



Paso Robles, CA

NEXT STEPS WORKSHOP RESULTS

January 2018

Contents

- Workshop Background 3
- Workshop Participant Perspectives of Paso Robles..... 4
- Debriefing of the Survey Results 6
- Areas of Community Focus..... 7
- Strategies to Address Key Focus Areas 8

Workshop Background

The City of Paso Robles, California conducted the National Citizen Survey in the fall of September and October of 2017. The National Citizen Survey (The NCS™), conducted by National Research Center, Inc., was developed to provide communities an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important local topics.

The survey and workshop were conducted to provide the City of Paso Robles with a systematic sounding of resident opinion to use in its upcoming two-year goal setting session. Paso Robles elected officials will convene in February to develop a new set of goals to guide their strategic planning.

Results offer insight into residents’ perspectives about the community as a whole, including local amenities, services, public trust, resident participation and other aspects of the community in order to support budgeting, land use and strategic planning and communication with residents. Results from the Paso Robles NCS are presented in separate reports.

Twenty-one key stakeholders from Paso Robles convened on January 11, 2018 to review the survey results and work together to debrief the survey results, identify areas of community focus and develop potential strategies that the City could pursue to increase the quality of life in Paso Robles. The participants included Paso Robles elected officials, six city staff, six members from community organizations (Main Street Association, the Chamber of Commerce, TravelPaso, and Republican Women Federated.) and three residents. A representative of the radio station KPRL also participated in the community dialogue.

City Council

Mayor Steve Martin
Fred Strong
John Hamon

Jim Reed
Steve Gregory

Staff

City Manager Tom Frutchey
Public Works Director Dick McKinley
Police Chief Robert Burton

Interim Fire Chief Jonathan Stornetta
Community Services Director Julie Dahlen
Civic Engagement Coordinator Shonna Howenstine

Community Organizations

Norma Moye – Executive Director, Main Street Association
Margaret Holstine - Main Street Association
Dale Gustin - Main Street Association
Teresa Sullenger – Republican Women Federated
Kathy Bonelli – Tourism Business Improvement District, Visit SLO CAL
Larry Werner – Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce, Housing Constraints and Opportunities Committee

Residents

William Faye
Jeff Carr

George (last name unknown)

Media

Dick Mason – KPRL AM Radio

Workshop Participant Perspectives of Paso Robles

Workshop participants were first asked their opinions about the community through a series of exercises. The first question asked participants **to list the words they would use to describe the city of Paso Robles**. Residents were overwhelmingly positive about their hometown.

Figure 1: Words to Describe Paso Robles



The second question posed to participants asked **what made Paso Robles unique** in comparison to other towns in the region and across the state.

Figure 2: Unique Features of Paso Robles

- Real small town America
- Well rounded in industry, commerce, recreation and life styles
- Small town feel with all the amenities
- Old fashioned values
- Spirit of cooperation
- Smart, steady growth
- Nights cool down 40+ degrees
- Rolling hills and open spaces
- Charming blend of rural and urban
- Multi-generational, multi-style, multi-income levels all combined in one community
- Safe community
- Positive, welcoming people
- Historical
- Weather, historical, old fashioned, spirit, positive welcoming people, real town America, spirit volunteer, strong ethic
- Can do attitude. Beautiful countryside. Strong history. Welcoming. Wine.
- Strong work ethic
- Clean and picturesque
- Rural feel with larger city values
- Creative willingness to get things done
- Outside the box
- Small town charm and big city Pasabilities
- More money for city to do great things!
- Safety, fire protection, new hall, opportunities for success, a flowing river year round
- Spirit of volunteerism
- Large wooded riverbed
- Climate cool nights hot days
- Far from any metropolitan area
- Develop and encourage outdoor uses of riverbed and trails. Citizens use of all amenities
- Housing variety in sufficient quantity to be reasonable in cost for both buyers and renters

The third exercise asked participants to think about Paso Robles as it is today and, if **given a magic wand, what one thing would they change.**

Figure 3: Improvements Sought for Paso Robles

- Pay attention to large growing vagrant {homeless} population claiming streets
- Homeless issue resolution
- More jobs affordable housing
- More meeting space
- More parking
- Expanded fire department
- Increase travel routes through town
- More housing
- New city hall
- Larger library
- Fix roads
- Build more homes
- A flowing river year round
- Fix our roads
- A good Indian restaurant
- Not have to follow all state regulations
- Improve housing availability.
- Provide more jobs.
- More bike and pedestrian trails.
- More attractions than Wine.
- More parking downtown.
- Library expansion
- More downtown parking
- Make Norma 25 again
- More recreation facilities
- Address homeless
- Opportunities for success for everyone
- Homeless services
- More bridges from east to west

Debriefing of the Survey Results

NRC staff presented the key findings from the survey in the workshop including both areas of community strength and opportunity. Resident ratings were compared to both national and regional benchmarks to aid in the interpretation of the findings.

