Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Strategic Plan Progress Report
ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Mayor and City Council adopted its five-year strategic plan in October 2019 as a tool to ensure that priorities set by the City Council are conveyed in the organization’s goals, that strategies are clearly developed to meet the goals, and that overall city government is accountable to meeting community needs.

The strategic plan has five multi-year goals with each goal containing its own set of strategies. The City Council identified nine strategies as its first two-year priorities. This report provides an update on the status and benchmarks regarding these priorities, along with a status update on other Year 1 and Year 2 strategies.

This report is prepared by Lauren Sugayan, Communications & Marketing Manager.

CITY MANAGER MESSAGE

Dear Mayor & City Council,

We have had a tremendously eventful year since the strategic plan was first adopted in October 2019. The City has experienced numerous crises and I am so proud of how well city staff have navigated them. We have made major progress in achieving the City Council’s priorities, as well as many other strategies in the plan. Today, we remain dedicated in facing the financial challenges ahead and building a sustainable future for our community. Much of the progress reported in this plan will showcase our diligence to find and implement cost-savings, build organizational efficiency, and continue the pursuit of economic development initiatives.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
COMMUNITY VISION
To be a vibrant, inclusive and prosperous community where residents and businesses thrive, and innovation grows

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION
To foster an environment where City employees are inspired, recognized and thrive

MISSION
Our mission is to create and provide effective, quality services that foster high quality of life and economic vitality.

VALUES
- Sustainability
- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Integrity

GOALS
A  Financial Stability and Sustainability
B  Governance and Organization Effectiveness
C  Economic, Community Development and Public Safety
D  Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure
E  Communication and Outreach

LEARN MORE
Read the full five-year strategic plan at www.unioncity.org/goals.
BY THE NUMBERS

YEAR 1 & YEAR 2 STRATEGIES THAT ARE UNDERWAY

22

YEAR 1 STRATEGIES THAT ARE COMPLETED

3

YEAR 1 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

September 21, 2019
Partial emergency operations activated for the cyber attack; rebuild of I.T. systems and data continues today.

November 23, 2019
A devastating murder of two young boys causes significant community angst. Police Department solves the case after 5,500 of investigative hours.

March 3, 2020
The stock market takes a dive amid the COVID-19 outbreak 10 days before the March 3 Primary Election causing significant voter uncertainty. Measure U does not pass.

March 23, 2020
A local emergency is declared for COVID-19 once again halting most city operations. Emergency Operations Center is activated as pandemic response and relief becomes the City’s new priority.

October 8, 2019
Partial emergency operations activated for Public Safety Power Shutoffs.

June 29, 2020
Death of George Floyd sparks protests & widespread looting. The Policing & Community Engagement Committee is established to foster community listening about policing in Union City.
**Goal A. Financial Stability and Sustainability**

**Strategy 1.** Establish a comprehensive fiscal stability and sustainability plan to address the General Fund’s long-term structural deficit.

**Voter-approved Initiatives:**
- Voters did not approve Measure U (the City's Public Safety Parcel Tax) on the March 3, 2020 ballot.
- City Council ad hoc subcommittee studied revenue measures for the November General Election ballot resulting in the unanimous placement of a Utility Users’ Tax on August 6, 2020.

**Management Audit:**
- The Potential Cost Reduction Strategies identified in the management audit will save the City $3.5 million with full implementation.
- Enactment of the Fiscal Stability Committee’s findings on other recommendations could increase revenues by approximately $475,000.
- Fire Station 30 was closed on January 15, 2020 resulting in $3.2 million in cost savings.
- Report made to City Council on August 11, 2020 on management audit.

**Cannabis Program:**
- City Council voted to expand cannabis zoning into Union Landing on July 28, 2020 allowing for one retail location. City anticipates reopening the City’s application process in September upon City Council approval.
- City staff continues to work with Jiva Life and Garden of Eden on processing building permits for cannabis retail locations. Estimated openings for both are anticipated for mid-2021.

