

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
COMMISSION**

Commission Meeting

Public Meeting

September 27, 2025

9:30 AM

San Joaquin Delta College

(SCMA) Science and Math Building, Room 271

5151 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95207

Call to Order

Commissioner Wednesday Pope, Chair

Disclaimer

The information and opinions expressed by presenters or public commenters before the Commission reflect the views of the speaker. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or the Office of Service and Community Engagement.

Land Acknowledgement

Commissioner Wednesday Pope, Chair

Review of the Agenda

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Public Meeting Agenda

September 27, 2025

- Welcome
- Public Comment on matters not on the agenda
- Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM
- Strategic Plan Review and Approval – ACTION ITEM

Lunch

- Strategic Plan Next Steps: Moving into Design and Implementation
- Youth Commissioner Survey: Review and Approval & Discussion on Digital Youth Summit
- Next Steps for Staff Action
- Adjournment

Remarks from Distinguished Guests

Commissioner Wednesday Pope, Chair
Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Establishment of Quorum & Public Comment Process

Beth Gashaw, External and Legislative Affairs Associate, GO-Serve

Public Comment – *Welcome*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

Beth Gashaw, External and Legislative Affairs Associate, GO-Serve

Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card for any item not on the agenda
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM

Commissioner Wednesday Pope, Chair
Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Public Comment – *Consent Agenda*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

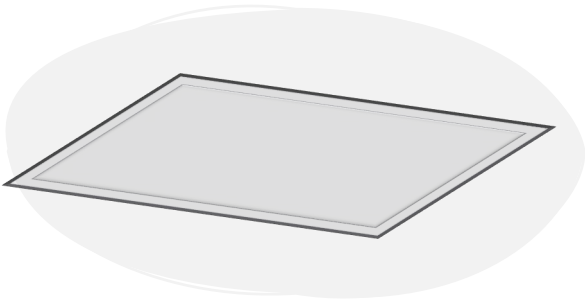
Strategic Plan Review and Approval – **ACTION ITEM**

Joyce Chiao, Consultant, Abundance

Building a Feasible, Yet Bold Strategic Plan

Situating the Strategic Plan

A Foundation

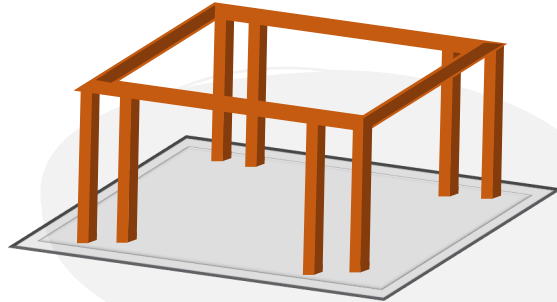


A strategy is grounded in

Context

Capabilities and considerations that inform what the Commission can do – and do well

A Frame(work)

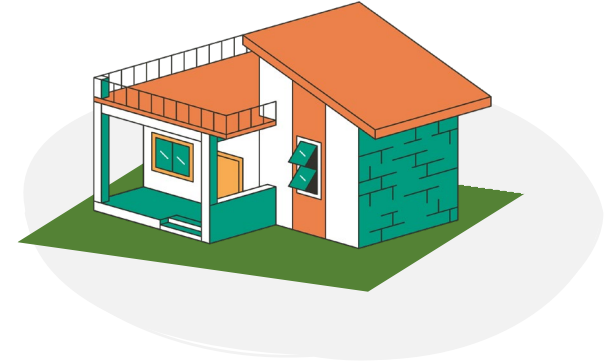


A strategy is defined by

Strategic Plan

Mission, Vision, Values, Goals, and Objectives that guide YEC decisions and direction

A Finished House



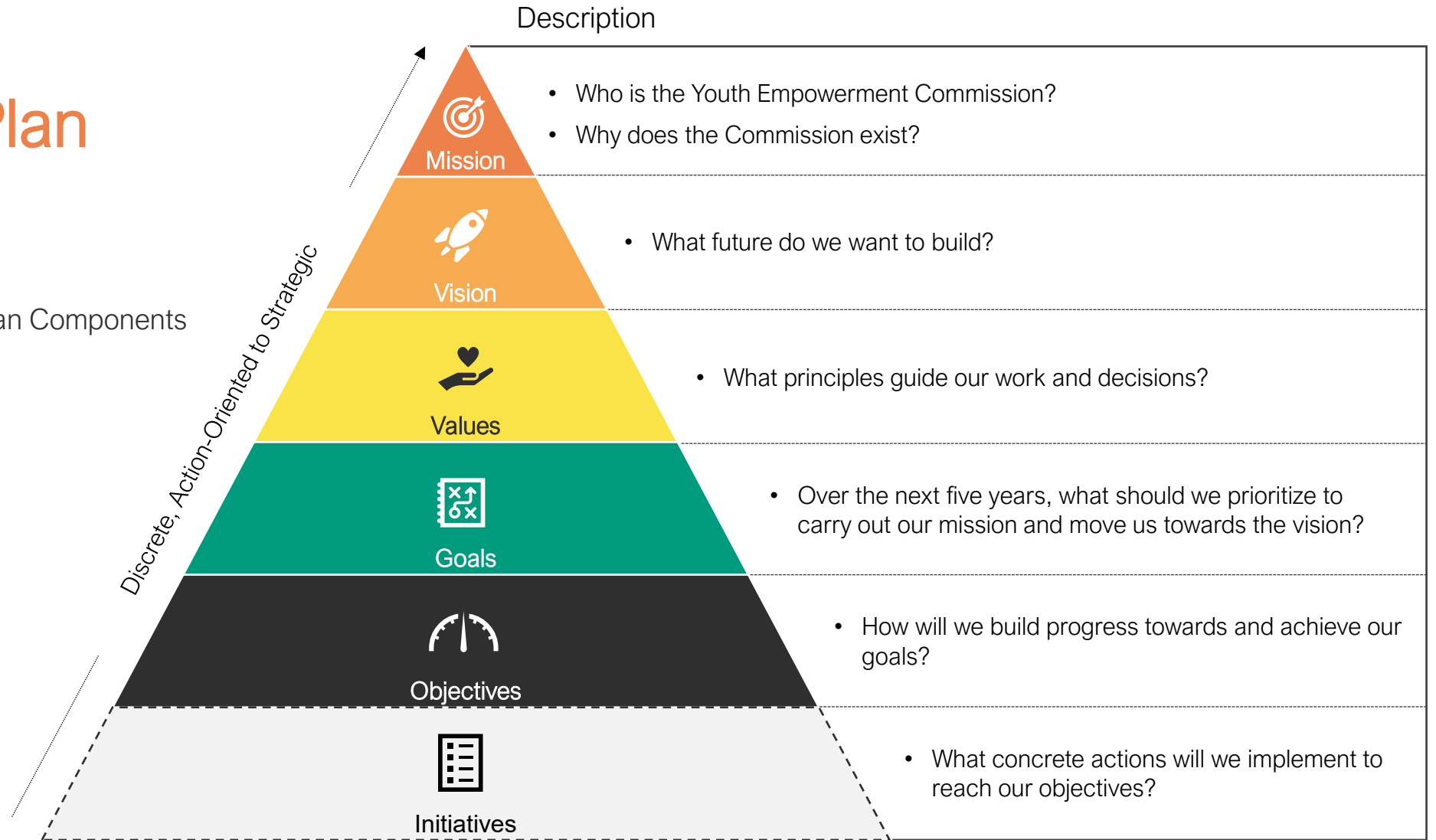
A strategy is carried out through

Implementation & Governance

Initiatives, metrics, and change facilitation to operationalize the Plan and gauge efficacy

