

STUDY SESSION

**City Council
December 11, 2018**

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jeff Boynton, City Manager

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SUBJECT: LA MIRADA STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 UPDATE

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Plan 2020, adopted in June of 2016, provides a guide for the City to identify priorities and achieve future goals and objectives. The plan builds on the City's record of success of being a safe, attractive, and thriving community where residents and visitors enjoy living and working. The Strategic Plan is supported by five core strategies with specific goals and actions to monitor progress.

Significant advancements have been made this past year. This update notes the specific efforts and actions accomplished this past year to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan 2020.

FINDINGS

Ensure a Well-Managed City Government

The City has a long-standing commitment to providing responsible financial stewardship and continues to make great strides toward ensuring long-term stability. The City achieves this by adopting and adhering to a balanced budget and maintaining a healthy level of reserves. At the end of Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the City's reserves were 120 percent of operating expenditures. La Mirada ranks in the top eight percentile of financially stable cities in California according to a report by State Senator John Moorlach. The City also received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the 29th consecutive year. City staff continues to promote transparency and accountability by providing residents budget information online and updates on the financial state of the City through the La Mirada Living newsletter and Business News publication.

To ensure appropriate cost recovery for services, City departments routinely monitor fees. To ensure prices for single tickets at the La Mirada Theatre reflect the market, staff works with Jacobsen Consulting to review sales data for the McCoy Rigby Entertainment Series as well as special presentations. Rental rates at the Theatre were revised last year and will continue to be reviewed annually.

The Community Services Department recently completed a Rental Facility Fee Survey and staff is reviewing survey results to compare fees with surrounding cities. Upon evaluation, staff will present its findings and recommend adjustments. Fees for youth sports and contract classes are routinely reviewed to ensure fees are within the parameters set by the City's User Fee Cost Recovery Policy. Fee adjustments for these programs tend to be relatively minor. For example, Youth League fees incurred a \$1 increase this year for volleyball, basketball, futsal and flag football.

Staff continues to work on increasing the number of sponsorships to help offset costs for community programs and events. In Fiscal Year 2017-2018, a total of \$44,601 in monetary and in-kind donations was received by the Community Services Department. Marketing materials are being developed to promote sponsorship opportunities for community programs and events.

Improving community engagement continues to be an area of focus. The City is currently working on enhancing its branding recognition and will carry those efforts into the City's website to draw attention with visually-appealing and relevant information. This will be done to improve customer service and increase website and social media traffic to maximize the promotion of City programs, events, and services.

New features implemented this year included a change to the design for the La Mirada Update to make it device-responsive, which adjusts the content based on the viewing device. Videos have also been used on the City's social media platforms to promote community events. User-friendly features such as these will continue to enhance the customer experience and keep the community engaged.

The La Mirada Theatre website is now fully integrated with TESSITURA, the new ticketing system. The Theatre's website will also undergo revisions focused on creating more user-friendly features for patrons, including reducing the number of steps needed to make purchases.

City staff is currently evaluating the Splash! website and will make improvements to the frequently asked questions page and other commonly viewed pages. Changes to the Splash! website are expected to be completed by spring. In addition, departments have increased posts to Facebook and other social media platforms in 2018. Approximately 312 posts to Facebook were made across City departments. All departments realized an increase in Facebook followers this year.

The "My La Mirada" service request system continues to allow the City to connect with the community. More than 725 service requests have been received through the smartphone app year-to-date. The most frequent requests include graffiti removal, vacation security checks, and property maintenance concerns. The City has added new features to the app for residents to apply for Temporary Parking Permits for non-conforming vehicles and obtain a Garage Sale Permit. The City continues to promote

the “My La Mirada” app to residents and encourages them to sign up as a registered user, which allows for emergency notifications to be received during a disaster situation.

Provide a Safe Community

Public safety remains the highest priority for the City. City resources are dedicated to preventing crime and enhancing the safety of the community. La Mirada’s crime rate in 2017 was 199 crimes per 10,000 residents, which is within the City’s goal of fewer than 200 crimes. The City continues to meet this goal and current statistics indicate that crime has decreased by 14 percent in 2018.

