



City of Visalia

City Council and Staff Strategic Planning Workshop January 25-26, 2008

REPORT

**Submitted by
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Sentient Systems, Inc.
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**VISALIA CITY COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP
January 25 – 26, 2008**

REPORT

A. PARTICIPANTS:

Council Members:

Mayor Jesus Gamboa
Vice Mayor Bob Link
Council Member Greg Collins
Council Member Don Landers
Council Member Amy Shuklian

Staff: City Manager Steven Salomon
City Attorney Alex Peltzer
Assistant City Manager Carol Cairns
Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director Michael Olmos
Deputy City Manager Leslie Caviglia
Administrative Services Director Eric Frost
Assistant Community Development Director/City Planner Fred Brusuelas
Parks and Recreation Director Vincent Elizondo
Public Works Director Andrew Benelli
Police Chief Robert Carden
Interim Fire Chief Gregory Glass
Economic Development and Housing Director Ricardo Noguera
Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva

Facilitator:

Sandra E. Tripp-Jones, Sentient Systems, Inc.

B. OBJECTIVES:

That the City Council, City Manager and Executive Managers:

1. Continue to strengthen the City Council and Staff Leadership Team;
2. Examine core issues identified by the Council and Staff and provide preliminary policy direction;
3. Prioritize and select two (2) year strategic goals;
4. Develop potential action plans to implement selected goals; and
5. Consider City Council and City Manager norms.

C. WORKSHOP REPORT:

1. Introduction:

The Workshop opened with introductions, a review of Objectives and Procedures (Agenda).

The City Council, Staff and members of the public attending identified last year's accomplishments.

- a. Sports Park
- b. Loop Bus
- c. Sequoia Shuttle / Kings National Park
- d. 17% Reduction in Crime
- e. Neighborhood Natural Resource Conservation Division
- f. Baseball Stadium
- g. Radisson ↔ Marriot
- h. Downtown Parking Structure
- i. 1 Million Sq. Ft. of Retail Space Approved
- j. Convention Center Telescopic Seating Installed
- k. Improved PD Relations with Other Agencies
- l. SPCA New Facility – Assessment & Planning
- m. Commercial Development North Visalia
- n. Sign Program
- o. Increased Code Enforcement
- p. Southeast Master Plan
- q. Cool City
- r. Summit Growth Task Force / Report
- s. Rating from Standard & Poor's
- t. Completed Island Annexations
- u. CNG Transit Facility Maintenance
- v. Land Acquisition Downtown
Increased Programming of Fresno State at COS / 4 Year College Program
- w. Uncontested City Council Election
- x. Parks / Infrastructure for Master Plan in East Downtown
- y. Measure T Continued an Additional Year
- z. Formed Council of Cities
- aa. Closed Recycling Plant
- bb. Oval Planning Traffic Grant
- cc. 1 Million \$ in Grants To Trees
- dd. Southeast Firehouse
- ee. New Housing and Economic Development Department
- ff. New Community Relations Position
- gg. Fresno Pacific University Expansion
- hh. New Police Department Substation
- ii. 20 Million \$ Roads Built
- jj. New Airline
- kk. New MOU's with All Employee Groups
- ll. Gang Issues – Public Awareness

Q2: Do sales tax projections include proceeds from Measures R and T?
R2: The General Fund projections are net after Measures R and T and do not include any Measure R or T funds.

Q3: How much of the reduction in reserves is due to covering capital improvement costs in excess of budgeted cost estimates?
R3: Temporary borrowing has grown, in some cases to cover "overages." Examples include the Golf Course and the planned Sports Park. The question has been whether it is more cost effective to finance the projects or to make an internal loan from the reserves.

Q4: What percentage of Tulare County sales tax does Visalia get?
A4: Visalia collects 47% of the all the taxable sales tax in the County. At the same time, the City represents 27% of the population.

Q5: Will property tax revenues decrease during the next 2-3 years due to reassessments?
A5: Revenues will not immediately decrease because collections are based on prior year's assessments. But we will research whether there will be reassessments and how soon.

Q6: Is there a time frame for implementing the recommendations from Finance?

A6: Yes:
Transfer \$: With March mid-year report
POB: Feb. 19
Storm Drains Ballot Measure: With March mid-year report
Mail ballots: Summer

Q7: Can you provide examples of potential cost reduction plans costs in the development function areas?

A7: Yes:
Not renew inspection contracts
Reduce outsourcing (related to expected volume decreases)
Reduce overtime (related to expected volume decreases)

Q8: What is our position in approving advance funding to outside groups?

A8: The practice has been to do so on a case-by-case basis. Staff will bring information to Council with the mid-year report for a policy discussion.

Q9: Have reimbursements from VUSD and grants been considered?

A9: Yes, but these are volatile and at risk.

Q10: How will home foreclosures impact the budget?

A10: There will be a decline in assessed valuations and property tax revenues. But the County is behind in doing reassessments and there is a delayed effect on revenues. Staff will research.

Q11: Why are booking fees still projected in expenditures? Were these not eliminated?

A11: Staff needs to research this.

Q12: What is happening to Visalia's "competitive edge?"

A12: Among other things, the County and surrounding cities have developed more retail and housing.

3) Council Comments:

- o Clarify timing of each of the recommendations.
- o Identify how these new items will impact existing work.
- o Seek costs reductions and potential improvements from departments (without the project being onerous).
- o When staff brings the storm drain ballot measure to Council, also bring for consideration a Lighting and Landscape Maintenance ballot measure.

4) Preliminary Council Direction on Budget: Council gave conceptual approval, by consensus, to the staff recommendations.

b. Neighborhood Preservation

1) Recommendations:

a) Residential Rental Inspection Program

- o Fee based
- o Self-sustaining
- o Levied on property owners

b) Historic Home Down-Payment Assistance

- o \$500,000 in Central Redevelopment Project area available
- o Funds set aside for funding this

c) Effective Property Management Educational Seminar

- o For landlords and property management companies
- o City host meeting

2) Council Questions and Responses

Q1: Is there code enforcement in the Oval Park Area?

R1: Yes, it is an area of focused code enforcement that is more user friendly.

Q2: Is it true that we are seeing copper theft?

R2: Yes, including from recycling.

Q3: Do we get any assistance from the County in code enforcement?

A3: Yes, the County is involved and actively enforcing.

Q4: What is the percentage of absentee landlords?

A4: 40%

In regards to the City at large, GIS estimates that there are approximately 6500 single family residential properties that are rentals in Visalia. They estimated that approximately 2700 (42%) have property owners out of the area. With specific regard to the Lincoln Oval Park area approximately 60% of the properties are occupied by tenants. Approximately 75% of the properties in the Washington School area tenant occupied.

- 2) Council Preliminary Direction on Neighborhood Preservation:
 - a) Maintain priority be placed on life safety issues.
 - b) Move forward with development of recommended programs.
 - c) Schedule Council work session to consider specific recommendations related to the these programs.
 - d) Include real estate and property managers developing Residential Inspection Program.
 - e) Watch conversion of apartments to “condos” thus reducing affordable housing stock.

We have not noticed this yet in Visalia. It’s more common in the Bay Area.

c. City Response to Gang Issues:

1) Staff Recommendations for Upcoming Strategic Programs

Suppression Strategies:

- a) Development of Gang Strategic Plan
- b) Special Enforcement Bureau
- c) Gang Injunction
- d) Evaluate Code Enforcement Options
- e) Local Auto Theft Task Force with CHP

Intervention and Prevention Strategies:

- f) Neighborhood youth counselors
- g) Gang Watch Program
- h) Truancy Program with VUSD
- i) Jobs for youth
- j) Youth and faith-based intervention options
- k) Tattoo removal program
- l) Family Intervention Task Force

2) Council Questions and Responses

Q1: Will the Police Department become involved in the neighborhoods?

A1: Yes

Q2: Has the Federal Government been involved in addressing gang issues?

A2: Yes

Q3: Have you considered a program to “turn in guns?”

A3: We have, but we will look again at the experience of other communities for cost of effectiveness of investment in this kind of program and actual decreases in crime.

Q4: Is Visalia getting a fair amount of time from the CHP helicopter? How much flight time does it spend in other jurisdictions (King, Madera, Merced and Fresno)?
A4: We need an incentive to get CHP helicopter time here. We need to lobby the CHP for more air time and build more of a partnership with the CHP.

Q5: Do we have a log monitoring program?

A5: The VPD is not doing this yet. Staff will report back to Council on a program.

Q6: Are the youth programs adequate?

A6: We need more city and private sector investment in you programs.

3) Council Preliminary Direction Gangs Issues:

Conceptual approval to move forward with implementation of recommended programs.

d. Long Range Planning:

1) General Plan Update (GPU)

a) Staff Recommendations:

Prepare a work plan and estimated schedule to prepare a community wide comprehensive General Plan update, including a companion Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

b) Council Questions

Q1: What will be the cost?

A1: The estimated cost is \$1.2 million.

Q2: How will it be paid for?

A2: \$200,000 has been collected in General Plan fees already; the balance will have to come from the General Fund.

Q3: What role will the community have in the process?

A3: Steve Salomon stated that there should be a good community input on the GPU.

Q4: What if the community wants policy that runs counter to “good policy” or “good services?”

A4: It is important to get broad input. City Council still has to make the decisions.

Q5: Can we save time and costs by:

Continuing to use the 1964 Plan incorporating the changes and update work that has been done recently into the current framework, thereby reducing the EIR costs?

A5: Staff has assumed that.

Q6: How much of the GPU work can be done by assigning to a person who's sole responsibility would be to take the existing framework, to inventory existing data and fold all that into the GPU?

A6: We will need someone to steer the project and will use staff to do as suggested. But we will still need outside expertise for certain elements, e.g., noise, safety, floodwater. But staff will look for ways to minimize costs of the project.

c) Other Comments:

- o Re: Public input process: One Council Member indicated that he does not want several meetings only to be "beat up."
- o Re: Annexations during the GPU: One Council Member indicated that he would like a "time out" on annexations during the GPU, in recognition that there is sufficient land available for development on existing lots without annexations.

d) Preliminary Council Direction:

By consensus, Council gave conceptual approval to hiring a consultant to complete the GPU, but relying on internal staff to do as much of the preparation as possible.