Strategic Plan Overview

Defining the Strategic Plan Components



Our Strategic Planning Process

Strategic Planning Approach



Key

✓

Completed

★

Current Phase

Building the Strategic Plan in Stages

Process to Finalizing, Formatting, and Implementing



July – *Initial Draft*

- Review initial draft of Strategic Plan components (Mission, Vision, Values, Goals, Objectives)



September – *Final Draft*

- Review and approve final draft of Strategic Plan components
- Discuss Strategic Plan “look and feel”
- Begin establishing Committees to identify initiatives

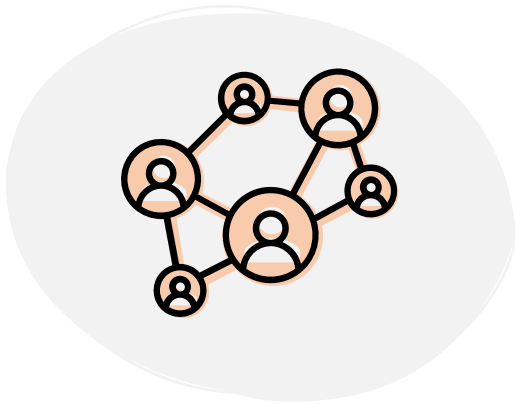


November – *Formatting & Design, Implementation*

- Review draft of formatted Strategic Plan
- Continue identifying Committee initiatives, and begin implementation
- Begin building success measures

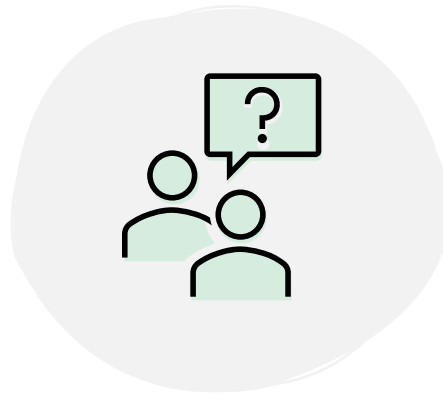
Summary of Strategic Plan Feedback

Feedback from July 26, 2025 Commission Meeting



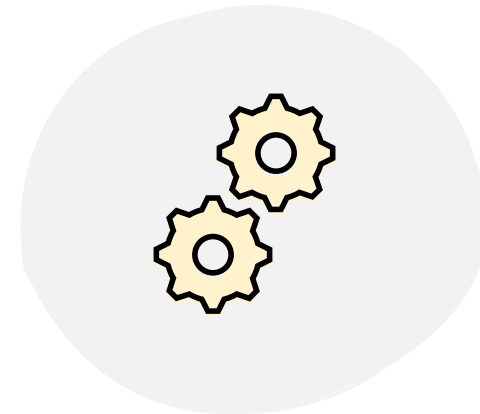
What Resonated:

Creating impact through partnerships and capacity



What Needed Clarifying:

Defining language and terminology

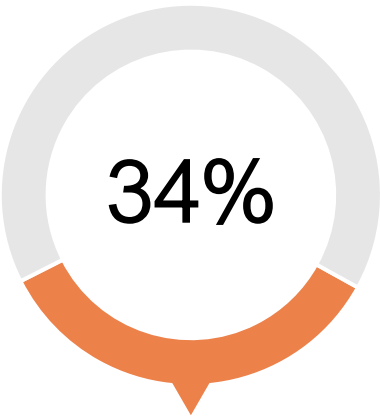


What Was Missing:

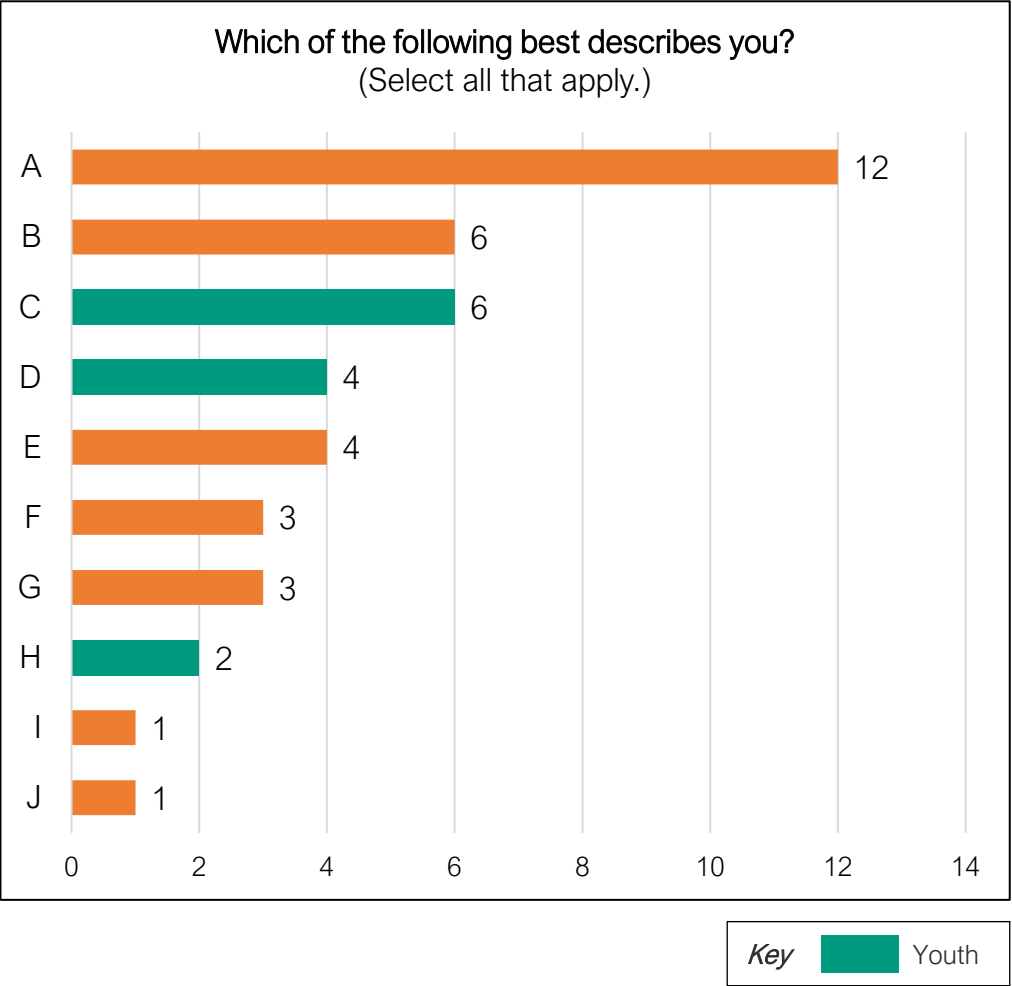
Specific details about *how* an objective would be carried out

Feedback Poll: Who Responded

The feedback poll
received 29 responses:



More than one-third of
survey respondents were
youth.

