism
- ~~Openness~~

**Comment [g2]:** Where is welfare/compassion/care for others? Not to mention "humility."

### ~~Strong~~ ~~Effective~~ Governance that Values Meaningful Resident Engagement

~~[See also definition of "openness" in "Values," above.]~~

Effective ~~Governance~~ ~~governance~~ is accomplished by elected officials who embrace ~~accountability in~~ their roles ~~as~~ Trustee and Policy Maker. ~~The Manhattan Beach City Council recognizes its obligation to make decisions with the long term best interest of the community at the center of every decision.~~ Respect ~~and~~ civility, ~~responsible engagement, dedication to clarity, and fact-based decision-making~~ are the hallmarks ~~of~~ ~~both~~ public ~~meetings~~ and personal interactions between and among our elected

**Comment [g3]:** "Openness" needs defined. No reason you couldn't include "transparency and free, unrestricted access to knowledge and information, as well as collaborative or cooperative management and decision-making rather than a central authority." But I don't think you mean this—or at least don't seem to in practice.

**Comment [g4]:** "Strong" can have a bad connotation. Also, you use "effective" in the next sentence.

**Comment [g5]:** Seems sort of "ends justify the means," if you roll over the community in the short term.

**Comment [g6]:** This is all a self-serving sentence that adds little.

officials, City employees and the public. ~~City facilities and support allow Our~~ residents to actively participate in civic life, ~~and recognize that volunteering is part of the culture and fabric of our community.~~ The City Council ~~listens and engender~~ encourages and listens to input from residents and effectively identifies and communicates with stakeholders.

**Comment [g7]:** The stricken section is not understandable, and is sort of creepy—that someone would not be a part of the community if they do not volunteer?

#### Governance Activities:

- Vigorously uphold standards of civility and decorum at all public meetings.
- Annually evaluate and adopt strategic initiatives that facilitates / continually enhances/continue to move the City towards its vision.
- Evaluate opportunities to enhance civic engagement and empowerment.
- Evaluate and enhance two-way communication strategies and opportunities between the City and the community.
- Support all requests for actions and decisions with objective and comprehensive empirical data-driven analysis.
- All City announcements and reports are objective, absent of boosterism.
- Ensure communications and actions are timely announced for public input, and are unambiguous, understandable, informative and responsive.
- Develop and maintain appropriate channels to respond to appeals, redress and grievances.
- Access local accountability resources beyond City Hall to monitor progress and provide relevant criticism and feedback.
- Resident expectations are appropriately managed such that the intent of reports, actions and results are clear and unambiguous.
- Review and follow-up items are scheduled and schedules are adhered to. Any lapses are captured, reported and made current.

**Comment [g8]:** “Vigorously” seems rather heavy handed. “Decorum” is dated and overly stilted. Sounds like you should be wearing powdered wigs and have a palace guard.

**Comment [g9]:** I disagree with all references to “annually” or “periodically” review without some sort of standard or milestone or objective gauge to compare. This should list HOW you are going to determine if you are meeting this goal (such as through outreach to community groups). Also, do not know why this is not redundant to the other governance activities (that is, you are evaluating initiatives/opportunities/strategies in the other points.

**Comment [g10]:** The point as written just “moves” the city, suggesting small incremental process.

#### ~~Excellent-Efficient~~ Municipal Services Provided by an Aligned and Committed Workforce

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The efficient delivery of high quality municipal services is made possible by the City’s aligned and committed workforce. Strong leadership ensures that teamwork and a strong customer service focus is developed and are translated into service delivery consistent with the priorities and expectations of the City Council.

City employees recognize the community’s identity is based on its small beach town, family-friendly character.

#### Governance Activities:

- Provide clear communication on Council priorities to the City Manager and staff.
- Proactively Review and update all City ordinances on a published schedule, including land use ordinances.
- Periodically review compliance, education efforts and enforcement of all City ordinances.
- Proactively Review and respond to public safety data and trends regarding public safety to ensure proper policies and practices are in place.

**Comment [g11]:** I read the transcript that added this section. I still do not see why land use gets a priority in this sentence. If you want to give land use a priority, then say so and/or give it its own bullet point.

- Continually assess and update long-term and specific planning documents.
- Proactively Review employee compensation and performance on an identified, regular schedule.

**Comment [g12]:** Continually? Right now I think there is a certain level of "plan update fatigue" because so many are drawn out over so many years.

**Comment [g13]:** Shouldn't this be a separate bullet point (blended in handout text).

## Financial Sustainability

Manhattan Beach is committed to being a financially successful City. ~~as a result of good oversight, financial stewardship, and cost management.~~ The City of Manhattan Beach places a high value on maintaining sound and pragmatic conservative financial practices to ensure the fiscal sustainability of the City. City services are funded with diverse revenue sources and dedicated revenue streams. The City consistently prioritizes the maintenance of existing infrastructure and assets, facilities and amenities, and plans for future capital construction requirements needs.