2) 198 Corridor

a) Staff Recommendation:

Authorize a future work session to consider potential strategies for the West Highway 198 Scenic Corridor.

b) Council Question:

Q1: What happens if we do nothing on the 198 Corridor?

A1: The County will develop in the area. The pressure will come to the City to approve development.

c) Other Comments:

- o 1991 General Plan Amendment gave rise to the 198 corridor as an "agriculture" entry.
- o We should look at establishing and "agriculture" zone.
- o We should be encouraging county-wide revenue sharing and county-wide development impact fees to take development pressure off our borders.
- o Spheres of influence should be regulated by cities.

d) Preliminary Council Direction:

By consensus, Council directed staff to schedule a work session for further direction from Council; if the question of the 198 Corridor cannot be resolved in the work session, and then incorporate it into the General Plan Update issues.

3) Design Standards

a) Staff Recommendations

Update Subdivision standards and Engineering Improvement Standards to incorporate contemporary design criteria to better facilitate safe, walk able and aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods.

b) Preliminary Council Direction:

By consensus, Council directed that new Design Standards be incorporated into the General Plan Update.

4) Density

a) Staff Recommendations:

Prepare a work plan and estimated schedule to amend the 2020 Plan and Municipal Code to incorporate the following items:

- (1) Infill Strategies
- (2) Higher minimum residential densities
- (3) Increase population benchmarks for Visalia Urban Development Boundaries (UDBs)
- (4) Criteria for prioritizing annexation proposals for the 98,700 and 129,000 UDBs

b) Preliminary Council Direction:

By consensus, Council gave conceptual approval for moving ahead with recommendations (1) and (2), including going through the public process.

c) By consensus, Council directed staff to schedule a Work Session on density to consider (3) and (4).

3. Council Goals

Long Term Strategies:

In preparation for the process to select priority goals for the next two (2) years, Council informally reviewed what have been long term strategies of the City of Visalia, including:

- Strong focus on integrated strategic planning
- Community-wide growth management plans
- Community buy-in
- Economic Development:
 - Increased regional tourism (Three-Park Majestic Mountain Loop and Shuttle Funding)
 - Develop Downtown
 - Develop Airport
- Focus on Fiscal Health
 - Maintain viability of existing revenue sources
 - Pursue revenue opportunities
 - Manage costs
 - Ensure legal compliances with regular audits
- Strong Organization
 - Attract and retain high quality employees
 - Use non-monetary incentives
 - Develop mission-driven employees
 - Increase employee productivity

The Council also identified some of its strengths as a decision making body that have contributed in the successful achievement of goals:

- Ability to keep their “eyes on the ball,” example the General Plan
- Commitment to fiscal stability, even in time of more difficult economic conditions
- Commitment to balancing community interests, e.g., golf course, sports park and stadium
- Patience

Priority Goals for 2008-2010

Council Members and Staff interviewed each other, listed and presented each Council Member's and the City Manager's potential goals for the next two (2) years (see Attachment 5). Using a process of “selecting with dots,” each Council Member chose their own 12 priorities from among all the listed potential goals. Thirteen (13) goals received 3 dots or more. By consensus, the Council conceptually approved these as the Council's priority goals for the next two (2) years. Staff will be responsible for developing final implementation plans to achieve the goals, with action items for Council consideration.

(5 dots)

1. Civic Center – emphasis on Public Safety Building
2. Community beautification and positive city image
3. Fiscal stability and enhanced fiscal position

(4 dots)

4. Circulation improvements
5. General plan update
6. Green / Cool City Initiative
7. Neighborhood Preservation Program

(3 dots)

8. Airport Expansion
9. Gang Response Programs
10. Increased regional tourism with focus on shuttles
11. Manageable Retiree Health Costs
12. Sports Park
13. Vital Downtown

(Other Important Goals)

14. Recreation Park Stadium (Oaks)
15. Animal Control

4. Preliminary Action Plans

Council and staff worked on four preliminary actions plans for the following goals:

- The Civic Center
- Circulation
- Downtown

- Neighborhood Preservation

Council also “brainstormed” ideas for City Beautification

The purpose of the preliminary action plans was to narrow the work of the next two years on the following criteria and to hear Council Members’ perspectives more fully.

- Funding available
- Do able in two years
- Finishes work that has been started
- Already a substantial investment
- Is strategic
- Funding really available

See Attachment 6 for the preliminary action plans.

5. Council Norms

Council and the City Manager clarified their existing norms and added some new ones. They are identified in Attachment 7.

D. EVALUATIONS:

Overall usefulness of the Workshop was evaluated with an average score of 5 with 6 being the highest possible score. Scores were generally higher from Council Members than from Staff.

Attachment 1

City of Visalia

Agenda Item Transmittal

Meeting Date: January 25, 2008

Agenda Item Number (Assigned by City Clerk):

Agenda Item Wording: Visalia’s current budget status

Deadline for Action: None

Submitting Department: Administrative Services

Contact Name and Phone Number: Eric Frost, x4474; Gus Aiello, x4423

Department Recommendation: That the City Council receives this report discussing preliminary budget forecasts for the remainder of the FY 07/08 and implications for the FY 08/10 biennial budget and direct the staff to do the following:

1. List potential cost savings alternatives to improve the City’s budget picture;
2. Develop limited revenue alternatives in order to maintain the current budget;
3. Reduce expenditures in the development functions in the rest of FY07/08
4. Bring to Council, for its consideration the following items:
 - A potential Pension Obligation Bond offering, to be presented at the City’s Feb. 19, 2008 meeting.

A pension obligation bond is a different way of funding the City’s PERS obligation. It can be equated to refinancing a home mortgage to a lower rate. If the bond issue were offered at an interest rate of approximately 5.75%, as opposed to the 7.75% currently paid to PERS, it would save the City approximately \$7.6 million (present value) over a 30 year period. This equates to an average annual savings of \$485,000.

- Transportation financing alternatives for advancing Measure R and other road projects;

For action by:
 City Council
 Redev. Agency Bd.
 Cap. Impr. Corp.
 VPFA

For placement on which agenda:
 Work Session
 Closed Session

Regular Session:
 Consent Calendar
 Regular Item
 Public Hearing

Est. Time (Min.): _____

Review:

Dept. Head _____
(Initials & date required)

Finance _____
City Atty _____
(Initials & date required or N/A)

City Mgr _____
(Initials Required)

If report is being re-routed after revisions leave date of initials if no significant change has affected Finance or City Attorney Review.

- A proposal for a Storm Drain rate ballot. Prop. 218 requires that increases in the Storm Drain operating fee be voted upon by property owners. The fee has not been raised since FY 04/05 and the City's ability to adequately handle storm water has been diminishing.

Summary/background: A number of potential issues face the City which could negatively impact this year's General Fund budget, namely:

- Potential State Budget Take-aways
- Some stagnant local revenues caused by the building slowdown and the general decline in the economy
- Increasing ongoing commitments such as employee contracts, retiree health and other operating costs
- Significant capital projects such as the Oaks Stadium and the SPCA building
- Potential back-up finance commitments for transportation projects which will encumber the General Fund
- Greater demands upon the City's General Fund cash resources as various operations borrow cash from the City's General Fund
- A lessening of the City's historical competitive advantage as other cities' revenues are on par or greater than Visalia's

A couple of positive aspects of the FY 07/08 budget process include:

- A balanced budget
- Property taxes which continue to increase due to the taxes assessment lag
- Projected General Fund expenditures are slightly below budget
- Relatively low levels of debt

As a result of these factors, a good budget this next cycle might be a status quo budget which continues to implement the direction already set by Council. However, new cost initiative should only be adopted to the extent they are offset by new revenues or cost savings else where in the General Fund Budget.

Visalia's fiscal situation. Gus Aiello has attached a General Fund projection for this coming fiscal year. Out of a \$70 million budget, operating expenses are tracking about \$300,000 less than budget while revenues are projected to fall short by an almost equal amount. Both General Fund Sales Taxes and developmental fees, such as building permit revenues, are down compared to budget. This leaves the budget about breakeven going into next year's budget.

If this year's budget leaves the General Fund starting at zero next year, consider the following challenges to Visalia's budget beyond the potential impact from the State:

- **Reduced sales tax.** Sales tax, the major General Fund revenue, is flat for this year. The City's budget assumed a 4% increase, leading to a \$629,000 shortfall in that revenue category.
- **Increasing ongoing commitments** such as employee contracts, retiree health and other operating costs. Employee contracts are scheduled to increase by at least 4 percent this next year. Some other commitments will add costs, making a status quo budget at least 4 percent

more expensive next year compared to last year. If revenues are flat next year, the City may be facing a 4 percent gap at the start of the budget year. Remember, 1% of the General fund budget is about \$600,000.

- **Significant capital projects** such as the Oaks Stadium and the SPCA building may grow in scope and cost more money.
- **Potential back-up finance commitments for transportation projects** which will encumber the General Fund. The transportation impact fee fund has consumed all its cash. The City is working to reevaluate the fee. However, if a decision is made to borrow money to continue the development of roads to be eventually repaid by impact fees, lenders will probably require some type of back-up credit, reducing General Fund flexibility.
- **Greater demands upon the City's General Fund cash resources.** To a greater or lesser extent, the City has used the General Fund to advance funds to other funds to eventually be paid back to the General Fund. Funds such as East Visalia Redevelopment Agency and the Valley Oaks Golf Course have had long-term multi-million dollar advances from the General Fund. Although these funds pay interest, the principal amount is not currently available to the General Fund. Further, new advances are putting additional demands upon the City's General Fund such as an advance to the parking fund which will eventually repay the General Fund from parking structure revenues and an advance to the Police Impact Fee fund for Precinct construction which will eventually repay the General Fund from future impact fees.

The use of the General Fund as a bank saves the City interest cost from loans and uncomplicates its borrowing efforts. However, the growing demands on the General Fund coupled with the City's use of monies saved to build capital assets, such as the Sports Park, cannot continue in the near future and will require the City to increase its borrowing from outside sources to fund capital projects.

