



PLANNING FOR EQUITY

Pescadero Town Planning Initiative

Prepared by **Puente de la Costa Sur**
Sponsored by **Silicon Valley Community Foundation**
August 2019

Executive Summary

The Pescadero Town Planning Initiative was born from the desire of many local groups to coordinate an equitable, inclusive and comprehensive process for residents in the rural Pescadero community to identify top priorities for social services, such as childcare and healthcare; infrastructure such as housing, sewer and water; and missing public town components such as a plaza, trails and a community center.

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation awarded a \$75,000 grant for this purpose to Puente de la Costa Sur (Puente) in 2018. An important value for this effort was to be inclusive of the local Spanish-speaking population, a group that - statewide and nationwide - is often underrepresented in community planning efforts. Because Pescadero is not incorporated, one obvious challenge was the lack of a City Council or Mayor to lead these planning efforts. Other challenges included engaging community members from a wide range of diverse backgrounds in a rural town where many don't have internet access, there are few community spaces for posting information, and there is no community phone book, newspaper or a comprehensive e-mail list. Keeping these goals and challenges in mind, the planning initiative was launched in August 2018.

A Steering Committee consisting of community members, school representatives, Pescadero Foundation trustees and Puente staff drove the Town Planning efforts.

The first step was to determine the needs of Pescadero residents by directly asking what they wanted to see in their town. Through Spanish- and English-language focus groups, those priorities were put into a spreadsheet and formed the basis for the questions presented on the voting boards used later at a community-wide Gathering. The focus group effort reached a total of 24 bilingual speakers, 72 Spanish speakers and 99 English speakers. The Pescadero region encompasses 82 square miles with approximately 2,500¹ residents and includes the towns of Pescadero and Loma Mar, both served by the Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council (PMAC). About 8% of residents participated in the focus

groups and 9% in the community-wide Gathering.

After an all-out communication effort by the Steering Committee, 217 people attended the Town Planning Gathering at Pescadero Elementary School on March 17, 2019. Two local women, Shay Barton and Monica Resendiz, served as keynote speakers, addressing attendees eloquently about their desire for “net zero” housing (buildings where energy generation and use are equal) and their experiences growing up in Pescadero. Attendees then moved out-of-doors to participate in a facilitated community activity designed to meet each other despite language barriers by mixing groups of English, Spanish and bilingual speakers. This endeavor was very well received. Once back inside, attendees heard a brief history of planning efforts in Pescadero and an explanation of the selection process of 25 ideas brought forward in the focus groups. Area residents then voted on the most popular ideas raised in the focus groups.

The most ‘voted-for’ items for infrastructure were trails, housing, a community center, solutions to the septic/water problems in town, and a public pool. The most voted for items for services and businesses were a health care clinic, laundromat and a playground.

Of the 217 participants, 63 signed up as volunteers to learn how to write grants to secure funding, to help move the housing project forward, to support the building of a town plaza and to engage in creating a trail system. Pescadero succeeded in moving forward with a vision for the town with a united voice - one that incorporated our diverse community of Spanish and English speakers, businesses owners, home owners and renters, agricultural workers, school leaders and more.

The desired outcome of having an inclusive process, finding consensus among a diverse group of residents and identifying next steps for the wellbeing of the community and its residents was achieved.

¹ Numbers for this estimation are based on Puente's service and outreach data.

How It All Started

In the fall of 2016, a group of community members representing local organizations including The Pescadero Foundation, the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District and Puente, with the support of staff from the office of San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley, came together to apply for a county grant to start a town planning initiative in Pescadero. The goal was to coordinate an equitable process in the Pescadero region to identify residents' top priorities for services and missing physical components of a strong community. Although the proposal was not funded, the group continued to work together and seek alternative funding sources under the name of Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative. Due to cost, processes like this are very unusual in rural communities, even more so in isolated areas such as the South Coast, which is unincorporated and relies on its community members, local non-profits and the Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council for

Of the 3007 total counties in the US, San Mateo ranks fifth in per capita income. This level of wealth would never be suspected when one walks the streets of Pescadero: there is no community center or public plaza; the only public restrooms are a couple of portable toilets; and the high school and middle school students cannot drink their school's tap water because it is contaminated.

leadership. Most communities organize town planning efforts with the support of or under the leadership of their town government or official representatives.

On behalf of the Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative, Puente revised the project for submission to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and in 2018, received a grant for \$75,000.

Previous Efforts

In 2004, the Pescadero community had engaged in a town planning process, which was funded by the S. H. Cowell Foundation. More than 120 local residents participated. Driven by grassroots local needs, the town came together to identify and prioritize consensus issues such as the need for affordable housing, sewage water treatment, flood zone mitigation, a town plaza or village square, and a new zoning code that would require new development to match the pattern of historic and walkable Pescadero instead of allowing suburban sprawl, among other ideas.



