



MEETING DATE: 02-12-07
STUDY SESSION

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 8, 2007
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

Provide feedback and direction on the vision, conceptual costs, funding sources and phasing options for the Civic Center/Library Master Plan

PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

In 2001, the Town Council prudently decided to begin a master planning process for the facilities at the Civic Center. Public buildings do not last forever; moreover, their ability to serve the public may decrease over time. The purpose of the master plan is to ensure that the Town is prepared to undertake improvements to the Civic Center, if and when necessary. The master planning process is intended to determine the public's needs for services, and to evaluate options for meeting those needs through existing and/or new public spaces. Completion of the master plan is not a commitment to undertake any of the improvements. It is a plan for how to proceed over the course of time, if and when the Council and community so determines.

BACKGROUND:

The effort to develop a Civic Center/Library Master Plan had its beginnings in the early 1980s when the Town Council discussed the space needs of the library and the police department, as well as the possibilities for obtaining a site to build a new library. In the late 1980s, properties on Villa Ave. and Fiesta Way were acquired with expansion of the Civic Center in mind, and the Town applied for funding under Proposition 85, the California Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 1988. That application was not successful.

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PAGE 2

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

In 1998, the Town once again began planning for a new library to be built at the Civic Center. A library needs assessment was completed, with funding from the Friends of the Library, the Library Trust and the Ness Trust. That needs assessment concluded that the library needed more space to continue to function effectively. Following this assessment, the Town determined that planning for a new library should be set within the context of the entire Civic Center complex. A master plan would provide a comprehensive understanding of community needs related to the municipal services provided at the Civic Center and of how the Civic Center site and facilities could best meet those needs. With a master plan, any needed incremental improvements could occur within a broader context.

On April 15, 2002, the Town Council adopted a resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Anderson-Brule Architects (ABA) to serve as consultants in the development of a strategic Master Plan for the Los Gatos Civic Center and Library.

To-date, the Council has discussed five of the elements of the Master Plan. These include:

- Town Service Assessment, which identifies the services the community desires the Town to provide (based on input from focus groups and community forums) – reviewed by Council on October 7, 2002;
- Existing conditions analysis of Civic Center facilities – reviewed by Council on January 6, 2003 (note: the project was put on hold from the fall of 2003 until early 2006);
- Operational Plan, which describes how the Town does and could provide these services – reviewed by Council on May 1, 2006;
- Space Program, which identifies the space required to provide these services – reviewed by Council on May 1, 2006; and,
- Site concepts for locating the services on the Civic Center site (based on input from a design charrette with 24 members of the community and staff) – reviewed by Council on June 5, 2006.

A Town Council ad hoc committee comprised of Mayor Pirzynski and Council member McNutt has provided policy guidance throughout the CCMP process since 2003 (Mayor Pirzynski and former Council member Sandy Decker comprised the committee prior to this time). Ad hoc committee members serve as Council “liaisons” to provide guidance and feedback on projects and/or events, such as the CCMP, that may have a significant impact on the community. Attachment 1 presents a summary of the community outreach and participation contributing to the development of the CCMP to-date. Outreach included six focus groups, two community forums, and on-line and counter questionnaires to receive input regarding Town services. All of the Council meetings noted above provided additional opportunities for community input. More than 150 people participated in these various outreach efforts, and more than 100 questionnaires were completed.

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

At the June 5, 2006 Study Session and a subsequent Community Forum held on June 8th, the Town Council and public provided feedback on four site options. In a workshop held in August, staff, the Council ad hoc committee, and the consultants translated the feedback on the four options into a master site layout for the Civic Center. At that time, it was determined an in-depth parking study was needed to ensure the plan accurately reflects the demand for parking. It was also determined that more time was needed to understand the range and capacity of various financing options and sources.

Although the parking study is not yet completed, staff is presenting the vision, conceptual costs, funding sources, and phasing options for the Civic Center/Library Master Plan at the February 12th Study Session. As discussed later in this report, the information from the parking study and any changes necessary due to its findings will be included in the final Master Plan to be brought before Council later in the spring. A detailed financing analysis would be developed after Council direction is established.

