



AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 7, 2010

DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER
DIRECTOR: ELIZABETH A. FETTER

☐ Consent ☒ Discussion

SUBJECT:

Report and possible action on community focus panels, council priorities and key performance indicators

Fiscal Impact

☐

No Impact

☐ Augmentation Required

☐

Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The City Council currently focuses on eight strategic priorities. Staff is proposing to revise the priorities to five through combinations and re-phrasing of the eight. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are associated with each priority. Staff will report on the KPIs annually to measure progress toward achieving the Council priorities.

A University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Department of Sociology research team conducted five targeted focus groups for the city of Las Vegas Your City, Your Way Initiative. The focus groups provide robust qualitative data on city of Las Vegas residents thoughts and opinions on city services in the context of city budget deficits and impending budget cuts. The focus groups also supplement the city of Las Vegas 2009 Community Assessment Survey, a telephone survey conducted by the UNLV Cannon Center for Survey Research.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve any new or modified priorities and key performance indicators and direct staff accordingly.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Submitted after Final Agenda Report on Current and Proposed Council Priorities and Key Performance Indicators, Citizen Survey and Focus Panels, Impacts on Budget Cuts, Programs and Services, PowerPoint from 1-7-2010 City Council Special Session and Departmental Strategic Business Plans by Staff
2. Submitted at Meeting Report on Focus Group Findings by Dr. Robert Futrell and Proposed Vision Statement for City of Las Vegas by Mayor Goodman

Minutes:

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MAYOR GOODMAN stressed the importance of this meeting, noting that it has been several years since this process began and changes have occurred with the economy that necessitates the City readdressing its vision.

CITY MANAGER ELIZABETH N. FRETWELL summarized the goals for this meeting, pointing out the unique environment which also allows for the City's Directors to be present at the table and the public's participation. She announced that FIRE CHIEF GREG GAMMON would be late, due to the Fire Academy graduation and the Director of Building and Safety, CHRIS KNIGHT, would not be attending due to an unexpected personal matter.

Using the PowerPoint incorporated into the backup, CITY MANAGER FRETWELL stated the meeting objectives and was hopeful in obtaining them. The City has a long history of strategic planning for the past 10 years, and with the launching of the Performance Plus Initiative in 2007, the City is able to adjust shortfalls in performance and align budgets to outcomes that are expected by the community.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER MARK VINCENT reviewed various slides that demonstrated negative growth rates and lagging property tax history. There has been an increase in the public safety portion of the budget due to cuts in non-public safety portions. Another slide identified the breakdown of the public safety cost composition. A final slide reflected the breakdown of government costs, as well as the culture and recreation functions.

MAYOR GOODMAN mentioned that everyone should be informed concerning the City's financial situation, given that the Council is briefed bi-weekly prior to the City Council meetings.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL discussed the slides pertaining to the community survey results regarding City services that should be considered as high priority and those that should have less emphasis. COUNCILMAN BARLOW questioned the discrepancy between the uses dealing with senior programs and less cultural services. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL agreed that some of the information may be contradictory but believed that the focus panel results could provide greater definition in clarifying some of the information. She also responded to COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN that the outcome of this meeting may address concerns with the notable discrepancies between the focus groups and the survey.

At CITY MANAGER FRETWELL'S request, DR. ROBERT FUTRELL, Associate Professor, University of Las Vegas Nevada, stated that focus panels are open and flexible, which allows for greater depth and clarification by the moderator. The focus group data will be used as a supplement to the data obtained from the community survey and the upcoming town hall meetings. COUNCILMAN ROSS questioned how the focus groups were selected. DR. FUTRELL referred to Table 1, which described the demographics and added that each focus group was randomly selected from seven neighborhoods across all City wards. Each focus group involved an open discussion and then a short paper survey, and the services rated in the survey were identified from the community survey. The short follow-up discussion involved those services. Additional slides identified the five categories of the panel results, which were Livable/Sustainable Neighborhoods, Safe City, Fiscally Sound Government, Pro Business Environment and Vibrant Urban Fabric. DR. FUTRELL reported on the results, emphasizing

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that emergency and fire services were considered critical services.