Pescadero residents at a Town Planning Gathering in 2004

While some of these issues saw subsequent action and follow up, many did not. This was a result of a lack of paid staff, there being only a couple of emerging nonprofits at the time, and the fact that there was no private development funding to move projects forward. The top vote getter from 2004 – the creation of a new zoning code for Pescadero that would require new buildings to be designed to encourage walkability – was explored in depth using grant funding again from the S. H. Cowell Foundation. The idea of a new custom zoning code for Pescadero was ultimately abandoned because the grant-funded research uncovered enormous costs to prepare the environmental documents that are required in the California Coastal Zone. The California Coastal Commission is a state agency with quasi-judicial regulatory oversight over land use and public access in the California Coastal Zone. Pescadero

is located in this zone, which adds expensive studies and another level of review to any proposed project.

Even without additional formal follow-up, local organizations and government agencies have made a lot of progress on a number of issues:

- The Pescadero Foundation explored the county-owned “Warheit Site” for affordable housing from approximately 2003-2010.
- A wastewater treatment study funded and led by the County was completed in 2008.

“In 2004, there were only four of us – two volunteers and two consultants – doing the entire process. Given the list of accomplishments after the 2004 workshop without follow-up on any ideas except the top vote-getter, just imagine what we could do if we had funding to do multiple next steps this time.”

Lynne Bowman, School District Board Member and 2019 Town Planning Steering Committee Member

- From 2008 to 2011, the RCD built multiple reservoirs for farms to have water security while keeping water in creeks for threatened and endangered fish, helped landowners prevent and repair catastrophic erosion on their properties, repaired and rebuilt rural roads that are the only access or egress for people in the redwoods, as well as critically important for wildfire fighting.
- Calfire and San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) completed a Community Wildfire Protection Plan in 2009 that identifies hazards and priorities for mitigating fire risk and brings resources to reduce the threat of wildfire.
- A Farmers’ Market was started by Puente in 2011.
- In 2014, San Mateo County created the Farm Labor Housing Rehabilitation Pilot Program which supports the creation of new farmworker housing, the rehabilitation or repair of existing farm labor housing and the replacement of existing dilapidated mobile home units.
- In partnership with Coastside Clinic, Puente launched a healthcare clinic with two examining rooms in 2015, with funding from the county.
- In 2014 the RCD completed an effort identifying flood control projects that would benefit fish and wildlife, public health and safety, and advance collaboration in the watershed.
- In 2016, the RCD restored 100 acres of floodplain on POST property on Butano Creek to reduce downstream flooding.
- As a result of a similar inclusive process, Puente launched a bilingual childcare coop in 2016.
- In 2016 the County financed the purchase and installation of two new homes for low-income farm workers on Cabrillo Farms.
- In 2016 the County installed portable restrooms near the public parking lot at the corner of Pescadero Creek Road and Stage Road and continues to maintain them.
- A parking lot was constructed in the public right-of-way at the corner of Stage Road and Pescadero Creek Road by the County in 2016.
- The Agricultural Workforce Housing Needs Assessment was completed by San Mateo County in 2016.
- Since 2008, the RCD restored habitat throughout the watershed for threatened and endangered wildlife.
- The RCD led the current effort to dredge Butano Creek in Pescadero Marsh and beyond to reduce flooding and restore fish migration. It will be completed this fall.

The 2019 Pescadero Town Planning Process

From 2016 to 2018, a group of residents and leaders met informally as the Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative (SPC). The SPC includes community members, business owners and leadership from The Pescadero Foundation, the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District (LHPUSD), the Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council (PMAC), Peninsula Open Space Trust (Post), the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD), and Puente. When Puente secured a grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to engage in an

equitable town planning process with a more deliberate focus on including previously underrepresented community members—especially Spanish-speaking Latinos—it hired consultants Lois Fisher, a New Urbanist Town Planner with Fisher Town Design and Alfredo Vergara-Lobo, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant. From the Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative, a smaller group formed the Town Planning Steering Committee to provide input to the overall project.

Challenges

Differences in language ability, education level, race and ethnicity among residents added complexity to the planning process. The fact that Pescadero is an unincorporated area brought particular challenges to this project:

- The lack of staff or elected leaders to orchestrate and direct this type of town-wide complex initiative.
- Despite having County support for some projects and services, Pescadero town planning has not been a priority for the County.
- The need for outreach tools to engage residents in the focus groups and in the Gathering. This outreach process was expensive and required many personnel and volunteer hours as the organizations involved in the steering committee had different key abilities to outreach to diverse groups of community members.
- Concern among residents that the hired consultants were following an “outside-the-area hidden agenda.”
- Resistance from community members who had felt disappointed with previous planning processes.
- The perception of the town planning process as ‘foreign’ to many of the Spanish-speaking participants because of their own experiences of exclusion from similar processes in this country and in their countries of origin.
- Steering committee meetings, which began as simple operating and implementation agendas, morphed into complex discussions about gaining community trust, how to best communicate and engage residents, and which strategies to develop to ensure that the process was both rigorously inclusive and transparent.
- Properly translating boards, flyers, banners, postcards and other presentation materials into Spanish.
- Vandalization of outreach materials.
- The lack of a community phone book, newspaper or a comprehensive e-mail list for a local outreach program.