DISCUSSION:

Principles Shaping the Vision for the Civic Center/Library Master Plan

Throughout the Civic Center Master Plan (CCMP) process, the Town Council and the community have articulated principles that have progressively shaped the vision for the Civic Center site. These principles are reflected in the elements of the CCMP: the Town Service Assessment; the Operational Plan; the Space Program; the Site Options; and, now, the vision for the site. Collectively, these principles represent community interests and desires regarding what, where, and how municipal services are provided. They also represent findings from technical analyses conducted throughout the course of the planning process. Key principles include:

- Planning for future municipal facility improvements is prudent. The Council and the community will need to determine if and when it is necessary to undertake any improvements.
- Any proposed improvements, whether in existing or new facilities, must be affordable for the Town to undertake with current or projected revenues and/or acceptable to the community to fund through bonds or other tax measures over time.
- Services provided by the Town or desired by the community should drive the recommended space program, within the opportunities and constraints presented by the Civic Center site.
- The scope of the Civic Center Master Plan should be limited to the existing Civic Center site, plus the adjacent Town-owned properties (including the building occupied by Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation). The Town's corporation yard and museums are not included in the scope.

PAGE 4

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

- The Civic Center should be the “heart of the community,” where there are opportunities to gather, celebrate, and learn, as well as to receive municipal services.
- Any improvements or changes to the Civic Center should maintain the “small town” feel.
- Easily identified central points of services, with clear signage throughout, should be included in the vision for Civic Center facilities.
- Available and emerging technologies should be used to enhance access to services through options for self-service and extended hours.
- The existing Town Hall facility should be reused for Town services, avoiding significant high cost retrofitting.
- Green space should be maximized.
- Views into the site and beyond should be maximized.
- Pageant Park should be preserved, with increased access for the public.
- Significant trees should be protected to the extent possible.

Applying the Principles: Vision for the Civic Center Site

As noted earlier, a design charrette with 24 participants (nine community members and 15 staff members) produced four site concepts that were presented and discussed at a Council Study Session in June, 2006 and at a subsequent community forum. The principles above guided the development of the four site concepts, which were entitled *Extended Plaza*, *Great Green*, *Boulevard*, and *New Town Center*. Based on the feedback from the Council and the community on the four concepts, the Town’s consultants prepared a Master Plan site vision that is presented in Attachment 2 and will be discussed in more detail at the Study Session.

Site Vision for the Civic Center: The vision for the site reflects the principles listed above, input from the Council and the community, and staff’s and the consultant’s professional expertise and analysis. This concept combines features from three of the previously presented concepts (all except the New Town Center concept). Key features include:

- Extensive open, green space;
- View sheds through the site ;
- Enhanced access to Pageant Park;
- On-site police facility with associated parking;
- New facility housing 1-story library, community center and dual-purpose Council chambers and associated parking;
- Re-alignment of Fiesta Way on the edge of the site rather than through it;
- Adaptive use of existing facility for Town administration and services, including a one-stop community development center;
- No programming for services in the Town-owned facility on Main St. across from the Civic Center;
- Underground and above-ground garages to accommodate increased parking need; and
- Protection of the majority of significant trees.

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

The square footage for each of the functions and/or facilities is depicted in Attachment 3. As noted, this vision includes a new facility housing the library, community center and Council chambers. A key feature of this facility is that the library would be housed on one floor, which is the preferred configuration from the library industry's "best practices" perspective. The "community center" represents a number of spaces, including space for the Community Services department, senior services, a program hall for large events or meetings, rooms for smaller community meetings and/or classes, and a dual purpose Council chambers/community room. The community center includes space for Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation (LGSR), which currently rents space for recreation programs from the Town in the Town-owned facility across from the Civic Center and in the Neighborhood Center. This space has been included for planning purposes, since LGSR currently uses Town space; however, the Town does not have responsibility for accommodating LGSR's space needs. Any proposed changes to LGSR's current use of Town space would need to be coordinated with them.