**Comment [g14]:** I think we should be a financially successful City regardless of methods used.

**Comment [g15]:** "Conservative" is merely a buzzword and does not necessarily translate to what you want to accomplish. It might be considered "conservative" to not fund the holiday meter program, or to accrue unnecessary levels of reserves by foregoing capital facility construction.

## Governance Activities:

- Annually review existing [?] and examine new potential new funding mechanisms and revenue sources.
- Proactively Annually review, adjust and implement new financial stewardship, financial oversight and cost management practices and policies that ensure effective budget fiscal management.
- Proactively Annually review policies and practices to ensure alignment between our resident and businesses competing needs, requirements, and the available financial resources available.
- Develops new programs and positions only when there is a clear and pervasive established demand, including return on investment and cost/benefit analysis.
- Proactively review existing programs for appropriate service reductions.
- Maintain resident trust in fiscal matters to ensure additional voted revenue support is available when needed.
- Evaluate fee-shifting and cost accounting practices for propriety, clarity and confidence, absent of overly aggressive practices.
- Proactively review, adjust and implement new policies and initiatives that support financial stewardship.

**Comment [g16]:** Need a definition of "prioritizes", and this is not clear. Does this mean this area will be a higher priority than elective services? That within this group there is priority activities (i.e., water more important than sewer), or something different?

**Comment [g17]:** No need to single out "resident and business." Also, this wording suggests that there is competing needs between businesses and residents.

**Comment [g18]:** Seems that this could be added to the second bullet point. Otherwise, there needs to be more of an effort to distinguish from the second bullet point.

## Environmental Stewardship

The residents of Manhattan Beach is committed to place a high value on a healthy, outdoor, and recreational life-style for residents and visitors and are is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment of this beautiful coastal community. The City recognizes its leadership role in environmental stewardship and works to create a built environment compatible with that compliments the natural environment. Manhattan Beach is recognized for its displays progressive environmental stewardship encompassing all environmental attributes and deploys healthy community and aesthetic

**Comment [g19]:** I don't know what "compliments the natural environment" means. Even "complements" (something that completes or makes perfect) should spell out the definition.

initiatives. A healthy and active lifestyle is accessible ~~for residents~~ because the City is safe, sustainable and ~~resilient~~.

Governance Activities:

- ~~Proactively review Assemble, develop and review data points relative to environmental attributes and the related stewardship.~~
- ~~Review and respond to trends and~~ changes in environmental stewardship best practices.
- ~~Identify leadership opportunities for environmental stewardship.~~

### Effective Physical Asset Management – Infrastructure, Facilities, Amenities

The City of Manhattan Beach is committed to ensuring a well-maintained and ~~up to date~~ responsibly rebuilt physical infrastructure ~~and effective performance of an efficient transportation system. Facilities and amenities are properly maintained to ensure the public's investment is properly managed.~~ The City is committed to a Capital Improvement Plan that responsibly anticipates and plans for the ~~ongoing needs~~ requirements of the community.

Governance Activities:

- ~~Proactively Develop~~ factual datapoints, timetables, depreciation schedules and other condition indices to assess and ~~communicate report on~~ the state of the City's above- and below-ground infrastructure and physical assets.
- ~~Annually evaluate and incorporate~~ the City's infrastructure investment ~~needs requirements~~ in the Capital Improvement Program.
- ~~Develop low-impact funding mechanisms commensurate with the related life of the project and anticipated requirements, and maintain related reserves at a responsible but efficient level.~~

### Economic Vitality

Manhattan Beach is committed to a ~~dynamic~~ approach to economic vitality. The City is ~~proactive in identifying and attracting new businesses, and~~ retaining existing businesses ~~and identifying and attracting new businesses that complement and enhance~~ compatible with our unique community ~~and residential integrity~~. The City ~~has created~~ a nurturing ~~business business-friendly~~ environment that encourages development ~~that ers interested in~~ meeting our high environmental and design standards. ~~The City provides excellent support services desirable for attracting business such as good schools, good roads, trash and clean-up, city beautification, great police/fire response, a welcoming community for visitors, and maintenance of a community attractive to those that value excellent family support, neighborliness, and the beach esthetic. Our community is attractive to a talented and innovative workforce.~~

Governance Activities:

**Comment [g20]:** Don't need to be exclusionary to residents.

**Comment [g21]:** I don't understand "resilient" in this context. I understand that an unsafe community often prevents an active lifestyle, but don't know about "resilience" (and not certain how "sustainable" necessarily fits in neatly).