Bilingual and Bicultural Outreach

To kick off the first outreach effort, residents were invited to participate in small focus groups where they were presented with a summary of the 2004 town planning effort, accomplishments to date, and the latest town planning process. To identify infrastructure needs, maps of the area were posted and attendees wrote their top priorities on the appropriate maps using self-adhesive notes and markers. To generate priorities on services, participants also used self-adhesive notes and



Spanish Speakers Focus Group at Pescadero Elementary, December 2018



Bilingual Speakers Focus Group at Puente, October 2018

brainstorming exercises. Current projects being overseen by the County, the Resource Conservation District or the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District were excluded from consideration to avoid overlap. The goal of these meetings was to generate excitement about the possibilities for making life better in Pescadero through town planning and to gather important ideas to poll at the larger town-wide Gathering.

The bilingual success of this town planning process can be attributed to those local Spanish speakers themselves, who chose to engage in an unfamiliar activity. Key to getting Spanish speakers to come to, likely, their first ever meeting on town planning was the trust that they

have in Puente. When they arrived at the focus group, they were greeted by a facilitator who spoke Spanish and who came from Latin America, as they did. The principal bilingual/bicultural assistant in this project was consultant Alfredo Vergara-Lobo. He used culturally appropriate tools such as empathy and conversations on positive engagement experiences to connect with Spanish-speaking residents in a way that helped them feel comfortable and become willing to participate fully in the upcoming town-wide Gathering.

This outreach process can be a model for other communities seeking to engage in inclusive town planning projects.

"I appreciated that the smaller group meetings' ideas were really heard! Thank you!"

Gathering participant



English Speakers Focus Group at Downtown Local, December 2018



Attendees at the March 17th Gathering at Pescadero Elementary School

"I appreciated all the people who attended, it was a nice diverse group. I felt a closeness among all the people."

Gathering participant

The Community Gathering

On March 17, 2019, a warm and sunny day in Pescadero, 217 people gathered at Pescadero Elementary School. The meeting outreach via focus groups, e-mails, knocking on doors, banners, newspaper articles, KPDO radio shows, announcements in church and other community meetings, flyers, postcards, a mailing to all postal patrons, information on two local nonprofit websites, and posts on different social media platforms, as well as free childcare and a community meal had succeeded.

Of those in attendance, 83 were Latinx and 134 were Anglos. Interpretation headphones were available at the sign-in desk and fully bilingual volunteers provided interpretation throughout the entire event. Adriana Serrano, a bilingual Latina from the Town Planning Steering Committee, was the Mistress of Ceremonies.

"When you first announced the community activity and began describing it, I rolled my eyes, as I'm not big on touchy-feely stuff, however, it was a most amazing experience for me to meet and talk with two neighbors I had never met before and with whom I would not connect in my everyday routine in town."

Gathering participant

Community Activity: Consultant Alfredo Vergara-Lobo led the group in a community communication activity outside on the school playground. Attendees sorted themselves into English-, Bilingual- or Spanish-speakers and then mixed themselves into groups of 3 or 4 people from each language category. The goal was to meet a neighbor whom you had not met previously. Some respondents commented that this was the most meaningful part of the day. The energy in the room was high as the group filed back into the hall.



Monolingual English and Spanish speakers meeting each other for the first time with the support of bilingual members of the community



Town Planner Lois Fisher presenting on Pescadero's past and its hopeful future

Town Planning Presentation: Town Planning consultant Lois Fisher told ‘The Development Story of Pescadero’, based on her research. She talked about how unincorporated Pescadero had been influenced by the pro-growth, then anti-growth, factions that fought over the fate of the San Mateo County Coastside in the 1960s and 1970’s. She urged residents to once more take the reins of self-determination to leave a green and walkable legacy for the next generation that will live in Pescadero.

Keynote Speakers: Two young women in the role of keynote speakers took to the ‘hay bale and barn door’ stage. Shay Barton was passionate in her plea to tie town planning efforts to addressing climate change issues. Monica Resendiz, a recently elected Pescadero school board member, talked about the difficulty of growing up in a household in Pescadero with her single mother, a brother and a sister. She inspired the room by sharing how, despite the odds, all three siblings are now college graduates. She is the first person in her family to run for public office.

