



CITY OF ATASCADERO

Action Plan

6/13/23

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Strategic Priorities

Three current strategic priorities were carried forward from the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan and were reshaped with revised key areas of focus.

- **Economic and Community Vibrancy**
- **Fiscal and Infrastructure Efficiency & Sustainability**
- **Ensuring Public Safety and Providing Exceptional City Services**

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY VIBRANCY

Key Focus Areas:

- **Downtown Vitality**
- **Activation of Underutilized Sites and Nodes**
- **Business Support and Jobs/Housing Balance**
- **Neighborhood Compatibility and Wellness**

Downtown Vitality

- Construct the Downtown Infrastructure Enhancement Plan (DIEP) to provide increased safety, Downtown walkability, business support, parking availability
 - Conduct purposeful, targeted campaign for 'We Are Open for Business' as part of the Downtown Infrastructure Enhancement Plan (DIEP)
- Complete Downtown paving project (pavement markings, ADA ramps, drainage issues, sidewalk repairs)
- Continue Street Tree Renewal Program with goal of having all trees and tree wells replaced and/or filled in compliance with adopted Street Tree Renewal Program (throughout the Downtown core)
 - Establish Downtown Streetscape Education Campaign that communicates ownership and maintenance responsibilities of trees, sidewalks, streets, etc
- Facilitate Chamber/ Business Improvement Area (BIA) project to install string lights over Entrada Ave
- Maintain the Atascadero Creek as a quality aesthetic feature to be enjoyed by all
 - Promote the voluntary creek clean-up program as a way to keep the creek free of trash
 - Explore permits and programs to manage vegetation and fuels in the creek
 - Continue homeless outreach programs and the Orange Bag Program to help keep the creek clean, safe and healthy
- Incentivize additional restaurants through the Restaurant Loan Program
- Explore zoning code changes to increase vibrancy
 - Research the ability to enforce regular operating hours
 - Introduce a better definition of retail zoning in the Downtown
 - Consider up-zoning/mixed-use/potential incentives as part of the General Plan Update
 - Explore incentives and code revisions to expedite the relocation of nonconforming uses and the occupancy of vacant buildings Downtown
 - Consider adjusting building height limitations in the Downtown as part of the general plan process and future zoning updates
- Engage property owners and tenants to encourage compatible development of vacant lots

- Continue to facilitate and promote current and future uses of vacant lots in Colony Square
- Continue to facilitate continued operation of the Downtown theater
- Facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties along Sunken Gardens/East Mall/West Mall
- Facilitate development of City-owned East Mall properties:
 - Research ways to incentivize development of property consistent with Council long-term vision and PD37 (\$0 sale or forgivable loan)
 - Ensure sale and development of properties are done without delay
 - Complete sale of property to developer and facilitate prompt development of properties in accordance with PD37
- Aggressively pursue the Armory site as a potential location for the Public Safety Center/Fire Station #1
- Implement Police Department special assignment position to provide business liaison to address Downtown concerns
- Acknowledge historical significance & importance of Printery in Downtown and look for opportunities to assist the Printery in obtaining grant funding.
- Continue to plan and host successful signature events
- Look for opportunities to facilitate and sponsor events designed to increase tourist activity
- Continue to build out First Friday events designed to stimulate business activity in the Downtown
- Facilitate increased activity and use of The Plaza on El Camino
- Communicate collaboratively with businesses to encourage a sense of pride, ownership, positive attitude, and harmony that promotes Downtown vibrancy

Activation of Underutilized Sites and Nodes

- Consider developing design “themes” for Commercial Nodes
- Complete transportation operational analysis, develop transportation concept plan, and adopt plan lines at nodes
- Creatively support development at Del Rio, Dove Creek & San Anselmo nodes
 - Begin exploring transportation improvements at San Anselmo/ECR and San Anselmo/101 intersections
- Investigate potential rezone/road abandonment for The Oaks Center (Spencer’s, Guest House, et.al)
- Creatively support retail or hospitality buildout of Springhill/Home Depot node
- Facilitate redevelopment of underutilized industrial zoned sites (Via, Sycamore)