Phased Site Vision

Because the above vision includes a large 64,000-square-foot facility housing a one-story library and multiple other services, it is not possible to phase its construction if necessary for timing and/or funding purposes. Given that the goal for the CCMP has always been to include phasing options, the consultants have laid out a second vision that accommodates this. The "Phased Site Vision" is depicted in Attachment 4. The difference in this option is that the new facility is divided into two buildings, one housing a two-story library and the other housing the "community center" services. A community room may be to be transferred from the community center to the library building to enable to the library to be a more complete stand-alone facility if the library was pursued in a first phase. Parking associated with the library and the community center is included within their individual footprints, with one level of underground parking beneath the library and a two-level underground garage beneath the community center.

At the Study Session, the consultants will discuss the features of both the initial vision and the phased vision, as well as the opportunities and constraints associated with them. Staff and the consultants are seeking Council feedback on each option, including general thoughts and comments on specific elements.

Achieving the Vision: Cost and Financing Considerations

Conceptual Cost Model

Attachment 5 presents the estimated costs for the CCMP. It is important to note that the cost estimates are based on conceptual, not actual, buildings. That is, the costs derive from the square feet required times an average square footage cost for that type of facility. For parking, the

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

estimate is based on the number of parking spaces required times the average per space cost for either above-ground or below-ground parking. The cost model includes primarily space designated as "core" in the space program. Some "optional" space is not included, and parking numbers do not account for the optional space not included. If and when any of the facilities are designed for construction, true cost estimates would take into account any difference in architectural design, materials, construction challenges, value engineering, or other factors that may influence costs. These factors could ultimately result in greater or lesser costs for the facilities.

CONCEPTUAL COST MODEL ESTIMATES

| Service | Total Square Feet | Total Cost Estimate |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| New Police Facility | 18,369 s.f. (new) | \$11,267,137 |
| Parking Garage - Police | 84 spaces | \$ 4,582,980 |
| New Library | 39,821 s.f. (new) | \$22,060,431 |
| Parking Garage - Library | 69 spaces | \$ 7,712,820 |
| New Community Center | 32,040 s.f. (new) | \$14,832,258 |
| Parking Garage - Com. Ctr. | 157 spaces | \$17,549,460 |
| Civic Ctr. Renovation | 25,191 s.f. (existing) | \$ 9,128,708 |
| Total | | \$87,133,794 |

Costs for parking are a significant portion of the total estimated costs. The high costs are largely attributable to the need to provide two levels of underground parking for the majority of the parking demand. The parking estimates used for the conceptual cost model are based on the application of the parking requirements in the Town code. It should be noted that in the case of the combined Council chambers and community room, two different parking ratios could have been used. Staff and the consultants opted to use the higher ratio of parking required which seemed most appropriate given the time of use of these facilities. This resulted in a lower demand for parking than would have been required at the lower ratio. As noted earlier and discussed later in the report, a parking study is underway that could recommend a different level of parking demand overall and/or for this function specifically. The costs could be affected either way depending on the findings.

The cost estimates include a 35% factor for "General Conditions/Soft Costs," which are comprised of contractor costs, standard consultants (e.g., architecture, structural, electrical, plumbing, landscape, etc.) fees, soils and geotechnical reports, development process fees, testing

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

and inspections, specialty consultants (e.g., security, lighting, acoustic, etc), and contingency allowance. More accurate "soft cost" estimates would need to be calculated in conjunction with the building design process, and with the development of a specific financing strategy.

The cost estimates also include a 15% building factor which accounts for department to department circulation, vertical circulation and width of the exterior walls.

Costs not included in the estimate are those for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (known as FFE costs). Typical FFE costs for libraries range from \$25 to \$35 per sq. ft., suggesting an estimated FFE cost for the 39,000 sq. ft. library of from \$97,500 to \$136,500. Different FFE costs would apply for police facilities (usually higher due to specialty equipment) and for community spaces range (potentially lower due to large open areas). Accurate FFE estimates would need to be calculated in conjunction with the building design process. At the time this was done, estimates for any possible re-use of existing furniture and equipment would be evaluated.