“I feel like the community exercise was the type of healing moment this town has been longing for and I look forward to figuring out how to have a lot more of them on a regular basis somehow.”

**Nicole Sillapere,
Steering Committee Member**

“I learned about the diverse history of Pescadero, I learned about others’ needs and values, I discovered that there is no government in Pescadero other than a Supervisor, thus the future of Pescadero is directly in the hands of the people. Pescadero cares.”

Gathering participant

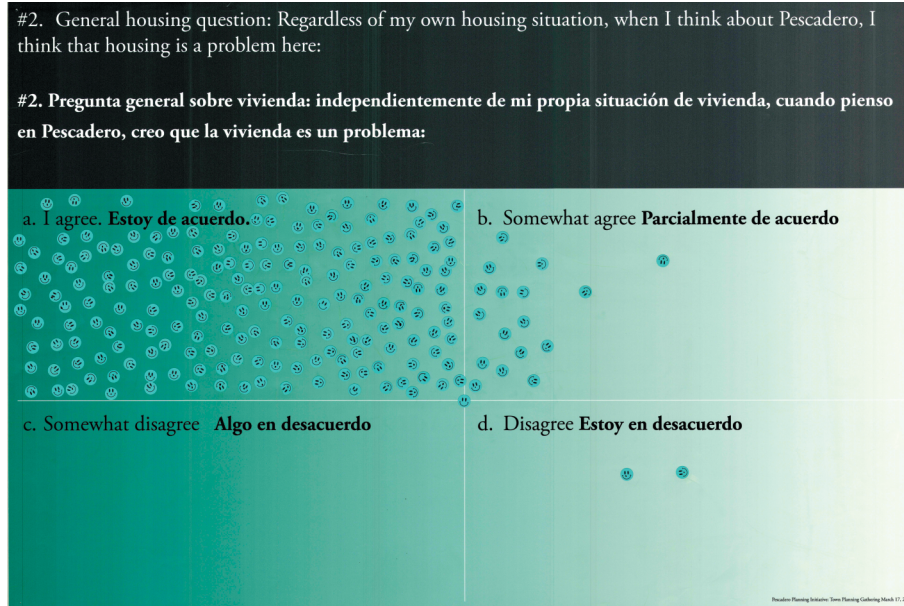
Voting: 25 boards with various questions in both Spanish and English were mounted on the walls of the room. Residents were then asked to select their preferences using green ‘smiley face’ dots they had been given as they signed in.



Participant in the voting exercise

Voting Board Example: Below is an example of a completed voting board. In this case, 85 people agreed that, despite their personal situation, housing is a problem in Pescadero, 17 somewhat agreed and 2 disagreed. In percentages, 98% of the respondents

considered housing in Pescadero to be a problem or somewhat of a problem. Images of all the voting boards are available in the Appendix available at MyPuente.org/PescaderoTownPlanning

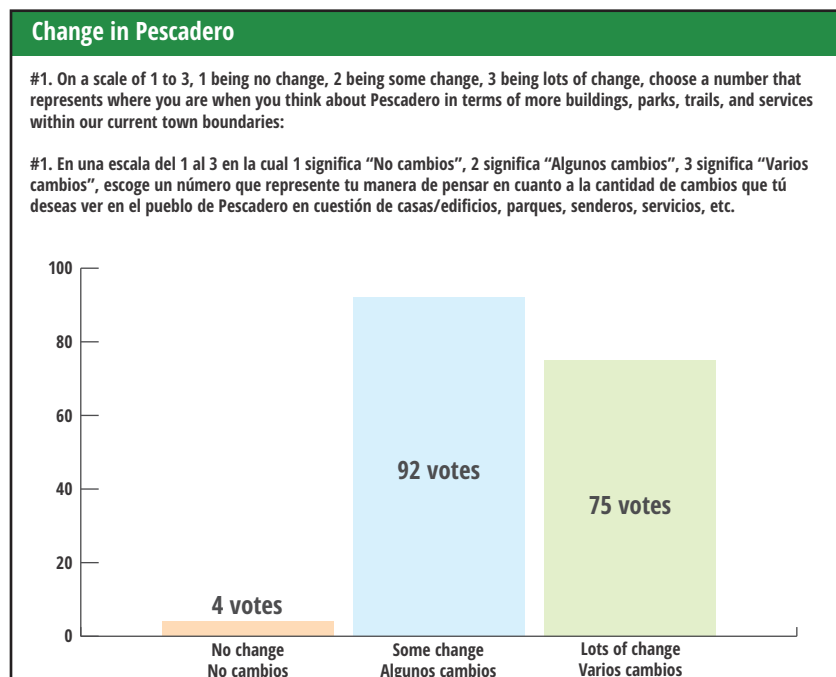


Residents' Top Priorities

The Steering Committee provided a very general first question asking locals about whether or not they wanted change in Pescadero in terms of more buildings, parks, trails and services within the current town boundaries.

