

Visalia City Council

June 26-27, 2007

Assessment & Direction- Setting Retreat

Summary of Workshop Discussion Notes

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Visalia City Council June 26-27, 2007 Assessment & Direction-Setting Retreat Discussion Notes

I. Overview of Workshop Goals and Objectives

The City Council convened their annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Direction-setting Workshop on June 26-27, 2007. This workshop was designed to assess progress, revisit priorities, and develop expectations and targets for the coming year. The major goals for the workshop included the following:

1. Review of Council's Prioritized Goals from '06 Council Retreat
2. Discuss and develop understanding and alignment of City Finances
3. Develop Priorities and Expectations for the Coming Year
4. Identify How Staff can Effectively Support the Council to achieve these Expectations

II. Agreements and Action Plans

The following is the list of agreements and action items that the Council and staff developed at the June 26-27, 2007 Assessment and Direction Workshop:

1. Staff will schedule the next City Council Annual Retreat for Jan. or Feb, 2008. They will schedule this session by July 16, 2007.
2. Staff will provide the Council with status reports of fiscal health on a semi-annual or annual basis, using the following three metrics:
 - a. Operating Expenses as a Percentage of Operating Revenue
 - b. Percentage of Government Debt Service to Revenue
 - c. Per Capita General Fund Balance
3. Staff will continue to provide Revenue Report Updates to the City Council on a monthly basis.
4. Staff will provide the City Council with a General Fund Departmental Expenditures Budget Analysis, by Department, on a quarterly basis. These will be one-page summaries.
5. Staff will provide a semi-annual status report on "Significant CIP Projects," including Traffic Circulation CIP Projects. Staff will develop a GANT Chart of "Significant CIP Projects." This "high-level spreadsheet" reporting tool will provide information such as "beginning and end points of key project phases" on two to three-year horizon.

6. Staff will research approaches and opportunities for attracting a unique retail outlet such as a Trader Joe's that would be a destination point and a magnet for visitors and shoppers, and report back to Council.
7. Staff will provide a status report on the Aquatics Center to the Council in January 2008.
8. Hold a Council Work Session on the Natural Resource Conservation Manager in September 2007 regarding the proposed work program for FY 2007-08.
9. Staff will generate metrics and approaches for measuring the ROI on the Sports Park.
10. Staff will provide an "Affordable Housing" Status Report on an annual basis. They will provide a semi-annual status update to Council on data re: the cost/home (i.e. the number of houses for sale/sold for different prices). Staff will provide Council with a presentation of the "State's Affordable Housing Goals," and an assessment of the City's success in meeting these.
11. Staff will come back to Council with attainable initiatives and outcomes for a focused effort addressing neighborhood blight, by focusing on the Oval and Washington communities. The effort will also include collecting data Citywide, in each of the 16 sectors developed by the Police Department.
12. Staff will generate a list of Gang Intervention goals and objectives to achieve in 18 months, and will deliver this to the Council.

III. Summary of Day 1, June 26th Discussions of the 13 Prioritized Projects

The City Council discussed each of the following thirteen Prioritized Projects on June 26, on the heels of staff presentations. The conversations were intended to develop understanding and alignment of progress made over the past 18 months, as well as to identify which of these topics the Council would like to discuss further on Day 2, Wed., June 27. The goal for the Day 2 discussions is direction setting - establish targets for each of the goals in the coming year.

A. Development of East Visalia

1. Council stated that they wish to establish a list of priority projects on 6/27, and, when possible, establish targets for each of them in the coming year. Council also wishes to schedule a Staff status update at a later session, as needed.
2. Some specific questions and/or desired outcomes for the 6/27 session include:
 - a. What are the key projects and what is the status of key projects?
 - b. What are the steps we are taking to successfully achieve our goals in the East Visalia Development effort, and for individual projects?

- c. What is the status of the development efforts on the corner of Acequia and Santa Fe? What can we expect in 2007-08?
- d. Can we receive an update on the Bruce Race reports' findings and recommendations?
- e. What is a realistic date for a report-back from City staff on these other items?
- f. What is the proposed frequency, and format, of staff status reports on these projects?