Strong partnerships between the City’s Public Safety Team, residents, and businesses are encouraged to meet the goal of keeping La Mirada among the safest cities in the region. Eighteen Neighborhood Watch meetings were held this year throughout La Mirada. In addition, staff met with 65 businesses to conduct security inspections and provide information on crime trends and crime prevention tips. Community-oriented policing continues to be encouraged through events such as National Night Out.

The Public Safety Team strengthens its partnership with local schools to provide a safe educational environment and offer programs against drugs, gangs, and vandalism. Public Safety staff met with La Mirada High School officials this year to discuss challenges and possible intervention efforts. As a result of these meetings, new programming will be presented to high school freshmen in January to discuss the topic of vaping, which is a major concern for teens.

A Prevention Intervention Program (PIP) was developed to provide intervention and support services to students in kindergarten through twelfth grade attending schools in La Mirada or residing in La Mirada. Public Safety staff continues to provide additional support, resources, and mentoring to students and families through this program.

Safety at City parks is also a priority to the City. Public Works staff continues to evaluate the lighting and security at La Mirada’s parks. A review of potential placement of security cameras at select parks was recently completed. The adopted Creek Park Master Plan also proposes enhancements to lighting. Improvements to other parks are being evaluated and may be more viable as part of future park renovations.

Public Works continues to review the condition of City sidewalks to ensure safe routes for pedestrians are provided. Crews address issues when they are reported by residents and through the biennial inspections. Repairs to sidewalk hazards that are observed on highly traveled school routes are given the highest priority.

To ensure La Mirada remains an attractive community, staff continues to enforce City Codes throughout La Mirada. Cases are identified through proactive enforcement by staff and requests for service generated by the public. Code Enforcement staff is also implementing a new door hanger program to acknowledge residents who demonstrate a high standard of maintenance.

Promote a High Quality of Life

The City strives to offer a variety of amenities for its residents, including first-class cultural and recreational programming to enhance the quality of life.

Splash! remains a favorite destination for families in La Mirada and the region. A new feature at Buccaneer Bay, including a six-lane mat racer slide and two aqua tube body slides, is currently being designed with construction expected to begin in fall 2019.

The La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts recently had all 1,251 auditorium seats replaced with attractive and plush seating. Sound system upgrades are in progress and will be completed in early 2019. Partial funding for these improvements was received from a State of California grant.

Minor modifications were made to several community events, including the Spring Beautification Awards Ceremony and the Concerts Under the Stars, to enhance the experience of participants. The addition of the Night Market to the summer concert series was received well by the community and increased attendance at the weekly concerts. Community events will continue to be evaluated to explore potential enhancements.

Community spirit continues to be strengthened by programs such as the Milestone Anniversary Recognition Program, the Business Recognition Program, Blue Star Program, Military Banners, and events such as the Memorial Day event and Salute to Veterans. A new college banner program was created through a partnership with the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District to recognize graduating La Mirada High School seniors who are continuing to pursue their education. Banners are displayed with photos of the students and their chosen college along Adelfa Drive in front of La Mirada High School.

To continue to provide a high-quality transit service, four transit vehicles will be replaced this year with funding from the Municipal Operator Service Improvement Program (MOSIP), and the Public Transportation Modernization Improvement and Service Enhancement Program (PTMISEA). The City's Dial-a-Ride program continues to be popular with seniors and students.

The City and the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District recently completed an agreement to enable La Mirada High School sports teams to continue using Behringer Athletic Fields, the Community Gymnasium, and Splash! A maintenance agreement for Los Coyotes Middle School was finalized as well to allow local non-profit youth sports leagues to have priority use of the campus fields when not in use by the school.

Preserving La Mirada's history remains an important goal. The Neff Estate is undergoing restoration, as new roofs are being installed on the Neff Mansion, the George House, and the Carriage Barn. Repairs to all three historic buildings are expected to be completed by spring 2019. The Historical Preservation Advisory Council

(HPAC) has embarked on a project to replace tree identification plaques at the park, as the variety of tree species is one of the park's truly unique features.