**Fiscal Planning:**
- A ten-year financial forecast model was developed and presented to the City Council on August 4, 2020. The model helps the City to understand the impact of the pandemic-induced recession on City finances.
- A formal Fiscal Sustainability plan is underway by City staff.
Goal A. Financial Stability and Sustainability

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<td>Strategy 1. Establish a comprehensive fiscal stability and sustainability plan to address the General Fund’s long-term structural deficit.</td>
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<td>Strategy 2. Determine the level of reauthorization of the public safety parcel tax and develop an informational plan.</td>
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Station District Buildout:
- All technical studies completed for Quarry Lakes Parkway; a presentation is being prepared for the Alameda County Transportation Commission.
- The Station District Specific Plan is underway and anticipated to be completed by April 2021. It envisions 1,800 new housing units, which will generate new property tax revenues.
- BART improvements are scheduled to be completed by mid-2021 and the at-grade pedestrian crossing on the east side of BART is expected to be completed by 2022. Both are expected to improve BART access and connect people to future jobs and housing in the area.

- Level of reauthorization determined in November 2019; Measure U placed on the March 2020 Primary ballot.
- A comprehensive public information plan was carried out in Winter 2019/2020.
- Measure U did not pass; a political assessment indicates that the impacts of COVID-19 and stock market dive impacted voters in the final 10 days of the election.
- Staff recommends that this strategy be modified to encompass work ahead with the Utility Users’ Tax on the November 2020 General Election ballot. City Council has unanimously voted to place a Utility Users’ Tax on the November 2020 General Election ballot.

- Fire Station 30 closed on January 15, 2020 resulting in $3.2 million in cost-savings annually.
- Fire Station 30 was leased to Falck Alameda County as of July 2020 to support ambulance operations under the County’s contract.
Goal B. Governance and Organization Effectiveness

Strategy 1.
Align the provision of critical city services and Strategic Plan implementation with current staffing levels.

- Re-organization underway with the addition of an Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer position.
- Strategically applied Early Retirement Incentive Program in July 2020.
- Staff work in the Economic & Community Development and Public Works Departments is intensively focused on the priorities identified in this plan, including Quarry Lakes Parkway, construction of the at-grade pedestrian crossing at BART, the Station District Specific Plan and the construction of bike lanes on Union City Boulevard.
- Staff work in the City Manager’s Office is intensively focused on priorities identified in this plan including fiscal stability & sustainability initiatives, professional development, communication and homelessness, among others.

Strategy 2.
Establish professional development plans for each employee to optimize staff resources, support their growth and demonstrate commitment to employees’ careers through a mentoring program and cross-training assignments.

- Individual Development Plan program launched in January 2020 with the aim to of having a professional development plan for every employee that needs or wants one.
- Online training portal launched to implement essential employee training, including on cyber security, workplace ethics, and other essential training.
- Interim, acting and temporary assignments in Public Works are currently being implemented to build leadership capacity and succession plan.
- Training, mentoring and advancement programs in the Union City Police Department are helping to build job competency and help police officers prepare for supervisory and management roles.
- City employees continue to participate in the Alameda County Leadership Program.

“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”
— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Goal C. Economic, Community Development and Public Safety

**Strategy 1.**
Analyze the feasibility of transforming warehouses to attract high-value industrial and commercial uses for the benefit of the community.

- Economic and Community Development provided a feasibility report to the Economic Development Advisory Team in February 2020.
- Staff study finds: (1) existing businesses are in need of warehouse, (2) a high demand for warehouses and high lease rates, (3) a need for a regional approach on taxing and (4) market forces impact staff’s ability to focus on this as a priority.
- A feasibility report to the City Council is forthcoming.

**Strategy 2.**
Facilitate the build out of the greater Station District Area through the construction of the Quarry Lakes Parkway, upgrades to the BART station, and completion of the pedestrian rail crossing and the sale and development of City-owned land.

