Atascadero City Council
Staff Report – Community Services Department

Colony Park Community Center Project Operations Planning
Status Report

RECOMMENDATION:
Council review operations report and provide direction as necessary.

DISCUSSION:

Background: The Colony Park Community Center project is moving forward, and plans are being developed to determine facility operations and levels of service. The following report provides a preliminary look at facility operations, and gives some examples of operating policies and plans.

Programming: One of the most important elements of the new Community Center will be the level of service for programs and activities. Programming will be offered for all ages, from youth to older adult, with activities scheduled to meet the needs of the various populations. Staff is recommending that many of the Community Services Department’s existing programs be relocated into the new facility. This enables the City to be able to offer a wide range of activities in the areas of youth and adult sports, contract classes, and special events without adding additional costs. Many youth sports that currently take place in school facilities can be relocated to the Community Center, saving fees now paid to the School District. Examples would be the youth basketball and volleyball leagues. Adult sports that have been discontinued in past years, due to costly school facility fees that the market would not bear, can now be reinstated in the City facility to provide more recreation opportunities and generate additional program revenue. Examples would be adult basketball and volleyball programs.

Existing contract classes now conducted in the Lake Pavilion, can also be moved to the new facility, providing a variety of recreation and special interest classes for youth and adults. Relocating these types of classes will not increase operating costs, and help fill the new facility with appropriate activities. In fact, relocating the contract classes from the Lake Pavilion will create available space there for more profitable rental activities there. In the case of contract classes and youth and adult sports programs, these offerings can also be expanded in the new facility with minimal increases in operating
costs. Contract classes are structured in such a way as the city splits the revenue from the activity with the private contract instructor.

The Colony Park Community Center will include the teen center and game room, which will be open on a drop-in basis. This area will be open free of charge during regular operating hours. The teen center area will serve kids from the 7th through the 12th grades. The Teen Center area will require staff supervision, and some alternatives for operating the teen center are discussed later in the report.

**Center Hours of Operation and Center Program Staffing:** The hours of operation will vary based upon the season, when school is in or out of session. When school is in session, the proposed hours are: **Monday through Friday, 3:00pm – 8:00pm. Saturday and Sunday, the hours would be 11:00am – 9:00pm, and 1:00pm – 5:00pm respectively.**

When school is not in session during the summer or during holiday and spring breaks, the hours would be: **Monday through Friday, 11:00am to – 8:00pm. Saturday and Sunday, the hours would be 10:00am – 9:00pm, and 1:00pm to 5:00pm respectively.**

The Community Center will also be open later in the evening on an “event basis” for special events and activities, such as teen dances. The Recreation Center will also be available for rental activities, and these activities would be based on cost recovery goals. Rentals may occur after hours or during the regular business hours identified above, if there are no conflicts with other uses and as space may be available.

The Center Director will be an existing staff position in the Community Services Department. Recreation Supervisor, Paula Anton, will be assigned as the facility Center Director, saving the City the need to fund this important position as a new position. Ms. Anton will supervise and oversee the entire facility operation and part-time staff on a day to day basis. One alternative for teen center supervision staffing for the normal hours of operation would involve two part-time staff persons present during all normal hours of operation. The staff would supervise the front counter, game room and be responsible for general facility welfare. Other staff and contract instructors would be assigned based upon the scheduling of new or existing programming for the facility, and would supplement the Center Director and part-time staff. From a program standpoint, the greatest challenge financially will be supervising and staffing the teen center/game room on a daily basis.

**Potential partnerships with other organizations:** City staff has met with representatives from the YMCA and the North County Boys & Girls Club. The YMCA based in San Luis Obispo responded to an invitation to submit a proposal for a potential partnership in the Center operations. Their proposal is attached (Attachment C). The YMCA has a great deal of applicable experience and expertise in operating youth programs and programs for adult populations as well.

The YMCA has expressed an interest in exploring some options to have the organization join in as a partner to operate the teen center and offer some special events and other developmental programming. One of the alternatives being considered
involves the YMCA, Atascadero Unified School District and the City operating an after-school program for teens at the Center. All three agencies have jointly applied for a 21st Century Grant, which would bring in as much as $150,000 in grant funding to offer the programming. The School District would be the Fiscal Agent. The YMCA would provide after-school program/teen center supervision and other activities such as a “Homework Lab”. The City’s “in-kind” match would involve the provision of facilities. If the grant is successful, some of the City’s operational cost would be significantly less than what it would cost the City to run the teen center and other programs. Mobley’s Boardshop has also expressed an interest in helping to set up computers for the after-school “Homework Lab”.

Cafe Operations: In March 2006, the Community Services Department made a public “Request for Proposals” (RFP) to find a private operator for the café to be located in the teen center. More than ten (10) RFPs were mailed out to prospective businesses that might have an interest in operating the café. The Proposals were due in May, and only one business, NCI Affiliates, Inc. submitted a proposal. NCI operated the “Back Porch Café” at the Lake Pavilion several years ago, and the City was satisfied with their performance. In May, NCI proposed paying $250 per month for the café, and 4% of the gross revenue.

City staff does not think that the sole proposal meets the City’s needs at this time. City staff prefers to explore the option to allow the YMCA to run the café, and use any proceeds to offset the cost of helping supervise the teen center/game room. Another avenue would be to run the cafe under City operation. A variation of this concept could include a vending operation only, which would certainly generate revenues and not require high overhead costs or staffing. After running the café “in-house” in this manner for a period of a year or so, the City could then issue another RFP, when the proposing businesses can look at the attendance numbers of the new facility, prior to making a proposal.

Facility Policies, Procedures and Standards of Operation:
Staff has been researching facility use policies and standards of operations. A draft policy manual is attached for City Council review and comment.

The Colony Park Community Center construction is currently on budget and on schedule. The anticipated grand opening continues to be in the fall of 2007.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The annual cost of the operation of the Colony Park Community Center is estimated to be as follows:

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Building Maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks (Landscape Maint.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center Operations</td>
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</tbody>
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Approximate Operations Total: $485,960
ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment B- Sample Weekly Program Schedule
Attachment C- YMCA Proposal for Services