Quality parks continue to be important to La Mirada families. New playground equipment was recently installed at Windermere Park. New playground features and rubberized surface material improve the safety and accessibility for children. The playground at Gardenhill Park is currently undergoing similar improvements. The project is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Once finished, all six La Mirada park playgrounds will have been replaced over the past four years.

In order to keep the public-right-of-way looking attractive, street name signage throughout La Mirada will soon be replaced. Plans are near completion, and the project is expected to begin in spring 2019.

The median landscaping along several major streets are also set to undergo improvements. The median landscaping along La Mirada Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and Valley View Avenue will feature a new design including plant species that are attractive, water-friendly, and meet State of California requirements.

Provide Quality Planning and Infrastructure

Attention to neighborhood improvements continues throughout La Mirada to support high property values and provide well-maintained infrastructure.

Voter-approved Measure I funds were used for the completion of the fourth phase of comprehensive neighborhood improvements. The sales tax measure officially expired on March 31, 2018. Construction on the fifth phase, the final phase using Measure I funds, will begin this winter and include all residential streets bounded by Imperial Highway, Biola Avenue, Stage Road, Valley View Avenue, and Milan Creek. Other available funding, including SB 1, gas tax, and Measures M and R, may be used to supplement this and future road improvement projects.

Traffic signal upgrades were completed along La Mirada Boulevard. The upgrades provide additional safety to commuters and pedestrians. Design work is underway for similar traffic signal improvements along the Santa Gertrudes Avenue corridor. Grant funding is being sought to provide traffic signal improvements along Rosecrans Avenue.

The Creek Park Master Plan was adopted in June to improve the popular community park which includes approximately 11 acres along La Mirada Creek. The plan was adopted with extensive community input. Possible improvements include naturalization of the creek, new restrooms, terraced seating in various areas along the creek, fitness stations made of natural materials, and improvements to the trails and bridges to enhance access, safety, and aesthetics. Staff is currently reviewing potential grant funding for this project.

Community Development staff continues to review City Codes to ensure quality planning and the protection of properties. In compliance with new State mandates, the

Zoning Ordinance was recently amended to include a process and standards for accessory dwelling units.

In 2018, the Planning Division completed 569 administrative reviews, 24 sign reviews, and one administrative adjustment. The Building Division processed 3,028 transactions with a work valuation of \$72,069,762. Staff continues to work with the public to ensure future development reflects La Mirada's high standards.

Construction of the I-5 Freeway widening through La Mirada continues. Approximately one-third of the project has been constructed. The Valley View Avenue Bridge is projected to be completed by December 2020. Completion of the entire I-5 Valley View Avenue Interchange is expected to be completed in 2021. This project is being managed by Caltrans. City staff routinely meets with Caltrans staff to resolve project issues affecting La Mirada businesses and motorists.

Support a Strong Local Economy

The City remains business-friendly to ensure a cooperative approach with La Mirada businesses. City staff continues to market key properties to potential retailers and restaurants to enhance La Mirada's privately owned shopping centers. Three properties were registered in the past year through the recently-established Ordinance No. 698, which requires the registering of vacant or abandoned commercial properties.

AMC Movie Theaters, Grocery Outlet, Thai Lady Restaurant, and the Local Lounge, were among businesses that completed improvements this year. The UPS facility on Trojan Way was also built and interior improvements are in process. Burger IM, Café Hygge, and Quezada's Tacos have recently obtained permits for tenant improvements. Chick-fil-A and Popeyes Chicken have received City planning approval to open new restaurants in La Mirada and construction is expected to be completed for both fast casual restaurants in 2019.

City staff meets with developers and real estate professionals interested in La Mirada properties throughout the year to achieve the objectives outlined in the Economic Development Action Plan. In order to offer local businesses opportunities to grow and thrive, the City maintains a cooperative relationship with the La Mirada Chamber of Commerce. While the City is a Lifetime Chamber Member, the City once again began contributing membership dues to this important community organization. City staff is working with the Chamber and SCORE to plan a series of Business Workshops in 2019.

The City remains committed to achieving the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan 2020. Much has been achieved in 2018 and City staff will continue to make progress on accomplishing the goals identified in the plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended the City Council review and discuss the Strategic Plan 2020 update.