

# General Plan Community Engagement Summary

## **Vision Salinas: An Integrated Planning Initiative**

In 2017, shortly after the adoption of the Economic Development Element (EDE), Visión Salinas was initiated to coordinate city-wide public outreach efforts. The EDE was instrumental in shifting City practices towards more equitable and inclusive engagement and served as a guide for the Visión Salinas process. Visión Salinas' extensive community engagement helped establish a foundation for this update by developing an Overarching Core Value and Guiding Principles for the General Plan Update. Visión Salinas was rebranded to Visión Salinas 2040 and served as the backbone of the planning process.

**Overarching Core Value: *An inclusive, diverse, and welcoming City where all persons can thrive.***

This Overarching Core Value is embedded in each of the following Guiding Principles:

- Economic Prosperity, Equity, and Diversity
- Housing Opportunities for All
- Healthy and Safe Community
- Youth and Future
- Collaborative, Inclusive, and Engaged Decision Making
- Livable and Sustainable Community
- Connectivity, Access, and Mobility
- A Community to Celebrate

## **Visión Salinas 2040 Engagement Strategy**

The Visión Salinas 2040 community engagement strategy uses an equitable outreach vision, and lessons learned from recent community plan processes, which increased efforts to bring more voices into the conversation. At the beginning of the Visión Salinas 2040 process, COVID-19 brought new challenges to outreach and required new and deliberate strategies to make sure the process was equitable and inclusive of Salinas' diverse voices. Community engagement summaries for the Working Groups and workshops/webinars are available at:

[www.visionsalinas.com/comengage](http://www.visionsalinas.com/comengage)

### **Key numbers:**

- **11,200+** total people engaged
- **5,913** People reached through Global Budget Engagement using Guiding Principles
- **22** Large Workshops
- **17** Pop-ups at community events and public spaces
- **16** Steering Committee Meetings
- **8** Working Group Meetings

### Key Objective: removing barriers to participation and building capacity

The City took many steps to enable community members to participate in the planning process at the level they desired, whether someone wanted to simply share their ideas through a pop-up, by attending a workshop, or if they wanted sustained participation in the multiyear planning effort. These steps included:

- Holding virtual meetings during social distancing protocols,
- Holding meetings after business hours, typically from 6-8 PM,
- Providing food and childcare, when appropriate,
- Conducting workshops and meetings in English, with translation to Spanish, and bilingual materials (when appropriate), Mixteco interpretation when requested, and
- Contracting outside outreach support to reach underserved populations.

### Community Engagement Structure

#### **Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee is comprised of key community stakeholders representing local agencies, community based organizations, the business sector, agriculture, schools, youth, and one representative for each of the six City Council districts and one representing the Mayor. The Visión 2040 Steering Committee is responsible for:

- Guiding the General Plan Update process and document structure
- Communicating information and priorities to drive engagement
- Developing content within Working Groups
- Providing guidance on project issues and key policy topics

Steering Committee meeting materials are available at:

<https://www.visionsalinas.org/steeringcommittee>.

#### **Working Groups:**

The purpose of the Working Groups was to allow residents, stakeholders and technical advisors the chance to expand on the 2002 General Plan's goals, policies and actions. Working Group members had the opportunity to expand on, vet and refine the content outlined in the policy matrices. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the early Working Group meetings were offered on Zoom and later transitioned to in person meetings centered around the three GP pillars. Meetings were exclusively held in the evenings to allow for more participation with food and translation available.

- February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Built Environment**
- March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Socioeconomic Systems**
- March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Natural Systems**
- March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022: **Built Environment**
- April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Socioeconomic Systems**
- April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Natural Systems**
- April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022: **Built Environment**

- May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Socioeconomic Systems**

### **Community Workshops/Webinars:**

The City held twenty-two (22) community workshops covering a variety of topics. In the early stages of the update process, workshops were held on Zoom and later transitioned to large in-person meetings.

- August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **District 2 Land Use Workshop**
- August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **District 1 Land Use Workshop**
- August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **District 3 Land Use Workshop**
- September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021: **District 4 Land Use Workshop**
- September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **District 6 Land Use Workshop**
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **District 5 Land Use Workshop**
- October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021: **City at large Land Use Workshop**
- January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Existing Conditions/Working Group Kick-off**
- April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Climate Action Plan Webinar**
- June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Community Design Webinar**
- September 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022: **Environmental Justice Workshops**
- March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023: **Public Safety Workshops**
- April 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023: **Housing Element Workshops**
- November 2<sup>nd</sup>: **Active Transportation Workshop**
- February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024: **Transportation Open House**
- February 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024: **Land Use Info Sessions**

### **Pop-ups:**

Community Development staff, with some outside support from the Center for Community Advocacy, completed seventeen (17) pop-up activities at community events and public spaces. They were designed to quickly attract and engage community members, share information and provide a voice to residents who are affected but have not been represented in the collaborative process.

### **Sustainable Agriculture Lands Conservation Grant (SALC) Engagement:**

In 2020, The City was awarded a grant through the California Department of Conservation, the Sustainable Agriculture Lands Conservation Grant (SALC) to support Visión Salinas 2040. The SALC grant augmented public engagement efforts focused on direct outreach to farmworkers. With the support of the Center for Community Advocacy (CCA) and eleven (11) General Plan Update Ambassadors, over nine hundred (900) farmworkers have been reached and a total of three thousand four hundred and fifty (3,450) Salinas community members were engaged using pop-up activities, food bank distributions, and lunch time field visits. This outreach was supported by staff with the preparation of pop-up materials focused on environmental justice, public safety, transportation, and housing.

The City also established a Technical Advisory Committee (Ag Tac) to assist with the development and review of a Salinas Agriculture Economic and Land Use Study (Study). The Ag TAC had representatives from Western Growers, the Monterey County Farm Bureau, Monterey County Vintners Association, and the Grower-Shipper Association. The Ag Tac helped develop the scope of work for the Study consultant, participated in interviews and assisted with connecting the consultants with other agriculture stakeholders, and reviewed the Study.

**City Budget Engagement:**

Over the last few years, the City has been committed to a robust community engagement process designed around the City budget. The 2022 and 2023 City Budget engagement process included forty (40) pop-up activities and over four thousand (4,000) survey responses. This feedback was reviewed and helped establish topic priorities and new goals, policies and actions.

**Plan Communication:**

- Project website-visionsalinas.org
- Public notices
- Radio interviews
- Email blasts
- Letters and postcards
- Social media (City Facebook and Instagram)
- La Plaza 5 AM Pop-up – meant to engage farmworkers at a popular bakery on their way to work.
- LCS Activity Kit – 400 kits distributed through the Salinas rec centers to share GP information.
- Coasters – 500 distributed to restaurants and bars. Coasters shared information related to the project website and invited folks to complete a General Plan survey.
- House meetings - through the SALC Grant, General Plan Ambassadors completed 95 house meetings. This is a common grassroots community organizing strategy where you hold small meetings anywhere community members are gathered, most often in their homes.