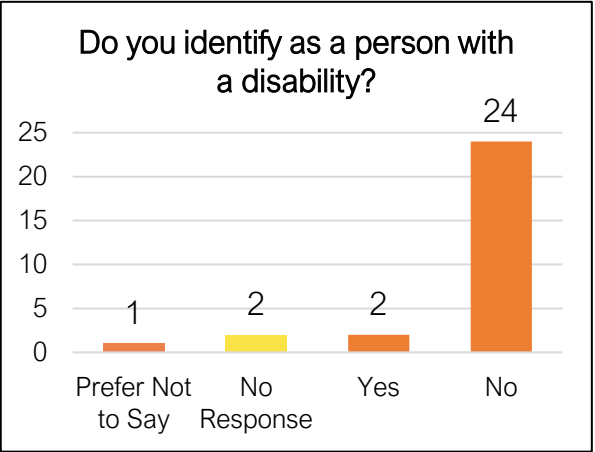
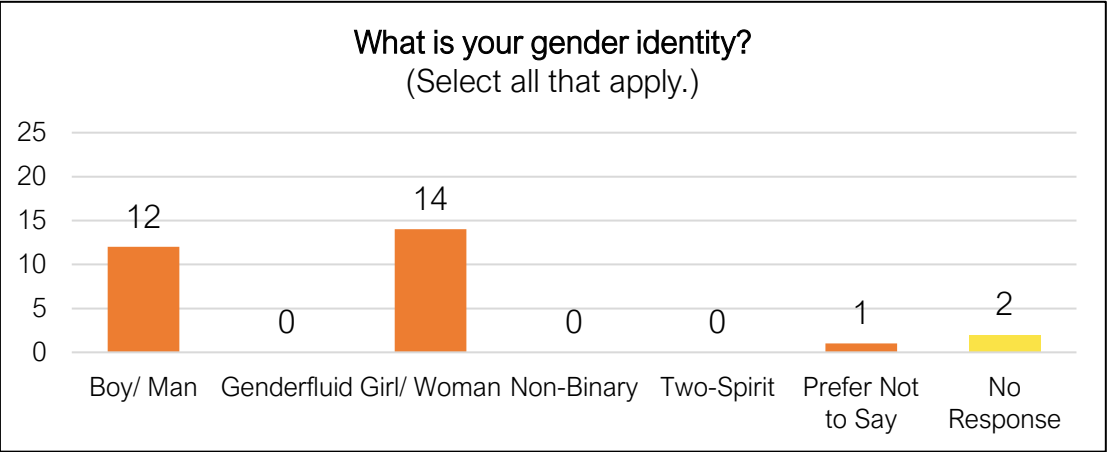
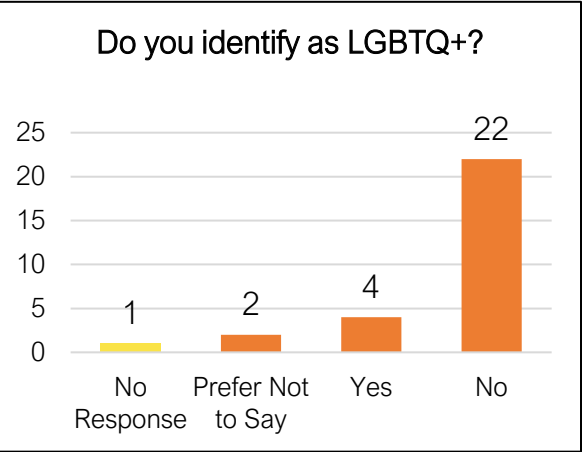
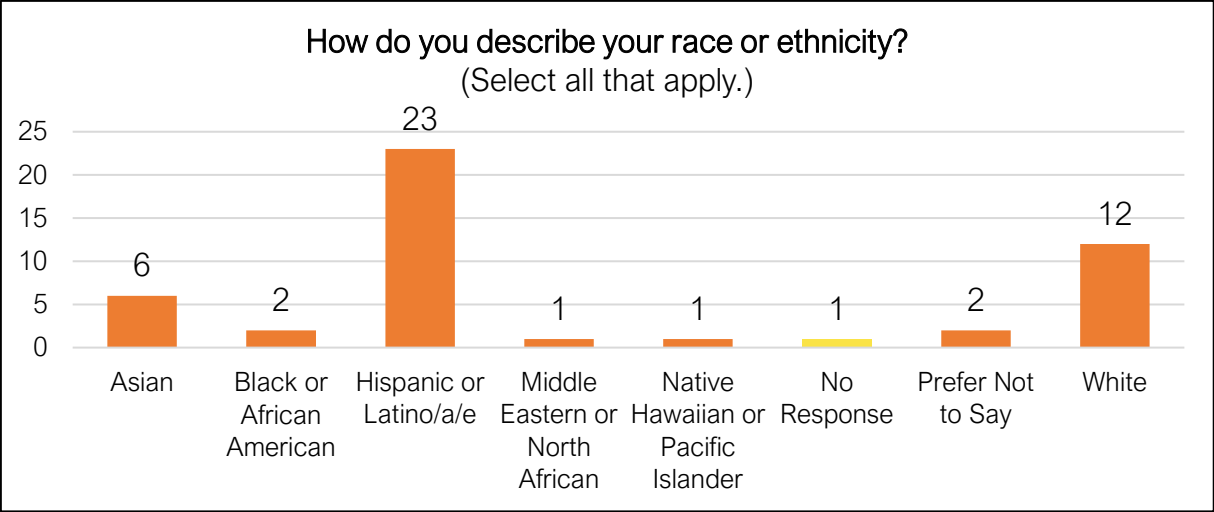
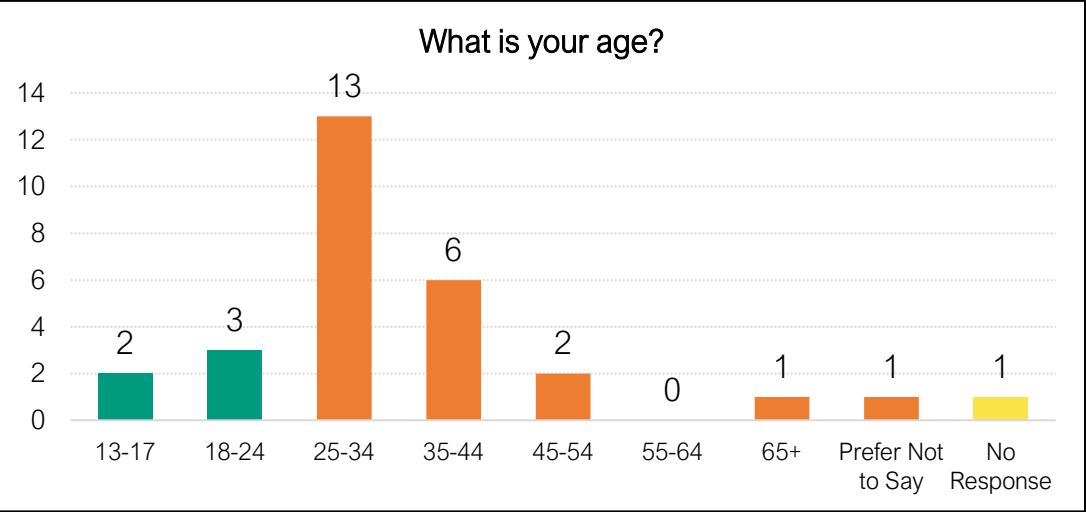


- Answer Choices: I am a(n)...
- A. Government staff member or policymaker working on youth issues
 - B. Staff member of a youth-serving organization or program (e.g., nonprofit, advocacy group, after-school program)
 - C. Young person interested in youth empowerment
 - D. Youth leader or advocate in my community
 - E. Parent, guardian, or caregiver supporting young people
 - F. Educator or school staff member (e.g., teacher, principal, school counselor, etc.)
 - G. Youth service provider (e.g., social worker, mentor, case manager, etc.)
 - H. Young person currently involved in a youth program or organization
 - I. Other
 - J. No Response

Feedback Poll: Who Responded

Note: All demographic questions also provided “Prefer to Self-Describe” as a response option. Because it was not selected for any of the questions, this answer choice is not shown in these results.

