

City of Carpinteria
City Council Agenda
Special Meeting (City Council Retreat)
Tuesday, July 28, 2026
Council Chamber, 5775 Carpinteria Avenue, Carpinteria, CA 93013

2:00 p.m. Special Meeting
Only In-Person

AMENDED AGENDA – Start Time Changed from 2:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Attendance/Viewing Options:

- Attend the in-person meeting in City Council Chambers at City Hall (5775 Carpinteria Ave.).

Public Comments

- Provide a live public comment in City Council Chambers at City Hall (5775 Carpinteria Ave.).
- Submit a written comment (as either a general public comment or on a specific agenda item) to be distributed to City Council by **12:00 P.M. on the day of the meeting** by either submitting your comment via (1) email to PublicComment@carpinteriaca.gov, or (2) follow this link
- (<https://carpinteriaca.gov/city-hall/agendas-meetings>), select the meeting you want to provide a comment on, and click the Submit Comments button located on the left hand side of the agenda portal. Please reference the agenda item to which your comment pertains. Although written comments become part of the record, they will not be read aloud at the meeting.

Levine Act Warning

Applicants and their agents before the City Council are subject to the campaign disclosure provisions detailed in Government Code Section 84308. No City Council Member may accept, solicit, or direct a contribution of more than \$500 from any party for 12 months following the date a final decision is rendered by the City. No City Council Member may accept, solicit, or direct any contribution from an agent of the party during the same time frame. This prohibition commences when an item involving the entitlement has been placed on the City Council's agenda for a public meeting, when the City Council Members knows the action is within the City Council's jurisdiction and it is reasonably foreseeable that it will come before the City Council as a decisionmaker, or when the proceeding is before the City Council for its decision. A party to a City proceeding—which includes both applicants and agents—shall disclose on the record of the proceeding any contribution of more than \$500 made to any Council Member by

the applicant, or any donations made by the agent, during the preceding 12 months. No party to a City proceeding, or agent, shall make a contribution to a Council Member during the proceeding and for 12 months following the date a final decision is rendered by the City. Prior to rendering a decision on a City proceeding, any Council Member who received contribution of more than \$500 within the preceding 12 months from any party, or who received any donations from an agent, to a proceeding shall disclose that fact on the record of the proceeding, and shall be disqualified from participating in the proceeding. However, if any Council Member receives a contribution that otherwise would require disqualification, and returns the contribution within 30 days of knowing about the contribution and the relevant proceeding, the Council Member shall be permitted to participate in the proceeding. If you believe that these provisions apply to you or a Council Member, please inform the City Clerk at the earliest possible opportunity. Failure to do so may affect the City's ability to process your application.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT WILL ONLY BE HEARD CONCERNING THE AGENDIZED ITEMS BELOW

CITY COUNCIL RETREAT

Schedule *(Times are approximate and subject to change)*

- a. 2:00 PM Opening, Framing & Ground Rules
- b. 2:10 PM Public Comment
- c. 2:30 PM Council Norms, Values and Principles of Governance
(Public Comment will be heard after the presentation)
- d. 4:00 PM Strategic Plan Process Audit and Expectations for FY 27-29 Process
(Public Comment will be heard after the presentation)
- e. 5:00 PM Dinner Break
- f. 5:30 PM Fiscal & Operational Framework for FY 27-29 Preparation
(Public Comment will be heard after the presentation)
- g. 6:45 PM Framing the Transition & FY 27-29 Strategic Plan
(Public Comment will be heard after the presentation)
- h. 7:00 PM Public Comment
- i. 7:15 PM Closing

ADJOURNMENT

The regular City Council meeting of August 10, 2026 is cancelled and the next regular City Council meeting will be held on August 24, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (805) 755-4403 or the California Relay Service at (866) 735-2929. Notification two business days prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements for accessibility to this meeting.

Materials related to an agenda item submitted to the City Council after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public review at the City Clerk's Office, located at 5775 Carpinteria Avenue, Carpinteria, CA 93013 or by going to the City's website at <https://carpinteriaca.gov/city-hall/agendas-meetings/>.

This agenda was posted on Thursday, July 23, 2026, in the City Clerk's Office, on the City Hall Public Notices Board, and on the Internet.