B. Promote Four-Year College/University

- 1. Council discussed what has been accomplished, and what are realistic expectations and/or targets that we can accomplish in the coming year. The following questions were identified on 6/26.
 - a. Are there land donations that we can explore that can serve as an incentive?
 - b. What other criteria do Universities use to decide when to establish a new campus?
 - a. Are there other Universities we can be encouraging to create a Campus in Visalia?

C. Develop Emergency Procedures/Protocol

- 1. Council discussed what has been accomplished, and what are realistic expectations and/or targets that we can accomplish in the coming year. The following questions were identified on 6/26.
 - a. Does the Fire Department have a protocol in place to respond to a fog-based 198 pile-up? If so, can we be briefed on this at a later date?
 - b. Can we attain a Summary document of "How the EOC Plan will actually work" and the overall protocol?"
 - c. What is our strategy to educate the community on our Emergency Response plans?
 - d. How will software upgrades improve our emergency response capabilities and/or preparedness?
 - e. What are the plans for creating a "Cooling Center?"
 - f. What are our plans in 07-08 for "testing our readiness" at the EO Center?
 - g. What are our long-term plans for the paramedic program? How will we increase the number of paramedics? Where will they be housed? What will be their roles and responsibilities?
 - h. How can we assure that emergency phone numbers are updated and are current, we have a person assigned and accountable to this and have excellent procedures to ensure that this is accomplished?

- i. Are there other questions that we should be asking ourselves?

D. Restore Historic /or Blighted Neighborhoods

1. The Council stated that on 6/27, they would like to discuss strategies for addressing and solving key issues in neighborhoods.
2. The following questions were identified on 6/26.
 - a. How do we encourage and support the formation for additional Neighborhood Groups? Do we have plans for this? If so, what are they, and if not, what are our targets for the coming year to do so?
 - b. What is the current status of “plotting/mapping” the blighted neighborhoods? Can we achieve this, and if so by when? This would assist us in prioritizing our efforts and to create targets for each neighborhood.
 - c. What is the status of a Needs Assessment that we have commissioned?
 - d. Are there other questions that we should be asking ourselves?

E. Expand Airport

1. The following questions, and recommendations, were identified on 6/26.
 - a. Proposals are due on July 19. We need to discuss this quickly, and have a lot of hard to work in front of this. We need to discuss this on 6/27, and if not, schedule a meeting for late this week or early next week for this purpose.
 - b. What is the long-term plan for the terminal (e.g. replace, upgrade, etc.)?
 - c. We should have a conversation about what is realistic for attracting airlines to Visalia? What are the incentives that we can use to attract airlines to Visalia?
 - d. Who is attending the “Jump-Start Convention” to attract airlines to Visalia?
 - e. What are the opportunities for moving UPS/DHL, etc. to the west side of the terminal, to create greater opportunities on the east side of the terminal? What are realistic targets for 2007-08?
 - f. What opportunities do we have to increase Charter Services on the East Side? What are realistic targets for 2007-08?
 - g. Are there other questions that we should be asking ourselves?

F. Affordable Housing

1. Council discussed what has been accomplished, and what are realistic expectations and/or targets that we can accomplish in the coming year. The following questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26.
 - a. What monies are available short-term and in the long term?
 - b. Given this level of financial resources, what should we focus on and what is realistic to achieve this year, and in coming years?

G. Pursue Light Rail

1. Steve indicated that staff can present their projected plan to the Council on 6/27. The following questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26.
 - a. What are the phases, milestones and steps for achieving this goal?
 - b. How can Measure R revenues assist this project?
 - c. Can we leverage Measure R monies with the State and Federal monies?
 - d. What is our mindset re: “transit options? We should begin thinking about corridors.
 - e. What are the three alignments that have been identified? What is the status of the Alignment studies?
 - f. Is the Lemoore – Corcoran corridor being reviewed and explored?

H. Promote Sequoia Shuttle

1. The Council agreed on 6/26 that there is not a need to discuss this on 6/27.
2. Staff will report to Council in October or November.

I. Resolve Gang Issues

1. The Council agreed on 6/26 that there is not a need to discuss this on 6/27. We have made significant progress, and have a robust plan in place, and we are aware of it.
2. Staff will generate a list of goals and objectives to achieve in 18 months, and will deliver this to the Council. A due date needs to be agreed upon.