Key ■ Youth ■ Left Blank – No Response



Feedback Poll: What We Asked

Poll participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

Required: Multiple Choice (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

1. This mission statement helps me understand the core purpose of the Commission.
2. This mission statement makes me want to engage with the Commission.
3. This vision statement clearly communicates the future that the Commission aspires to create.
4. This vision statement portrays the desired long-term impact of the Commission in a way that inspires me.
5. These values reflect the culture that the Commission should build, maintain, and strengthen.
6. These values capture the core ideas that should guide how the Commission approaches its work and decisions.
7. These goals identify the key priorities over the next five years for the Commission to carry out its mission and move towards the vision.
8. The objectives will enable the Commission to reach its goals over the next five years.

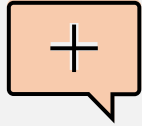
Optional: Overall Strategic Plan Feedback (Open-Response)

9. What resonates with you?
10. What is missing or needs editing?
11. What questions do you have? What needs to be clarified?

Feedback Poll: What People Shared – Key Themes



Overall, survey results showed **positive reactions** to the draft Mission, Vision, Values, Goals, and Objectives.



The responses from **youth (ages 13-24)** reflected these **positive reactions**.



In open-ended comments, survey participants expressed **overall agreement with the Strategic Plan** but wanted **more details about implementation**.

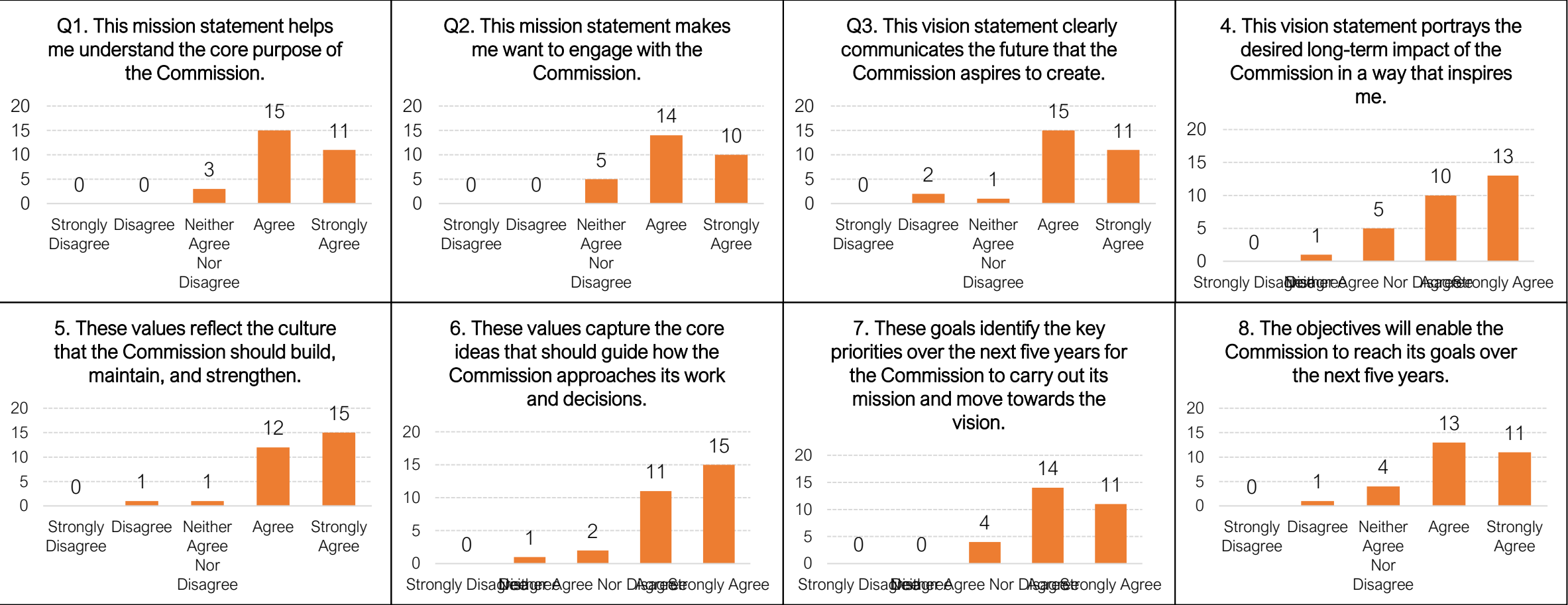


Some survey participants also mentioned wanting **simplified language**.

