

From: [REDACTED]
To: [BoardComment](#)
Subject: Town Hall Strategic Planning comments
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 8:56:39 AM
Attachments: [Town Hall Strategic Planning meeting comments.docx](#)

Also attached as a Word document.

District strengths:

Engaged citizenry. Older, many retired, but largely well informed and well educated. Over 90 percent voted in the last election.

Excellent reputation as a tourist destination.

Low Covid incidence, despite many tourist visitors

Rich natural resources: Monterey Pine Forest, Coastline under federal and state protection, including National Marine Sanctuary status, marine mammal viewing activities (otters, harbor seals, sea lions, elephant seals, gray and humpback whales)

Historical roots in ranching and other agriculture. Families trace their heritage back several generations

Native American advocacy, Northern Chumash Tribal Council

District weaknesses:

Long standing divisions between development and environmental advocates, both in the community and on the CSD board. Although the populace is engaged with local issues, few participate in local government.

Failure to be transparent, resulting in lack of community support for the CSD

Inability to work with other relevant state and federal agencies: conflicts with Coastal Commission, State Parks

Financial confusion regarding costs of Emergency Water Supply Project, continuing cost additions beyond loan repayments, already high at \$660,000 annually, and maintenance. The project, seven years into its inception, lacks even a completed permit application.

Those financial costs affect all other district operations, in water and wastewater. Both are aging, with frequent leaking water pipes and deferred maintenance on the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Ongoing litigation over water and EWS issues, causing more financial drain.

High fire risk of the Wildland Urban Interface. Failure to implement the Cambria Forest Management Plan.

Covid impacts on local business, which are now operating in the streets. Parking problems are causing friction, as restaurants convert parking spaces to outdoor eating places.

District goals:

Cambria is ideally poised to be a model community of smart energy use and caring for all its residents and visitors, human and wildlife, from the hillsides and trees to the sandy beaches of the coastline.

Make water security for Cambria's residents, businesses and visitors a goal. Rename the

Sustainable Water Facility to its original name, Emergency Water Supply Project, and rewrite to project description to serve existing users only. Then complete the application for a Coastal Development Permit. If Cambria is unable to complete the permit application by the end of 2021, abandon the plant. Seven years and twenty million dollars is more than long enough. Cambria continues to spend money on the plant when other needs go unmet. Disband the Water Wait List. There is never going to be enough water for more development. Commit to water conservation for Cambria's residents and make Cambria a model community for 21st century water use.

Make the health of Cambria's Monterey Pine forest a priority. Commit to ecologically sound forest and open space management. Visitors come to Cambria for its natural wonders, including the Monterey Pine forest, some of which is on district property at Fiscalini Ranch and much of which is home to Cambria's residents. A healthy forest is a significant aspect of fire safety. Hire a forest ecologist to advise on improving the forest. Get a workable evacuation plan that will allow Cambrians to get out of town in event of fire, faster than the current estimate of longer than four hours.

Commit to working cooperatively and collaboratively with other agencies that influence Cambria, such as State Parks and the Coastal Commission. Currently, Cambria's relationship with State Parks is so poor that the district can't get permission to enter State Parks land for its Instream Flow Studies, one of the requirements for the Emergency Water Supply Project's CDP application, already mentioned. The Coastal Commission is suggesting getting a Cease & Desist Order against approving permit applications or erecting a billboard to tell locals Don't Believe These People.

Make a plan to bring Cambria to Carbon Neutrality and 100 percent renewable energy by 2025. Commit to cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase Cambria's resiliency. Get on board with the ideas of California's Clean Mobility Options, such as zero-emissions car sharing. Support local farmers and ranchers in greenhouse gas sequestration methods, such as no-till farming, restoring wetlands, and using compost.

Work with Cal Trans on its Sustainable Highway 1 project to manage traffic through Cambria, <https://www.sustainablehighway1.com/>

Address a wider range of housing in Cambria, from low income through middle income through creative use of existing buildings, bearing in mind the limit of water available. Current extractions from the creeks are already damaging the environment.

