



City of Morgan Hill

Legislation Text

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT **MEETING DATE: JUNE 1, 2016**

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APPROVED BY: City Manager

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICE PRIORITIES ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Receive report.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES, GOALS & STRATEGIES:

Ongoing Priorities

Maintaining fiscal responsibility

Preserving and cultivating public trust

2016 Focus Areas

Planning Our Community

Improving Our Communication

REPORT NARRATIVE:

Background

Morgan Hill is a special place with an amazing quality of life, unique sense of community, and strong property values. As a community, we must continue to address our quality of life needs to keep it that way. Maintaining police protection, including neighborhood patrols and crime prevention programs, fire protection, and streets, roads and parks are all important to our quality of life and protecting local property values.

Thanks to strong fiscal management and cost savings measures, the City has been able to maintain quality city service, even during the recent State Budget Crisis and Great Recession. However, without sufficient ongoing revenues, publicly owned infrastructure, especially streets, are continuing to deteriorate and the backlog of deferred maintenance is increasing.

At the November 5, 2014 meeting, the City Council accepted the Infrastructure Funding Update Report which identified an ongoing streets and roads maintenance funding shortfall of \$5.8 million per year. It is fiscally responsible to maintain our streets, roads, and potholes now, before they

deteriorate further and become more costly to fix in the future.

At the January 2015 Annual Goal Setting Workshop, the Council adopted a strategy that the City Council would receive a comprehensive infrastructure action plan detailing the steps necessary for a potential ballot measure by April 2015.

In an effort to address these needs, the City Council initiated the process of reviewing the feasibility of a Municipal Finance Measure for the November 2016 ballot to provide locally- controlled funding for capital projects within Morgan Hill.

At the April 15, 2015 City Council meeting, a Public Infrastructure Financing Report was provided and Council directed staff to contract with a Communications/Feasibility Strategy Firm and schedule a June 17, 2015 Public Infrastructure Financing Workshop. On June 17, 2015, a *Best Practices for Potential Ballot Measures Workshop* was conducted which outlined the best practices to be used to engage the community on the quality of life services and fiscal issues. At the July 8, 2015 Council meeting, City Council adopted resolutions authorizing the City Manager to execute consulting agreements with the Lew Edwards Group and Godbe Research as the Communications and Feasibility Strategists to provide the framework necessary to pursue potential ballot measures.

Engagement Process

Community engagement and outreach began in November/December 2015 with completion of a statistically valid survey of potential voters in Morgan Hill conducted by Godbe Research. The survey was accomplished through a combination of telephone and online surveying. The results of this survey were shared with Council and the community in January 2016 and continue to be available on our website at www.morganhill.ca.gov/qualityoflife. In the survey, Morgan Hill residents identified the following, among others, as priorities:

- Rapid response to 9-1-1 emergencies
- Maintaining the number of police officers on neighborhood patrols
- Maintaining crime prevention and investigation programs
- Maintaining fire protection
- Maintaining city streets and roads, and repairing potholes
- Maintaining the long-term financial stability of the City

To learn more from our residents, in April 2016 the City began engaging the community further to obtain additional feedback about Morgan Hill's quality of life needs and to make sure as many people as possible have an opportunity to share their views. Building upon the above identified priorities, an online community feedback survey (survey attached), implemented by City staff, was launched with a letter and invitation to the community from the City Manager. This survey was sent through our varied communication channels and continues to be available on the City website. At the time of writing this report, 534 community members have participated in this online community feedback survey.

Additionally, a small City team has been engaging various community groups and organizations by

providing a presentation on the Community Quality of Life Service Priorities (presentation attached), answering questions and listening to feedback. As of this date, we have made eleven presentations to the following groups/organizations: Teammates, Library, Culture and Arts Commission, Seniors, Police Department, American Association of University Women, Jackson Oaks Homeowners Association, Parks and Recreation Commission, Historical Society, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce Board, and Rotary. We will continue making presentations through mid June 2016.

Next Steps

Looking ahead through the end of July 2016, we will continue to engage the community through sending further letters and information from the City Manager and meeting with key stakeholders to obtain additional feedback. Another statistically valid survey of likely Morgan Hill voters will be conducted by Godbe Research. We will return to Council at the end of July with another report including further community feedback, the results from the third survey and recommendations on whether to move forward with a revenue measure for the November ballot.

What We Have Heard

The feedback through the current online survey and our presentations is summarized below.

The top 5 priorities from the current online survey are as follows:

1. Maintaining City streets, roads and repairing potholes
2. Rapidly responding to 9-1-1 emergency calls
3. Maintaining a safe, clean, reliable local water supply
4. Maintaining fire protection services
5. Managing growth to maintain neighborhood character

The top 5 themes from the current online survey comments are as follows:

1. Better management of growth
2. Solving traffic problems within Morgan Hill
3. Police/Fire and Safety are very important
4. Preserving Open Space and Agricultural Land
5. Improving our schools and the quality of education in Morgan Hill

Comments/themes from our presentations:

1. More affordable senior housing is needed
2. Concern about new development and the water supply
3. Need for more affordable housing in general
4. Interest in knowing the Pavement Condition Index for County roads in Morgan Hill

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Collaborate

- The community engagement effort to better understand Morgan Hill's quality of life service needs and priorities began in November/December 2015 with the statistically valid survey conducted by Godbe Research.
- In January 2016, the results and key findings of that survey were shared with the community through our varied communication channels and with the City Council. This information continues to be available on the city website at www.morganhill.ca.gov/qualityoflife/
- On April 8, 2016, the first in a series of community letters from the City Manager was sent at the same time the current online Community Feedback Survey was launched. The Community Feedback Survey will continue to remain open through June 2016.
- April 28, 2016 we kicked off our community presentations. At the time of this report we have completed eleven community presentations. Presentations to various groups and organizations will continue.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS:

None

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL AND COMMISSION ACTIONS:

1. The City Council received the Safe and Sustainable Streets Study in May 2013.
2. The City Council received the Infrastructure Funding Update Report in November 2014.
3. The City Council included infrastructure funding as a goal during the 2015 Annual Goal Setting Workshop.
4. The City Council received the Public Infrastructure Financing Report in April 2015, which included \$35,000 for a community survey, for FY 2014-15, and an additional \$215,000 in necessary funding for FY 2015-16, thus bringing the total cost to \$250,000.
5. As part of the FY 2015-16 Operating Budget, Council approved moving the \$35,000 for a community survey into the FY 2015-16 operating budget.
6. A "Best Practices for Potential Ballot Measures" workshop was conducted on June 17, 2015, which outlined the best practices process to be used to engage the community on quality of life services and fiscal issues.
7. At the July 8, 2015 Council meeting, the City Council adopted resolutions authorizing the City Manager to execute Consulting Agreements with the Lew Edwards Group and Godbe Research.

FISCAL AND RESOURCE IMPACT:

Funding and staff time commitment were allocated in the current budget for this community engagement effort.

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act):

Not a Project

LINKS/ATTACHMENTS:

Quality of Life Service Priorities Community Online Survey Results as of 5/18/16

Quality of Life Service Priorities Community Online Survey Comments as of 5/18/16
Community Quality of Life Service Priorities Presentation