- **A lessening of the City's historical competitive advantage** as other cities' revenues are on par or greater than Visalia's is a subtle, long-term change. One of the reasons that Visalia has been successful has been its relative financial position. Visalia has been the center of commerce for the Tulare/Kings counties. This has allowed Visalia to receive more than its proportional share of sales tax. That historical trend will probably change as other local communities gain size and begin to gain more of their share of the local sales tax.

In addition, the other communities have developed other revenue sources that Visalia has not, such as larger public safety override sales taxes and utility user taxes. As a result, the historical ability of Visalia to pay somewhat more than other communities is lessening.

All these short and long-term trends point to a more difficult budget year. Now consider the impact the State budget on top of the local issues the City must grapple with.

State Budget. The governor has proposed a state budget for next year. His budget is a proposal, one which is *unlikely to be the final solution*. The Governor's January Budget proposes few cuts which will affect cities and should probably be considered the best that cities can hope for. The adopted budget will probably ask that cities contribute more to the final budget solution.

The Governor has proposed a budget that addresses the fundamental State budget problem: the State spends more money than what it brings in. The Governor's fundamental approach is to reduce the size of the State's budget by reducing all discretionary programs by 10%. This difficult approach seeks to balance State revenues with State expenditures. If implemented, the City would suffer the following reductions:

- 10% reduction in booking fee reimbursements, approximately \$20,000.
- Some potential reduction in Citizen's Options for Public Safety (COPS) grants. This program would be decreased by 10% and State may not fund proposed grants from the City.
- Delay in the receipt of various street monies.

The challenge to the state budget is that a 10 percent cut in services is difficult and painful to achieve. Tremendous pressure will build to find other solutions rather than make the hard cuts. As a result, the legislature will probably look for alternatives to implementing the cuts. If that occurs, one potential source is taking local agency's revenues which are limited by Prop 1A, passed in November of 2004.

Michael Coleman, a policy advisor to the League of California Cities has written the following commentary on how the State could take local government revenues since the implementation of Proposition 1A, the Local Revenue Protection Act.

How Much Property Tax Could the State Borrow Under Prop 1A?

I've had lots of questions like this recently.

Proposition 1A (2004), in Section 25.5 (1)(C)(iv) of Article XIII of the State Constitution, that *"A suspension of subparagraph (A) shall not result in a total ad valorem property tax revenue loss to all local agencies within a county that exceeds 8 percent of the total amount of ad valorem property tax revenues that were allocated among all local agencies within that county for the fiscal year immediately preceding the fiscal year for which subparagraph (A) is suspended."*

Note that this is a cap on the total revenue loss to "all local agencies" within a county, not on each individual agency. "Local agencies" are defined in Proposition 1A as cities, counties and special districts but not redevelopment agencies or schools. So the total the state could borrow is eight percent of the sum of property taxes allocated among the cities, special districts and the county in each county in the prior year.

Although it is not defined in Prop 1A, we believe "property tax revenues that were allocated" includes secured and unsecured, supplemental as well as property tax in lieu of VLF - but probably not property taxes in lieu of the sales taxes under the triple flip (although this is unclear). The intention of the writers of Prop 1A was to set the cap at approximately the level of ERAF III which totaled \$1.3 Billion annually in FY04-05 and FY05-06 including \$350 million per year from cities. The total amount in FY08-09 statewide is over \$2 billion.

But note that Proposition 1A says nothing about how those loans are exacted among those individual agencies. The Legislature could hold the county harmless, borrowing only from cities and special districts. Or it could borrow the entire amount from the county. So a city really can't say its exposure is 8% of its property tax revenue. It could be more and it could be less. It's just too early to say.

And finally, be comforted for now that we have heard of no serious proposal by the administration or legislative leadership to invoke Proposition 1A property tax borrowing. For more information on Proposition 1A see: <http://www.californiacityfinance.com/#PRO1A>

Mr. Coleman's analysis appears well reasoned and provides the City with a couple of yardsticks for assessing potential revenue "borrowings". If the City were to lose 8% of its General Fund property tax, then the City could expect the following revenue loss as shown in Table I, Potential State Revenue Borrowing.

Table I

Potential State Revenue Borrowing	
All Amounts in Millions	
2006/07 Property Tax	23.5
Less: Triple Flip Sales Tax Swap	-6.4
Net Property Tax at Risk	17.1
8% potential borrowing	1.4

The problem with this analysis is that if the State pursues a borrowing strategy, they may decide to borrow all the money from local agencies. Since cities represent approximately ½ of all the local agency money, the 8% borrowing could increase to about 16% or almost \$3 million for Visalia.

Last fiscal year, the City spent around \$60 million from the General Fund. Thus, the potential impact of borrowing is somewhere on the order of 2.5% to 5% of the City's revenues.

It is important to note that currently there is no proposal to borrow any money. However, the difficulty of gaining approval of a state budget with the proposed deep cuts will surely lead to a discussion of potential alternatives to the Governor's proposed budget.

Other Indicators

Last year, the City developed some fiscal health indicators that rating agencies apply to cities in evaluating their credit worthiness. Finance staff has updated some of these displays for 2007 which are found in attachment #2. The general tenor is that Visalia's fiscal strength has lessened for understandable reasons as 1) Planned use of reserves to pay for such items as the Sports park, 2) the general economic conditions in the Central Valley have worsened; and, 3) the City has issued more debt such as the Section 108 loan for the Parking Structure and the Mooney Redevelopment Agency. As a result, these indicators further emphasize the need for caution.

Conclusions

In developing next year's budget, caution and restraint are needed because Visalia must meet its own revenue challenge as well as potentially being subject to State take-aways. As a result, a good budget this year might be to maintain the current service levels. To meet this objective, management recommends that the City Council direct staff to:

1. Develop revenue alternatives in order to maintain the current budget;
2. List potential cost savings alternatives to improve the City's budget picture; and;
3. Bring to Council, for its consideration the following items:

- A potential Pension Obligation Bond offering, to be presented at the City's Feb. 19, 2008 meeting;
- Transportation financing alternatives for advancing Measure R and other road projects;
- A proposal for a Storm Drain rate ballot. Prop. 218 requires that increases in the Storm Drain operating fee be voted upon by property owners.

In addition, Staff will bring to Council on February 19, 2008 the City's CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Statement) and the City's Mid-year report is schedule for March.

Prior Council/Board Actions:

Committee/Commission Review and Actions:

Alternatives:

Attachments: Attachment #1, General Fund Projection
Attachment #2, General Fund Fiscal Indicators

Memorandum

To: Eric Frost, Administrative Services Director
From: Gus Aiello, Finance Manager
Date: January 23, 2008
Re: Status of the General Fund

Visalia's current fiscal situation

Table I - General Fund Current Status, below, currently indicates revenues are projected slightly below budget offset by an almost equal amount in expenditure savings. No adjustment to the budget is recommended until at least the mid-year report.

Table I – General Fund Current Status, details current year budgeted revenues as well as projections by type.

Table I
General Fund - Current Status
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2008
(in thousands)

REVENUES	Current Budget	Projection	Variance Fav/(Unfav)
Property Taxes	\$ 22,117	\$ 22,747	\$ 630
Sales Taxes	17,313	16,684	(629)
Other Taxes	5,595	6,185	590
Subventions and Grants	3,140	3,755	615
License and Permits:			
Construction Permits	3,525	3,200	(325)
Other Licenses & Permits	50	74	24
Fees and Fines	1,106	1,269	163
Use of Money and Property	2,313	1,461	(852)
Charges for Current Services:			
Zoning Fees	348	284	(64)
Engineering and Subdivision Fees	1,436	1,291	(145)
Special Police and Fire Services	366	414	48
Recreation Programs	792	651	(141)
Other Service Fees	112	113	1
Miscellaneous	332	202	(130)
Total Operating Revenues	58,544	58,329	(215)
Fund Balance for Designated Capital Projects	8,836	146	(8,690)
Prior Year Capital Roll-over	3,600	3,600	-
Total Resources	\$ 70,980	\$ 62,075	\$ (8,905)
EXPENDITURES			
Current:			
General Government	\$ 1,609	\$ 1,529	\$ 80
Community Development	5,420	5,412	8
Public Safety:			
Police	23,708	23,954	(246)
Fire	10,140	10,290	(150)
Public Works	3,765	3,654	111
Parks and Recreation	7,011	6,520	491
Total Operating Expenditures	51,653	51,359	294
Capital Outlay	15,158	6,487	8,671
Transfers Out to Other Funds	4,085	4,085	-
Total Expenditures	70,896	61,931	8,965
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenditures	\$ 84	\$ 144	\$ 60

Revenues

The current revenue exceeds the budget by approximately \$60,000. Some items to note are:

- Property taxes remain strong due to an increase in assessed value.
- Sales taxes are projected to come in lower than budget by \$629,000 based on a slowing economy. The projection is approximately the same as the actual received last fiscal year; however, the budget programmed a 4%

increase in revenues for the current year, which is not expected to occur given the current economic conditions.

- Transient occupancy tax and business license tax are anticipated to come in \$500,000 over budget, combined.
- Grant revenues should exceed budget by approximately \$527,000.
- Construction permits are projected to be lower than budget by \$325,000 based on the continued slowing trend in the housing market.
- Interest earnings are anticipated to be \$771,000 lower because interest earning for projects with designated fund balances were incorrectly budgeted in the general fund. These interest earnings are dedicated back to those designations and removed from this analysis.
- Engineering fees are projected to come in lower than budget by \$140,000.

Expenditures

The operations portion is the direct spending within departments. As presented in Table I - General Fund Current Status, total operating expenditures are projected to come in lower than budget by approximately \$294,000. Major items to note include:

- There is a projected over-expenditure in Police of \$246,000. This is due to booking fees of over \$200,000 which were not included in the budget.
- Fire is projecting to exceed its expenditure budget by \$150,000 this is primarily due to overtime from the deployment of a strike team to combat the fires this fall in southern California. The City will be reimbursed for much of this expense in the 2008/09 fiscal year.

Finally, capital expenditures consist of large capital items such as buildings and streets projects, vehicles and other expenditures over \$25,000. The revised budget amount of \$15.1 million includes designated fund capital expenditures of \$8.8 million and prior year capital roll-overs of \$3.5 million, funded from designated Fund Balance.