COUNCILMAN REESE discussed with DR. FUTRELL how the survey questions were prioritized, and DR. FUTRELL also noted that the survey was approximately five minutes with some questions being arranged in a different order to improve test results.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON pointed out that most of the information came from the focus group and questioned if those participating were informed about the City's financial situation. DR. FUTRELL replied that although this group did not inform the participants, he believed there was some awareness of it. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL added that there was discussion regarding whether or not the focus groups should seek feedback on the City's financial situation; however, it was determined that it would impact the reliability and unbiased nature of the data.

COUNCILMAN BARLOW discussed with DR. FUTRELL the fact that there were no African-Americans included in the focus panel process to date. He stated there would have been more time to do the survey, but this is only one piece of the entire data. The Councilman commended the presentation but expressed some confusion with the conflict between the survey recommending reduced cultural services and Consideration 3 which encouraged maintaining them. He also reiterated his concern with the ethnic makeup of the participants.

DR. FUTRELL also reported on the data dealing with government fiscal responsibility and the business environment. There were positive comments on certain City attempts for economic diversification, but there was some concern with access to economic assistance. He reviewed several considerations dealing with budget reductions, maintaining youth services, strong neighborhoods, having clear communication regarding City obligations and economic diversification.

COUNCILMAN ANTHONY appreciated the presentation. He questioned Table 2 which reflected 7 of 10 categories not to be cut dealing with public safety yet the majority of the budget is public safety. DR. FUTRELL answered that the groups identified essential services versus other services, but it is not an indication that other services are unimportant. MAYOR GOODMAN questioned whether citizens would be willing to pay more for the essential services. DR. FUTRELL responded that some indicated they would be willing to do so, but no one stated they would be unwilling to pay to avoid service reductions. COUNCILMAN WOLFSON felt this information should be available for the upcoming town hall meetings. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL replied that although there was some discussion relative to the survey, she felt there is a need for more specific discussion rather than relying upon examples. The Mayor commented that he has heard from individuals who feel the City's salary structure is too high. Even though discussions have dealt with expenditures, revenue is equally important.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN clarified that those participants may or may not have selected "other" or just the separate category for Hispanic. It is important to clarify these points to understand the results.

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RECESSED: 3:02 P.M. - 3:09 P.M.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL outlined the Strategic Business Process, including the Strategic Business Plan for every City department. The process makes the City more transparent to the public and better at effectively managing and focusing on priorities.

The Council and CITY MANAGER FRETWELL reviewed the Vision statement, as priorities can change every few years. MAYOR GOODMAN emphasized that world-class city should remain, as that is what Las Vegas should be. The Council also preferred keeping vibrant as it is the look for the City. Addressing COUNCILMAN REESES question regarding the purpose for amending the language, CITY MANAGER FRETWELL noted that there were new Council members, but the statement can be reaffirmed as is or amended. In discussing the word affordable, COUNCILMAN BARLOW commented that the economic decline enabled an increase in homeownership.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON suggested that the Council agree to keep the Vision statement in tact but possibly add to it. MAYOR GOODMAN agreed that economic diversity should be included. There was discussion as to whether the existing word diverse related to ethnicity, background, beliefs and attitudes versus economic diversity. COUNCILMAN BARLOW agreed with COUNCILMAN WOLFSON, who pointed out that the City has taken pride in being the leader in the current economic situation. COUNCILMAN WOLFSON suggested making the verbiage reflect ethnically and economically diverse. Additional suggestions were made and CITY MANAGER FRETWELL confirmed that the Council desired to integrate economically and ethnically diverse, visionary, proactive and clarify open and transparent government. She informed MAYOR GOODMAN that any changes could be adopted at this meeting or they can be addressed at a future City Council meeting.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL reviewed the slides regarding the current eight priorities for effective focus versus the proposed five, which were Fiscally Sound Government, Pro Business, Vibrant Urban Fabric, Safe City and Sustainable/Livable Neighborhoods. Staff believed that three of the goals are interrelated and could be collapsed into a single priority called Sustainable/Livable Neighborhoods. COUNCILMAN ROSS stressed the need for the City to be the leader in ease as to doing business with government. GREG GAMMON, Fire Chief, described the process for reporting on every call response for Fire, other entities and private ambulances. He noted that in some areas, the response time is three to four minutes and in areas where stations are further apart, the response time is greater. COUNCILMAN ANTHONY suggested that domestic crime is a violent crime as well, and the measures should include property crime. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL agreed and explained that domestic crime is a focal point for Municipal Court and was separate for that reason. CHIEF GAMMON outlined the benefit of the cold iv fluid test program that has been in place for three weeks, noting that it has resulted in more saves to date. MAYOR GOODMAN emphasized that this type of leading is what makes Las Vegas a world class city. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL added that this new technique will improve the City's percentage "save" rate on cardiac responses and pointed out the joint effort of multiple departments to support this priority.