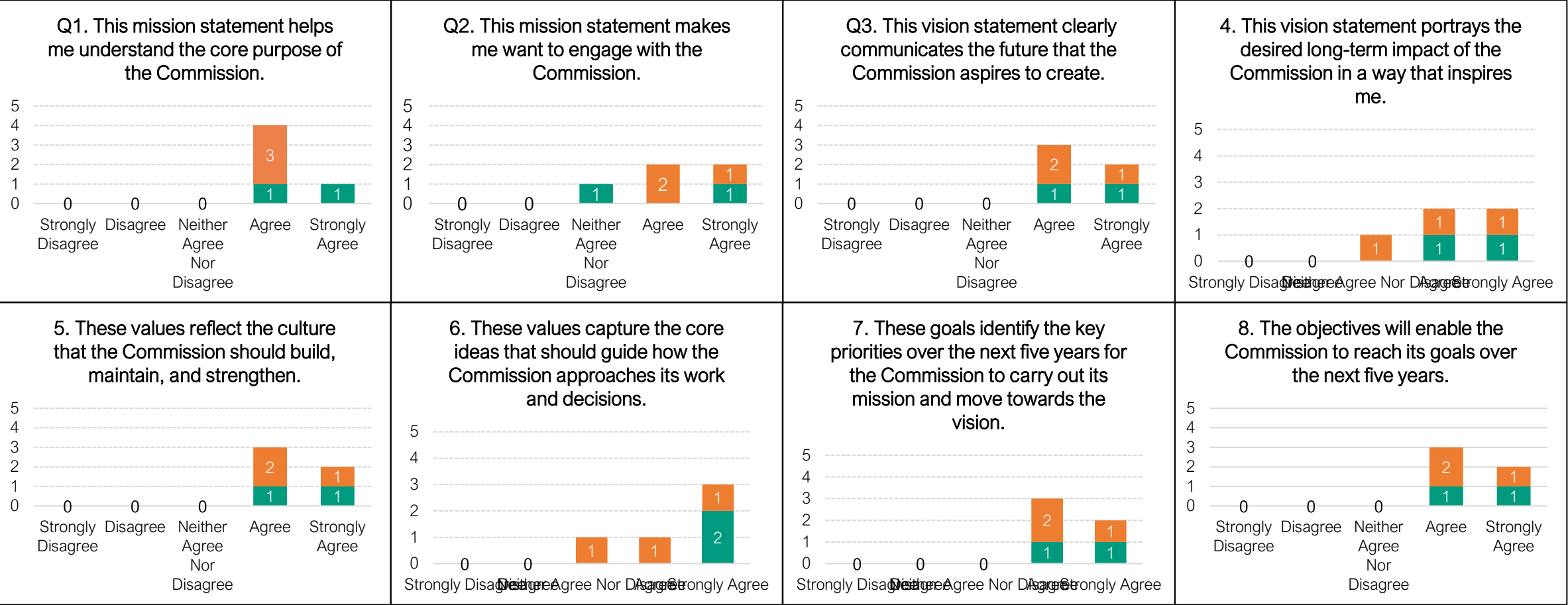


When asked about what resonated with survey participants, the **focus on equity and support of marginalized youth** was one of the most common responses.

Feedback Poll: What People Shared – Overall



Feedback Poll: What People Shared – Youth (Ages 13-24)



Key 13-17 Years Old 18-24 Years Old

Additional Comments



Explicit Connections to AB-46

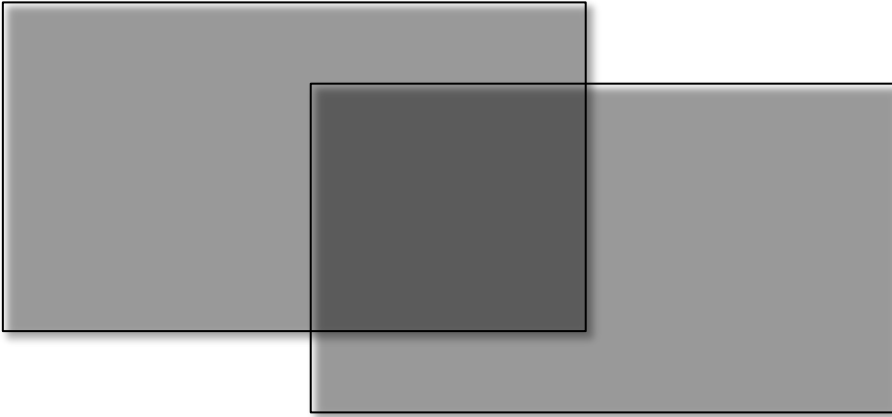


Feasibility of Implementation



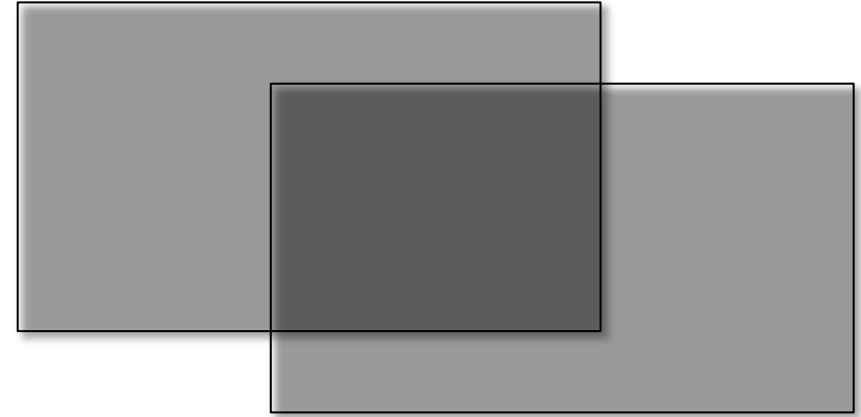
Broadening the Policy Focus

How We Used the Feedback



In addition to reviewing the results of the multiple-choice questions, we reviewed each comment from the open-response questions and took one of the four actions:

1. Addressed the comment as an edit within the Strategic Plan
2. Discussed the comment and decided how to proceed, especially for comments requiring scope conversations
3. Noted to incorporate the comment in the narrative of the full Strategic Plan
4. Noted the comment for implementation and performance management

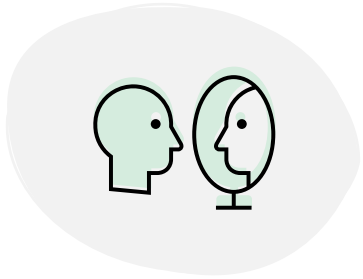


Through this review, we revised the draft into the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. Key changes included:

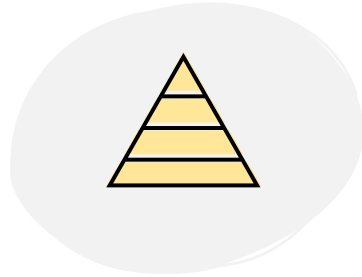
- Restructuring of Goals and Objectives (e.g., revisions to Goal 2)
- Simplifying language
- Adding more descriptive detail, while balancing with the need to keep the content succinct
- Revising wording that did not resonate (e.g., “activate”)

Proposed Draft for Approval: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

Questions to Consider



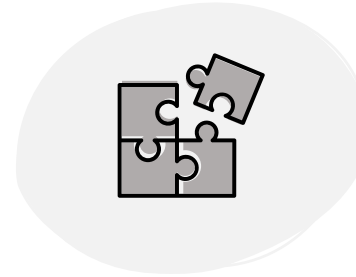
Do the Mission, Vision, and Values **reflect who we are as a Commission?**



Do these Goals and Objectives **align with the Mission, Vision, and Values?**



Does this Strategic Plan **align with the YEC charge and capabilities**, as outlined in AB-46?



Do the Goals and Objectives position YEC to make the greatest impact it can by **addressing the most pressing needs through its unique role and value?**



Would you like to share **any other thoughts** about the Strategic Plan?

Mission

Who is the Youth Empowerment Commission? Why does the Commission exist?

We uplift the voices and leadership of California’s youth – especially those from marginalized communities – by shaping policy, strengthening civic engagement, and creating equitable access to opportunities that build youth power and well-being

We do this by upholding our charge within AB-46 (2021).

Vision

What future do we want to build?

A California where all youth thrive in just, inclusive systems that reflect their lived experiences and support their futures

Core Values

These principles guide our work and decisions:



Youth Power & Leadership

We center youth as leaders and decision-makers today, not just in the future. Youth shape the policies and systems that affect their lives.



Equity & Inclusion

We prioritize the voices of historically-marginalized youth and work to remove systemic barriers. We expand access to opportunities that lead to meaningful outcomes and improve the quality of life for all young people.



Authentic Engagement

Youth participation should be ongoing, supported, and respected for its labor. Their voices must create real change, not token or one-time input. We engage youth in both physical and digital spaces.



Collaboration & Partnership

We build intentional partnerships that use local knowledge, uplift youth-serving organizations, and avoid duplicating efforts.



Transparency & Accountability

We are accountable to young people through clear communication, follow-through, and honest measurement of impact. We use data and technology to share information openly, accurately, and promptly.