We wanted to provide a place for those who did not want any change in town to register their opinion rather than assume that everyone wanted to plan for additions to their town. See below for graph of the results:

Graph of results from Board #1:
4 people wanted no change, 92 wanted some changes, and 75 wanted to see lots of change in Pescadero.



For the rest of the boards, the ideas with the greatest number of 'yes' votes were:

Votes	Topic
196	Trail from Pescadero to the ocean
193	Housing: small individual homes
192	Pedestrian/bike bridge over Pescadero Creek in the Goulsen right-of-way*
187	Community Center
177	Trail from downtown to the High School
173	Housing: upper floors of 'mixed use' downtown buildings
173	Trail from Pescadero to Memorial Park
165	Laundromat
161	Affordable Housing and teacher housing on North Street school site
160	Find solutions for septic/water issues
160	Publicly accessible pool

*Members of the Steering Committee received anecdotal information that some people thought this question was voting for a pedestrian bridge along Pescadero Creek Road where it floods regularly, instead of the location in the Goulsen right-of-way. We do not know how many people were confused about this board.

The table below shows all the 'yes' votes:

YES Votes			
Total Number of YES Votes	Topic	Total Number of YES Votes	Topic
196	Trail from Pescadero to the ocean	70	Teen activities
193	Housing: small individual homes	69	More bike parking at the High School
192	Pedestrian/Bike bridge over Pescadero Creek in Goulsen right-of-way	66	Daily farmers market
187	Community Center	65	Gym
177	Trail from downtown to the High School	64	Childcare for infants and toddlers
173	Housing: upper floors of 'mixed use' downtown buildings	63	Rodeo
173	Trail from Pescadero to Memorial Park	61	Skate Park
165	Laundromat	59	Services for older adults (seniors)
161	Affordable housing and teacher housing on North Street school site	59	Health food store or coop
160	Find solutions to septic/water issues in town	57	Sidewalks on North Street
160	Publicly accessible pool	55	Move flagpole to center of intersection
155	Town Plaza	53	Pizza place
152	Plaza at the Dias property	50	Training for childcare providers
139	Playground	49	Childcare Cooperative
139	Parking downtown is somewhat of a big problem	48	BMX Track
139	Public restrooms	44	Employee training - vocational skill sets
129	Preserve historic school house in a park	40	Bike exchange
121	Small green park	38	Dentist
119	Housing: apartment buildings	37	Town newsletter in English and Spanish
113	Dog Park	33	Emergency housing for domestic violence survivors
110	Way-finding signs	33	Fabric/Hardware/Dry Goods Store
108	Traffic calming	20	Grief and other counseling services
105	Free bike racks downtown	19	Career and college resources fair
103	Healthcare Clinic	17	Assistance with college debt
102	Housing is a problem/is somewhat of a problem in Pescadero	10	Car Wash
101	Explore ways to organize parking downtown	7	Bowling Alley
96	Amphitheater	7	Creative after school program*
93	Affordable grocery store	6	Tea and yarn shop
90	Better high-speed internet	4	Farm supplies*
85	Licensed childcare with sliding scale fees	4	Locations for local day care*
85	Sidewalks downtown	3	LGBTQ safe space (Café)*
84	Bus service to Half Moon Bay	3	Children's clothes and game store
80	Street trees on Stage Road	2	Shoe Store
79	Street trees on North Street	1	Police Station*
74	Paid (secure) bike parking downtown		

* Items added by participants the day of the Gathering that received votes

The table below shows the most popular suggestions for businesses, activities for children and human services.

Vote Tabulation for Businesses, Places for Kids and Human Services	
Number of YES Votes	Businesses
165	Laundromat
93	Affordable grocery store
65	Gym
59	Health food store or coop
53	Pizza place
40	Bike exchange
38	Dentist
33	Fabric/Hardware/Dry Goods Store
10	Car Wash
7	Bowling Alley
6	Tea and yarn shop
3	Children's cloths and game store
2	Shoe Store
Number of YES Votes	For Kids
139	Playground
63	Rodeo
61	Skate Park
48	BMX track
Number of YES Votes	Human Services
103	Health care clinic
90	Better high-speed internet
85	Licensed Childcare with sliding scale of fees
84	Bus service to Half Moon Bay
70	Teen activities
66	Daily Farmers Market
64	Childcare for infants and toddlers
59	Services for older adults (seniors)
50	Training for childcare providers
49	Childcare Cooperative
44	Employee training - vocational skills set
37	Town newsletter in English and Spanish
33	Emergency housing for domestic violence survivors
20	Grief and other counseling services
19	Career and college resources fair
17	Assistance with college debt
7	Creative After School Program
4	Farm supplies
4	Locations for local day care
3	LGBTQ safe space (Café)
1	Police Station

Another way to evaluate the top vote-getters is a Net Yes list, which reflects total positive votes minus total negative votes. Housing leads this list with a net positive of 192 votes for very small individual homes, and a net of 172

positive votes for housing on the upper floors of new mixed use downtown buildings. A community center came in at second place with 186 votes. A plaza rounded out the leading items.