After the presentation, participants broke up into groups of 4 to 6 to discuss the survey results. **Each group had one council member and a mix of staff and residents to encourage the mixing of ideas.** Groups debriefed the data by responding to three key questions:

- *What results did you expect?*
- *What results were surprising?*
- *In what areas do we need to dig deeper?*

After the group discussions, each group reported back their findings to the larger audience of participants. The group level responses are provided in the figure below.

Figure 4: Participant Reactions to Survey Findings

Expected Findings	Surprising Findings	Areas Where More Research/Analysis is needed
Parking Housing Cost of living Health care/mental health care Street repair People love the downtown Great place to visit and live Homelessness	Drinking water Trails and paths Support for Animal Shelter Support for Homeless Shelter Preschool/childcare Perception of Albertsons/Wal-Mart Support for sales tax Parking as a problem (to achieve a successful downtown)	Mental Health/Homelessness and their relationship to safety and affordable housing Preschool/child care Concern over how homelessness might affect the vibrancy of downtown

Areas of Community Focus

At the end of the debriefing exercise, participant work groups were asked to **identify 3-4 areas issues they felt should be areas of focus for the City Council to consider in February as they set new goals.** The groups identified 10 areas of focus in all. To narrow this list from 10 to a more actionable number, participants were given two “sticky dots” and were asked to place these dots by the issues (or issue) they felt was most pressing. The areas of mental health, housing (affordability and variety), jobs, streets/parking and public safety were those receiving the highest number of votes.

Figure 5: Key Areas of Community Focus

Potential Areas of Focus	Number of Participants Selected Area as the Most Important
Mental health	9
Streets	7
Housing (affordability and variety)	6
Jobs (head of household and career ladder)	6
Public Safety (maintain focus)	5
Homelessness/homeless shelter	3
Vibrant downtown (sustain)	3
Parking	1
Community engagement	0
Animal Shelter	0

Strategies to Address Key Focus Areas

Once the five issues were identified, NRC provided some examples of how local governments across the nation use survey results to improve communities. The presentation encouraged thinking innovatively to address community issues. Participants were then reassigned into new work groups (to once again encourage the mixing of ideas). **Each group was randomly assigned one of the issues to discuss more depth and brainstorm the types of strategies Paso Robles might use to move ahead on the key area of focus.** After the brainstorming sessions, each group presented back to the larger group for comments and additional suggestions.

Figure 6: Potential Strategies to Consider

Focus Area*	Strategies
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a task force to define problem and assess public costs (e.g. medical, public safety, etc.) • Meet with county and neighboring communities to identify shared needs and form a coalition • Meet with mental health experts (including therapists at Atascadero State Hospital) • Collaborate with churches and other non-profits to address community issues related to homelessness • Call on the County Supervisor to address funding issues with State • Identify a facility to house and triage non-criminal homeless persons
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work of housing committee to streamline development/building process and decrease fees • Encourage more multi-family units • Quantify and regulate vacation rentals • Streamline process for developers • Understand that the cost of living is higher here because health care and child care are so expensive • Lobby state to alter its policy on Kit Fox Mitigation fees • Work with county to help with housing subsidies • Consider a “locals first” home buying policy • Educate developers on existing policies that encourage affordable housing • Find ways to fund more affordable housing
Jobs**	<p>Goal: Everyone who wants a good job can have one</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What job base should we attract? <i>Look at other communities and compare</i> 2. Need for increased workforce training <i>Develop an apprentice training program</i> 3. What do businesses need? <i>Pursue fiber optics</i> 4. Support economic development staffing <i>Work with the Chamber of Commerce on its staffing</i> 5. Keep improving the quality of life in Paso Robles <i>Pursue activities to create great places to live, work and shop</i>
Streets/Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address perceptions of parking as an issue through social media and other communications • Provide more signage in areas where people can park • Educate business owners about difficulties with employees utilizing key parking spots • Support new App where residents will report potholes and receive information from city on status

• *Public safety was not included as there were only four work groups and this was determined to be more about keeping it a priority than a change to current community operations.*

** *This work group chose to give one example tactic under each strategy.*