

Plans on Community Gatherings and Town Engagement

Community Gatherings

Over the past years, my conversations with community members have underscored the desire to have more community events and know when they are. We also heard this in the [Tiburon Parks and Recreation Strategic plan](#), which emphasized the desire for more community events and improved awareness.

2024 Tiburon Park and Rec Strategic Plan

Community Events

Many participants requested an increase in community events. Existing events are well-liked, and residents want more.....

Spaces for Community Programming

To support and encourage community events, there is support for a multi-purpose space for community programming...This space would allow for outdoor gatherings like concerts while also remaining informal and multi-purpose.

Activities for Kids and Teens Many participants noted the lack of activities and spaces for older kids and teenagers in Tiburon. More spaces and activities that are meant for teens are wanted.

As a community, we have also seen a positive increase in the diversity of community events, just not focused on the traditional Friday Nights on Main (FNOM) but also a Baseball parade, Juneteenth celebration, Diwali, and December Holiday festivities. Over the past year, we have also experienced the development of a growing civic space at Zelinski Park for additional cultural events.

From the activities and participation, it is clear that there is a demand for more community events in community spaces. Still, the execution of that is unclear given the multiple stakeholder groups engaging in these events, including city commissions such as Heritage and Arts, Diversity and Inclusion; local nonprofits like Little League, Landmarks, and the Library; and business representatives with the Chamber of Commerce and Destination Tiburon and of course Town Council. The intent is there, but we still need direction from the Town Council. These are my suggestions to improve this.

Policy Recommendations for more events

- Request a representative from the Heritage and Arts Commission, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, and the Chamber to meet with the organizers of [San Anselmo Live on the Avenue](#) and report back on the keys of their success by March 2025
- Request the Belvedere-Tiburon Library to provide Tiburon Town Council with community event goals as part of their JPA agreement to improve community event promotion.
- Increase the number of FNOMs from two to four, including one around July 4th and the Fall Solstice. One FNOM should be teen-focused.
- Develop, with the above organizations, by February 2025, a plan for events through June and repeat in April 2025 for the entire year's events.
- Establish a scheduling and promotion process and other improvements with the mentioned community event nonprofits by June 2025 for community and commercial success.

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Community Connections with Town

Also, during the development of the [Tiburon Parks and Rec Strategic Plan](#), we heard from citizens and neighborhood groups unaware of the plan and the public outreach. Lack of clear awareness is also a general trend on Next Door regarding any changes or updates in Town, ranging from road closures to the monthly “Chipper Days”. The [Town’s 2040 strategic plan](#) also highlighted the desire for community connections.

As a Town, we need to leave the physical and digital confines of Town Hall and council chambers and meet the community where they are: in their neighborhood parks, picnics, cafes, or homes. We need to use multiple methods to meet Tiburon residents where they are comfortable and engaged.

As part of this, Town staff and elected officials should meet the community in the neighborhoods to briefly inform and, more importantly, listen to the community, away from the online echo chambers and in person, away from Town Hall. These engagements must include all community members, homeowners and renters, lifelong residents, and recent transplants. The goals are understanding the priorities and needs through listening, being authentic, and consistently providing an opportunity for feedback. Mill Valley, a few years ago, implemented a program like this called the [Mill Valley Community Engagement Program](#).

As a member of the Tiburon Town Council, I would propose policy actions to meet this goal and improve community engagement. The goal is for the Town to engage with and gain more insights into its residents' needs, meet those needs, and communicate the Town’s projects.

- Request staff meet with the Mill Valley Community Engagement Liaison to understand their program and opportunities to learn from and leverage.
- Expand from the [POST Subcommittees](#) on MiniParks and other park improvements to identify community points of contact and local priorities and share this with the Town Staff.
- Town staff, in coordination with the [Disaster Advisory Council, will conduct](#) focused online surveys through the mail and online to identify contacts and the best ways to communicate with town residents.
- Examine the use of community-based online tools to share plans and roadwork updates and seek feedback from the community; these could include [EngagementHQ](#), owned by Granicus, which the Town is already using, and [Zencity](#).
- Review the Town Budget and, without an incremental headcount, hire a resource reporting to the Town Clerk solely for online community communications.

Our views are unique, yet our problems are not. The Town of Tiburon cannot rely on previously used methods for resident engagement but must learn from the past, leverage programs from other communities, and expand the use of digital outreach to meet the residents on their terms and time.