J. Build Sports Park

1. The following questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26. The Council does wish to discuss the following items on 6/27:
 - a. How will we market the Sports Park?
 - b. Who is responsible for the marketing?
 - c. How will we measure ROI?
2. Other questions identified on 6/26 include:
 - a. When do we begin Phase 3?
 - b. When do we look at adjacent land?
 - c. What is our plan for developing the land we have acquired?

K. Bring a Bookstore to Downtown Visalia

1. The City Manager reframed the issue from a downtown bookstore to “What is the retail strategy for downtown.”
2. The Council agreed, on 6/26, to discuss the following issue on 6/27:
 - a. How do we encourage the development of a downtown retail strategy?
 - b. What is currently happening?
 - c. What opportunities are there for us?
3. The following are other questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26.
 - a. What activities will staff undertake?
 - b. Is there a need for a Needs Assessment?
 - c. Which other groups should be coordinating these efforts on enhancing downtown retail?
 - d. What is the role of City-funded entities to address this issue?
 - e. In what ways is the hospital a resource for us?

L. Build Olympic Pool

1. A decision was reached on this topic on 6/25. Staff will provide a status report in January 2008.

M. Promote Fiscal Health of City

1. Eric Frost delivered a presentation and recommended that the Council consider adopting several key measures that they can use to track the fiscal health of the community.
2. The following questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26.
 - a. Can we better utilize tax-increment financing to assist with our fiscal health?
 - b. Can we more effectively use monies from the two Redevelopment Agencies?
 - c. How and when do we identify projects to pursue in these Redevelopment Districts?
 - d. What are our plans and options for land sales to help us for financing priority projects?

N. Other Priority Projects identified on June 26 for the 2007-08 Fiscal Year

The following questions, and/or recommendations, were identified on 6/26.

1. Can we receive a status update of CIP projects, such as traffic circulation projects? Can we receive this on 6/27? If not, when?
2. What is the status of the ground water program? Let's develop an action plan that identifies where we are and where we are going.
3. What is the status of the SR63 being moved? What is CALTRAN's receptivity to other options?
4. The Opening-up of Mill Creek: Opportunities exist to attain grant money for this. Can we get this on staff's agenda for 2007-08?
5. Identify strategies to support, coordinate and focus efforts associated with "Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth?" The Hospital may be the point person for this, and what can we do to assist them?
6. The Goshen Community Services District plans will impact our community. What conversations have we had with the County? Do we have influence over this? Next steps?
7. What are the targets and expectations for the Natural Resources Conservation Manager in 2007-08?

IV. Tues., June 26 Assessment of Accomplishments Discussion

Council members brainstormed a list of accomplishments and achievements over the past 18 months. The following is a list of these accomplishments:

1. Implementation of Measure T
2. The Sports Park
3. Approval of Shopping Centers
4. Gang Intervention Progress (includes the Loop Bus)
5. Launching the Sequoia Shuttle
6. Police Chief Hiring
7. Participation in the Fresno State Advisory Committee
8. Progress with the 4-year local degree program
9. Expansion and retention of University outreach to include Fresno State, University of Phoenix and Chapman University
10. The South East Master Plan
11. Paramedic program
12. Two new Police Sub Stations
13. Completion of the Parking Structure
14. Securing professional baseball in Visalia
15. Fiscal vitality of the Community
16. Work on East Downtown Master Plan
17. Excellent Financial Health
18. Two-year budget
19. The City received a significant award for the Budget. The last time they achieved this was 1991.
20. Raised the bond rating to an "A" Rating
21. Funding the Youth Groups
22. Caldwell Ave. Improvement (Santa Fe Signals)
23. Santa Fe Avenue acquisitions
24. Downtown off-ramp improvements
25. Improvements to Shirk Road
26. Riggin Avenue/St. Johns River Parkway connection
27. Development of Agricultural Land preservation Strategies
28. Job development – We have a 5.2% Unemployment Rate
29. Measure R
30. Building the Bus Maintenance Facility
31. Doubling Airline passenger travel
32. Downtown Revitalization Momentum
33. New Fire Station on Lovers Lane
34. New Fire Station under construction
35. Community involvement in workshops, planning sessions, etc.
36. Public Involvement on the Boards, commissions and committees
37. BMI relocating downtown
38. Collaboration with the School District
39. Purchase of additional land for airport protection
40. Hiring of the new Housing & Economic Development Director
41. Sign Ordinance Enforcement and development of kiosks for subdivision signs
42. The Code Enforcement Program and Officer
43. Commitment to new Animal Control - SPCA facilities