Business Support and Jobs/Housing Balance

- Pursue land uses that support business and jobs/housing balance
 - Complete General Plan Update and begin General Plan implementation strategies including municipal code updates designed to streamline zoning policies
 - Continue to work toward meeting our RHNA affordable housing goals
- Continue to facilitate enhancement of fiber-optic broadband infrastructure access for residents and businesses
 - Leverage earmarked broadband funds to increase broadband speed, reliability and access, while reducing costs for residents and businesses
 - Use completed Broadband Strategic Plan to apply for additional available funding through Federal and State grants to advance connectivity
 - Find ways to increase consumer ISP choices
 - Consider adjusting permitting fees to encourage fiber-optic broadband development
 - Develop micro-trenching policy
 - Consider developing a “Dig Once” policy
- Investigate ways we can support and capitalize on the proposed Space Port
- Look for ways to toot our own horn and continue to publish proof that we are easy to work with!
- Launch a business attraction social media campaign
- Continue to support regional economic development efforts
- Support expansion of family entertainment opportunities
- Continue to support Chamber and other non-profit partnerships

Neighborhood Compatibility and Wellness

- Establish Objective Design Guidelines to support Quality Development and transitions between zoning districts
- Look for opportunities for trail/pedestrian connections
- Prepare thoughtful, targeted educational materials for residents/neighbors on SB 9, ADUs, and zoning
- Participate in and present at local ADU workshops
- Explore options for short-term rental ordinance by bringing a discussion item to Council. (No staff report)

FISCAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

Key Focus Areas:

- **Asset Management/Replacement/Modernization**
- **Financial Strategies**
- **Transparency and Accountability**

Asset Management/Replacement/Modernization

- Examine life cycle costs for capital projects and purchases
- Look for opportunities and grants to fund infrastructure
- Purchase and implement Asset Management software
 - Conduct inventory and condition assessment of City assets
 - Establish procedures for proactive monitoring
 - Develop a sustainable replacement plan and prioritize funding for City assets
- Begin replacing Fire Station #1
 - Aggressively pursue obtaining Armory property within first year
 - Explore feasibility of co-located Public Safety Center for Fire, Police, Dispatch and Emergency Operation Center (EOC)
 - Pursue grants, low interest loans and financing to fund project
 - Increase projected annual allocation to reflect high cost of construction for essential services facilities
- Develop Zoo capital improvement and funding plan to discern the viability of continuing AZA accreditation
 - Collaborate with Friends of the Charles Paddock Zoo (Friends) to maximize fundraising and increase awareness
 - Work with Friends to develop and implement plan to raise \$1,000,000 in the next two years for construction of the Madagascar Biodiversity Hot Spot
 - Consider City matching capital funding for Madagascar Biodiversity Hot Spot
- Update wastewater treatment plant retrofit and secondary treatment improvements
 - Add additional staff and/or consultants to manage Wastewater Treatment Plant Update Project
 - Begin design of treatment plant upgrades
 - Pursue grants, low interest loans and financing to fund project
 - Discuss potential policies related to wastewater capacity charges and other development fees that may discourage desired business types
 - Pursue collaboration with Atascadero State Hospital on common wastewater solutions

- Based on the availability of grant funding, begin planning to extend sewer to priority eligible sewer expansion areas
- Continue to address key deferred maintenance issues in parks and public facilities
- Begin replacement of the financial system
- Expand energy infrastructure (back-up generators, redundancy)
- Consider sidewalk repair amnesty or other limited assistance program
- Update City Engineering Standards to provide safe and consistent public improvements

Financial Strategies

- Develop balanced strategy of operational expenditures vs. capital/one-time expenditures that will accommodate future growth
- Adopt budgets and fiscal strategies that:
 - Continue conservative Council/general fiscal strategy
 - Prepare the City for changing economic conditions
 - Build and maintain responsible reserves for asset replacement
 - Maintain a healthy general fund reserve
- Continue fiscal strategies and adjust plans as needed to allow the City to respond to changes in a fiscally sustainable manner
- Renew F-14 on the 2024 ballot
- Implement opportunities, strategies and plans to grow the organization as the community grows
- Invest in full and part time staff
- Develop responsible reserves for unfunded liabilities (non-asset)
 - Explore and consider funding Section 115 Trust for pensions
 - Consider additional payments for unfunded pension liability (UAL)
- Ensure that the resources (tools, equipment, facilities, technology) are available to assist staff and to build staff capacity
- Identify and invest in tools, equipment and facilities to increase long-term operational efficiencies. Invest in:
 - Agenda management solution
 - Digital plan check software, equipment and process
 - Records organization, scanning and destruction
 - Other time savers
- Prepare and strategically implement new impact fee study
- Perform critical third-party review of permitting process towards essentialism