City of Visalia

315 East Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 9329



*Neighborhood
Preservation*

Tel: (559) 713-4534 Fax: (559) 713-4812

2006-2007

Neighborhood Preservation Division Accomplishments and Proposals

Staff Recommendations

To promote and maintain a safe and desirable living environment, to discourage neighborhood decline, and to improve the safety and appearance of the homes and properties in Visalia it is suggested that Council give consideration to the following proposals:

- Residential Rental Inspection Program,
- Historic Home Down payment Assistance Program,
- Effective Property management Educational Seminar.

2006 Accomplishments

The Neighborhood Preservation Division of the Housing and Economic Development Department has been tasked with identifying, assessing and addressing code enforcement challenges within the City. 2006 accomplishments included:

- Transition from a code enforcement program into a Neighborhood Preservation Division.
- Implementation of a monthly Neighborhood Preservation meeting involving representatives from several city departments, divisions, interested agencies and community members. The meeting is regularly attended by representatives from the Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Housing and Economic Development Department, Community Development Department, City Attorney's Office, Health and Human Services Department, SPCA, Cal Water, Northern Visalian's Advisory Committee and Washington Residents For A Better Community. All City Manager(s) and Department Heads receive minutes from the monthly meeting.
- Implementation of a weekly meeting involving personnel from the Police Department, Fire Department and Neighborhood Preservation Division to discuss common concerns.
- Adoption of a revised Nuisance and Administrative procedures ordinances.

- Received 844 complaints, investigated and resolved 629 complaints (72%). For the specific nature of complaints received refer to attachment #1.
- Successfully recruited and hired a Code Enforcement Technician.
- Gained compliance with the removal of 120 subdivision development signs.
- Removed 4,811 non permitted portable signs.

2007 Accomplishments

- Received 866 complaints. Investigated and resolved 642 complaints (74%). For the specific nature of complaints received refer to attachment #2.
- Identified and posted 79 residential properties as “Unsafe to Occupy”. Identified and declared 30 residential properties as “Public Nuisances”.
- Removed 3,427 un-permitted signs.
- Implemented the Administrative Citation and Hearing Program. 270 Administrative citations were issued citywide. 16 of the 270 citations were appealed in 2007. The Administrative citation program has generated \$46,695.00 in fines. To date \$21,695.00 has been received.
- Received a \$135,000 Cal Trans’ Environmental Justice Context Sensitive Planning Grant to assess traffic issues in the Oval Park area.
- Recovered \$58,542.00 through cost recovery efforts (2008 revenues recovered to date \$36,639.00)
- Staff will be tax rolling 129 properties for \$93,378.82 for outstanding cost recovery fees due.
- Implemented a “Conditional Use” permit review and inspection program.
- Successfully recruited and hired a bilingual 1,000 hours Code Enforcement Technician for CDBG areas specifically. (Oval and Washington School Neighborhoods included)
- Hosted and attended several meetings with representatives from the Washington Residents For A Better Community and Northern Visalia’s Advisory Committee

Tasks

The Neighborhood Preservation Division has been tasked with identifying, assessing and addressing residential challenges in specific neighborhoods. Key challenges include:

- Dilapidated and/or substandard housing
- Ineffectively managed rental properties
- Properties entering into or in foreclosure
- Abandoned properties and vacant lots
- Absentee landlords
- Nuisance properties unnecessarily draining city resources and
- Historic properties not being maintained and/or altered without Historic Preservation Committee review and approval.

2006 Substandard Housing Data

- 844 Code Enforcement complaints were received.
- 234 of the 844 complaints involved substandard housing.
- 137 of the 234 substandard housing complaints involved single family residences

- 96 of the 137 single family residence involved rental properties.
- 44 of the 137 rental properties were absentee property owners.

2007 Substandard Housing Data

- 866 Code Enforcement complaints were received
- 236 of the 866 complaints involved substandard housing
- 151 of the 236 substandard housing complaints involved single family residences
- 105 of the 151 single family residences involved rental properties
- 49 of the 151 rental properties are absentee property owners
- 79 properties were identified and as “Unsafe to Occupy”
- 30 properties were identified and declared “Public Nuisances” residences based on ineffective management practices
- 78 of the 236 substandard housing complaints received in 2007 have been investigated, resolved and closed with no further action necessary.

2008 Pending Housing Enforcement Actions

- There are 682 open Code Enforcement cases from previous years.
- 395 Open cases consist of housing complaints.
- 230/395 Of The Open Cases Involve Rental Properties
- 215/395 Open rental property complaints are for substandard housing
- 109/230 Of The Rental Properties Involve Absentee Property Owners
- 22/395 Of The Open Cases Involve Properties That Are Vacant

Current Substandard Housing Enforcement Practice

The City of Visalia’s current practice is to respond to substandard housing complaints on a reactive basis.

The Combination Building Inspector assigned to investigate these complaints currently has approximately 395 open housing complaints. A significant number of these complaints involve single family residences. Frequently cases involve absentee landlords.

When complaints are confirmed the property owner is sent a written correspondence titled Notice and Order detailing the violation and what is required to resolve the violation. Property owners are required to pay code enforcement cost recovery fees of \$158.14 per hour for staff time required to bring the property into compliance. The fee was established through the Zucker Fee Study and report.

As a standard practice staff files a Notice of Pendency (clouding of the title advising potential buyers or refinancees that the property has an enforcement action by the City for substandard condition(s) pending against the property) Action Pending on all identified substandard properties with the Tulare

County Recorders' Office. Releases are only issued when the property condition is brought into compliance and all fees assessed and owed are paid.

Lincoln Oval Park Area Assessment

- In 2006-2007, 241 Code Enforcement complaints were received within ½ mile of the Oval Park. Based on the 2000 census figures, there are 76 vacant lots and abandoned homes in the area representing approximately 16% of all properties.
- Approximately 60% of all properties are occupied by tenants.
- Recently, there have been quite a few transients congregating in the Oval Park.

Actions Taken

- Staff has attended the Northern Visalians' Committee meeting to provide information and discuss committee concerns.
- Applied for and received the CalTrans Environmental Justice Context Sensitive Planning grant to address traffic and safety issues around the Oval Park.
- Staff met with Saint Mary's Catholic Church Monsignor Raymond C. Dreiling to discuss the church's concerns in the neighborhood and their desire to develop affordable housing on their property.
- Toured the Oval Park with representatives from the Northern Visalians' Advisory Committee to identify their major concerns.
- Toured the Oval Park with Police personnel to understand what the concerns are in the area.
- Staff has approved a 4,000 square foot commercial development at the northern edge of the Oval Park. The owner/developer has joined the City's Parking In-Lieu District.

Next Steps

- Staff will meet with the Northern Visalians' Advisory Committee on February 13, 2008 to discuss the Oval Park.
- A Request for Proposal will be issued to select a traffic consultant to complete a traffic study as part of the Cal-Trans grant.
- Staff will host community meetings to discuss future plans for the Oval Park and the surrounding area including the use of the Park/Recreation Building on site.
- The City is pursuing acquisition of nearby lots with the use of parking in-lieu fees to develop more parking.

Washington Elementary School Assessment

- In 2006-2007 140 code enforcement complaints were received within ½ mile of the school. Based on the 2000 census figures, there are 93 vacant lots and abandoned homes representing 7% of all properties.
- Approximately 75% of all properties are rental properties.
- NEIGHBORS HAVE RAISED CONCERNS ABOUT INSUFFICIENT LIGHTING, ILLEGAL DUMPING AND POOR MAINTENANCE OF SOME RENTAL PROPERTIES.

Actions Taken

- Staff has attended meetings with members of The Residents for a Better Community to discuss lighting and other neighborhood concerns.

- Staff met with the Washington Elementary School Principal Mary Kalasian and Randy Groom to identify safety concerns involving the school.
- Staff from Police, Public Works and Housing and Economic Development Departments have met and toured the area to assess safety concerns.
- The City has restriped the crosswalks surrounding the school and surveyed Garden Street to possibly add tandem parking for the school facility.
- Public Works staff is in the process of surveying the neighborhood to determine where new streetlamps can be installed on existing poles.
- Fencing has been installed in the alleyway to limit inappropriate use between S. Bridge Street and S. Santa Fe Street just south of Noble Ave.

Next Steps

- Meet with Washington Residents for a Better Community on January 28, 2008 to discuss the possibility of establishing a Landscaping and Lighting District, affordable housing activities in the area, a development project sponsored by the Tulare County Housing Authority and code enforcement and police department efforts.
- Follow up with Public Works staff, Washington Elementary School officials and Garden Street residents on the possibility to implement tandem parking on Garden Street.
- Pursue the acquisition, development and rehabilitation of twenty (20) units with the Tulare County Housing Authority.
- Coordinate development of infill housing with the Habitat for Humanity.
- Pursue the establishment of a Landscape and Lighting District if members of the community are interested. If this is not possible then evaluate where 2-3 new streetlamps can be installed within the neighborhood with the use of CDBG funds.
- Southern Cal Edison will install a new light on Myrtle Avenue directly outside the Washington School between Garden and Bridge streets.

The majority of code enforcement complaints received in both neighborhoods involve:

- Lack of property maintenance.
- Lack of effective property management.
- Accessibility to vacant homes and lots.

Residential Rental Inspection Program Proposal

Based on the complaints received emphasis should initially be focused on addressing single family residential rental properties. The long range goal of the program should be to inspect all residential rental units within a 3 year period. Initial emphasis will focus on life safety violations however the long range goal should be total compliance.

The cost for inspection would be borne by the property owners. The program is intended to be self sustaining through the inspection fee and through cost recovery efforts.

Staff recommends that Council give consideration to exempting:

- all new residential construction from inspection during the first 10 years of existence,

- properties owned by or subject to annual inspection by the Tulare County Housing Authority and

In the event that Council is supportive of staff's recommendation to consider implementation of a Residential Rental Inspection Program staff will research the costs associated with implementation and a process for implementation.

Preliminary research of similar programs would suggest that 3 Building Inspectors and 1 Office Assistant would be required to implement such a program.