44. Continued progress on the Community Campus
45. Collaboration with Inter-County Law Enforcement Players
46. Implementation of the IT master Plan, and securing new software for the Police Department
47. The Police Department Reorganization
48. Record bookings in the Convention Center
49. Miki City Park
50. Relations between the City and the Hospital
51. Purchase of CALTRAN's property on Murray
52. Close to adopting the first Form-based Zoning Code
53. Angle parking on Center Street
54. Formation of Parking Committee re: Downtown parking
55. The Cape Seal Program
56. The Street Maintenance Program, in general
57. Our Cultural Arts strategies
58. Conclusion of the Enchanted Playhouse purchase
59. Joint Meetings with the Planning Commission
60. Island Annexation Program
61. Acquisition of land along waterways
62. The Urban Forestry program
63. Retractable Seating at the Convention center
64. Approval of the site for the Imagine U
65. Progress of "Strategic Planning re: annexation and growth
66. Two-block Master Plan for the City Hall area
67. High Speed Rail Progress
68. Affordable Housing Projects
69. Planning for two community commercial areas
70. Expansion of the Industrial Park
71. Civic Center progress
72. The Council's annual Workshop and Department Head Workshops
73. The Marriott transition
74. Planning for the Mill Creek Restoration and Day Lighting
75. Adoption of a Bike Plan
76. Adoption of a downtown housing plan and process
77. Expansion of transit services

The Council discussed these achievements after brainstorming the list. Some of the key comments are reflected below:

1. We've set the standard very high. We have achieved an impressive list of accomplishments. We have a lot on our plates.
2. We've accomplished all of these items on the list in an innovative manner.
3. We should consider reducing the number of projects in 2007-08, and concentrate on what we have in the works.
4. Staff and Council are working hard, and are hard working.

5. The Strategic Planning process has been our blue print and has launched these efforts.
6. The outstanding Staff Council partnership has enabled us to achieve this.
7. The can-do attitude of the staff and the Council has enabled us to develop this innovative and impressive list of programs and projects.
8. Lots of credit goes to the Finance staff. They have helped us to proceed with these projects in a financial sound manner. Our reserves are solid. Our bond rating is an "A." They attain matching funds and grants, enabling us to pursue this aggressive agenda.
9. The programs and projects are distributed evenly throughout the City (North, South, East and West).
10. The Council members get along well, despite the numerous 3-2 votes on issues. It's a tribute to the members' leadership, and could not have occurred without their civil discourse and professionalism.
11. Steve Salomon is the glue, and our accomplishments could not have happened without him. Steve gives us lots of excellent analysis, and many options, and doesn't withhold information from us, briefing us on the "good, bad and the ugly." He gives us the data, and lets the City Council make the decisions.

V. Tues., June 26 Staff Presentations: Status Updates of Prioritized Goals from the January 2006 Council Strategic Planning Retreat

The City Council developed a list of 13 prioritized projects at their January, 2006 Strategic Planning Retreat. Staff presented status updates on the progress to date of each of these 13 projects. Handouts were included in the Agenda Packet for each of the presentations (See Handouts). The following is the list of prioritized projects:

1. Development of East Visalia
2. Promote Four-Year College/University
3. Develop Emergency Procedures/Protocol
4. Restore Historic and Blighted Neighborhoods
5. Expand Airport
6. Construct Affordable Housing
7. Pursue Light Rail
8. Promote Sequoia Shuttle
9. Resolve Gang Issues
10. Build Sports Park
11. Build Olympic Pool
12. Bring a Bookstore to Downtown Visalia
13. Promote Fiscal Health of City

VI. Wed., June 27 Multi-voting Results

The Council used a Multi-voting technique to identify the top issues for discussion at the June 27th meeting. Items not selected will be discussed at a later date. Fiscal Health and Downtown-related CIP projects were not included in the multi-voting exercise, as these items were discussed at the kick-off of the June 27 session. The following are the results of the Multi-voting process. The Council focused their attention on those items with 3 or more votes, with two exceptions. The issues of “Smart growth Strategies” and the “Scenic Corridor Strategy” were not addressed due to a lack of time. A summary of these discussions are included in Section VII.