City of Carpinteria

COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

ITEM FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

City Council Strategic Planning Workshop Including Review of Council Norms, Values and Principles of Governance; Evaluation of Overall Process and Management of the Fiscal Year 25-27 Strategic Plan Cycle; Alignment of Expectations for the Next Fiscal Year 27-29 Plan Process; and Fiscal and Operational Framework for Fiscal Year 27-29.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Receive presentation and provide direction to staff as appropriate.

Sample Motion: I move to receive the presentation and direct staff as appropriate.

BACKGROUND

On January 18, 2025, the City Council held a retreat to, among other things, develop a City Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2025-26 and 2026-27 (FY 25-27).

On March 24, 2025, the City Council adopted Goals and Priorities for FY 25-27 as previously discussed and drafted during the City Council retreat on January 18, 2025.

On July 28, 2025, the City Council adopted the final Strategic Plan for FY 25-27, which included a public-facing, user-friendly document to enhance transparency, promote accountability, and support ongoing monitoring of progress.

As part of the development of the City's two-year Strategic Plan, it was decided that City staff would provide semiannual reports on work progress, and that a mid-cycle retreat would be conducted to allow for review of the plan as a whole. In addition, the retreat allows the City Council to engage in broad discussions on other topics such as long-term financial stability, principles of governance, and strategic planning for the next two-year budget cycle (FY 2027 – 2029).

DISCUSSION

To assist with the general process, the City has retained the services of Tripepi Smith. Tripepi Smith is a team of more than 50 communications experts, providing marketing,

technology, and public affairs consulting. Tripepi Smith currently works with over 100 city governments and public agencies, and has experience facilitating comprehensive goal setting processes, including development of the City's current Strategic Plan.

Prior to today's retreat, Tripepi Smith held multiple meetings with the City Manager to discuss meeting form and deliverables. Tripepi Smith also conducted one-on-one interviews with each Councilmember.

As part of the retreat, Director and Strategic Plan Facilitator, Christine Martin, will facilitate a structured, interactive program session.

Christine Martin brings over 20 years of experience in the public sector, providing exceptional service to local government. Prior to joining Tripepi Smith, Christine was the Assistant City Manager for the City of Livermore, where she served for over two decades in senior leadership roles.

Christine is a solutions-oriented servant leader known for strong political acumen and a positive, can-do approach. In her role as Assistant City Manager, Christine established the City's communications and emergency management programs, led the development of a five-year strategic plan and served as liaison to key council subcommittees. She led legislative advocacy efforts, represented the City in regional coalitions and served as chair of the Alameda County City Managers Association. In her role as a senior planner, she spearheaded the City's first comprehensive zoning code rewrite, resulting in an award-winning development code including form-based transect districts specifically created to protect the historical downtown area. She also led complex annexations and large-scale development projects. She also served as president of the City's largest bargaining unit, helping to bring transparency and effective communication from the executive team to the unit.

Christine is a graduate of the ICMA High Performance Leadership Academy, where she focused on organizational development, change management, and effective communication.

POLICY CONSISTENCY

This report can be found consistent with the City's interest in promoting good governance, including efficient use of public resources and public transparency.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

No Additional Funding Requested. Minimal staff time to prepare the report is included in the Adopted FY 2026-27 General Fund Budget.

LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The City Council retreat is a special meeting of the City Council pursuant to Carpinteria Municipal Code 2.04.020. The meeting is open to the public. Posting of the agenda and making the agenda materials available in advance of the meeting through the City Clerk's office and the City web site.

OPTIONS

1. Receive presentation and provide direction to staff as appropriate.

PRINCIPAL PARTIES EXPECTED AT MEETING

The general public, including various interest groups.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Tripepi Smith Presentation Slides

Staff contact: Michael Ramirez, City Manager
(805 755-4450), michaelr@carpinteriaca.gov