--

Christine Heinrichs

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Elizabeth Bettenhausen, B.A., Ph.D.
[REDACTED]
Cambria, California 93428
[REDACTED]

14 January 2021

Board of Directors
Cambria Community Services District
via email

cc: Ossana Terterian, CCSD Board Secretary
John F. Weigold IV, CCSD General Manager

I request that this letter be included in the official public record of this meeting.

Re: 3.A. Agenda, Special Meeting 15 January 2021

Dear Board of Directors:

Here is my response to your request for “Brainstormed (no evaluations) Perceptions.” Please note that I focus only on the CCSD--and not on the wider scope of the town.

Strengths of Cambria Community Services District

1. The Finance Department is now served by excellent staff, making the revenue and expenditures clear to the community for the first time in decades.
2. The Wastewater Department and the Water Department are well supervised and staffed.
3. The Resources and Facilities Department serves the community beyond all reasonable expectations.
4. The District Clerk Department has been marvelously improved.
5. The Fire Dept. exercises its responsibilities with commendable expertise.

Weaknesses of Cambria Community Services District

1. Substituting rhetorical claims of transparency for sufficiently informing the rate and tax payers, and other members of the community, about deliberations by ad hoc committees of the Board of Directors and between individual directors and the general manager
2. The lack of response from the Board of Directors and the General Manager to the comments by the public at meetings or in writing is not only ongoing bad public service. The problem is growing larger.
3. The responsibility of CCSD in relation to Fiscalini Ranch Preserve is vaguely defined.

4. The CCSD has never taken up the substantive question of whether and how the CCSD is responsible for the ecological condition of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve.
5. Not understanding the authority and accountability distribution between CCSD and county, regional, and state agencies
6. Falling prey too quickly to the pleasures of power in such fashion as to obscure accountability to the public
7. Propensity to define the best policy and course of action as whatever avoids the threat of being sued.
8. The Agenda of the CCSD Board of Directors has never focused on thorough discussion of environmental aspects of the CCSD's work, including effects of the climate crisis on this community. Any so-called environmental discussions have simply been mitigation issues in proposed projects..

District Goals

1. Obtain a Coastal Development permit for the Advanced Water Treatment Facility to operate only as an emergency facility in the event of drought or disaster-caused loss of water.
2. Develop a clear procedure for determining and declaring stages of water conservation and levels of use permitted in situations of changing water supply in San Simeon Creek aquifer and Santa Rosa Creek aquifer.
3. Develop a clear and complete procedure for enacting surcharges on water use, including the defining of situations of differing water supply situations.
4. Make public bimonthly a table showing the usage amount of water by customer category.
5. Consider whether the amount of water use by commercial customers (now around 30% of water used in the district) is too high.
6. Reevaluate policy decisions made by previous Boards of Directors, especially the stipulation I the Water Master Plan permitting 665 news single family residential housing units.
7. Reexamine the stipulation in the Water Master Plan for recycled water distribution system.
8. Bring to fruition a unified Capital Improvements plan developed on the assumptions that all the District departments are interdependent in policy.

This brief, incomplete, first draft storm in my brain has exhausted me.
With gratitude for your official interest in what I've thrown to your tempest tomorrow,
Elizabeth Bettenhausen

From: [REDACTED]
To: [BoardComment](#)
Subject: Jan 15 Strategic Planning comments
Date: Thursday, January 14, 2021 6:45:05 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Attached please find my comments on the CCSD's Strategic Planning process.