1. Promote Fiscal Health (No votes – Staff prepared a presentation on this topic in advance of the multi-voting activity)
2. Downtown Development (Central District, East downtown, West 2 blocks Master Plan, and Miki City Park Master Plan) (No votes – Staff prepared a presentation on this topic in advance of the multi-voting activity)
3. Airport Expansion and Sustainability (5 votes)
4. Addressing Blighted Neighborhoods (4 votes)
5. Natural Resources Conservation Manager (4 votes)
6. New Animal Control Facility Planning and Construction (4 votes)
7. Affordable Housing (3 votes)
8. Sports Park Status and ROI (3 votes)
9. Traffic/circulation-related CIP Projects Update (3 votes)
10. Smart Growth Strategy (3 votes)
11. The Scenic Corridor Strategy (3 votes)
12. Ground Water Program (2 votes)
13. Dinuba Blvd./State Highway (2 votes)
14. Mill Creek Opening Up (2 votes)
15. Goshen Community SD Impact (2 votes)
16. Recreation Park Building and Renovation (Ballpark) (2 votes)
17. Synchronization of Street Lights (2 votes)
18. Downtown Parking Task Force (2 votes)
19. Measure R Impact (2 votes)
20. Planning Infrastructure – Implementation of SE Master Plan (1 vote)
21. Promote 4-year college (1 vote)
22. Develop Emergency Procedures/Protocols (1 vote)
23. Support Healthy Communities (1 vote)
24. Pursue Light Rail (0 votes)

VII. Wed., June 27, Notes from Discussions re: Priority Projects

The following is a summary of discussion notes from the list of each of the prioritized projects or priority areas that the Council had developed through the multi-voting process:

A. Fiscal Health

1. Eric Frost delivered an updated Fiscal Health Analysis to the City Council, which included projected 2007-08 data.
2. Eric suggests that the City Council focus on three factors and three indices as the Council makes budgetary decisions and monitors the City's fiscal health. The three factors are:
 - a. Watch out for increasing expenditures.
 - b. Watch out for increasing debt.
 - c. Watch out for decreasing fund balances.
3. The three metrics to use for monitoring fiscal health include:
 - b. Operating Expenses as a Percentage of Operating Revenue
 - c. Percentage of Government Debt Service to Revenue
 - d. Per Capita General Fund Balance
4. Eric stated that Long term debt/capita is currently about \$270/person in 2007, which is up from recent years, and, is similar to the level in 2004. It's increasing, and we're still in decent shape.
5. A comparison of our "Government Debt Service: Percentage of General Fund" with other municipalities shows a similar trend. In FY 06-07, we were at 2.02%, and in 2007-08, we are at 3.42%.
6. The General Fund balance/capita is also, growing, and, it too is better than most cities.
7. Our debt load is also increasing, and, we are below past "peaks."
8. The City Council agreed that they do want to use these three metrics as tools for assessing fiscal health. Staff will provide the Council with status reports of these three metrics on a semi-annual or annual basis.
9. Staff will continue to provide Revenue Report Updates to the City Council on a monthly basis.
10. Staff will provide the City Council with a General Fund Departmental Expenditures Budget Analysis, by Department, on a quarterly basis. These will be one-page summaries.

B. Downtown CIP Projects

This Priority Project includes development of East downtown, Central downtown, City Hall West 2 block Master Plan, and the Miki City Park. Mike Olmos presented a 10-minute overview of the extensive list of downtown-based CIP projects currently in the works. (See his 1-page handout). The following is a summary of general reactions, and implications and/or opportunities on the horizon that the City Council members, based on the presentation by Mike Olmos:

1. The general reactions of the City Council members is that we have an impressive list of projects in the works, our plate is full, we set the bar high, and we have lots to be proud of.
2. Councilman Greg Kirkpatrick requested that staff develop a GANT Chart of “Significant Projects.” This “high-level spreadsheet” reporting tool would provide information such as “beginning and end points of key project phases” on a two to three-year horizon.
3. Councilman Bob Link reminded his peers not to forget Central Downtown. He requested that tax increment money not be borrowed from The Central Redevelopment District, and if we do take tax increment money from the Central District Redevelopment District, we should agree to a “not-to-exceed threshold or percentage.”
4. Councilman Greg Collins stated that he feels that the East Downtown will blend seamlessly with the existing downtown and will emerge into the “downtown inner core.” He is not differentiating the two as separate.
5. Councilman Bob Link stated that we should develop a vision of the ideal mix (e.g. housing, Medical, residential, commercial, entertainment, etc.) for downtown, and strive to attain that mix. Others seconded this idea and noted that the “Form-based Code” and the Downtown Strategic Plan will help the City achieve this.
6. It’s our leadership that will influence the community to “see downtown as one downtown.”
7. One suggestion was to consider establishing a “property based improvement district (PBID)” for the east side of downtown. The group decided to review this suggestion at a later time. An alternative to creating a new PBID would be to concentrate on expanding the existing PBID.
8. The Council discussed opportunities on the horizon. These included the following:
 - a. Noble/Downtown off ramp improvement project
 - b. Locust/Court Corridor. Older homes could be converted to office use. It would be a nice addition to the downtown

mix. We can go almost to Tulare Street with this mindset. We would not want to do this at the expense of losing residential housing in this area.

- c. We could also go north, and connect the downtown with the Oval community. It was noted that many development and improvement projects in the Oval community are in the works. Greg Collins noted that there is an impediment, from a pedestrian's point of view, between downtown and Oval, in the form of a highway. He suggested exploring ways to get the state highway out of the downtown.
9. Another "Opportunity on the Horizon" is to enhance our mix with a unique retail outlet such as a Trade Joe's that would be a destination point and a magnet for visitors and shoppers. It was noted that there are a number of vacancies east of Santa Fe Street that would accommodate this.
10. Downtown community leaders have been striving to achieve this for years, so we should make a stronger and more concerted effort to achieve this. Steve, Mike and Ricardo will research this and get back to the City Council.
11. An additional "Opportunity on the Horizon" would be to market the Antique and Second-hand Stores on East Main Street, which is a unique community asset.

C. Expand Airport

1. Mario Cifuentez presented an overview of the status of efforts to retain/attract "Essential Air Services," and responded to questions raised on June 26, listed below:
 - a. Status of the FAA "Essential Air Services" RFP
 - b. What are the realistic expectations and/or targets that we can accomplish in the coming year?
 - c. What is the long term plan for terminal (e.g. replace, upgrade, etc.)?
 - d. What incentives, if any, should we consider to attract airlines to Visalia?
 - e. Who is attending the "Jump-Start Convention" to attract airlines to Visalia?
 - f. What are the opportunities for moving UPS/DHL, etc. to the west side of the terminal, to create greater opportunities on the east side of the terminal? What are realistic targets for 2007-08?
 - g. What opportunities do we have to increase Charter Services on the east side of the airport? What are realistic targets for 2007-08?

2. The “Essential Air Services Proposals” are due on July 19. Results from the “marketing analysis and the airport’s true marketing potential” will be provided to the City on July 9, and the proposal will be crafted having integrated these results. Note: The City is able to attain \$1.7 million/year for carriers, and not every community has this. The RFP’s will be distributed by July 10-11. We will have face-to-face meetings and/or conference calls with the carriers between July 11 and 18.
3. The current size and configuration of the terminal is working fine at this point, and is handling the 19 passengers effectively. If Visalia were to attract a second carrier, we may need to expand the facility.
4. Providing incentives to airlines may not be necessary. We are studying our marketing capacity and opportunities at this time. There may not be a good ROI on incentives.
5. We will not be attending the Jump Start Convention this year. We would attend these if we achieve passenger levels of about 10,000 passengers per year.
6. Staff will convene a work session with the Council in August, 2007 to discuss the status, pro’s, cons, and ROI of a) Interstate Air Service and b) moving UPS/DHL to the west side of the airfield.

