

City of Encinitas, CA

City Council Retreat Report

February 13-14, 2023

The City of Encinitas held a City Council retreat on February 13-14, 2023 to establish goals and clarify expectations for the coming year. The retreat was planned and facilitated by Raftelis.

Setting the Stage

The retreat began with participants introducing themselves and shared “one word” hope or expectation that they had for the retreat. The words included:

- Vision
- Consensus
- Priorities
- Goals
- Alignment

High-Performance Governance

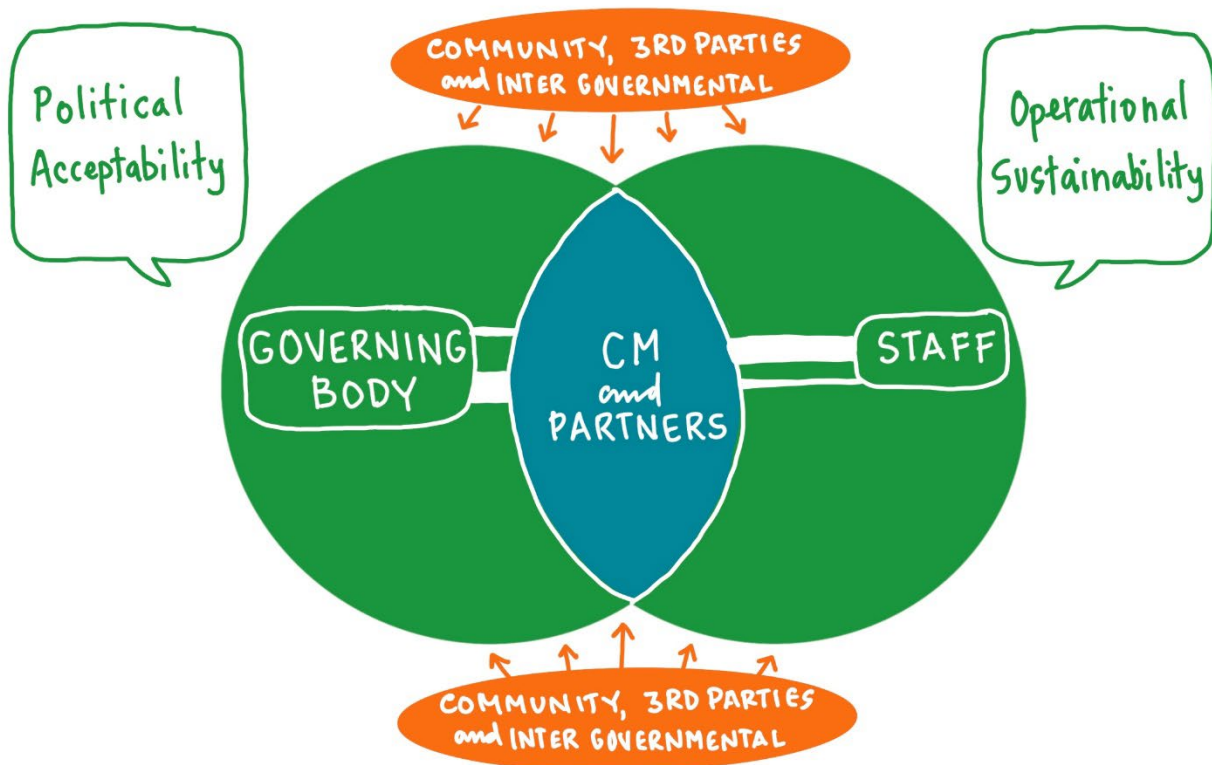
Dr. John Nalbandian presented a workshop discussing the “gap” that exists between political acceptability (what we want to do) and administrative sustainability (what we have the capacity to do) and explored how disruptive forces widen that gap. Bridging this gap is THE prerequisite for effective governance. Nothing gets done unless we can connect the will with the way.

There is a gap on every issue – and you must bridge the gap on every issue. In developing that capacity, you should understand two things:

1. Politics involves choices among conflicting values where no value profile is correct – unless of course it is yours 😊
2. Government, politics, and administration are more than just different roles and responsibilities; they are different mindsets

At the local level, the City Council is referred to as the “governing body” – at the state and federal level there is no governing body because we have SPLIT the responsibility of governance and separated governance from administration. At the state and federal level, we have the separation of powers, which is designed to keep bad things from happening. The Council-Manager form of government was designed to facilitate good things happening. The City’s Org Chart demonstrates that the City Manager is accountable to the governing body and that the governing body is elected to represent the electorate. The Org Chart might be about accountability, but it is not about day-to-day work.

John then shared an illustration that shows two arenas – the arena of politics and the arena of administration. The governing body finds itself in the political arena – but they are not the only actors – as shown on the following illustration. The other arena is administration – where the staff lives. The City Manager rests at the intersection of politics and administration – to bridge the gap between politics and administration without being captured politically.



The bridges don't automatically connect – the connection must happen in the “ellipse” – that space between the two arenas where the City Manager resides. The Bridge doesn't always line up perfectly – sometimes the staff will say this must be done, but the Council may not sense that the time is right; and sometimes the Council will be enthusiastic about a priority but there is not the capacity to accomplish it.

If Council spends time on the administrative arena (getting into the details and getting into the weeds) it leaves a gap for the political work.