Historic Homes Down Payment Assistance Program Proposal

Intent

The program is intended to increase home ownership rates in the City's Historic Districts, approximately 650 properties are located in the districts.

Funding Conditions

A maximum of \$50,000.00 may be loaned as a secured second. The buyer must contribute not less than 5% towards the initial down payment. The second shall not exceed the initial down payment contribution from the buyer. An example is:

- \$200,000.00 sale price
- \$20,000.00 down payment from buyer
- \$20,000.00 historic home down payment assistance from city

Funding Source

\$500,000.00 in Central Redevelopment project area funds (both general and low/mod in the event that the applicant meets the requirements) will be set aside as a funding source. If the applicant meets the requirements for the HUD Federal Home Program (Home Investment Partnership Funds) these funds may also be utilized as a funding source.

Terms

The second will be deferred for the first 5 years with a 25 year repayment plan commencing on the 61st month.

Interest Rate

3% fixed

Loan Servicing

AmeriNational

Monitoring

The City will monitor the program participants on an annual basis to insure that the parcel and structures are maintained in a code compliant condition and in accordance with historic guidelines.

Occupancy Requirement

The City shall require proof of owner occupancy annually. The home must remain owner occupied or the interest rate of the note will be accelerated to the current market rate.

Effective Property Management Educational Seminar Proposal

The City of Visalia has a significant number of residential rental properties and absentee landlords. To assist in the enforcement of substandard housing complaints hosting a seminar to address substandard housing complaints and property management issues will assist in clearly defining the rules and regulations necessary for compliance.

While engaged in enforcement actions landlords and property managers frequently advise that if the City had informed them of the problem they would have taken action to resolve the problem. Staffs response has consistently been that the City is not in the property management business and it is the property owner's responsibility to insure that the property is being effectively managed beyond the collection of rent.

The California Landlord Tenants Handbook will be distributed to all attendees to assist them in understanding landlord and tenant rights and requirements.

Staff representing various City Departments, Divisions and allied agencies will be invited to address and respond to the attendee's questions. Participation is anticipated from the following Departments, Divisions and allied agencies:

- Police Department (excessive calls for service)
- Fire Department (fire prevention, inoperable vehicles, junk, trash and debris)
- Housing and Economic Development Department (code enforcement, substandard housing complaint investigation)
- Parks and Recreation Department (graffiti abatement)
- Waste Management Division (trash collection)
- SPCA (animal complaints)
- Environmental Health (infestations)
- Cal Water

In Summation

The goal is to reduce substandard housing through enforcement of a **zero tolerance for substandard housing policy** with aggressive enforcement of existing ordinances and proactive programs.



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: January 11, 2008
To: City Council
From: Chief Bob Carden
Subject: Visalia Police Department Gang Suppression & Intervention Efforts

The purpose of this memo is to update the City Council on the Visalia Police Department's gang suppression and intervention efforts accomplished during 2007 and upcoming efforts for 2008. Gangs have continued to be an issue of great concern to this community and to the Visalia Police Department. During this past year, the Police Department has engaged in a practice of continuous evaluation of our response to the gang issue. These evaluations have resulted in redeployments that are intended to use our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible. These evaluations have also resulted in the strengthening of our working relationships with all aspects of the community from faith-based, education, health services, allied law enforcement agencies, and others. The relationships that have been forged along the way are building on our belief that a comprehensive approach of intervention, prevention, and suppression is necessary to break the cycle of gang violence in our community.

During 2007, the number of validated gang members increased from 883 to 928. It is possible that the increase in the number of validated gang members may be the result of increased enforcement and identification efforts. A trend that was noticed in 2006 is that gang members have become savvy to the validation efforts that are required in order to obtain gang enhancements on court convictions that result in stiffer sentences. As a result, validation of gang members has become increasingly challenging as fewer gang members admit their membership outright, requiring more investigation to validate gang members. Efforts have been made since that time to improve our identification efforts.

There were twelve homicides in 2007, six of which were believed to be gang related, an increase of 3 from 2006 levels. The City, however, experienced a 14% decrease in the number of gang-related attempted murders and assault w/ deadly weapon reports in 2007 compared to 2006. There was also a 12% decrease in the number of drive-by shootings.

Visalia Police Department 2007 Gang Efforts

Suppression Efforts

Special Enforcement Bureau / Gang Suppression Unit

Gang violence in 2007 seemed to occur very sporadically during the course of the year, with a majority of the events occurring in early spring (April-May) and during the summer (July-August). A redeployment of resources occurred in order to more effectively and efficiently address the gang issue. As a result of these efforts, the Special Enforcement Bureau was created and the name of the Special Enforcement Unit was changed to the Gang Suppression Unit. The Narcotics Unit was moved from the Support Services Division to the Operations Division and is now also a part of the Special Enforcement Bureau as is the G.R.E.A.T. Officer (Gang Resistance Education And Training) who transferred from the Youth Services Unit to the Special Enforcement Bureau in the Operations Division. These deployments are intended to increase sharing of information and resources that are used to conduct directed and focused enforcement measures on Visalia's gangs.

Increased suppression efforts by the Visalia Police Department's Gang Suppression Unit, with assistance from MAGNET (Multi-Agency Gang Network Enforcement Team), Visalia Police Patrol, and the Tulare County Gang Suppression Task Force resulted in 179 arrests during a five-week period; 99 of those arrests were felony arrests. Efforts by the Gang Suppression Unit in 2007 resulted in a total of 495 gang arrests and the recovery of 56 firearms.

MAGNET

The Visalia Police Department has maintained its commitment of two Gang Suppression Officers to MAGNET, our joint enforcement partnership with the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. MAGNET focuses its enforcement efforts in the greater Visalia area to include Cutler-Orosi, Ivanhoe, Goshen, Linnell Camp. MAGNET is comprised of officers from the Visalia PD, TCSO, Tulare County DA's Office, CHP, State Parole, Tulare County Probation. The partnerships formed between these agencies has resulted in greater sharing of information and a combined multi-agency effort to impact gangs in Tulare County.

Tulare County Gang Task Force

Officers of the VPD Gang Suppression Unit continue to work with and participate in gang details with the Tulare County Gang Task Force, which is facilitated by the Tulare County District Attorney's Office and acts as a rapid response unit to gang issues anywhere in the County.

Intervention & Prevention Efforts

L.O.O.P.

The L.O.O.P. (Local Organization Outreach Program) was implemented in June of this past year and has proven to be a successful venture by providing safe means of transportation from Visalia neighborhoods to Youth Centers throughout the City of Visalia. Total ridership for the L.O.O.P. program since its inception (June – December) was 6,573.

G.R.E.A.T Program

The GREAT Program continues to be taught in Visalia Unified School District elementary schools between grades 2-6. Officer Rob Zieg spends time with students daily discussing the dangers of gang involvement and the importance of making good decisions in their lives. Officer Zieg also conducts classes that are aimed at informing and educating parents and the community about gangs and how to identify gang involvement in youth and intervention methods.

Youth Services Unit

The Visalia Police Department Youth Services Officers work closely with the Visalia Unified School District to address gang issues on school campuses. During the summer months of 2007, Youth Services Officers were assigned to work at the various Community Centers in the City of Visalia where they connected with neighborhood youth and provided a safe environment at the centers. Youth Center representatives reported that having the Officers at their centers during the summer months made a difference in incidents occurring at the centers compared to years past.

Multi-Agency Gang Intervention Task Force

The Multi-Agency Gang Intervention Task Force and the Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force (City of Visalia & County of Tulare) partnered together and sponsored the "Step Up" Tulare County Gang Summit on December 6, 2007, at the Visalia Convention Center. The Summit was host to more than 1,400 attendees who heard keynote speakers from local and State authorities and attended break-out sessions designed to inform and engage participants in the aspects of gang intervention, prevention, and suppression. The Gang Summit received very positive marks from the community and has sparked other community efforts to become more involved in the gang issue. A Youth Summit and Faith-Based Seminar are in the planning stages and should contribute to the momentum on gang intervention and prevention.

Members of the Multi-Agency Gang Intervention Task Force applied jointly for State funds from the Cal-GRIP Program in an effort to receive State funding to expand the Neighborhood Youth Counselor Model in the greater Visalia area by adding seven NYC's in order to reach more at-risk youth and connect them to resources available from task force members. The grant application has been submitted and is awaiting review.

P.A.L. Unit

The Visalia Police Department Police Activities League continues to thrive through its leadership programs, sports programs, mentoring, and relationship-building with youth in Visalia and Police volunteers. In the year 2007, P.A.L. served a total of 2,500 kids in various P.A.L. programs such as P.A.L. Boxing, P.A.L. Jr. Giants baseball, P.A.L. Honor Camp, P.A.L. BBQ, P.A.L. Trash a Thon, P.A.L. Easter Egg Hunt, & P.A.L. Christmas party. Currently, the P.A.L. Unit is working to renovate and move into the new P.A.L. building at the old Cal-Trans facility on East Race Street in 2008.

Tulare County Probation

The Gang Suppression Unit is in the process of completing an MOU with the Tulare County Probation Department that would bring a Probation Officer into the Gang Suppression Unit to work closely with our officers. While this certainly provides the Gang Suppression Unit with a valuable resource to target known gang offenders, the goal of this relationship is to increase the number of quality home visits conducted by probation and gang officers in order to prevent gang activity and seek to intervene with known gang offenders.

Upcoming Prospective Programs & Strategies

While the Visalia Police Department has made strides in a positive direction during the course of 2007, we remain true to our practice of constantly evaluating the effectiveness of our approach and the need to be innovative and proactive against gangs. The following paragraphs highlight some of the programs that are on the horizon in our gang efforts for the upcoming year.

Suppression Strategies

Gang Strategic Plan

The Special Enforcement Bureau is in the process of developing a gang strategic plan that will address the available resources through the Department and other City, County, and State resources to attain maximum impact on Visalia's gang activity. The Special Enforcement Bureau will seek to implement more directed and focused enforcement measures aimed at core gang activities.