Signature

ATTACHMENT A

Tripepi Smith Presentation Slides



Strategic Plan Bridge & Groundwork Workshop

Tuesday, July 28, 2026

Agenda for Today

Tuesday, July 28 | 2:00 – 7:30 PM

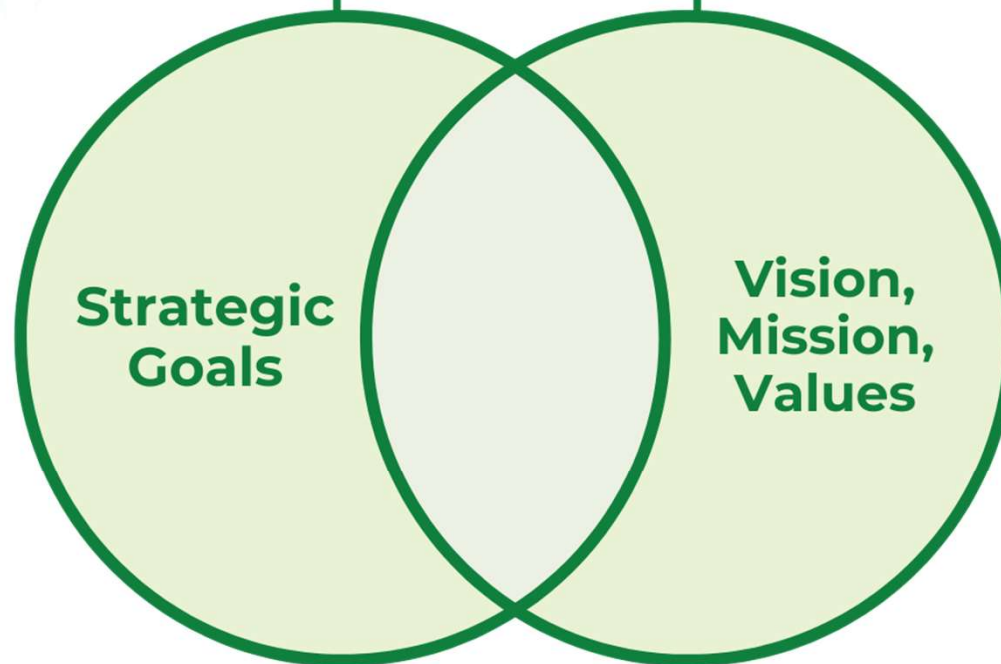
2:00 PM	Welcome, Introductions & Background
2:10 PM	Public Comment
2:30 PM	Block One: Council Norms, Values and Principles of Governance
4:00 PM	Block Two: Strategic Plan Process Audit and Expectations for FY 27-29 Process
5:00 PM	Dinner Break
5:30 PM	Block Three: Fiscal & Operational Framework for FY 27-29 Prep
6:45 PM	Block Four: Framing the Transition & FY 27-29 Strategic Plan Process
7:00 PM	Public Comment, Wrap Up & Next Steps

PUBLIC COMMENT



Block One: Council Norms, Values and Principles of Governance

City Council Norms, Values and Principles of Governance



Norms

Norms are the shared expectations for behavior and interaction among council members and between the council and city staff. They establish guidelines for communication, decorum and decision-making processes.

Foster Balanced, Constructive and Solution-Oriented Discussions
Practice Leadership / Mutual Accountability
Provide Direct Communication
Maintain Professionalism
Cultivate Kindness and Respect
Prioritize Communication with the Community

Norms

Foster Balanced, Constructive and Solution-Oriented Discussions

- Ensure all viewpoints are heard and considered, creating a balanced discussion that reflects the collective interest
- Maintain constructive dialogue and manage displays of frustration or dissatisfaction
- Stay solution-focused
- Come to meetings fully prepared, having reviewed agenda materials, conducted necessary research, and sought clarification on complex issues in advance

Potential New Norm

- Commit to the deliberative process by being willing to respectfully disagree and raise concerns early, while standing by collective decisions once they are reached

Norms

Practice Leadership / Mutual Accountability

- The mayor is primarily responsible for keeping discussions productive, but any council member may intervene to remind the group to remain constructive and focused

Potential New Norm

- Adhere to three step deliberative process and empower Mayor and Council Members to call points of order if not followed
 - 1. Questions of staff, 2. Public comment, 3. Council deliberation

Norms

Provide Direct Communication

- Communicate with clear, respectful directness
- Clearly articulate the reasoning behind decisions, ensuring the community and fellow council members understand the rationale, considerations, and intended outcomes

Potential New Norm

- Dissenting votes represent policy debate, not ongoing opposition to staff execution

Maintain Professionalism

- Adhere to established policies and procedures rather than individual preferences or personal dynamics
- Practice active listening, solution-oriented dialogue, and adherence to shared and adopted goals

Norms

Cultivate Kindness and Respect

- Recognize kindness and politeness are important in fostering a collaborative work environment

Prioritize Communication with the Community

- Actively engage with the community through transparent, consistent, and frequent communication
- Be present and accessible in the community by attending local events, engaging with residents, and actively listening to diverse perspectives

Values

Values reflect the core beliefs and priorities that guide the council's actions and decision-making. They provide a moral and ethical compass, ensuring that decisions align with the community's aspirations and the city's mission. Where goals and priorities provide direction on what is to be done, values provide direction on how they should be done.