D. Blighted Neighborhoods

1. Mike Olmos and Steve Salomon provided a brief overview of City efforts to-date. The City has been focusing efforts on the Oval & Washington communities. They have made progress.
2. They proposed focusing the City’s efforts on these two neighborhoods. The City can increase our chances of being successful through a focused effort, and can better apply our resources to achieve greater results. We risk disappointing the residents in these two communities, who have come to the City seeking assistance, if we don’t focus. Through a focused effort, we can develop an effective program, coordinate the approach with existing groups, and establish a targeted and meaningful needs assessment.
3. The City Council supported this approach. In addition, they agreed that we should also begin to identify other areas Citywide that need attention. They proposed collecting data in each of the 16 sectors, developed by the Police Department. The Council also talked about getting a better handle on issues associated with “group homes” and also on identifying areas where the “Good Neighbor Policy” is being abused.
4. The City Council requested that staff come back to Council with realistic and attainable initiatives and outcomes.

E. The Natural Resources Conservation Manager (NRCM): Targets and Expectations

Leslie Caviglia provided a brief status update of the hiring process, and stated that the position should be filled by August, 2007. She asked for Council input, questions, and their targets and expectations for the NRCM. The following is a summary of their discussion:

1. Increase community awareness and the education level of the City's efforts on these important issues.
2. Explore competitive effects with Countywide Solid Waste JPA.
3. Increase diversion to 50%. Ensure that we have a "tagging program" to measure our effectiveness.
4. Get Groundwater Recharge Efforts back on-track with the KDWCD.
5. Explore ways that we can improve the air quality in the region.
6. Explore opportunities for energy conservation (e.g. solar panels, etc.).
7. Update the City Council on ROI for our existing and future energy conservation efforts.
8. Apply LEED certification and award standards for new development, and evaluate the "effectiveness of LEED standards."
9. Cal. Water: Encourage the acceleration of their conversion to meters.
10. Explore application of the Cool Cities Initiatives.
11. Explore application of new technologies such as LEED Lighting, permeable concrete parking lots, etc.
12. Conduct a comparative cost analysis of the Airport Electric Bill, past and present.
13. Work with the Citizen Environmental Committee and the City Council's Natural Resources Committee and the Household Hazardous Waste Program.
14. Hold a Council Work Session on the NRCM status in September, 2007, and present the proposed work program for FY 2007-08.

F. The New Animal Control Facility

1. Carol Cairns delivered an update of the plans for establishing the new animal control facility.
2. An RFP is being developed for the Facility Design within the next 30 days. There is a very short-time frame and an aggressive schedule for the project. The Construction Start Date is in about 12 months.

3. There is a City Council Working Committee leading this effort along with staff.
4. City Councilman Don Landers stated that the plan at this time is to build the project as a City-owned facility. The City would own the facility, and lease it to the SPCA. The City would create a contract with the SPCA to provide the services on behalf of the City. If the SPCA were to add additional facilities and extra services, this would need a contract adjustment, and these non-mandated services would be financed by the SPCA.
5. City Councilman Greg Collins stated that he was concerned with the price. He asked whether this would be a design-build, or a design-bid-build project, and asked what would be the size and cost of the project. There are lots of variables and criteria to consider as we make decisions. There are potential revenue streams for the City.
6. City Councilman Don Landers stated that we are hiring a consultant who will assist us in the “Facility Needs” to meet the 20-20 plan.
7. City Councilman Greg Kirkpatrick asked whether there is value in considering a phased construction plan.
8. City Councilman Bob Link asked whether there is value in considering a JPA with the SPCA for this project. Don Landers stated that this is not the plan at this time.
9. Mayor Jesus Gamboa recommended attaining a legal opinion re: the plan to lease the facility to the SPCA.

G. Affordable Housing

1. Mike Olmos briefed the City Council on the progress made in providing affordable housing to Visalia. He responded to the questions identified the evening before (June 26), which are listed below:
 - a. What monies are available short-term and in the long term?
 - b. Given this level of financial resources, what should we focus on and what is realistic to achieve this year, and in coming years?
2. There has been lots of progress to-date! There are numerous affordable housing projects underway (e.g. a Mill Creek townhouse project, etc.) and there are many projects on the horizon.
3. There is a \$2.5 million 41-unit project in the works.
4. We are seeking other projects via partnerships with organizations that have proven track records. An example of this is construction

