

City of

# La Mesa, California

CITYWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2028



# CITY OF LA MESA

*JEWEL of the HILLS*

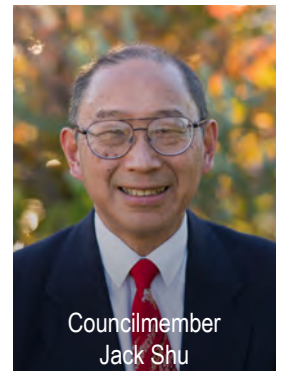
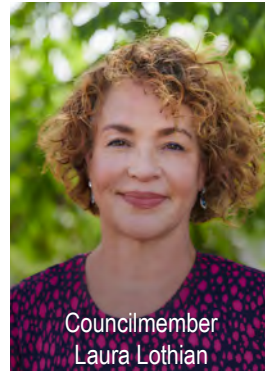
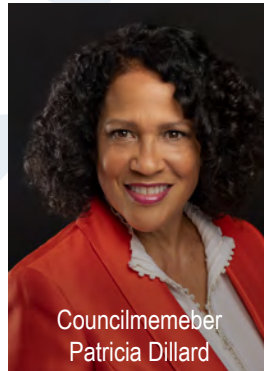


# Introduction

A well-designed strategic plan is like a reliable roadmap that points out a destination and provides a clear and concise path to reach it. The strategic plan establishes priority areas of focus for the City over the next five years, highlights specific strategies that will be executed to achieve desired outcomes, and establishes a framework to keep the public updated on the City's progress.

## A Message from the Mayor and City Council

La Mesa is a community we are all proud to call home. This strategic plan articulates the City Council's vision, mission and priorities to balance the needs of the community to retain a safe and healthy environment, preserve our small-town charm and provide inclusive access to high-quality public services. Our City Council, along with our dedicated City staff, is committed to carrying out these strategies over the next five years to achieve our vision of a thriving community where everyone feels at home.



## A Message from the City Manager



We are pleased to present our strategic plan to the La Mesa community. The City's Strategic Plan covers fiscal years 2023-24 through 2027-28 and serves as a roadmap to guide the work of the city. I look forward to working

with our City Council and staff to implement the established goals and strategies to deliver on La Mesa's promise as a place where our residents, business and visitors can thrive.

### City Executive Team

- Greg Humora, City Manager
- Amanda Lee, Assistant City Manager
- Lyn Dedmon, Assistant to the City Manager
- Rida Freeman, Director of Administrative Services
- Kerry Kusiak, Director of Community Development
- Susan Richardson, Director of Community Services
- Tammi Royales, Director of Finance
- Glenn Sabine, City Attorney
- Steve Swaney, Chief of Heartland Fire and Rescue
- Ray Sweeney, Chief of Police
- Michael Throne, Director of Public Works
- Megan Wiegelman, City Clerk

# Strategic Plan Overview

The Strategic Plan is a living document, featuring a framework that balances the needs of the community and the City's resource capacity.

A citywide Strategic Plan is fundamental to successful work planning. It is a policy document that reflects the priorities of the City Council. It informs budgeting and annual staff work plans. After adoption, staff integrates the policy focus areas into its operations and workplans. City staff also reports back regularly to City Council on progress.

## STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK



- **The vision** sets the focus for the future. It is an aspirational statement of where the organization wants to be.
- The City's **mission** is a statement of purpose of the organization. It fundamentally describes what that organization stands for and what it will do.
- **Organizational values** provide the basis for how the organization and its members will work to achieve the vision and drive how identified goals will be implemented.
- **Goal areas** will guide the direction and focus of the organization for the next several years. They are closely aligned with the vision and state the desired outcomes to be achieved. They help City leaders decide which of the many worthy projects should be done and when, within available resources.
- **Goal statements** elaborate what is to be achieved in each goal area.
- **Strategies** express how the City plans to accomplish its goals. They articulate the means to achieve desired outcomes for each strategic focus area. Strategies generally include broad areas to pursue, rather than individual projects.
- A **workplan** is the blueprint for carrying out the strategic plan. It contains the detailed steps that must be taken to assure that the goals and strategies are achieved. Workplans provide a framework for determining specific timelines, assignments, and resource allocations. They are designed to be a management tool to help the organization assure that goals are attained and are well suited to periodic check-in about progress, changes or challenges.