Proactive & Systemic Solutions

We focus on root causes and advocate for policies that prevent crises before they occur.

Five Strategic Goals

1

Policy & Legislation

Strengthen youth-related policy and legislation to expand equitable access to youth programs and services

2

State Budgeting

Examine and inform the State budgets that respond to youth needs

3

Civic Engagement

Advance youth participation and leadership in sustained, meaningful civic engagement, with a focus on marginalized and underrepresented youth

4

Connected Youth Networks

Grow the capacity and collaboration of youth-serving organizations to meet youth needs and maximize impact

5

Strong Operations

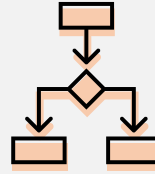
Build the operations of the Commission to stay effective and sustain impact over time

Goal 1

Policy & Legislation

Strengthen youth-related policy and legislation to expand equitable access to youth programs and services

1.1



Increase Commission and community understanding of the State policymaking process

1.2



Provide State decision-makers with youth-informed insights and policy proposals to both remove systemic obstacles to existing services and create or expand programs that reflect emerging youth identified needs

1.3

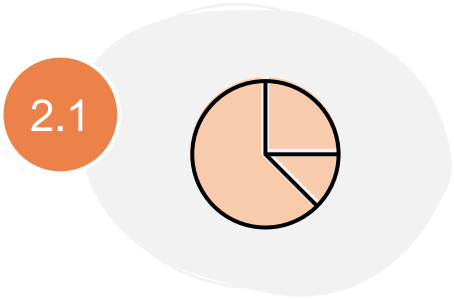


Bring the needs and successes of youth-serving organizations to State decision-makers

Goal 2

State Budgeting

Examine and inform the State budgets that respond to youth needs



Increase Commission and community understanding of how State funds are allocated to support youth well-being



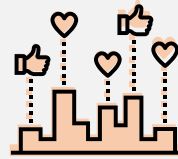
Enhance pathways to elevate youth and community voice in Commission budget recommendations

Goal 3

Civic Engagement

Advance youth participation and leadership in sustained, meaningful civic engagement, with a focus on marginalized and underrepresented youth

3.1



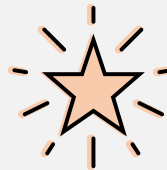
Build equitable partnerships with policy and civic groups to grow civically-engaged youth leaders

3.2



Collaborate with State, local, and community groups on youth-centered campaigns that share meaningful youth civic engagement opportunities

3.3



Promote youth leadership efforts to inspire more youth to participate in civic engagement

Goal 4

Connected Youth Leadership

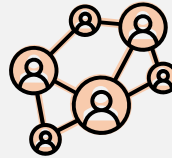
Grow the capacity and collaboration of youth-serving organizations to meet youth needs and maximize impact

4.1



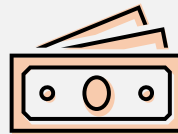
Support resource- and knowledge-sharing across youth-serving groups so they can learn from each other

4.2



Share funding opportunities to grow and sustain local youth commissions

4.3



Create a fund to provide grants to organizations and programs that serve marginalized youth

Goal 5

Strong Operations

Build the operations of the Commission to stay effective and sustain impact over time

5.1



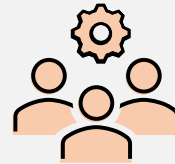
Build a website that keeps youth informed about updates, opportunities, and outcomes

5.2



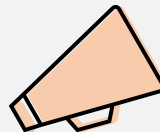
Secure funding to support continued Commission operations

5.3



Add staff and tools to manage programs, support youth engagement, and sustain growth

5.4

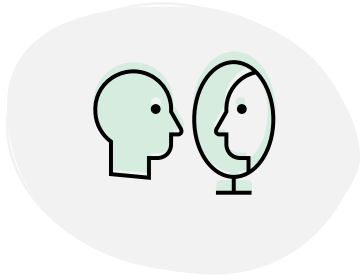


Partner with State and community organizations to spread awareness of programs and services

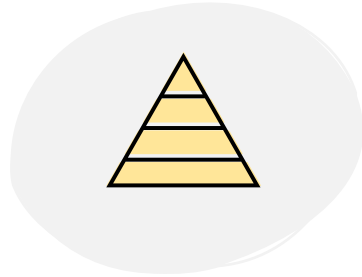
Strategic Plan at a Glance

Mission	We uplift the voices and leadership of California’s youth – especially those from marginalized communities – by shaping policy, strengthening civic engagement, and creating equitable access to opportunities that build youth power and well-being. We do this by upholding our charge outlined within AB-46 (2021).					
Vision	A California where all youth thrive in just, inclusive systems that reflect their lived experiences and support their futures					
Values	 Youth Power & Leadership	 Equity & Inclusion	 Authentic Engagement	 Collaboration & Partnership	 Transparency & Accountability	 Proactive & Systemic Solutions
Goals	Goal 1: Strengthen youth-related policy and legislation to expand equitable access to youth programs and services	Goal 2: Examine and inform the State budgets that respond to youth needs	Goal 3: Advance youth participation and leadership in sustained, meaningful civic engagement, with a focus on marginalized and underrepresented youth	Goal 4: Grow the capacity and collaboration of youth-serving organizations to meet youth needs and maximize impact	Goal 5: Build the operations of the Commission to stay effective and sustain impact over time	
Objectives	1.1 Increase Commission and community understanding of the State policymaking process 1.2 Provide State decision-makers with youth-informed insights and policy proposals to both remove systemic obstacles to existing services and create or expand programs that reflect emerging youth identified needs 1.3 Bring the needs and successes of youth-serving organizations to State decision-makers	2.1 Increase Commission and community understanding of how State funds are allocated to support youth well-being 2.2 Enhance pathways to elevate youth and community voice in Commission budget recommendations	3.1 Build equitable partnerships with policy and civic groups to grow civically-engaged youth leaders 3.2 Collaborate with State, local, and community groups on youth-centered campaigns that share meaningful youth civic engagement opportunities 3.3 Promote youth leadership efforts to inspire more youth to participate in civic engagement	4.1 Support resource- and knowledge-sharing across youth-serving groups so they can learn from each other 4.2 Share funding opportunities to grow and sustain local youth commissions 4.3 Create a fund to provide grants to organizations and programs that serve marginalized youth	5.1 Build a website that keeps youth informed about updates, opportunities, and outcomes 5.2 Secure funding to support continued Commission operations 5.3 Add staff and tools to manage programs, support youth engagement, and sustain growth 5.4 Partner with State and community organizations to spread awareness of programs and services	

Questions to Consider



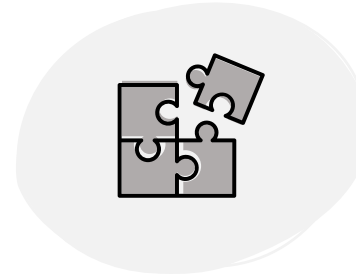
Do the Mission, Vision, and Values **reflect who we are as a Commission?**



Do these Goals and Objectives **align with the Mission, Vision, and Values?**



Does this Strategic Plan **align with the YEC charge and capabilities**, as outlined in AB-46?



Do the Goals and Objectives position YEC to make the greatest impact it can by **addressing the most pressing needs through its unique role and value?**



Would you like to share **any other thoughts** about the Strategic Plan?