Clear Communication	Collaboration
Fairness And Equity	Responsiveness
Accessibility	Respect and Open-Mindedness
Proactive Community Engagement	Forward-Thinking
Accountability	

Principles of Governance

Principles of Governance define the overarching roles and responsibilities that shape how the council conducts its business and engages with the public. These principles help maintain accountability, transparency, and effectiveness in governance, ensuring decisions are made effectively and in the best interests of the community.

Council Responsibility
Staff Responsibility
Council-Advisory Body Relations
Community-Wide Governance

Principles of Governance

Council Responsibility

- Partner with City staff as trusted subject-matter experts, valuing their expertise while engaging in thoughtful inquiry to ensure well-informed and balanced decision-making
 - Discuss staff report content
- Clearly communicate the City's goals and objectives to constituents and share community feedback with staff
- Ensure decisions are made with all necessary facts; defer items if more information is needed
- Be mindful of City resources and ensure decisions align with long-term plans and goals
 - Potential new principle “any new item requires Council consensus before staff devotes more than two hours.”

Principles of Governance

Council Responsibility

- Research, ask questions, explore options, and stay engaged through regular meetings with the City Manager
- Recognize and appreciate staff and community contributions
- Prioritize citywide well-being in decision-making while thoughtfully considering district-specific concerns to ensure inclusiveness

Principles of Governance

Staff Responsibility

- Understand that Council members, and the public we strive to serve and engage, may not have expertise on all issues. Exercise patience, speak plainly, and use visuals when appropriate. Provide pertinent context when presenting information for City Council consideration, such as assumptions, constraints, and other key considerations
- Research and present unbiased information, aligning recommendations with the City's budget, General Plan, and Strategic Plan
- Deliver accurate and timely information and provide clear, actionable options for council decisions
- Maintain professionalism and respect
- Be available and follow up on questions through the City Manager

Principles of Governance

Council-Advisory Body Relations

- Advisory bodies should focus on providing clear, realistic recommendations that align with council goals, the City budget, and long-term plans
- Advisory bodies should provide the City Council with regular updates
 - Submit annual work plan to Council, schedule annual joint CC/PC study session
- Advisory bodies should operate respectfully, leave personal opinions aside, and focus on actionable recommendations*
- Advisory bodies should provide the rationale behind their recommendations

Principles of Governance

Community-Wide Governance

- Prioritize citywide well-being in decision-making while thoughtfully considering district-specific concerns to ensure inclusiveness
- Maintain transparency and articulate the rationale behind decisions
- Engage the community by actively seeking input and ensuring all voices are heard, not only an outspoken few
- Use data, financial information, and historical context to inform decisions and policies
- Promote collaboration, clarity, and respect across all community interactions, emphasizing the long-term vision for the City
- Attain and uphold a thorough and practical understanding of the City's services, programs, and resources
- Receive regular updates from local agency partners

PUBLIC COMMENT



Block Two: Strategic Plan Process Audit and Expectations for FY 27-29 Process

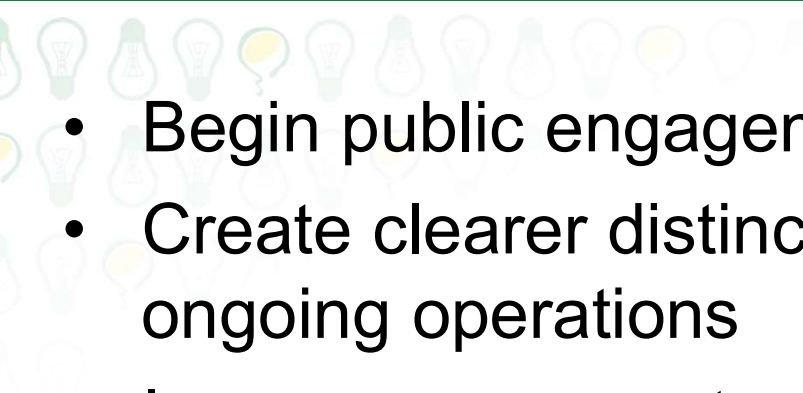
Purpose

- Reflect on lessons learned from the FY 2025–2027 Strategic Plan
- Confirm expectations for the next planning cycle
- Establish stronger tracking, transparency and scope management practices