Thank you,
Jim Townsend

[REDACTED]
Cambria, CA 93428

January 14, 2021

TO: Board of Directors
Cambria Community Services District

FROM: Jim Townsend
[REDACTED] Cambria

RE: Strategic Planning comments

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on CCSD's Strategic Planning initiative. I believe the path to a more community focused, effective, and productive District involves three factors. The three factors are Board accountability, transparency, and focus. With your permission, I will discuss each in turn:

Board Accountability

Since the 2014 Prop 218 election supporting a series of rate increases intended to fund an "Emergency Water System" to serve exiting Cambria residents and businesses in times of drought, the EWS project has morphed into a very different animal, intended not only to provide drought relief, but to support "build out," including the eventual addition of hundreds of new homes and businesses in Cambria. However, to the best of my knowledge, the CCSD Board of Directors has never taken a formal vote on any changes to the original project. When the project description was changed (along with the name) there was no vote taken by the Board. When finally, after nearly six years, a Coastal Development Permit application was submitted to San Luis Obispo County, it was done so without a vote by the Board. "Will serve" letters for new water service, guaranteed to be rejected by the Coastal Commission, are routinely issued by staff without input from the Board.

This failure by the Board to take a formal stand on these critical issues cannot be blamed on staff or the CCSD's legal team. The Board, as the elected representatives of the ratepayers, are responsible for making the big decisions and setting policy. Going forward, the Board should make these types of decisions via formal Board resolutions, debated, and voted on during regular public meetings.

Transparency

It often appears that many of the CCSD's actions relating to water services are based either on some sort of previous legal settlement, or fear of future lawsuits. CCSD has also been involved in litigation with the designers of the water facility for several years. But ratepayers have no idea exactly what is going on with previous and potential litigation. While I understand that there may be some degree of discretion required by such litigation, the ratepayers, who are after all, footing the bills, are entitled to a clear explanation of exactly how ongoing and potential litigation affects CCSD's decision making. The Board should require the District Counsel to report, in public, at least monthly, on the status and impacts of current and potential litigation. CCSD is doing the public's business, and that business should be done in public.

Focus

The mission of the CCSD is provide water and wastewater services, fire protection, and parks and open space for the residents and visitors to our community. That's it, and you'd think that would be enough to keep the Board and staff plenty busy. Spending time and money (even if some of money comes from a grant) on things like electric vehicle charging stations is well outside the mission of the CCSD. Visitor serving facilities, such as charging stations, should be left to organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, whose role is to promote tourism.

I therefore encourage the Board of Directors of the Cambria Community Services District to be accountable, via formal board actions for the big decisions that affect all ratepayers. I encourage the Board to ensure the ratepayers know why certain actions are taken, especially when they relate to "secret" legal issues. And finally, I encourage the Board to stay focused on CCSD's three areas of responsibility and refrain from spending valuable staff time and ratepayer's money on issues outside of those three areas of responsibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [BoardComment](#)
Subject: Public Comments on CSD Strategic Planning
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 10:24:20 AM

Based on the Board's three key areas of discussion:

District Strengths:

1) Improved communication and transparency to the Public from the past.

District Weaknesses

- 1) CSD continues to ignore regulatory input on EWS plant from organizations like Calif Coastal Commission and Calif State Parks. Public needs to hear what those agencies are telling CSD as to a successful CDP process.
- 2) Fire safety is a priority, but hiring a Forest Ecologist never seems to be a priority with the CSD.

District Goals

- 1) Turn this train around. The Board needs to address the reality that the regulatory agencies and the Cambria public do not and will not support this water plant as a means to add additional water hookups in Cambria. The community cannot exist alongside our environment if emphasis of the CSD is toward expanding the water needs of Cambria at the expense of community resources and environment. Science tells us that there is a carrying capacity that any ecosystem needs to stay within in order to maintain a balanced system. Adding additional water needs upon our existing system is not supported by the science and if continued, will have long term impact on our community.
- 2) The Board needs to direct this change in the course of direction upon the CSD staff, management and legal counsel, so that our community can remain focused on providing services to existing customers, and living within our carrying capacity and our natural resources. Beating our heads against regulatory agencies again and again in the hopes of turning this EWS into a SWF is foolish and a waste of our financial resources.
- 3) The District needs to hire a Forest Ecologist to evaluate and report back to the Board on a regular basis as to the needs of our entire forest, which includes our residential area. Our forest doesn't end at a property line. A fire certainly doesn't recognize property boundaries. Neither should we. By having a Forest ecologist and not a Forest manager, we have a better chance of keeping the forest healthy while still maintaining fire safety.