Public Comment – *Strategic Plan Review and Approval*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

LUNCH

30 Minutes

We will be back at **TBD**

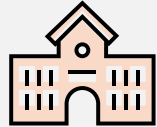
Strategic Plan Next Steps: Moving into Design and Implementation

Joyce Chiao, Consultant, Abundance

Designing the Strategic Plan for Different Groups



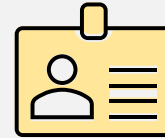
California Youth



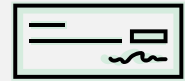
Youth-Serving
Organizations



Policymakers



Commission Staff



Funders

One-Pager



Teen Kitchen Project

2022-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

ABOUT US

Founded in 2012, the Teen Kitchen Project (TKP) provides home-delivered, medically tailored meals to individuals living with a critical or chronic illness in Santa Cruz County. Meals are designed by an in-house Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and Executive Chef. And are prepared by teen chefs who benefit from the opportunity to give back to their community while learning valuable workforce and life skills. Meals are delivered by adult volunteers who perform weekly wellness checks for meal recipients. Over the last 13 years, TKP has worked closely over 2,200 teens and delivered over 480,000 meals. 84% of TKP's clients live in 2022-2026 low-income.

MISSION

Building healthier, more resilient communities through food security, providing meaningful engaging teens in professional development opportunities, and supporting the health and well-being of individuals living with chronic illness.

VISION

A healthy, sustainable, and equitable community. We are excited to work with staff, our volunteers, and the community to achieve our goals:

- Work with Intention
- Integrity Matters
- Young People are the Future
- Upholding Dignity & Inclusion
- Food is love



Amanda Rodella
Board President



TeenKitchenProject.org

Youth Strategy 2022-2026

Nimitila Shire Council's Youth Strategy 2022 - 2026 sets out a three-year strategic commitment to the Council and support and respond to the needs of young people aged 12-25 years of age who live, work, study, volunteer or play in the Nimitila Shire.

There isn't only really heteronormal sex education at school even if it doesn't include conversations on consent or what a respectful relationship looks like.

**16 year old,
Shirley**

Talk to me as if I'm a complete idiot, you know? I don't want to feel stupid, I want to feel confident about myself.

**16 year old,
Ethan**

Making connections come together and unite, trust everyone here and yourself. Be open, communication and decision, being okay to ask people for help.

**16 year old,
Hazelridge**

Youth activation programs to help them gain experience for future jobs.

**20 year old,
Yamamoto**

More LGBTQIA+ Activities
POV Events, Disability Awareness Community

**19 year old,
Diamond Creek**



Vision

Young people in the shire can thrive economically, socially and environmentally. They have the skills, knowledge and resources they need to succeed.

Priorities

1. Healthy and Well
2. Empowered and Engaged
3. Access to Safe Spaces and Places
4. Equipped and Employed
5. Welcomed and Connected

For a full copy of the Youth Strategy 2022 - 2026, visit [NimitilaShire.vic.gov.au](https://nimitilashire.vic.gov.au).

Contact us
6423 3111 | youth@nimitila.vic.gov.au
nimitilashire.vic.gov.au




Up Next: Implementation

AB-46:

8273. The commission shall carry out the duties imposed upon it by this chapter, and may do any of the following:

(d) Form committees and task forces to discuss specific issues and policy areas and meet as necessary.

(f) Appoint advisory committees from within its membership or with outside members whenever necessary. Members of an advisory committee shall serve without compensation, but each may be reimbursed for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of official duties.

Commission Bylaws

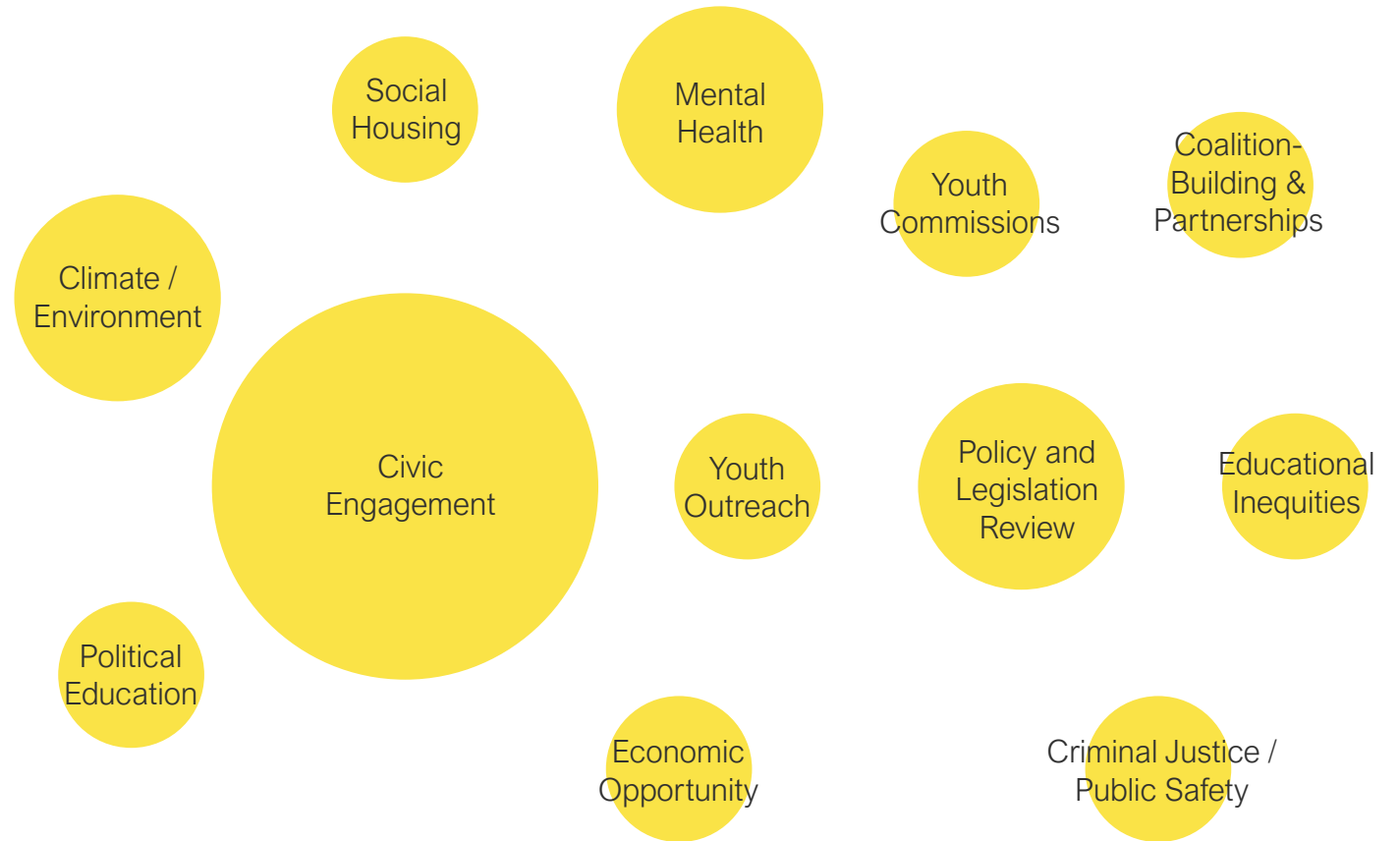
ARTICLE VIII. AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Chair of the Commission may establish Ad Hoc Committees to address issues as deemed necessary and appropriate. The Chair of the Commission will recommend active members and outside members whenever necessary for appointment to an Ad Hoc Committee. Recommended appointments to an Ad Hoc Committee shall be approved by majority vote by the Commission. Ad Hoc Committees may include no more than two (2) active members and be supported by Commission staff. Stakeholders Entities with a vested interest, community members, and policy experts may be engaged to inform the work of the Ad Hoc committees.