Special Enforcement Bureau

The strategy of the Special Enforcement Bureau for 2008 will be to conduct directed and focused enforcement measures and investigations at known gang offenders within the City of Visalia to reduce their ability to impact activity in the city. This strategy will employ narcotics investigations, search warrants, surveillance, warrant details, probation and parole searches, multi-agency cooperation, code enforcement, sector officer involvement, etc., to reduce the effectiveness of gang leadership and known offenders within the city. It is our intent to impact gang violence in Visalia by minimizing the impact of known offenders.

Gang Injunction

The Visalia Police Department Gang Suppression Unit is actively working in conjunction with the Tulare County District Attorney's Office in obtaining a civil gang injunction to target some of the most violent gangs in the City of Visalia. The civil gang injunction will arm the officers of the Visalia Police Department with an effective enforcement tool intended to create a safer environment for intervention and prevention efforts to take root.

Evaluate Code Enforcement Options

The Visalia Police Department is exploring the possibility of developing a unit that would include adding a Code Enforcement Officer to the Special Enforcement Bureau as a resource to address nuisance residences or residential complexes that generate excessive calls for service due to gang activity.

Local Auto Theft Task Force

In conjunction with the California Highway Patrol, the Visalia Police Department intends to participate and support a local agency Auto Theft Task Force.

Intervention & Prevention Strategies

Neighborhood Youth Counselors

The City of Visalia has applied jointly with members of the Multi-Agency Gang Intervention Task Force for State Cal-Grip funding to expand and enhance the neighborhood youth counselor model currently being used at the Visalia Youth Centers. Neighborhood Youth Counselors are reformed gang offenders who mentor and develop relationships with at-risk youth to steer them away from the gang lifestyle.

Gang Watch Program

The Gang Watch program has been created by the Visalia Police Department based on the G.R.E.A.T program. The intention and design of the Gang Watch program is to educate members of the community in recognizing, identifying and reporting gang activity. Members of the Visalia Police Department have been given training and will utilize the information they have received to instruct community members. The program is designed to be taught in small group settings like Neighborhood Watch meetings to allow ample opportunity for questions and open discussion.

Truancy Partnership with VUSD

Visalia Police Department Youth Services Officers will work closely with the Visalia Unified School District to develop a strategy to reduce truancy in an effort to reduce juvenile crime and gang involvement.

Jobs for Youth

Jobs for Youth is a training program designed to help at-risk youth from becoming involved in gang activity. It is a collaborative work experience program involving businesses, youth, education and government agencies for at-risk youth. At-risk youth receive life skills training and work experience while paired with mentors.

Youth & Faith-Based Intervention Options

The Visalia Police Department is supporting efforts to conduct a County-wide Youth Summit targeted to occur in Fall 2008. This is a cooperative effort amongst members of the Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force. The Visalia Police Department and the faith-based community are also partnered in developing a faith-based seminar to mobilize resources of the faith-based community to address the issue of gangs.

Tattoo Removal Assistance

The Visalia Police Department is exploring participation of local businesses to offer “tattoo removal” assistance to aid former gang members in their efforts to leave the gang lifestyle.

Family Intervention Task Force

The Visalia Police Department is exploring the possibility of creating a Family Intervention Task Force to identify and assist at-risk families by connecting them to resources available through the Multi-Agency Gang Task Force.

Conclusion

While the Police Department continues to be concerned about the level of gang violence impacting our community, we are encouraged by the progress that was made over the course of this last year on the issue of gangs. Overall crime decreased in the City of Visalia by 17% with an 8% decrease in violent crime and a 19% decrease in property crimes. The Visalia Police Department Gang Suppression Unit logged 534 total arrests, 495 of those being gang arrests and recovered 56 firearms. It is believed that these gang efforts taken during the course of this last year had an impact on those overall crime decreases. This progress was accomplished not only by the Police Department and the City of Visalia, but the community as a whole. The success of the L.O.O.P. Bus program, the growth of youth participating in P.A.L., the attendance of the Gang Summit, the relationships being forged through the gang task forces and with other local agencies, as well as the media attention, are all promising examples that this community is willing to partner with the Visalia Police Department to claim ownership of this program and to “step up” and be involved. It is imperative in this upcoming year that we continue to build on those relationships and remain focused on the goals of intervention, prevention, and suppression. Positive strides in areas of intervention, prevention, and suppression all stress the message of anti-gang, but even more importantly, pro-youth, pro-family, pro-community.

If you have comments or require further information, I am available at your convenience.

BC/cm

Memo To: City Council
From: Community Development Staff
Subject: Planning Issues

Recommendation: Following the discussion of planning issues contained in this report, staff recommends Council authorize the following strategies:

1. Prepare a work plan and estimated schedule to prepare a community wide comprehensive General Plan update, including a companion Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
2. Authorize a future work session to consider potential strategies for the West Highway 198 Scenic Corridor.
3. Update Subdivision standards and Engineering Improvement Standards to incorporate contemporary design criteria to better facilitate safe, walkable and aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods.
4. Prepare a work plan and estimated schedule to amend the 2020 Plan and Municipal Code to incorporate the following items:
 - a. Infill Strategies
 - b. Higher minimum residential densities
 - c. Increase population benchmarks for Visalia Urban Development Boundaries (UDBs)
 - d. Criteria for prioritizing annexation proposals for the 98,700 and 129,000 UDBs

This paper will provide background information regarding several community planning issues. Council discussion on these issues is anticipated and direction is requested regarding a package of long range planning efforts for the coming year.

Status of the Current General Plan– Recommendation No. 1

The General Plan Land Use Element has provided the underpinnings of the City's physical growth and area expansion during the last 17 years. This includes almost 40,000 new residents and development in two UDBs (98,700 and 129,000). The Land Use Element has effectively guided the development patterns and practices typical of the City's current era.

However, as has been identified in previous development policy forums and as outlined in the preceding sections of this report, the Land Use Element is gradually becoming outdated, creating certain limitations in its ability to comprehensively address the individually complex and interrelated policy issues that may be desired in the coming years. Additionally, the other General Plan Elements (please see Exhibit A), which by state law must be compatible and consistent with the Land Use Element and with each other, are also in need of substantial updates to satisfy state planning law requirements related to General Plans.

- The Safety Element (1975) does not take Measure T into account, and it will require an update to incorporate new flood hazard information required by AB162.

- The Housing Element adopted in late 2005, is on a state mandated track for revision by 2009.
- State mandated air quality updates must be incorporated into the Land Use Element and other elements by June 30, 2010.
- Based on current General Plan framework, the City can consider moving into the 165,000 UDB in the next few years, based on meeting development criteria in the current 2020 Plan for the 129,000 UDB and population growth (current population is estimated at 120,000). The 165,000 UDB expansion area is shown as Urban Reserve and is currently unplanned.
- Planning efforts in various parts of the City (Southeast Specific Plan Area, East Downtown, Medical District) should be woven together by a community wide comprehensive update.
- Consideration of contemporary planning principles emerging from the Smart Growth Task Force.

Perhaps an even more critical deficiency is the dated nature of the General Plan Program EIR as a viable CEQA tool. Adopted in 1991 with the 2020 Plan, the analyses pertaining to many of the environmental categories such as air and water quality impacts, habitat and protected species identification and mitigation, historic preservation, and agricultural land preservation are largely out of date. This is because new state and federal legislation, jurisdictional agencies' rules, and in some cases the City itself, have created new standards and protocols that are not reflected in the General Plan EIR, including mitigation measures and statements of overriding considerations.

The potential risk of producing flawed environmental documents based on outdated information and conclusions in the current GP EIR have recently caused several developers to prepare their own environmental documents for the City's acceptance and adoption. The City itself is increasingly facing these same risks in processing public projects such as infrastructure improvements, park and trail construction projects, affordable housing partnerships, and a variety of grant applications that require CEQA review.

Updating the General Plan Program EIR in conjunction with a comprehensive General Plan update is the best approach for achieving the City's long-range vision for growth and development in an environmentally defensible manner. The substantial costs and efforts involved in a comprehensive General Plan update and Program EIR are warranted in light of the complexity of the policy issues and the environmental compliance challenges facing the City now and in the coming years. Upon direction from the City Council, staff will begin preparing a work program for the Council's consideration. The work program will include estimated timelines and costs based on current industry standards and practices tailored to the City's unique circumstances and requirements.

A community wide comprehensive General Plan update will take approximately three to five years to complete given the extensive community outreach normally desired by Council and the EIR process. The estimated cost to prepare the update is \$1,000,000 however the true cost will be determined during the Request for Proposal process.

West Highway 198 Scenic Corridor – Recommendation No. 2

The West 198 corridor has been the subject of several planning efforts spanning many years. While numerous ideas have emerged over the years, no planning strategy has gained significant traction. Potential strategies that have been considered include establishing an open space setback area for Highway 198, clustered development concepts, and an enterprise zone. While the area remains controversial, given ongoing community interest in developing a permanent scenic corridor plan and land owner interest in development opportunities, it is worthwhile to again seek a planning strategy for the area. Council could take a fresh look at the corridor to consider a planning effort to merge the various interests. Given the complexity and long history on this issue, it should be discussed as a separate item. Staff recommends that a work session be set within 90 days to discuss potential strategies for West Highway 198.

Design Standards – Recommendation No. 3

Design standards for subdivisions and other developments are contained primarily in the Subdivision Ordinance and Engineering Improvement Standards. These standards should be updated periodically to reflect advancements in subdivision and infrastructure design principles. Design standards for residential subdivisions were updated several years ago to reduce local street widths, widen sidewalks, create street parkways and incorporate tree-scapes. However, standards can also be improved regarding storm water basin design, permeable concrete parking areas, street connectivity and other areas. This update can be conducted over a period of 6 months to a year given that considerable information on design issues has been developed based on recent local planning efforts.

Amend Current 2020 Plan and Municipal Code – Recommendation No. 4

Infill Strategies – Recommendation No. 4-a

As Visalia expands outward through annexation and development of edge lands, there is the question of whether the community is effectively infilling areas that have been bypassed by development. There are a variety of vacant and under-utilized residentially zoned properties within the existing City limits. These properties range in size from under a ½ acre to over 20 acres. In June of 2007 staff estimated there are approximately 503 acres of vacant or under-utilized residential property within the City limits. This was done by examining the City aerial photos dated February 2006. Underutilized parcels consist of parcels which have existing development on them (for example, a farm house on a large parcel in the R-1-6 zone), with the greater balance of the parcel being vacant.

