Atascadero City Council
Staff Report – City Manager’s Office

City Council Strategic Planning

RECOMMENDATION:

Council invite community input regarding potential strategic planning issues for the February 23-24, 2007 workshop; review potential strategic planning issues suggested by the Planning and Parks and Recreation Commissions; review initial list of issues suggested by City Council and revise list as necessary.

DISCUSSION:

Background: The City utilizes a Strategic Planning approach to focus resources, establish priorities, direct the City’s work product and create a two year budget. The Strategic Plan is developed through a series of Council, Commission, community and staff meetings. The City Council Strategic Planning Workshop, will be held Friday and Saturday February 23 and 24, 2007 in the City Council Chambers.

This year City staff specifically asked the Commissions to provide suggestions about strategic issues facing the City that would be important for the Council to review at Strategic Planning. Those suggestions are included below.

The Strategic Planning workshop provides a unique opportunity for the City Council to discuss its working relationship and a variety of complex issues facing the community. It is a careful balance of public input, team building and problem solving in a compact time period. The workshop focuses on Council discussion so that the community and staff can hear and understand the preferences and directions of Council.

Parks and Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission voted unanimously to recommend seven (7) issues to the Council for consideration during strategic planning. The Commission recommends that these issues be addressed in the manner most appropriate to the Council’s process. The issues identified are as follows:
1) Address the deferred maintenance at parks and recreation facilities. Public input and Commission discussion regarding long deferred maintenance at The Charles Paddock Zoo, Lake Park and other facilities was determined the highest priority issue.

2) Develop Recreation Center Operations Plan. The Council will address this item on an agenda early this year.

3) Begin to implement the Charles Paddock Zoo Master Plan, and prepare for accreditation. The Zoo Master Plan needs to have the “first phase” architectural design plans developed (approx. $23,000). A capital campaign can be started with the Zoological Society. Investment in the Zoo is seen having many long term benefits, including boosting tourism.

4) Complete Stadium Park Master Plan. This project is in progress and should be completed by Spring. There will be items the planning committee and Parks Commission will recommend for inclusion in the next budget.

5) Review Arts and Public Places Policy. Recent application of the policy for the Veteran’s Memorial Project has revealed this policy should be reviewed and updated. The Commission is willing to accept this task this year.

6) Develop a Master Plan for Paloma Creek Park. Under State of California ownership, park planning and making park improvements were difficult. Now that the park is City owned, a park master plan is needed to accommodate the changing uses and identify park improvements. (Approximate cost $50,000)

7) Explore the City/School relationship to ensure maximized use of the agency facilities and resources. This item could be referred to staff and the City/Schools committee.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission identified seven issues for consideration through the Council’s strategic planning process. Those issues are:

1. Review policy/code regarding fence height/location and variances
2. Condominium Conversion Policy (Prime candidates for conversion may be older apartment unit, this could be an incentive for reinvestment)
3. Housing needs study
4. Communications between Commissions and City Council
5. Appearance review for multifamily (especially as they convert to condominiums)
6. Construction changes without Planning Commission approval and after the fact approvals (may need a penalty or bigger incentive for things to be approved before action is taken)
7. Insure format encourages public participation

City Council

The Council has been maintaining a list of issues to review at the workshop. The list includes:
1. Develop Council Strategic Initiatives
2. Code Enforcement
3. Televising Council meetings
4. Brainstorming Council’s direction relative to commercial development attraction
5. Council Norms
6. Tourism

Tonight’s meeting provides another opportunity for the community to raise or comment on issues that may be discussed by the City Council at the Strategic Planning Workshop. There are likely more issues of interest than time available and the Council will have an opportunity at the workshop to prioritize the issues for discussion. The list of issues provides staff with some direction to prepare supporting information and materials to assist the City Council discussion.