Another cost not represented in the conceptual cost model is the cost for operations and maintenance (O&M). These are the costs generated by having additional square footage to operate and maintain. Actual O&M costs would not likely increase proportionate to the increase in square footage, however, to the extent that "green technology" is incorporated in the design and information technology is used to enhance productivity and streamline operations. O&M costs would need to be calculated in conjunction with the building design process, and ongoing fiscal capacity to cover any increased costs would need to be identified prior to construction.

Funding Sources

The development of a detailed financing strategy is a critical element in achieving the vision for the CCMP. The financing strategy takes into account available funding sources and their capacity over a projected period of time. Available sources are paired with eligible elements of the CCMP according to the desired phasing plan. This detailed financing strategy will need to be developed once the vision for the site and the phasing plan are determined.

Attachment 6 describes the funding sources that may be available for the elements of the CCMP if the Council and community so determine. It is likely that any improvements contemplated in the CCMP will be funded by a combination of strategies commonly referred to as "Pay-as-You-Go" and "Pay-as-You-Use" strategies. The first strategy ("Pay-as-You-Go") assumes the use of existing cash, capital campaigns and other fund raising efforts, real property sales, and joint government partnerships. The second strategy ("Pay-as-You-Use") assumes the need to borrow funds in some form of future debt financing. An advantage of Pay-as-You-Use financing is that it matches the benefit and cost of the improvements with the actual users of the improvements over time. "Pay-as-You Use" strategies include Redevelopment Agency Tax Increment Financing

PAGE 8

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

and General Obligation Bonds. The attachment describes the funding source, current and/or projected capacity (if known), and general requirements associated with each.

Issues and Considerations

Initial Survey of Los Gatos Voters

As staff worked to bring the vision, conceptual costs, and financing considerations forward for Council discussion, it became clear that another piece of critical information needed at this stage is to have preliminary data on public opinion about Town facilities and the public's interest in supporting new and improved facilities. With the Council ad hoc committee's guidance, staff engaged Fairbanks, Maslin, Maullin & Associates, a public opinion consultant firm, to conduct an initial poll of Los Gatos voters.

The poll was a statistically valid, random sample telephone survey administered the week of January 22nd. Based on the recommendation of the consultants, no advanced information was shared about the survey so as not to bias the results. The executive summary and the "topline" results of the survey are provided in Attachment 7.

Key findings from the survey include:

- Voters have positive feelings about how the Town provides services and manages Town finances;
- Voters do not identify any single issue as a serious problem facing Los Gatos;
- Over 60% of the voters haven't heard anything about the Civic Center Master Plan and possible changes or expansions to the library or Civic Center;
- While most voters indicate support for a bond measure to build a library, community center and police station, that support falls below the required two-thirds threshold required for approval;
- Support for a potential bond measure declines significantly when voters hear the tax impact of the measure; and,
- Voters rate a new library higher than a community center or police facility as a potential use of funds from a bond measure.

Based on the analysis of the survey results, the consultants recommend that the Town undertake additional public education and outreach before placing a bond measure before the voters and that the current levels of voter support for a potential bond measure are not sufficient for the Town to move forward with a bond measure in 2007. Given the declining levels of support when voters hear the tax impact of a potential bond measure, the consultants recommend minimizing the cost of the measure and suggest that library improvements should be a central focus of a potential bond measure.

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

A public opinion survey is a tool to understand the overall opinions of voters, and, in this case, their opinions without previous knowledge about the CCMP. Through analysis and interpretation of results, the survey can serve as a guide for educating the community about a topic. This initial poll tells us where the voters are today, what is necessary to achieve the levels of support required, and what is the most effective way to get there. It is important to note that polls cannot predict exactly what the future will be, how voters may feel after more information is provided, or how external conditions can affect the opinions in the future. One key external consideration in thinking about public financing for Civic Center facilities is other potential ballot measures, such as the parcel tax the elementary school district is pursuing, and any other unanticipated ballot measure that may be pursued by other agencies. The poll conducted for the CCMP provides valuable benchmark information for the Town as next steps on the CCMP are contemplated.

