



## CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** City Council **DATE:** March 9, 2026

**DEPARTMENT:** Community Development & City Manager's Office

**PREPARED BY:** Valerie Stump, Lisi Horstman, and Adelaide La Torre

**PRESENTER:** Valerie Stump, Lisi Horstman, and Adelaide La Torre

**AGENDA TITLE:** Turning the Tides: Building Community, Strengthening Neighborhoods and Leading By Example

### RECOMMENDATION

Receive the presentation on the Turning the Tides Initiative and provide feedback to staff.

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### BACKGROUND

Consistent with the City's Strategic Plan 2024-2028, this initiative advances our commitment to fostering meaningful community-building opportunities while enhancing the beauty, safety and livability of our neighborhoods. The City has historically supported beautification efforts through beach clean-ups, amnesty events, and other volunteer activities that improve public spaces.

**Turning the Tides** builds on that foundation by establishing a structured, city-wide platform that brings together residents, businesses, non-profits, and community organizations to participate in volunteer clean-up and community building activities across both residential and commercial areas. The program promotes civic pride, neighborhood revitalization, and community partnerships. It reinforces the principle that maintaining a clean and welcoming community is a shared responsibility between the City and the community it serves.

In coordination with hands-on clean-up initiatives, the initiative will be coordinated with a proactive code enforcement education campaign. The goal is to increase awareness of property maintenance standards, provide resources and guidance to residents and businesses, and promote voluntary compliance through education before enforcement.

The initiative will launch with a City-organized Earth Day Clean-up event and expand into additional community-driven events later in the year.

### DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### Overview

The City will coordinate and promote events, provide staff support, supply materials when feasible, assist with volunteer organization, and support partnerships and potential

permitting as needed. The long-term objective is to establish a sustainable volunteer network capable of organizing future events with limited direct City oversight.

### Phase One – Spring Kickoff Event

This initial phase is intended to model leadership by example-demonstrating that City employees are not only public servants, but community builders committed to the care and pride of Fort Bragg.

The initiative will launch with a Spring Kickoff Event on Earth Day which is April 22, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., beginning at Bainbridge Park at 400 E. Laurel Street. Activities will primarily include trash collection, general neighborhood beautification and weed removal. City staff will coordinate volunteer registration, provide limited supplies, and organize work areas. Community members and City staff will participate together. This event will serve as the program kickoff and a pilot effort to gauge participation levels, community engagement, and opportunities for expansion.

### Phase Two – Community Brainstorm Session

In Summer 2026, staff will host a public brainstorming session open to residents, businesses, nonprofits, and other community groups. The session will gather ideas for future events, identify potential community leaders, strengthen partnerships, and develop the structure for a Fall Community Week. This step is intended to build community investment and transition the initiative toward greater community leadership.

### Phase Three – Turning the Tides Community Week

Staff anticipates hosting a week-long series of events in Fall 2026 at various locations throughout the City. Potential activities include neighborhood clean-ups, tree planting, tire amnesty and paper shredding events, sharps disposal opportunities, school-led outreach projects, and neighborhood assistance efforts coordinated with local organizations and businesses. Events may be led by community partners where feasible.

## **FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE**

Fiscal impacts are expected to be minimal at the start with limited expenditures for outreach materials and basic supplies (e.g., trash bags, gloves) may be required. Future program expansion may require Council consideration of a modest operating budget which will be built into Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget Development.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY**

The Turning the Tides Community Clean-Up Initiative directly advances several priorities identified in the City's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.

The program supports the Strategic Plan's commitment to:

- Promoting community engagement and volunteerism

- Enhancing neighborhood beautification and public spaces
- Increasing visible City presence within the community
- Strengthening partnerships with residents, businesses, and nonprofits
- Encouraging shared responsibility for maintaining a safe, clean, and welcoming environment

By launching the initiative as both an internal team-building effort and a public community event, the City reinforces its commitment to leading by example. The coordination of clean-up activities alongside a proactive code enforcement education campaign further supports the Strategic Plan's focus on transparency, communication, and voluntary compliance before enforcement.

Turning the Tides is designed not as a one-time event, but as an ongoing community-building platform that aligns with the City's long-term vision of civic pride, neighborhood vitality, and collaborative stewardship.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Public outreach will include:

- City website announcements
- Press Release
- Social media postings
- Mailers to property owners and residents
- Direct outreach to businesses and community organizations
- Volunteer registration via QR code and contact information

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Powerpoint Presentation on Turning the Tides