Strategic Plan Process

Strategic Planning Process	Timeline
Community Survey	November 25 – January 10
Community Workshop #1 (English)	Wednesday, December 4
Community Workshop #2 (Spanish)	Thursday, December 5
Community Workshop #3 (Bilingual, via Zoom)	Wednesday, December 11
1-on-1 Meetings with City Council	December
Strategic Planning Retreat with City Council	Saturday, January 18
Meeting with Staff to Develop Strategic Goals and Objectives	January/February
City Council Meeting to Adopt Strategic Plan	February/March

Opportunities for Improvement

- 
- A decorative background on the left side of the slide featuring a row of lightbulbs. Some are lit (yellow) and some are unlit (grey), creating a pattern of ideas and innovation.
- Begin public engagement earlier in the process
 - Create clearer distinction between strategic priorities and ongoing operations
 - Improve progress tracking throughout the plan cycle
 - Better communicate accomplishments to the community
 - Establish a consistent approach for incorporating new priorities mid-cycle

DISCUSSION

FY 27-29 Strategic Process and Priorities

Strategic Plan process/timeline

Should the next Strategic Plan focus primarily on:

- High-impact Council priorities
- Long-term transformational initiatives
- Community outcomes

...while recognizing that routine departmental work continues outside of the Strategic Plan?

One-In, One-Out Protocol

When Council adds a significant new initiative during the Strategic Plan cycle:

- ➔ Add one priority
- ➔ Pause or remove one existing priority

Benefits

- Protects staff capacity
- Maintains realistic workloads
- Keeps Council priorities focused
- Prevents continual expansion of the work plan

How do we better tell the City's story?

Potential enhancements:

- Public-facing Strategic Plan dashboard (Red / Yellow / Green status)
- Strategic Plan section included in future Council staff reports
- Regular reporting on outcomes and performance metrics
- Better connection between Strategic Plan progress, staff time and taxpayer investment



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PUBLIC COMMENT



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BREAK



Block Three: Fiscal & Operational Framework for FY 27-29 Prep

Fiscal & Operational Framework

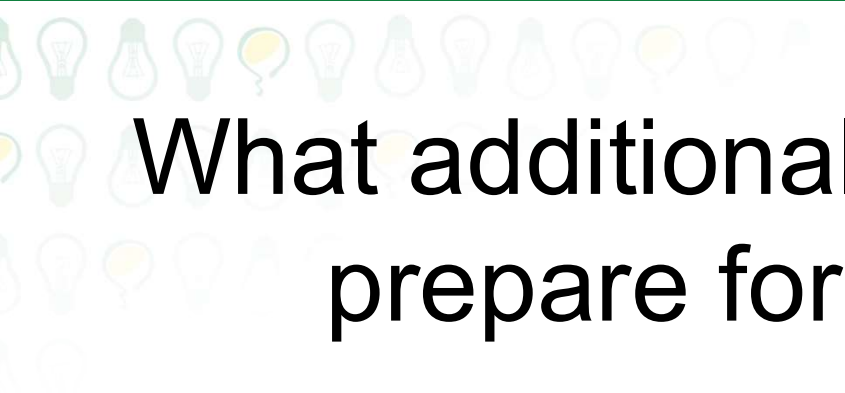
Purpose

Validate the key fiscal and operational themes identified through Council interviews and provide direction on information staff should prepare for the Winter Strategic Planning Retreat.

Objective

- Confirm major policy themes
- Identify information needed to support future decisions and inform the public of trade-offs
- Provide staff direction for the next phase of strategic planning

Discussion

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What additional information should staff prepare for the Winter Retreat?

Are there additional policy areas Council would like staff to explore?

Interview Themes & Discussion

Fiscal Sustainability

- Long-term financial planning
- Scenario modeling
- Finance Subcommittee review

Economic Vitality

- Business retention
- Streamlined permitting
- Preserve small-town charm
- Economic development opportunities

Infrastructure

- Roads & pavement
- Community Pool
- Veterans Hall
- Long-term funding strategies

Organizational Capacity

- Workforce capacity
- Service delivery metrics
- Customer service performance
- Consistent community messaging (storytelling)

PUBLIC COMMENT



Block Four: Framing the Transition & FY 27-29 Strategic Plan Process

PUBLIC COMMENT



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Conclusion



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Thank You!