- Remain active in the League of CA Cities for City's rights and sales tax allocation statewide
- Actively look for creative investment opportunities
- Capitalize on grant opportunities to accomplish action plan goals
- Explore public and private partnerships to achieve action plan goals
- Establish Citywide primary survey benchmark system to reduce Public Works and Technology staff time and to streamline development
- Hire grant writing consultant

Transparency and Accountability

- Continue to look for ways in which technology can increase and clarify transparency and accountability
- Complete overhaul of City website. (simplify, eliminate old data and make it more efficient)
 - Continue to devote resources to keep website up-to-date
- Continue and build upon outreach efforts for Measure D-20 and Measure F-14 sales tax measures
 - Develop outreach program highlighting available information on use of F-14 funds
 - Refine Measure D-20 annual report to include results and performance measures
 - Continue to publish and distribute Measure D-20 and Measure F-14 annual reports
- Improve transparency and understandability of financial reports
 - Consider alternate financial presentation to demonstrate balanced budget
 - Make Finance Committee meetings available virtually
- Implement records management program to facilitate access to public records
- Increase transparency and public awareness of Zoo
- Implement an online payment and tracking system for City fees and tax payments
- Create and incentivize a new customer satisfaction survey for permit/planning processes
- Ensure that all messaging is accessible and consistent across all media platforms
- Improve wi-fi at City Hall and the Zoo
- Continue community engagement in decision-making discussions
- Improve emergency planning communications with business community through the fire inspection program

ENSURING PUBLIC SAFETY AND PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CITY SERVICES

Key Focus Areas:

- Staff
- Unhoused Population
- Flourishing Community

Staff

- Hire and retain an adequate level of staffing to achieve our priorities
 - Work toward long-term goal of 2 emergency dispatchers on duty at all times
 - Develop and implement organizational changes to reduce span of control for Public Safety supervision
 - Work toward long-term goal of additional Fire & Emergency Response resources
 - Develop strategies to ensure adequate staffing based on projected changes to workload as community grows/demands change
- Provide competitive salaries/benefits and appropriate classifications for all employees
- Continue to maintain and look for opportunities to enhance other hiring, retention, employee growth and development programs
 - Provide training and professional development opportunities
 - Facilitate employee promotional opportunities with an eye toward succession planning
 - Explore a wider City employee recognition/commendation program
 - Explore other retention and attraction strategies (low cost loans?)
- Work to ensure that employees have the tools necessary to do their job
- Continue to support and promote mental health and wellness services for employees
- Continue to prioritize a culture that emphasizes working together as one team (no silos) and treating each other like family.
- Complete an essentialism evaluation of each department to identify lower priority programs and activities
- Roll out updated mission statement
- Hire for heart

Unhoused Population

- Expand training and education of staff and community members on available support resources for our unhoused population
- Continue to train and educate staff and community members on compassionate interactions with our under-represented residents
- Build Outreach for Underrepresented Residents (OUR) Team program with a focus on:
 - Connecting homeless/underrepresented individuals with services
 - Providing a resource for community concerns
 - Participate in multi-jurisdictional information sharing system to more effectively provide services and respond to community needs
- Look for opportunities to assist Non-profits in facilitating pathways out of homelessness
- Participate in crafting and developing regional solutions to address homelessness
- Advocate for addiction and mental health programs
- Collaborate with the County in looking for opportunities and grants to provide resources to respond to future opportunities to support underrepresented residents
- Optimize use of opioid settlement funds to support local programs and partnerships
- Support partner non-government organizations outreach efforts
- Consider revisions to the municipal code to strengthen the camping ordinance and create a shopping cart ordinance that does not require a large upfront capital investment from local businesses
- Implement strategies for ongoing areas of public concern including design of public spaces
- Continue to perform regular clean-ups of problem encampments
- Continue to perform vegetation management activities in the Downtown District

Flourishing Community

- Adopt list of historic structures and implement General Plan policy
- Implement Community Choice Energy
- Continue to meet requirements for AZA accreditation for the Charles Paddock Zoo
- Consider name change for zoo to Central Coast Charles Paddock Zoo

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- Increase awareness of available recreational scholarships for lower income residents
- Consider expanding recreational scholarship program to all low-income residents
- Improve communications with the schools on common city/school issues like vaping, food distribution resources and safe corridors for kids
- Continue robust communications regarding community wildfire preparedness and evacuation planning