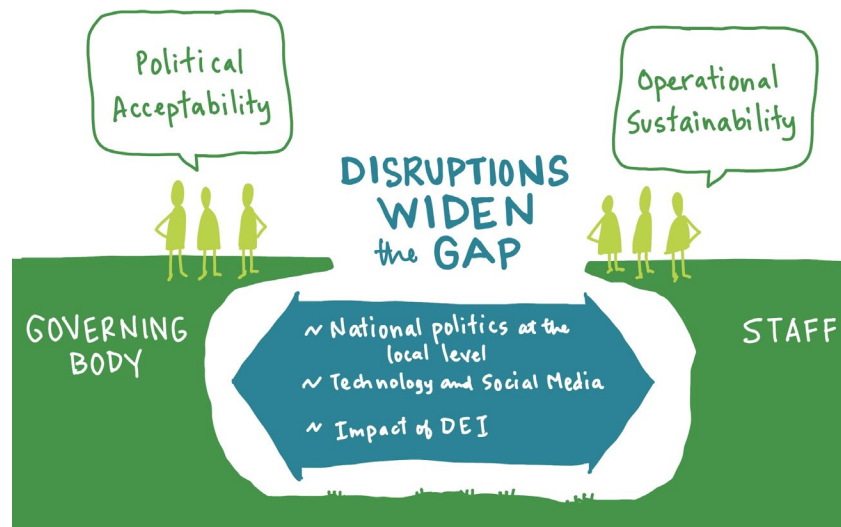
Third parties and intergovernmental and community partners – are critical to bridging the gap. Important issues in the community transcend boundaries. Homelessness is an example – you may feel the consequences within your jurisdiction, but the City government of Encinitas doesn't have all the knowledge, resources, and capacity to deal with a problem that you have experience of! The issue transcends the boundaries of the jurisdiction. The leadership challenge of this time period is managing boundaries.

Dr. Nalbandian was doing research for a book, so he surveyed people and asked them what contemporary trends they were seeing. It was pointed out that these are not trends – they are disruptive forces. In the natural world disruptions are inevitable – there will be earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes; what is not inevitable is your response. The response to the social disruptions must be intentional. These disruptions include:

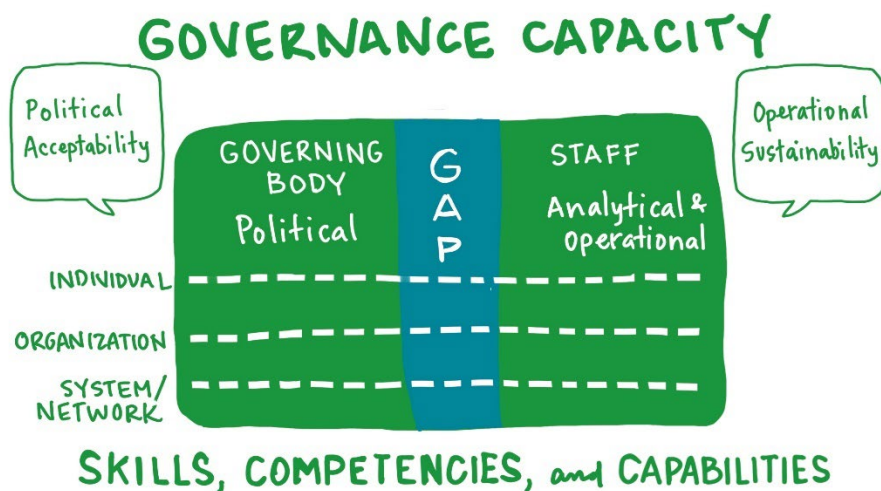
1. National politics filtering down to the local level

2. Technology and social media
3. Impacts of DEI

This concept is generally depicted in the illustration below.



Governance capacity is the ability to bridge the gap and make the connection between political acceptability and administrative sustainability. The following graphic discusses the idea of governance capacity being a way that we can bridge this gap.



Political skills exist at the individual, organizational, and system/network level. Analytical and Operational Skills exist at the individual, organizational, and system/network level. The disruptive forces increase the space of the gap – partners are invited to help bridge the gap.

The slides from Dr. Nalbandian's presentation are attached to this report for future reference.

Workshop Debrief

- Appreciate Council speaking up
- Question how some of yesterday's workshop applies to THIS Council
- Four Values – we all share them and we just have different approaches
- Liked how the four values were laid out
- Appreciate the values and new vocabulary being shared
- Liked the case study – collaborating with Council
- Liked the idea of having Council workshops
- Learned something new – appreciate working with our staff!

This exercise invited the Mayor and Council to consider how different groups (the public, the staff, and City Council colleagues) might describe an “ideal” member of the Governing Body.



The Public is looking for:	The Staff is looking for:	My City Council Colleagues are looking for:
Proactive	Proactive	Creative
Passionate	Clear/Clarity	Deliberative
Responsive (x2)	Vision	Responsive to the community
Dedicated	Dedicated	Focused
Fairness	Logical	Kind
Smart	Consistent	Understanding
Accountability	Realistic	Prudent
Information about City priorities	An Advocate	Work well together on big goals
Knowledgeable	Understanding	Show up on time 😊
Someone who will drive action	Understanding	Support each other
Management of City budget and projects	Understands the issues and challenges	Good listener – good listening skills, listener
Communicative – keeps public informed and engaged	Supportive (a partner and supporter – support them and trust their competence/expertise)	Respectful – professional demeanor, respectful interactions
Follow the Law	Follow the Law	Consistent
Problem Solver (x2)	Sincere	Reliable
Helpful (x3) - Help with their issues	Timely	Collaborative (x4)
Sometimes a Miracle	Patient	Honesty
Honesty and Integrity	Respect staff's skills	Open mind
Openness/transparency	Openness/Transparency	Openness/Transparency
	Asks thoughtful questions	
	Respectful Interactions	
	A Balanced Approach	
	Positive	
	Let staff problem solve with the public also!	
	Read staff reports	
	Thorough – the staff reports contain all needed info and answer likely questions	

Articulating Expectations

In the Council-Manager form of government, the City Manager plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between the elected officials and the professional staff of the organization. The Council was asked to consider what they expect from the City Manager, and to share those expectations AND what they are willing to give the City Manager to allow them to meet the Council's expectations.