Parking Study

As noted above, the Town is undertaking an in-depth parking study to ensure the CCMP accurately reflects the demand for parking. The Town's current zoning code does not specifically address public buildings such as the Civic Center, and the types of activities occurring here. The parking allocation in the CCMP was based on the closest land use designations available in the Town code, and thus may not accurately reflect the demand. As part of the parking study, the consultant is conducting occupancy surveys during peak periods at the Civic Center, estimating parking demand for Town vehicles, surveying other civic centers' parking occupancy, forecasting future parking demand based on the CCMP, and recommending the parking supply needed.

The results of the parking study and their implications for the CCMP will be brought forward to Council as part of the final approval of the CCMP. It is expected that these results will affect the number of spaces required, and thus the cost associated with providing the spaces.

Interim Needs and Opportunities

Interim Needs

It has been clear throughout the development of the CCMP that ultimately the Council and the community would need to determine if and when major improvements to the Civic Center would be undertaken. It has also been clear that the solutions to space needs are not solved only by building new facilities.

PAGE 10

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

At the same time, the analysis conducted over the past five years identifies some key deficiencies in the Civic Center facilities that warrant addressing in some manner. The Civic Center is a 40-year-old building, and the 27-year-old Neighborhood Center is a highly-used, multi-purpose building. In certain cases, addressing the deficiencies in these facilities is necessary regardless of the timetable for implementation of the CCMP. Key deficiencies include the following:

- Police services – the most critical need for additional space is for police services. At 5,275 sq. ft., the police department space in the Civic Center is sub-standard with many issues of overcrowding, insufficient space for interviewing victims, a multi-purpose dispatch area with many distractions, lack of security for the public and police officers, out-of-compliance holding cells, lack of vehicle security, insufficient crime evidence storage, and more. The police department is currently occupying one of the Town-owned homes to house their operations (1,100 sq.ft. not included in the square foot figure noted above). In addition, building requirements for public safety space are significantly greater than for other municipal services, limiting the options for meeting the need in existing facilities.
- Library Disability Access – With its high public usage, the library facility must be available to members of the public with disabilities. Overcrowded conditions have led to disabled access deficiencies throughout the library. In addition, the elevator is out of compliance for disabled access.
- Parking – The existing Civic Center experiences parking shortfalls at peak periods throughout the day and during events with large gatherings of attendees.
- Other, less critical deficiencies such as signage, the Neighborhood Center kitchen, and the need for additional meeting space may need to be addressed depending on the timetable for implementation of portions of the CCMP.

As noted, the police department has the most critical space needs for both the short and the long-term. While the public opinion survey showed support for funding additional space for police, that support was not as high as the support for a new library. This is likely because the library is a visible, highly-used public facility, while the police department gets relatively few visitors and the vast majority of Los Gatos residents do not have occasion to know about the dire conditions.

Monitoring Opportunities

Even if the CCMP was in place, with implementation underway, the Town should always be aware of opportunities that may address the Town's space needs in a more efficient, cost-effective and/or timely manner. For this reason, staff continues to monitor the local real estate market for land or space that may meet the Town's needs.

Given the critical need for additional space for the police department, staff has focused on monitoring the market for buildings that could meet these needs. Another reason staff has

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

focused on the police department is because police operations could potentially “unplug” from the Civic Center. A location adjacent to a major arterial could provide good access to the Town’s neighborhoods. In addition, a full operational presence at the Civic Center is not necessary given the activities conducted by police and the relatively low contact with the public at the facility. Finding a cost-effective, affordable space built to the higher building standards required for public safety may represent a favorable interim or permanent solution to the police department needs. If police facilities were to be located off-site, a counter presence could still be maintained for police customers at Town Hall.

Direction Needed and Next Steps

The February 12th Study Session represents a critical juncture in the development of the CCMP. The feedback and direction provided by Council will lead to the final CCMP, to be followed by implementation as determined by Council. Direction is needed on the following issues in order to finalize the CCMP:

- Vision for the CCMP
 - Does this represent a desirable vision for the Civic Center site?
 - Should the final CCMP include the option with one facility for the library and community center, or two facilities for these services?
 - Other feedback?
- Phasing Approach
 - Should one facility be pursued first? Which one?
 - Should facilities be pursued concurrently?
 - Should an off-site facility be pursued for the police department?
- Financing Options
 - Does Council have any comments on potential funding sources, such as the use of RDA money for eligible facility construction or the option to pursue a bond measure?