While it is unavoidable to have some undeveloped properties within the City, the key policy questions include: 1) How much is too much? 2) How can under-utilized properties be encouraged to develop to their highest density potential?

Strategies for achieving effective infill include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The City should adopt a definition of “Infill Parcels”, as prescribed in Land Use Element Policy No. 4.1.18. To date, no formal criteria for classifying “infill” properties

exists in the General Plan. This determination and criteria is needed to categorize infill areas and for implementation of incentives for development.

2. The City could initiate a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to permit the use of 5,000 square foot lots on designated R-1-6 infill parcels, including development standards, as prescribed in Land Use Element Policy No. 4.1.18.
3. The City could streamline incorporation of smaller lots and mixed densities in new single-family subdivisions.
4. Consider creating a process for a Master CUP for small Infill PUD's, to streamline the process for eligible developments, and to establish a uniform set of standards for mixed/higher densities.
5. Pursue completion and development of Specific Plans such as the Southeast Area Specific Plan and other "master plans" that include higher density residential development.
6. Encourage the development of higher density mixed-use through a Form Based Code in selected areas of the community.
7. Develop a fee waiver for the processing of active tentative maps wherein the map is processed with a 10 percent minimum increase in density over the adopted tentative map.

These individual policy proposals also simultaneously relate to the General Plan Goals cited at the beginning of this report.

Higher Minimum Residential Densities – Recommendation No. 4-b

Council previously indicated their consensus to consider raising the range of units per acre (density) for the residential categories in the General Plan (citywide), which would increase the minimum number of units per acre required for subdivisions and parcel maps to at least the mid-range density for that land use designation. For example, the R-1-6 zone comprises approximately 85% of the residentially designated property in the City with a density range of two (2) to seven (7) units per acre. Raising the minimum to five (5) units per acre would result in a modest density increase for new subdivisions. The current estimated average density for subdivisions is 4 units per acre.

Annexations and UDB Expansion – Recommendation No. 4-c&d

As of January 1, 2008, the amount of undeveloped and non-annexed land within the:

- 98,700 UDB totals 1,667 acres, or approximately 6.8% of the 24,504 acres (38.29 sq. miles) that are within the 98,700 UDB line.
- 129,000 UDB (including the 98,700 UDB) totals 4,407 acres, or approximately 15.4% of the 28,441 acres (44.44 sq. miles) that are within the 129,000 UDB line.

In calendar years 2006 and 2007, the City completed four property owner-initiated annexations totaling 732 acres, which includes the 483-acre Vargas Annexation. As of January 1, 2008, there are seven owner-initiated annexation applications on file with the

City totaling 827.2 acres, for which no scheduled public hearing before the City Council has been set, due to application incompleteness or unresolved policy issues.

At the June 11, 2007, Joint Work session, the City Council considered strategies recommended by staff to increase development densities and to extend the life of the 129,000 UDB, thus promoting more compact infill development, and delaying expansion into the agriculture lands beyond the 129,000 UDB. There was support for the following strategies:

- Develop criteria to prioritize annexations inside the 98,700 and 129,000 UDBs. Staff recommends scheduling a future work session to bring back options for the prioritization of residential annexations.
- Increase population benchmarks for the 129,000 and 165,000 UDBs by 10% to 141,900 and 181,500 respectively.

Regarding the other planning concepts, staff requests Council affirmation for amending the 2020 Plan to incorporate the other planning strategies listed above. If Council supports these strategies, staff will prepare a work program to amend the 2020 Plan and will target a one to two year timeframe to complete the work.

Exhibit “A”
List of General Plan Elements and Adoption Dates

	<u>Date of Last Update</u>	<u>Previous Updates</u>
Land Use Land Use Element EIR - 1990	1991	1963, 1976
Circulation Circulation Element EIR - 2000	2001	1976, 1989
Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks	1989	1974, 1981
Housing	2005	1984, 1993
Noise	1995	1975
Safety	1975	
Seismic Safety	1975	
Urban Boundaries (Consolidated into Land Use Element, 1990)	1975	
Historic Preservation	1979	
Scenic Highways	1976	

Other Reference Documents

	<u>Date Adopted</u>
Zoning Ordinance	1993 (updated 2007)
Subdivision Ordinance	1996 (updated 2004)
Engineering Improvement Standards	2004

SINGLE-FAMILY LOTS

2835 # of Lots on Un-recorded Tentative Maps
2756 # of Lots without Issued Building Permits on Recorded Final Maps
5591 # of Approved Lots that are Vacant

MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING UNITS

608 # of Units on Un-recorded Tentative Maps
216 # of Units without Issued Building Permits on Recorded Final Maps
824 # of Approved Units that are Vacant

Attachment 5

Individual Potential Council Goals Lists

Jesus Gamboa

- Civic center
 - Identify financing to get it done
 - Sell land?
 - Identify partners
 - Start public safety building
 - Need to get focused
- Dinuba highway commercial development
 - Hotels by sports park w/ phase ii
 - Theater in that quadrant
 - Infill on 63
- Develop into regional park
 - Boating and fishing area
 - BBQ / camp sites
 - Open space asset
- Airport expansion
 - Terminal suitable to airlines
 - Runway extension
 - Continue planning process with partners
 - Hopefully in 10 -15 years on the ground

Bob Link

- Make progress on civic center area
 - Break ground on public safety building
 - Build Oak St. & School St. Between Tipton & Burke
 - Encourage private development on key sites
- Downtown
 - Encourage retail development in key downtown vacant spaces
 - Better solution to parking - in lieu fees in conversion / re-use of existing buildings
- Complete Oaks Stadium project
- Aggressively pursue water conservation
- Improve city / county relations / finances
- Aggressively pursue higher paying clean energy

Amy Shuklian

- Gang suppression / intervention / prov.
 - Neighborhood watch
 - Support current policies / direction
- Neighborhood preservation
 - Code enforcement
 - Historical home program
 - Aggressive sub-standard housing enforcement
- Community beautification
 - Beautification committee
 - Signs and banners
 - Electronic community billboard
 - Truck parking
- Scenic corridor
 - Study session
- Design standards for commercial / office
 - Design manual
 - Work session
 - Pedestrian friendly design will attractive facades
- Drive through
- Sports park (Phase II)
 - Get 'r' done
- 4 year college
 - Continue to work with COS / Fresno State, etc.

Don Landers

- Fiscal integrity
 - Must do without fail
 - Grants, balance budgets
- Public safety
 - Due within the constraints of budget
 - Historical home program
 - Aggressive sub-standard housing enforcement
- Circulation – need to do better
 - Synchronize stop lights
 - Pursue diversified funding
 - Improve quality of streets (reflectors, paint stripping – quality of life)
- SPCA
 - Not in compliance
 - Doable fiscally – on track

- General plan update - starting
 - Focus - doable
 - Incorporate new standards

Greg Collins

- Neighborhood preservation
 - Core revitalization
 - City in a city
 - Downtown / east Visalia
 - Code enforcement
 - Historical preservation
 - Façade renovation downtown
 - Attracting major office retail downtown
- Enhanced input from committees and commissions
 - Full compliment of positions “infill”
 - Give committees and commissions charge/responsibilities – direction
 - Biannual reporting to council
 - Advertise on website – assign staff
- Implement cool cities initiative
 - Catalog things to do (Shawn)
 - Assign various aspects of initiative to staff and committee
 - Report semi-annually (trust but verify)
- Enhance fiscal position / strategy
 - Grow bed tax & more downtown hotels
 - Attract unique retailers downtown
 - Continue to apply for grants
 - Consist. Be innovative in ways to save “more bang for your buck”
 - Continue land investments (buy low – sell high)
- Clean beautiful efficient
 - Clean up signs
 - 0 trucks
 - Preserve scenic corridor
 - Good landscaping practices
 - Trees
- Preservation of ag land
 - Ag enterprise zone
 - Ag land mitigation fees
 - State / federal grants to purchase
 - Purchase development rights
- Affordable housing
 - Density bonus on infill
 - Historical preservation – loan for down payment
 - Tax grant projects

- VIA
- Housing authority
- Hfh

Steve Salomon

- Assure financial stability
 - Work with council on feasibility of some new limited revenue options
 - Some revenue options could involve ballot measures
 - Explore budget savings & monitor all expenditures
- Work with Council, Police & others to expedite gang issues
- Work with downtown Visalia PBID in maintaining downtown vitality
 - Complete 20 year traffic improvement study
 - Work with the hospital to help implement downtown plan
 - Discussion with Caltrans on 198 interchange to downtown
 - Identify next downtown parking structure using public/private investments
 - Help with selection of next downtown director and their inclusion into community
- Work with county on relocation of new office in downtown and help with reuse of building – Court & Oak.
- Work with convention and visitor bureau on visitor center for shuttle service to national park in downtown
- Implement with council neighborhood presentation as presented.
- Complete and open N.W. fire station
- Work on helping increase vitality of Mooney Blvd. From Noble to Caldwell with infill – helping present businesses
- Work with natural resources to implement strategy for alternate water, energy and conservation of energy
- Implement Phase II – Sports Park.

Council Norms

Attachment 6

- A. Council dialogue process, in order:
1. Staff reports.
 2. Public hearing.
 3. Questions from Council.
 4. Deliberation – everyone has a turn to speak.
 5. Motion – do not leap in.
- B. Public speakers identification: Delete request for address and ask for name, street and city.
- C. Communications:
1. Council gives same information to all Council Members.
 2. Council Members ask questions on agenda ahead of time – no surprises.
 3. Council Members may ask questions again at the Council meeting to educated others there.
 4. City Manager and individual City Council Members meet weekly for updates, ask questions.
- D. Citizen Complaints/Concerns:
1. Different Council Members handle them differently.
 2. The City Manager prefers that they be referred to him first, so that he can track the response.
 3. Council Members agree that phone calls from citizens should be returned in a timely manner.
- E. Communicating with the Media:
1. All Council Members talk to the media.
 2. Each Council member “owns” his/her decisions and does not comment on the decisions of others.
 3. In emergencies, the City’s Community Relations Manager will be proactive with the media.
- F. Reaching Out to the Public:
1. Different Council Members have different “accessibility” practices:
 - Attending and participating in events – several Council Members.
 - Available at work - Bob.
 - Private phone number given to constituents – Don, Amy.
 - Email – Greg, Amy.
 - Mayor’ radio program - Jesus.
 - Travel around City and drop in on people – Jesus
 - Monthly or quarterly “coffee table” – Amy.
 2. New ideas:
 - Video streaming of Council Meetings on the website.
 - Staff reports on line.