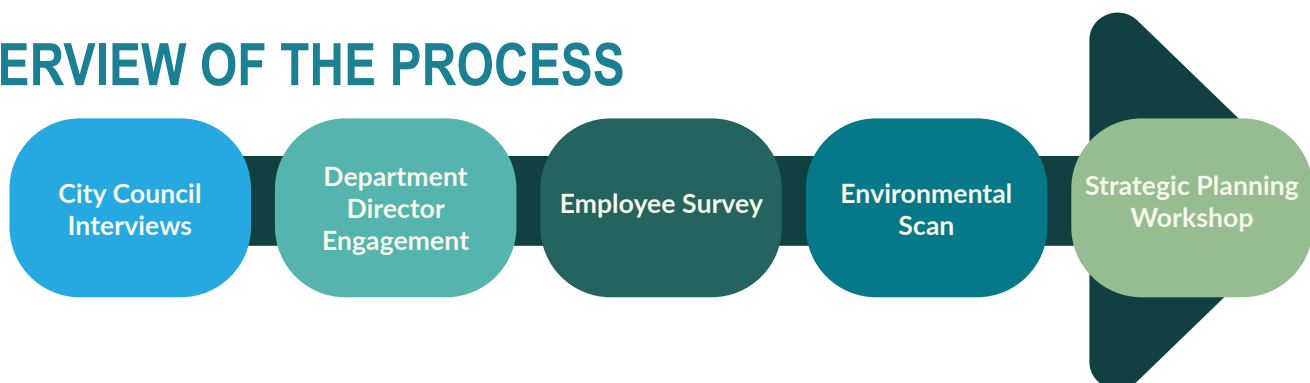




## Strategic Planning Process Overview

- **City Council Interviews.** Council members and the Mayor participated in interviews as a starting point for the process.
- **Department Director Engagement.** Department directors provided input through individual interviews and review of information gathered in the process.
- **2022 Employee Survey.** 115 City employees responded to a survey to provide input regarding strategic plan priorities. The survey was deployed from May 17 – June 6, 2022.
- **Community Input.** The City deployed a community opinion survey in 2021 and 2023 to seek feedback about City priorities. The community was also invited to participate in the City Council workshop held on June 10, 2023.
- **Environmental Scan.** An environmental scan is a document that provides an overview of factors (internal and external) that impact the community and the organization to set the context for the strategic plan and inform the discussion about goals and strategies.
- **Strategic Planning Workshop.** A City Council workshop was held June 10, 2023 to identify vision, mission, values, goals and strategies in the strategic plan.

## OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS



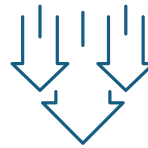


# Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats

Proposed strategic goal areas were informed by the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats identified through engagement activities. The major themes are presented below.

## STRENGTHS

- Sense of community
- Small-town feel
- Downtown village
- Dedicated and responsive city staff
- Organizational and community resilience
- Public safety response
- High level of customer service
- Financial stability
- HOME Program
- Civic communications

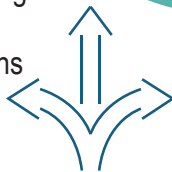


## CHALLENGES

- Staffing challenges – workload exceeds capacity, employee morale
- Impacts of regional homelessness
- More housing units mean greater demand for government services and infrastructure
- Ensuring a mix of housing options without impacting community character
- Neighborhood traffic concerns – cut-throughs, calming measures needed
- Aging infrastructure

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Upgrade the City's technology
- Encourage a mix of affordable housing options
- Mitigate neighborhood traffic concerns
- Identify reliable revenue streams to maintain long-term financial health
- Improve government efficiency
- Implement parks improvements
- Expand economic development opportunities citywide; support local businesses
- Beautify the City
- Improve the development permit process



## THREATS

- Local sales tax expires in 2028
- Impacts of the post-Covid economy
- Rising home prices
- The labor market
- Increase in regional homeless population
- State mandates related to housing
- Natural disasters
- Economic recession

