



**CITY OF MARTINEZ**

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
September 18, 2013**

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Philip Vince, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Status Report and Review of Council Goals and Objectives discussed at the February 9, 2013 Retreat

**DATE:** September 11, 2011

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Synthesize progress on five major council priorities discussed at the retreat and provide additional direction to staff.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the retreat, five core focus areas were identified by the Council: (1) Public Safety, (2) Fiscal Health, (3) Public Infrastructure /Marina, (4) Economic, Housing and Community Development, and, (5) Quality of Life and Community Wellness.

**Public Safety**

The community enjoys a low crime rate and our police department has a positive relationship with our residents and business owners. The chief is keeping the community safe with 37 authorized sworn personnel and two frozen positions, 13 civilian employees and 5 part-time employees including a new part-time code enforcement officer. The Chief's designated neighborhood policing area initiative and participation in National Night Out Against Crime have been well received by the community. Fortunately crime has decreased in many areas the past few years, but there is no guarantee that trend will continue.

Given the financial constraints the City is still struggling with, the Police Department is still not able to offer programs it once offered. For example, in better financial times there were two School Resource Officers dedicated to Alhambra High School and the Martinez Junior High School. Currently, the Chief has patrol officers who work a beat respond to issues at the high schools on an as needed basis. Further, the traffic division was recently reconstituted after several new hires were released to patrol; however, the designated motor officer will retire later this fiscal year and leave a void until another officer can be trained and deployed.

At the start of this fiscal year, the City Code Enforcement program transferred to the Police Department. Staff and Council agreed that the City needed more resources devoted to the number of increasing code enforcement complaints. The Chief is currently revamping the enforcement and cost recovery functions, which will increase the efficiency and overall effectiveness of the program.

Once the code enforcement function is established, there is a distinct possibility that the half time Code Enforcement position will have to transition to a full time position. Currently, there are no funds authorized in the FY 13/14 budget to elevate the Code Enforcement position to full time.

### **Fiscal Health**

The City Council recently approved a balanced two year operating budget and a five year CIP budget. The City has approximately a 19% General Fund Reserve, which is considered healthy when compared with other cities in the Bay Area.

While the economy is slowly recovering in the East Bay, the City of Martinez is still grappling with major property tax reductions. Although sales tax is trending higher, it still cannot backfill the reduced property tax revenue experienced during the past five years.

The improving economy, a renewed emphasis on cost recovery, and updating our fees made it possible for the City Council to approve a Deputy Director of Strategic Planning and Community Development position. This management position will provide staff with excellent skills and resources and serve as a critical link in achieving Council's goals.

Even with \$25 million dollars of voter approved Measure H funding, Development Impact Fees/Measure, and a Measure WW \$1.6 million allocation, the City still falls short of the funding needed to repair all our roads, parks, and municipal facilities. The lack of funding for future maintenance of all new parks, library, and the aquatic facility constructed with Measure H bond proceeds is a major concern that will need to be addressed in the near future. The City will have to continue to exercise fiscal prudence in order to generate additional funding for all our emerging needs.

### **Public Infrastructure**

In addition to a number of Measure H projects in design and construction, the City is finalizing an extensive road paving project. At the City's water treatment plant, a number of small and large projects are under design and in the implementation phase. The inter-modal parking lot at the Zocchi site is under construction and will be fully paved, landscaped and striped by the end of the year.

Moreover, the City is securing entitlements from East Bay Regional Park (EBRP) to move forward with the Berrellesa Bridge design and construction. The engineering department is also working with EBRP to get final approval to move forward with the redesign of the entryway leading into the Zocchi site.

To insure future sustainability of downtown businesses, the City is examining the ongoing challenge of providing more long term parking for shoppers and other clients, such as jurors and lawyers. Staff has met with the presiding Judge and Court Administrator to discuss long term parking needs for their clients. In January 2013, the State administered further cost cutting measures by consolidating a number of programs throughout Contra Costa County, including Family Court, which increases the demand for parking by at least 70 spaces per day. This and other factors may necessitate building a parking structure on land owned by the City to meet increased demand. Staff is analyzing the costs and benefits of adding a parking garage in the next year.

Lastly, significant upgrades are in process or will soon be implemented at the Water Treatment Plant and within the water system in general including a major electrical upgrade, seismic retrofit, reservoir and pump station replacements and upgrades.