What the Council needs from the City Manager	What the Council is willing to give the City Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead organization to be engaged with all parts of the community • Community insight/sensitivity • Engage with the community • Professional expertise • Bring in new management knowledge and technology • Chief policy advisor • Dedicated – be engaged, give the City its money's worth • Responsive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsiveness to citizens and Council ○ Follow-through on requests – initial response: got it, working on it, etc., then complete answer • Excellent communication – keeping everyone (staff, citizens, and Council) informed • Provides clear, complete, and concise information • Explanation of tradeoffs • Analysis of staff time and costs • Willingness to embrace new ideas and projects • Effective delegation and follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good delegator • Teamwork • Leadership and direction to City staff • Good team builder • Great leader to our staff • Tell us what we need to know, not what we want to hear • Respect and Trust • Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to trust that direction will be followed ○ Operate with and assume positive intentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and Financial resources • Support of resource requests to achieve our goals within bounds of feasibility • Support • Defense of our direction • Build community support • Collaboration with City Manager on meeting our goals • Commitment – accessibility • Time • Follow-up • Staff autonomy in the kitchen • Do my homework and stay at right altitude • Trust • Trust and Respect • Clear Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear objective direction and vision – written consensus of all five Council members ○ Articulate desired outcomes • Open and honest communication • Fairness, honesty, and open communication • Assume best intentions • Insights and knowledge • Undivided attention – be engaged and listening • Collaborator and partnership • Communication – timely, thorough, and transparent • Work-Life Balance

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take responsibility• Effective Communication<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tailored communications for each Councilmember○ Timely, thorough, internal and external○ Concise• Helpful<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Problem solver• Organization and Planning – meetings and staff• Well managed and disciplined City processes• Available – good listener• Willingness to address long standing challenges• Fiscal control and accountability• Collaboration and partnership• Fairness and neutrality – no politics!• Fair• Consistency• Use my time efficiently• No surprises<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Don't blindside me in public | |
|---|--|

True Today – True in Ten Years

Participants were asked to share their responses to two questions:

- What is **true** about Encinitas today that you **hope** will still be true in ten years?
- What is **not true** about Encinitas today that you **hope** will be true in ten years?

True Today AND in Ten Years	Not True Today BUT True in Ten Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental leaders • Environmentally healthy – achieved through CAP, mobility, open space protection • Natural coastline and healthy beaches • Pristine • Clean, Healthy Open Space • Financially sound and having invested in infrastructure – ATP, water/wastewater, open space, and roads • Beach City Vibe • Unpretentious • Community character – five unique communities • Desirable, innovative, and welcoming City • High quality of life achieved through diversity, affordability, and safety • Great Mix – businesses, housing types, people • Community with character – not JUST another beach town • Small bulk/mass; small scale, walkable community without towering monstrosities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create workforce housing • Housing for people of all income levels • Solutions for homelessness • Everyone who wants to live here can afford it • We protect affordable housing • Greater diversity (people and housing) • No pandemic impacting local events and gatherings • Parks and open space in every neighborhood • Leucadians can cross the tracks safely and legally (and we have forgotten it was ever an issue) • More mobility options • Roads and streets that are people-centric • Partisanship is not impacting local politics • Politics with less rancor and more assumptions of good intent • State does not override local zoning

These concepts were grouped and reaffirmed existing focus areas around Mobility, Housing, Community Engagement, and Effective City Services. The additional concepts were considered during a later exercise and resulted in two new Focus Areas for the City’s Strategic Plan.

Identify 2023-24 Key Areas of Focus

Last year, the City identified four Focus Areas. The Council reviewed those Focus Areas and Success Statements, modified some of the language and added two new ones to their 2023-2024 Strategic Plan.

Focus Areas	Success Statement
Mobility & Alternate Modes	Mobility and Alternative Modes mean we strive to be a nation-wide leader in mode shift by providing data driven solutions to create a safe transportation network along with programs that educate and empower people to reach destinations by active transportation and micro-mobility.

Focus Areas	Success Statement
Engagement & Education	Engagement and education means taking initiative to listen and learn from the community using diverse and inclusive communication tools that continually adapt, and build relationships with our community stakeholders. Communication and engagement are characterized by being fair, civil, timely and transparent.
Housing & Affordability	Housing & Affordability means providing diverse and affordable housing, including workforce housing, and having a roof over everyone's head, engaging underrepresented populations, and ensuring the provision of support services.
Fiscal Stewardship & Effective City Services	Fiscal Stewardship means using resources in a prudent and efficient manner consistent with City goals. Effective City Services means services are provided respectfully, responsibly, timely and predictably.
Evolving & Preserving Community Character	Evolving & Preserving Community Character means managing growth while maintaining an accessible, innovative and welcoming unique beach city; ensuring that diversity of the community includes a great mix of businesses, people, housing and open space that results in a high quality of life.
Environmental Health & Leadership	Environmental Health & Leadership means continuing our environmental leadership by showing our commitment to good stewardship of our natural resources; meeting our goals on Climate Action remains a priority, including decarbonization, mobility mode shift, clean air and water, responsible solid waste disposal, storm and wastewater reuse, shoreline and open space preservation.