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**LA MESA**

*JEWEL of the HILLS*

## Vision

La Mesa is a

# **THRIVING COMMUNITY**

*where everyone feels at*

# **HOME**







## Mission

*Our mission is to reliably deliver*  
**HIGH-QUALITY  
PUBLIC SERVICES**  
*that enhance the quality of life*  
**FOR ALL.**





# Organizational Values

WELCOMING

ACCESSIBILITY

ACCOUNTABILITY

EXCELLENT  
CUSTOMER  
SERVICE

INTEGRITY





# Our Goals

Five multi-year goals have been established. These identify outcomes to be achieved through an associated set of strategies.



## SAFE COMMUNITY

*Maintain a community where residents and visitors feel safe.*



## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

*Ensure a strong financial outlook through careful planning, sustainable service levels, and fiscal sustainability.*



## LIVABILITY

*Promote a high quality of life that current and future generations can afford to call home.*



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

*Invest in infrastructure to serve the needs of the community.*



## HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

*Nurture an organizational culture where employees are recognized for the delivery of high-quality services to the community.*



# Safe Community

*Maintain a community where residents and visitors feel safe.*

## Our Strategies

- Maintain a low crime rate using effective community policing
- Implement the Vision Zero Plan to increase safety for all
- Improve residents' capacity to prepare and respond to emergencies or natural disasters
- Increase public safety presence
- Promote a safe community where all feel welcome and included





# Financial Sustainability

*Ensure a strong financial outlook through careful planning, sustainable service levels, and fiscal responsibility.*

## Our Strategies

- Evaluate City services for efficiencies to establish sustainable service levels and practices
- Evaluate staffing levels and the allocation of limited resources
- Prepare for an extension of Proposition L (sales tax proposition to maintain essential City services)
- Increase reliable revenue sources that will grow with expenditure trends
- Consider impacts of development on City infrastructure and services





# Livability

*Promote a high quality of life that current and future generations can afford to call home.*

## Our Strategies

- Maintain a system of services, regional shelters and housing for La Mesa's homeless population and increase resources for the HOME program
- Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is affordable and accessible to current and future generations
- Implement the City's Climate Action Plan to enhance livability, support climate adaptation, and achieve sustainability goals
- Enhance the Downtown Village and other economic centers as thriving destinations for residents and visitors
- Preserve La Mesa's character through purposeful and thoughtful design standards
- Ensure all residents have equitable access to City services and spaces
- Ensure the City is visibly clean, to allow residents, businesses, and visitors to enjoy attractive community spaces
- Grow special events and cultural activities to promote and celebrate community





# Infrastructure and Amenities

*Invest in infrastructure to serve the needs of the community.*

## Our Strategies

- Ensure City streets, facilities and public green spaces are well maintained
- Support infrastructure improvements that promote all modes of mobility
- Continue Civic Center improvements
- Pursue capital resources to fund public amenities
- Improve communication with the public regarding street and facility improvements and impacts
- Develop a roadmap to enhance technology resources citywide
- Develop and enhance parks, trails and recreational facilities to better serve residents





# High-Performing Organization

*Nurture an organizational culture where employees are recognized for the delivery of high-quality services to the community.*

## Our Strategies

- Continuously improve and modernize City service delivery
- Create opportunities for training and professional growth for employees at all levels
- Leverage a data-driven approach to ensure City activities are strategic and outcome focused
- Enhance communication tools to improve information sharing and promote accessibility to city services and programs
- Cultivate an organizational culture of success that demonstrates teamwork and customer service
- Address concerns about staffing capacity and succession planning, to improve service delivery and morale
- Increase employee engagement and recognition to ensure employees feel supported and valued



# Conclusion

This Strategic Plan is designed to guide the work and future of the City of La Mesa. It reflects the guidance and input of the City Council, staff, and the community.

The plan articulates the vision for the City and establishes a set of goal areas and strategies to guide the work of the City of La Mesa over the next several years.

An accompanying strategic plan status report will provide a periodic update to the public on progress related to the goal areas.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this important initiative and everyone who will help make the vision a reality.







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