- All technical studies completed for Quarry Lakes Parkway; a presentation is being prepared for the Alameda County Transportation Commission.
- The Station District Specific Plan is underway and anticipated to be completed by April 2021. It envisions 1,800 new housing units, which will generate new property tax revenues.
- BART improvements are scheduled to be completed by mid-2021 and the at-grade pedestrian crossing on the east side of BART is expected to be completed by 2022. Both are expected to improve BART access and connect people to future jobs and housing in the area.

"Leadership is the ability to facilitate movement in the needed direction and have people feel good about it."

- Tom Smith, best selling author
Communications Coordinator hired in March 2020 to support the implementation of communication priorities. Comprehensive community outreach and education in Year 1 carried out to educate about the strategic plan, impacts of failed ballot measures and city finances, including dozens of community meetings, multiple press releases, two city finance newsletters and robust social media outreach. Virtual strategies have been put into place amid COVID-19 to ensure outreach continues through pandemic, including virtual town halls, use of Facebook Live for city meetings and use of social media story tools.

City Manager’s Office study identified a lack of funding, staffing, staff training, hygiene services, and housing navigation services. Partnerships with community organizations and Alameda County established. Coordination between Police and Economic Development in place to CARES Act funding is being directed locally to keep vulnerable people in their homes so they do not become homeless. Lazuli Landing development has 16 units that are a homeless preference. CAREavan expected to continue through end of Fiscal Year 2022 when funding will expire. Report to the City Council is expected in Fall 2020.

Strategy 3.
Develop a multi-departmental approach to address homelessness through coordination with staff, community organizations and Alameda County.

- City Manager’s Office study identified a lack of funding, staffing, staff training, hygiene services, and housing navigation services.
- Partnerships with community organizations and Alameda County established.
- Coordination between Police and Economic Development in place to mitigate issues at commercial centers.
- CARES Act funding is being directed locally to keep vulnerable people in their homes so they do not become homeless.
- Lazuli Landing development has 16 units that are a homeless preference.
- CAREavan expected to continue through end of Fiscal Year 2022 when funding will expire.
- Report to the City Council is expected in Fall 2020.

Goal E. Communication and Outreach

Strategy 1.
Conduct outreach and community education about the City services, financial resources, areas of cost, and impacts of failed ballot measures on city services.

- Communications Coordinator hired in March 2020 to support the implementation of communication priorities.
- Comprehensive community outreach and education in Year 1 carried out to educate about the strategic plan, impacts of failed ballot measures and city finances, including dozens of community meetings, multiple press releases, two city finance newsletters and robust social media outreach.
- Virtual strategies have been put into place amid COVID-19 to ensure outreach continues through pandemic, including virtual town halls, use of Facebook Live for city meetings and use of social media story tools.

There’s always an opportunity with crisis. Just as it forces an individual to look inside himself, it forces a company to reexamine its policies and practices.

- Judy Smith, crisis management expert
Goal A. Financial Stability and Sustainability

**Strategy 4.**
Conduct an assessment of all costs and revenues of parks and recreation programs and services to enable Council to determine subsidy level.

The Fiscal Stability Committee examined community and recreation costs with the following findings:

- Community & Recreation Services (CRS) strives to balance community programming and maximize rental income at the community centers on the weekends, during peak demand hours for the facilities.
- There is no duplication of recreational programming on the east and west side of the City. Pre-school programs occur on both sides of town, state law limits number of children who can enroll at each site, and program is self-funded.
- Fee-based programming covers the costs of most classes and camps and subsidizes several free or low-cost program.
- The City significantly subsidizes sports fields, court rentals, and memberships. The Fiscal Stability Committee recommended $475,000 in recommended fee increases to reduce City subsidy.
- Closure of Mark Green Sports Center or leasing to a private operator will require reductions in 5 FTE and 3 PT employees. Interviewed recreation experts on the leasing of the Mark Green Sports Center. Challenges were identified in leasing the facility. Experts responded facility too large to operate by a private vendor, but no RFP issued to date. There may be potential to operate facility as an event center, but may require expansion of solid waste and recycling capacity.