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MAYOR GOODMAN supported being transparent, given the current economic situation, there may be a need to reevaluate being more like the private sector. He gave an example of hiring an individual to handle collections for ambulance services rather than relying upon American Medical Response. Times are different and the City may not have that luxury as it did before to provide certain services for the public. COUNCILMAN WOLFSON added that the wage and benefit growth also applies to sustainability. The private sector makes difficult decisions and it may be necessary for the City to make the same type of difficult decisions.

COUNCILMAN REESE stressed that things can quickly change; it is good to have goals and statements in writing, but the City needs to be able to adapt quickly.

COUNCILMAN ROSS felt it was a good idea to have fewer priorities. He appreciated the efforts to generate revenue and discussed with CITY MANAGER FRETWELL the work being done before effecting City employees. He agreed the economy has changed but everyone at the City needs to stay focused on the good of the city.

COUNCILMAN ANTHONY supported the recommended priorities. COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN desired to review the recommendations including her suggestion to add engagement as a priority, and follow up with CITY MANAGER FRETWELL as soon as possible.

COUNCILMAN BARLOW appreciated the presentation as he was enlightened and realized that with the changes in the economy, it is crucial to make focused decisions in determining what is relevant in how we operate as a City. The concern with operating as a business is government has opportunities, such as bonding, that the private sector does not. He was glad to revisit the vision and mission statements to give the new members such as himself an opportunity to opine.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL thanked the Council for the feedback and acknowledged the Directors and staffs efforts to put together the information for the Council to make informed decisions. She commended MARK VINCENT and MAGGIE PLASTER for their work.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON recommended the information from today's meeting be drafted but not finalized until the town hall meetings are conducted over the next 60 days. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL recommended preparing a revised version, which will be modified after the town hall meetings and will allow staff to begin the budget. COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN responded that the City is on the right track and the information provided will allow for some adaptations after the citizens' feedback.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL summed up that the presentation was complete and there were no additional concerns or suggestions at this time. COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN reiterated that if greater emphasis was needed on anything, it would be determined as the process progresses. CITY MANAGER FRETWELL agreed that there was room for flexibility and modifications. MAYOR GOODMAN added that the community needs to have something to identify with as Las Vegas. In the past, Jerry Tarkanian and the UNLV Rebels were such a point

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of community identification.

CITY MANAGER FRETWELL outlined the next steps, which included mocking up some revisions, placing an item on a future agenda, in February, briefings to the Council, creation of a sixth priority and seeking Councils approval, all of which will be subject to changes from the public feedback.

MAYOR GOODMAN read a proposed revised vision statement, which was submitted for the record. He took the opportunity of having all the directors present who help make the City run. He advised staff that the Council is totally reliant on them and to make sure the information supplied is very accurate. He received three different stories of the recent tragedy at the Federal Building and he would have looked very foolish had he given a statement. The City is not looking for yes men, and it has the best employees working in the Las Vegas Valley.