Council Goals

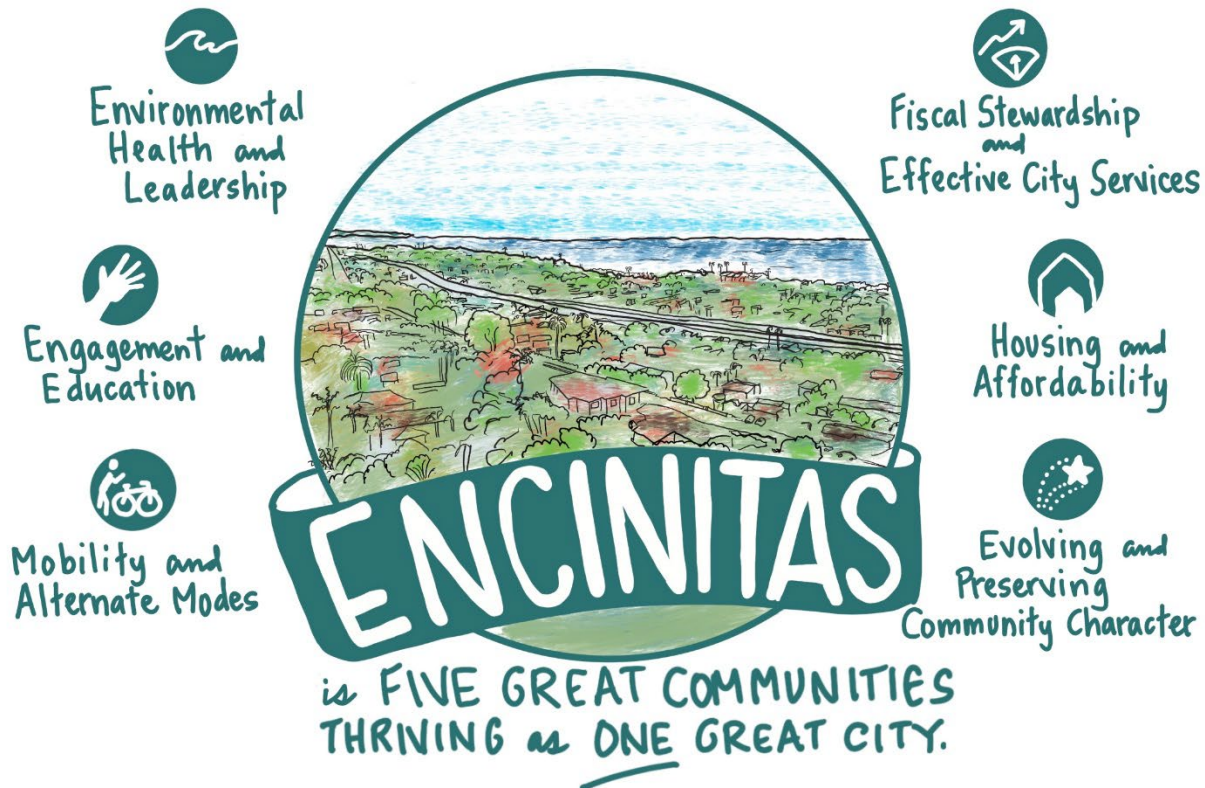
Council then shared their individual thoughts on potential goals. Those items were considered by their colleagues and ultimately Six Goals were agreed upon to move forward for 2023-2024. Each idea is listed below with the number of Councilmembers who expressed support for each item when asked to identify their top seven of the 19 choices. The items in bold move forward as Council Goals.

Mobility & Alternate Modes	Engagement & Education	Housing & Affordability	Fiscal Stewardship & Effective City Services	Evolving & Preserving Community Character	Environmental Health & Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund remaining Streetscape elements (3) • Quail Gardens Drive – Saxony Westlake safe routes complete streets (3) • Safe, Legal Rail Road Crossings and Establish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Housing Solutions Manager to explore solutions for homeless and unhoused (3) • 100% Affordable Housing (choose a site, define a project, find funding partners) (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address wildfire safety and evacuation in Encinitas (0) • Increase focus on crime reduction through enforcement and crime investigation (0) • Efficiency and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific View Phase II (2) • Maintain and defend local control of land use decisions – lobby at state level (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand habitat stewardship and Open Space Acquisition (4) • Improve storm water facilities to reduce pollution and flooding (2) • Solar on all major City Facilities;

<p>Citywide Quiet Zones (5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm Traffic City Wide (1) • Mode Shift Coordinator (2) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore feasibility for workforce housing (0) • Preserve existing affordable housing (i.e. mobile home parks) (1) • Create more affordable housing efficiently without overwhelming market rate development (1) • Provide open, fair and transparent allocation of affordable housing – well defined random process (0) 	<p>of Fire Services evaluation (2)</p>		<p>Net Zero in City Facility Electricity Use (2)</p>
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The Strategic Planning Framework

The Council reviewed legacy strategic planning documents and agreed to update the framework to include the following elements:



Vision

Encinitas is five unique communities thriving as ONE great City.

Mission

Leading the preservation and evolution of our City and providing innovative services that enhance the quality of life for residents, visitors, businesses, and our communities.

Focus Areas

Mobility & Alternate Modes

Mobility and Alternative Modes mean we strive to be a nation-wide leader in mode shift by providing data driven solutions to create a safe transportation network along with programs that educate and empower people to reach destinations by active transportation and micro-mobility.

Engagement & Education

Engagement and education means taking initiative to listen and learn from the community using diverse and inclusive communication tools that continually adapt and build relationships with our community stakeholders. Communication and engagement are characterized as fair, civil, timely and transparent.

Housing & Affordability

Housing & Affordability means providing diverse and affordable housing, including workforce housing, having a roof over everyone's head, engaging underrepresented populations, and ensuring the provision of support services.

Fiscal Stewardship & Effective City Services

Fiscal Stewardship means using resources in a prudent and efficient manner consistent with City goals.

Effective City Services means services are provided respectfully, responsibly, timely and predictably.

Evolving & Preserving Community Character

Evolving & Preserving Community Character means managing growth while maintaining an accessible, innovative, and welcoming unique beach city; ensuring that diversity of the community includes a great mix of businesses, people, housing and open space that results in a high quality of life.

Environmental Health & Leadership

Environmental Health & Leadership means continuing our environmental leadership by showing our commitment to good stewardship of our natural resources; meeting our goals on Climate Action remains a priority, including decarbonization, mobility mode shift, clean air and water, responsible solid waste disposal, storm and wastewater reuse, shoreline, and open space preservation.

Council Goals

- **Safe, Legal Rail Road Crossings and Establish Citywide Quiet Zones**
- **Expand habitat stewardship and Open Space Acquisition**
- **Fund remaining Streetscape elements**
- **Quail Gardens Drive – Saxony Westlake safe routes complete streets**
- **Utilize Housing Solutions Manager to explore solutions for homeless and unhoused**
- **100% Affordable Housing (choose a site, define a project, find funding partners)**

Parting Thoughts/Adjourn

As the day came to a close, each participant was asked to share a parting thought on how they felt about the work done during the retreat.