Attachment 7

Council Agreements and Action Plans for 2008

Dept	Subject	Due	Assigned	Update
Finance	1. Develop various revenue alternatives to maintain current budget	June, 2008	Frost	Part of budget process
	2. Present potential cost savings alternatives	June, 2008	Frost	Part of budget process
	3. Develop presentation on Pension Obligation Bond offering	Complete	Frost	Council Presentation
	4. Develop transportation financing alternatives for advancing Measure R/road projects	June, 2008	Frost	Part of budget process
	5. Develop proposal for Storm Drain rate ballot in compliance with Prop. 218	Sept., 2008	Ross/Nielsen	
	6. Present Mid-year report and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to Council	March, 2008	Frost	Council Presentation
	7. Research decrease in property tax due to reassessment over next 2-3 years	June, 2008	Frost	Part of budget process

Housing/ED	1. Research costs and develop plan for implementation of fee-based residential rental inspection program for single family residential rental properties, with the goal of inspecting all residential rental units within a 3-year period.	Apr. 2008	Tim Burns	Work Session
	2. Direct funds from Central Redevelopment project areas to be set aside and used as down payments for the Historic Homes Down Payment Assistance program.	May, 2008	Tim Burns	Work Session
	3. Develop and implement Property Management Educational Seminars to address substandard housing complaints and property management issues of landlords, and property management companies	May, 2008	Tim Burns	Work Session

Police	1. Develop and implement Gang Strategic Plan	Dec., 2008	Jason Salazar	
	2. Develop and utilize former gang members as Neighborhood Youth Counselors	TBD	Gang Int. Tsk Frce.	Seeking funding
	3. Research, develop and implement a truancy partnership with VUSD	April, 2008	Ernie Villa	
	4. Evaluate and develop code enforcement options	Dec., 2008	Jason Salazar	
	5. Assist in the development of a jobs for youth program with local CBOs	On-going	Ernie Villa	
	6. Promote youth and faith-based intervention options with local organizations	On-going	Gang Int. Tsk Frce.	
	7. Explore the development of providing assistance in a tattoo removal program	Aug., 2008	Jason Salazar	
	8. Establish a local auto theft task force in conjunction with the CA Highway Patrol	May, 2008	Perry Phipps	
	9. Work with the Tulare County District Attorney's Office in the development and implementation of Gang Injunctions	April, 2008	Jason Salazar	
	10. Develop and implement Gang Watch training sessions with local organizations to increase public and parental awareness of the signs of gang activity.	Completed	Glen Newsom	Trainings are ongoing
	11. Research options for establishing Leg Monitor Program	August, 2008	Rick Haskill	
	12. Research potential for CHP partnership for expansion of local helicopter coverage	Completed	Co Chiefs Assoc.	CHP not interested at this time. Will continue to pursue as opportunities arise.
Planning	1. Bring to a work session a plan, schedule and budget to prepare a comprehensive	April, 2008	Smith/Scheibel	

Strategic Planning Workshop
January 25-26, 2008

	General Plan update, including a companion Environmental Impact Report			
	2. Schedule a future work session to consider potential strategies for the West Highway 198 Scenic Corridor	May, 2008	Brusuelas	
	3. Update subdivision standards and Engineering Improvement Standards to incorporate contemporary design criteria to better facilitate safe, walkable and aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods.	Dec., 2008	Brusuelas/Young	
	4. Prepare work plan and estimated schedule to amend 2020 Plan and Municipal Code to incorporate infill strategies, higher minimum residential densities, increase population benchmarks for Visalia Urban Development, and establish criteria for prioritizing annexation proposals	April, 2008	Scheibel/Smith	

NRC Division	1. Update work plan and present to City Council	March, 2008	Ogletree/Caviglia	Council Presentation
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Council Action Plans from Breakout Sessions				
Priorities	Subject	Due Date	Assigned To	Update
Community Beautification	1. Return to Council with realistic strategy for improving the visual appeal of the community within budget constraints	June, 2008	TBD	
Downtown	1. Develop with Downtown Visalian's Strategic Plan Committee an action plan to recruit targeted retail businesses and encourage second-story projects	October, 2008	Noguera	
	2. Consider appropriate changes to the parking in-lieu fees on Main Street	April, 2008	Chamberlain	
	a. Consider extending the term of repayment for new construction from 5 to 10 years			
	b. Consider deleting the parking-in-lieu requirements for change of use request in conjunction with the PBID increasing the parking fund contribution			
	3. Implement a Façade renovation program, to be subsidized through grants, low-interest loans through Redevelopment.	On-going	Noguera	
Circulation	1. Complete the acquisition of the Right of Away for the Ben Maddox Interchange Improvements.	Dec., 2009	Benelli	
	2. Begin construction of the Santa Fe over crossing	Sept., 2008	Benelli	
	3. Work with Cal Trans to begin improvements East Bound Downtown Interchange Improvements	Jan., 2009	Benelli	
	4. Complete Plaza Dr. improvement Project Report as next step towards early 2010 construction date	July, 2008	Benelli	
	5. Complete the transportation impact fees assessment	June, 2008	Benelli	
	6. Begin construction of the widening of Houston Avenue from Ben Maddox to N. Dinuba including the Santa Fe Circle	August, 2008	Benelli	
	7. Implement two-way traffic along Acequia Avenue	Summer, 2008	Benelli	Report to come to Council 3/2008
	8. Approve contract for Downtown Circulation Plan.	April, 2008	Benelli	On schedule to be completed this year.
	a. Synchronize Demaree from Walnut to Caldwell	Complete	Benelli	
	b. If IB competitive grant funds are awarded, synchronize Caldwell east and west of Mooney. If grant not awarded, seek other funds.	Sept., 2008	Benelli	

Strategic Planning Workshop
January 25-26, 2008

	c. Hire consultant to design plan for synchronization of Caldwell east and west of Mooney for implementation upon funding availability	Complete	Benelli	TPG hired.
	9. Ensure the Circulation Element is updated as part of the General Plan update.		Olmos/Benelli	
	10. Improve the implementation of the Bike Path plan striping the following: by the following:			
	Walnut Avenue, from Shirk Street to Akers Street	May-08	Bons	
	Whitendale Avenue, from Roeben Street to Akers Street	May-08	Bons	
	Roeben Street, from Whitendale Avenue to Tulare Avenue	May-08	Bons	
	Ferguson Avenue, from Demaree Street to Mooney Blvd	Jul-08	Bons	
	Cameron Avenue, from Stonebrook Street to Court Street	Jul-08	Bons	
	Pinkham Street from Caldwell Avenue to K Avenue	Aug-08	Bons	
	Giddings Street from Tulare Avenue to Goshen Avenue	Aug-08	Bons	
	Akers Street from Caldwell Avenue to Riggan Avenue	Sep-08	Bons	
	<i>Pending BTA Grant application notice or other funding:</i>			
	Mineral King Avenue, from Akers Street to Mooney Blvd	Sep-08	Bons	
	Noble Avenue, from Akers Street to Woodland Street	Sep-08	Bons	
	11. Improve school sidewalk areas.	July, 2008	Benelli	
	a. Construct sidewalk improvements on Jacob	Sept., 2008	Benelli	
	b. Presentation on project list for sidewalk improvements utilizing the \$100,000 allotted for this purpose through Measure R.	June, 2008	Benelli	
	c. Apply for Federal Safe Routes to School Grant	Deadline TBA	Carr/Loliva	
	12. Fully implement new pavement management system purchased in 2007	Dec.,2008	Benelli	
	13. Explore options for funding to repair trench cuts.	Dec., 2008	Benelli	
	14. Complete Ferguson St. connection utilizing Measure R funding for design and construction	Dec., 2009	Benelli	

PARTICIPANT FINAL EVALUATIONS

1. I feel this workshop has been (circle one): average: 5.1

			(4)	(4)	(5)
1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Useful		Moderately Useful		Very Useful	

2. The most useful activity for me was:

- Strategic Planning and Goal Setting with Council.
- Goal priorities (dots).
- Setting goals and priorities.
- Getting the Council to agree on priorities.
- Goal setting and interaction with staff.
- Visually identify Council priorities for future reference.
- Action steps for prioritized goals.
- Hearing the Council Member's individual focus.
- Listening to Council's thoughts.
- Discussion of planning items.
- Discussion by Council and Staff of the primary issues of budget, gangs, planning and neighborhood preservation.
- Mixing with staff and other Council Members.
- Getting my ideas down on paper and express these ideas to others.

3. The most useful learning of the workshop for me is:

- Understanding the goals and priorities of the Council.
- Identifying goals and objectives.
- Future goals.
- Hearing Council's priorities.
- Listening and observing with the future in mind.
- The discussion and input of all.
- Staff reports and discussion that followed.
- Listening to staff presentations.
- How the Staff and Council look at the needs of the community.
- Interaction with Council.

4. My suggestions for follow-up are:

- Production of report and distribution
- Written document.
- Notes to be distributed.

- Ensure timely recap of report.
- Make sure we follow-up in a timely and organized way in the organization and with the Council.
- We need to integrate the report into the 08-10 budget process.
- Continue to do workshop every 1-2 years.
- City Council Work Sessions.
- More detail on top priorities with action planning.
- Ensure that Council Goals are the starting point for the next retreat.
- Additional staff presentations.
- Include other staff members.
- Evaluate where we are in 6 months.

5. Other comments.

- Great time! Great to be with you.
- Thank you for helping us plan our future!
- Thanks for all the hard work.
- Good job!
- Need to spend more time on the needs of the community.