

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: TANYA NARATH, COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)
CHAIR
NANCY MANCHESTER, TEMPORARY STAFF LIAISON TO CAB
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
ON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AS REQUIRED BY
RESOLUTION NO. 28174

AGENDA ACTION: REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the City Manager's Office that the Council receive a report from the Community Advisory Board on its outreach process for community input on the Capital Improvement Project budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Advisory Board, in fulfilling the responsibility detailed in Resolution No. 28174 for obtaining community feedback on Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), held a series of meetings in January, 2016, for this purpose. This report will present those findings along with suggestions to improve the CIP input process in the future.

BACKGROUND

1. The Community Advisory Board (CAB) was created in response to the 2002 Charter Review Committee recommendations and established by Resolution No. 25805 on October 28, 2003. The CAB is comprised of 14 members who represent seven geographic areas of Santa Rosa.
2. CAB member duties were instituted in Resolution No. 25805 but have been updated from time to time. Resolution No. 28174 includes all CAB member duties; some duties were amended on March 11, 2014 via Resolution No. 28442 and others on September 15, 2015 via Resolution No. 28686.
3. One of CAB's continuing responsibilities, per Resolution No. 28174, is, "Budget Priorities for Capital Improvement Projects. CAB, with support from the City Manager's Office, shall advise on the design and facilitation of a public participation

process that offers a minimum of four neighborhood meetings for the community to review and provide feedback on the CIP budget and priorities.” The Resolution further states that meetings shall take place prior to City staff’s preparation of the CIP which begins each year in January.

4. In January 2016, CAB hosted five community meetings.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

1. To meet the CIP public participation process requirement, CAB hosted a series of five meetings in January, 2016, to provide the public with an overview of the CIP process and an understanding of what CIP funding sources could be considered discretionary. A synopsis of the concept of Participatory Budgeting was also presented. The five meetings were held in the evenings in five locations: Finley Center, Oakmont East Community Center, Bennett Valley Senior Center, Roseland Elementary School Library, and Steele Lane Community Center.
2. Staff from Water, Public Works, Recreation and Parks, Fire, Parking and the City Manager’s Office were in attendance. CAB members Tanya Narath and Chris Rogers were at all five meetings.
3. About 40 people attended the meetings in total. The main areas of concern expressed by the people who attended the meetings were:
 - a. Pedestrian enhancements;
 - b. Park development and upgrade of facilities;
 - c. Courthouse Square; and
 - d. Roseland Creek.
4. A survey was distributed to attendees. There were 30 responses received. Overall, 80% of respondents felt they had a better understanding of the City’s Capital Improvement Program, 84% felt they had a better understanding about what a Capital Improvement Project is, and 70% felt they had a better understanding about how Capital Improvement Projects are funded.
5. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents made a suggestion as to what types of Capital Improvement Projects the City should consider funding. Responses included (verbatim):
 - Real Toilets in Parks (not slimy port-a-pots). This is just another spoke in a bureaucratic wheel;

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- Gardens in all large parks and unused land allocated to community garden use;
- Bicycle support, homeless encampment support, park development, transit (bus) support, pedestrian support, small projects proposed by neighborhoods, shelters and supportive housing development;
- Public Lavatories (toilets) not showers for general use, free city buses (at least for students) to get to school / libraries, support expansion of Roseland Library (more hours of operations);
- Do something about the pedestrian hostile areas;
- Improved public transportation (more efficiently placed stops), existing county island infrastructure areas that have been left behind, specifically the Clover Drive, Lance Drive, Jennings area;
- Caution on new water meters in time of drought;
- More senior housing and centers. Continuing programs for foster children who reach 18 years. Transition programs for homeless;
- It seems that all types of CIP are already included. CIP book would have been good to provide a reference for meeting, CIP book has many "projects" that are so vague as to be indiscernible as to whether it is complete or progressing. CIP reference map is badly outdated;
- Housing for the Homeless folks;
- Parks, streets, sidewalks in low income areas;
- Pavement of Apple Valley Lane, Lighting along Newhall bike path;
- Some of the aesthetics;
- Old Courthouse Square – again; and
- Road and Sidewalk Improvements in Roseland.

While valid suggestions, many of these items are not considered Capital Improvement Projects. Staff addressed questions by the public and interacted with community members during and after the meetings.

6. CAB members in attendance collected additional public comments which included the following, separated into themes:

- General comments
 - Prioritization of Roseland. Ensuring the annexation happens and taking care to prevent it from becoming the hub for high density and low income housing options in the city;
 - Addressing blight in the Southeast- particular in South Park;
 - Focus on alternative modes of transportation;
 - Reinvest in roads that are technically not in the city limits (in unincorporated urban pockets) that serve as arteries into the city.
 - Continue to utilize transit oriented development and incentivize mass public transit;
 - New water infrastructure and meters- need a long term drought plan;

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- Too much graffiti in the downtown area.
 - Specific Projects
 - Install a traffic signal at Mill Street and Santa Rosa Avenue, as is called for in the Station Area Plan;
 - Pavement markings and bike lanes along Maple Avenue. Resident believed it was a public safety concern;
 - Fully implement the Roseland Creek concept plan;
 - Kawana Springs Community Park funding;
 - Crosswalks along the Kawana Springs area;
 - Add a change machine at the Transit Mall;
 - Community connector bridge at Elliot Avenue;
 - Continue to push for (and fund) an at-grade crossing at Jennings Avenue;
 - Courthouse Square- concerns about the process and outreach done on the project;
 - Sidewalks needed on Franklin Avenue and North Street;
 - Incorrect striping at a mobilehome park (already responded to by staff).
7. The survey distributed to attendees also asked for additional comments or suggestions. The responses, again verbatim, included:
- Need more community members to become involved / excited about possibilities;
 - Good start, Upbeat CAB approach;
 - Coordinate to avoid overlapping (e.g. Roseland Advisory Group Meeting is same time as your 4th meeting);
 - Sounds like CAB project on steroids. Hoped it was about where to spend city \$\$ not additional projects;
 - Have not felt that the public is listened to;
 - Would probably get higher turn out if meeting time was not at dinner time, at least here in Oakmont;
 - Perhaps have a meeting a little later after supper and people get home from work. Have a meeting quarterly so people can get into the groove of participating;
 - In implementing participatory budgeting hard work needs to be put into educate and engage, particularly as it relates to rumors; and
 - Should be meaningful, but are not, very poorly presented (arrow to question 9 which asked if these types of community engagement meetings were meaningful and important).
8. In discussing the outcome of these meetings, staff and CAB recognized that, while this effort was effective and a very good forum for public input, the outreach and meeting process needs to start earlier in the year so that the feedback is timely and more meaningful during the CIP planning process. The solicitation of feedback by CAB for the 2017/2018 budget will begin in October of 2016 rather than in January

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2017. The input received from this series of meetings, combined with that received in January 2016, will help inform the CIP planning process for fiscal year 2017/2018.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Advisory Board reviewed and recommended the outreach process for January 2016.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Powerpoint Presentation

CONTACT

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