Cambria Community Services District Request for Public Input for 2021 Strategic Planning (submitted by Robert Reid 01-14-2021)

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the first phase of your strategic plan process. Strategic planning often foregoes business planning and actionable items, measures of success and clear strategies to achieve stated objectives...so I hope this would be an important aspect of your plan.

I don't think there is much of anything that will come as a surprise in this planning exercise. Emergency water security (permit the EWS and not the SWF) and fire safety (management and evacuation) are clear priorities, so I've grouped my input as Primary and Secondary goals. With such limited resources, we need to make the tough decisions, and pursue the simplest most cost-effective solutions. Let's recognize the limitations (budget, staffing, expertise, regulations, environment, public safety), even a blank page has four corners.

As a public entity, you are in a unique position of accountability to several entities, first and foremost to residents, businesses, taxpayers and ratepayers. That said, I sincerely wish you success in the planning effort and even more so in its implementation and hope there will be working groups to provide more focused community input in developing a CCSD Strategic Plan.

District strengths

Small, close knit community

Active citizens with interest in civic issues and organized groups (e.g., Lions, Rotary, Churches, etc.)

Resident expertise (many professionals, most retired)

Approved Local Coastal Plan

Staff experience and tenure

Infrastructure in place (though aging)

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District Weaknesses

Communication

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GOALS and OBJECTIVES (Strategies for Objectives TBD by CCSD and stakeholders)
PRIORITY GOALS and OBJECTIVES

1. Water security for existing residents and businesses (EWS)
 - a. Change back to EWS (drop SWF) and secure final permits for emergency use as designed
 - b. Redirect SWF funding to infrastructure support/other needs
 - c. Identify water delivery loss and needed repairs
 - d. Explore Warren Ranch reservoir option
 - e. Renew aggressive water conservation measures and fixture retrofit program
 - f. Gray water recycling/water storage

2. Fire safety and Evacuation preparedness
 - a. Update Emergency evacuation plan w/alternate routes
 - b. Improved/aggressive prevention with property inspection/compliance of improved and unimproved properties (CalFire, CFD, volunteers)
 - c. Ban all open wood fires in fire season (revised Fire Code)
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SECONDARY GOALS and OBJECTIVES

3. Ecologically sound and fire-safe Forest and Open Space Management

- a. Forest management plan
 - b. Forest Manager recruitment
 - c. Genista (Broom eradication)
 - d. Private and public parcel plan
 - e. Stewardship/management plan for CCSD open space parcels f.
 - f. Greenspace, SLO Conservancy, SLO County, private owner property transfer w/conservation easements
4. Infrastructure (water delivery and wastewater treatment)
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15 January 2021

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [BoardComment](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Strategic Plan comments/input to CCSD Board
Date: Thursday, January 14, 2021 12:07:04 PM
Attachments: [CCSD Strategic Plan input.docx](#)

Attached please find comments/input for CCSD Board and Staff for the upcoming strategic plan workshop and plan process. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to ask. Best wishes on this endeavor.

Robert Reid
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [BoardComment](#)
Subject: CCSD Strategic Plan Input
Date: Thursday, January 14, 2021 9:40:37 PM
Attachments: [CCSD Strategic Plan input.docx](#)
[Town Hall Strategic Planning meeting comments.docx](#)

Cambria Community Services District Request for Public Input for 2021 Strategic Planning

The two attached documents penned by Robert Reid and Christine Heinrichs mirror my views about the CCSD organization's strengths and weaknesses. Robert's fair, concise, well-organized input lays it on the line the way I also see it. Christine's rich narrative fills in the blanks and supports the same themes.

They both advocate a more conservative approach to the expensive aging SWF water plant and to the town's finances.

My own personal hot button is addressed by both Robert and Christine and that is this:

I believe the CCSD should, after investing around \$20 million in the SWF, prove to current residents that the it can work as advertised before upping the ante and issuing intent-to-serve letters for water we don't currently have. That seems reckless and unnecessary.

I look forward to your presentation of findings next week.

Scott Anderson

[REDACTED] Cambria