Next Steps

Based on Council’s feedback and direction, staff and ABA will finalize the CCMP and return to Council for final approval. The final CCMP will include:

- Town Service Assessment
- Operational Plan
- Space Program
- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Vision for the Civic Center Site (site diagram)
- Conceptual Cost Model

PAGE 12

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION AND DIRECTION ON THE VISION, CONCEPTUAL COSTS, FUNDING SOURCES, AND PHASING OPTIONS FOR THE CIVIC CENTER/LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

- Phasing Strategy
- Preliminary Financial Strategy

The CCMP will also include the parking study, with any changes due to its findings incorporated into the site vision and the cost model.

At the final CCMP approval stage, staff will seek Council direction on next steps, including direction to proceed with an in-depth financial analysis. The following two options will be presented for consideration:

Educate then Proceed Option – This option is to undertake an outreach campaign to inform the community about the CCMP and then to re-assess community support for a bond measure. Based on the results of the public opinion poll, proceed with the pre-development process, including schematic design of the Civic Center site with in-depth focus on the first phase facility or facilities.

Proceed and Educate Concurrently Option – This option is to proceed with the pre-development process, including schematic design of the Civic Center site with in-depth focus on the first phase facility or facilities, and undertake an outreach campaign concurrently to inform the community about the CCMP, followed by re-assessing community support for a bond measure.

These options will be discussed in greater detail when the final CCMP is brought forward for Council's consideration. Included in the discussion will be a description of the pre-development process, options for consideration, and estimated costs. Staff will also seek Council direction on any concurrent actions to be undertaken with the above options at this time.

CONCLUSION:

The development of the Civic Center Master Plan (CCMP) has been a long, complex endeavor. Grounded in the prudent decision to plan for the Town's long-term facility needs, the CCMP is driven by the services the Town currently provides and the community desires. The CCMP that has unfolded over time reflects many principles articulated by the Town Council and the community. Community and Town Council input, and analysis of service needs, space requirements, and site considerations have evolved into a master site vision that shows how the Civic Center site could ultimately accommodate Town services.

Estimated costs indicate that the build-out of the entire CCMP could cost approximately \$90 million in today's dollars. The initial public opinion survey suggests that sufficient numbers of voters would not support a bond measure of that magnitude at this time, although support for a

FEBRUARY 8, 2007

new library is strongest among the potential facilities and satisfaction with the Town in general is high. The survey results also showed that less than 40% of the respondents have heard of the CCMP, with 61% saying they hadn't heard anything about it to-date. The poll conducted for the CCMP provides valuable benchmark information for the Town as next steps on the CCMP are contemplated.

The next steps for the CCMP include completing the parking study, which will provide more accurate information about the parking demand at the Civic Center. Council direction on several issues – the site vision, phasing approach, financing options, and recreation space – is also needed to complete the CCMP. There are also some critical needs that the Town may need to pursue concurrently.

The Civic Center Master Plan is a roadmap for the future, enabling the Town Council to make decisions about facility improvements to enhance service delivery as necessary or as opportunities arise. Without the CCMP, these decisions would not be able to be made in such a broad context or with such in-depth analysis. Staff looks forward to the Council's feedback and direction on the CCMP.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

Is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funds for completion of the Civic Center/Library Master Plan as noted above are included in the FY 2006-11 Capital Improvement Plan. Any additional work which may be beyond the original scope or as a result of the Master Plan process will require additional funding.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Outreach and Participation Summary
- Attachment 2 – Vision for Civic Center Site
- Attachment 3 – Space Program
- Attachment 4 – Phased Vision for Civic Center Site
- Attachment 5 – Conceptual Cost Model
- Attachment 6 – Potential Funding Sources for CCMP
- Attachment 7 – Key Findings from Los Gatos Voter Survey/Topline Results
- Attachment 8 – February 12, 2007 PowerPoint Presentation