### **Marina**

The Council has directed staff and the marina subcommittee to continue negotiating with our legislators and various State agencies in Sacramento to reach some level of consensus in order for the City to move forward with renovating the marina. There is at least \$6 million dollars or more of repairs identified at the Marina to insure that marina operations will be intact for the next 45 years.

The Marina Enterprise Fund is responsible for an outstanding debt of \$4.1 million with the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBAW). Dredging the marina every 30 months is a reoccurring cost in the amount of \$285,000, and right now the General Fund reserve is the only source of funding available to cover the ongoing dredging costs. To qualify for future grants and loans, the City must get DBAW to agree to restructure or forgive the debt. There are a number of options the Council can consider in raising funds to rebuild the marina, including surveying the community, but if none of these options materialize in future negotiations with the State over the next six to nine months then the Council may have to consider closing the Marina.

If that eventuality should occur, opportunities still remain to make improvements to the waterfront. Staff is planning to bring to Council in December a conceptual plan including all land and facilities operated by the City, which are located north of the railroad tracks. This plan will include outlining future options for Council to consider, which will entail both the possibility of renovating the marina or closing the entire facility.

### **Economic, Housing and Community Development**

It is apparent that the City of Martinez has a number of assets, both public and private, which serve as the economic engine for future prosperity and growth. With the recent \$10 million investment in the Rankin Aquatic Facility, Tavan Field, and Rankin Park, the City is already experiencing increased demand for expanded use of these three recreational facilities. It is paramount that the City develops a strategic plan for fuller utilization of these facilities in the near future.

If parks and recreation continue to serve as an economic engine for the future of Martinez, and possibly others, then similar emphasis will continue to be placed on making difficult investment decisions with regard to the amount of public subsidy the City is willing to contribute to the cultural arts.

In the past eight months staff has explored a year-round concert series at the Amphitheater and is close to selecting a company to manage the Campbell Theater. Both venues will contribute to Martinez becoming a destination place and possibly improving the economic prospects for downtown merchants and business ventures locating near the waterfront.

Some of the most prized and underutilized assets in Martinez are the brick buildings which encompass much of the downtown. The charm of the historic downtown will be in jeopardy if the property owners do not move forward with seismically retrofitting their buildings. This is an expensive proposition and the City is exploring various financial programs that would incentivize downtown building owners to move forward with retrofitting their buildings.

One of the financing mechanisms the City is investigating is the formation of an Economic Development Corporation (EDC) which would act as a separate fiscal entity and operate as a non-profit corporation. A major earthquake similar to Loma Prieta in 1989 would have devastating impacts on buildings and the downtown that are still not seismically retrofitted. The City is faced with the task of identifying the amount of resources it would be willing to contribute to launch this program.

As part of community development, annexation of the Pacheco/Arthur Boulevard will be explored. Annexation of this area would be a benefit by bringing increased service provision to those households while simultaneously increasing the property tax revenue and potential opportunities for additional funding for the City. Housing development of infill areas will also be explored to achieve the goals outlined in the Housing Element with an emphasis on transit-oriented development and “green,” eco-friendly designs to ensure long term sustainability.

### **Quality of Life and Community Wellness**

At the end of the day, great communities are defined by the quality of life residents experience on a day-to-day basis. A top priority for the City includes updating our General Plan, which has not been updated in thirty seven years. The General Plan is primarily a land use document that provides a snapshot of current goals and policies in the community such as housing, traffic, and open space, with an emphasis on strategic planning to guide the future development and maintenance of the physical environment in Martinez.

In the revised General Plan more emphasis is placed on the community wellness aspect to insure that all Martinez residents maintain a good quality of life. It is paramount that the City provides adequate recreation opportunities including hiking and bicycling trails to insure a healthy and vibrant community. Community leaders are encouraging nutritional health and making better choices in what we eat. New programs targeting childhood obesity and healthy restaurant certificate programs will also be considered in the revised General Plan.

Martinez leaders are embracing diversity and exploring ways to help target groups such as homeless and lower income individuals and families become more integrated into the fabric of the community. These are not easy problems to solve, but creating jobs, building affordable housing, and making it feasible for younger and older residents to stay and thrive in Martinez is part of the future planning in the revised General Plan.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Many of the policies and programs highlighted in this report will have a fiscal impact on the community. While some fiscal estimates for one time programs and costs can be articulated, it is premature to start estimating the full financial impact of City programs and policies.

**ACTION:**

Discuss current progress of various Council goals and priorities identified at the February 2013 retreat and direct staff accordingly.