Department Directors were invited to share a one-word reflection:

- Progress
- Learning
- Progress
- Alignment
- Further Clarity
- Contribution
- Alignment
- Collaborative
- Collaborative
- Direction
- Relationship

The City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Mayor, and Council shared a parting reflection on the time spent the past two days at the retreat:

- **Pam:** Appreciate everyone – you have jobs and kids and things; thanks for taking the time. This is a good way to hear each other out and get our ideas and dreams up on the board. Appreciate the process – glad we did two days together – kept the momentum going. Also appreciated having the staff here and being part of the process to hear what is important to the City Council.
- **Jenn:** This was about learning each other and learning how everyone works and thinks. Staff nailed it with many of the words they shared. We are all on the same team – we have a goal – we may have different views and approaches; we know the goal is our end game. We will all make the commitment to get to that goal – civilly, transparently, and respectfully. Great way to kick off a new Council and a new year.
- **Kellie:** The Encinitas Song 😊 Experiencing that we have been through a transition – every election feels like an upheaval, then we all come together and become a singular functioning body. I have hope that we will be a cohesive and functioning body. We have it together! I have a sense of appreciation that this is hard work – but we are all in the business of solving problems and we have a kinship in that regard that is hard to find.
- **Bruce:** I liked the word collaboration and I appreciated having the entire staff here so they can hear directly from us. It will help bring us all together as one collaborative group. Work in progress – this is all culminating in a budget which we will adopt in mid-June for 2023-2024. Budget is where the rubber meets the road – this is the vision and strategy. There will be changes along the way and we have to collaborate on that also.
- **Joy:** Glad to get feedback from the department heads that they had clarity. Happy to hear that and to feel it myself. This has been an effort that resulted in more clarity for me than last year. Happy that we evolved our process – and having staff here is part of that. There was wisdom in that! This reaffirms for me we are a lot of good people, dedicated to solving problems together. Can't ask for a better job.
- **Allison:** Grateful I could be here so early in my tenure – this was a big learning; and grateful for everyone being here working in the same room. Clarity – I think we got more clarity which also helps me. Inspired – I am inspired by what we already do and what we can do! I leave here feeling excited!

- **Mayor:** Ten or so years ago – went to a fundraiser for Scripps Hospital and got a little stone that says Vision and Legacy. These strategic planning sessions where we state our vision, identify our goals, and work together with the staff to do important work is how we leave a legacy. Many projects are critical to our City – the importance of this gathering to focus on how we will continue to enhance our vision is super important.

APPENDIX:

Governance and Goalsetting Retreat Presentation



Encinitas, California

Governance and Goalsetting Retreat

February 2023



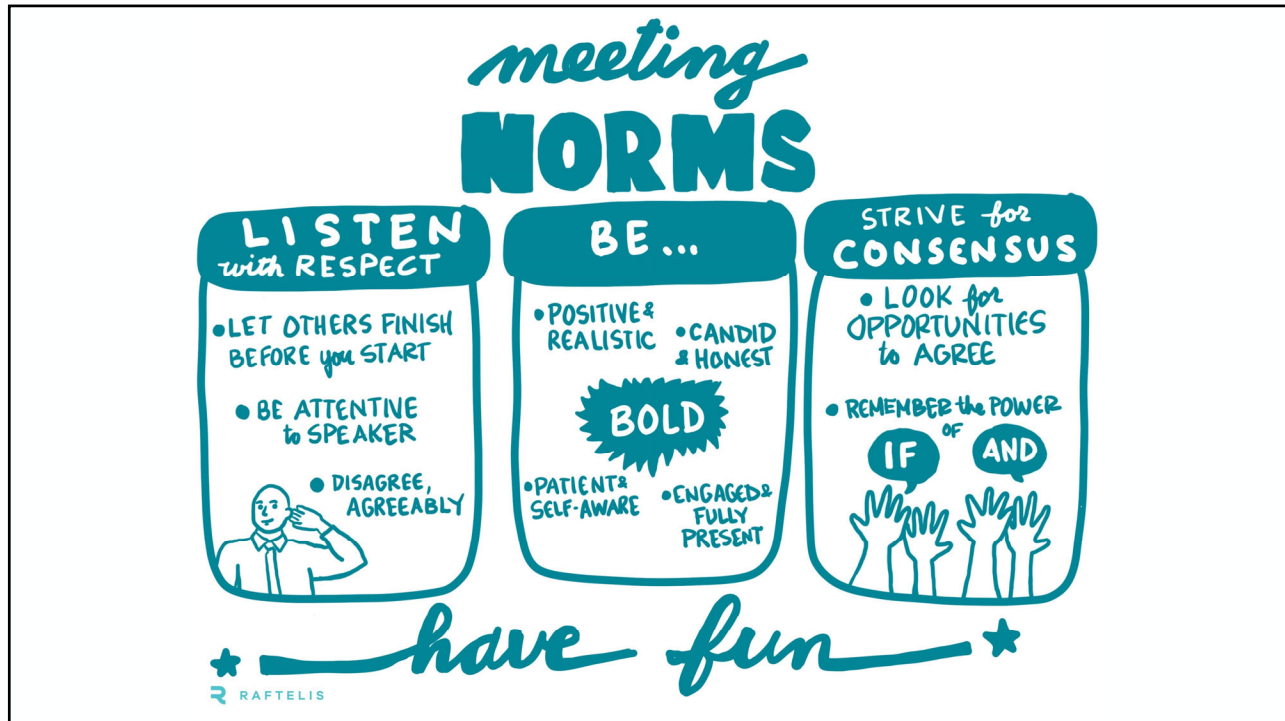
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Agenda

1. Setting the Stage
2. High Performing Governance
3. Workshop Debrief
4. Good Governance
5. True Today – True in Ten Years
6. Parting Thoughts/Adjourn

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High Performing Governance

Bridging the Gap between Political Acceptability and Operational Sustainability in a Disruptive Environment

