



# CERES CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

**2020-2021**  
**Revised (2020)**

The intent of this update is to continue the existing Strategic Plan Summary for the next two years. A new or updated Strategic Plan will be considered in early 2021.

The future is not someplace we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.

John Sharr, *Loyalty in America*

## ***Council's Values/Guiding Principles***

The *values* of an organization drive both the goals and strategies created and the process of implementing the strategic plan. The previous version of the Strategic Plan Summary established the following guiding values and principles that are still applicable:

The City seal's motto, "*Together we achieve,*" states the underlying value of the City of Ceres. The City Council's guiding principles are:

- Be an approachable Council, with members who are involved in the community
- Treat people fairly
- Be proactive, not reactive
- Make long-lasting decisions
- Foster strong communications with the community
- Expect quality development as part of being a quality community
- Foster openness and public engagement
- Be friendly in all encounters
- Be proud of our small town atmosphere
- Respect the roles of the mayor, council members, city manager, and staff

## *Vision*

A *vision* states where the organization wants to be in the future. It should be broad and ambitious enough to serve as a guide and specific enough to be understood by people reading it. The Mayor and Council members proposed phrases that they think could be part of a vision statement for the City. The following vision statement was created as a result:

*In collaboration with the community, together we achieve a Ceres that is an attractive, livable, safe community with beautiful neighborhoods, landscaped streets, parks, trails, facilities and vibrant commercial and entertainment amenities.*

## *Goals*

*Goals* set the framework for policies that guide the direction and focus of the organization, budget decisions and allocation of other resources, such as staff time. Goals are “up on the balcony” wide views of opportunities for change and improvement. They are statements of how you want the future to be. Goals provide the “why” (larger meaning and context) of the specific actions the agency takes. They help the management team, and Council, when they are involved, to decide which of the many worthy projects should be done and when, within available resources.

The Council has a broad range of goals and projects they wish to accomplish over the next two years. The goals fall into the following areas:

1. **Infrastructure:** Ensure that the community has adequate, well maintained infrastructure (including water, sewer, streets, traffic signals, parks, sidewalks, facilities) that fosters a quality community and supports a strong economy.
2. **Livable community:** Create a vibrant, safe, attractive and walkable community that maintains a small-town feel, with parks, trails, shopping, entertainment and other desirable amenities.
3. **Economic development:** Proactively recruit and attract businesses to Ceres in order to add to the quality of life and enhance the fiscal base of the community.
4. **Planning for the Future:** Ensure the City has plans and policies in place to attract and create desirable development, maintain and improve neighborhoods and annex land to achieve a livable community and support a strong economy.
5. **Government operations:** Provide quality services to meet community needs, assuring that the City has helpful, well trained, properly equipped and sufficient staff who partners with other public agencies to provide efficient services.
6. **Community engagement:** Establish strong relationships with all sectors of the community, recognizing its cultural diversity and increase their involvement in creating the future of the City.

## *Strategies*

*Strategies* are the means to achieve the goals. They are the individual projects that must be assigned, with resources identified, which will contribute to achievement of a goal. Projects should be

achievable within the available resources, with clear direction and attainable timeframes, with periodic checking in about progress, changes or challenges.

### **Infrastructure:**

1. As part of the General Plan implementation, create a plan to accommodate all infrastructure needs for the next 50 years, (including sewer, water, parks, streets, traffic signals, storm drains, sidewalks and public facilities).
2. Complete the plans and advocate for funding for the Service/Mitchell/SR 99 interchange.
3. Update the Five Year Capital Improvement Program to reflect Council's vision, goals and priorities.
4. Complete the design for Eastgate Park, Lions Park, and Lower River Bluff Park and complete construction in 2021 or earlier.
5. Aggressively pursue the design, and implementation of the Stanislaus Regional Water Authority surface water treatment and delivery facilities.
6. Leverage Measure L and SB-1 revenues to maintain local streets and roads.

### **Livable Community:**

1. Establish the vision of a livable community as a key component of the General Plan.
2. Establish mechanisms and policies which ensure that impacts of development are paid for by the developer (e.g., off-site infrastructure installed at the time of development).
3. Pursue programs that ensure the community has adequate police and fire protection.
4. Actively pursue improving the appearance of the community by expanding the Code Enforcement efforts and implement the recommendations of the Beautification Action Committee.
5. Establish development guidelines that will promote an image of careful planning that includes amenities such as requiring landscaped medians.
6. Encourage development of housing for all economic levels of the community, including affordable, senior and executive housing.

### **Economic Development:**

1. Proactively implement the City Council's Economic Development Strategic Plan 2013-2020 consistent with the Council's long term vision and priorities, including actively attracting new businesses, with a focus on retail enterprises to capture more sales tax and desirable restaurants. Secure funding, hire a consultant and complete an update to the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
2. Proactively implement the Downtown Specific Plan that establishes the downtown as a destination point.
3. Examine commercial corridors to identify possible locations for new retail.
4. Attract entertainment venues for youth and adults.

**Planning for the Future:**

1. Implement the General Plan to create a well-planned community for the long term.
2. Implement the new policies and procedures delineated in the updated Ceres Municipal Code.
3. Create development procedures that are clear to developers.

**Government Operations:**

1. Review the organization and make changes to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
2. Create and implement a staff development program.
3. Strengthen the Council/staff team in order to effectively achieve Council priorities.
4. Update the City's administrative codes, policies and procedures to ensure proper administration of the organization and effective achievement of Council priorities.
5. Increase the City's partnership with the schools and identify specific ways in which to collaborate.

**Community Engagement:**

1. Create better connections and communications with all segments of the community.
2. Encourage citizens to be more involved in city government. (e.g. have boards/commissions that are meaningful and with clear roles).
3. Conduct town hall meetings to engage citizenry.
4. Collaborate with community groups to achieve mutual goals.