**Comment [g22]:** I like "requirements" because this term includes not only what we "need," but also the many "amenities" or standards that are dictated by our population.

**Comment [g23]:** "Dynamic" could mean "constant change, activity, or progress." What do you mean by "dynamic."

**Comment [g24]:** I believe the emphasis should be on existing business retention.

**Comment [g25]:** I don't like "business-friendly," as it suggests that we are not "resident-friendly."

**Comment [g26]:** I do not understand this at all. First, why it is in there? I see no need for this. Also, this suggests some sort of "dog whistle" about the fact that we don't want a diverse community. I don't know where this demand for attraction of "silicon beach" comes from (from the transcripts).

- ~~Proactively~~E-evaluate economic development tools, best practices and policies that support the City's economic development priorities.
- ~~Proactively explore~~Explore and evaluate economic vitality opportunities throughout all commercial areas of the city.
- Periodically review developed data and indicia of community services at levels desirable by business.

From: [vic.law1@gmail.com](mailto:vic.law1@gmail.com) <[vic.law1@gmail.com](mailto:vic.law1@gmail.com)>

Date: Wed, Dec 9, 2015 at 4:19 PMs r.

Subject: Re: 2015 City-wide Strategic Plan Final Draftout this

To: Nadine Nader <[nnader@citymb.info](mailto:nnader@citymb.info)>, Mark Burton <[markfburton@gmail.com](mailto:markfburton@gmail.com)>, Tony D'Errico <[tderrico@citymb.info](mailto:tderrico@citymb.info)>, wpowell <[wpowell@citymb.info](mailto:wpowell@citymb.info)>, David Lesser <[dlesser@citymb.info](mailto:dlesser@citymb.info)>, [ahoworth@citymb.info](mailto:ahoworth@citymb.info)

Cc: Vic Allen <[VIC.LAW1@gmail.com](mailto:VIC.LAW1@gmail.com)>

Hi Nadine:

I read your "six pillars for success" and thank you for alerting me. I wonder how many of our wonderful residents participated in the meeting when this was developed. Please let me know if you are aware of the number. The timing of the meetings was not possible some residents including myself. I wonder how the City will determine what input from a resident is "meaningful" since most residents now feel that there is little hope that their input will be heard at all. The new format of meetings does not give any easy chance for a resident to even speak about an item on the agenda when it appears on the calendar but allows them to speak on an item for a limit of two minutes only before it is discussed and before the staff report (which is often vague and/or incomplete) is discussed, presented and/or explained.

To top it off you give the residential community until December 22 to give their comments when you must know being a parent that many of the residents take off out of town with their family until well into the first week of January. This is Exhibit A of how the input from the residents is less likely to be considered "meaningful" since many of the residents will not be able to give any input whatsoever. When they learn about this if ever, they will be told "sorry too late" and this City Manager and management will go on its merry way doing things without the approval of the residents or other citizens such as loans to city employees with taxpayer funds of millions of dollars for the less than one per cent interest because they wish to live in Manhattan Beach. While that is another subject it shows how "fuedal" and "futile" your pillars are and the chance with secret meetings and the like any resident who the City considers a "stakeholder" and only those has a chance to participate in its local government. Residential participation has been headed in a shameful manner with secret meetings for what the City considers "Stakeholders" and deliberately excludes impacted and caring residents, with a lock on the door for the City Clerk and numerous others with possible violations of the Brown Act as well: as a result I do not think that what appears to be merely "lip service" along with the open government press release appears to be encouraging thus far although the iteration could be considered a start by some. I and others are aware that we are visitors to our City Council Meetings, it is the City Council's meeting not the resident's and we "should get it straight" said Mayor pro tem D'Errico when it was suggested that one way to shorten the meetings was to have a time limit for council members some of whom who repeat themselves or parrot another member.

I am planning to read the remaining pillars and the press release attachments and may comment if I can before December 22, 2015. I thank Mathew in the City Clerk's office who tries to be helpful at all times for enabling everyone and myself such as to see the press release and attachments since both Library Internet was not working last Saturday, Sunday, Monday and part of yesterday, Tuesday as well as the city computer ...

I am amazed at the timing of the above and the goals of the City Manager and the City Attorney where I was abruptly cut off in the middle of the sentence ; this shameful reduction by the City of residential participation is heartbreaking for anyone who cares for democracy in local government especially their own local government..

I mention again the draft of the pillars could be a start but the real actions will tell us if the Pillars are "meaningful" to anyone including the residents..Someone once told me when I was a younger man that actions speak louder than words.

Kind regards for the holidays.

Respectfully yours,

W.Victor