- of a ten-unit Robinwood Court project via a partnership with the Housing Authority.
5. We are pursuing all opportunities. We continue to be active, and are working with the Housing Authority and the Habitat for Humanity.
 6. Councilman Greg Collins asked if we are lacking projects that address the “entry-level market” (e.g. \$250,000/unit). Staff and Council responded that there are units available in the community that addresses this niche.
 7. The City has a first-time homeowner’s program. Developers are using this now, and as fast as the funds are available.
 8. We are pursuing “tax credit projects” (i.e. tax credits for rental properties). Steve Salomon stated that all large-sized rental projects utilize these.
 9. It was suggested that we consider forming a Visalia “Affordable Housing/Entry Level Housing” Committee. Steve suggested that we could use the “Smart growth Committee for this purpose. He reiterated that the City is using all the resources that we have, and are aggressively pursuing outside resources, to build affordable housing in the community.
 10. Council requested that staff provide semi-annual status updates to the City Council on date re: the cost/home (i.e. the number of house for sale/sold for different prices).
 11. Council requested that staff provide them with a presentation of the “State’s Affordable Housing Goals,” and a comparison/assessment of the City’s success in meeting these.
 12. Council requested that staff provide an “Affordable Housing” Status Report.

H. Sports Park

1. Vince Elizondo briefed the City Council on the status of the Sports Park. He responded to the questions identified the evening before (June 26), which are listed below:
 - a. How will we market the Sports Park?
 - b. Who is responsible for the marketing?
 - c. How will we measure ROI?
2. Vince stated that Jason Glick is the point person for marketing the Sports Park. They are striving to attract major usage of the park (e.g. five major Soccer Tournaments, etc.).
3. Vince stated that the Sports Park soccer fields are already scheduled for 40 weeks in the first year, which is a lot of wear and tear on the fields. The Council and staff discussed the approach for building in rest-time for the fields, using a field rotation system.

4. The Council raised several policy issues for later discussion, including the following:
 - a. Will the general public be charged for use of the fields?
 - b. Will youth leagues be charged?
5. Some Council members stated that there should be a fee for all who use it, as it is an important regional asset, and we will need to maintain it in order to attract tournaments.
6. Councilman Don Landers requested that staff “track the ROI of soccer tournaments” in the community. Vince and Eric Frost will generate metrics and approaches for measuring the ROI on the Sports Park.

I. Traffic Circulation Projects

1. Andy Benelli briefed the Council on the Traffic Circulation Projects in the City, and provided a brief overview of the top ten such projects. They are listed, along with other discussion notes and agreements from this conversation.
2. There are about 75 traffic-related CIP projects underway, excluding “storm-drain” projects.
3. Top Projects include the following:
 - a. Caldwell Project working with Santa Fe Railroad & RJ Berry.
 - b. Dinuba Ave. Project in front of the Sports Park
 - c. Woodland Project
 - d. Houston Ave. and Mineral King Project
 - e. Lovers Lane Interchange
 - f. Ben Maddox Interchange Project
 - g. Houston-Santa Fe Roundabout
 - h. Santa Fe Bridge Over-cross Project – Staff will come to the Council in August for ROW approval with 7 land owners
 - i. Plaza Drive Interchange
4. Staff will provide a semi-annual status report on Traffic Circulation CIP Projects that will utilize a GANT chart.

VIII. Staff Support to the City Council

This agenda item was designed to provide an opportunity for the Council to suggest ways that staff can support the Council in achieving these targets and priority goals in the coming year, as well as ways that the staff can better support the Council, in general. Council members responded to some “starter questions,” including: a) What should the staff continue to do, b) What should they do more of, and/or c) what should they do less of:

1. In general, we are very pleased with the professionalism and fiscal stewardship and dedication of our professional staff.
2. Staff does a great job in numerous areas, including the following:
 - a. Accepting and managing the aggressive and impressive workload, and providing excellent leadership,
 - b. Report preparation and report-outs
 - c. Briefing Council members in advance.
 - d. Anticipating the needs of the Council
 - e. Staff will actually accompany Council members to certain meetings providing support.
3. What staff can do more of:
 - a. Provide semi-annual or annual Status Updates of the significant CIP projects.
 - b. Close the communication-loop with Council members: if a meeting is canceled that is scheduled, inform the Council member prior to the meeting.
 - c. Schedule the next City Council Annual Retreat for January or February, 2008 soon, and get this on our calendars.