News from the City!

Sales Tax Measure D-20
Next Steps

April, 2021 - By City Manager, Rachelle Rickard

The Atascadero City Council is unified in their desire to ensure public engagement, transparency and accountability, including having strong public engagement and input regarding the expenditure of funds to be received from Sales Tax Measure D-20. Public engagement is a continuous, ongoing dialog between City Council, City staff and the community. In order to foster community dialog and public engagement, as well as to gather ideas and information to help the City develop strategies for the expenditure of Measure D-20 funds, a series of well-publicized public meetings were held earlier this year. Based on all of the input we received and collated, Council has now developed four Strategic Priorities and associated Key Focus Areas for not only the expenditure of Measure D-20 funds, but all discretionary City funds.

1. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY VIBRANCY - Creating the environment and services to nurture quality and diverse economic, recreational, and community connections that create prosperity and enrich our genuine, authentic community. The Key Focus Areas are:
   • Recreation & Events
   • Downtown
   • Safe & Hospitable Business/Work Environment
   • Business Infrastructure, Technology & Support

2. FISCAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY - Continuing to be responsible and accountable stewards of our resources now and into the future by efficiently and effectively investing in modern and reliable infrastructure and equipment, and maintaining financial stability regardless of economic conditions. Ensuring that staff has the tools, technology and resources they need to do their jobs. The Key Focus Areas are:
   • Asset Management/Replacement/Modernization
   • Financial Strategies
   • Transparency & Accountability

3. ENSURING PUBLIC SAFETY AND PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CITY SERVICES - Having the tools, resources, and professional staffing necessary to create and maintain an environment where our community (residents, businesses, visitors, and staff) feels safe, served, and mutually respected. The Key Focus Areas are:
   • Staffing
   • Unhoused Population
   • Community Engagement

4. QUALITY OF LIFE: Embracing Atascadero’s warm friendly atmosphere and building on our sense of community by providing attractions, open spaces, outdoor interactions and a variety of things to do for all. The Key Focus Areas are:
   • Things To Do
City staff is working on preparing draft operating budgets, refining revenue projections, identifying deficiencies, researching solutions for areas of prioritization, developing cost projections, identifying potential metrics, and generally gathering information. A draft action plan will be presented for consideration by the Council during their regular meeting on April 27. Additional, detailed information to enable the Council to make refined funding decisions consistent with the action plan and previous Council Strategic Planning direction will also be presented.

In April and May, the Finance Committee will meet to review various sections of the budget, which will include Measure D-20 information. These meetings will be held on Thursdays at 3:00 p.m., beginning on Thursday, April 22. Each of these meetings will be advertised to encourage public participation; “how to attend” information will also be publicized in the meeting agendas posted on the City’s website and elsewhere.

At the June 8 Council meeting, the budgets for Fiscal Years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 will be presented for adoption. The budgets will incorporate the priorities, actions, service levels and metrics developed through this expanded public process.

Then during the July 13 Council meeting, the Council will review the first annual Measure D-20 report that will include information on where the Measure D-20 funds are going to be spent, what is to be achieved by the expenditure of these funds and what metrics will be used to determine success. The report will be distributed to all Atascadero residents and businesses, similar to the F-14 Roads report.

As always, if you have any questions regarding this or another topic related to the City of Atascadero, please contact me at rrickard@atascadero.org.