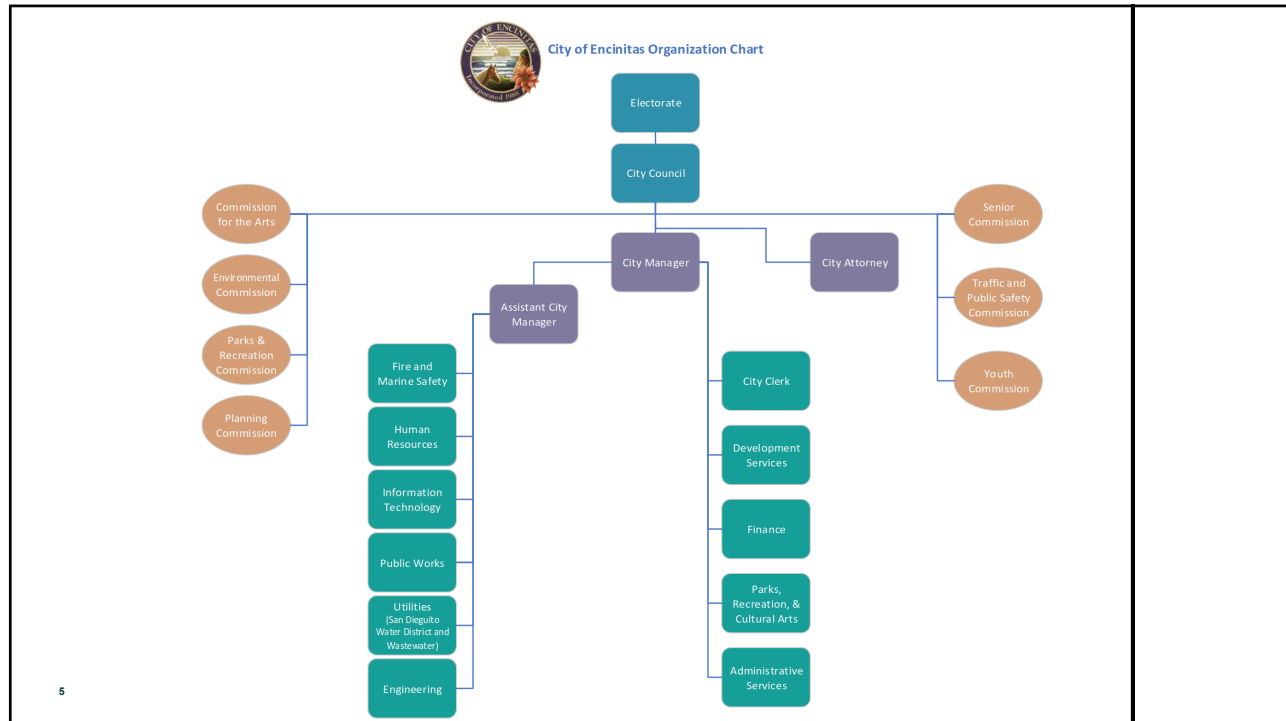
John Nalbandian and Julia Novak

www.goodlocalgovernment.org

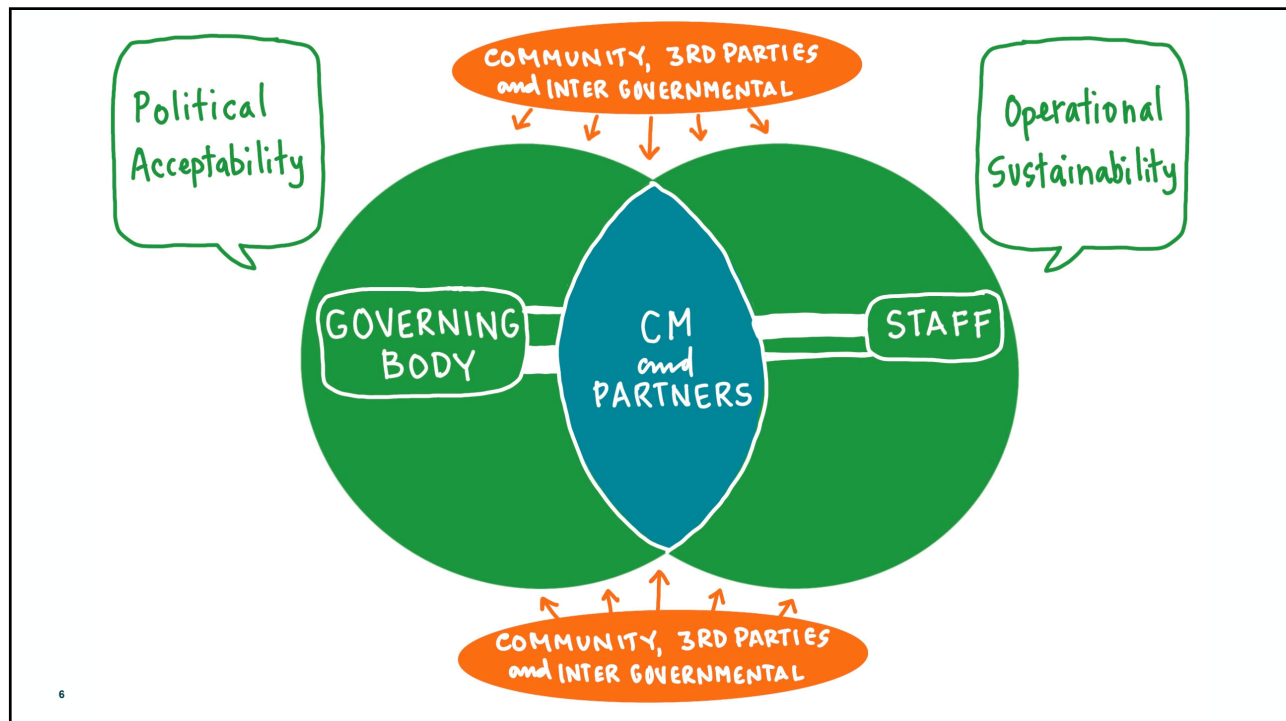
nalband@ku.edu



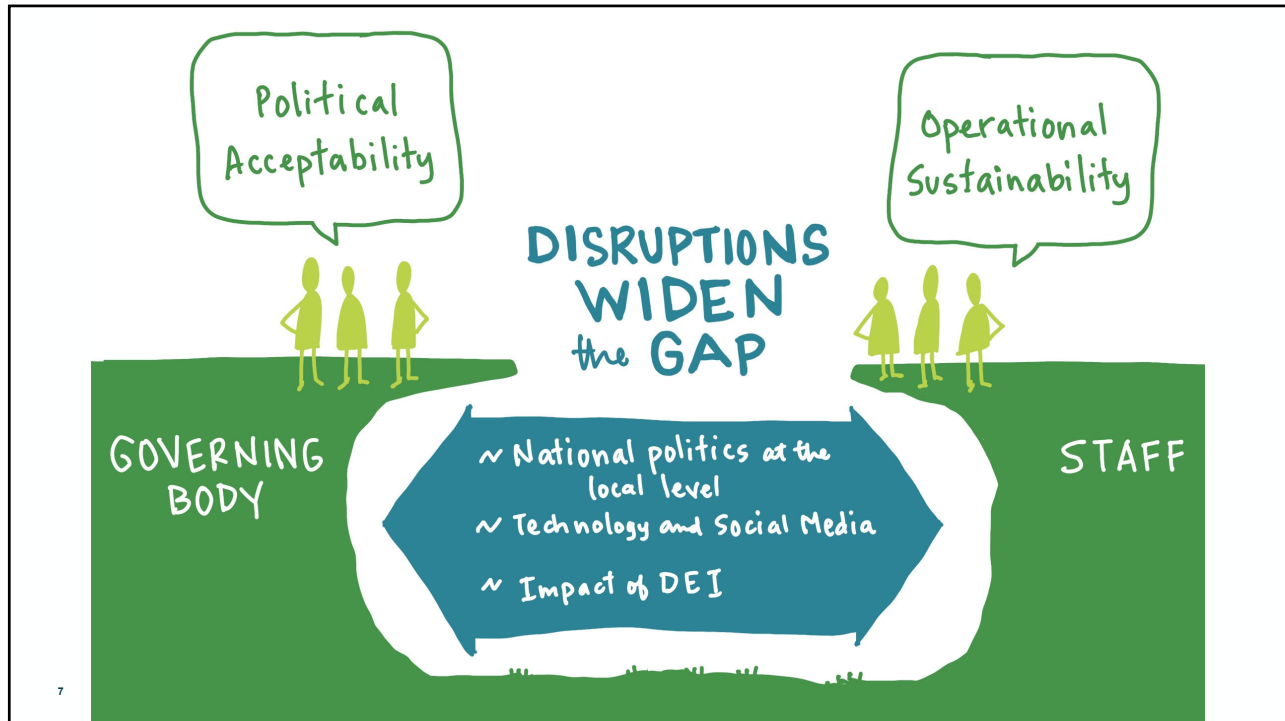