The top ten, sorted by percentage of 'Net Yes' Votes:

Votes	Topic
99.0%	Housing: very small individual homes
98.9%	Community Center
98.9%	Housing: upper floors of 'mixed use' downtown buildings
98.7%	Town Plaza
98.7%	Plaza at the Dias property
98.6%	Playground
98.4%	Small green park
98.3%	Housing: apartment buildings
98.2%	Dog Park
97.9%	Amphitheater

Net Positivity Index (sorted by percentage of Net YES votes/Number of Total Votes)

Number of Total Votes	YES Votes	NO Votes	Net YES Votes	% of Votes Approved	Topic
194	193	1	192	99.0%	Housing: very small individual homes
188	187	1	186	98.9%	Community Center
174	173	1	172	98.9%	Housing: upper floors of 'mixed use' downtown buildings
156	155	1	154	98.7%	Town Plaza
153	152	1	151	98.7%	Plaza at the Dias property
140	139	1	138	98.6%	Playground
122	121	1	120	98.4%	Small green park
120	119	1	118	98.3%	Housing: apartment buildings
114	113	1	112	98.2%	Dog Park
97	96	1	95	97.9%	Amphitheater
162	160	2	158	97.5%	Find solutions to septic/water issues in town
131	129	2	127	96.9%	Preserve historic school house in a park
64	63	1	62	96.9%	Rodeo
62	61	1	60	96.8%	Skate Park
104	102	2	100	96.2%	Housing is a problem/is somewhat of a problem in Pescadero
49	48	1	47	95.9%	BMX Track
168	160	8	152	90.5%	Publicly accessible pool
116	110	6	104	89.7%	Wayfinding signs
113	105	8	97	85.8%	Free bike racks downtown
212	196	16	180	84.9%	Trail from Pescadero to the ocean
208	192	16	176	84.6%	Pedestrian/Bike bridge over Pescadero Creek in Goulsen right-of-way
193	177	16	161	83.4%	Trail from downtown to the High School
189	173	16	157	83.1%	Trail from Pescadero to Memorial Park
82	74	8	66	80.5%	Paid (secure) bike parking downtown
77	69	8	61	79.2%	More bike parking at the High School
92	80	12	68	73.9%	Street trees on Stage Road
98	85	13	72	73.5%	Sidewalks downtown
127	108	19	89	70.1%	Traffic calming
164	139	25	114	69.5%	Parking downtown is somewhat or a big problem
167	139	28	111	66.5%	Public Restrooms
72	57	15	42	58.3%	Sidewalks on North Street
100	79	21	58	58.0%	Street trees on North Street
130	101	29	72	55.4%	Explore ways to organize parking downtown
209	161	48	113	54.1%	Affordable housing and teacher housing on North Street school site
132	55	77	-22	-16.7%	Move flagpole to center of intersection

The idea of a town plaza in general received 98.7% positive votes and the goal of purchasing a key property in town for a future plaza also gained 98.7% positive votes. The least controversial ideas sorted by percentage of Net Yes votes/total votes were:

- Housing: small individual homes: net 99% yes votes
- Community Center: net 98.9% yes votes
- Housing (upper floors of “mixed use” downtown buildings): net 98.9% yes votes

“I am inspired to see how united we are as a community in what we feel will benefit our town. Our community – collective voice is strong and clear about what we all want and need.”

Gathering participant

Community Values: Gathering participants were asked to give ‘write-in’ answers to seven open-ended questions. One poster asked about the community values that residents hold most dear. Common responses were:

- Bilingualism
- Community gatherings

- Deep sense of connectedness to people and nature
- Feeling safe, never having to lock house or car door in town
- Family, farming and history
- Inclusion, equity and justice
- Sense of community
- Scenic beauty, farming heritage and local economic support
- That we all come together in disasters and emergencies
- **Community Meal:** Attendees celebrated the event together outdoors with lively music along with a simple but healthy meal that included local, organic burgers with meat donated from TomKat Ranch, one of Pescadero’s grass-fed beef operations. Delicious salads and side dishes were also prepared with fresh ingredients from nearby farms by local chef Tim Edmonds.



Participants at Gathering sharing a meal

Participant Evaluations of the Gathering

To make future Pescadero gatherings even better, at the end of the presentations, bilingual evaluation sheets were distributed to all 217 of the participants. The team received 138 back – about 64%.

