



Atascadero City Council

Staff Report – Community Development Department

Strategic Planning 2010 Phase IV – Community Vision

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Council:

1. Review and discuss staff's summary of current City goals; and,
2. Review and/or amend the Council Issues list for the January 30th workshop.

DISCUSSION:

During last year's strategic planning process, the City Council adopted three major goals.

- 1. Grow the City's Economy and Pursue Economic Development**
- 2. Enhance Public Safety**
- 3. Stabilize the City's Finances**

These goals formed the foundation for the City's strategy to cope with an unprecedented economic downturn. A summary of the progress achieved on these goals is included as an attachment to the staff report (Attachment 1). As 2010 begins, the City's economic crisis has been stabilized and there is a need to look forward with a long range vision of the future of Atascadero. Atascadero's centennial is just a few short years in the future.

There are a number of existing goals and programs that have been identified in the General Plan and ADE's economic strategy that need to be reviewed and considered for implementation. Many of these goals focus on a vision of balanced long term economic development that would enhance commercial, tourism and industrial opportunities. Another underlying theme of these goals is the need to improve the quality and appearance of the business and industrial districts. As Atascadero seeks to attract national retailers and wine country tourists, there is a need to spruce things up.

Staff has provided a summary of the current Council Goals, key General Plan goals and the recommended ADE goals for the Council's consideration and discussion.

2009 Council Goals

1. **Grow the City's Economy and Pursue Economic Development**
2. **Enhance Public Safety**
3. **Stabilize the City's Finances**

General Plan Economic Development Goals / Implementation

Program	Section	Status
Eagle Ranch Annexation	Policy 1.2.8 to 1.2.11	Application on hold
Certify Housing Element	Housing Element	In process
Update Appearance Review Manual (Design Guidelines)	Program 1.3.1	Developed Downtown Design Booklet
Encourage Mixed Use Development on El Camino Real	Program 3.1.7.	Staff is encouraging this. Council approved housing incentive.
Historic Overlay zoning	Program 6.3.1 and 6.3.2	No action
Higher standards for quality and appearance of signs	Program 1.3.4	Council funded an incentive to encourage higher quality signs.
US 101 Landscaping	Program 1.3.6	No action
Improve civic gateways	Program 1.3.8	Installed distinctive signage at downtown entry points and north border along U.S.

		101.
Encourage hotel and tourism uses	Policy 13.3	In process
Encourage employment and business uses in appropriate locations	Goal 13	No action

Economic Development Strategy Goals (ADE Report)

Marketing

- | | |
|-----|---|
| M-1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the branding process to establish agreed upon messages for use throughout the marketing program |
| M-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade websites for both visitors and business attraction |
| M-3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute measures to collect e-mail addresses for online newsletter |
| M-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop information about for Veterans Memorial and Purple Heart Trail and integrate into the City promotional programs |
| M-5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy to improve collaboration among SLO County jurisdictions on tourism marketing |
| M-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional Year 1 marketing activities as funds/staffing permit |

Land Use / Site Development

- | | |
|------|---|
| LU-1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop design guidelines for Downtown (completed) |
| LU-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish parking district in Downtown |
| LU-3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop area plan for industrial zone around Via Way bridge. |
| LU-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form broadband working group: collaborate with stakeholders, obtain TA/funding from Governor's Broadband Initiative and CA Emerging Technology Fund |
| LU-5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete zoning study for Morro Road to increase visitor serving potential (CP zoning amended to allow hotels) |

Tourism Asset Development

- | | |
|-----|---|
| T-1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility of wine museum |
| T-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for designation as Gateway to Carrizo Plain National Monument |
| T-3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study feasibility of equestrian oriented resort |
| T-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility of expanding Paloma Park |

Business/Job Development	
B-1	▪ Establish Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program, conduct interviews with businesses in key clusters, identify one or more clusters to engage as (an) ongoing network(s).
B-2	▪ Create City and County green product/service directory and resource guide
Workforce Development	
W-1	▪ Inventory training and workforce development agencies/programs/resources/facilities

Next Steps

Based on Council direction, staff will refine the goals or develop additional information for discussion during strategic planning workshop. Council should also review the latest list of issues (Attachment 2) which will be included with the materials at the workshop. This is an opportunity for Council Members to raise issues that they would like to discuss and may lead to a City Council goal.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact resulting from the approval of these strategic planning goals and consent to the related action plans.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1: Progress Achieved on 2009 Council Goals
- Attachment 2: Council Issue List

Progress Achieved on 2009 Council Goals

1. **Grow the City's Economy and Pursue Economic Development**

- Made several improvements to the permit process.
- Adopted the *Atascadero Local Stimulus Program* aimed at accelerating local capital projects and providing incentives to local businesses.
- Completed construction on downtown streetscape.
- Revised the Economic Development Strategy and began implementation of the recommendations.
- Facilitated the financing and construction of Colony Square.
- Several major retail projects are in progress including Rite Aid, Tractor Supply Company and Wal-Mart.
- Launched new Economic Development website and tools

2. **Enhance Public Safety**

- Attended the Emergency Management Institute providing critical training to over 60 staff and community members and tested the City's emergency plan.
- Made several important investments in training -- a critical component of response -- including publication of a Fire Department Career Development Guide and implementation of performance based training and improved focus on traffic enforcement and communications equipment.
- Obtained grants to purchase modern equipment and increase response and enforcement activities.
- Placed a new wildland fire engine into service.
- Enhanced enforcement in the Sunken Gardens by implementing frequent patrols, increased visual presence and an action plan involving several agencies including the school district.
- Hardened critical communications systems in preparation for disasters by making them all wireless with off-grid power supplies.
- Implemented a new web-based portal for citizens to file police reports and get information online and initiated use of Nixle to alert residents of critical public safety alerts.

3. **Stabilize the City's Finances**

- Enhanced the revenue base by aggressively pursuing economic development and retail projects.
- Obtained more than \$1.7 million in Federal Stimulus Funding.
- Reduced operating expenses through staffing and service level reductions and reduced General Fund expenses by over 20%.
- Adopted a balanced two-year budget consistent with the City's financial plan.

Strategic Planning 2010 City Council Issues

In Atascadero the City Council has typically started the strategic planning process with a list of current issues important to the community. The list is developed by the City Council and helps to ensure that everyone's projects and concerns are discussed when evaluating current realities or establishing future scenarios.

- Economy
- State impact on local finances
- Labor Relations
- Pavement striping for traffic calming and pedestrian safety
- Bike routes/Bicycle Tourism
- Tree Ordinance Modifications