**Strategy 5.**
Implement the City’s cannabis program to attain the anticipated $1.4 million in new revenue with a commitment to adapting where necessary in light of evolving Statewide trends.

- City Council votes to expand cannabis zoning into Union Landing on July 28, 2020 allowing for one retail location.
- City anticipates reopening the City’s application process in September upon City Council approval to fill a retail permit.
Report made to City Council regarding Union Landing PBID and Union Landing updates in May 2020. Incorporation of PBID has provided a governing structure for property owners. Coordination efforts between property owners and City has increased. PBID was renewed in July 2020 for five years with additional funds approved for marketing. City Council approved resolutions to accept state grant funds for planning activities related to increasing housing (early 2020 and mid-2020). Stream-lined process in place for single family residences who are looking to remodel, add-on or build new to accommodate increasing capacity. Lazuli Landing development project approved by City Council on July 28, 2020. Project will provide 81 below market rate apartments and 16 units that have a homeless preference.

City staff continues to work with Jiva Life and Garden of Eden on processing building permits for cannabis retail locations. Estimated openings for both are anticipated for mid-2021. Staff recommends to modify this strategy to eliminate the dollar amount description of anticipated revenue.

**Goal B. Governance and Organization Effectiveness**

**Strategy 3.**
Implement a new system of electing councilmembers by district and establish protocols for governance.

**Goal C. Economic, Community Development and Public Safety**

**Strategy 4.**
Enhance the City’s partnership with Union Landing property owners and tenants to grow the vitality of the business district and revenue to the City.
- Report made to City Council regarding Union Landing PBID and Union Landing updates in May 2020.
- Incorporation of PBID has provided a governing structure for property owners.
- Coordination efforts between property owners and City has increased.
- PBID was renewed in July 2020 for five years with additional funds approved for marketing.

**Strategy 5.**
Promote housing development for all income levels in the community by updating the zoning ordinance to include objective standards in order to streamline development and facilitating the development of affordable housing.
- City Council approved resolutions to accept state grant funds for planning activities related to increasing housing (early 2020 and mid-2020).
- Stream-lined process in place for single family residences who are looking to remodel, add-on or build new to accommodate increasing capacity.
- Lazuli Landing development project approved by City Council on July 28, 2020. Project will provide 81 below market rate apartments and 16 units that have a homeless preference.

"To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace."

-Doug Conant,
CEO of Campbell’s Soup
Goal C. Economic, Community Development and Public Safety

**Strategy 7.**
Collaborate with commercial brokers on retail and commercial opportunities for new businesses and identify factors that will encourage high revenue-producing businesses to lease vacant properties.

- Two big box stores were filled with Ross and Burlington Coat Factory at Union Landing. Staff continues to work with property owners to fill vacancies.
- Vacancy rates are at approximately 1%; however, staff is currently examining the impact of COVID-19 on the local market.

**Strategy 8.**
Prioritize and expedite major land use development applications.

- Projects in process to support business expansion in the industrial area.
- Applications in process for new retail and a preschool.
- 1,000 unit development including an affordable housing component anticipated to be brought for public hearings in early 2021.

**Strategy 9.**
Update the short-range transit plan that includes an evaluation of providing services to the business district and the New Haven Unified School District.

- Metropolitan Transportation Commission has suspended short-range transit plans due to current funding environment and challenges brought on by COVID-19. City still plans to produce a draft plan later in 2020.

**Strategy 10.**
Strengthen the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program through the Alameda County Fire Department, per agreement with the County.

- Emergency Services Coordinator hired in March 2020.
- Training plan developed for CERT; review and approval of plan underway with CERT Board.