The evaluation requested the following information from participants:

- This is what I discovered/learned about my community at today's gathering:
- What can we do to improve for future gatherings?
- What ideas did you learn today that are valuable to you?
- What surprised you?

My overall rating for today is (please circle one answer):



Not informative/Not helpful



Somewhat informative/helpful



Very informative/helpful

The evaluation results were as follows:

😊 Very informative/helpful = 73%

😐 Somewhat informative/helpful = 23%

😞 Not informative/helpful = 1%

No response to this question = 3%

All percentages are rounded. Additional information about the evaluation results, in both English and Spanish, is included in the Appendix.

"We all value openness and friendliness. We agree on infrastructure priorities: housing, transport, parks, laundry."
Gathering participant



Gathering participants filling out their evaluation forms

What's Next?

One criticism by local residents of the Town Planning event in 2004 was that there was not enough follow up on the results. In the hope that this time will be different, the Steering Committee has compiled a list of subsequent steps that could be taken at this time. They are divided into near term, medium and long term. Many of these ideas have been circulating in the Pescadero community for years.

Near term:

- **Commission a study for a low-cost package sewage treatment facility to serve the Pescadero CSA 11 Zone (County Service Area).** This study would include options for maintenance and oversight. Estimated cost: \$40,000.
- **Create a communication strategy:** create an effective strategy to reach all members of the community, including Spanish speakers and people without an email address, about ongoing town planning and other activities. Communication strategy can include email, mail, social media, KPDO and/or a monthly newsletter/bulletin. The goal is to continue from the success of the March 17, 2019 Gathering and engage the broader Pescadero community. Estimate: \$10,000-15,000 to develop a strategy.
- **Train the 15 grant writer volunteers who signed up at the Community Gathering:** Estimate: \$15,000-20,000 for one or more trainings.
- **Laundromat:** work with the school district to determine the cost, ideal size and feasibility of locating a laundromat at the high school or in town. Consultant needs to have expertise in using water recycling to minimize laundromat water use. Estimate: \$10,000-15,000.
- **Community Center task force:** establish a task force of local residents to create a list of needed programs and services that could be provided by a Community Center, possible locations, and effective ways to market services and classes to local residents. Estimate: First stage – \$15,000-20,000 to hire a consultant to assist the task force with this undertaking and, second stage – \$15,000-25,000/year to hire a part-time staff support/community activities coordinator for Pescadero.
- **Annual community Gathering:** in the focus groups and at the Gathering, many residents expressed a desire to meet regularly as a town, including both English- and Spanish-speaking residents to break bread together. One idea was to hold this event annually and have a theme for food from the various ethnic groups that have inhabited this land over time: Native American, Spanish, Mexican, Chatino, Mixteco, Portuguese, Italian and Japanese cuisines could be explored in turn. Estimate: \$10,000-20,000 for outreach, Spanish-language translators, child care, space rental, food, etc.

Medium term:

- **Hire a full-time housing design, entitlements, permitting & construction project manager for 3 years for The Pescadero Foundation.** Correction of the current lack of housing was a top priority for both Spanish and English speakers. This next step would fund critical staff support for the provision of housing in Pescadero. The Pescadero Foundation has been working on this issue for years but without dedicated staff support. Estimated cost: \$100,000-130,000 per year, including salary and benefits for a project manager for 3 years = \$300,000-390,000, plus \$100,000 for offices and

administration = \$400,000-490,000. The goals of this position would be to:

Find the best way to get housing built.

Determine the likely paths forward and barriers to affordable housing. Study and map locations on the South Coast (including surplus County lands) and agricultural housing sites that could support “granny units” and larger groups of affordable housing. The goal is to create ‘net zero’ affordable housing so that future utility bills are also affordable or non-existent for future renters/owners.

Research/apply for grant funding for feasibility studies or construction.

Guide the small package wastewater treatment project, which will evaluate the feasibility and associated costs to install a new centralized wastewater system for the town.

Climate change impacts: The project manager will need to keep abreast of climate change issues and anticipated impacts of coastal flooding and sea level rise.

- **Create a Pescadero town plan:** The steps to create a town plan to move the community dreams from the Gathering on March 17, 2019 toward reality for all Pescaderans are:

Program for the town plan: The community selected the major types of projects that the residents want to see in town. (March 17, 2019 community Gathering.)

Prepare a site analysis: This is a map, or series of maps, that locates the opportunities and constraints represented by the program for easy understanding by consultants and the general public. Biological studies, traffic engineering feasibility studies, maps

showing floodplain constraints for construction, zoning constraints, water supply, sewage treatment studies, climate change work by the San Mateo Office of Sustainability on sea level rise and other climate impacts in the watershed, etc. will be researched by various specialists such as hydrologists, biologists, traffic engineers, etc.