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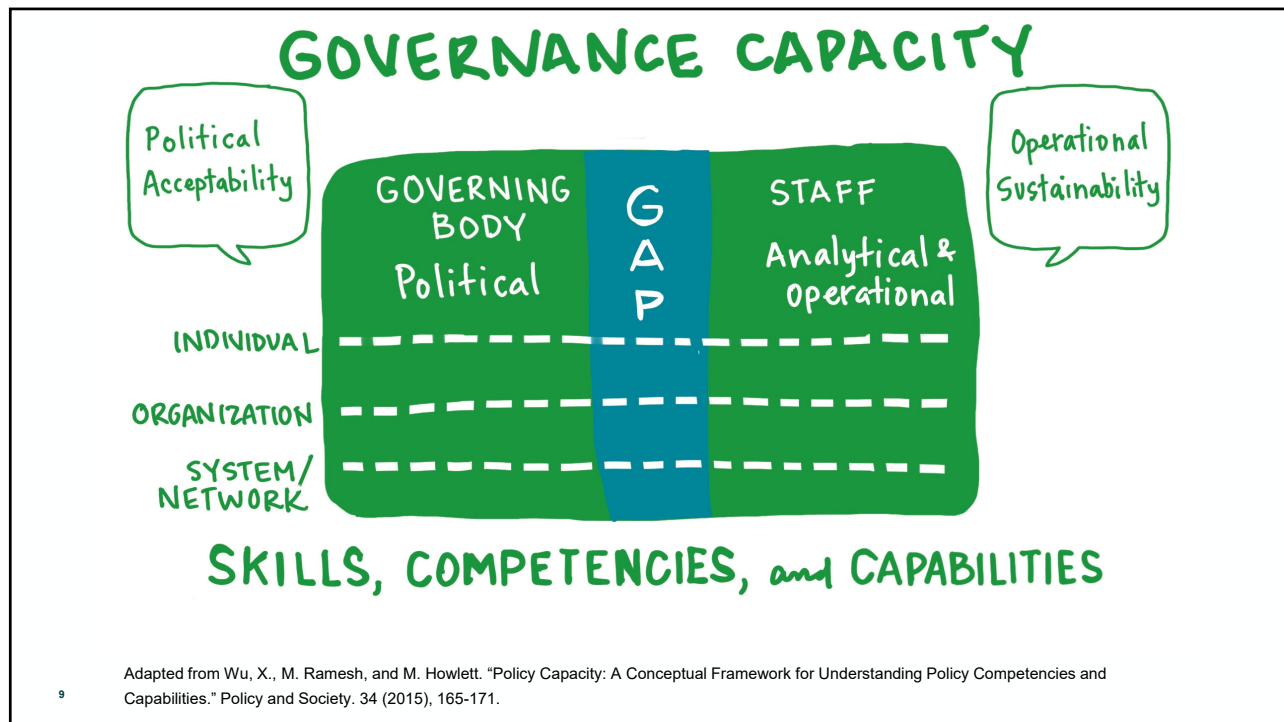
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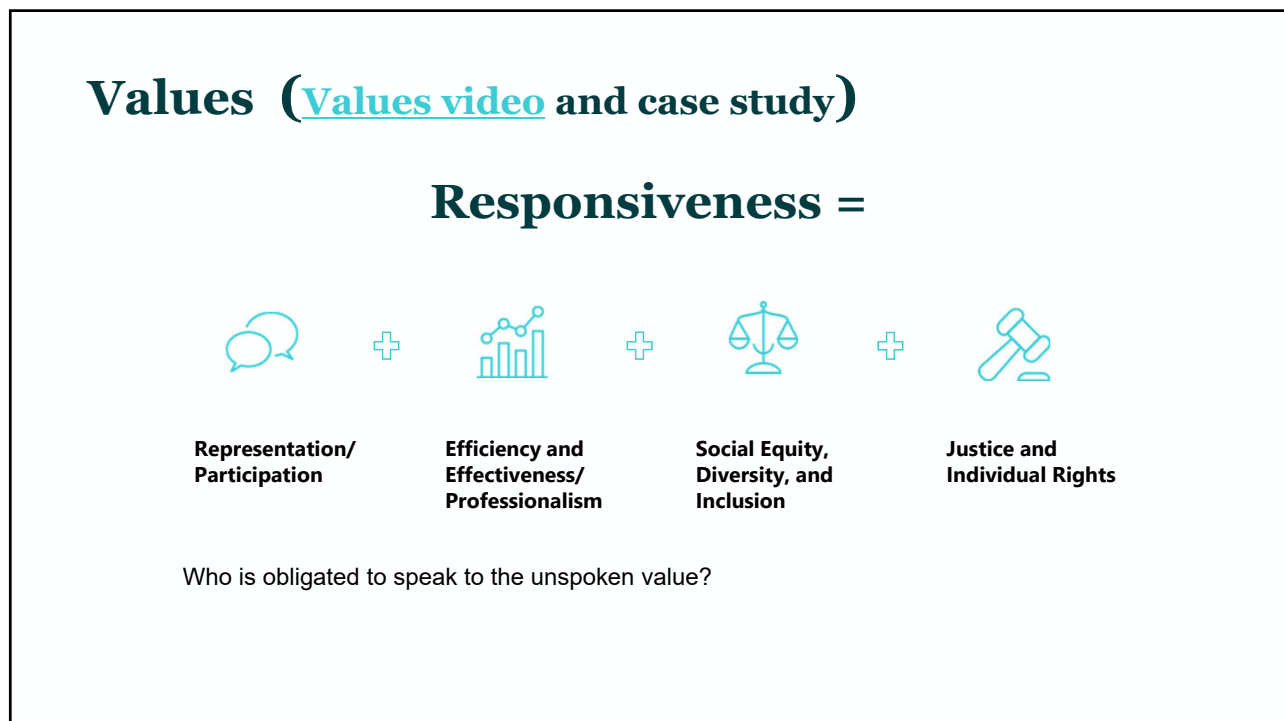
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Filling Cups