The Ad Hoc Committees may present recommendations for action to the full Commission at a regular meeting of the Commission.

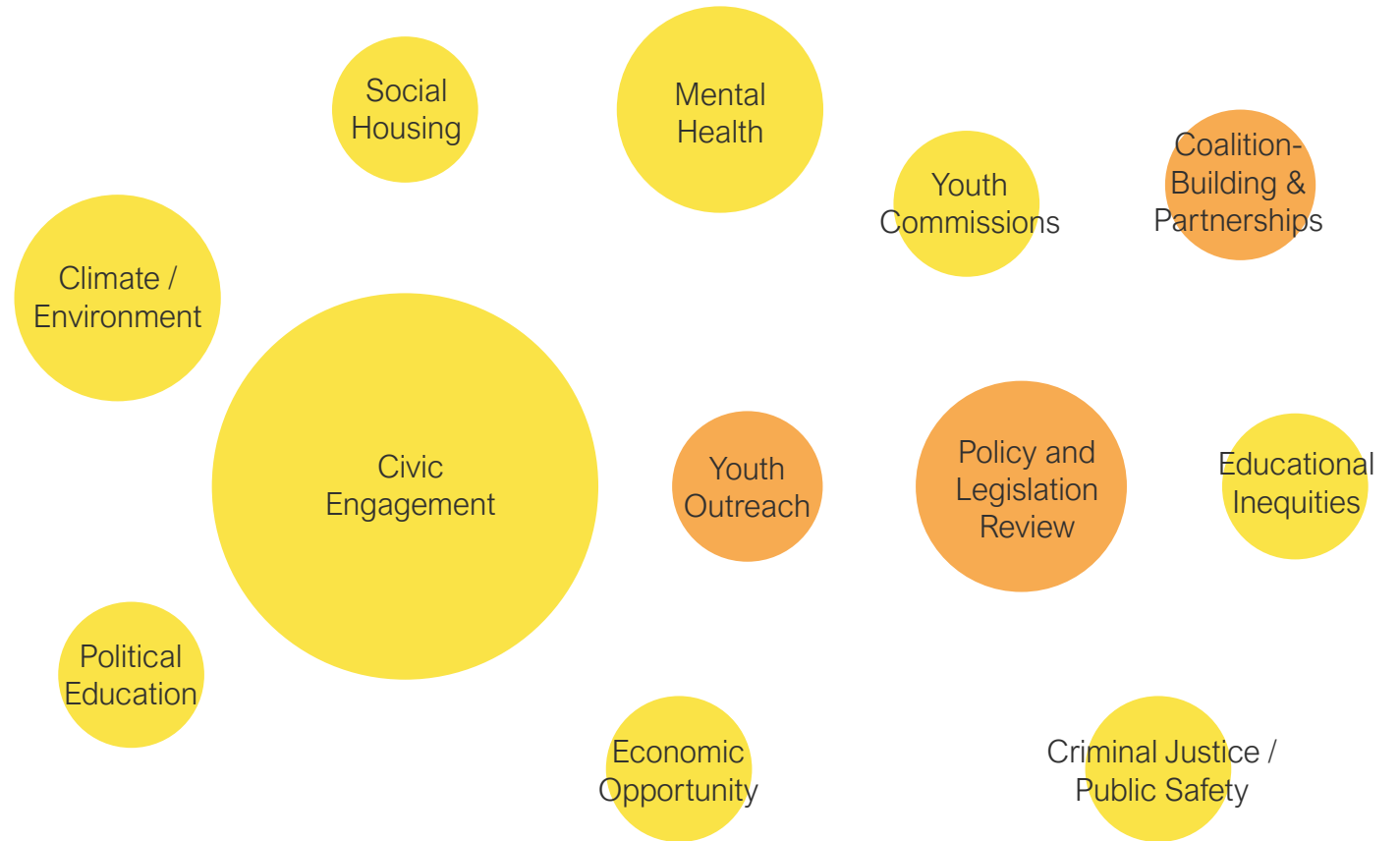
Up Next: Implementation

At the November 2024 YEC Meeting, Commissioners expressed wanting to focus on these issue areas in committees:



Up Next: Implementation

At the November 2024 YEC Meeting, Commissioners expressed wanting to focus on these issue areas in committees:



Proposed Committees

Legislation & Policy Review

Analyzes current and new legislation focused on youth, and advises State policymakers

Community Engagement

Conducts youth outreach, and cultivates relationships with youth-serving leaders and organizations

Data & Outcomes

Provides data analysis capacity for the Commission to track progress and outcomes

Civic Engagement

Identifies and promotes opportunities for youth to take action in their communities and society

Other Committee(s)?

Public Comment – *Strategic Plan Next Steps: Moving into Design and Implementation*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Youth Commissioner Survey: Review and Approval & Discussion on Digital Youth Summit

Dr. Amy Lerman, Executive Director, Possibility Lab at UC Berkeley

Kate Sadowsky, Director of Community Outreach, Possibility Lab at UC Berkeley



**Youth Empowerment
Commission**

September 2025

Engaging Youth Commissions:

Youth Commission Survey and Summit

POSSIBILITY LAB
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY

Goals for Today



Youth Commission Survey

Review draft survey and ensure alignment with Youth Empowerment Commission goals.

Youth Commission Summit

Discuss proposed Summit theme and agenda; brainstorm topics for small group discussions.

Youth Commission Survey

Purpose

Data collection and engagement.

Understand common practices,
priorities, and experiences of local and
regional Youth Commissions.



Youth Commission Summit



Purpose

Build a network, share ideas and experiences, and increase coordination and effectiveness of Youth Commissions across California.

Youth Commission Summit

Proposed Theme: Increasing Our Impact

Proposed Activities:

Sharing Panel: Effective Youth Commissions

- A panel of local and regional Youth Commissioners share effective practices.

Break-Out Groups: Topic-Based Discussions

- Small groups discuss topics chosen by the YEC to generate “talking points” that reflect youth viewpoints and identify communities whose stories need to be told.

Capacity Building: Effectively Using Data and Storytelling

- Attendees learn practices for telling compelling stories with data and narrative, using examples from their break-out groups.

Activity

What **topics** should be included in the Summit **break-out discussions**?

POSSIBILITY LAB

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY

Public Comment – *Youth Commissioner Survey: Review and Approval & Discussion on Digital Youth Summit*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Next Steps for Staff Action

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Adjournment

Commissioner Wednesday Pope,
Chair



Next Commission Meeting:

November 15, 2025
Los Angeles, CA

In person and virtual

Website:
youthempowerment.ca.gov

Email:
youthempowermentcommission@opr.ca.gov