Create alternate bubble diagrams:

These are a series of quick sketches to show three different combinations of suitable locations for various elements of the program. For example, the drawings will show two to three different locations for a community center, trails, parks, parking, traffic calming and housing locations, etc.

First Gathering: This bilingual Gathering will explain and get input on the Site Analysis and Bubble Diagrams from the residents.

Concept sketches: These colored sketches will show two possible layouts of the desired program elements, revised and refined per the input at the first meeting. The designs will be more fleshed out than the Bubble Diagrams.

Visual preference boards: Options for bike racks, benches, wayfinding signs, restrooms, etc. will be created for input from the residents.

Second Gathering: This second bilingual Gathering will explain and get input on the concept sketches and visual preference boards from the residents.

Prepare a preliminary town plan: This will be a very detailed plan that includes the Pescadero Community’s preferences from the previous meetings on one drawing, within current Local Coastal Plan policies and known resource constraints.

Final Gathering: This bilingual Gathering will explain and get input on the preliminary town plan from residents. Cost estimates will be included for various items as applicable. Local and regional media as well as prospective funders will be invited to this meeting to see what Pescadero residents are planning for their town.

Final town plan: A final town plan will be created at this point that includes input on the preliminary town plan from local residents at the final Gathering. The community will rank their top priorities for projects to build. Local and regional media outlets will be invited to attend.

Report: A report will be created that documents the design process and includes design details and cost estimates of priority projects for future grant writing, the creation of final construction documents and construction costs.

Total range (depending on the final scope of work): Estimate: \$290,000-\$445,000.

Long term:

- **Preparation of final design drawings/construction of priority projects:** After the town plan is finalized, priority projects will be highlighted. The steps to final implementation include grant writing, preparation of final construction drawings, final budget estimates, permitting by design professionals and finally construction of the various projects. These projects could be done independently and on various time frames as funding becomes available. We have no budget estimate yet for this item.
- **Spanish Speaker outreach best practices report for Planners:** Puente's outreach team worked on increasing the number of Spanish-speaking residents who would attend the

town planning outreach meetings. They strategically combined conventional outreach methods such as in person visits, phone calls, email/text, and online platforms with client-centered and culturally-appropriate approaches such as flexible times of day/week for meetings and at locations that residents were already frequenting in their daily lives.

At Spanish speaker focus groups, a culturally-appropriate outreach strategy was used. It combined a unique mix of appreciative inquiry, strengths-based partnering and interventions to let attendees know that their struggles and fears were recognized. Using organization relationship systems coaching (ORSC) approaches, the Pescadero town planning team, led by Alfredo Vergara-Lobo, broke through the barriers to participation often found in communities typically overlooked in mainstream planning processes in the United States.

Breaking through these barriers increased attendance and levels of engagement as evidenced by the number of residents who attended the project's culminating community Gathering as well as the number of attendees, including Spanish-speaking residents who committed to volunteer on follow-up town planning projects.

A detailed study of how these culturally-appropriate and specific strategies succeeded can be incorporated in a best practice report for planning professionals who are often challenged by their inability to successfully engage Latino community members in similar planning processes in any significant numbers. A planner would be on the team as well to assure direct applicability for planning professionals. A study of this kind would cost between \$30,000 and \$45,000.



The inheritors of Pescadero

Conclusion

The question for the Gathering was “What legacy do current residents want to pass on to future residents?” We now know that the priorities shown at this Gathering reflect the desires of both English and Spanish speakers. We also know that there is unity on which projects to move forward: thirty-four of the ideas on the boards received over 90% of the votes on that board, and a total of 63 residents signed up at the Gathering to volunteer in some capacity to make their dreams for their town come true.

Pescaderans are rewriting the script and showing that people from different backgrounds share values and goals. As they work towards these

“This is an organized effort to make positive changes. People of all walks of life are interested and motivated in an integrated way.”
Gathering participant

aspirations, community health and connection will increase and greenhouse emissions will decrease. Community members voted to create walking paths to schools/jobs and for recreation, local housing and a plaza/park for local residents- all of which will reduce auto emissions. They also want to get together regularly with everyone in their town. They are showing that they care for the next generation enough to work hard to pass on a positive legacy.

“I learned that Latinas/Latinos and Anglo neighbors are united.”
Gathering participant

This document, appendices and other related documents are available at MyPuente.org/PescaderoTownPlanning



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Acknowledgements

Puente would like to thank all those who helped to make our town planning effort a success:

Funder

Silicon Valley Community Foundation

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Town Planning Partners and In Kind Donors

Downtown Local, Duarte's Tavern, Lois Fisher, Forever Bloom Farm, La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District, Pescadero Elementary, Tim Edmonds, The Pescadero Foundation, Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council, Puente de la Costa Sur staff and Board of Directors, Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative, TomKat Educational Foundation, Alfredo Vergara



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