Is the Cups video relevant in today's disruptive environment?



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Characteristics of Politics and Administration

Characteristics	Political Acceptability		Operational Sustainability	
	Politics	CAO, Senior Staff and Third Parties in the GAP Electeds*	Administration	
Activity	Game/allocation of values		Problem Solving	
Players	Representatives/trustees		Experts-trustees	
Conversation	"What do you hear?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Passion ■ Dreams ■ Stories 		"What do you know?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Data ■ Plans ■ Reports 	
Pieces	Intangible: Interests and symbols		Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment	
Currency	Power (stories), loyalty, trust		Knowledge (deeds)	
Dynamics	Constructive conflict, compromise, change		Predictability, cooperation, continuity	

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Bi-lingual

- Understands that no value profile is the “best”
- Politics and administration are more than different roles, behaviors, and responsibilities. They are mindsets.

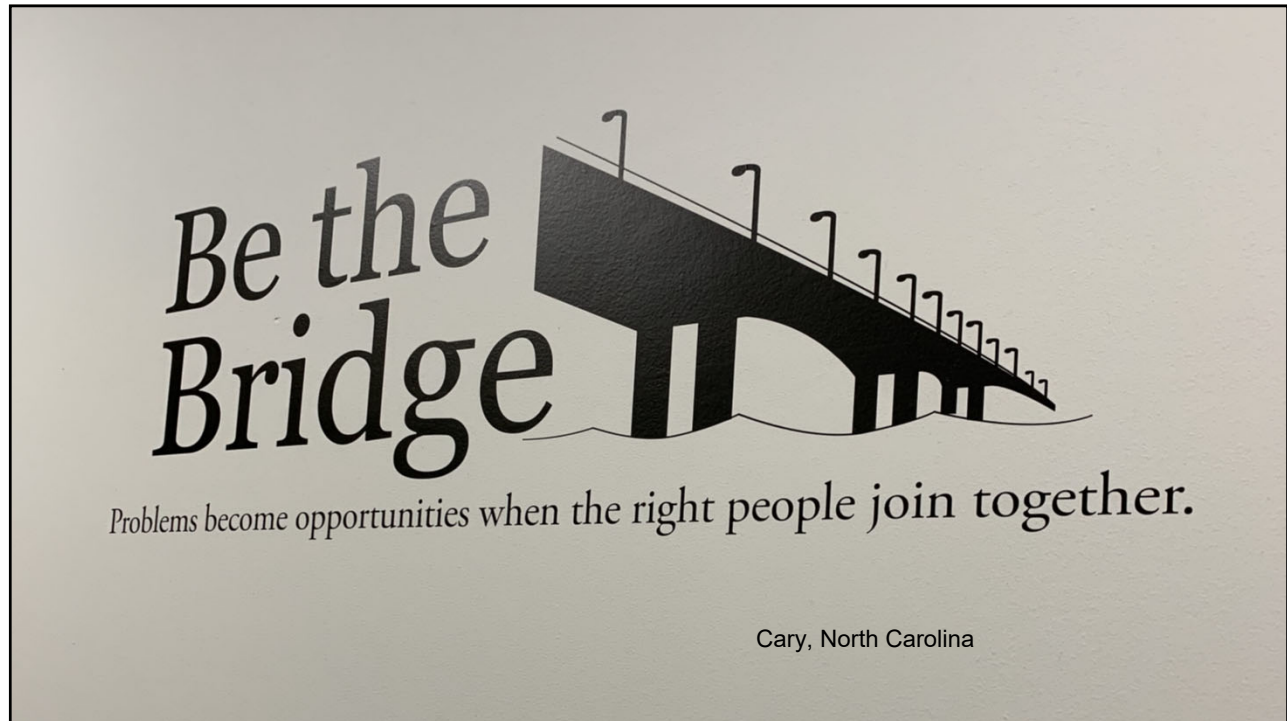
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Summary

- Bridging the gap is essential
- Role of translator/bridge builder is critical
- Good politics is about values, not right answers – stories matter (convey values)
- Do not ignore any value over time; it will come back to haunt you
- Democratic process is “messy”
- Politics/administration = ways of thinking
- Difference between “representative” and “trustee”

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