**Strategy 11.**
Complete the General Plan update (along with the Decoto Industrial Park Study Area Specific Plan (DIPSA)).

- General Plan completed and adopted in December 2019.
- DIPSA Specific Plan, or Station District Plan, anticipated to be completed in April 2021.
Goal C. Economic, Community Development and Public Safety

**Strategy 13.**
Align public safety services with community needs based on a data driven decision-making approach.

- Department priorities have been realigned to address significant impacts of cyber attack, including recovering/recreating lost documents. This is expected to last up through late 2021/early 2022.
- Implementation of emergency deployment schedule amid COVID-19 and events stemming from the death of George Floyd.
- Policing and Community Engagement Committee established to hear feedback from the community on areas of improvement regarding policing in Union City. Presentation on findings and recommendations to the City Council scheduled for September 2020.

Goal D. Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure

**Strategy 1.**
Continue the build-out of the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian network with an emphasis on closing gaps, addressing safety concerns, and increasing connectivity to the Station District.

- Dedicated web page launched.
- Bike and Pedestrian Access Committee established with ongoing public outreach.
- Draft plan expected later this year with final plan by mid-2021.
- Union City Boulevard Bikes lanes will be under construction in 2021.

**Strategy 2.**
Implement the City’s capital improvement plan (CIP).

- Lack of staffing creates significant impediment to completing capital priorities.
- Current CIP under construction and pending construction include: BART Phase 2A, BART At-Grade Crossing, Decoto Road rehab from Alameda Creek Bridge to Station Way, Contempo Park rehab, UCB Bike Lanes, Dyer Pavement rehab from Deborah to Alvarado, and traffic signal video detection, signal control for transit and bikes, and traffic signal cycle upgrades at Alvarado and Galaxy, and Alvarado-Niles Road and Union Square.
Goal D. Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure

Strategic 9.
Convert the UC Transit fleet to electric.
- City Council approved commitment to electrification in early 2020 in order to seek funding opportunities.
- Implementation expected to take 10 years and requires installation of EV charging stations at Corp Yard (expected to be installed by November 2021).
- First delivery of 4 new zero emission buses expected in December 2021.

Strategic 12.
Explore additional opportunities to meet or exceed State waste reduction and recycling targets.
- Continued collaboration with StopWaste on plastic waste reduction efforts.
- Increased public outreach on State requirement for increasing diversion of organic materials from landfill disposal and reducing Organic Waste Methane Emissions.

Goal E. Communication and Outreach

Strategic 2.
Improve the delivery of and employee and community access to the annual State of the City Address.
- Implementing plans for a virtual State of the City Address amid COVID-19 pandemic. This forced change will benefit community and employee access.

Strategic 3.
Create and implement a plan for conveying progress and outcomes from the City’s Strategic Plan to employees and the community at large.
- Employee and community road show carried out to advance Strategic Plan resulting in dozens of presentations throughout 2019 and 2020.
- Staff report template modified to ensure strategic plan alignment with City Council decision making.
- Video produced and widely distributed in January 2020 about strategic plan.
- Plans underway to implement online dashboard for improved plan management and easy online communication of progress and outcomes.
CHALLENGES AHEAD

1. Charting a path forward with significant fiscal challenges and educating the community about city finances.
2. Being able to support pandemic relief and aid to businesses and residents.
3. Completing the rebuild of data and systems from the cyber attack.
4. Responding to conversations about police reform resulting from the death of George Floyd.
5. Staff’s ability to meet enormous work demands and accomplish workloads.
6. Supporting employees to prevent talent from leaving the organization.
7. Re-imagining work models for employees, including telecommuting and flexible work hours, and service models for the public, including online reporting and applications, and the like, in order to adjust to COVID-19.

“My model for business is The Beatles. They were four guys who kept each others kind of negative tendencies in check. They balanced each other and the total was greater than the sum of the parts.

That’s how I see business: Great things in business are never done by one person, they’re done by a team of people.

- Steve Jobs